

Instructional Directors' Meeting
August 29, 2006
Minutes

Attending were Susan Meyers (for Terry Conroy), Chuck Abshier, Y'vonne Williams, Ron Sanders, Fred Khozein, David Day, Selby Holder, Mike Denn, and Lynn Parks.

[Agenda item 1] Ron distributed copies of a listing of FA 06 short (flex) courses and FA 06 CE courses. He noted that he needed to present the list of short courses and CE (continuing education) courses to the president, so he needs to make sure his list is accurate and complete. There will be a push to offer more short courses and CE courses this fall, he noted.

President Stuckly visited the meeting to review the problem of low enrollment. He said that we need to push for more short courses. Anything we can offer in this base year will be helpful. The other campuses are doing better than Waco in their fall enrollment. We need to have more faculty recruiting and more targeted marketing. Elton said that faculty recruiting is still the key to getting students in, and we need better coordination between departments such as recruiting and counseling.

Ron thought that having a single point of contact with the press creates an unfortunate bottleneck. The local paper needs good local news, but we don't always seem to get it out in a timely fashion. Selby thought the current TSTC commercials were not as effective as some commercials we've had in the past.

Another opportunity for us is the dual-credit course arrangement, Elton said. Right now, we have only 22 dual credit students from Waco ISD. The concern was expressed that WISD personnel were sometimes not supportive of dual-credit arrangements with TSTC or of TSTC recruiting in general.

Elton also said that he talked to the Chancellor about the quarter to semester conversion. The conversion cost the school significant funding. The Chancellor is seeking additional funding to make up the shortfall, Elton noted, but we need to keep growing just to stay even.

Fred asked if there was a way to reward growing programs. Elton said we don't have the resources right now to do much rewarding, and part of the problem is that faculty in some programs were overloaded with industrial training and didn't have the opportunity to do recruiting.

Elton said he would like to set up a committee to study why some programs are growing and how we can improve recruiting. Discussion ensued. Elton then left the meeting.

Ron noted again that there will be a push this fall to offer additional short-term courses and CE courses. David thought that Bechtel and Fluor may need additional trainees from other programs besides welding, but we need to make sure that instructors doing

additional training are properly compensated. Ron said that for people doing extensive training beyond their usual classroom load, we will pay a commensurate overload (there will be no four-hour overload cap). If courses are offered as CE, we need to make sure we have the pay issues worked out, said Ron. Teaching a night or weekend course and paying a flat fee for it (in addition to the faculty member's regular salary) might be helpful, David thought. Selby thought that any new short course offerings this fall should be offered nights or weekends.

ACTION: Directors should let Fred and Ron know by this Thursday (August 31) what additional short (flex) courses or CE courses could be offered this fall.

[Agenda item 2] Fred distributed a report showing FA 05 vs. FA 06 enrollment by program. A number of programs were down significantly, with only a few programs showing good growth. Additional discussion ensued about why enrollment was down. Chuck thought we should advertise in movie theaters, PBS stations, and via email. The concern was expressed that our current marketing campaign was too focused on a "soft sell" approach, and our advertisements need to be more clearly focused on the technical jobs for which TSTC provides training. Selby thought it was ineffectual to focus our TV exposure on Channel 18. Susan thought it would be good if we looked at advertising in football programs and had more giveaways.

Fred asked the directors if they track enrollment trends, and what the reaction is if a program is in decline. Discussion ensued. Susan noted that one perception that works against us is we generally don't give scholarships.

Fred asked the directors to verify the accuracy of the FA 05 vs. FA 06 enrollment by program report.

ACTION: Directors will disseminate the FA 05 vs. FA 06 enrollment by program report to their department chairs and verify its accuracy.

Ron distributed copies of a memo that is being distributed to DL students regarding problems with WebCT Vista and how to access the system properly. (The memo had been constructed by Amy Patrick with assistance from the IDEAS Center.) It seems that a large number of DL students are having trouble logging in and accessing assignments. Susan said they're working hard in the IDEAS Center to resolve problems for students. Ron noted that a work order has been placed with System (which maintains the server for the WebCT software), and some issues are now being resolved. Additional discussion ensued.

[Agenda item 3] Ron distributed the appropriate sections of this year's budget book to the various directors. Fred noted that a considerable amount of money has been moved from the VP's office to the operating budgets in the cluster director accounts.

ACTION: Directors should review the budget sheets and make adjustments (through Ronda) to operating budgets as needed to support growing programs. Also, directors

should manage overloads in an efficient way, and keep an eye on open personnel slots that go unfilled for a long period of time; these slots may be needed more in a different department.

Ron said that some HEAF money might be needed to resource the Bechtel and Fluor effort. Perkins money should be ready for spending, he noted.

[Agenda item 4] Miscellaneous

Selby noted that the program reviews in his area were not due until 2007. It was noted that it's time to insert the first-year outcomes for the 2005-07 IE Unit Action Plans.

ACTION: Department chairs should enter their first-year outcomes for their 2005-07 IE Unit Action Plans. Directors should also ensure that activities related to the Three-Year Program Evaluation Cycle are being completed on a timely basis.

There being no further general business, the meeting was adjourned.

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS

ACTION: Directors should let Fred and Ron know by this Thursday (August 31) what additional short (flex) courses or CE courses could be offered this fall.

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ACTION: Directors should review the budget sheets and make adjustments (through Ronda) to operating budgets as needed to support growing programs. Also, directors should manage overloads in an efficient way, and keep an eye on open personnel slots that go unfilled for a long period of time; these slots may be needed more in a different department.

ACTION: Department chairs should enter their first-year outcomes for their 2005-07 IE Unit Action Plans. Directors should also ensure that activities related to the Three-Year Program Evaluation Cycle are being completed on a timely basis.