

**Academic Affairs Director Meeting**  
**October 4, 2024**

Meeting commenced at 9.05 a.m.

1. **Preloading courses for incoming Freshmen** Marc Guidry
  - Dr. Guidry has a meeting scheduled with Tammy Wyatt, Vice Chancellor UTSA to discuss pre-loading students into 9 hours, starting fall 2025.
  - UTSA started doing this two years ago and it has been very successful. Megan Weatherly, Mickey Diez and others will join the meeting.
  - UTSA report students don't feel like the university is taking away their autonomy or making them choose, instead they feel like the university cares.
  - UTSA is a Banner school which is helpful to us, as they will have navigated some of the same issues we may run into.
  - SFAS1101 will be an opt-out rather than an opt-in. We know from data that when students take SFAS1101 they are more successful and it increases grades and retention.
  - Students will be placed in six hours of core courses, freshman composition and core math in first year if they have not already taken those.
  - Our first priority has to be what is best for our students.
  - TSI may be a factor.
  - Chris Talbot is interested in preloading his art majors into their major courses.
  
2. **Student Experience Project** Marc Guidry
  - The Student Experience Project will be conducted by Chris Wilson and Karyn Hall starting fall 2025.
  - The purpose is to increase student success by implementing six student experience constructs which are;
    - social belonging
    - trust and fairness
    - institutional growth mindset
    - self-efficacy
    - identity threat
    - social correctness
  - This will involve about 40 faculty, with two faculty leaders, to begin fall 2025.
  
3. **Reinventing SFAS1101** Marc Guidry
  - A committee is looking to improve SFAS1101, and the possibility of making this a 3-hour course and include in the core.
  - We need to help students more with study skills.
  - The most logical place in the core for would be to replace oral communication with SFAS1101.
  - This would be a big undertaking, the earliest we would do this is fall 26/27.

4. **Student Success Center**

Raquel Skidmore

- The SSC have a peer mentoring program.
- GenJacks is a huge part of their work with over 5,000 first gen students.
- They also provide success coaches, handle Smith Hudson scholars and undecided majors.

5. **PACE**

Brent McLemore

- Professional and Continuing Education (PACE) was created to meet a need beyond our degree seeking students, for adult learners, as well as employers, to upskill/train employees.
- Our initial catalog is available online, we are partnering with Edtogo. They use our brand and we use their content curriculum, solely on line.
- The goal for PACE is to create revenue.
- We also plan to offer on-campus modules, and hope to have a handful of items to offer by spring/summer 2025.
- We are getting the infrastructure in place; a news release will be coming out soon.
- Brent has reached out to employers such as Etech, City of Nacogdoches, Elliott Electric, offering micro credential, skills course, or personal enrichment.
- Dr. Smith recommended PACE work with CARRI on outreach and suggested Give5.

6. **Institutional Effectiveness**

Chris Wilson

- This office provides behind the scenes support on retention and recruitment.
- They have been working on pathways to success and QEP to improve student success by lowering debt and decreasing time to degree.
- Map successful eight-semester course sequence for undergraduate programs.
- Supporting move to degree works.
- Working with faculty and staff to re-examine their eight-semester course sequences.
- Tools will be used by advisors and others to get from point A and B to earn their degree.
- In future degree maps will be housed in the catalog.
- Also looking at analyzing annual program reviews.
- Will be looking at assessment to help improve student success.

7. **AARC**

M.E. McWilliam

- The AARC are thinking of new ways forward.
- Looking at transformative things we have not done before, including:
  - Launched email drip campaign by major.
  - Consider tutoring post COVID.
  - SI group leaders working with professors

8. **CTL**

Cindy Kilpatrick

- CTL support, strengthen and promote teacher learning,
- They have been actively involved in ACUE and CTL staff are going through this, building on what is being learned and how to offer support.
- Re-introduced teaching and learning connections for new faculty.

- Starting AI coffee and conversations, this is a hot topic that people want to know about.
- Working on graduate student training program with Dr. Lane.
- Offering some new certificates. rolling out an advanced online instructor course.
- OER and z courses and reducing cost for students – in collaboration with Jonathan Helmke.
- Sessions will be offered for faculty in spring to learn more.
- Increasing face to face offerings and opportunities for faculty to come together, discuss and learn.

9. **School of Honors**

Michael Tkacik

- Work closely with AARC and SSC.
- Working with Karyn Hall's office to obtain good data to help increase retention for honors students.
- SFAS1101 symposium this year will be on retention.
- Dr. Tkacik has advised/mentored 60% of honors students and is becoming more involved.
- Dr. Tkacik's advanced courses now have no book costs associated with them, saving students money.

10. **CARRI**

Mary Ann Rojas

- CARRI building should be complete by Spring 2025.
- CARRI are working with DETCOG (Deep East Texas Council of Governors).
- Drone transportation service for delivery of specimens to labs has been introduced at Texas Tech. We are talking to Hans Williams and looking at the possibility of this for SFA.
- DRAX is the largest power supplier in the UK and is coming to the US. They are very attracted to this area because of the wood waste available.

11. **Library**

Jonathan Helmke

- Jonathan is re-envisioning the library and the services offered, working with faculty and staff.
- Increasing OER to support research.
- Looking to re-imagine 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> floors for group study spaces.
- ETRC are expanding the archives lab.

12. **International Office**

Heather Catton

- International students are constantly using their office/student study space, retention is good.
- Have issues keeping international athletes.
- 84% increase in study abroad, mostly thanks to scholarships provided by the Provost's office.

Meeting concluded at 10.45 a.m.

*Attendees: Lorenzo Smith, Chris Wilson, Cindy Kilpatrick, Brent McLemore, Jonathan Helmke, Heather Catton, Ginger Walker, M.E. McWilliam, Mike Tkacik, Raquel Skidmore, Mary Ann Rojas, Sharon Brewer, Marc Guidry*