

Deans Council
October 2, 2024

Meeting commenced at 9.01 am

Minutes from 8/21, 9/4, and 9/18 were approved and will be posted on our web page.

1. **SFAS1101** Marc Guidry/Megan Weatherly
 - Dr. Guidry informed the deans we will be making a change for fall 2025.
 - SFAS1101 will be a 1-hour elective credit and we will be pre-registering all freshmen into the course, they can then opt out if they wish to.
 - There has been discussion about making SFAS1101 a three-hour course (freshman seminar) and add to the core.
 - One-hour courses cannot go into the core however perhaps we could bundle two or three courses together to make three-hour course.
 - Marc and Megan have been working with Student Affairs on a different freshman experience.
 - We currently have trouble covering everything in our current SFAS1101 one-hour course.
 - We need more faculty teaching SFAS1101, currently a large number of staff teach this class.
 - If we decide to change SFAS1101 to a three-hour course for the core, it would have to replace oral communication or foreign language. Dr. Guidry asked for thoughts from the deans.
 - COLAA would lose out on those hours but overall the university would not.
 - There would be overloads to pay and we would have to find the additional money.
 - Section sizes tend to be around 25.
 - We need engaging faculty that can teach larger classes.
 - Currently SFAS1101 classes are approximately 22 students and being taught 50/50 by faculty and staff.
 - Currently there are 26 sections of SFAS1101 which is 46% of the freshman class.
 - No decision was made on this option.
 - It was agreed we would wait to see how many students opt out of the 1-hour course in fall 2025.
 - We will come back to this topic.

2. **Overview Provost** Lorenzo Smith
 - Dr. Smith reminded the deans the extended leadership meeting is 10/7, and said everyone should present something - information/concerns, and could even test drive some ideas for the December presentations.
 - Dr. Guidry will present on NSSE results.
 - The deans will present at the December 2 meeting, at 10am in Twilight Ballroom.
 - The Provost is interested in low producing/high producing programs investing in advising, organizational changes,
 - how you are moving the needle on first year retention.
 - This is not a directive from the provost but would fold nicely into the strategic plan.

3. **Remote Work** Lorenzo Smith
 - UT System are working on a policy to bring staff back to campus (from working remote). This mainly relates to staff and not faculty. There will need to be justification for anyone working remote, details

are yet to be finalized, more to come.

4. Any Other Business

- Mickey Diez is looking at separate graduate and undergraduate commencement ceremonies.
- The deans had not been consulted about this and were concerned about this.
- Some of the deans felt it is hard enough to get faculty to show up for one commencement, let alone two.
- This was discussed at chairs forum and they complained they were not given any input.
- Mickey Diez wants to try something new and we will see how it works out.
- The deans stated that faculty like seeing graduates walk the stage with the undergraduates, it is a recruiting tool.
- Gina Oglesbee and John Wyatt have requested more information on the deans' admin restructures and have delayed their visit with Deans Council to 10/16.
- Dr. Lane asked the deans to send a few highlights for each college in graduate programs.

5. Vacancies

Lorenzo Smith

- Dr. Smith provided a list of vacancies, we currently have about 58 in Academic Affairs
- The majority of those are locked in as far as searches etc.
- If we decided not to back-fill positions these funds (\$1.1m) could be used for salaries.
- Dr. Knepp stated he already did this in his college, he has sacrificed some positions to give raises.
- We need to look at the backfills carefully as we have some crucial needs.
- We have choices where we can put our money.

6. Date of Next Meeting

October 16, 2024

Meeting adjourned 10.43

Attendees: Lorenzo Smith, Marc Guidry, Sharon Brewer, Ginger Walker, Judy Abbott, Kim Childs, Forrest Lane, Dustin Knepp, Tim Bisping, Hans Williams, Gary Wurtz