



Academic, Governance, and Strategic Planning Council Recap

CHEC 407 February 22, 2024

Members present: Dr. Neil Matkin, Dr. Bill King, Melissa Irby, Dr. Abe Johnson, Monica Velazquez, Mary McClure, Steve Matthews, Dr. Wendy Commons, Dr. Adrienne Caughfield, Dr. Kerry Loinette, Tricia Murray, Dr. Rebecca Orr, Dr. Krystal Humphreys, Dr. Sukanya Subramanian

Members absent: none

Action Items

- Emergency Management Working Group Recommendations for (1) Improving Warnings and Notifications and (2) Exterior Door Markings – **Dr. Bill King**

This stems from the Plano swatting event. Avigilon and cellular coverage are also part of this and are on schedule. Two things under consideration:

- (1) improving warnings and notifications. (see handout).
 - a. The first option is to add District Office and Classroom Instructor Computers to InformaCast.
 - i. Office & Instructor Computers
 - ii. Adding 1,000 computers
 - iii. Cost per machine: \$4.10
 - iv. Additional annual cost **\$4,093.40**
 - b. The second and recommended option is to add all computers to InformaCast.
 - i. All Machines (8,400 licenses)
 - ii. Cost per machine: \$3.78
 - iii. Additional annual costs: \$31,752

Both options will also require a one-time service fee of \$7500.

The main difference is that option 2 includes lab computers and any other campus computer on the Cisco network. This fills gap of cougaralert. Open for discussions/questions.

Observations were made that the expense of option 2 was redundant, and a map of coverage to evaluate gaps and overlaps would be helpful in deciding if the extra expense is warranted. Council agreed to start with option 1 to see how it works, and if desired, the district can upgrade later. A coverage map can be requested in the interim.

Motion by Steve Matthews to proceed with Option 1. Kerry Loinette seconded. Motion passed.

- (2) Exterior door markings – Wayfinding for EMS is very different from student/faculty-focused wayfinding. These door markings would meet international fire code and are very easy and inexpensive to install. No questions asked. Council agreed to proceed.

Steve Matthews motioned to proceed. Adrienne Caughfield seconded. Motion passed.

- Change to the DOS Policy & Procedures for Scholastic Dishonesty – Dr. Rebecca Orr
 - Proposed change has been passed by Faculty Council in collaboration with DOS

This proposal developed from faculty concerns regarding the inability to put placeholder grade in the gradebook when scholastic dishonesty is being investigated. Students respond to grade changes more than emails. They often miss or ignore the emails and then get cited for lack of compliance on top of possible academic penalties. Additionally, blank grade entries during the investigation process lead to gradebook inaccuracies that mislead students' understanding of their actual grade.

The proposal is to allow faculty to have the option to enter a temporary placeholder grade of 0 for an assignment that has been submitted to DOS for investigation. This placeholder grade cannot be used to calculate the final grade submission. Upon completion of the DOS investigation, faculty will finalize the appropriate grade based on DOS findings and the stated syllabus policy. Other schools utilize this type of process.

The net effect is a more accurate/transparent view of grades for the students during the process and allows them to resolve the grade or withdraw without penalty. The placeholder will immediately affect the grade but is temporary. The question was raised of what triggers the placement of a 0? It was suggested to send a 24-hour notice wherein a placeholder is put in if there is no response from the student to the DOS office within 24 hours. Faculty Council wants the zero to be a trigger to the student rather than a 24 notice because they feel delivering and tracking the notice would add to faculty workload. Per general counsel, that would fall on the DOS office, not faculty. Additionally, a standardized note that would remain on record could be added in canvas stating that the grade is a temporary placeholder, etc.

Use of an "X" would still apply in select situations, like finals, to allow for adjudication. The only change to the current policy is language to communicate that a temporary placeholder can be assigned until the DOS adjudicates and that the grade can change upon DOS determination. It will not infringe on the faculty's ability to assign a grade. A sentence needs to be added to the syllabus as well.

Dr. Rebecca Orr motioned to approve the change. Melissa Irby seconded. Motion passes.

Discussion Items

- HR Clear Rules of the Road for All – **Dr. Neil Matkin**

In the past, many issues brought to HR by Faculty Council were not resolved. These items of discussion came out of things learned from those experiences. There are inconsistencies between campuses, departments, deans, etc. on how things are addressed by associate deans/deans/provosts, etc. We need to clarify what constitutes disciplinary actions at level 1, level 2, level 3, and terminations. For example, (2) level 2s = termination, (1) level 3 = termination. This removes excuses and everyone knows what to expect. Dr. Matkin has asked for assistance from a law firm that specializes in higher ed policy and is envisioning something developed collaboratively.

Faculty representatives in attendance agreed that transparency and consistency are crucial. Training will be planned and implemented once the policies are more fully developed and approved.

- Ombuds Function – **Dr. Matkin**

The Ombuds position/function has been discussed since 2015, and was, in fact, mentioned in All College Day preCovid. The Ombuds Function is a neutral party with direct access to the top administration. This is

designed to be a resource person with whom faculty can discuss situations without going through direct chain if needed.

The ombudsman would not be allowed to help with process during meetings. They are meant to be an anonymous resource to help achieve resolution. This individual will try to solve problems amicably and will be a skilled communicator and trained mediator. They will be outside the supervisory chains.

Not yet sure if this will be a current employee or someone new from outside. No issues or concerns raised by AGS. Dr. Matkin will come to Faculty Council in April and discuss.

- **Upward Evaluations for Administrators – Dr. Neil Matkin**

There have been complaints about lack of anonymity, fear of speaking, etc. during evaluations. Dr. Matkin is reaching out to peer colleges to discuss upward evaluations and how they are handled. We want to identify problems sooner. Concerns raised by members:

- when evals are anonymous, there is a lot of room for unfounded things
- concerns about administrators that make it clear that there are repercussions if faculty have complaints and fear of retaliation

- **Faculty Rank and Privileges/MYC – Dr. Neil Matkin**

When the college was founded, everyone was a professor. Many folks view longevity as a factor for reward, plus merit-based pay, etc. There are no criteria to base this on. A conversation is desired with the Faculty Council/faculty about creating faculty ranks based on set qualifications, with pay and contracts tied to that. Longer contracts, more formal process. Thoughts on examining this idea?

Per faculty member – a task force discussed and was very in favor of this.

- **Faculty Council Full Representation or Development of Task Force – Dr. Neil Matkin**

We need to know faculty is fully represented as Dr. Matkin begins to work on these things. Trying to develop a process with Dr. Orr to make sure of full representation. If it can't be accomplished, AGS will be used to develop a task force. Dr. Orr stated that she would love ways for Faculty Council to communicate the desire for more involvement from faculty. Dr. King mentioned that from a workforce perspective, there is an idea that people don't want to get involved, and that they perceive they aren't wanted or will be attacked. We need to consider other ways of doing things. Dr. Orr - A workforce committee was started to bring ideas about things Faculty Council doesn't know. Haven't gotten a response but culture change takes time. The new formula has already helped with representation. Dr. Matkin – not needing to vote today. But we aren't using hand chosen members, and we want a representative body. I would like to have an idea for process in next couple months.

- **All Faculty Convocation – Dr. Neil Matkin**

- Not going to be April 12th. Finding a new date.

Feedback Items

- **2025-2026 Academic Calendar – Dr. Bill King/Dr. Abe Johnson**

- Please review and get back to us by next Friday.
- Abe Johnson – drop day for class is 4 days of instruction pared back from 10 days. This is creating issues for faculty. Possible recommendations of zero days or 2 days, also moved the shorter terms closer to start. Need faculty/admin to be involved but will send something out.

Information Items

- Emergency Response Mapping for All Campuses – **Dr. Bill King**

This is already in progress. We have aimed to verify the size of rooms on all campuses. The maps also work for EMS. The info is loaded into a database, so they have immediate access and it is kept up to date. Celina is completed, currently working on CYC.

- CRASE & Stop the Bleed Update – **Dr. Bill King**

Allison Venuto is doing a great job rolling this out. Great feedback so far, only one major complaint. The training is being incorporated into new-hire and new faculty orientation. More stop-the-bleed kits have been added. Training will be offered starting in the fall, and there will be a supplemental budget item for Mike Messina to roll out this training.

- Recommendations for Workday Team Regarding Student Credit Hours – **Dr. Kerry Loinette**

Is there a limit we can put on how many credit hours a student can register for during each part of term? We have researched with the committee and need to know what capabilities Workday has. Can it alert a student they are beyond recommended hours, etc.? Dr. Matkin – what is the goal? Dr. Loinette – for example – it's possible for a student to take 21+ credit hours over several short Parts Of Term, which is beyond recommendations. Questions raised – Can we set a maximum that prevents registering beyond recommendations (not an alert)? Is there a way for students to get approval for exceeding certain limits? Jon Hardesty is leading this.

- Recommendations for Guidance for Faculty Members Working with Students on Military Active Duty – **Dr. Kerry Loinette**

Trying to differentiate the guidelines for faculty to follow regarding incompletes due to military service. Question of funding – do they have to repay the funding? Is it feasible for them to take classes while on active duty (they can't miss more than 25% of class) Proposing a similar but altered incomplete status/process.

Round Robin

Dr. Sukanya Subramanian – Faculty Council is having its elections – 1 more in nursing, 1 in health sciences, 1 in trade and manufacturing.

Dr. Matkin – Dr. Schumann agreed to come back to Plano to serve 18-24 months. Starting April 1st.

Dr. Bill King – 2 major events held recently. TAMU Engineering Academy is creating a lot of waves in a great way!