

ORAL ROBERTS UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC COUNCIL
MINUTES
August 17, 2015 – 11:00 a.m., GC 3112

1. **TOPIC:** Opening

Dr. Kathaleen Reid-Martinez, ORU Provost and chair of the Academic Council, opened the meeting with a welcome and prayer.

2. **TOPIC:** Mode of Operation for Council Meetings

For the current Council meeting, it was agreed that a majority of voting members would constitute a quorum and any votes would be conducted by a show of hands.

ACTION: For future meetings, a sub-committee made up of some of the members of the Task Group on the Role of Faculty in Governance was appointed to begin the process of drafting rules of order for the Academic Council. This sub-committee is composed of Dr. Kenda Jezek, Dr. Timothy Norton, and Mr. Terry Unruh.

OPEN: The sub-committee of Dr. Jezek, Dr. Norton, and Mr. Unruh is expected to meet prior to the next Academic Council meeting to begin drafting a recommendation for rules of order for future meetings.

3. **TOPIC:** Curriculum Change Proposals – process and forms to be used

Dr. Kenneth Weed presented the newly created form to be used as the cover page for proposals for curriculum changes. All information in these forms will be entered electronically, including signature approvals. The signatures will be date stamped in the system. Since this form will be distributed through e-mails, it will be important for the form to include the list of attached documents. All curriculum change proposals will need the signature of the college dean. The college dean will determine whether the proposal needs (1) college-wide faculty approval, (2) additional deans' approval because of effects on other colleges, and (3) Academic Council approval. If approved by the Provost, the form is sent to the registrar who then sends the form back to the Dean of the college in which the proposal originated. The dean of the originating college then ensures distribution of the approved change to the Dean of Learning Resources, Director of International Programs, **Director of Athletic Academics** (there was a question about this title. Kyle Jones is **Associate** Athletic Director for Academics. He was previously **Assistant** Athletic Director for Academics. One of Kyle's subordinates, Jaci Inman, has the title of Director of Athletic Academics. If Kyle were to leave the University he might be replaced with an Associate Athletic Director, an Assistant Athletic Director, or just a Director. Kyle suggested perhaps we should use the title "Athletic Director/Academics

or Head of the ELI Center.), Director of Student Resources, and the University Technical Editor for implementation.

A question arose concerning the process for handling general education proposals. It is assumed that general education proposals would have received input from all departments on campus through their representatives on the General Education Curriculum Committee. General Education proposals would follow the protocol for all academic committees which report to the Academic Council which means proposals from this committee would not need a department chair's nor a dean's signature prior to being presented to the Academic Council.

A second question was posed concerning when approved proposals would go into effect. It will be assumed that proposals will become effective in the fall semester following their approval. If earlier implementation is needed or desired, it must be stated on the form.

ACTION: It was suggested that the approved form should be amended to indicate that a copy of the form should also be returned to the chair of the originating department.

OPEN: Dr. Linda Gray, Dr. Cal Easterling, and Mr. David Fulmer agreed to review the form and the processes in additional detail prior to the next Academic Council meeting.

4. **TOPIC:** Academic Committee Assignments

Mr. Terry Unruh thanked the deans for their cooperation in sending all committee appointments to the Provost's office. There is still some work to be done in scheduling meetings for all of the various committees. The original intent was for the Academic Council and all academic committees to meet on the third Monday of the month at 11:00. That is why the colleges were asked to assign different faculty members to each committee to avoid a conflict of meeting times. Unfortunately there are a few standing committee appointments (such as the director of the general education curriculum) for which that schedule would create a permanent conflict. Mr. Unruh again emphasized the desire for as much faculty involvement in academic decisions as possible. It is therefore important for departments to meet and conduct business on the first Mondays, colleges to meet on the second Mondays, the Academic Council to meet on third Mondays, and the University Faculty to meet on fourth Mondays to make the flow of information as seamless as possible and shorten the time needed to make decisions.

ACTION (1): A list of all committee assignments will be compiled by the Provost's office and the list will be made available on the Academic Council website.

ACTION (2): The Provost will send out a blast e-mail to all committee members thanking them for their willingness to serve and explaining the intention for committees to begin meeting in September and to appoint/elect a committee chair.

ACTION (3): Dr. Weed will send an electronic version of the handbook to the members of the Task Group on Tuesday in order for members of the Task Group to verify that the handbook changes reflect the spirit of the faculty governance proposals approved by the board of trustees during the summer of 2015.

OPEN: Dr. Reid-Martinez shared that, based upon the charge from the board of trustees, the Task Group on the Role of Faculty in Governance is continuing to study the revisions to the faculty and administrative handbook and the best practices to use in order to conduct business in the Academic Council and the committees which report to the Council. The Task Group is scheduled to meet on Friday, August 21, 2015 to review the proposed changes in the handbook.

5. **TOPIC:** Recommendation for General Education Curriculum Review

Dr. Lori Kanitz presented a recommendation from the general education committee that an in-depth review of the entire general education curriculum be conducted over the next three years beginning this semester. A two page report was distributed and discussed. Dr. Kanitz highlighted external factors and internal factors which are driving the need for such a review.

External factors include the “colliding trends” of the perceived need for college degrees and the question of the value for the cost of a college degree. Some of the internal factors include the perceived lack of connection between various courses in the general education curriculum as well as the disconnect between general education courses and courses within a student’s major. Other internal factors are the assessment of learning outcomes is heavily focused on entry level classes typically taken in a student’s first year with little assessment of continued development of critical skills in the subsequent years. Although ORU has conducted general education reviews in the past, few significant changes have been made. The timing of such a substantial review is good for it coincides with the fiftieth anniversary of the University, the HLC visit in the fall of 2016, and the imperatives included in the KPI’s of the Five Year Adaptive Plan recently approved by the board of trustees.

In conclusion, Dr. Kanitz indicated that this review would be a three year process to be led by the Coordinator for General Education and an independent group called the Institute for General Education and Assessment (IGEA) in which:

Year 1 – research and input from the faculty, staff, students, alumni, employers, etc.

Year 2 - recommendations and formulation of a new general education structure
Year 3 – faculty development and preparation for implementation.

The IGEA will make recommendations through the General Education Curriculum Committee to the Academic Council.

ACTION: A motion was made by Dr. Edward Watson and seconded by Dr. Audrey Thompson that the recommendation for a serious review of the general education curriculum be approved. The Academic Council voted 18 for and zero against this motion.

OPEN: Dr. Reid-Martinez indicated that the next step would be to take this recommendation to the University Faculty at next Monday's meeting. Final recommendations related to General Education changes will come back through the General Education Committee to the Academic Council.

6. **TOPIC:** Student-Engaged Research

Dr. Kenneth Weed shared that much of this type of research has traditionally been done in the natural science departments, but there are many new initiatives in other departments as well. Dr. Weed shared his excitement related to the new Experimental Psychology Lab on the second floor of the Graduate Center. This lab includes ten stations with new monitors and interactive software and will allow experiments to be conducted virtually.

ACTION: Dr. Weed encouraged other departments to notify him of other initiatives in order to be included in the faculty showcase at this fall's 50th anniversary celebrations.

7. **TOPIC:** Old Business – Clarification of the distinctions between a BS and a BA degree at ORU.

Dr. Lori Kanitz reported that this matter had been discussed at the final meeting of the Faculty Senate on April 28, 2015. This topic was tabled at that meeting. There was discussion about prohibiting students from switching from a BA to a BS by simply substituting two additional science classes for the modern language requirements of the BA. Currently most BS degrees at ORU require 55 hours of general education (including HPER classes) but BA degrees require 61 hours of general education because of the additional language requirements. A student switching from a BA to a BS would be expected to take two additional classes in either science or math and thus increase their general education requirements from 55 hours to 61–63 hours.

ACTION: The Council recommended that this item be sent back to the General Education Curriculum Committee and that the Committee solicit input and recommendations from those academic departments which offer both BA and BS

degrees. It was stressed that the integrity of the distinction in the degrees needs to be upheld.

OPEN: Because this item does impact general education, any proposal from the departments will need to come back through the General Education Curriculum Committee and to the Academic Council.

8. **TOPIC:** Miscellaneous business

ACTION: The Provost requested that agenda items for future meetings be e-mailed to her office with a CC to her assistant, Kristin Towles-Esparza.

OPEN: The Provost also indicated that “announcements” will be a permanent agenda item. Dr. Mark Hall announced a reception for the new Music Therapy Lab scheduled for tomorrow, August 18, in suite 124 in Citiplex Towers at 3:00. All are welcome and food will be served.

9. **TOPIC:** Adjournment

The Council meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Unruh

Terry Unruh
Vice Chair, Academic Council