

ORAL ROBERTS UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC COUNCIL
MINUTES
December 4, 2015 – 11:00 a.m., GC 3112

1. **TOPIC:** Opening

Mr. Terry Unruh, Vice Chair of the Academic Council, opened the meeting with prayer and thanked the Council for their cooperation in attending this specially called meeting. Mr. Unruh announced that the Provost, Dr. Kathaleen Reid-Martinez, was out of the country representing ORU. It was determined that a quorum was present.

2. **TOPIC:** Approval of Minutes of meeting on November 16, 2015

Minutes were distributed electronically prior to the meeting. Mr. Unruh asked if there were any questions or corrections to the minutes and none were offered. Dr. Timothy Norton moved for acceptance of the minutes. Motion seconded by Dr. Eric Newberg. Approved unanimously.

3. **TOPIC:** Proposal for last 30 hours at ORU

Mr. David Fulmer, University Registrar, presented a proposal to change the policy which requires a student to take at ORU the last thirty hours prior to graduation. This proposal would require any 30 hours, not just the last 30 hours, to be taken at ORU and would also allow each department to determine additional requirements on specific courses or number of hours which could be transferred. This would not change the ORU policy which limits the number of hours transferred from community colleges to 72 and from four years schools to 98. This proposal is in line with the policy in place with the state regents and used by the government as a way to increase graduation rates.

The proposal would break our current policy into two mutually exclusive parts: (1) university level would simply require a total of any 30 hours to be taken at ORU in order to earn a degree and (2) department level to allow the various departments to determine any additional graduation requirements for students majoring in their department, such as which courses must be taken at ORU and how many hours within the major must be taken at ORU. The current policy states that six hours within the major and Senior Paper must be taken at ORU.

After opening the floor for questions and discussion, the following issues were expressed:

- a. This proposal only applies to undergraduate students.

- b. The current policy states the last 30 hours must be completed at ORU which means the last thirty hours in chronological order, not the last 30 hours specified on the degree plan sheets.
- c. There was concern over the potential to transfer in “signature” courses like Senior Paper, Spirit Empowered Living, and Health Fitness if this proposal is accepted. These courses are part of the DNA of ORU and should be guarded carefully.
- d. Concern was also expressed related to an elitist attitude about courses within our majors, including senior level course. If the University is unwilling to accept transfer of such courses, we are, in effect, stating that our course is superior to the same course taught at other institutions.
- e. HLC requires transfer policies to be clearly stated in the university catalog so any changes to our policy, including unique, program-specific requirements, should be listed in the transfer policy section of the catalog and repeated in the program section of the catalog.
- f. The proposal could be interpreted loosely so it was recommended that the phrase “If specified by program requirements” be inserted before the phrase “thirty hours must be taken at ORU.”
- g. The proposal was not designed for the purpose of watering down an ORU degree.
- h. If each department/program is allowed to set their own program-specific requirements related to the transfer of course, it will become chaotic to advise students, even within the same college.
- i. Neither the current policy nor the proposal addresses transfer courses related to a minor. All 18 hours of a minor could be taken at another institution.
- j. Currently 10-15% of graduating seniors petition to transfer in classes within the last 30 hours of graduation.
- k. The current policy allows for the last 30 hours to be taken in-person or online. The proposal does not address this issue.
- l. Program specific requirements related to transfers would have to be determined prior to May 1 so they could be included in the ORU catalog and implemented for students entering in fall 2016.
- m. Departmental chairs still have the prerogative of what courses to accept for transfer credits.
- n. Concern was expressed that our current policy of “the last” 30 hours is our effort to insure that our graduates are professionally competent. If the policy is changed to “any” 30 hours, it will be difficult to determine a graduate’s competency if the majority of courses taken at ORU were during the freshman and/or sophomore year.
- o. This proposal has significant importance for the agreements currently being developed with our international affiliates. Some of the programs under consideration are for the students to take classes for one year at ORU and three years at a university in their home country. A question was asked concerning whether such articulation agreements already

address on a case by case basis these limitations on transfer credits and timing of transfer courses.

- p. Perhaps this is an issue which must be addressed in a two-prong approach – one focused on residential transfers and one focused on international affiliations. For example, in some of our programs, we would be glad to accept the vast majority of classes from some of our international partner universities because of the strong reputation of the program in the other country (such as engineering). However, we may be less willing to transfer the same number of courses from any university in the US.
- q. The deans have previously discussed this proposal but it has not been presented to department chairs or the faculty.
- r. The discussion did not seem to be moving toward a decision but rather indicated the need for additional input and discussion from all of the faculty.

ACTION: Dr. David Burkus moved to table this issue so that it might be discussed by the chairs at their meeting in January and discussed by the faculty within the departmental meetings in January. Motion seconded by Dr. Charlene Martin. By a show of hands, 9 voted for, zero voted against, 7 abstained. Proposal was tabled. Because the January Academic Council date is scheduled for Martin Luther King Day, Mr. Unruh asked the members of the Academic Council to watch their e-mails for a possible special meeting in January to vote on this proposal. If passed, this proposal will likely be forwarded to the University Faculty on January 25, 2016, for approval.

ACTION: Mr. David Fulmer was asked to revise wording of the proposal based upon the today's discussion and be ready to present the revised proposal to the chairs in January. Deans were also asked to solicit input from their respective faculties early in January during the departmental meetings or the college meetings.

4. **TOPIC:** Summer School Issues

Dr. Mark Hall, Dean of the College of Arts and Cultural Studies, expressed his appreciation to Dr. Julie Huntley for her work on revising summer school policies at ORU. Free housing will be offered to students engaged in four academic events during the summer. Academic events include a summer school session, a summer mission trip, or work with Empowered 21. Allowing participation in off campus events like summer missions is very beneficial for students who need some place to store their possessions while serving on the mission field or with Empowered 21. The goal is to increase summer school enrollment throughout the summer, but it must be done in a profitable manner.

The cafeteria will be open for 48 days this summer during summer camps held on the ORU campus. Meals may be purchased on a daily basis. Consideration is being given to various block meal plans which can be purchased.

Concern was expressed related to students being forced to move from one dorm to another during the summer because of the needs of summer camp participants.

ACTION: Dr. Hall was not aware of any policy requiring students to change dorms during the summer, but agreed to check into it and discuss it at the next Dean's Council.

5. **TOPIC:** Articulation Agreements.

Dr. Mark Hall reported there are several national and state articulation agreements currently under reconsideration, including several with Tulsa Community College. ORU is working on an articulation agreement and a reverse articulation agreement with Lone Star in Texas. Agreements with Teen mania, Hillsong, Victory, and Christ for the Nations are currently under discussion. An international agreement is being developed with Shiloh Bible College in Ethiopia. Work on an agreement with a university in Malaysia is almost complete and another one with Beijing University in China is ongoing.

It was reported that most of our special arrangements with other institutions stay within the current transfer policies. Most of the articulation agreements with ORU are for a period of three years, so issues such as these can be addressed during the renewal process of necessary.

ACTION: None

CLOSED

6. **TOPIC:** New Business – no items were presented

7. **TOPIC:** Future meetings

Mr. Unruh reminded the Council it is likely that a specially called meeting will occur in January because of the conflict with Martin Luther King Day. The meetings in February, March, and April are scheduled on the third Monday of each month. A meeting in May is possible if there is pressing business to be conducted following the spring meeting of the board of trustees, but no Council meeting is currently planned.

8. **TOPIC:** Announcements

Mr. Unruh reminded the Council of the ORU Christmas Concert tonight, the Christmas party at the home of the President and Mrs. Wilson on December 10, and the ORU employee Christmas party at lunch on December 18. Dr. Andy Lang announced there would be a meeting of the Task Group on the Faculty Role in Governance following the Council meeting today. Dr. Ken Berchenbriter announced that D2L will be enhanced with additional functionality over the holidays and photo class rosters will be available for the faculty after the drop/add period, approximately the second week of the semester.

9. TOPIC: Adjournment

Dr. Timothy Norton moved for adjournment. Dr. Edward Watson seconded. Approved unanimously. The Council meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Unruh

Terry Unruh
Vice Chair, Academic Council