

## Undergraduate Education Advisory Committee

April 22, 2016

### Summary Notes

---

**Members present:** Brett Millán (co-chair), Lawrence Abraham, Melissa Armentor, Yvette Bendeck, Debbie Cottrell, Steven Daniell, Jerry King, Barbara Lerner, Nancy Martin, David Roach, Esther Rumsey, Kathryn Wetzell, Emily Wilson

#### **1. Call to Order and Election of Committee Co-Chairs**

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Reinold Cornelius. Both co-chairs were absent. Ann Kenimer was out-of-country and Colleen Smith had resigned because of re-location. Reinold Cornelius asked for nominations for both positions. Nancy Martin nominated Ann Kenimer and Larry Abraham seconded the nomination. Melissa Armentor nominated Brett Millán, and Steven Daniell seconded. For both co-chair elections, all members voted in favor, and none opposed.

#### **2. Consideration of Summary Notes From the September 18, 2015 Meeting**

The summary notes were accepted unanimously after Steven Daniell moved and Nancy Martin seconded the motion to consider.

#### **3. Discussion on How the UEAC Fits Into Coordinating Board Operations**

Rex Peebles, Coordinating Board assistant commissioner, presented and members discussed the topic. The UEAC is charged as an advisory committee to provide input and recommendations to guide Coordinating Board rulemaking and policymaking. Shared advice resulting from UEAC conversations is invaluable to staff for formulating rules, interpretation of statutes, and creating guidelines and policies. The January 2009 UEAC report "Designing Texas Undergraduate Education in the 21st Century" was discussed as a resource for future UEAC work. The report offers an opportunity to decide which recommendations are still relevant under the new strategic plan 60x30TX and whether modifications can be made to inform future UEAC work. Reinold Cornelius indicated that members could review the document and discuss at the fall meeting.

#### **4. Update on the Coordinating Board's Marketable Skills Conference**

The Coordinating Board hosted a first Marketable Skills Conference to help institutions in support of the third goal of 60x30TX. Sponsored through a partnership of the Coordinating Board, the Texas Workforce Commission, The University of Texas at Austin, and the College for All Texans Foundation, the conference was the first official gathering of Texas institutions of higher education to discuss one of the goals in 60x30TX.

Ginger Gossman, Coordinating Board senior director, gave an overview of 60x30TX goals. It is designed to establish a globally competitive workforce in Texas by 2030 and it builds on the success of the former higher education plan, Closing the Gaps by 2015. She reported that the

Coordinating Board hosted the TabLab conference in February 2016, the first of its kind to address the issue of Texas Affordable Baccalaureate (TAB) degrees since 60x30TX launched. The conference provided a foundation for higher education leaders to create TAB degrees. Three-hundred-eighty community college and university representatives participated.

The Financial Literacy Advisory Committee was created to help the Coordinating Board to convene a statewide advisory group to benefit parents and students before, during, and after their college careers according to the charge of 60x30TX. Annual membership in the committee will include financial aid officers, higher education leaders. K-12 leaders, non-profit leaders and business industry leaders.

Also in support of communicating the Coordinating Board's new strategic plan are 60x30TX regional workshops that are supported by the Houston Endowment and the Lumina Foundation and tri-agency regional meetings led by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), and including the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the Coordinating Board. The regional workshops are intended to provide a forum for local leaders to exchange ideas and create partnerships to help achieve the 60x30TX goals.

#### **5. Discussion on the Coordinating Board's Strategic Plan 60x30TX**

Committee members discussed their experiences at the Marketable Skills Conference. Some felt the conference was well organized and feed-back to their respective faculty senates was well received. Faculty is looking forward to attending local regional meetings. A member said that he and fellow attendees at the conference felt they already showcase marketable skills at their campuses. For example, the importance of skills such as writing and critical thinking is already embedded at the university level. So, there was a need to develop value added skills, in addition to the marketable skills being offered, perhaps through better packaging to showcase what is learned to outside parties. A member reported that local employers stress marketable skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, and communication. Rex Peebles stated that the original idea of the Texas Core Curriculum core objectives was to learn what skills could be deemed marketable in the field after graduation. Both hard and soft skills should be taught in each class for every degree to gain and sustain employment.

Ginger Gossman spoke to the question regarding the possibility of a state identification of marketable skills. She discussed how the Coordinating Board will convene a statewide learning community on how to share ways to identify marketable skills while higher education institutions will decide how to describe the skills. UEAC was offered an opportunity to submit ideas on how to facilitate this endeavor. The intent is to recognize commonalities among identified marketable skills as they are shared by higher education institutions; the Coordinating Board doesn't want to dictate marketable skills, only assist in creating them.

#### **6. Update on Fields of Study and Programs of Study**

Pamela Rodgers, Coordinating Board program director, provided an update on Fields of Study (FOS) and Programs of Study (POS). A FOS provides a statewide guarantee of transfer to any public college or university in Texas, and further promises that the courses in the approved FOS Curriculum (FOSC) will apply to the relevant degree programs. A field of study curriculum is comprised of "a set of courses that will satisfy the lower division requirements for a bachelor's degree in a specific academic area at a general academic teaching institution."

There are currently nine Board-approved FOSC active. The Coordinating Board created committees to create new FOSC for music, nursing, engineering technology, and communication and a committee for the Mexican American FOS will be considered at the June 2016 CAWS meeting. Each committee has 24 advisory committee representatives, in equal numbers from two-year and four-year institutions.

Programs of Study (POS) in technical and career education improve transferability in lower-division courses. POS provide an opportunity for post-secondary students to transfer college credit to a two-year or four-year higher education institution if they offer a Bachelor of Applied Sciences (BAS). There are sixteen career clusters with 122 programs. The Coordinating Board adopted rules to establish advisory committees for the first of the eight career clusters. Rules for developing the remaining clusters will be considered by the Coordinating Board at its April meeting. The first committee meetings will begin in June 2016.

### **7. Update on Dual Credit**

Andrew Lofters, Coordinating Board program director, provided an overview on dual credit and members discussed the topic. The Coordinating Board defines dual credit as a process by which a high school junior or senior enrolls in a college course and receives simultaneous academic credit for the course from both the college and the high school. State law allows both school districts and colleges to obtain state funding for dual credit courses. Colleges receive state formula funding for contact or credit hours of instruction. Decisions about who pays tuition, fees and other costs for dual credit are made at the local level, and it varies from district to district. Most community colleges waive all or part of the cost, while relatively few universities offer waivers. As participation numbers grow and the cost of courses increases, institutions may reduce or eliminate their waiver. If requested, public institutions of higher education in the state are required to assist a school district in developing and implementing a program designed to provide students with the opportunity to earn the equivalent of 12 hours of college credit while in high school.

### **8. Discussion and Consideration of the 2014 Texas Core Curriculum**

Reinold Cornelius discussed the Coordinating Board's review of 10-year assessment reports. The reports contain two components, the assessment of the core objectives and an evaluation of the assessment process. The six core objectives need to be assessed every 10 years.

Brett Millán introduced Kathleen Fenton who recently worked on a collaborative analysis of the core curriculum across and the assessment plans from Texas public colleges and universities, done for the North Texas Community College Consortium (NTCCC).

The range of unique core courses in public higher education institutions was discussed. There are between 28 and 488 courses in the core curricula of different institutions. The average is 90 courses and the median is 79. There are 16 core courses shared by 75 percent or more of all Texas public higher education institutions. Core courses are not necessarily found in the same Foundational Component Area (FCA) or Component Area Option (CAO) across institutions. Most institutions have fewer, rather than more core courses.

As assessment reports are reviewed, Coordinating Board staff will also look at individual core curriculum courses to determine if a revisit of currently approved courses is warranted.

Members discussed the time necessary to undertake the endeavor. Members suggested doing such a review one or two FCA at a time.

Members asked about courses that were approved at some institutions but not at others. Reinold Cornelius explained that courses are reviewed based on each course's individual documentation, but also emphasized increased awareness of a discrepancy beginning last summer, which helped inform the core curriculum application guide to offer ideas of coherent evaluation. The guide assists current and future reviews and assists in determining which currently approved courses do not fit into the core curriculum. Reinold Cornelius gave the example of skills courses that serve skills development and not academic appreciation. Some of these type of courses, along with highly specialized courses were initially approved in 2014 (over one thousand courses were reviewed in 2014) and some in 2015, however they do not necessarily fit the definition of the assigned FCA. Lawrence Abraham suggested staff notify institutions when currently approved courses are being reviewed in order to prepare for a possible non-approval. Members discussed the equal attention given to FCA definition, core objectives, and alignment with the Academic Course Guide Manual (ACGM). Reinold Cornelius stated that he plans to post the Texas Common Course Numbering (TCCN) equivalency of courses on the Coordinating Board website of core courses to help students and advisors.

### **9. LEAP Texas Work on Undergraduate Curriculum**

Co-Chair Brett Millán, introduced Karen Mongo, Dallas County Community College District (DCCCD), and LEAP Texas Faculty Collaboratives Grant Project and she introduced Dr. Terry DiPaolo, DCCCD and LEAP Texas Hub Director. Each presenter gave an overview of the LEAP Texas website, including past, current, and future projects. Three areas of activity were discussed: 1) leveraging the newly redesigned core curriculum for the overall improvement in undergraduate education, 2) creating capacity for large-scale, inter-institutional collaboration in robust and authentic assessment, and 3) embedding high-impact practices in the undergraduate curriculum. The Faculty Collaboratives project first phase includes Texas, California, Indiana, Utah, and Wisconsin, and is sponsored by the Association of American College and Universities. LEAP Texas is leading the project with funding from the Lumina Foundation. The project is creating a state-based, faculty-led dedication of advancing reforms of curriculum to address graduation rates, student engagement and retention. LEAP Texas' faculty fellows are currently working on researching the integration of core objectives into teaching, learning, and assessment through 2016 and 2017. Members and their colleagues were invited to share their experiences working with core objectives with LEAP Texas.

### **10. Consideration of Future Work and Meeting Dates**

Meetings are now planned one year in advance on the third Friday in April and September, unless there are conflicts with holidays or professional meetings. The fall 2016 meeting will be on September 23, 2016 and the spring 2017 meeting will be on April 21, 2017.

### **11. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 2:48 p.m.