TCCAO Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, April 22, 2020
Zoom
3:00pm-5:00pm

Attending
Specific member or designated representative attendance not recorded.

Welcome
Amy Andersen, TCCAO President, called the meeting to order with glad tidings to all, and announced that this virtual meeting may be one of the largest gatherings to date.

Minutes Update
The organization started taking minutes of meetings at the October 2019 meeting; that set, taken by Chris Maynard, TCCAO Vice President, are now posted on TCCAO website. There will be no minutes for the retreat earlier this year; we will post materials provided during the retreat.

Guests/Presenter: THECB Update
Dr. Ray Martinez, Deputy Commissioner for Academic Affairs and Workforce Education, originally slated to provide a general briefing, was unable to attend; Dr. Stacey Silverman, Assistant Commissioner, Academic Quality and Workforce, instead brought greetings and good wishes from Commissioner Keller and Deputy Commissioner Martinez. Silverman provided a comprehensive update on several topics:

- Continued regular communications with institutions, different agencies, and university system offices leadership, with the goal of understanding issues thoroughly and providing answers to the institutions as timely and efficiently as possible
- Appreciation for submission of questions; directed members to FAQ website, updated daily;
- Asked all to share funding concerns for the best case for amplified support in the next legislative session, specifically recognizing or mentioning that they are focusing on: Importance and difficulty of documenting expenses, especially costs incurred in quickly to remote delivery; Increased student financial aid needs; GEAR UP Act funding to be split between Texas' secondary and post-secondary institutions ($307M)
- Described Commissioner Keller's vision for the Agency, in the light of the COVID-19 takeover...
    - To encourage innovation and flexibility now more than ever. Faculty should be the managers of their institutions' core curriculum, so institutions should be able to include specific courses in their core that recognizes, and provides coherence for students in sync with, the history and the mission of their institutions
    - To ensure efforts to build coherent transfer pathways for students moving from 2-year to 4-year institutions, done in a thoughtful and innovative way (where core + FOS = guaranteed transfer, that everyone understands), in which 2-year and 4-year institutions collaborate and develop solutions that work for Texas
- Recognized importance of SB25, especially course sequencing; staff are collaborating with Map My Path representatives on a potential plan
- Requested participation in the survey by the Governor's Office (deadline tomorrow at 5pm) to formulate the way to move forward and get Texas "back to work"

Silverman thanked the members for their time and took questions or statements (*responses italicized*).

- Please take back the message (from multiple/all members) to Dr. Keller that it is important to clarify that the rapid move to virtual classes this semester was more of an emergency remote learning than it is a high-quality learning experience.
- Regarding funding the Governor has for education, can you share priorities, rules or details? *Advocacy by the Commissioner for higher ed funding, especially in light of the last session being a public ed funding session.*
- Regarding emergency aid funding, separate from the federal relief, similar to post-Hurricane-Harvey efforts (via private coalitions) -- is that part of the CB effort? *Will take this as follow-up.*
- Regarding the [US] President's ban on immigration, what is being done to include higher education as an exemption, as with the technical arena? *Will take this back as follow-up.*
- Regarding a possible clawback on the formula funding allocated for us for the following year – is there evidence for that or is it just a rumor? *Has not heard of a clawback or reduction (today).*
- Regarding exceptions for international students to take more than one online course, is CB tracking whether these exceptions will be extended into the fall?
  - *We gave maximum flexibility in moving courses to remote delivery, and we indicated institutions do not have to report these as distance education courses at all. They are open to moving this forward to the fall, too. Will take this back for follow-up as well.*
  - So one solution would be to not list these courses as online courses in the fall?
  - *Referred to agency FAQ page that directly addresses this for the summer term, stating it could possibly move into the fall. Noted that students must be informed that a face-to-face course could be moved to remote learning, if required, by the pandemic.*
- Regarding the forthcoming CB directive for leniency on the number of Q-drops that are allowed—will the same leniency be true for excessive hours? *Have raised that as a question and are waiting to hear back (clarification that "waiting to hear back" means awaiting responses from the Governor's Office).*
- Regarding FOS curriculum, if a college uses pass/fail grades, does the senior college have to accept that as part of the curriculum?
  - *Referred members to the website FAQs, in particular their recent posting of the "8 guiding principles" from the "big 6 national associations," especially #8 ("do what's best for the student"). Will reiterate concern and question back to the workgroup.*
  - With appreciation for the "guidance," the problem is *what* is in the student's best interest? It isn't in a student's best interest to simply accept hours if their proficiency in it is such that they will not be successful in subsequent courses.
  - *Suggested approach for those students is to be aware they are going to need extra support; some programs won't accept a "pass," not even for a prerequisite course; students need to be well-advised on the potential down-the-road ramifications of selecting a "pass" (applying to graduate or medical school, certifications, licensure, etc.).*
- From the chat, Silverman was asked to share more information on Map My Path ("MMP").
  - *MMP is an online platform that allows a student to easily enter the credits they have to help figure out where their transfer pathways would lead, to understand meta-majors.*
  - Is MMP a platform an institution can opt in to, is it a for-purchase, what is the CB's role in making it available/accessible? *Will take this question/statement back.*

Discussion Item: COVID-19 Federal and State Aid

Regarding CARES Act funding to support students, what are other institutions doing?

- Spend as much of our allocation as fast as possible
- Institutions will only get more money if they spend the money what they have
- Funds cannot be used for scholarships and cannot be used toward "campus" debts
    - Students *can* use those funds to pay their tuition, but can't be compelled to do so
- Some schools are distributing funds via student ID/credit cards
    - Some schools have cards but with more limited use, cannot be used for distribution
- Student applications (through a Banner form) for specific amounts in different categories
- Discussion on potential caps; rumors of $3K payouts for students, with any tied to Title IV being the priority
    - Guidance received on caps is, if you are going to cap it, you should do so at or near the maximum Pell Grant cap would be for a student at your institution.
- Handling requests on a first come, first served basis, to avoid discriminating or prioritizing based on any criteria
- Confirmed that funds cannot be used for students who were 100% online prior to the transition
- Concerns over rapidly-changing guidance and future audits – how to get the funds to students but also protect the institution
- Caution to schools with online applications, to avoid problems over eligibility
- Funds are not to be for students registered for summer, only for students registered in spring
- Frustrations over inability to recoup expenses incurred by institutions prior to the transition date (technology, reimbursements for housing, etc.)

Discussion Item: How Institutions Will be Handling P/F Grades

Knowing we will see both letter and P/F grades for the next several years, and attempting to come up with a consistent approach to handling them, what are members doing? Do they transfer? Do they count toward degree requirements? How are you handling financial aid concerns, posting SAP, etc.?

- No P/F grades this semester—will post regular grades for all courses, agreed upon by deans and faculty alike; Accepting a "P" as a "C"-ish grade, with the awareness that some students are going to need a lot of support from tutoring, math lab, etc. (citing Calc I > Calc II example)
- Allowing students to decide on Pass/Fail internally after grades have posted.
    - For prerequisites or courses that require a C or better, a P will not count, so students are encouraged to *not* take a P; have extended same rules to transfer students
    - Some colleges won't allow P/F (Engineering, Education, etc.) for accreditation, etc.
- Some schools won't give students a choice, they will just have a P or F, so we all are going to run into difficulties at some point
- Changed the grading scale to Pass, Pass-D, No Pass, to accommodate programs for which a D is not sufficient to move forward; maintaining a list of courses ineligible for the grade adjustment
- Have heard of faculty just giving all their students As; how is that any different than a student who gets a P? Won't be able to tell if they've learned course objectives at a high level; going to give students grace this semester; come up with better guidelines for the next pandemic.

- No P/F grades this semester—will post regular grades for all courses, although unpopular with students. We felt it was important to maintain the rigor of our curriculum. We have relaxed other policies such as last date to drop a class.
- Encouraging all students making that selection to work through a Financial Aid Officer to ensure there are no significant financial aid complications. Students will have only 48 hours to decide.
- Processing using a Banner form—the day after grades are posted, students have 24 hours to request to change letter grade to P/F; then process runs overnight automatically (based on Registrar estimation of one extra day to process with graduation/financial aid checkouts).
- Students will have choice of Credit/No Credit, since with a P/F, an F counts against GPA; seems to be going over well with students; they will have a couple of days after grades post to decide; also, advising is starting this week to help provide info to students.
- DegreeWorks users, you will have to do a lot of scribing, as DW does not handle P/F or CR/NCR.
- Small-school hybrid solution: after grades are posted, students can apply for a grade substitution (a process, not a policy, not a grade change – to avoid SACS issues); the app goes to cross-campus committee, and will be used as part of the documentation for the CARES Act; want to be sure we can fully inform (and protect) the student.
- Very important to offer advising and make sure students have answers.
- Create a flow chart (decision tree) for students to help them through making that decision.
- Advisors required to sign off; in certain cases, also other offices (International Ed, Athletics, etc.); trying to ensure students see all the offices that are important to making that decision.
- Disclaimers on app: decision is irrevocable (a future re-change is not an option); no guarantee there will be no impact on ability to get into graduate or professional programs, licensure, etc.

Discussion Item: Challenges/Opportunities in Remote and Online Instruction
Reiterating again the importance of calling this what it is—an emergency transfer to remote teaching, not online or distance learning, what challenges/opportunities are members experiencing/seeing?

- Students (reported by many) and faculty (reported by a few) who did not have WiFi at home
  - Have purchased/provided loaner laptops, WiFi hot spots, web cams, etc.
- Opened computer lab for appointments; also, WiFi accessible in certain parking lots
- Future/Fall planning
  - Summer I is completely online, probably Summer II, still planning Fall
  - Planning on some hybrid courses to minimize in-person contact
  - Using larger classrooms to be able to space out
  - Possibly only attending one day of two-day (Tues-Thurs) in-person classes
  - Just starting talks, ramping up committees/task forces
  - Hard to plan with ever-changing needs, rules, challenges
  - Investigating multiple options – back to normal, entirely online, and a middle ground
- Faculty training
  - Numerous (faculty) training sessions, with a large number of first-time attendees
  - Regularly-offered "courses"; additional webinars
  - Faculty requesting follow-up training to provide more than just a recorded lecture
  - Additional training scheduled to start: virtually, in small "chunks," in some cases IT will work with a specific college or department

- For a true transition to online teaching, providing longer, in-depth training, but for an emergency prep, training faculty with 3-4 hour session – to demonstrate functions only
- Important to pair the technology with the didactic, have the teaching center work with the tech side, so the faculty learns not only how to do it, but what are the techniques that make it more effective
- Student training: many offer modules open to students anytime; not always mandatory, but may consider that change; faculty could also add to course requirements
- Mental health issues our students are facing may be exacerbated at home; hearing reports that students have no private place in their home for counseling sessions
- Online proctoring: with multiple constraints (expensive, faculty and students have to be prepared, vendor capacity issues), how are members handling increased requests?
  - Using Examity, but since students weren't prepared in advance (across the board), the departments are paying for it this semester
  - Some specialized areas have different methods: Nursing is using Zoom, etc.
  - Centralized approach is to use Respondus; decentralized approach is to allow program to decide (Proctor U, Examity, etc.)
  - Biggest challenges are the STEM fields (Engineering, etc., where students have to do derivations, etc.)
  - Recently approved Proctorio through a System contract, may be the least expensive solution ($20/student/year; paying by DL fees).
    - Would CB have funds for a statewide license?
    - *Silverman: Will take this request back; $20/student/year is reasonable cost.*

Discussion Item: Handling Challenges in Recruitment and Enrollment
- Proceeding cautiously, not reading too much into early enrollment numbers, adjusting budgets
- Students are coming to campus for orientation, but are not registering yet
- Hearing much about a switch from 4-year to 2-year institutions to save money
- Trying to register new freshman as soon as possible by prepopulating some courses, then scheduling advising appointments, to try to keep them engaged
- Worry about new international enrollments; can now send e-signed I-20s
- Seeing a lot of confusion about the CARES Act; students may not understand that funding
- Students are stating they intend to come/return, but are waiting to ensure face-to-face courses
- Hearing from Music, Dance, and other applied majors that want the opportunity to perform, or have hands-on opportunities
- Whether or not Athletics are available may also impact enrollment

Discussion Item/Report: #TeachersCan
Dr. Shonda Gibson, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, The Texas A&M University System, was originally slated to provide an update, had to this meeting early for a TEA called meeting; she asked members to visit TeachersCan.org. She will send follow-up information for distribution.

Updates and Progress Reports
1. **Treasurer's Report (Aswath)**
   Report (see below) was provided by email to members. Only two items differ from the prior report: annual retreat costs ($11,409); and advanced payment for the current meeting due to a

late cancellation ($1,344). (The hotel agreed to credit 100% of the payment for the cancelled April meeting toward our future meeting.) TCCAO is ending the current quarter with $30,047.

2. **TALA Update (Maynard)**
The second cohort of the Texas Academic Leadership Academy (started by TCCAO, facilitated by Sam Houston State University), will finish virtually. The third cohort's postponed start is now August 6-8, virtually if needed (for the kickoff and throughout the program). We have space for additional nominations; deadline to submit is extended until May 15. Cost, if completed virtually, is highly affordable ($1000 fee plus any travel). See the TCCAO website, on the TALA page. The program is designed for early career administrators–offering leadership, professional development, budget, managing personnel--training topics the average faculty member didn't have when getting their Ph.D. The nomination includes three parts: a letter of nomination by your Chief Academic Officer, and a CV and one-page form completed by the faculty nominee.

3. **Future Meeting Dates**
For the next meeting (July 22, 2020; 3:00pm-5:00pm), members agreed by consensus to meet virtually. Chris will contact the Doubletree by Hilton, Austin to request the credit extension continue until the fall meeting. An informal Zoom call will be set in May for sharing any updates.

Adjournment
The meeting adjourned at 5:00pm.

	Texas Council of Chief Academic Officers					
	Treasurer's Report					
	as of: 4/20/2020					
	Activity				**Income**	**Expense**	**Balance**
9/16/2019	**Beginning Balance (transferred from Tarleton)**					$28,570.15
1/17/2020	Membership Dues as of 4-20-2020			$450.00		$10,200.00
1/17/2019	Retreat Registrations as of 1-24-2020			$200.00		$5,250.00
1/17/2020	Misc. funds from UT Tyler account audit					$195.91
1/17/2020	Double Tree by Hilton Austin: October Meeting				$900.55	
1/22/2020	Hilton Airport Airport: January Retreat				$11,409.78	
3/18/2020	Doubletree by Hilton Austin: Cancellation April meeting				$1,344.00	
	(amount will be credited to next onsite meeting)					
1/17/2020	Credit card fees as of 2/29/2020				$513.86	
	Current Balance					$30,047.87