

**COUNCIL OF  
DIRECTORS OF STUDENT ACADEMIC SERVICES**

**MINUTES**

**July 19, 2023**

**Zoom - <https://zoom.us/j/99545430954>**

**Passcode - 321037**

**10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

In attendance: Shannon Baker, Laurie Beets, Dani Bellmer, Larry Burns, Kyndal Campbell, Aaron Christensen, Brenda Dawes, Amy Gazaway, Ebonie Hill, Nick Holmes, Randy Kitchens, James Knecht, Kayla Loper, Amber Manning-Ouellette, Amy Martindale, Marissa McIntyre, Lance Millis, Linda Millis, Jeremy Minyard, Beverly Morris, Rita Peaster, Richard Shepard, Anna Teague, Betsey Weaver, and Chris Francisco, Chair.

**1. Introduction of Associate Provost Shannon Baker – Chris Francisco**

S. Baker began her position as Associate Provost of Student Success here at OSU this week. She will be chairing DSAS starting August, 2023. Most of the DSAS members have met her or participated in her on campus interview. S. Baker is looking forward to working with everyone. She worked very closely with the advising team from her previous institution, and she is looking forward to learning all the different advisor processes at OSU. She also mentioned that she is temporarily located in 201 Whitehurst. Debbie Stump will be contacting DSAS representatives to schedule one-on-one meetings with S. Baker. DSAS members were thanked for their dedication throughout the year and especially the last six weeks through summer enrollment. C. Francisco will be transitioning to faculty issues, curriculum, RPT, policy issues, and State Regents matters while S. Baker will be focusing on student success and advising. As we are all working toward student success, there will be continued collaboration.

**2. Sense of Belonging Study – Drs. Amber Manning-Ouellette and Kayla Loper**

The Sense of Belonging Study, as explained by K. Loper and A. Manning-Ouellette, is a longitudinal study. Loper and Manning-Ouellette are hoping to give this survey via First-Year Seminar classes. The motivating theory behind this study is based on Maslow's hierarchy, focusing on the importance of students to feel they belong. Maslow's theory was based on a theory from a tribal nations in Canada called the Breath of Life Theory, which is more circular in nature, always working together.

Pilot studies in the past have revealed barriers and challenges to historically-excluded populations on the OSU campus regarding engagement. What are the barriers and why are these students not becoming engaged? Most of the reasoning came from exclusion. As a campus we need to discover what we can do for our students to thrive no matter what their background. The purpose of this study is to have a baseline of how to understand how we might engage students on campus and what does belonging look like to all of our students. Findings from this study will be available to everyone on campus.

Timeline of study will include administering the research during the fall, 2023 and spring, 2024 semesters. The interview and focus groups are voluntary, although there may be incentives to join. Strategically, this study should be administered before Homecoming in the fall semester and before spring break in the spring semester. The survey is simple to take with 54 questions taking less than 10 minutes. Questions are basic and generic, yet fun.

Four components within the survey:

- Feeling / sense of belonging
- School spirit
- Social connections at the university
- Academic focus and support

Scores can be calculated separately for the different components or a total score. IRA will conduct the survey through Slate. Manning-Ouellette and Loper are asking first-year seminar instructors and advisors to encourage students to take this survey during weeks 6 to 9 of the Fall, 2023 and Spring, 2024 semesters. A script will be provided and can be communicated verbally or electronically. This survey cannot be required, but possibly it can result in extra credit.

S. Baker expressed her support for encouraging the first-year seminar students to participate in this survey. DSAS members expressed their concern that there will be a push for students to take this survey, but the data will not be available or used to help students now. L. Burns with IRA responded that more information is needed before data can be displayed. The first year will be more of a pilot survey.

There is not a plan for first year transfer students but it could be a possibility.

### 3. OSRHE Policy Update – Chris Francisco

C. Francisco detailed the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE) recent policy revisions. Final versions have not been released to C. Francisco at this time, but OSRHE staff are hoping to distribute something by September.

- Certificates - Vice Chancellor Robert Placido approved the idea of moving existing minors to certificates and decided to introduce this move to the entire state with notification only, no approval necessary. When the policy draft was revealed, the OSRHE Policy 3.4 specified embedded certificates, micro credentials and minors, but no standalone certificates. C. Francisco explained that policy was clear about embedded certificates only. However, after approaching OSRHE about standalone certificates, the response was that all certificates would now only require notification. We will proceed with our normal process of seeking approval of certificates at Instruction Council, followed by Council of Deans, with final approval coming from the A&M Board. We will then send the certificate to OSRHE for notification via a new OSRHE form, which we have not received. The official approval date is yet to be established. Basically, policy is determined but process is still under review. Internal processes are being finalized, and C. Thrasher will be working with C. Francisco to determine forms. C. Francisco will continue to keep DSAS members updated.
- New programs - Vice Chancellor Placido would like to have new program approval completed in 2 months. He is looking for a more streamlined approach. No budget information will be required. Text boxes will be provided to explain employer demand / student demand / resources to provide this program. IRA will need the program number State Regents assign.
- Protest procedure:
  - Currently - LOI is submitted with 45 days to request copy of proposal. If you don't request a copy of the proposal you cannot protest it. If you do request a copy you will receive it after 45 days and you have 30 days to protest
  - New Process –
    - LOI – all institutions will receive the LOI with the opportunity for anyone to protest within 14 days. OSRHE would like to see institutions working through objections within 30 days. If the proposing institution does not respond, OSRHE will intervene.
    - Proposal - all institutions will receive the full proposal with another opportunity for anyone to protest within 14 days. Once again, OSRHE would like to see institutions working through objections within 30 days. There may be a need to go to OSRHE for settlement.
- No external reviews will be required for doctoral programs
- Program modification requiring approval
  - Changing name of degree / program
  - Changing type of degree
  - Degree deletion
- All other program modifications require notification only
  - Non-substantive changes - all non-substantive changes will need to go through the Oklahoma A&M Board of Regents approval followed by addition to Curriculum Inventory Management (CIM)

program. The philosophy of OSRHE is once the existence of the program is approved, institutes are experts on what needs to be adjusted to deliver a quality program. Internal procedures are currently under review.

**K. Other**

- a. C. Francisco thanked everyone who assisted with the very successful orientation and enrollment program this summer.
- b. C. Francisco welcomed Dr. Dani Bellmer as the Ferguson College of Agriculture DSAS representative.
- c. Pandemic Response Team met in May, and the decision was made to remove the COVID language from most of our documentation across campus. The COVID statement on the Fall syllabus reads, "Faculty are expected to treat a positive COVID test result as appropriate documentation for an excused absence and are encouraged to remain flexible for students who need to miss class for other COVID-related issues (e.g., member of household instructed to isolate)." We are anticipating a normal semester.
- d. Academic Affairs is relocating into temporary space for approximately six months. We will be located in 106A and 106B Whitehurst. Phone numbers will be disconnected for a brief period of time. The 101 suite will be renovated this fall to create additional space for a growing number of administrators.
- e. C. Francisco expressed his pleasure in working with DSAS during this last year. He commended DSAS members that this is the group that gets things done, always finding solutions to the problems we face.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:17am

Minutes were recorded by K. Campbell