Academic Steering Committee Minutes
March 4th, 1:30 pm
General Academic Building Conference Room

*Action Items are noted below in red

1. **Plus/Minus Grading System:** Dr. Roach asked Dr. Smith to chair a sub-committee to take a look at the plus/minus system and bring it back to the committee with a recommendation.

2. **Textbook Policy:** Dr. Roach stated that he would take a proactive approach and take the discussed textbook policy to Chancellor and the Senior Vice Chancellors and then to the Cabinet.

3. **Dual Enrollment:** Dr. Roach asked Lance Tatum to meet with him regarding the details of implementing this recommendation.

4. **Commencement Prayers:** Dr. Roach asked Ray White to meet with him and Mr. Nick Cervera regarding this subject.


Absent: Vickie Miles, Earl Ingram

Guests: Rex Snider, Herb Reeves, Scout Blum

I. **Approval of Minutes from February 19th meeting – Dr. Ed Roach**
   - The minutes were approved as presented. Dr. Jeffrey motioned to approve and Dr. Barron seconded.

II. **Opening Comments**
   - Dr. Roach mentioned that there are still pending items from the previous steering committee meetings. In the future, pending action items from the meetings will be sent out immediately with the minutes to follow later.
   - Dr. Roach mentioned the need to respond on previous action items. He mentioned the need for Dr. Ingram to respond to the faculty council regarding the BlackBoard training issue. Also, he mentioned that the issue of the location of official transcripts had been resolved with HR.
• Dr. Roach also requested that the deans update him on their CRC postmortems which need to be completed before the URC postmortem can take place. He also requested that the deans’ pick up the promotion and tenure portfolios from his office.
• Dr. Roach told the committee that he would not sign any blanket certifications.
• Also, he stated that everyone’s input was needed for the list of Leadership retreat attendees.

III. SACS Update
• Dr. Dew distributed a handout (Handout A) to group with the schedule of progress. He stated that there is a need to pay particular attention to the faculty rosters. Also, as part of this process the Institutional Effectiveness Committee will be reviewing the formatting for annual achievement reports. He reported that there will be a Substantive Change workshop on March 31st at Columbus State University which TROY representatives will attend. TROY has offered to host a workshop for SACS in the fall. Dr. Dew stated that they are reviewing the 2nd drafts for the SACS report and hope to reach 25% shortly. In March, IRPE will begin the audit of faculty files.

IV. Plus and Minus Grading Presentation
• Dr. Scout Blum, representing the Faculty Council, presented the idea of plus and minus grading to the committee. She stated that the Faculty Council had passed a resolution to adopt the move to plus and minus grading. The perceived advantages were increased effort (student would strive to reach a B instead of a B- where as before an A would have been unattainable), a decrease in differences among students and an increase in fairness and more breakpoints in the grading process. Dr. Roach questioned how this issue passed the faculty council. Dr. Blum responded that it passed with a high percentage but there was some dissent. Dr. Barron questioned the positive effects relative to the negative effects. She expressed concern over the increased number of graduate students who would be dropped from program. Dr. Jeffrey questioned the cost to implement a new system in DATATEL. Dr. Blum stated that IT had indicated that the capability was already within the system. Dr. Roach questioned where TROY is in relation to other Alabama schools on this issue. Dr. Blum stated that only 3 of 16 Alabama schools offer plus and minus grading. Dr. Roach stated that there needs to be information on the DATATEL implications of this proposal. Dr. Barron stated that many graduate students would have to pick up additional hours to reach the requirements for graduation if this goes into effect. The question of an increase in grade appeals was raised. Dr. Blum stated that there had been no increases. Dr. Richardson stated that that only takes into account formal grade appeals and doesn’t take into account “informal” grade appeals. Dr. Roach asked Dr. Smith to chair the review of plus and minus grading and bring it back to the committee with a recommendation.

V. Decision Items
• **Textbook Policy** – Dr. Roach stated that we are not dealing with the policy as much as the coordination of the policy. Dr. Fulmer stated that we have (1) a policy, (2) a process within each college for selection and (3) an effort to put academic leaders together with the bookstore staff. Dr. Fulmer stated that this is an effort to formalize the processes used for communication on a regular basis. (HANDOUT B) Dr. Barron motioned to approve, Dr. Jeffrey seconded. The motion passed will all in favor. **Dr. Roach stated that he would take a proactive approach and take the discussed textbook policy to Chancellor and the Senior Vice Chancellors and then to the Cabinet.**

• **Dual Enrollment** – Dr. Tatum stated that he had been working with the ACCESS Director, Ms. Reba Davis to offer dual enrollment beginning Summer 2008 to 13 counties in southeast Alabama. This would be open to high school juniors and seniors in those areas. These individuals would have to meet the same standards as other applications and would pay the same tuition and fees. These courses have to be taught in interactive classrooms; on the Troy campus, the Wallace Hall classrooms will be used. Specific coursework in the College of Arts & Sciences (English and History) and the Sorrell College of Business (Economics) will be the initial offerings for students with the College of Education (Psychology) and the College of Communication and Fine Arts (Mandarin Chinese and Speech) to follow. A March 20th meeting will be held to finalize the summer offerings and a meeting on April 16th will be held to finalize the fall offerings. Dr. Tatum stated that he had spoken with Ms. Vickie Miles and it was possible to code these students specifically as dual enrollment and to cross list them by high school. Dr. Roach questioned the positives and negatives associated with this effort. Dr. Tatum responded that it allows TROY to recruit high school students and allows the students to earn college credit. On the negatives, the expense of the courses may be cost prohibitive for some students since they likely will not qualify for financial aid and there are a limited number of appropriate facilities on campus. A question was raise as to how this would affect AP courses. Dr. Tatum stated that AP courses are not true dual enrollment. The students would have a registration cut date which would allow TROY students to fill the empty seats. Dr. Jeffrey motioned for approval and Dr. Richardson seconded. The motion passed will all approved. **Dr. Roach asked Lance Tatum to meet with him regarding the details of implementing this recommendation.**

VI. **Briefing on AGSC/STARS**

• Keith Sessions presented information to the committee on AGSC/STARS and how this can be this information is used by prospective students. He informed the committee that these students tend to graduate at a higher rate. Mr. Sessions stated that he would be happy to speak with any groups to help inform them about the articulation process. He gave everyone a handout (HANDOUT C) with information regarding the program.

VII. **Discussion**
• **Commencement Prayers** – Ray White mentioned the issue of how to deal with commencement prayers. It was mentioned that one way to deal with this was for prayer to be student initiated. Mr. Herb Reeves mentioned that the SGA had a standing resolution requesting prayer for events held on campus. **Dr. Roach asked Ray to meet with himself and Mr. Nick Cervera regarding this issue.**

VIII. **Other**

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.