

## BSLAS COORDINATING COMMITTEE

April 1, 2021

### Meeting Notes

Zoom meeting – 2:00 p.m.

#### Attending

Randy Prus	Lei Qian
Charles Matthews	Amy Gantt
Rachel Callicoat	Susan Hodson, ex officio
Carolyn Fridley, ex officio	Marlin Blankenship, ex officio

#### Not attending

Maribeth Nottingham  
Alicia Wallace  
Tara Hembrough

1. **Call to order.** The meeting was called to order at 2:03 p.m. by Randy Prus, BSLAS-CC Chair.
2. **Approval of minutes.** Charles Matthews made the motion to approve the minutes from February 22, 2021, seconded by Lei Qian. With corrections, the minutes were [approved](#) 4 yea, 0 nay, 1 abstention.
3. **Program Review. Action since last Committee meeting (2-22-2021), reported by Randy Prus.**
  - Contacted Rachel Toews (Registrar) to add Group 7, Tribal Organizational Leadership, as an option for a major on Colleague (important for transcripts, graduation applications and submission of major clearance letters).
  - Contacted Jennifer Swearingen (Institutional Research & Records) to update the Academic Catalog (specifically page 78, “Liberal & Applied Studies”). Once summer and spring courses have been entered into Colleague, updates to the Academic Catalog will be addressed.
  - Contacted Brad Ludrick (Associate V. P. for Tribal Relations & Academic Affairs) regarding the current Program Review process (in light of delays created by the COVID-19 pandemic). Randy Prus received no reply from Brad Ludrick, however he received information from Teresa Golden (Vice President for Academic Affairs) regarding the process. Randy Prus’s e-mail to Teresa Golden noted the unusual characteristics of the BSLAS Program: “...data that typically go into Program Reviews isn’t particularly relevant, such as faculty qualifications, facilities, and budget.” Teresa Golden replied that “since it [BSLAS] is housed in your department your departmental finances may still be relevant.” The e-mail continued, reporting that Teresa Golden is looking for an outside reviewer, and student data is needed from (dependent on) Colleague. She advised that the Committee, “attempt to proceed sooner rather than delaying.”

Randy Prus added that if we are able to get budget data it can be added because it will support the recommendation. Charles Matthews said that if we believe the Program Review is ready to be submitted then he supports submitting it. His impression from the Chair’s meeting (held the previous day), is that there may be legal reasons for including data (that we currently do not have access to). Randy Prus thinks the report should be submitted now, and if administration wants to delay it until next year when data is available, it will be the same report. Charles Matthews noted that there is certain data required, and if we don’t have access to it then we may need to delay the official submission. Randy Prus said the report will be submitted to Teresa Golden, and if it comes back, it comes back. All that is needed to submit the report is for the Committee to accept the recommendations.

4. **Discussion about recommendations:** Charles Matthews has questions about the recommendations and acknowledges the effort involved in making requests that will benefit the program.
  - Question: A recommendation is to hire a full-time instructor with a 6-hour course load and 6-hour re-assign time?

Discussion: Instructor rank and the department-specific responsibilities for instructors.

- Question: Do we envision this instructor to do scholarly activity and service. Carolyn Fridley added that as instructor, she is responsible for teaching, scholarship, and service.
- Question: Carolyn Fridley has re-assign time for advising and Coordinator responsibilities. With the same course load and re-assign time, would the new position be tantamount to a full-time advisor? Randy Prus stated that the

distinction is that the new position would be classified as faculty. Carolyn Fridley added that she is interested in hiring another faculty advisor.

- Question: Would Carolyn Fridley's re-assign time and teaching load remain the same? (Yes.)
- Question: Is a portion of the re-assign time for advising and a portion for Coordinator responsibilities? (Yes.)

Discussion: Charles Matthews said that if half of the new instructor's re-assign time is spent advising, and half of Carolyn Fridley's re-assign time is spent advising, it would be the equivalent of a full-time advisor. Randy Prus noted that there are currently 94 advisees, and they are all idiosyncratic. Charles Matthews contends that it would be an excellent point to make in the recommendation; the BSLAS is not "cookie cutter" advising. Each BSLAS student requires a lot of time to advise. Charles Matthews voiced his approval for including this point in the recommendation and favors including as many specific reasons as possible to support a new instructor position. The time required to advise each student might shine some light on why re-assign time is needed for this new position.

Carolyn Fridley asked Susan Hodson to estimate the amount of time needed to advise a BSLAS student. Carolyn Fridley added that in her experience it has taken hours to advise one BSLAS student, when there are multiple institutions, spanning decades, course equivalencies, etc. (as an extreme example). Susan Hodson said that assigning a number for the time commitment is difficult. The initial contact for a "simple" case (uncomplicated) would involve a minimum of two hours and can extend well beyond that. For a student with issues involving academic forgiveness, academic renewal application, financial aid, the time commitment can be eight to ten hours - for one student. BSLAS students are not the thirty minute incoming freshman advisees. Charles Matthews suggested that it may be beneficial to look at the next dozen BSLAS students and record how much time is required for those dozen students and multiply that number by seven (to reflect the total number of current advisees).

Marlin Blankenship offered his approach to writing a job description for advisors that includes three pieces: (1) onboarding (2) enrollment (3) concierge (e.g. financial aid). Advising is all of that. Approximately 45 additional minutes would be needed to explain a BSLAS degree, the process of enrollment, and register the student for classes. There are often additional questions, i.e. paying for school, requesting transcripts, etc. that could take days to address. Maybe it would be helpful to think about all the pieces involved in advising.

Carolyn Fridley suggested a fourth advising piece, that of mentor/cheerleader. She noted that this population requires a significant amount of time to support, encourage and explain the lexicon of higher education since many BSLAS students are re-navigating higher education after an absence of many years. Once registered for classes, many are insecure, and need reassurance (again and again) that they can be successful. This population needs extra time. Charles Matthews believes that the core of this discussion needs to go in the recommendation to justify re-assign time for the new position. Randy Prus agreed and added that the recommendation needs to include the number of hours required to advise.

Charles Matthews suggested that the job description for the instructor position explicitly state the requirement for service and scholarship. Randy Prus noted that scholarship and service are pathways for tenure, for which instructors are not eligible, so without the hope of tenure, the requirement does not make sense.

Referring to the time commitment required for BSLAS advising, Susan Hodson added that advising involves more than following a degree plan and enrolling for classes. Advising this population is a commitment from the point of first contact until degree completion – the entire process. Carolyn Fridley agreed.

- Question: What courses would the new instructor teach?

Discussion: Randy Prus said that ideally, courses would be taught in EHL, but the new instructor could be assigned to teach in any department. Experience with the BSLAS and advising would be preferred. Charles Matthews noted that this is not clear in the recommendation and should be explicitly stated. He added that it is important to keep the recommendation brief but detailed and expand the rationale.

**5. Moving forward with the Program Review.** Randy Prus noted that the additions to the recommendations are to include the time commitment involved in advising, the courses to be taught, with requirements to include experience teaching a discipline relevant to BSLAS – perhaps Applied Behavioral Sciences (the Group with the largest number of graduates). He

asked Marlin Blankenship to submit his approach to writing a job description and add mentoring/cheerleading. Randy Prus asked Carolyn Fridley and Susan Hodson to keep records on the time commitment required for next dozen BSLAS students (six each). Randy Prus recalled that Carolyn Fridley has kept an advising/BSLAS Coordinator log. Carolyn Fridley confirmed the log, explaining that since she was the first Coordinator, there was no one to ask about the details of the position, so she kept the log for two years. Rachel Callicoat suggested that a longitudinal examination of the log could be done so the numbers would not be compared with others and to consider if they are representative of the current experience in time commitment. Charles Matthews added that if timeframes are included in the log (rather than simply student names) the time spent advising an individual student could be extrapolated from that information.

Randy Prus said that revisions could be completed by the week of April 19<sup>th</sup>. At the last meeting of the semester – or by e-mail – the Committee will vote on the Faculty Senate report (Randy Prus will write) and on the Program Review.

- Question: Regarding the time commitment required for BSLAS advising, should input from Site Coordinators be included?

Discussion: Charles Matthews said that the data from the Sites may be different from Durant. Marlin Blankenship suggested contacting Jeni Maple (Director of Online & Distance Advising Center) for input on the time commitment required for BSLAS advising. The online students acquired through Academic Partnerships are Durant students but may be more time consuming than local students, and he suggested that we error on the side of more time. Charles Matthews endorsed local (Durant) data because it would more closely model what the new instructor would be doing.

**6. Additional items for consideration.** Prior to the motion to adjourn, Carolyn Fridley asked Marlin Blankenship to share the flier that had been developed to advertise Group 7. Marlin Blankenship noted that Lauren Rowland (Director, Native American Institute) and Morgan Browne (Secretary, Center for Student Success) assisted in the creation of the flier. The flier is currently being used in the employee lounge at the Choctaw Casino, as a 30 second screen scroll.

Marlin Blankenship reported that he had been asked to put together a 2 + 2 program for Oklahoma's Tribal Colleges, pairing an Associate Degree in Native American Studies with Southeastern's BSLAS with an emphasis in Tribal Organizational Leadership. The goal is to create a pathway for Native people at the Tribal Colleges to complete their bachelor's degree to help with job placement and/or advance in the organization. He will keep the Committee updated.

Carolyn Fridley was contacted with a (first-time) question about whether a student can double major (with one of the two majors) in Liberal & Applied Studies. Charles Matthews responded that it is inappropriate to add Liberal & Applied Studies as a second major. He suggested that if a student wants another degree, then it should be a master's degree rather than a second bachelor's. Just because something is possible (e.g. two or three associate degrees) does not make it a good idea.

**7. Adjourn.** Charles Matthews made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Rachel Callicoat. Motion was approved by acclamation, and the meeting was adjourned at 3:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Carolyn Fridley