

ACADEMIC SENATE REPORT

Tuesday, February 11, 2025

Blackboard Ultra

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Ms. Beth Dunn called the meeting to order at **2:31p.m.**

II. Members Present:

Frank Alvino, Heather, Amwoza, Mary-Casey Incardone, John Cody, Elizabeth Collins, Rob Connor, Beth Dunn, Rebecca Fournier, Joyce, Fritz, Ruth Hallongren, Saadia Khan, Gail Krahenbuhl, Larry Manno, Selma Mehmedagic, Jacqueline Mullany, Julianne Murphy, Salvatore, Siriano, Calvin Washington II

Ex-Officio Members: Jeanette Bartley, Susan Campos, Paul Jensen, Joe Klinger

Non-Voting Members: Hilary Meyer

Guests: Gregg Beglau, Michael Crenshaw, Purva DeVol, Panos Hadjimitsos, Lisa Huff, Denise Jones, Brenda Jones Watkins, Justyna Kohtz, Jodi Koslow Martin, Shekinah Lawrence, Jason Lemberg, Mel Loucks, Daniele Manni, Mary-Rita Moore, Troy Moran, Ty Perkins, Melissa Ramirez-Cooper, Angela Staunton, Kurian Tharakunnel, Shelley Tiwari

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Beth Dunn asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the **December 10, 2024**, Academic Senate meeting. Mr. Larry Manno, made a motion to approve, seconded by Ms. Selma Mehmedagic. Motion carried.

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. **College Curriculum:** Dr. Julianne Murphy stated that the Committee met on February 6.

New Curriculum:

A new program, *Electric Vehicle Charger Installation and Maintenance* (16-17 credit hours), effective fall 2025, was introduced with six courses listed.

New Courses: Two new courses were proposed for fall 2025:

- **PSY 203:** Psychology of Religion
- **PSY 204:** AI and Human Behavior

Revisions:

- **AUTO 112:** Introduction to Automotive Technology and **AUTO 230:** Computerized Engine Controls had updates to course descriptions, learning outcomes, topics, and instructional strategies.
- **C 317E:** Diagnostic Medical Sonography Certificate had revisions in prerequisites and changes to course placements within the curriculum.

ACADEMIC SENATE REPORT

Dr. Julianne also shared:

The deadline for submissions was yesterday, with two more meetings before the April meeting, and March 10 is the next deadline.

Faculty members and deans were reminded to review their department's IAI courses. A detailed syllabus and topical outline with learning outcomes are required for these courses. The committee shared IAI guidelines and a syllabus template.

The IAI website was shown, and the link will be posted on the Blackboard curriculum shell for members to access course descriptors and check if their courses align with IAI course requirements.

Dr. Julianne Murphy stated the most common reason IAI courses are sent back to the college is due to an insufficient syllabus, specifically lacking a detailed topical outline, contact hours, and learning outcomes. The syllabus needs to align with IAI course standards. PowerPoint presentations with this information are posted on the Blackboard curriculum shell, and anyone without access can email for it.

*Ms. Joyce Fritz motion to approve curriculum and seconded by Ms. Selma Mehmedagic.
Motion carried.*

- B. **Academic & Scholastic Standards:** No report.
- C. **Student Development:** Ms. Mary-Casey Incardone stated the committee will meet on February 14 at 1 p.m. on Blackboard. If interested please email marycaseyincardone@triton.edu for the link.
- D. **Academic Support:** Ms. Leslie Wester reported on behalf of Mr. Christopher Clem that the committee will meet on Thursday, February 13 at noon on Blackboard.
- E. **Campus Quality:** Ms. Jacqueline Mullany shared that the committee will meet on February 19 at 3 p.m.
- F. **Professional Development:** Ms Gail Krahenbuhl shared the meeting held on the last Thursday of December focused on reviewing survey results and discussing the future direction of the committee's work. A major topic was shaping faculty-centered professional development, considering the current climate and the committee's potential impact. The group also reflected on past professional development efforts, particularly around budget and speaker bookings, with ongoing discussions with administrators. Additionally, they are working on handling outstanding faculty nominations, though the process is still being figured out as its new and involves a lot of learning. The committee is committed to getting it done despite these challenges.
- G. **Assessment:** Mr. Larry Manno shared that the committee met on Thursday, January 23 focused on planning Assessment Day 2025, which will take place on Friday, April 11, from 8:30 AM to 2:00 PM. The event will feature a main presentation, four breakout sessions, and provide breakfast and lunch. Afterward, assessment committee members will assist faculty with using Watermark, entering data, and creating action plans. A formal agenda will be shared after the February meeting, and registration will open shortly thereafter.

ACADEMIC SENATE REPORT

The General Education Outcomes Subcommittee is working on a rubric for this year's critical thinking assessment. Once finalized, a committee representative will provide assessment information to relevant faculty and chairs.

The updated assessment committee website now includes new structure details, an updated handbook, and a presentation on new procedures. Upcoming dates to note:

1. February 13: A virtual training on Watermark from 9:00-10:30 AM for faculty to learn about course and program-level assessments. The session will be recorded for later viewing.
2. March 15: Deadline for submitting assessment reports.

For help with completing reports, faculty can reach out via email for assistance.

H. Online Education and Technology: Ms. Saadia Khan shared that the OETC meeting on January 31 covered several key updates. The committee approved the updated rubric for hybrid and online courses, as well as an updated, streamlined Course Approval Form for easier signature collection and completion of requirements by developers. A waiver request from one of the agents was also approved. Additionally, the committee discussed the U.S. Department of Justice accessibility guidelines, which require public institutions, including Triton, to be ADA compliant by April 21, 2026. Strategies for achieving this compliance were discussed with Mr. Humberto Espino and Ms. Dominique Dial.

V. Operational Assembly: Ms. Hilary Meyer stated the committee met on Monday, February 10 reported from the following committees:

- **Guided Pathways:** Guest speaker Ms. Lorena Gasca presented on how Career Services is aligning with Guided Pathways by shifting to a co-curricular model with pillars: Get Ready, Gain Experience, and Go Professionally. They are focusing on career exploration earlier with students, helping them select classes in collaboration with advising to meet their career goals, whether for transfer or direct employment. The program is moving from a four-semester checklist to a more flexible career plan. Two new reports are available on the portal: the Fall 2024 Course Success report and the Annual Report on Town Demographics.
- **Student Affairs:** The department has moved to event tracking via CRM Advise to promote and track student attendance at activities. They also celebrated exceeding enrollment goals, hitting 12,501 students for Spring. Financial Aid Awareness Month is underway with workshops and preparation for the 2025-2026 academic year. Various student events are ongoing, including Black History Month as well as legacy to LLC celebrating the journey of black entrepreneurs and a youth leadership conference. The Testing Center started off site testing for early college placement testing and the Transfer Center hosting three big events connected to our University of Illinois Partners. Advising has a new streamlined webpage be sure to check out the latest update.
- **Business and Facilities:** The W2's have been mailed out. New bleachers and HVAC lab construction are underway. Roof guard projects are in progress to comply with OSHA regulations. Cosmetology lab renovations are also in progress. In about four weeks, there will be additional window replacements, depending on the electric vehicle program's needs at the lab. Also, a new EV charger will be installed in the M building through a grant for electric vehicles.

ACADEMIC SENATE REPORT

The Communications area is celebrating the 50th anniversary of the campus radio station WRRG and working on promotional videos for new programming and eight-week courses. They have finalized the summer credit schedule and are preparing the summer continuing education guide. The community publication, *Connect*, has been sent out, and the summer credit schedule is being finalized. Additionally, the summer continuing education guide will be released in March. Personnel budgets will be verified in March and communications will be sent to the Cost Center Managers.

- **Human Resources:** Statements of economic interest will be emailed at the end of February, early March. If it applies to you, make sure to complete it by the May deadline to avoid a fine. Additionally, in-service scheduling is being arranged for mid-managers, classified, and non-bargaining employees.
- **DEI:** The DEI has several Black History Month events planned, including those that have already taken place, like the basketball game kickoff. Upcoming events include a freedom quilt and squares on February 20, a presentation on Black architects by adjunct Michael Rogers in collaboration with the library, and movies every Thursday hosted by the library in celebration of Black History Month. For more details, check the webpage.
- **Old Business:** The operational assembly goal of automating degree completion work is ongoing, and monthly meetings continue to ensure that all students earning degrees receive them, even if they don't apply. In Summer 2024, 428 students graduated, up from 250 the previous year, showing significant progress. Fall 2024 graduates reached 556, compared to 471 in Fall 2023, indicating continued improvement. The focus now is on May's graduation numbers. While automation is helping, students are still encouraged to apply for graduation to ensure all coursework is properly recognized.
- The next Operational Assembly meeting will be on March 10.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Announcements:

Ms. Beth Dunn reminded everyone to display their full names on the Blackboard site for easier attendance tracking. The new Blackboard site was welcomed, and members were also informed that the Senate bylaws on the website need updating, with efforts underway to revise the PDF version.

Ms. Beth Dunn announced that all Senate seats are filled except for one representative from classified staff and mid-managers. She encouraged anyone who knows someone interested in these non-voting positions to send their names to her for consideration, emphasizing the importance of full representation from everyone on campus. Mr. Jason Lemberg volunteered for the position.

The next Academic Senate meeting will be on **Tuesday, March 11 at 2:30 PM** via the **new Collaborate Ultra link**. There was a mention that some people had the wrong link, and the correct one will be updated on the website. If attending via Blackboard, be sure to look for the new Academic Senate site with "Ultra" in the name. For any issues, contact Ms. Beth Dunn.

ACADEMIC SENATE REPORT

Mid-year Strategic Plan Progress Presentation

Dr. Purva DeVol shared that Ms. Colleen Rockafellow will discuss Goal 2 and Goal 3 will be discussed by AVP Paul Jensen and Ms. Hilary Meyer.

Ms. Colleen Rockafellow, Associate Vice President of Business Operations, provided an update on **Goal 2 Action Plan**, which aims to cultivate a diverse, equitable, and inclusive work environment that supports employee engagement. The action plan focuses on strengthening cross-departmental communication and fostering collaboration. The team has made progress with key initiatives:

1. **Authentic Triton:** A series of events designed to build community across departments, with good participation numbers.
2. **Onboarding Process:** Efforts to streamline onboarding and provide employees with an Employee Resource Guide to better understand campus processes and procedures. This guide is now active on the employee portal.
3. **Campus-wide Exploration:** Engaging staff in conversations about how to share trends and information in higher education, with meetings held across campus to gather input.

The team has worked consistently, meeting monthly and achieving progress toward the KPIs. Future goals include continuing to meet these targets, evaluating progress, and finding ways to share current trends and information more effectively across the campus. Ms. Colleen encouraged others to reach out with ideas on how to improve staff education on higher education trends.

Dr. Purva DeVol shared **Action Plan 2** focuses on fostering a diverse, equitable, and inclusive work environment to support employee engagement and student success. It aligns with Illinois' state mandate requiring community colleges and public universities to submit an annual equity plan. This plan involves data-driven practices and programs, with a focus on reviewing data collection methods to ensure consistency and alignment with institutional standards.

Key developments include:

- **Equity Plan Framework:** A committee of 17 faculty, staff, and administrators has been working on advancing the equity plan.
- **Employee Engagement Survey:** In alignment with the Illinois Equity Plan, an employee engagement survey will be launched from March 3 to 28, administered by the external company Great Colleges to Work For. The survey aims to gather data for equity and climate initiatives.
- **Survey Communication:** Survey invitations will come directly from the external company, not internal communications. Results will be available by the end of the summer.

Dr. DeVol encourages participation in the confidential survey to help shape future initiatives and enhance campus climate.

Ms. Hilary Meyer shared **Goal 3 Action Plan** stating that Dr. Jodi Koslow Martin is the Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs at Triton College. She is also the cabinet champion for the strategic efforts surrounding neurodiversity, where she plays a pivotal role in fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment for neurodivergent students. Dr. Koslow Martin is involved in initiatives aimed at helping students with neurodivergent conditions like autism and ADHD, ensuring that they receive the support and resources necessary to succeed in both their academic and professional lives.

Key points:

ACADEMIC SENATE REPORT

- **Why neurodiversity matters:** One in four adults has a disability, many of which are invisible, such as neurodivergence. There is a significant gap between the number of neurodivergent students who could benefit from services and those who are currently receiving accommodations.
- **Current statistics:** As of fall, only 360 students out of 10,000 are "CAAS connected" (receiving accommodations). This highlights the need for inclusive practices, even for students who don't formally qualify for accommodations.
- **Plan for neurodivergent students:** Triton aims to become an institution of choice for neurodivergent learners, with a focus on creating inclusive transfer programs, supporting families, and ensuring campus-wide inclusivity. The library has been identified as a key hub for neuroinclusive efforts.
- **New initiatives:** Triton is applying for an autism-inclusive campus designation through the College Autism Network, offering academic coaching in the library for building executive functioning skills, and planning neuroinclusive transfer center programming.
- **Call to action:** The committee seeks feedback from faculty on how to connect soft skills like executive functioning to course and job success, highlighting their relevance to students.

The goal is to ensure that neurodivergent students can thrive both academically and in their future careers.

AVP Paul Jensen discussed the progress of **Goal 3 Action Plan**, which focuses on strengthening community relationships and preparing students for the workforce. Focusing specifically on supporting adult students in accelerating credentialing and workforce advancement, especially as more students return to college to advance their careers.

Key initiatives include:

1. **Crosswalk of competencies:** Mapping professional certifications to college courses using the American Council on Education's recommendations, allowing students to earn credit for certifications (even if ungraded).
2. **Competency-based education (CBE):** Offering flexibility for students to leverage their existing skills and knowledge, improving retention and completion rates.
3. **Prior Learning Assessment (PLA):** Enhancing formal processes for students to earn credit based on prior learning, such as through proficiency exams and portfolio assessments.

The team is also engaging employers to understand their experiences with students balancing work and education, and is compiling this feedback through Career Services. The college has created a webpage to support working adults, providing information on programs, FAQs, and courses.

AVP Jensen emphasized the need for effective marketing to inform students about these opportunities. He asked for suggestions on how to improve outreach and ensure students know about prior learning assessment. The initiative is moving forward, with further updates and implementations expected in the coming months.

ACADEMIC SENATE REPORT

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion adjourned by Mr. John Cody and seconded by Ms. Selma Mehmedagic. Motion carried.
Ms. Beth Dunn adjourned the meeting at **3:40 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted by:

Casandra Ramirez

Casandra Ramirez

Minutes approved:

Beth Dunn

Beth A. Dunn