

INSTRUCTION COUNCIL

Minutes

Thursday, June 18, 2026

126 ITLE or Zoom

<https://okstate-edu.zoom.us/j/93408932681?pwd=k7XfZJyUQZIDaBosY89x45j3PHDFfs.1>

Meeting ID: 934 0893 2681

Passcode: 097849

9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

In attendance: Chris Francisco, Rita Peaster, Marissa McIntyre, Jamie Fullerton, Rich Frohock, Ty Hawkins, Craig Freeman, Rebecca Sheehan, Shannon Baker, Chris Ormsbee, Larry Burns, Kaitlynn Holcomb, Laurie Beets, Aaron Christensen, James Knecht, Ronna Vanderslice, Darius Prier, Carisa Ramming, Jennifer Rudd, Cynda Clary, Diane Jones, Candace Thrasher

Meeting was called to order at 9:04am

1. Discussion on retention efforts – Chris Francisco

Baker provided an overview of the new structure for the Office of Student Success (OSS). The new structure offers a three-pronged approach: Student Success Architecture and Governance, Academic Advising Oversight and Coordination, and Programmatic Support for Students. Programmatic support includes Academic Reboot, Pre-Professional Advising, LASSO, Supplemental Instruction, and Exploratory Advising. There will be four groups to support student advising, retention, and persistence. 1) Student Success Persistence Council, chaired by Baker and Brent Marsh, will monitor retention and persistence, provide just-in-time intervention, and focus on the bigger picture items. This group will also decide what will go into the retention report. 2) University Advising Council replaced the small DSAS group. Membership will include college DSAS representatives, Honors College, Athletics, and OSS leadership. 3) Student Success Action Committee will be chaired by Nick Holmes. This group will focus on implementation and the how-to of priorities and initiatives developed by the Student Success Persistence Council and the University Advising Council. This structure separates out the decision-making process and will bring together a broad group of people. 4) Student Success Forum replaces the big DSAS group and will meet once per semester. OSS will focus on coordinating efforts around retention and persistence, onboarding new advisors, and assessment. The new structure will allow more ability to track progress for initiatives and goals.

Prier asked if there is a rubric for how instructors should be involved with students who are disengaged? Baker stated that the Student Success Persistence Committee could discuss instructor involvement and bring a proposal to Instruction Council. A small group from the Student Success Persistence Committee will begin meeting in July to prepare for the beginning of the semester. The first meeting of the Student Success Persistence Committee will be the week before school starts to begin identifying students who may be at-risk. Last year, most of this responsibility fell to RAs in housing.

Clary shared a concern that there are college-wide meetings scheduled the week before classes begin, and there could be a scheduling conflict for individuals serving on the Student Success Persistence Council. Baker responded that Audrey Pinion will reach out about the meeting date and time. Baker encouraged Associate Deans to ensure that individuals serving on the Student Success Persistence Council are excused from college events to attend the meeting. Baker will provide electronic copies of the handouts to Thrasher, who will disseminate them to the Listserv.

Francisco shared that we want instructors to provide information about student engagement in their courses. He encouraged Associate Deans to remind instructors about academic alerts and to submit alerts about non-attendance early in the semester.

Burns reported that retention is down 1.5% across all cohorts. The first-year cohort is down an additional 1.5%. This decline in enrollment brings about budgetary concerns. Retention data has been examined and an exact trend has not been noted. Baker shared that the largest decline is in students between their third and fourth year, but there is also a significant decline in students between their second and third year. Baker has met with Chad Blew and Robert Raab about the disbursement of retention grants. Scholarships and Financial Aid is primarily focusing on students transitioning from their first to second year. Baker requested that every advisor set aside 4 hours per week for current students during Orientation and Enrollment. Baker also said that advisors should open calendar availability for current students between the end of Orientation and Enrollment and the beginning of the semester.

Francisco reported that we are down about 6% in orientation registrations from last year. We have a lot more concurrent students for fall – nearly 700. However, concurrent revenue does not replace the decline in enrollment. Burns stated that OU is reporting their first-year cohort is up 1000 students, and they are expecting a freshman class of 7000.

2. Strategic priorities – Chris Francisco

Francisco shared that the OSU/A&M Board of Regents approved the strategic plan last week, and President Hess sent out the strategic plan to the campus on Monday. Francisco pointed out several items in the new strategic plan that related directly to Instruction Council

- Goal 1 is Enhancing Academic Excellence and Life-Changing Opportunities. There are several key performance indicators that will require extensive work. Objective 1 calls for an increase in the number of programs that have undergone external review in a six-year period. Some programs have done this, but as a university, we have not done this systematically. Objective 1 also calls us to modernize our process for general education review and assessment. We will need to develop a process to assess the learning outcomes for general education designations. The final key performance indicator for Objective 1 is the percentage of courses with documented learning outcomes. Francisco shared that the topic of course learning outcomes did come up in the most recent HLC accreditation. There has been discussion in Faculty Council about requiring all new proposed courses to have documented learning outcomes. Objective 2 calls to improve the transfer process between system institutions, including streamlining general education course prefixes and numbering. This objective will require us to work with other institutions within the system to solidify general education transfer. Francisco acknowledged that aligning course prefixes and numbers could be challenging. As an example, we offer the calculus sequences as 4-3-3, but OSU-OKC offers it as a 5-5 sequence. Francisco reminded the group that students look at us as one institution. Objective 4 calls for an increase not only in online enrollment, but an increase in persistence within online programs. Objective 5 calls for an increase in the number of degree

programs that require a high-impact practice. Some programs already require a high-impact practice, such as a capstone course. We will need to identify which programs do not currently require a high-impact practice as part of their degree requirements and move toward incorporating one in their degree requirements.

- Goal 6 is Embracing Digital Transformation and Emerging Technologies. Object 3 calls for the expanded use of early academic alerts and the submission of six-week grades. This objective recommends six-week grades be used for upper-division courses, as well as lower-division courses. Instruction Council will need to develop a plan to communicate to faculty that the expectation is that 90% of classes will submit six-week grades. Hawkins asked if six-week grades were expected for graduate courses. Francisco clarified that the expectation to submit six-week grades is for undergraduate courses. Hawkins asked if there were plans to mandate a minimum amount of content be delivered within the first six weeks of the semester to provide students with a meaningful account of their progress at the six-week mark. Francisco stated that there is room to discuss Hawkins' idea further and agreed that we should provide guidance to faculty on this matter. Baker suggested providing concrete next steps for students when they get their six-week grades. Baker also shared that it would be nice if alerts could offer positive feedback. Francisco shared that we have tried providing positive comments as part of the alert system, but it resulted in an overload on the advisors. Advisors received notifications for every submission, including the positive comments. Burns shared that the research group examining instructors' perspectives of academic alerts is working to have its report completed by the end of the fall semester.

3. Curriculum

Course Action Summaries:

N/A

Program Modifications:

N/A

4. Other

- A. Francisco reminded the group that the deadline to submit enrollment exceptions for upper-division courses is the week of June 22. He will be out of the office on June 26.
- B. Francisco stated that the course syllabus policy language has been revised and approved. It will take effect fall 2026. As a reminder, courses that do not have regularly scheduled meeting times will not require a syllabus, contract, or agreement. The revised policy should be posted on the website soon.
- C. A new state law goes into effect for the fall 2026 semester that requires institutions to have a grading policy that states grading is based solely on academic factors. We are updating section 6 of the University Academic Regulations because we did not have an existing policy this seems to fit into. Our updated language regarding grading must be in place prior to the start of fall 2026. Prier suggested that we continue to remind faculty that it is a good idea to have a rubric that is reflective of the assignment and distribute that to students. Francisco added that instructors should ensure they follow the rubric when grading. Francisco will bring the updated language in UAR Section 6 to Instruction Council and Faculty Council before implementing it.
- D. Francisco discussed the BUS assessment plan. He indicated that some colleges expressed an interest in working together to develop the assessment plan. If anyone wants to be a part of the

working group to assess the BUS, email him. He clarified that it would not be a standardized plan and that colleges can still have flexibility with the assessment plan.

- E. Ormsbee provided a list of ITLE programs for fall 2026. She encouraged Instruction Council members to share the dates with new department heads, faculty members, and GTAs. She needs to ensure accurate registration numbers for space and food. New Department Heads Orientation is Tuesday, August 4th. All Department Heads: Critical Issues Update is Wednesday, August 5th. Information about the new RPT document will be shared during this meeting. New Faculty Orientation is Thursday, August 6th, Friday, August 7th, and Monday, August 10th. Ormsbee reiterated that she does not have a mechanism to collect the names of new faculty members and relies on the colleges to share this information with new faculty members. The GTA Conference is scheduled for Wednesday, August 12th. As a reminder, first year GTAs are required to attend the GTA Conference on August 12. Registration is limited to the first 250 GTAs who register. There will be a self-paced option in Canvas for those who are unable to register or are not one of the first 250. The deadline to register is August 1. There was additional discussion about potential ways to obtain lists of new faculty and GTAs earlier. It is important to get faculty and GTAs signed up through payroll to enable access to email and Canvas.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:07am.