



TVCC Faculty Association Executive Council

Friday, January 24, 2025

Regular Meeting with Dr. Morrison Minutes

A regular meeting of the Executive Council of the Faculty Association of Trinity Valley Community College met in the conference room of the Athens Administration building with a call to order at 9:01 a.m. on Friday, January 24, 2025. The following were present:

- TVCC President Dr. Jason Morrison
- VP of Instruction Dr. Spencer Wagley
- VP of Student Services Tammy Denney
- AVP of Academic Affairs Erica Richardson
- Tom Sheram
- Jennifer Stephens
- Angel Ellis
- Sam Austin
- Valerie Holmes
- Lesa Hendrix
- Deanna Frye
- Sam Smith

I. Undocumented Students

The Faculty Association discussed concerns regarding how TVCC can support undocumented students and students born to undocumented parents. While there was clear sympathy for the challenges faced by these students, it was emphasized that TVCC must comply with state and federal laws. Violating laws could result in severe consequences, such as the loss of Title IV funding and significant impacts on the institution's ability to operate.

The key points of the discussion included:

- Ensuring compliance with the law while maintaining compassion for affected individuals.
- Acknowledgment of the risks involved in any noncompliance, including jeopardizing the institution's funding and stability.
- Commitment to providing resources, sharing information, and encouraging students to seek external support where available.
- Recognition that TVCC is not positioned like larger institutions (e.g., Ivy League universities) that might have more flexibility or funding to address such issues.

The discussion highlighted the importance of balancing institutional integrity with providing support to vulnerable student populations.

II. Improving Communication Between Administration and Faculty

The Faculty Association discussed improving communication between the administration and faculty, focusing on the possibility of implementing regular updates from the President, Vice Presidents, or Division Chairs. While it was noted that information is currently shared through executive council meetings, Faculty Association discussions, and emails, there is a need to ensure that faculty are fully engaged and receptive. Some suggested creating a bi-weekly or monthly email update or newsletter from Vice Presidents or Division Chairs, which would include relevant updates such as new appointments, policy changes, and other critical information. Additionally, the idea of a centralized platform, such as Teams or SharePoint, was proposed to host committee minutes and other key documents, making them more accessible and beneficial for future accreditation processes.

Attendance reporting emerged as a critical issue, with an emphasis on ensuring accurate and consistent practices. It was clarified that attendance should be treated as an academic act rather than simply logging in, and faculty must understand the importance of proper reporting to avoid institutional consequences. Broader changes stemming from state and federal mandates were also discussed, with the suggestion to address these updates during convocation to raise awareness and provide guidance on how faculty can adapt.

The conversation highlighted the need for transparency without overwhelming faculty with unnecessary details. It was acknowledged that updates should focus on what directly impacts faculty and students while striking a balance to avoid information overload. In response, the administration expressed a willingness to create bi-weekly updates or newsletters and to enhance communication by developing a more centralized and accessible system, such as SharePoint. There was also a commitment to ensure that any new reporting or requirements imposed on faculty are necessary and beneficial to the institution.

III. Faculty Accountability and Participation

The Faculty Association discussed concerns regarding the implementation of broad, punitive policies in response to the actions of a few faculty members, emphasizing the importance of trusting the professionalism of all faculty. A specific example was the sign-in sheet used at graduation, which some viewed as unnecessary and reflective of a lack of trust. While there was acknowledgment that accountability is necessary, especially for contracted days, there was also pushback against the perception of punitive oversight. It was noted that a majority of faculty comply with expectations, and the sign-in process was primarily an accountability measure.

The discussion also touched on the evolving nature of faculty evaluations, with suggestions that better record-keeping could allow faculty to receive credit for their contributions. Some expressed that participation in events like graduation is part of the profession, and those in academia should appreciate these milestones. The administration committed to working collaboratively with faculty to address these concerns and ensure accountability while fostering a sense of trust and mutual respect.

IV. Active Shooter Training

The Faculty Association discussed ongoing efforts to implement active shooter training for the college. It was noted that each campus has a unique plan tailored to its specific needs, and these plans have been under discussion for several months. Initial steps may include tabletop exercises to analyze potential scenarios and improve response protocols. There is also interest in eventually conducting full-scale training scenarios involving students, police, and other stakeholders, with counseling available afterward to address the intensity of the experience. For broader preparedness, the college is considering implementing an annual online training requirement for all faculty and staff.

V. Other Topics

The Faculty Association discussed several procedural and policy-related updates. First, faculty evaluations for the 2023-2024 academic year will take place in spring 2025 rather than fall 2024. Beginning with the 2025 spring evaluations, a new three-year evaluation cycle will start, aligning with established policies.

Questions were raised about handling students who fail prerequisite courses after enrolling in subsequent courses. It was clarified that if a student fails a prerequisite, a failed prerequisite report is run, and their schedule may be adjusted based on their academic standing (e.g., probation or warning). The academic review board, which is being reinstated, will assist in managing cases of students on academic suspension, ensuring proper processes are followed. Specific situations, such as student-athletes with eligibility concerns, were noted as requiring direct communication with coaches due to the complexity of sports-related guidelines.

Faculty were reminded of the importance of adhering to state and Department of Education guidelines, particularly regarding grade changes. Safeguards are in place to protect faculty and the institution by ensuring that all actions are compliant with regulations and verifiable. It was emphasized that these measures aim to reduce unnecessary pressure on faculty while maintaining institutional integrity.

Lastly, the Faculty Association was provided with a draft policy for a four-day workweek. The proposed policy outlines a minimum requirement of four hours per day on a TVCC campus for faculty. Feedback from the Faculty Association on this draft policy was requested.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:27 a.m.