



## TVCC Faculty Association Executive Council

**Friday, January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

### **Regular Meeting**

A regular meeting of the Executive Council of the Faculty Association (FA) of Trinity Valley Community College met in the conference room of the Athens Administration building with a call to order at 9:04 a.m. on Friday, January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024. The following were present:

- TVCC President Dr. Jason Morrison
- TVCC VP of Student Services Philip Parnell
- Jennifer Hannigan
- Tom Sheram
- Jennifer Stephens
- Mike Young
- Regina Clary

### **I. Academic Calendar**

The meeting began with a discussion on the academic calendar, specifically regarding the scheduling of final examinations. Dr. Morrison indicated the Cardinal Takeover committee is looking at the academic calendar in detail. Several changes are being considered, such as the length of semesters and the possibility for the first day of finals to be moved to Wednesday instead of Tuesday. This adjustment in finals would ensure uniformity and consistency in semester lengths by allowing all classes to have a regular meeting before finals begin. Dr. Morrison emphasized the importance of maintaining consistency in the academic calendar for federal compliance, particularly for accreditation purposes. The Faculty Association members responded positively to the suggested adjustment in the finals date, acknowledging its potential benefits in aligning with federal regulations and enhancing the overall structure of the academic calendar. The change would necessitate some alterations in how potential graduates are processed, and Dr. Morrison noted those kinds of issues are being discussed by the Cardinal Takeover committee, which is responsible for setting the proposed calendar.

### **II. Course Attendance**

Recent challenges faced by faculty in regard to class enrollment fluctuations were discussed. Faculty have expressed concerns regarding when official final enrollment is calculated. The current formula, particularly when addressing courses taught “by the head,” can be problematic in some cases, FA noted. Fluctuation in a course’s enrollment can potentially result in significant salary decreases for a faculty member if enrollment drops during the first week of classes. Dr. Morrison proposed creating a timeline to track changes in enrollment and identify a reasonable approach to address such issues in a timely manner. Dr. Morrison spoke on the

importance of establishing a consistent policy to handle enrollment fluctuations effectively, highlighting the need for clearer policies and procedures in handling enrollment changes. Dr. Morrison stressed the need to address these issues to alleviate faculty anxiety. He suggested pulling data in Fall 2024 to analyze enrollment trends and develop the data needed to determine if policy change is needed.

### **III. TCCTA Conference**

TCCTA Conference was discussed, focusing on budgetary considerations and policies regarding attendance. It was noted that the handbook currently limits the conference expenses to \$400. Dr. Morrison outlined his approach to budgeting, emphasizing the need to identify specific items for the budget and to consider pricing from previous years to ensure accuracy. He highlighted the importance of planning ahead and being specific. He suggested the faculty handbook be changed so that in 2025 TCCTA travel is addressed like any other conference travel request. Individuals wishing to attend should include their expenses in the budget and provide detailed specifics. TCCTA trips will still be funded in the future, but funds will need to be requested like any other travel when each year's budget is built.

Regarding out-of-state travel, Tom Sheram raised a concern about the policy that only one department representative can attend an out-of-state event. He inquired about the possibility of making exceptions for special purposes. Dr. Morrison suggested including such requests in the budget, and that those making such a request be ready to justify the advancement and benefits the conference would provide. Dr. Morrison also urged all TVCC employees to exercise common sense when submitting budgetary requests.

### **IV. VPI Hiring Process**

The FA discussed the Vice President of Instruction (VPI) hiring process, outlining the steps and timeline involved. The expected date for a new VPI is June 1, if the hiring process goes as expected. The process will be as follows:

- The first step will involve a committee of 20 faculty members and division chairs, chosen at random to represent a variety of divisions and all TVCC campuses. That group has been selected and will be responsible for narrowing the applicant pool down to 8-10 candidates.
- The second step in the process will involve an interview committee, made of a different group of faculty, administration, and division chairs. Those candidates will be responsible for conducting initial Zoom interviews and narrowing the process to the final candidates.
- The third step will include finalists coming to campus to visit. During that visit the candidate will meet with Dr. Morrison and the members of the board. Also, candidates will attend an open Q&A session attended by TVCC employees and the community. Following those open sessions, TVCC faculty will be asked to give input on the final selection, and that input will be taken into account by Dr. Morrison when submitting a final name to the Board of Trustees.

## **V. Student Absences**

Faculty asked for more communication regarding students who are going to be absent for TVCC-related events. There were concerns expressed about students being absent without proper notification or notification that comes after the students have left, and it was noted that students may or may not self-report school-related absences. Dr. Morrison acknowledged the issues raised and said he would encourage coaches and group sponsors to send earlier reminders to faculty if a group will be gone for an event.

## **VI. Faculty Onboarding**

FA discussed faculty onboarding, focusing on the current process and potential areas for improvement. Dr. Morrison stated Janene Dotts is working on streamlining the onboarding process for new faculty members. It was suggested that division chairs should have a checklist to ensure all necessary steps are completed during the onboarding process. Dr. Morrison noted the responsibility for overseeing this process should primarily fall on the Vice President of Instruction.

## **VII. Professional Development**

Dr. Morrison provided an update on professional development initiatives. He outlined plans to select cohort groups of 10 individuals, with a goal of having 30 participants go through communication-based professional training this year. The first group is scheduled to start in February. Dr. Morrison raised a question regarding the possibility of restructuring Learning Day into micro events geared toward helping faculty and staff address specific and relevant issues. He encouraged faculty to share ideas and express their preferences for such events. Angel Martinez-Ellis suggested that the Faculty Association organize mini-sessions where concerns can be addressed and discussed in a supportive environment.

## **VIII. Other Items**

- Dr. Morrison asked faculty for their input regarding the possible future implementation of faculty advisors in certain areas, such as specialized programs. FA responded positively to the possibility.
- The change to the faculty evaluation policy will be taken to the Board in February for approval.
- FA followed up on the need for a review of current disciplinary policy. Dr. Morrison said he would be putting a group together to review that policy at a later date.
- Dr. Morrison noted that the strategic planning process would begin in early February and that the group would be focusing on building practical and measurable goals that are attainable and will move the college in a positive direction.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:53 a.m.