A&SPIRE YEAR FOUR (2017-2018)

AOD 1 – Evaluating the Four C’s

• This Act of Determination is completed.

AOD 2 – 10-year Enrollment Management

Year 4 Accomplishments

Recruitment:

• Fall 2017 Census reached a significant milestone; 38.3% (an increase of 8.3% over Fall 2016) of A&S incoming freshmen enrolled with scores identifying them as high-ability (> 29 ACT/1360 SAT). The College led the overall University HA by 1%.
• Hosted our first A&S Distinguished Scholars Day (DSD) in Fall 2017 involving 18 departments.

• Implemented the Pre-medical (PMDV) Designation Policy, Texas Common Core Number System (TCCNS), and new Transfer Policy into oversubscribed departments (BIO, CHE, PSYCH) that requires minimum of 3.5 transfer GPA.

• January 2018, Dean’s office partnered with REL, Truett and Admissions to host the third Baylor2Seminary program. Guests have been small in number, though yield from the event continues to be strong (currently 60% as of July 1, 2018). Extending to a fourth pilot year, revisions are planned for Jan. 2019 to reduce the number of scholarships but increasing the amount, as well as opening the event to Religion minors and students who indicate an “interest in vocational ministry” on their applications.

• A&S faculty (n = 307) actively partnered with Admissions for recruiting programs throughout the year: Invitation to Excellence both fall and spring, Code Red, Know Where You’re Going Day, Distinguished Scholars Days (A&S and THEA), Rallies, Premiere, and Campus Visits Under the Tent. Further increases in faculty contacting (calls, cards, emails) prospective student majors throughout the recruiting cycle.

• The A&S Enrollment Council approved and submitted to the Provost’s office and Office of Undergraduate Admissions (for a fourth year) numerical goals at the department level for new freshmen for the Fall of 2019. It is hoped that this document influences how Admission representatives speak about programs in the College, encouraging growth in undersubscribed majors and redirecting students with default interest in oversubscribed departments to areas where student-to-faculty ratios are not as large.

• Implemented new A&S Transfer Policy designed to improve the quality of our transfer students and to increase the accessibility of our degrees for transfer students, as August 2017 for most of the policy, with implementation of August 2018 for portion pertaining to GPA cut-off for enrolling students interested in oversubscribed departments.

Retention

• The New Parent Experience (NPE) Webinar series, fall 2017, met with great success. The 12-week, one-hour per week webinar series was directed at parents of self-identified first-generation freshman college students with majors housed in the College of Arts & Sciences. Retention and earned GPA appear to be higher for the students whose parents attended the webinar series than for first-generation students whose parents did not attend the webinar. This has implications for future programming with parents to ensure retention success. After one year with the
College, the webinar series is now being made available to all parents of new students and is being managed by the Parents Network.

- Student Success Collaborative (SSC), the University retention and graduation tool, continues to grow in both use and usability.
- The Dean’s office automated portions of the petition process thus improving efficiency. Further possibilities are being studied.
- Welcome Week Friday (August 2017). While not a requirement of the university, 19 (of 24) A&S departments or departments/programs hosted welcome sessions focused on connecting new students to their major and faculty in the department. This represents one additional department over 2016 summer and continued adoption of this opportunity to influence retention goals.

Graduation

- As of fall census 2017, A&S 4-year graduation rate (students enrolling Fall 2013) is at its second highest in at least seven years at 63.1% which bodes well for increased six-year rates in future years. The six-year rate (students enrolling in Fall 2011) also boasted one of the highest at 74.4% (Goal is 82%).
- Online Summer Instruction. During Summer 2017, the College saw another increase in all areas. Twenty-three faculty from 12 departments taught a total of 20 courses via 39 sections for an enrollment capacity of 669 seats (in comparison, summer 2016 offered 200 seats). Students are eager to enroll in summer to stay on track to graduate or to work ahead.
- A Director of Interdisciplinary Studies has been appointed who will promote interdisciplinary certificates, minors, and majors that will assist undergraduates (especially in the humanities) in securing admissions to graduate schools and attaining jobs in the workforce.
- The Biology Department initiated a change this year to their major. They no longer offer pre-biology, effective for fall enrollment 2018, and as such all incoming freshmen with interests in BIO as a major are now being advised via the College of Arts & Sciences Advisement (previously advised as a pre-biology major through University Advising).
- This Act of Determination will be incorporated into the Arts & Sciences response to Illuminate, particularly the second Pillar, Transformational Undergraduate Education. The Arts & Sciences Enrollment Management team will continue to implement measures aimed toward increasing the percentage of high-ability students, the freshman retention rate from 87.8% to 90%, and the six-year graduation rate from the current 74.4%.
AOD 3.1 & 3.2 – Investing in Teaching: To Improve Pedagogy

Year 4 Accomplishments

- The Dean’s Office, in coordination with department chairs, began the process of identifying and selecting a faculty member from each department to partner with the Academy for Teaching and Learning (ATL) on teaching innovations.
- In fall of 2017, appointed a pedagogy/curriculum development consultation team for the new A&S core curriculum. The chair of this team is Christopher Richmann, associate director of the Academy for Teaching and Learning. ATL will be offering numerous workshops and events for the 50 or so A&S faculty members who will be designing or redesigning common courses in the new core.
- A representative of the Dean’s office attended a presentation hosted by ATL on expanding the Learning Assistant model to areas outside of STEM. Biology instituted learning assistant models over this past year. Learning assistant models benefit at three levels: undergraduates, selected students who serve as learning assistants, and the faculty who have this additional support.
- This Act of Determination is completed.

AOD 3.3 – Investing in Teaching: To Improve Technology-Enhanced Learning

- This Act of Determination is completed.

AOD 4.1 – Strategies for Engaged Learning/Merit Scholarships-Office

Year 4 Accomplishments

- Within the newly created Office of Engaged Learning, a website was designed and implemented that provides an overview of activities broadly falling within this sphere: undergraduate research (EUReKA), national and international scholarship opportunities (SPARK), community engagement (Bears Building Bridges), internships, and study abroad. See https://www.baylor.edu/engagedlearning/
- SPARK instituted a revised and expanded web presence, with many new features, including social media Twitter feed and robust calendar of events. See https://www.baylor.edu/scholarships/. A new EUReKA website to promote undergraduate research was created and linked to many research areas within departments in A&S (https://www.baylor.edu/engagedlearning/index.php?id=950291).
- The personnel involved in Engaged Learning was expanded. The new division for Undergraduate Research (EUReKA) is headed by Dr. Brian Raines, associate dean for undergraduate studies, sciences. Carrolle Kamperman, associate dean for undergraduate studies, took on new roles with Engaged Learning; she assisted with Student Profiles in SPARK, expanded our community engagement efforts and supported
SPARK programming, including work with aspects of Fulbright process and committees within the SHECP internship program.

- Brian Raines and Elizabeth Vardaman orchestrated much of the content for the 2018 spring College of Arts & Sciences magazine, which featured Engaged Learning across A&S. See [https://issuu.com/baylorartsandsciences/docs/a_s-mag_spring2018_web](https://issuu.com/baylorartsandsciences/docs/a_s-mag_spring2018_web)
- Funding for supporting a summer research internship was created and implemented by the College of Arts & Sciences Board of Advocates.
- SPARK assumed full responsibility for the Shepherd Internship program at Baylor. This program is sponsored nationally by the Shepherd Higher Education Consortium on Poverty—SHECP ([https://www.shepherdconsortium.org](https://www.shepherdconsortium.org)). Six Baylor students were awarded eight-week internships for summer 2018. SPARK now provides expanded mentorship to the recipients to help enrich the interns’ plans for careers tied to poverty studies.
- Staff within SPARK supervised applications for many scholarship applications, including 19 Fulbright applicants as well as candidates for Marshall, Rhodes, Truman, US-UK Fulbright Summer Internships, Critical Language Scholarships, and other national programs. Ten Baylor students were Semi-Finalists for Fulbright, with five being awarded Fulbright scholarships for 2018-19. Other applications, awards, and finalists included a Goldwater winner, a MENAR Fellowship winner, a Boren winner, a John Jay Fellowship winner, a Pickering Fellowship winner, a NOAA Hollings recipient, and a Schwarzman Finalist. Approximately 60 students applied for awards through SPARK.
- SPARK staff met with over 100 students via the Undergraduate Student Profile, helping those students know the opportunities SPARK offers and helping them connect our resources to their own academic and professional goals.
- Staff within SPARK doubled the number of students (from 25 to 50) for the 2018 Ampersand Society cohort, redesigned the program resources, and added two more faculty-mentors so that this A&S honor society can reach more students and promote more engaged learning opportunities.
- With the implementation of the Office of Engaged Learning, this Act of Determination will be incorporated into the Arts & Sciences response to *Illuminate*, particularly the second Pillar, *Transformational Undergraduate Education*.

**AOD 4.2 – Strategies for Engaged Learning/Merit Scholarships-Undergraduate Research**

**Year 4 Accomplishments**

- Administered the third successful summer of the Summer Science Research for Incoming Freshman (SSRF) with 10 freshman conducting research on campus in the sciences.
- Supported the BTRUE summer research program for students in the sciences with 16 students.
- Supported inaugural class of 10 Science Research Fellows, and accepted 10 new SRF students for fall 18.
- Supported the McNair Scholars program by working to match the selected students in the McNair program with faculty research mentors.
- Administered a weekly research seminar for undergraduate research students, including the SSRF, BTRUE and McNair students.
- Brian Raines attended a Council on Undergraduate Research Institute on Implementing an Office of Undergraduate Research.
- Created an Office of Undergraduate Research, EUReKA.
- Created a website, www.baylor.edu/eureka which houses a directory of research opportunities for interested undergraduates to search for research opportunities.
- Created a web-form for faculty to submit their research opportunities.
- Oversaw the publication of the journal Scientia which publishes undergraduate research articles in the sciences. This year the quality and scale of the journal increased.
- Worked with the student research organization, BURST, to implement Research Internship Day during the fall semester to make students aware of the various summer research programs available to them.
- Collaborated with URSA and BURST to host URSA Scholar’s Week and hosted the keynote speaker.
- Supported the William and Argye Hillis Scholars program, wherein the numbers were increased this year to 40 Hillis Scholars.
- Promoted the EUReKA office at Freshman Orientation.
- Promoted the SSRF program at events targeting high-ability students.
- Worked with the faculty organizer to solicit applications and nominate 4 students for the Goldwater scholarship. One student was awarded this scholarship as a sophomore in recognition of her research with Dr. Touradj Solouki.
- Implemented a robust social media presence for EUReKA to promote undergraduate research on campus.
- With the implementation of the Office of Undergraduate Research, EUReKA, under the leadership of the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies, Sciences, this Act of Determination will be incorporated into the Arts & Sciences response to Illuminate, particularly the second Pillar, Transformational Undergraduate Education.

**AOD 5.1 – Assessing the Structure and Function of the A&S Core Curriculum-Colloquia**

- This Act of Determination is completed.
AOD 5.2 – Assessing the Structure and Function of the A&S Core Curriculum—Determine Whether Further Assessment of the Core Curriculum is Needed

- This Act of Determination is completed.

AOD 5.3 – Assessing the Structure and Function of the A&S Core Curriculum—Changes to the Core

Year 4 Accomplishments

- In October 2017, the A&S Council of Chairs voted 20-4 to approve an A&S unified core curriculum for the BA, BFA, BS, and BSAS degrees.
- Interim Provost Gary Mortensen provided final approval in May for the A&S unified core with the aim to implement for fall 2019.
- Associate Dean Burleson met with Vice Provost Wes Null to express the desire that the A&S unified core would become the core for all degrees at Baylor University. Subsequently, Burleson was instructed by Null to meet with Robbins College representatives to assist them in revising their core curricula so that it “mapped” onto the A&S unified core as closely as possible. Work is underway with Vice Provost Wes Null to map the new A&S core curriculum to other academic units across campus.
- The Dean appointed a taskforce to study the possibility of an alternative core for students for whom a wider breadth might fit their curricular and vocational objectives. This taskforce met during fall 2017. No recommendation has as of yet been offered to the Core Curriculum Advisory Committee.
- Three standing committees (appointed by Dean Nordt)—A&S Curriculum Committee, A&S Core Curriculum Advisory Committee, and A&S Cultural Events Experience Committee—and 12 ad hoc committees (appointed by Dean Burleson and others)—Text Books and Readers Consultation Team, Pedagogy/Course Design Consultation Team, Diversity/Multicultural Requirements Consultation Team, Inspiring Virtues Consultation Team, Civic Engagement Consultation Team, Marketing Consultation Team, Advising Plan Committee, Catalogue Switching Committee, Civic and Personal Responsibility DL Committee, NSE Committee, Summer Online, and Transfer Credit Committee. All total there are 15 committees with over 140 individuals working on the implementation of the A&S unified core. This implementation phase—once done—will complete the 7-year process of revising the A&S core curriculum which began because of Pro Futuris’ goals.
- The A&S Core Curriculum Advisory Committee and the A&S Curriculum Committee receive 205 course proposals and approved 140 of these for the unified core. It is anticipated that approximately 230 courses will eventually be approved for the 2019-2020 Undergraduate Catalogue.
• A Director of the Core—a faculty member in the Department of History—has been appointed and will begin work in fall 2018. The Director of the Core provides oversight for the unified core curriculum and will assist the academic departments and the faculty that teach core courses to engender and maintain the highest levels of curriculum and instruction for all core courses.

• Provided release time for course development for selected faculty members in the Departments of English and History who will be teaching new common courses in the unified core.

• The Dean appointed a taskforce of Graduate Program Directors from representative programs (S. Dolan PSY, D. Jortner THEA, M. Moody-Ramirez JPRNM, M. Parsons REL, M. Sepanski MTH) and representatives from the A&S dean’s office (V. Osborn, K. Wilkins committee chair) to study the potential impact of the proposed core on graduate students. While changes in the undergraduate core would have no impact on graduate curriculum, there was some concern that teaching opportunities for graduate students might be reduced or lost if undergraduates were no longer required to enroll in as many (or any) courses in various departments. Uncertainty about which courses would ultimately be included in distribution lists was seen as leading to difficulty in planning. Whereas some departments felt they might lose opportunities for recruiting majors from their non-majors classes, other departments welcomed the reduced teaching demanded of their graduate student population.

• This Act of Determination will be completed in fall 2019. The next steps will be incorporated into the Arts & Sciences response to Illuminate, specifically in the second Pillar, Transformational Undergraduate Education.