A&SPIRE YEAR FOUR (2017-2018)

Theme 2
BECOMING A NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED RESEARCH INSTITUTION

AOD 1 – Developing Top-Tier Tenure Guidelines

Year 4 Accomplishments

- Departments in the sciences division continue to update and enhance their tenure guidelines, with expectations in granting and publications commensurate with those of aspirant institutions. Departments are also developing guidelines for “promotion to full professor” that are linked to expectations at aspirant institutions.
- This Act of Determination has become operational within each academic department and, therefore, is completed.
AOD 2 – Increasing Research in the Humanities/Social Sciences

Year 4 Accomplishments

- English, Sociology, and Communications have completed revised promotional guidelines.
- Theatre Arts, Communications, Sociology, Theatre Arts, and English have completed strategic hiring plans.
- A multidisciplinary “Baylor Ethics” proposal was submitted to the Provost’s office for consideration in response to ongoing university-level strategic planning. The proposal describes a faculty hiring plan and a variety of research, graduate education, professional education, and undergraduate education opportunities. Although final decisions with respect to overall proposal implementation are still pending, “Human Flourishing and Ethics” has been identified as one of five “signature initiatives” included in Illuminate, the University’s new academic strategic plan. At a minimum, there is interest in new graduate programs (MS and PhD) in the field of “Bioethics.” These degrees would potentially be offered in collaboration with Baylor College of Medicine.
- This Act of Determination will be incorporated into the Arts & Sciences response to Illuminate, specifically in the third Pillar, Research and Scholarship Marked by Quality, Impact, and Visibility and in the Signature Academic Initiatives:
  - Human Flourishing and Ethics; and
  - Baylor in Latin America.

AOD 3 – Improving Doctoral Production in STEM

Year 4 Accomplishments

- Annual reports from five departments having graduate programs (CHE, ENV, PHY, PSY, MTH) variously documented aspects of their graduate programs, including demographics of graduate-student population, progress toward degree, degrees awarded, awards and grants received, publications and presentations, etc. The Chemistry report addressed recruiting with regard to mailing of brochures, hosting a recruiting weekend, and sponsoring other campus visits by prospects. Generally, departments are not yet reporting on their strategies for recruiting of more graduate students of increasingly better quality nor for increasing the productivity of their graduate students while in the program. Many chairs are effectively utilizing the Digital Measures database to prepare these reports.
- This Act of Determination will be incorporated into the Arts & Sciences response to Illuminate, specifically in the third Pillar, Research and Scholarship Marked by Quality, Impact, and Visibility.
AOD 4 – Acquiring New Faculty in STEM

Year 4 Accomplishments

- A strategic proposal for a new Materials Science and Engineering initiative was submitted to the Provost’s office for consideration as part of ongoing university-level strategic planning. The initiative will support interdisciplinary research and grantsmanship, graduate education and faculty hiring in A&S (Physics and Chemistry & Biochemistry), as well as the School of Engineering and Computer Science (Mechanical and Electrical & Computer Engineering). “Materials Science” has been identified as one of five “signature initiatives” included in Illuminate, the University’s new academic strategic plan.
- This Act of Determination will be incorporated into the Arts & Sciences response to Illuminate, specifically in the Signature Academic Initiatives.

AOD 5 – Increase Staff Support for STEM

- This Act of Determination will be incorporated into the Arts & Sciences response to Illuminate, specifically in the third Pillar, Research and Scholarship Marked by Quality, Impact, and Visibility.

AOD 6 – Creating/Enhancing Research Centers in STEM

Year 4 Accomplishments

- A BearQuest seeking approval to hire a Director of a proposed Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) Spectroscopy Center was submitted and is currently under consideration. The Director would oversee operation and maintenance of six NMR/EPR instruments, interface with users on a day-to-day basis, train new and existing “open access” users (i.e., faculty and students performing routine experiments), assist with the conception and development of advanced NMR experiments and assist or lead proposal development related to use or acquisition of new NMR/EPR instrumentation. If approved, hiring a Director would also formalize a new A&S Core Facility to be managed by the Director’s Office of the Baylor Science Building.
- A comprehensive plan was developed to implement “user fees” within all A&S Core Facilities (i.e., the Center for Microscopy and Imaging, the Mass Spectrometry Center, the Molecular Biosciences Center, and the recently proposed Center for Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Spectroscopy), beginning in 2020. The plan not only includes a timeline and procedure for implementation of user fees, it also includes a mechanism for monitoring and updating user fees on a recurring basis. We will seek Provost’s office
approval of the plan in the coming weeks and subsequently communicate the plan to
department chairs and all faculty users of A&S Core Facilities.

- This Act of Determination is completed. On-going developments for research centers
  will become part of the Arts & Sciences response to *Illuminate*, specifically in the third

**AOD 7 – Planning for Masters Programs**

**Year 4 Accomplishments**

- Implemented the new 4+1 masters program in Communication.
- The new 4+1 and MA program in Classics has been approved; recruitment is ongoing.
- The Department of Environmental Science is collaborating with the Department of
  Public Health in the Robbins College of Health and Human Sciences to develop a new
  Master of Public Health (MPH) degree specialization in environmental health sciences. A
  new clinical faculty line has been approved to assist with program implementation and
  management, and the search for this individual is in process.
- Developed the plan for the 4+1 BS/MS dual-degree program in Tropical Disease Biology,
  a collaboration between Baylor Department of Biology and the National School of
  Tropical Medicine, Baylor College of Medicine, with curriculum available to students
  beginning Fall 2019.
- This Act of Determination will be incorporated into the Arts & Sciences response to
  *Illuminate*, specifically in the second Pillar, *Transformational Undergraduate Education*.
  The revenue generated from the new masters programs will assist in the
  implementation of the third Pillar, *Research and Scholarship Marked by Quality, Impact,
  and Visibility*, and in the implementation of the *Signature Academic Initiatives*. 