THE FACULTY SENATE
December 3, 1999

MEMORANDUM

TO: President Ray M. Bowen

SUBJECT: Approval of Non-TAMU Courses for Distance Degree Programs (FS.17.65)

At its regular meeting on November 8, 1999, the Faculty Senate approved the proposal for inclusion of Non-TAMU courses in TAMU Distance Degree as submitted by the Academic Affairs Committee. Attached is a copy of the material sent to our Senators.

Please review and inform me of your action on this recommendation. Thank you.

Thomas E. Wehrly
Speaker, 1999-2000

Attachment

cc: Dr. Ronald G. Douglas, Executive Vice President & Provost
    Dr. Janis P. Stout, Dean of Faculties & Associate Provost
    Dr. J. Rick Giardino, Chair, Graduate Council
    Ms. Linda F. Lacey, Director of Academic Support Services
    Dr. Kenn Harding, Chair, Academic Affairs Committee

Approved:

Ray M. Bowen, President

Date 1/1/2000
Approval of Non-TAMU Courses for Inclusion in TAMU Distance Degree Programs

Background

Both the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (CB) require that universities assume responsibility for the quality of distance education. According to SACS policy on distance education,

"The institution's faculty assumes responsibility for and exercises oversight over distance education, ensuring both the rigor of programs and the quality of instruction."

The Coordinating Board, recognizing that universities may want/need to use faculty and course materials from other distance programs, requires that procedures be in place to evaluate all instructional materials developed by other organizations or institutions prior to use in distance education.

The following procedure is designed to meet the quality control goals of these regulatory agencies. This procedure will be used:

1. when any department or college elects to use distance education courses from other universities as part of an approved TAMU distance degree program, or
2. when a TAMU distance education degree program is participating in a distance education degree-program consortium composed of TAMU and other universities which are contributing courses to the degree program.

Procedure

Any TAMU department/college that wishes to use distance education courses developed by other universities for inclusion in a TAMU degree program must establish an internal review process that satisfies the department/college's criteria for: (1) currency of instructional material, (2) quality of instructional material, (3) applicability of material for inclusion in the TAMU degree program for which the courses are being solicited, and (4) the quality of the faculty delivering the courses.

Scope

This procedure applies to any course or group of courses that TAMU is considering using in one of its approved distance programs when the course(s) are part of the curriculum of another university. This policy assumes that (1) the university from which TAMU is soliciting distance courses will be responsible for teaching and granting credit in the courses and (2) the TAMU department/college will consider using distance courses from another university only if these courses are unavailable for distance delivery at TAMU.

NOTE: This procedure does not apply to individual courses that a student may wish to transfer from one or more institutions when he/she applies for admission to the TAMU master's program. This procedure applies when a TAMU master's program decides to borrow a group of courses in a specific content area from another university and to offer that group of courses as an option or a focus area within the master's program.
Process for Reviewing Non-TAMU Courses for Inclusion in TAMU Degree Programs

1. The Dean of the College wishing to use distance courses from another university will ascertain that the courses needed cannot be obtained at TAMU. The requesting Dean will ask the appropriate dean at TAMU for written confirmation of that college's inability to provide the needed courses in a distance format.

2. The TAMU department/college will (1) determine that the contributing university/college holds appropriate accreditation and (2) obtain a complete syllabus for each course (this syllabus will include a course description, text list, assignments, any reference/required supplementary material, and grading standards).

3. Following standard college procedures for curricular action, the department and college will assess the adequacy, currency, quality (of faculty and material), and appropriateness of the courses, as stated in the "Procedure" section above.

4. The TAMU department/college wishing to require these courses in a specific degree program will submit the request, with all supporting information and documentation, to the Graduate Council or University Curriculum Committee as appropriate.

5. If approved by the Graduate Council or University Curriculum Committee, as appropriate, the request will be submitted to the Faculty Senate. If approved, the Faculty Senate will forward the request to the President for approval. A copy of the President's memorandum to the Faculty Senate approving the request and a copy of the original request will be sent to the Provost and to the Office of Distance Education.

6. For all courses that are approved for inclusion in degree programs, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) will be prepared and signed by the Provosts of each university and the deans of each college (host university and TAMU) to the effect that both entities agree that these courses may be used for the specified degree.

Approved by Academic Affairs Committee on October 18, 1999
Approved by the Faculty Senate on November 8, 1999