

SEM Meeting Minutes

Date: May 14, 2026

Time: 1:15 PM – 2:30 PM

Attendees: unknown

Absentees: unknown

Facilitator: Lisa Chamberlin

Admin Support: Itzel Davison (absent)

Location: Main Building D102

Melissa Rodriguez led the notes synopsis via Teams chat.

Topics Discussed

1. Current concerns for students, faculty, and staff
2. Existing supports and supports planned for Fall
3. Strategic brainstorming and planning

1. Current Concerns for Students, Faculty, and Staff

Student Familiarity with Canvas

A concern identified through Running Start student focus groups was that some students had **no prior experience with Canvas before their classes began**. This lack of familiarity may create an additional barrier as students begin online coursework.

Several ideas were discussed to help students become familiar with the Canvas environment before classes officially begin:

- **Week Zero:** Lisa suggested encouraging faculty to post their Canvas courses approximately one week before the quarter begins, giving students an opportunity to explore the course environment and become familiar with expectations and navigation.
- **Consistent Course Templates:** Coco shared the practice of using standardized course templates to provide students with a consistent and familiar framework across courses. A common structure could reduce the cognitive and technical burden of navigating different course designs.

Broader Concerns Across A&S, TS, and HSP

Additional concerns were shared regarding how well students, faculty, and staff are currently supported in online learning environments. Key issues included:

- **Varying levels of student technology proficiency:** Students enter online courses with different levels of technological experience and confidence.
- **Challenges learning content online:** In some courses, students continue to struggle with learning course content in an online environment despite faculty efforts to employ effective online teaching strategies. This concern has been observed through the dean's faculty evaluation process as well as the nature of student grievances received over the past year.
- **Student accountability and communication:** Concern was expressed about students' willingness or ability to take responsibility for their own actions. In particular, there appears to be an increasing expectation that others will navigate or mediate conversations with faculty rather than students communicating directly with their professors.
- **DFW rates:** In some courses, DFW rates appear to be similar between face-to-face and online sections. The group discussed whether this warrants additional research to better understand the factors contributing to student outcomes in different modalities.
- **Professional development for faculty:** The college has not provided substantive andragogical professional development for faculty in several years. The group discussed the need to determine what professional development is feasible, what should be prioritized, and when it could be offered.

The discussion recognized that these concerns represent a **confluence of multiple factors** affecting online education and student success. There is a need for coordinated strategies among the deans, VPI, and other stakeholders so that efforts are aligned rather than developed independently or in silos.

2. Existing and Upcoming Supports

The group discussed supports that currently exist or may be available beginning this fall, including:

- Providing students with earlier access to Canvas courses through a potential **Week Zero** approach.
- Increasing consistency across courses through **standardized course templates**.
- Exploring additional faculty professional development focused on effective teaching and learning strategies for adult learners and online environments.

- Better coordinating existing supports and resources across areas of the college.

3. Strategic Brainstorming

The group discussed using a **reverse-engineering approach to strategic planning**. Rather than beginning with individual initiatives or activities, the group would first identify the desired end state or outcome.

The proposed process is:

1. **Define the desired end goal or end state** — recognizing that the goal may be an initial target rather than a permanent endpoint.
2. **Work backward from that goal** to identify what would need to be true to achieve it.
3. **Identify the strategies, resources, supports, and changes** necessary to reach each preceding step.
4. **Determine roles and coordination** among deans, the VPI, faculty, staff, and other stakeholders.
5. **Prioritize actions** that can be implemented in the near term while continuing to work toward longer-term systemic improvements.

This approach may help the college move from identifying individual concerns to developing a coordinated strategy and avoid duplicating efforts across areas.

Key Takeaways / Potential Next Steps

- Explore the feasibility of a **Week Zero** approach for Canvas courses.
- Explore the use or expansion of **consistent course templates** across online courses.
- Determine whether additional research into **DFW rates by course modality** would be useful.
- Identify feasible opportunities and timing for **faculty professional development in andragogy and online teaching**.
- Clarify how deans, the VPI, and other stakeholders can **coordinate efforts and resources** rather than working in silos.
- Use a **reverse-engineering strategic planning process** to identify the desired future state and work backward to determine the actions needed to achieve it.
- Continue to consider the concerns and ideas raised in relation to subsequent **IEC discussions** and broader institutional planning.