



Brownsville, Edinburg, Harlingen

2022-2023 Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 14, 2023, 3pm – 5pm CST Via Zoom

Senators Present

Khalid Aada, Jair Aguilar, Andrew Anabila, Sonja Arredondo, George Atisa, Grant Benham, Ben Brown, Lucia Carreon-Martinez, Joel Chirinos, George Diaz, Fuat Firat, Christopher Gabler, Christine Gerin, James Gleason, Sergey Grigorian, Federico Guerra, Jonathan Guist, Tekla Hawkins, Marcela Hebbard, Jose Esteban Hernandez, Kip Austin Hinton, Pauline Jojo, Ulku Karabulut, Hale Kaynak, Megan Keniry, Sanjeev Kumar, Dean Kye, Kye-Hwan Lee, Karin Lewis, Qinyu Liao, Robert Magee, Pedro Martinez, Theresa Mata-Pistokache, Randall Monty, Nancy Nadeau, Rafael Otero, Cynthia Paccacerqua, Nilanjana Paul, Diana Paz, Emmy Perez, Monika Rabarison, Genaro Ramirez-Correa, Manuel Saldivar, Andrea Schwarzbach, Dana Shackelford, Hooman Tabatabai-Mir, Eloisa Tamez, Owen Temby, Ahmed Touhami, Mohammed Uddin, Jorge Vidal, Vejoya Viren, Sarah Williams-Blangero, Aaron Wilson, Christian Zuniga

Senators Absent

Antonio Aguirre, Stephanie Alvarez, Roseann Bacha-Garza, Jameela Banu, Linda Belau, Narayan Bhat, Mircea Chipara, Louis Falk, Ayleen Godreau, Krista Jobson, Jeong Kim, Hansheng Lei, Michael Machiorlatti, Gladys Maestre, Salma Mahmood, Gerardo Munoz-Monaco, Riccardo Pizzinato, Padmanabhan Rengasamy, Jeannean Ryman, Miguel Salazar, Clarissa Salinas, Paul Valadez, Yingchen Yang

Guests

Carla Angulo-Pasel, Gasser Ali, Bruno Arthur, Eric Cardenas, Keri Gonzalez, Jason Hartley, Jungseok Ho, Dania Lopez Garcia, Idua O, Jaime Ortiz, Lily Puente, Nancy Razo, Aziza Zemrani

- I. Meeting Called to Order at 3:03pm**
- II. Report of FS Parliamentarian – Senator Falk**
 - a. Reminder of Roberts Rules of Order
- III. Report of FS Secretary – Senator Guist**
 - a. Approval of January minutes
 - i. Motion to Approve by Senator Aguilar; 2nd by Senator Tabatabai-Mir
 - ii. No discussion
 - iii. **Minutes approved: 38 approve; 0 decline; 5 abstain**

*Point of order requested by Senator Paccacerqua to move up the UTFAC Update on the agenda
– no objection

IV. UTFAC Update – Senator Paccacerqua

- a. The Texas Senate introduced a bill (SB 18) that aims at eliminating tenure. Only the title of the bill is known at this time. The message we are getting from UT System and Stacy Napier, UT System Vice Chancellor for Governmental Relations, is to channel all concerns through Veronica Gonzalez. We need to make sure she is hearing our concerns. This is the UT System Strategy. This does not preclude activism as individual/private citizens or through AAUP.
- b. Other potential bills target the teaching of CRT and institutional support for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion programs. These are Senate Bills. So far the House has shown little to no interest in these issues. We need to be careful when we talk about these issues and if we contact our representatives about these, we need to do so as a private citizen, not a UT employee.
- c. Some positive things also to report from this meeting
 - i. A good meeting with the president of the Student Advisory Council and possibilities for more coordination/interaction with this group
 - ii. UTFAC voted to support a resolution (which has already been passed by the Board of Regents) to support Freedom of Speech in order to show a united front with the Regents.

V. Old Business

- a. ADM 07-106 Use of Animals in Research Training and Testing Related Activities
 - i. There is a need for more time to discuss with constituents. Senator Lewis made a motion to table to allow for this time. Motion 2nd by Senator Kaynak. Passed by Acclamation
- b. ADM 06-401 Academic Titles
 - i. The changes here are to align HOP with changes in Regents Rules
 - ii. Motion to approve: Senator Paccacerqua; 2nd: Senator Lewis
 - iii. No Discussion; Motion passed by Acclamation
- c. ADM 00-000 Faculty Development Leave Policy
 - i. More time is needed to discuss with constituents
 - ii. Motion to table: Senator Lewis; 2nd: Senator Aguilar
 - iii. Discussion: concern that policy reads as if travel is a requirement
 - iv. Motion to table passed by Acclamation

VI. College/School Caucus breakout rooms

- a. Senators met with other senators from their respective college/school in breakout rooms to discuss any issues deemed relevant

VII. Committee Reports

There are mid-term vacancies on the following committees that need to be filled.
Please solicit nominees from your colleges where appropriate

- a. University Tenure & Promotion – CECS & CLA vacancies

- b. Faculty Research Council – CECS & SSW vacancies
- c. External Awards Committee – CLA unexpired term
 - i. Senator Palacios-Knox self-nominates for this vacancy
- d. University Library Committee – UC vacancy
 - i. Senator Esteban Hernandez & Senator Puente both self-nominate for this vacancy
- e. Distinguished Lecturer Committee – CLA vacancy
 - i. Senator Magee self-nominates for this vacancy
- f. Environmental Sustainability ad-hoc committee
 - i. Senator Gabler self-nominates for this committee
- g. Discussion
 - i. No discussion

VIII. New Business

- a. Waiting for documents from these committees to be distributed – will revisit these issues at the next meeting

IX. Report of the President-Elect, Senator Cynthia Paccacerqua

- a. More from the UTFAC meeting
 - i. There is a bill in the House asking for raises for state employees that includes staff & faculty at higher ed. Institutions
 - ii. There is a proposal to freeze tuition at UT institutions
 - iii. One university is looking at implementing a raise for successful post-tenure review when not attached to promotion. Our administration has been receptive to the discussion of this idea.

X. Report of the President, Senator Kip Austin Hinton

- a. Shirts approved – place order through Qualtrics survey
- b. Provost candidates are visiting campus over the coming weeks. The first candidate is visiting campus today.
- c. UTRGV Strategic Plan: A bilingual university – working to update website to make it bilingual. Also working for systems to recognize diacritical markings that are part of the correct spelling of certain names
- d. Environmental Sustainability Ad-Hoc Committee
 - i. Using UTSA Sustainability Policy as a jumping off point
 - ii. We should have such a policy – this is actually required by Regent’s Rules
 - iii. The Environmental Sustainability Ad-Hoc Committee will begin working on this policy
- e. AAUP
 - i. There is no local chapter at UTRGV which limits our ability to organize. A lot of Texas universities have chapters and use them to promote faculty voices. We need a chapter and need more AAUP membership so please consider joining

XI. Guest Presentations

- a. Jaime Ortiz, incoming Associate VP of Global Engagement

- i. We have been falling short in creating graduates that are global citizens and there is much we can do better. He will be working to launch a new office of Global Affairs and as soon as his appointment becomes official he will be coming to us in our individual departments to see how we can work together
- b. Jason Hartley, incoming VP for Operations, Planning, & Construction
 - i. There are a lot of future construction projects planned and a lot of deferred maintenance to be addressed so the immediate focus is getting up to speed on all of this. He will make an effort to improve communication regarding construction and maintenance activities to the campus community. Another priority will be to update and create a new Master Plan.
- c. Questions/Comments
 - i. Senator Hebbard to AVP Ortiz: What is your vision for COIL (Collaborative Online International Learning)
 - 1. Online is an important component but physical travel is important to meet and interact with collaborating researchers
 - ii. Senator Gabler to VP Hartley: Is the Port Isabel Campus on your radar yet? There are real safety issues there.
 - 1. Yes, it is. There is a desire to expand this and include in the Master Plan but don't know to what extent it will be prioritized and funded.
 - iii. Senator Atisa to VP Hartley: Regarding ongoing construction, what is the most ideal approach to expanding on campus? Upwards or filling in available land?
 - 1. The previous master plan is outdated, and we have far outgrown what this addressed. He would not like to see us fill in all available land. Preference to maintain green space and the beauty of campuses. We need to build for the long term and a new master plan will be really helpful to determine what, where, and how we build and expand.
 - iv. Senator Palacios-Knox to VP Hartley: Is it possible to give us a sense of which buildings are up next for deferred maintenance? Please consider accessibility to classes when doing maintenance/construction.
 - 1. Yes, the need for clear communication on upcoming/ongoing projects is clear and will be made. Much of the priority for deferred maintenance are things like new roofs, water leak repair, etc. ("Building Envelope" issues)

XII. Meeting adjourned: 4:54pm