



Brownsville, Edinburg, Harlingen

2022-2023 Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 17, 2023, 3pm – 5pm CST Via Zoom

Senators Present

Khalid Aada, Jair Aguilar, Antonio Aguirre, Stephanie Alvarez, Andrew Anabila, Sonja Arredondo, George Atisa, Roseann Bacha-Garza, Ben Brown, Mircea Chipara, Joel Chirinos, Louis Falk, Fuat Firat, Christopher Gabler, Christine Gerin, James Gleason, Sergey Grigorian, Federico Guerra, Jonathan Guist, Tekla Hawkins, Marcela Hebbard, Kip Austin Hinton, Pauline Jojo, Ulku Karabulut, Hale Kaynak, Megan Keniry, Jeong Kim, Sanjeev Kumar, Karin Lewis, Qinyu Liao, Robert Magee, Salma Mahmood, Pedro Martinez, Randall Monty, Gerardo Munoz-Monaco, Nancy Nadeau, Rafael Otero, Cynthia Paccacerqua, Nilanjana Paul, Diana Paz, Emmy Perez, Monika Rabarison, Genaro Ramirez-Correa, Padmanabahn Rengasamy, Jeannean Ryman, Miguel Salazar, Andrea Schwarzbach, Dana Shackelford, Hooman Tabatabai-Mir, Eloisa Tamez, Mohammed Uddin, Paul Valadez, Jorge Vidal, Vejoya Viren, Sarah Williams-Blangero, Aaron Wilson, Christian Zuniga

Senators Absent

Jameela Banu, Linda Belau, Narayan Bhat, Grant Benham, George Diaz, Ayleen Godreau, Krista Jobson, Dean Kyne, Kye-Hwan Lee, Hansheng Lei, Michael Machiorlatti, Gladys Maestre, Lucia Carreon-Martinez, Theresa Mata-Pistokache, Riccardo Pizzinato, Manuel Saldivar, Clarissa Salinas, Owen Temby, Ahmed Touhami, Yingchen Yang

Guests

Bruno Arthur, Jonikka Charlton, Jose Esteban-Hernandez, Criselda Garcia, Marisa Knox, Sofia Almeda Montes

- I. Meeting Called to Order at 3:02pm**
- II. Report of FS Parliamentarian – Senator Falk**
 - a. Reminder of Roberts Rules of Order
- III. Report of FS Secretary – Senator Guist**
 - a. Approval of December minutes
 - i. Motion to Approve by Senator Firat; 2nd by Senator Rabarison
 - ii. No discussion
 - iii. **Minutes approved: 38 approve; 0 decline; 3 abstain**
- IV. Old Business**
 - a. Tenure-track & tenured faculty evaluation for COVID years

- i. Reminder that faculty could opt in or out of tenure clock extension and that annual evaluations can also take into consideration circumstances during COVID that faculty may have experienced. These accommodations are not permanent, however so we should think about how we will approach this issue going forward.
 - ii. Comments/Questions:
 - 1. Senator Falk: CLA is taking this into consideration in evaluations
 - 2. Senator Karabulut: The understanding in CoHP is that all faculty received a 1-year extension
 - 3. Senator Paccacerqua: It should be noted that regarding post-tenure promotion there is no “clock”; Make sure that if a department committee makes an accommodation, the committee needs to be as explicit as possible in explaining this accommodation so that higher levels of review can be informed by the review level most knowledgeable in the discipline and with the most familiarity with individual situations
 - 4. Senator Tabatabai-Mir: What faculty benefit from this in terms of hire date? Response from FS President Hinton: Memo was for faculty up for promotion during 2022
 - 5. Senator Tamez: Who authorizes extension, and can there be more than one? Response from FS President Hinton: There can only be one extension and it was automatic unless faculty opted out.
- b. Faculty Workload Reporting Timeline
 - i. Workload dates have been posted on AA website. Declaration of workloads are to be done through FPT. Workload meetings with chairs must be done by March 24. The Dean reviews to make sure workloads are consistent with the needs and goals of department. Discussion between chair and faculty is mandatory and needs to happen before faculty submits workload in FPT.
 - ii. Comments/Questions
 - 1. Senator Alvarez: How does this work in conjunction with Faculty Development Leave?
 - a. FS President Hinton: If faculty member is approved for FDL, an updated workload plan would be submitted but not sure about all of the considerations. Will bring up with Dr. Arney for clarification.
 - 2. Senator Gerin: Does this also include the School of Medicine?
 - a. FS President Hinton: Yes
 - 3. Senator Alvarez: If workload changes during the year how is that handled?
 - a. FS President Hinton: An updated workload plan is supposed to be submitted
- c. Commencement
 - i. Thank you to all that attended Fall Commencement. If you did not attend, remember that you must attend in the Spring.

V. Committee Reports

- a. Student Advisory Fees Committee
 - i. We need volunteers to serve on this committee. This committee decides on allocation of student fees to different programs that apply for funding.
 - ii. Senators Tamez (SON) and Martinez (Music) volunteered
- b. Provost Search Committee
 - i. Will be notified of campus visits for Provost candidates the week before their visits at which point names will be given. More applicants are still coming in so do not know exactly how many will be visiting campus.
- c. Technology Enhanced Oversight Committee – Senator Monty
 - i. Welcome Bob Allen from IT and guest Cody Holder from Microsoft Higher Ed Customer Support
 - 1. Mr. Holder [presented an overview of MS Teams](#) and some of the ways it can be used for collaboration in our classes. If anyone would like to have a more in-depth conversation with MS about this, reach out to Mr. Allen and he will help facilitate it.

VI. New Business

- a. HOP Policies
 - i. [ADM 07-106 Use of Animals in Research Training and Testing Related Activities](#)
 - 1. Sent out for our information in advance of a discussion of this policy at next month's meeting
 - ii. [ADM 06-401 Academic Titles](#)
 - 1. This is being revised to match changes in Regent's Rules
 - 2. Comments/Questions:
 - a. Senator Falk: What is the difference between Senior Lecturer and Distinguished Senior Lecturer? And can someone be promoted from Senior to Distinguished effecting another pay raise.
 - i. FS President Hinton: Yes, that would be an additional step available for promotion that would presumably include a pay raise. As to the difference between the two, don't know but would guess it's more or less just sequencing
 - b. Senator Hebbard: re: "Appointments shall terminate at the expiration of the stated period of appointment without notification...". While understands the legal reasons for such a statement, from a more human standpoint, there should be required some kind of notification
 - iii. [ADM 00-000 Faculty Development Leave](#)
 - 1. This would be a new HOP policy that would put into policy the procedure that is already being followed
 - 2. Comments/Questions:
 - a. Senator Paccacerqua: Has the Faculty Research Development Council had any input, or do they have any comments on this policy? They should review this.

VII. Report of the President-Elect – Senator Paccacerqua

- a. Has been asked to share the following concerns with the FS
 - i. There have been issues with students being told they can't enroll in a course due to financial aid issues – however the student actually can. What is being done to address this misinformation? How can we be sure this doesn't continue?

VIII. Report of the President

- a. Texas Legislature in session
 - i. Veronica Gonzalez is in Austin meeting with legislators. For now her advice is to work through her office to voice concerns with any pending legislation.
 - ii. Comments/Questions:
 - 1. Senator Firat: The FS has standing committees that specifically concern some of these issues. We have an Academic Freedom committee. Why wasn't that committee invited to the meeting with legislators that happened last month?
 - a. FS President Hinton: This was an oversight. RGV legislators will be on campus on February 27 and he will be sure the committee members are invited to meet with them at that time.
- b. Meeting of FAC and TCFS in Austin
 - i. Likely that legislative issues will be the main topics of discussion. Will keep us updated.
- c. Faculty Senate shirts
 - i. Has made arrangements with 123 Screen Printing in Mission for a gray polo with UTRGV Faculty Senate on chest. They will be about \$19/shirt. Will send us a form to use to place orders.

IX. Guest Speakers

- a. Sofia Almeda Montes, University Registrar
 - i. Presented an explanation of the waitlisting process.
 - ii. Comments/Questions:
 - 1. Senator Kaynak: Is it possible to count waitlist without purging it?
 - a. Montes: We do capture the list before it closes on the Friday before classes start. We will take a look to see what level of granular data that contains. The system also does track whether a student attempts a registration.
 - 2. Senator Falk: To verify if a student did try to enroll who would I contact?
 - a. Montes: email registrar@utrgv.edu or if urgent can send her a message through Teams
- b. Jonikka Charlton – Associate Provost of Student Success
 - i. Dr. Charlton is attending to listen to feedback/concerns and answer questions
 - ii. Comments/Questions:
 - 1. FS President Hinton: Can you talk a bit about how it may be better to communicate with staff through via Teams?

- a. Charlton: Yes, this is probably the primary way staff communicate and is probably the easiest, most efficient way to get an answer to a question and make contact with a staff member
- 2. Senator Paccacerqua: 1) When the registrar does a move of a course to a different time/date would it be possible to flag it and confirm if it is really intended to prevent unintentional problems/mistakes? 2) Do we know the average credit hours students take in a semester to better understand their workloads? 3) Can you address issues with students maybe having unrealistic expectations of accommodations from faculty?
 - a. Charlton: regarding course change requests: the registrar's office has been good about keeping student success in mind and asking appropriate questions about a requested change.
 - b. Montes: In the case of course cancellations, all possible options are exhausted before cancelling a class. Major class changes are not initiated by the registrar's office. These come from the departments. About 7000 schedule changes requests on average are received for a given term.
 - c. Charlton: regarding student expectations for accommodations – The best place to capture student attention is at Vaquero Round Up to set these expectations at the beginning of their college career and educate them as to their responsibilities as students. We can talk further about what specifically is being communicated to students to make sure it is adequate and appropriate. Regarding average credit hours – we do have that data but would need to look it up and report back.
- 3. Senator Alvarez: Are there any updates to the “off track” emails that students are receiving?
 - a. Charlton: They will look into the issue to see if there is a way to send differentiated messages to students more tailored to specific situations. Will hopefully have an update on this for us by the next senate meeting.
- 4. Senator Alvarez: Cross-listed classes...can these have both prefixes listed on transcripts? This is especially important for interdisciplinary programs.
 - a. Montes: We do not have the capability to do that in the system we are using. We can perhaps come up with some work arounds.
- 5. Senator Kaynak: During student orientation, are we telling students not to take 15 hours if they are working full time?
 - a. Charlton: We don't give blanket advice of that nature but do one-on-one advising to ask questions about individual situations and advise accordingly.
- 6. Senator Falk: Sometimes there can be a waitlist for a certain section of a course while other sections have very few enrolled. This causes

stress on faculty who are waiting to see if their class is going to make, etc. Can waitlists be turned off until all sections are full?

- a. Montes: Unfortunately, waitlists can't be turned on/off for specific classes. They are either on for all classes or off for all classes.

- 7. Senator Paccacerqua: Students are sometimes try to register for a class and told they can't only to later find out that they actually can. What is the source of this problem?

- a. Montes: This is usually triggered by a CPOS error (course program of study) and is most commonly related to a class not on the degree plan. It can also be caused by a minor or concentration not properly declared.

- 8. Senator Gabler: Are there better alternatives to "Do Not Drop" lists for students with pending funding that is still awaiting processing?

- a. Montes: Up to a certain point we do have the ability to work with individual students to buy them more time if we can see that there is funding on the way. This can be done up until the 20th class day at which point the state requires a student be dropped for non-payment.

- 9. Senator Hebbard: In cases where students request to be dropped by the instructor, sometimes the faculty member has found that a deadline has passed and cannot drop the student. Can you explain this process for us?

- a. Montes: As an example, in Fall 2022, November 10 was the deadline for a student to drop a class. There is no difference on a transcript whether the student drops the class or is dropped by the instructor. Students are encouraged to do the drops themselves and the deadlines are the same for student drops or faculty drops. These are institutional deadlines however, not state deadlines, so in extenuating circumstances there may be exceptions that could be made. Students do have the right to appeal a drop request made by the instructor. Student rights and responsibilities give the student the right to remain in the class if they wish and then earn whatever grade they earn for better or worse.

X. Motion to Adjourn

- a. Motion to adjourn by Senator Lewis; 2nd by Senator Falk
- b. **Meeting adjourned at 5:02pm**