

2021-2022 Faculty Senate Meeting Agenda
Tuesday, April 12, 2022, 3 pm – 5 pm CST Via Zoom

Community Agreement

The UTRGV Faculty Senate is brought together in the spirit of shared governance to move forward in a positive open manner for input that allows all stakeholders to speak regarding policy and process formation. To create a safe environment where everyone's opinions are valued and considered, let us observe the following:

- 1. Try to be on time to the meeting and actively participate*
- 2. Review the pre-reading materials to be discussed, and if you plan to comment have your thoughts organized in advance*
- 3. Assume positive intent, seek to understand, be inclusive, bring productive energy to discussions*
- 4. Only one person speaks at a time (use raise hand feature to be recognized)-chat is not part of the official record (will not be included in the minutes).*
- 5. Respect and acknowledge everyone's opinions, even if they differ from yours*
- 6. Confidentiality: some things should not be repeated outside the meeting*

Senators Present: Khalid Aada, Jair J. Aguilar, Tony Aguirre, Stephanie Alvarez, Andrew Anabila, Jameela Banu, Grant Benham, Sarah Blangero, Ben Brown, Lucia Carreon, Dumitru Caruntu, Mircea Chipara, Joel H. Chirinos, Cynthia Cripps, Amy Cummins, George Diaz, Louis Falk, A Fuat Firat, Christine Gerin, Rob Gilkerson, Sergey Grigorian, Fred Guerra Jr, Jonathan Guist, Tekla Hawkins, Marcela Hebbard, Sharon Helsley-Mcginley, Kip Austin Hinton, Michiyo Hirai, Ulku Karabulut, Hale Kaynak, Sanjeev Kumar, Dean Kyne, Kye-Hwan Lee, Karin Lewis, Qinyu Liao, Michael Machiorlatti, Salma Mahmood, Rachel Mann, Arnulfo Mar, Cynthia Paccacerqua, Randall Monty, Nancy Nadeau, Nilanjana Paul, Diana Paz, Emma Perez, Abdullah Rahman, Volker Quetschke, Padmanabhan Rengasamy, Sam Sale, Clarissa Salinas, Dana Shackelford, Andrea Schwarzbach, Owen Temby, Paul Valadez, Jorge Vidal, Vejoya Viren, Aaron Wilson, William Yaworsky, Soojin Yoo, Aziza Zembrani

Administrator: Vanessa Ceballos

Senators Absent: Sonja Arredondo, Narayan Bhat, Jimmy Gonzales, Rene Gonzalez, Hansheng (Jet) Lei, Yu Liu, John Luna, Mike Magee, Theresa Mata-Pistokache (email excuse), Riccardo Pizzinato, Henry Reinhart, Miguel Salazar, Manuel Saldivar, Yingchen Yang

Guests: Michael Abebe, Janna Arney, Erica Buchberger, Jonikka Charlton, Monica Clua Losada, Rebecca Coberly, Romeo Di Loreto, Veronica Gonzales, Daniel Hunter-Holly, Kirstin Munro, Christopher O'Kane, Ala Qubbaj, Shawn Saladin, Thuy Vu

Meeting convened at 3:00 pm

I. Welcome by Faculty Senate President Karin Lewis:

- A. Please mute microphones and rename zoom tile to include: *"*Guest [name]..."* or *"[name]: (FSEC), title, college/department"*
- B. Volker Quetschke (Parliamentarian) will monitor the discussion
- C. Cynthia Cripps (Secretary) will monitor the chat. If you have questions you would like to have read aloud on the floor, please send direct message those to her in the chat.
- D. The chat is not part of the official record.

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- E. Amid the troubling time in our world, thank you for attending today. Thank you for the work you do and your contribution to our university, community, and beyond.
- F. Please make your remarks respectful, succinct, and focused on the topic on the floor.

II. Report of FS Parliamentarian- Volker Quetschke

- A. Roberts rules & Zoom guidelines reminder:
 - 1. Each senator is limited to (2) 90 second question/comment(s) per topic
 - 2. Please write and send all motions, resolutions etc. via email or the chat so it can be copied and pasted succinctly and be placed on the zoom screen to avoid confusion during the discussion and voting process.

III, Report of the FS Secretary-Cindy Cripps

- A. Micky Caruntu moves to approve the minutes, Rachel Mann seconds the motion
 - B. Minutes from March 8, 2022
 - 94% approve
 - 2% decline
 - 4 % abstain
- Motion carries. March 8. 2022 minutes approved with 94%.

IV. Report – President-Elect Kip Hinton

- A. *Covid-19 Remembrance*” – UTRGV Covid -19 Memorial Committee: March 23 at noon – flags were distributed to represent loved ones that we lost to Covid-19. Pictures of loved ones were displayed.
- B. It was an emotional ceremony. Thank you to all who participated: especially Emmy Perez, Sonya Arredondo
- C. <https://www.utrgv.edu/covid-memorial/index.htm>
- D. <https://www.utrgvrider.com/covid-19-remembrance-memorial-honors-community-members-loved-ones/>

V. Report - President Karin Lewis

- A. Senator Officer College Representative and Executive Committee elections this month, The FSEC will assist in facilitating elections, as necessary.
 - B. Texas Council of Faculty Senates: Karin Lewis and Cynthia Paccacerqua attended the meeting. (Cynthia Paccacerqua is our South-Central Representative)
- Topics of Discussion:
- 1. Policy revisions for NTT, TT, T&P, Annual Evaluation, Course Evaluation
 - 2. Executive administrator turnover – several president and provost searches are being conducted.
 - 3. Strategic planning
 - 4. Hiring ombuds
 - 5. Top-down restructuring taking place (Texas A&M in particular)
 - 6. Merit raises and market equity adjustments. Discussions of lost spending power (rather than using CUPA data to relay that faculty are struggling equally as everyone else)
 - 7. Workload concerns
 - 8. Top concern across the state was the Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick’s intent to threaten academic freedom, specifically the 2022 Interim Legislative Charges toward the Texas Senate
 - a. TCFS passed a motion to have the EC expand a statement from February 2022 in response to the LG’s comments at a press conference at that time, to now address the current concerns, particularly since he targets faculty senates. A statement is being drafted and will be released soon.

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- b. FAC from UT system is drafting a collective statement to be released following the April 28 & 29 FAC meeting in Austin.
- c. There was much discussion on the approach to respond firmly and collectively.
- d. Today we have a resolution draft to discuss. Keeping in mind the senate voted to write a resolution prior to the LG's charges. We need to consider our intent and timing of our response.

VI. Guest Presentations

- A. Daniel Hunter – Holly: Special Committee Policy Revisions (draft) Annual Review (Tenured/Tenure Track Evaluation) (pre-reading handout 3.) The process began in April 2020.
 - 1. Committees
 - a. *Faculty Success & Diversity Council*: Daniel Hunter-Holy CFA Michael Abebe, Megan Birk CLA, Thuy Vu
 - b. *Faculty Senate Special Committee on Annual Review*: Angela Chapman, Rebecca Coberly, Marcela Hebbard, Hale Kaynak, Jacob Neumann, Manuel Saldivar, Adrian Sandoval, Owen Temby
 - 2. Guides used in the revision: UT system Regents Rules and Regulations, UTRGV HOP Policies (2020-21) ADM 06-502, 06-505, and 06-504, WFN Feedback on Faculty Review, Faculty Annual Review Survey, Dean's Council.
 - 3. Draft principles:
 - a. UT system Regents' Rules Essential Minimum requirements of the policies
 - b. Specific standards and expectations created by individual departments
 - c. Avoid redundancy in the process: faculty submitting their dossiers and within the different levels of review.
 - 4. Charge of committee - to ensure annual review of faculty:
 - a. provides constructive and formative peer review
 - b. allows for rank specific review
 - c. provides feedback on "progress toward professional goals"
 - d. streamlines the process
 - e. is based on department guidelines
 - f. is clearly written to eliminate ambiguity
 - 5. Primary changes include:
 - a. Reorganization of UTRGV HOP policies for faculty review by rank (rather than by type)
 - 1. Annual Review (HOP ADM 06-502): dossier must include the applicable work, documents, and information for the academic year under review
 - 2. Tenure and Promotion (submitting for promotion) (HOP ADM 06-505): dossier must include applicable work, documents, and information since the submission for their last major review
 - 3. Comprehensive Periodic Evaluation (aka Post Tenure Review) (HOP ADM 06-504): dossier must include applicable work, documents, and information since the submission for award of tenure, but departmental guidelines may require longer
 - b. Streamline and clarify review process: including detailed departmental guidelines, dossier requirements, levels of review and requests for consideration and appeal. Departmental guideless should be reviewed a minimum of every 6 years.
 - c. Ratings: each level shall rate faculty member using 4 ratings: Exceeds expectations, meets expectations, does not meet expectations, or unsatisfactory

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- d. Department committee and chair rating (including narratives) reviews will be sent to the Dean for approval.
- e. Reconsideration and appeals:
 1. Reconsideration: faculty member provides more information and documentation if they think the committee may have missed something. Faculty member provides clarity and explanation to be reconsidered and the dossier returns to the committee.
 2. The Dean may provide written justification to change the rating. This would then go to the provost (higher level) for a final decision.
- f. Grievance Process – in cases of discrimination or other concerns, the case will be taken to Ombuds and/or an outside office.
- g. FPT should now generate course evaluations, workload report, departmental level evaluations without the faculty member having to do this.
- h. Associate Professor may apply for promotion early if they feel they have met the criteria in a shorter amount of time, based on their departmental guidelines.
- i. It is important to make sure the process is formative, and faculty reflect on their own professional goals and progress toward the next post-tenure or promotion review.
- j. These revisions were drawn from specific concerns related to university policies that were gathered in the Faculty Annual Review Survey, WFN Feedback, and committee member's experience.

Faculty Discussion:

- What are the areas of inconsistencies: TT, NTT, T all have different criteria for review, our current document does not address these different levels. What should be rated? Teaching, Research, Service, rated separately or an overall rating?
- Streamlining: FPT can customize. The team can take the suggestions and this draft to craft something unique for each college and all three ranks.
- Initially the draft is passed through the leadership teams, faculty senate, and if the faculty senate decides to send it to all faculty, that feedback can be compiled and shared with the FPT team and committee working on the document.
- This new draft does not address the many hours faculty lose on administrative work. Faculty members take 10-days to 3 weeks to compile and put together the dossier each year. This is always due at the beginning of the semester (when students need us a lot), and it is not possible for everyone to do during the summer.
- Recommendation: Each year faculty submit a current and past CV with a short narration to the department committee. If the committee needs more clarification, then the faculty member will need to provide more information... otherwise no more documentation will be needed. This will alleviate unnecessary administrative work and allow faculty to concentrate on their research and teaching.
- Faculty need to prove their case, but the way this is presented somewhat depends on the department criteria. Bullet points and outline form may be sufficient documentation, with brief narrative, other departments may require more detail. FPT asks for a "summary" ... this is vague and may need to be defined by the department level.
- The document needs to define or outline equivalents to "chair" and "department" that are listed in the document... some faculty are in "programs" and document is unclear who would be evaluating those faculty... the school, the program, the associate dean, director? – Some of this clarification can be found in the definitions at the beginning of the document.

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- It is not clear how the faculty member's expectations tie to their workload.
- The department should not only approve of guidelines, but it should state in the document that they should be *voted* on by faculty in the department
- Some publications can be uploaded automatically to FPT, likewise Grants should upload automatically into FPT.
- Payment of article publication is a problem
- This document is for all Academic and Health Colleges.
- This document does not address the pathways calendar/changing dates.
- The requirement for feedback on professional ethics is new... and adds another component and expected review
- In terms of merit-based raises being based on the post tenure review rating (exceeds expectations, etc.), it seems inequitable assessment if some people are submitting post tenure (5 year) reviews and others annual reviews.
- Each college/unit had a charge last fall of determining what measures would constitute awarding merit in their area.
- Some colleges look at more than 1 year to determine merit awards
- Some form of annual evaluation is required by regents' rules
- Ultimately, we need to take the *cumbersome* out of the process.
- If all annual evaluations are going well, why is there a post tenure review?

B. TX Senate Interim Charges (pre-reading handout 4.)

1. Veronica Gonzales – Senior VP for Government and Community Relations
 - a. Session meets every two years, the next starts in January 2023. List of interim charges has been issued and interim meetings will begin in the next few months
 1. TX House of Representatives list of interim charges does not mention tenure or *critical race theory* (CRT)
 2. TX Senate: LT Gov. Patrick has listed both CRT and tenure as important issues. It is not listed in the charges but in the news, he threatens tenure if CRT is taught.
 - a. UT Austin Faculty Council - asserted that they had a right to teach CRT and stated it in a resolution. A&M had a similar resolution.
 - b. As a result of the resolutions, LT Gov, Patrick proposed to end tenure for new hires and currently tenured professors.
 - c. They would change the law to say teaching CRT would be evidence that could possibly revoke tenure
 - d. It is important to note that there is NO legislation on file right now.
 - e. LT Governor can have his opinions but only the legislature can pass and pre-filed until Nov 2022
 - f. It is a campaign year and so there will be a lot of political drama to find support from the constituents.
 - g. The resolutions are not binding
 - h. Would need to pass both chambers, so if it does not pass in one It does not pass.
 - i. There are so many steps in the process. It is much easier for a bill to die than to pass.

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- j. LT Gov Patrick cannot pass the legislation (senators do this), but he has control over the budget
- 3. Please vote – elections do have their consequences.
- 4. Board of Regents does not believe tenure needs to go away
- 5. UTRGV is taking this very seriously. We must be strategic. We do not want to do something that will hurt budget/funding for UTRGV.
- 6. Organizations are already lobbying to advocate for positions, including for faculty
- b. Recommendations:
 - 1. Academic freedom is necessary
 - 2. Let those submit not naming a particular university but represent faculty across the state before we submit a resolution right now
 - 3. Hidalgo county Legislator is vice chair on finance committee. We need to communicate to our legislator the importance to advocate for their constituents
 - 4. If a bill is filed and it is necessary for us to voice these important issues, then register our position
 - 5. Currently there are not a lot of universities submitting resolutions.
- c. Faculty concerns:
 - 1. Can we reach out (to students, community, legislators), to explain the importance tenure and academic freedom. The qualifications of professors and authority based on their education, research, and background in academics. We should be recognized as having the knowledge to judge curriculum and what is in it.

Response: When there is no formal bill, it is difficult to take action. Maybe there can be a faculty committee to create a document/conversation, including examples from the LG comments, for legislators and how losing tenure or academic freedom could impact education.

VII. Old Business

- A. Response from Council of Chairs re: FS motion regarding dept. budget transparency (pre-reading handout 5.)
 - 1. Council of Chairs does support the FS resolution to share budget information.
 - 2. Dr. Janna and her team are working on a template and a mock-up that all departments/units will use for disclosure of financial information that they can share and provide transparency.
- B. Update on SCTE work
 - 1. Dr. Arney and Shawn Saladin: Provost, SER, Faculty Success, FPT (Shawn, Jonikka, and Dr. Arney) are working organizing student focus groups, to gather information and explain to students what course evaluations are for and their importance. Looking at course evaluations from a students' perspective has not been the focus in the past.
 - a. Issues: things related to students, issues with the scale, number and types of questions.
 - b. We ran some tests: Keep 5-point scale, move "3" into "I don't know" (so it doesn't count)
 - c. FPT is flexible: we can add more to the 5 questions, or add questions and have separate scores for those questions, whatever you think is best
 - 2. Micky: the professor can choose questions; the college or department may also select questions specific to their area. How are these evaluations weighted within the entire evaluation? Department should have the freedom to do their evaluation within guidelines

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C. Fuat Firat & Randall Monty–Draft Resolution (pre-reading handout 6.) Discussion. Possible vote.

1. Karin Lewis: two suggested edits from senators
 - a. Add an introductory paragraph asserting the authority and responsibility of faculty for the curriculum and the importance of academic freedom
 - b. Remove the mention of “Board of Regents.” the Board of Regents has been very supportive of UTRGV and are working on this issue
2. Fuat Firat: After FSEC meeting we were told the President and VP were going to make a statement regarding UTRGV supporting Academic Freedom. But after the FS meeting in March what we thought would be a statement supporting a united front against the suppression of academic freedom, turned out to be a statement asking for silence on the issue.
 - a. The rhetoric is being labeled as “political theater,” but the Academic Freedom committee does not agree. More and more attempts are being made in several states to ban books.
 - b. We are fearing that here is becoming a political system that is trying to control communications and all kinds of education and teaching.
 - c. We need to create a united front now, before it is too late. If it gets put on the agenda, it may be too late.
 - d. Interim charges are very broad that people can come up with issues for anything.
 - e. We have to be vigilant and prepare
 - f. Firat moves to adopt the resolution, seconded by Stephanie Alvarez

Discussion and senator suggestions:

- We should rewrite the resolution to reflect what professors and faculty’s role and importance of Academic Freedom. To outline the importance of tenure. There has been a political shift directly targeting faculty senates and the role that faculty have in universities. Suggest not mention critical race theory, but rather focus on the role of faculty for the good of the public. The resolution is very similar to many others, like a template, but should be in our words/language. The current resolutions look similar to those on the African American Policy Forum website.
- Unsure how the resolution will be received by LT Governor Dan Patrick. Will this make UTRGV (and faculty senate) his new target? We don’t have the long-standing political influence that UT Austin and College Station have, and they have withstood the attacks.
- FAC is working on and will vote on a one paragraph statement addressing this
- It’s a no-win situation, but we should not necessarily go into the political aspect, but we should not hide from our responsibilities.
- It is about doing what is morally correct. If we wait it may be too late.
- Endorsing other resolutions is not uncommon. Eliminating CRT from the resolution is problematic because it is what is being attacked. We are doing a disservice to our students who we represent if we don’t respond to this. Mexican American and LatinX communities are sometimes known for not speaking up (being suppressed). We

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should also think that the other universities will support our point of view and resolution we would put forward.

- We are a Hispanic serving institution, and our decisions should reflect that. In 2016 students had to protest for the UTRGV president to support identifying this university as a sanctuary campus. Students were very upset and did not feel supported.
- We need to stay informed and ask ourselves, what is the best way to receive the outcome that we need?
- The resolution has similarities and differences from other resolutions. We can have friendly amendments. We need our actions guided by principles, not by strategic interests or fear. As academics we need to take a position now. If we wait too long, it will lose effect. Other universities have done this, and we can join this united front.

Louis Falk called the question:

Vote to approve the resolution as it is:

42 + 1

Approve: 38% 16

Reject: 36% 15 + 1

Abstain: 26% 11

Motion does not carry.

- Faculty Senate unanimous agreed to amend current resolution and bring it to the floor at the May meeting.

VIII. FS Committee reports/motions discussion – (tabled)

- A. FS Educational Policy Committee report
- B. TEEOC Committee Report (pre-reading handout 7)

IX. New Business - (Tabled)

- A. Join AAUP <https://www.aaup.org/membership/join> Community Agreement
 1. Active AAUP chapters serve the profession at hundreds of accredited colleges and universities. While all AAUP chapters promote basic academic freedom, quality education, and other core AAUP principles, additional chapter activities are determined by campus activities and needs.
 2. Many AAUP chapters take an active role in campus politics, in conjunction with faculty senates or separately. Some work with other local AAUP chapters on state-level issues. Some serve as collective bargaining agents for faculty and other academic professionals on campus. Chapters often hold forums on topics such as salary equity or the tenure process, host social events, and bring in invited speakers. Many produce newsletters or websites.
- B. The Provost's Office is working on faculty technology costs/technology replacement and upgrade schedule and budget
- C. Proposed revisions to the Faculty Developmental Leave policy anticipated presentation for May FS meeting

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XI. Next meeting date: Tuesday, May 10, 2022 (3 pm-5 pm) via Zoom

A. Newly elected senators will be confirmed

XII. Meeting adjourned 5:23 pm