



Brownsville, Edinburg, Harlingen

**2022-2023 Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, May 9, 2023, 3pm – 5pm CST Via Zoom**

**Senators Present**

Jair Aguilar, Antonio Aguirre, Stephanie Alvarez, Andrew Anabila, Sonja Arredondo, Roseann Bacha-Garza, Linda Belau, Grant Benham, Ben Brown, Lucia Carreon-Martinez, Mircea Chipara, Joel Chirinos, George Diaz, Louis Falk, Fuat Firat, Christopher Gabler, Christine Gerin, James Gleason, Sergey Grigorian, Jonathan Guist, Marcela Hebbard, Kip Austin Hinton, Krista Jobson, Ulku Karabulut, Hale Kaynak, Megan Keniry, Jeong Kim, Marisa Palacios Knox, Kye-Hwan Lee, Hansheng Lei, Karin Lewis, Qinyu Liao, Gladys Maestre, Pedro Martinez, Randall Monty, Gerardo Munoz-Monaco, Nancy Nadeau, Nilanjana Paul, Diana Paz, Emmy Perez, Riccardo Pizzinato, Monika Rabarison, Padmanabhan Rengasamy, Jack Ruelas, Jeannean Ryman, Miguel Salazar, Clarissa Salinas, Andrea Schwarzbach, Dana Shackelford, Hooman Tabatabai-Mir, Eloisa Tamez, Owen Temby, Ahmed Touhami, Jorge Vidal, Vejoya Viren, Sarah Williams-Blangero, Aaron Wilson, Christian Zuniga

**Senators Absent**

Khalid Aada, George Atisa, Jameela Banu, , Narayan Bhat, Ayleen Godreau, Federico Guerra, Tekla Hawkins, Jose Esteban Hernandez, Pauline Jojo, Sanjeev Kumar, Dean Kyne, Michael Machiorlatti, Robert Magee, Salma Mahmood, Theresa Mata-Pistokache, Rafael Otero, Cynthia Paccacerqua, Genaro Ramirez-Correa, Manuel Saldivar, Mohammed Uddin, Paul Valadez, Yingchen Yang

**Guests**

Janna Arney, Guy Bailey, Veronica Gonzalez, Cristina Villalobos, Robert Velez, Engil Pereira, Dania López Garcia, Arlett Lomelí, Sudi Pasupuleti, Summer Diamond, Margaret Rubi, Justin White, Bruno Arthur, DM Witman, Mayra Ortiz, Kate Christoffersen

- 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 April minutes
    - i. Motion to approve: Vidal; 2<sup>nd</sup>: Falk
    - ii. Approve: 38; Do not approve: 1; Abstain: 5
    - iii. April minutes are approved.

#### **IV. Old Business**

##### **a. ADM 06-701 Organized Research Units**

- i.** President Hinton & President-elect Paccacerqua met with VP Saygin. This policy is intended to align ourselves with the norm for institutions aiming for R1 status. Not all centers are research units and not all ORO's are centers. This intends to clear up the distinction and would apply only to Research Units.

##### **ii. Comments**

- 1.** Senator Alvarez: Paragraph 3: "...normally carry a distinction..." Would like to clarify that "normally" does not mean "always".
  - a.** Austin-Hinton: Correct, this does not mean always.
- 2.** Senator Gabler: SEEMS still has not been able to meet to discuss this policy so would request more time to review
- 3.** Senator Maestre: Referencing paragraph 4 – Is SOM operating under a different structure? SOM has not been operating under this type of procedure. Does this need to be clarified to indicate it is intended for all colleges?
- 4.** Senator Blangero: The amount a research program is getting back on indirect costs (7%) is generally not enough to support the program. There has to be additional support from the institution beyond that 7%. Not ready to move forward on this policy.
- 5.** President Austin-Hinton: The question of moving forward is complicated. There are things we need to do now in order to begin to move forward toward our goal of R1 status. So we need a policy like this so that we can show external entities that we have this policy so that they know we have this system in place to support the ORU's. So, if we as a FS do not approve a policy on this, then the institution is somehow going to have to institute a non-HOP policy that we are going to follow which would cut us out of the process in a way.
- 6.** Senator Chipara: We do not have faculty/staff that are focused on obtaining and writing grants. Showing that we have ORU's is unimportant if we don't have the investment in research that is needed. This policy does not serve the goal. It is more administrative structure.
- 7.** President Austin-Hinton: This policy is one of the elements we need in order to move in that direction of R1 status. Designed to help the institution channel more money to the ORU's
- 8.** Senator Gabler: Respectfully disagree with some of the points made. The people leading these units are typically faculty. The main investment in research by the university is the appointment in institutionally sponsored research. That 30% of workload is the big investment. This is formalizing the reinvestment of some of that IDC into the centers and is a positive development.

##### **iii. Motion to approve ADM 06-70: Senator Firat; 2<sup>nd</sup>: Senator Kaynak**

1. Senator Falk suggests a friendly amendment that would allow adjustments to the policy based on feedback from SEEMS and others.
  2. Senator Lewis: We can follow the policy as it goes forward and make sure our feedback is incorporated so moving it forward at this point is a prudent decision
  3. Senator Williams-Blangero: Centers are not an absolute requirement for ERU status. There are ways to get grant funding into departments without necessarily going through a center. So, don't see this as being the major determiner of whether we achieve ERU status
  4. Senator Chipara: What are the requirements to achieve this status and what is our current status?
    - a. President Austin-Hinton: Dr. Sangin would be the person best able to answer that question so we will invite him to come address this question in the Fall
- iv. Senator Falk calls the question
- v. Vote to advance ADM 06-701
1. Approve: 34; Reject: 7; Abstain: 17
  2. Motion passes
- b. ADM 07-304 Institutional Base Salary HOP Policy
- i. President Austin-Hinton: This formalizes the way money needs to be handled in order to get the federal government and other funding agencies to trust that we are using money in the correct way.
  - ii. Motion to approve: Senator Tabatabai-Mir; 2<sup>nd</sup>: Senator Chipara
  - iii. Discussion:
    1. Senator Gabler: This is a good thing. We need the trust of funding agencies and it works the way we need it to.
  - iv. Senator Falk calls the question
  - v. Vote to approve ADM 07-304
    1. Approve: 42; Reject: 2; Abstain: 8
    2. Motion passes
- c. ADM 00-000 Faculty Development Leave Policy
- i. Discussion:
    1. Senator Keniry: What happens to teaching and service load during leave semester
      - a. Austin-Hinton: 100% of workload would be devoted to Research. If FDC relates to teaching, then research & service commitments would continue
    2. Senator Alvarez: Pg. 5 – Application Requirements > #5 Supporting Documents: should not say required as this may not apply to all situations. It should be Supplementary only.

3. Senator Keniry: Section 8a (Annual Review): For semester faculty is on FDL the workload should reflect 100% research but would the annual evaluation take that into account? There are many different research appointments and this may not cover everything. If the FDL centers on Teaching Development, how would the workload be considered?
4. Senator Gabler: Best solution could be to leverage Workload Policy. Maybe a workload proposal could be part of the FDL application.
5. Senator Alvarez: FDL only includes one semester often so what about the review for the entire year? We also still have to assign a rating for all areas and merit policies often require a certain rating for all areas.
6. Senator Temby: The 100% research is going to raise a number of problems
7. Senator Diaz: Echoes the concerns voiced by Senator Alvarez. If you're on leave and you don't teach, there is no way to get "Exceeds"
8. Senator Chipara: Would suggest to discard the 100% language and replace it with an agreed upon workload between faculty and department chair
9. President Austin-Hinton: We will come up with a draft accounting for the concerns raised and will send out for an online vote. We will table for now.

## **V. Committee Reports**

- a. Technology Enhanced Education Oversight Committee (TEEOC), Randall Monty
  - i. Not ready to report
- b. B3 Working Group
  - i. Currently being organized. Will include senators and administrators and will be meeting this month to put together a new strategic plan for reaching our B3 goals.
- c. Ad-Hoc Sustainability Committee
  - i. Working on a policy that we will be able to use as an institution to meet our sustainability goals. We are doing that by imitating the policy that is used at other UT institutions. One thing we are interested in seeing is for this process to prepare an annual report that is done with faculty, student, and staff input.
- d. Discussion:
  - i. None

## **VI. New Business**

- a. FS shirts: The shirts were printed incorrectly. They say "Staff Senate" instead of "Faculty Senate" so these will be delayed.
- b. New senators officially welcomed and confirmed. Thank you for joining us.

- c. 2023-24 FS & FSEC Calendar will be distributed via email as soon as it has been finalized.

## **VII. Guest Presentations**

### **a. President Guy Bailey**

- i. Legislature has to pass a budget. Always one of the last things they do. We usually have a much better sense of what that budget is going to be at this point. Our ability to do pay raises in the fall depends on what happens in the legislature. Two versions of the budget. The House version is very favorable for us and would easily allow us to do raises and a number of other things. The Senate version is very challenging. Hoping for something closer to the House version of the budget. The problem is we can't really do any planning right now. The Fall implementation of pay raises given the short time we will have is going to be very difficult so if we are able to do raises we are more likely to implement them in the December pay check.

### **b. Veronica Gonzalez, Associate Vice President for Government & Community Relations**

#### **i. Update on Legislation:**

- a. SB 18 (Tenure): House speaker and Committee chair both said they don't want to eliminate tenure. The focus at this point is now on post-tenure review and processes to ensure faculty don't become "dead wood" or to allow for procedure in cases of derelict of duty/malfeasance/etc. The bill would legally require us to do what we already do and is standard practice at universities nationwide. There is still concern about what institutes good cause. Are faculty at the whim of administrators? Then need to pass something in order to satisfy the Governor and Lieutenant Governor. The Senate has said it will agree to what the House passes. This is in the best shape we can hope for since to do nothing is not an option.
- b. DEI: Legislature did away with CRT and rolled CRT into the DEI bill. What is prohibited? Preferences bases on race, sex, gender for hiring or programs that give preference for race, sex, gender, etc. Exceptions apply when Federal law requires otherwise. The bill does not apply to academic course instruction, scholarly research, creative work, student awards, guest speakers, policies, practice, procedures, programs or activity that enhance student academic achievement or post-graduate outcomes, data collection, student admissions or student recruitment. The Board of Regents & Presidents can decide if a certain program is exempted. Compliance audits have also been

eliminated. The combined version of SB 17 & 18 are the best we could hope for.

**c. Questions:**

- i. Senator Falk:** Will we have to do away with Dream Zone advocacy programs.
  - 1. Gonzalez:** Bill prevents advocacy so we won't be able to call it that, but we will be able to provide information. We just can't give preference.
- ii. Senator Alvarez:** Restrictions would apply to student success initiatives. Dream Zone advocacy is really about student success. What is your sense on how that would be impacted?
  - 1. Gonzalez:** The idea is that we would not give preference to one program or another, or one student over another based on race, sex, gender, etc. There will be test cases so it remains to be seen but they don't want to hurt students. The main focus seems to be on hiring. Programs based on federal grants have certain requirements that would not be superseded by this legislation.

**d. Janna Arney, Executive Vice President & Provost**

- i.** Would like to share some of our successes and achievements. We continue to thrive and none of it would happen without all of our faculty. The careful financial planning in our early years helped us to be able to thrive during the pandemic. Also our program offerings which have continued to grow and expand. Have invested about \$25.6 million just on new programs. We continue to look at our processes to see how we can do these things better and more efficiently. Have spent a lot of effort getting the money and decision closer to the programs themselves to allow for more timely and efficient decision making. Faculty Review processes have been updated and streamlined. Have created a new onboarding process for new faculty that lasts the entire first year: New faculty excellence awards; Faculty Seed Research Awards; Evaluations for chairs and deans; Brought in Huron to study and create a roadmap to guide our research agenda; have hired a new VP for Research to lead us forward; 4-year graduation rate is at 31.4 which is very competitive nationally and is heading on an upward trajectory. We did a complete redesign of our student-facing areas which played a big roll in this in addition to all of the work done by the faculty; Pay raises are remaining competitive and continues to be a top priority; Continue to recruit new, highly qualified faculty; have improved our search/hiring process to keep us competitive and timely; Implemented pay raises for student workers from \$8 to \$12/hr; Launched our strategic plan this past year; In the process of building our McAllen Medical Campus; Campus Life – a big theme in strategic planning is how to make life outside the classroom just as robust as life inside the classroom; Starting Fall '24 our expanded spirit programs will begin.
- ii.** In closing would like to thank all of the capable leadership from the Faculty Senate and feels that the relationship has been a really strong

example of shared governance and it has been an absolute privilege to work in the roll of Provost.

### **VIII. Election of FS Officers**

- a. Parliamentarian**
  - i.** One nominee: Louis Falk
  - ii.** Senator Lewis thanks Dr. Falk for his previous work as Parliamentarian and makes a motion to approve Dr. Falk by acclamation to continue in this roll for the 2023-24 year; 2<sup>nd</sup>: Senator Gabler
  - iii.** Motion approved by acclamation. Senator Falk is elected to serve as Parliamentarian for the 2023-24 year.
- b. Secretary**
  - i.** Senators Temby, Hebbard, Viren, Guist all nominated and all decline nomination
  - ii.** Senator Gabler nominates Senator Randall Monty. Senator Monty accepts nomination
  - iii.** Senator Gabler: Motion to elect Senator Monty by acclamation; 2<sup>nd</sup>: Senator Alvarez
  - iv.** Senator Monty is elected Secretary for the 2023-24 year.
- c. President-Elect**
  - i.** Senator Temby nominates Senator Chris Gabler; 2<sup>nd</sup>: Senators Kaynak & Falk
  - ii.** Senator Gabler accepts nomination
  - iii.** No additional nominations
  - iv.** Senator Lewis: Motion to vote by acclamation for Senator Gabler as President-Elect; 2<sup>nd</sup>: Falk
  - v.** Motion approved by acclamation. Senator Gabler is elected President-Elect for the 2023-24 year
- d. Faculty Senate Executive Committee**
  - i.** Schools and College that do not have among their members a FS officer need to elect a representative for the Faculty Senate Executive Committee

### **IX. 2022-23 President Kip Austin Hinton – Farewell Remarks**

- a.** Thank you to all of you for your service as senators. It has been a pleasure and look forward to continued work on multiple projects in roll as past-president.

### **X. Meeting adjourned**

- a.** Motion to adjourn: Senator Falk; 2<sup>nd</sup>: Senator Lewis
- b.** Meeting adjourned at 5:05pm