

UTRGV ACADEMI AFFAIRS EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

JANUARY 28, 2016

1:30PM – 4:30 PM

TSTC UC #133

MEMBERS PRESENT	Havidán Rodríguez, Nina Young, Lisa Smith, John Ronnau representing Frank Fernandez, Eduardo Gutierrez, Marcy de Leon, Steven Block, Bobbette Morgan, Dora Saavedra, Dave Jackson, Jeff Graham, Alex Domijan, Dahlia Guerra, Walter Diaz, Kristin Croyle, Mark Andersen, Parwinder Grewal, Michael Lehker, Cynthia Brown, Ala Qubbaj, Paul Sharpe, Alberto Davila representing Mark Kroll, Marie Mora, Alma Rodríguez representing Patricia McHatton
MEMBERS EXCUSED	Patricia McHatton, Mark Kroll
OTHERS PRESENT	LTC Walter Llamas (ROTC), Frank Zecca (Information Technology)
REVIEW OF MINUTES	Approval of Minutes – December 17, 2015 – Minutes were approved unanimously.

AGENDA TOPICS

ROTC INITIATIVES

LTC WALTER LLAMAS

DISCUSSION	LTC Walter Llamas provided an update about the UTRGV ROTC Program. The PowerPoint presentation will be disseminated to the committee electronically. He pointed out how meaningful it is to UTRGV ROTC students when faculty, department chairs/directors, deans, etc., participate in ROTC events, including commissioning events. The Provost reiterated this point.		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE	

UPDATE ON WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

LISA SMITH/CYNTHIA BROWN

DISCUSSION	As mentioned in past meetings, there is currently over 90,000 webpages between combined campuses that. The large volume is part of the reason for the long process. Lisa Smith has reprioritized requests submitted with department websites being reclassified from "low priority" to "medium". Community-related and accreditation-related websites are being moved to "high" priority. However, the order in which websites will be worked upon depends on when they are requested; many departments have not yet requested websites, therefore, will not appear on the college websites.		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE	

10GIG CLASSROOM PROJECT

JEFF GRAHAM

DISCUSSION	Jeff Graham discussed the 10gig Classroom Project. This project will upgrade classrooms and allow them to be video streamed. Currently, they have \$350k allocated for this program; \$200k of which are being used for "core upgrades". Faculty should not notice a major difference or interruption at this time; all will hopefully be in place by the time we need these services. The classrooms in Brownsville now have the same technology as the ones in Edinburg. Dr. Graham emphasized to please inform IT if faculty are having issues with technology in a particular classroom, especially if it is issues with WebEx or with needs for videoconferencing and facilities. The Provost noted that because It is now part of the Academic Affairs division, this will help streamline the needs of the faculty.		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE	

REVIEW PROCESS FOR INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS AND PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

CYNTHIA BROWN

DISCUSSION	Drafted guidelines were circulated regarding international partnerships, such as for Study Abroad, faculty exchanges and so forth. Institutional affiliation agreements with other institutions can only be approved by the UTRGV President or Provost. Once these are approved, specific program agreements may be considered. The provost considers several factors when entering into an agreement. (1) Who will be engaged (the preference is for multiple departments and colleges; and should not only depend on one or two faculty members); (2) the agreements must be active with expected engagement from the UTRGV community; and (3) they will only sign agreements for up to three years at a time, to ensure the level of engagement is sustained throughout the course of the agreement.
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE DEADLINE

IDENTIFYING PEER INSTITUTIONS

HAVIDÁN RODRÍGUEZ

DISCUSSION	HURON is researching an equity salary study, on research, endowments, enrollment and# of faculty. HURON provided list of peer and aspirational institutions. Handout was circulated for review and determine/identify peer or aspirational institutions. Submit list by Monday to Marcy de Leon. Provost wants to see the thoughts of these institutions.
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE DEADLINE
Everyone was asked to fill out form and submit list to Marcy de Leon by Monday, February 1.	AAEC February 1, 2016

FACULTY SEARCHES: REVIEW PROCESS

HAVIDÁN RODRÍGUEZ

DISCUSSION	Faculty Searches: Review Process – Currently there are 160 faculty searches occurring. The Provost highlighted that when hiring faculty, teaching is of utmost importance. We also need to consider meeting the status of an emerging research institution in the context of UTRGV’s goals. The Provost emphasized that faculty, chairs and deans need to fully review and vet job candidates, thoroughly and carefully. Faculty should not be hired just to fill the position. The deadline for hiring is March 15, 2016.
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE DEADLINE

FACULTY ANNUAL EVALUATIONS

HAVIDÁN RODRÍGUEZ

DISCUSSION	<p>The Provost expressed concerns over some of the questions he has received as well as some of the reviews of faculty that he has observed. As a result, he discussed the UTRGV HOP on Annual Faculty Evaluation, HOP 06-502 and Faculty Tenure and Promotion, HOP 06-505. He emphasized several key points, but faculty, department chairs/school directors, deans and anyone involved in the tenure/promotion process should be thoroughly familiar with the policies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. We need to align our Annual Reviews with Tenure/Promotion. It is unacceptable for some faculty to exceed expectations during annual reviews consistently, and then be informed they do not meet the standards when going up for tenure/promotion. B. UTRGV requires peer observation of teaching, and for faculty going up for tenure and/or promotion, external reviews. For the latter, the focus should be on research/scholarship. C. No tenure-track/tenured faculty member is exempt from research, regardless of their faculty workload. All tenure-track/tenured faculty members must be engaged in teaching, research/scholarship, and service. However, various weights depending on workload can differ across faculty, and should be considered in the review processes. D. All tenure/promotion review committees need a minimum of three members. Note that Associate Deans should not be on these committees. E. HOP 06-505, Section D.3.d specifies that: <i>"Each department shall develop its own evaluation standards/criteria with the goal of becoming an emerging research institution. These shall be approved by the department faculty, chair, college dean, and the Provost/EVPAA."</i> Departments/schools should currently be working on their evaluations standards/criteria, with the emerging research institution in mind. F. HOP 06-505, Section E.1.a.vi specifies that: <i>"Each level of review shall conduct an independent evaluation and provide substantive feedback to the faculty member, highlighting the faculty member's weaknesses and strengths, as well as areas for improvement..."</i> The Provost strongly emphasized the point about "weaknesses and strengths" is meant to provide faculty with constructive and substantive feedback designed for their professional growth and development. This statement should NOT be construed as instructions to denigrate or insult faculty, or that the reviewers are required to include negative statements about the faculty they are reviewing. Moreover, if the reviewers do not perceive any weaknesses, they can make a note of that. G. HOP 06-505: Section D.1.c specifies that:
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<p><i>"The purpose of promotion at UTRGV is to recognize and reward faculty records of sustained professional accomplishments and potential for future performance that contribute to UTRGV's mission and to establishing UTRGV as an emerging research institution."</i></p> <p>The Provost emphasized that tenure/promotion is not just a reward for past work; the "potential for future performance" at UTRGV is also important.</p> <p>H. Section D.5.d specifies that: <i>"All those involved in the review process shall adhere to the highest standards of ethical and professional conduct; shall focus on factual information; avoid practices that would conflict with the ability to be fair and unbiased; and guard against inaccuracies caused by either undue emphasis or omission of information."</i></p> <p>The Provost emphasized the point about "ethical and professional conduct" in these reviews; in fact, he reiterated this point throughout the entire discussion. Again, the reviews should NOT be viewed as an opportunity to denigrate faculty; they are designed to provide faculty with substantive and formative feedback. Reviews that are unprofessional or unethical in nature should have been returned to the reviewers by the Department Chair/School Director or Dean. Reviews that are unprofessional in nature should not make it to the Provost's level.</p> <p>I. Assistant Professors cannot hold tenured positions at UTRGV. Associate and Full Professors at UTRGV must be tenured.</p> <p>J. Faculty who accept full-time employment at another institution effectively resign from UTRGV upon acceptance, whether they are tenured or not. (See HOP 06-505, Section D.7.b: <i>"The acceptance of a full-time appointment at an institution outside UTRGV shall be considered as a resignation of any faculty position, tenured or otherwise, that a faculty member holds at UTRGV."</i>)</p> <p>K. The faculty member and Department Chair should come up with an annual action plan for the following year.</p> <p>L. For faculty seeking <i>early</i> tenure and/or promotion, if any level of review recommends against the request, the dossier will not move forward as an application for tenure and/or promotion. <i>Note:</i> For Associate Professors, the HOP specifies the minimum time in rank before promotion is normally six years.</p>		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

NON-TENURE TRACK CONTRACT RENEWAL AND PROMOTION

HAVIDÁN RODRÍGUEZ

DISCUSSION	The promotion decisions for Lecturers end with the Provost. However, Lecturers who are not seeking promotion but are seeking renewal for their three-year contracts do not need to be reviewed/approved by the Provost. If the Lecturers meet the criteria to be rehired, the Dean may issue their offer letters, copying the Provost.	
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

WORKLOAD FOR TENURED AND TENURE-TRACK FACULTY

HAVIDÁN RODRÍGUEZ

DISCUSSION	Any questions, refer them to Marcy de Leon and/or Nina Young.	
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

FACULTY/STAFF ASSIGNED TO GRANTS, 100% EFFORT

HAVIDÁN RODRÍGUEZ

DISCUSSION	Faculty/staff with 100% assignment on grants cannot be assigned to teach courses. Questions can be referred to Marcy de Leon.	
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

DISTRIBUTION OF IDC FUNDS

HAVIDÁN RODRÍGUEZ

DISCUSSION	Last week, the IDC was disbursed to faculty with grants at UTPA, based on the UTPA policy (which disbursed IDC once per year). Faculty with grants at UTB already received their IDC, as their policy disbursed funds quarterly.	
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

HAVIDÁN RODRÍGUEZ

DISCUSSION	<p>A handout was circulated regarding the Strategic Plan process. The Provost emphasized how important it is to actively engage our university community in our strategic planning process, particularly people in Academic Affairs. As Dr. Bailey indicated at his Leadership meeting on the 27th, strategic plan is essentially about academics. All of this must be built into the fabric of UTRGV.</p> <p>This led to a productive discussion about ways to increase engagement. People should be made aware that lots of positive things are happening at UTRGV, but not everyone knows of them.</p> <p>There was a productive and engaged Retreat on Thursday January 21st. The SP website has been updated to include some of the discussion points: http://www.utrgv.edu/spc/index.htm. The full list of Committee members as well as the Steering Committee (both of which include representatives from the Faculty Senate and WFN) is also posted (http://www.utrgv.edu/spc/committee-membership/index.htm). The SPC is accepting feedback through email (strategic-planning@utrgv.edu) and on-line: http://www.utrgv.edu/spc/feedback-comments/index.htm.</p> <p>Ongoing working groups: Handouts were passed out to everyone for their review and feedback for improvement</p>		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE	

MASTER PLANNING COMMITTEE

HAVIDÁN RODRÍGUEZ

DISCUSSION	<p>A UTRGV Master Planning Committee is being formed to work in conjunction with the UTRGV Strategic Planning Committee; it is overseen by Cannon Design, who were part of the Strategic Planning Retreat on January 21st.</p>		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE	

PEOPLESFT STEERING COMMITTEE

HAVIDÁN RODRÍGUEZ

DISCUSSION	<p>Names have been submitted. Once finalized, an update will be provided.</p>		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE	

UPDATES

DISCUSSION	<p>Faculty Affairs & Diversity:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Dr. Ala Qubbaj mentioned his office can provide individual training for the Faculty Portfolio Tool (FPT). Faculty should be reminded to upload their syllabi. b. There were approximately 100 nominations for the UTRGV Faculty Excellence Awards, which were due Monday, January 25th. NOTE: Some prior UTPA faculty had asked about college-level awards. Those awards were left up to the colleges. Dr. Walter Diaz, Dean of COLA, mentioned they may have these college awards next year, but as he had discussed with the chairs, the timing did not work out this year. COLA will, however, have a spring event to celebrate achievements. (Note: No other college representatives commented on this point c. UTRGV had 30 nominations for the Regents Awards. d. There are 17 faculty members receiving funding from the Faculty Development Funding Program this cycle, ranging between \$1000-\$3000; this is on top of 18 awarded this past fall. Moreover, there were approximately 50 applications for the Junior Faculty Travel Support Program this cycle; the deadline closed Monday. This is on top of 30 who were funded in the previous cycle. The Provost's Office has provided approximately \$100,000 for these two programs alone this year. e. There was a small orientation for new faculty joining UTRGV in Spring 2016. f. A post-doc workshop with 8 STEM women faculty from the University of Houston was held earlier this month. g. There is a Summer Writing Retreat funded through an NSF grant to Jackson State University, in partnership with UTRGV, designed for women faculty in STEM and the Social Sciences, that will be held in May in South Padre Island. Eligible faculty will be contacted with more information. h. The Center for Teaching Excellence will be offering training for Graduate Assistants. Faculty should take advantage of the resources offered by the CTE. i. The Faculty Development Council, when formed, will be asked to come up with guidelines and deadlines for the Faculty Professional Development Leave program. This Program is like a sabbatical at other institutions; it provides faculty with full salary for a one-semester professional development leave, and 1/2 salary for one-year. <p>Faculty Senate:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. One of their main initiatives is shared governance. 14 institutions in the FAC are concerned their institutions are not fully embracing shared governance. Dora Saavedra, President of the UTRGV Faculty Senate, is currently working on a white paper on this issue. b. The FS will consider 19 policies/guidelines at its January 29th meeting. 		
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- c. The FS is working with the Administration to have better communications, and looks forward to more frequent meetings with the Provost and President to discuss relevant issues.
- d. Department Chairs/School Directors and Deans are being asked to include on their meeting agenda a space for Faculty Senate updates.

Women’s Faculty Network:

- a. The WFN is represented on both the Strategic Planning Committee and its Steering Committee; Strategic Planning will be discussed at the February 4th WFN meeting.
- b. A new WFN Mentoring Program will be launched at the February 4th meeting, through the WFN Mentoring and Outreach Committee. The plan is to have tenure-track faculty and newly hired faculty be mentored by senior faculty in other colleges. More information is forthcoming.
- c. The WFN Achievements and Advancement Committee is partnering with the Library to promote the research of women in the Lunchtime Learning Series; once a month, women will present their work during brown-bag seminars.
- d. Search committees are encouraged to contact the WFN Chair, Marie Mora (Marie.Mora@utrgv.edu), to schedule meetings between job candidates (regardless of gender) and representatives of the WFN. These meetings are not designed to be a formal part of the search process; what is discussed (such as schools, dual career hiring programs, etc.) stays within the group and is NOT reported back to anyone involved in the hiring decision. We have received amazing feedback from candidates that these meetings were a determining factor in the decision to come to our campus.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

ADJOURNMENT	Meeting adjourned at 4:45 pm
NEXT MEETING	February 18, 2016