



2015-2016 Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

March 4, 2016, 2:00-4:40 PM

RAHC 1.100, Harlingen, Texas

Minutes Prepared by Wendy Lawrence-Fowler, UTRGV Faculty Senate, Secretary

SENATORS PRESENT: Andrew Anabila, Dongyop Oh, Sam Sale, Wendy Lawrence-Fowler, Mahmoud Quweider, Sanjeev Kumar, Immanuel Edinbarough, Micky (Dumitru) Caruntu, Sandra Musanti, Lionel "Javier" Cavazos, Rosalinda Hernandez, Bobbette Morgan, Jacob Neumann, Robert Gilbert, Britt Claude Haraway, Frederick Darsow, Justin Writer, Yasar Tasnif, Jameela Banu, Lilia A. Fuentes, Angela Scoggin, Sandra Hansmann, Wilma Mealer, Catherine Faver, Jeffrey McQuillen, Dora Saavedra, Thomas White, Rosalva Resendiz, Michael Weaver, Ernesto Ramirez, David Anshen, Irina Armianu, Cory Wimberly, James Wenzel, Gary Leka, Aziza Zemrani, Stephen Merino, Margaret Graham, John Newman, Eleftherios Gkioulekas, Ranadhir Roy, James Hinthorne, Nicolas Pereyra, Kathy (Kathleen) Carter, John VandeBerg, Michelle Alvarado, Kelly Leu

SENATORS ABSENT: James Boudreau, Sibin Wu, Mohammad Azarbayejani, Brian Warren, Bailey Wang, Alexander Kazansky, Murat Karabulut, Jeannean Ryman, Fidencio Mercado, William Sokoloff, Sheila Dooley, Maria "Miriam" Herrera, Matthew Terry, Yuanbing Mao, James Bullard

SENATORS ABSENT (EXCUSED): Christopher Vitek, Daniel Hunter Holly, Donald J. Lyles, Wendy Innis, Joe Lacher, Brent Campney, Jasang Yoon, Arden Dingle, Mohammadali Zolfagharian, Volker Quetschke, Irasema Gonzalez

FACULTY SENATE OFFICE ASSISTANT III: Vanessa Ceballos

VISITOR(S): Ala Qubbaj, Havidán Rodríguez, Cynthia Brown, Theresa Maldonado

- I. Pre-Meeting (1:45):
 - a. Senators Signed in for Attendance and for Travel Reimbursements (Edinburg & Brownsville Senators)
- II. President Saavedra convened the meeting at 2:05 p.m.
- III. Action Items:
 - a. Approval of the Minutes for February 12, 2016 Meeting (Senator Wendy Lawrence-Fowler). There were no corrections to the minutes. Senator Morgan moved that we accept the minutes as presented. Senator Caruntu seconded the motion. The motion carried.
 - b. Old Business: None

IV. Presentations

- a. Senator Morgan reported on the Texas Council of Faculty Senate meeting held in Austin, TX, February 25-27, 2016. Issues addressed included:
 - i. Guns on campus: while not everyone is happy, every campus is complying with the legislation and has policies in place.
 - ii. THECB 60 X 30 plan: 60% of all Texans in the 25-34 year old age cohort will achieve a post-secondary education credential by 2030. There is a movement that ties this to competency based curriculum. This plan will likely have a larger impact on community colleges than on four year campuses.
 - iii. A committee from Texas State University presented a study report on the non-tenured track faculty over the last 15 years. There has been a steady increase in non-tenure track faculty including lecturers and clinical faculty. During the same period, the number of tenure track positions has steadily decreased. We would likely see if there are similar trends in Edinburg and Brownsville over the last 5 years. Currently, 40% of all Texas State University courses are taught by non-tenure track faculty. The committee and study suggested they are not treated fairly. UTRGV is setting a better tone because non-tenure track faculty have representation in the Faculty Senate. Additionally, Texas State University was praised for their orientation program for new faculty.
 - iv. Topics of concern: shared governance (this was focused on during the fall), writing tenure and promotion policy, and the review process; the GRIP plan - graduation, retention and improvement plans that tie learning outcomes to graduation.
- b. Senator Wenzel provided a quick update on the White Paper detailing faculty concerns about the manner in which the transition has taken place, and the administration's management of campus activities. The goal is to collapse the issues into four or so larger issues. He indicated that he has requested copies of form I 990 from the last few years from UTPA and UTB. The I 990 is associated with budget transparency.
- c. Senator Wenzel requested input from the senate with their issues of the way that campus is going.
 - a. There is not a firm deadline for input, but a goal is to have a draft done in the next two weeks.
 - b. President Saavedra requested that the Faculty Senate hold a special meeting on March 25th to be able to finalize this report and any other work on policies that we might be reviewing.
 - c. Senator Wenzel suggested that the White Paper should be from the faculty, rather than solely from the Senate. Senator Quweider requested a copy to enable input from faculty.
 - d. The principal issue categories are: transparency, communication, financial fiduciary responsibilities, and campus climate. Further discussion included the idea of forming a partnership between the administration and faculty to deal with issues. Our

document needs to provide evidence that we understand that there are constraints to resolving all the issues while also emphasizing that deadlines need to be established.

- V. No Updates from Administration are scheduled for this meeting at this time due to the scheduled work session. (Administrative guests appeared later in the meeting - See their comments below.)
- VI. President Saavedra welcomed and introduced Dr. Theresa Maldonado, Senior Vice-President of Research, Innovation & Economic Development
 - a. Dr. Maldonado provided information about her background and her role at UTRGV. She indicated that in addition to research, creativity, and innovation, there is a role of economic development, particularly to help students who are graduating.
 - b. Dr. Maldonado has hired a person to look at the facilities and needs for research - because we are distributed campuses. Dr. Andreas Holzenberg will be working to develop a shared services model.
 - c. She has formed a Research Deans Council. The associate dean for research from each of the colleges serves on the council, as does Dr. Saavedra.
 - d. Addressing the Faculty Research Award process, she indicated this year that she empowered the associate deans to review the proposals this year. She wants to remind faculty to write proposals that may be read by people who may not be in their discipline. Those that percolated up through the review process were rewarded (considered meritorious).
 - e. Her short term goals included: working with junior faculty on grant writing. Promotion and tenure is going to get more rigorous as we become an emerging research institution. Full professors will be part of this conversation. There will be a workshop on the NSF Career Awards in about 3 months. Based on her experience, successful grant writing is about the way issues are framed. She recommends that one should always think “Did I convey my idea and who should care (about this project)?” She will be working with all faculty. With respect to all disciplines, she has hired an assistant vice president for research translation, rather than for technology transfer. The economic development piece is new at both campuses. Irv Downing will be working with faculty. He is out in the community, educating the community about our resources and pulling them in. He will extend his reach. We want to bring the agencies down here as well as the SpaceX’s. Currently, we do not market our resources very well. We need to start bragging about what we have. We need a cohesive story....why should a sponsor give us money?
 - i. Visual aid shown: a word cloud that came from the strategic planning retreat - largest font - research and metrics; unifying the campuses
 - ii. The story has to be about impact of the work: Under the microscope.
- VII. Guests were invited to speak: Dr. Rodriquez, Dr. Brown, and Dr. Qubbaj
 - a. Provost Rodriquez thanked the Senate for their work.
 - i. He had three announcements: 1) He noted the president's memo of Feb 19, 2016 in which President Bailey wrote about the first class at UTRGV, campus carry, the Huron salary study, and the strategic planning process. The Provost recommends

- reading the email. In response to a question about a timeline for salary set asides, the Provost indicated he was looking at this and had not made a final determination yet.
- 2) Human Resources (HR) is starting to complete a comprehensive review of job titles and compensation for staff. HR will hold sessions to explain the process. 3) Drs. Bailey and Rodriguez will be meeting with all college faculty in April and May to talk about UTRGV. The Provost encouraged the faculty to attend. There will be at least 7 meetings for the academic colleges. President Saavedra stated that since the Staff Senate has yet to be formed, the Faculty Senate will be bringing up some of their issues during the meetings. The Provost responded that there is a group of staff that are working together to create the Staff Senate. The Staff Senate constitution is under review by counsel.
- ii. There were about 160 faculty searches this year for tenure/tenure track and lecturer positions. The unfilled positions will be open for next year, and there will be new positions. Last year there were about 100 hires.
 - iii. He addressed questions about Brownsville space needs. Administration is looking at space issues on a daily basis. Deans have been asked to identify critical space needs (particularly for research). They are looking for space in the fall for new hires. There are buildings under consideration for acquisition, and they are thinking about what can be on and off campus. A major issue is that it is not possible to build a building overnight. In response to an observation that back to back scheduling is causing problems with student success, the Provost suggested that faculty should not conflate (student) failure with space (needs), but it is a major problem. The problem is magnified on the Brownsville campus because there are use and modification constraints on leased space. UTRGV currently has 4 new buildings (Science in Edinburg, Brownsville Science and Arts and Music) and 2 new buildings, one on each campus in the planning stages.
 - iv. The Provost spoke to the issue of early tenure. He indicated that he has no objections; however, people who come up for early tenure need to have conversations with their dean and chair, and they need to have a record that supports the move. A discussion of the wording of 'meeting' versus 'exceeds expectations' as well as the overall tenure and promotion review process ensued. The Provost indicated that while tenure and promotion is a peer review process at department and college, there are a number of levels of independent review. In response to questions about what the criteria are used at the independent levels---Do they vary from the department level? What are the intangibles from the point of view of the Provost that are not explicitly stated in the criteria? ---, the Provost stated that he would expect the criteria to change because academia and the discipline have changed/evolved. Focusing on the different levels of review: the department committees are looking at the criteria (all levels looking at the department criteria). The other levels are charged with equity across the campus or at the appropriate level.
- b. Dr. Brown announced that both the graduate and undergraduate curriculum committees met today. This year's foci are corrections and revisions on existing degree plans (prerequisites and other things that will not have a significant impact on students). The

goal is to get documents from the committees by April 1, 2016, because the deadline to get these changes to THECB is May 1, 2016.

- c. Dr. Qubbaj announced that the Faculty Profile system is about to go live; therefore, faculty should update their information as soon as possible. The system is tied to Google Scholar and research administration. Access is through the FPT icon on the single logon window. His office is in the middle of reviewing the university level awards (55 nominations). A new award, the department mentoring award, has been created. His office has received 15 packets for Regent's Award candidates. Forty junior faculty received development awards. Drs. Christina Villalobos and Marie Mora are nominated for the Hispanic Faculty Award. Tenure and promotion pathways for next year are under development and everything will be aligned. Post tenure review will occur in the fall instead of spring, as will lecturer reviews. Training for tenure and promotion committees will be held in spring. Committee memberships will be added to the Provost's website. His office is working towards writing support for faculty. HR website will display vendor discounts.

VIII. New Business: (HOP Review Presentations from Senate Committees and Possible Action-vote)

President Saavedra noted that there are policies ready for review. Please look at Blackboard and review them. Due to lack of time, the policies were not reviewed during the meeting.

- a. ADM 2-102 Academic Committees and Councils (3-3:20)
- b. ADM 6-111 Faculty Grievance (Tom White et al.) 3:20-3:40)
- c. ADM 6-302 Appointment of Deans (for c, d, and e 3:40-4:00)
- d. ADM 6-201 Academic Program Standards and Approval
- e. ADM 6-104 Faculty Resignation and Modified Service
- f. ADM 06-505 Tenure and Promotion

IX. Not addressed due to lack of time: Faculty Senate Working Group Workshop Session (Senator Wenzel)

- X. Upcoming HOP policy assignments (volunteers needed to review about 18 more policies) and possible SPECIAL MEETING of the Senate (March 25th and LUNCHEON meeting on April 1st beginning at 12:30). Senator Weaver moved that we hold a special meeting on March 25th to work solely on policies from 9:30 am to 1pm with lunch. The motion was seconded by Senator Roy. The motion passed.

XI. President Saavedra adjourned the meeting at 4:37pm.