

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

2017-2018 Faculty Senate Meeting III
Brownsville: BBBRHB 1.222 (Zoom)
Edinburg: EACSB 1.106
Friday, October 19, 2018
2:00 p.m. - 4:30p.m.
Minutes

Minutes prepared by Ernesto Ramírez, UTRGV Faculty Senate, Secretary

- I. Convene Meeting and Welcome Senators and Guests
 - The meeting convened at 2:10 pm
 - President Volker welcomed UTRGV President Bailey to the Senate

- II. Report from President Dr. Guy Bailey about SACS COC (15mins), Q&A (10 min)
 - Dr. Bailey reported that we had a visit from a SACS/COC special committee last week. Dr. Bailey further described the history of the probation under which UTRGV currently operates.
 - At the end of 2016 we were put on probation, and we remained on probation after last year's meeting – due to audit timing by state and the meeting time of the SACS COC committee. Our audit indicated that there were problems in FY16, but there was no evidence yet to present at the time of the meeting to indicate corrections. After the release of the state audit, we had no errors present. SACS/COC also found no errors in their independent audit. We will not know anything yet until the December meeting about their decision to remove us from the probation.
 - Dr. Bailey then reported that a merit increase might be possible. If we have a reasonable fall enrollment, we might have a merit pay increase. Our graduate enrollment is back up this fall. In the paycheck obtained on the January 1st paycheck, will reflect an average merit increase of 2% for those who are eligible. We will receive some notification in the form of a letter sometime near the end of November to indicate what each individual's percentage increase will be. We may have another merit pay in Fall 2019 if we can continue this enrollment growth.
 - Q & A
 - Q: What are the criteria for merit?
 - A: That is to be determined by the EVP, Deans, and Chairs – based

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upon annual evaluations from last year (AY 2017-2018).

- Comment: this is the first time we have used these FPT evaluations, there is a disconnect between what was supposed to happen and what did happen.
 - Response: if you have suggestions, please make them known so that the process can be improved.
- Q: With a 2% average, what is the minimum and maximum?
 - A: 0% minimum and 4% maximum
- Q: Have you considered a flat distribution?
 - A: maximum is \$4000, minimum is \$1000; a meaningful amount for people, an attempt to get a fair amount out there. You had to be here at least a year, and administrators do not eligible to receive this merit pay increase.
- Q: Is this a one-time merit adjustment?
 - A: No, this is an adjustment to your base pay.
- Q: Have there been any discussions about lecturers, people whose pay is way behind that of others?
 - A: EVP McHatton can discuss that, but we did discuss adjustments to lecturers.
- Q: In 2015, started the discussion about UTRGV being an Emerging Research Institution - Where are we?
 - A: There are two things we need to do - enhance research expenditures and expand the number of doctoral programs and graduates. We have another approved program; clinical psychology is starting. Several more are in the process, from the planning stages to approval with the THECB. We need to get to the requisite number of graduates first.
Expenditures are up to \$28 million or next year maybe \$30 million. Still we need to increase the expenditures! It takes time; this is a slow process as we move forward.
- Q: Will there be a merit adjustment for staff?
 - A: Yes, that is true.
- Q: In the legislative session, what other factors besides enrollment are favorable?
 - A: These are difficult to predict, the state has many expenditures to deal with on an emergency basis, but at least the revenues have increased. The governor is willing to use rainy day funds to

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pay for some of those emergencies allowing the legislature to budget other items in place. Therefore, the legislature is willing to look at not just enrollments, but also graduation. One plan indicates that those institutions identified as serving at risk students receive more money upon completion of the degree. Many of our students are identified such. We are hoping for special items to hold and that we do well in formula funding.

- Q: How are “at-risk students” defined?
 - A: THECB has defined them as Pell Grant eligible students; they are the least likely to graduate, such as minority students, and those are students we serve.
- Q: The messages we are getting gives the impression that there is an imbalance between the growth of academics and the administration; can you give us a report?
 - A: If you look at the last letter I sent, there has been a reduction in administration costs of \$5 million, a 9% reduction in administrative costs. Go to the annual budget summary for the UT system and look at the infrastructure report. That savings has allowed us to pay equity adjustments.

III. Request for nominations and election of President-elect

- Senator Vidal nominated Senator Caruntu, who accepted the nomination
 - Dora Saavedra announced that the FSEC had nominated Arden Dingle, who has accepted the nomination.
 - Senator Herrera nominated Senator Ramírez, he accepted the nomination.
 - Senator Paccacerqua nominated Senator Gkioulekas. He declined the nomination.
 - President Volker Quetschke asked for a delay to obtain information and statements from the nominees.
 - Senator Paccacerqua made the request into a motion
 - Seconded by Senator Lyles
 - Vote: The motion carried unanimously.
- a. The request for nomination and election of possibly vacated FSEC seats was tabled.

IV. Report from the Faculty Senate President

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- Nothing to report/approve at this time

V. Action Item: Approval of Minutes – Friday, September 21, 2018

- Motion to approve was made by Senator Levinson,
- Seconded by Senator Lyles
- Vote: unanimous approval.

VI. Announcements

- Senator Feria announced her position as Women's Faculty Network (WFN) Chair, former Faculty Senate Senator and Secretary, Michelle Alvarado, is the newly elected WFN liaison to the Faculty Senate.

- Senator Estrada read a statement about the Library committee, the work of the library committee, the description is in the ADM. Please send names of interested faculty; 1 per college. Senator Estrada introduced new a librarian, Justin White. He will help with open access publishing and copyrights. His focus is to build a connection in open access environment. He is not here to push for mandates - this is a movement that is a community of contributors. Next week is open access week. On the 22nd at 2pm, he will be holding the first session about services he will provide. The session will be in classroom 1 Edinburg; on the 25th there will be a screening of the movie *Paywall: The Business of Scholarship* which will be followed by discussion. Pay attention to Messenger for more information.
- Senator Sharpe from SOM provided us with information on a survey that will be done, to be completed by SOM faculty only. This raised a concern that there has been a failure to consult the staff in the SOM about the work culture and the like. The senator is urging the FS to consider this. One of the SOM senators has addressed this with the EVP/Dean, who is now exploring options to serve them as well. The FS will monitor the situation.

VII. Business

a. Shared Governance Award –

- We had posted the evaluations of administrators, internally on blackboard, and they will be available on the website when IT can move on it. When it is ready online, an announcement will be sent out. There are more things to be seen on the website soon. We are thinking of recognizing an administrator that has done well in the administrator evaluations. Saavedra indicates that two scored high for shared governance, Dr. Qubbaj from Engineering and Faculty Affairs and librarian, Paul Sharpe. She suggested the Senate award

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them a plaque or certificate of recognition to public acknowledge these individuals.

Motion. Senator Weaver moved to take the suggested action. Senator Gkioulekas seconded the motion

Vote: A majority of the Senate voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried

b. Motion to request growth plans for administrators who received low evaluations in the spring Administrator Evals.

- Question brought forth in discussion: What is difference between motion and resolution? A motion is an announcement usually of a proposed action item, while a resolution carries more weight in that it goes to the UT administration as well.
- There is a concern that a low response rate may be an issue, in that a response from FS may not be needed. We should use this information to move forward in positive way. The concern is to mark an administrator as lacking in performance when there may not be a lack of performance. One senator asked if there was leadership training. The concern again was that we should not probably single out people for a negative evaluation here, as it is a single evaluation. Another point was made that we do need to do something, otherwise the evaluation is a useless exercise, others also support that we need to take action.
- The issue was raised again that the response rate was low for some of the administrators, how can we hold someone accountable when the result may not be valuable when we look at it? Response: The only way to get more participation is that there is a result of action that comes from these surveys. Otherwise, we have a catch 22 in that no one will do the work of completing the survey as there is no need to do the work since nothing comes of the survey. This action we take is to help us move forward. They say to motivate is to do something with the survey. Questions were based upon a singular item survey; it was clarified that this is about the result of a single item on a survey. We are looking for a detrimental action; this is about growth and moving forward.
- The motion to request growth plans for low scoring administrator was made by Senator Lyles
- Seconded by Senator Gkioulekas
- Vote: For: 38 Against 16, abstention 4; the motion carried

- c. **Community engagement HOP 2nd reading (moderated by Dora Saavedra)**
 - This is not a mandate; but we do need this in our policy to reflect what we do, Community Engagement is not just teaching, but research and service. UTB was already an engaged Carnegie university, UTPA was not. We only addressed the changes told that this should be done, if possible, related to Carnegie. No other issues were discussed.
 - Motion: Senator Graham moved to accept all changes present to ADM 06-304, ADM 06-502, and ADM 06-505.
 - Seconded: Senator Atkins
 - Vote: The motion carried unanimously

- d. **Constitution committee**
 - Chair Past-President Saavedra – Deadline March 15 report to the Faculty Senate. This committee started a year ago by Senator Timmer. President Quetschke reconstituted the committee and called on members to volunteer.

- e. **Chair survey committee**
 - A resolution was passed last year. Senator Zemrani will chair this committee and report to the Senate on progress.

- f. **Whitepaper report card committee**
 - This committee must investigate the overlap which exists among the reports produced by ModernThink and the Administrator evaluation – with the White Paper report. We had the paper two years ago and we need to assess what has been done, to do a report card and to look at the other two tools. Dr Weaver will chair the committee.

- g. **Children in the workplace resolution by Marie Mora and Dora Saavedra to present to the WFN and Faculty Senate**
 - Motion: Senator Weaver moved to support and pass this resolution.
 - Seconded: Senator Graham
 - Vote: The motion passed unanimously

- h. **Q&A session with EVPAA Dr. Patricia McHatton**
 - EVP McHatton wishes to tell us about the MOA she stated; a Board of Regents rule

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requires that an MOA be provided. There is a template which UTRGV used. It is required by system to provide an MOA. We need to separate the MOA process from payroll issues. The other is an agreement of workload effort that should be separate. To not confound the issues. We need to do this in a consistent manner.

- We need to develop a set of guidelines for the workload process. We will follow these. The workload policy committee will continue on the policy that group will remain in effect to then develop the guidelines of the workload procedures.
- This committee has worked for a policy at the institutional level that is flexible and recognizes issues related to different disciplines. It is a broad draft. It will be shared with deans, chairs, and faculty. It allows for differentiated workloads so that faculty may negotiate to make decisions with chairs about the percentages. It allows for that dialogue. This process will help you to identify the weight of the course so that you can more accurately do workload. That will be done at college level. After this, each college and department will work out its own policy to allow flexibility to reflect faculty work. Some issues: (1) we must meet student demand for classes and (2) we address weighted student hours to meet the fiscal needs of the college as well.
- Q: What about pay adjustment for lecturers?
 - A: We have taken a look at new lecturer ranges; new lecturers were hired in those ranges. Old lecturers are at a salary rate below those and we have identified those who are below that lower range. They will be brought up to that level. That is 28% (or 28 individuals - EVP was unsure which of these it is) of the lecturers from a couple of hundred who will receive adjustments that may range to a couple of thousand dollars. Only those impacted will be emailed/or informed. The chairs and deans will be copied. This is effective in the next check (11/1). They were the last group that we needed to do adjustment for according to EVP.
- Q: Merit guidelines
 - A: There are guidelines in draft form. These will be shared with FS President and deans. It will not be an across the board 2% which is based upon total faculty rate. Therefore, a percentage will be given to faculty based upon merit. The merit decisions will be based on last year's (2017-2018) evaluation, not this year's evaluation (2018-2019).
- FS President noted that one of our concerns is that there have been "squishy" guidelines. That was declared as not quite true; there have been definite guidelines that have been developed. Research, service, and community engagement have a place to be acknowledged and much of the previous weights

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are still useful.

- Comment: Part of the issue with the MOA was based upon the fact that the presentation was seen as heavy handed, without consideration of the fact that people were already on the payroll and scheduled.
 - A: There was a poor choice of words in the MOAs, but the language used in the document, came from Board of Regents. Templates are adaptable, so this is not, but it is called a template. This is a yearly requirement to accept the faculty appointment.
- Suggestion was made about merit. If there had been one or more years since a merit raise, we should average the previous years since the last merit raise as one score for merit raise consideration.
- Q: Lecturers were not given MOAs, we were told to contact the provost office directly. So, why were lecturers excluded from the MOA process?
 - A: Probably because, with the MOA we were trying to capture the amount of research that was being conducted across the university. Without research/requirements on the lecturer track, we did not go in that direction. Since they are not requirements of the title, they were not included. All appointments should have a MOA in the future.
- During the meeting we were sent the draft workload policy.
- Q: Does the MOA have any role in the evaluation on a yearly process?
 - A: It should. In the sense of that the research percentage is announced here. Did you do it? It plays a role in that, it is a tool to check what you committed to and what you delivered. You may want to review your tenure and promotion guidelines to be in line with the new policies. If you have tracks, you may wish to align them. What clarifies that percentage as work output? This cannot be done at the institutional level, it needs to be in the departments. Every discipline is different.
- Q: About TT and research, do you think there will be a percentage that is a minimum.
 - A: One of the things is that TT faculty cannot be on a teaching intensive track. They need research to obtain tenure. Could the teaching track impact movement to full professor? You need to clarify that in your department, so that you have that opportunity with tracks.
- Q: If the MOA is a mandate from Board of Regents, when did this happen and why is it just here now? It would also be ideal to separate MOA and workload you stated, but then it becomes a criterion for evaluation. If it is to be used for our evaluation, we need a process to amend or grieve this, or it may be used against

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us.

- o RR 31001 started in 2004, amended last in 2016. The faculty appointment document was last updated in April 2000. We are now following and are in compliance with the rules. When you determined your efforts, it was based upon discussion with chair. You claim what your output will be with that percentage. There has to be some alignment at the end to determine if that has been done. EVP made it clear that deans were to make it known to chairs that this was a discussion between the Chair and faculty. If it didn't happen, EVP needs to know that it didn't happen. Make her aware so that she can track it down. She knows that in one case, when it was assigned in one case that teaching was too low. I was brought to that Dean's awareness. She needs to be made aware. MOAs are not written in stone, you can make it reflect your needs by discussing those with our chairs. The question is whether the chair is listening.
- Q: SOM concern, MOA had problems. In this template document it says that I can be fired at any time. This is not how you attract medical faculty. Also, I was told by a chair at town hall meetings that there is no way to make changes to the MOA. Beyond that clinical time was based upon standards not appropriate for this region or for the specialty. This doesn't inspire confidence.
 - o A: First, speak with EVP Krouse. It is inappropriate for EVP McHatton to comment. Krouse will not, this is the venue in which it should be addressed in that this is FS. EVP will speak with the other EVPs to get some response for us. Discussion was based upon an acknowledgement that the language is harsh, but that it is not threatening of employment. We need some uniformity across the university on these processes so that we have some measure of security among the faculty. Doing work on policy is not enough when there are some entrenched power issues in the institution. If you try to fix this, you are being sent to the chair, and there is the problem. Go from there to the dean, and then to EVP McHatton. In SOM this is being done by the chairs. Every department then is different. Our university is in a transition process. As a consequence of this status, we do need flexibility, but how do we apply this procedure – these loads, in other places, are being done by what was accomplished in the previous year. So here as we start, we need a mechanism to address our achievement or lack thereof. Otherwise, our risk is to be in the situation where we do not do our work and we are not able to meet the obligations of research and not become a research

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institution.

- Guest- Faculty member from Social Work, Sudershan Pasupuleti – He is having trouble with his chair of the department, concerning the MOA. He is now experiencing situations. In last spring I signed an MOA and was doing that workload, twice the chair attempted to change his workload. The day before classes' changes were made to his workload without his input. As a senior faculty professor and with much experience, this is a serious frustration. Now under division of health affairs, his interim dean reports to EVP Krouse.
 - EVP will discuss this with other EVPs and Deputy President Arney.
- As a junior faculty, in SOM the MOA doesn't reflect the work assignment that was negotiated upon hiring. It is not being addressed well either in SOM. Maybe at next FS meeting we can have EVP Krouse to answer these questions.
- Due to technical issues in the meeting, it was difficult for all participants to engage, regardless of location.
 - Senator Caruntu made a motion to invite the UTRGV Chief Information Officer Jeffrey Graham to the next meeting to experience our IT frustrations firsthand.
 - Senator Gkioulekas seconded the motion
 - Motion carries unanimously
- Senator Levinson brought to the attention of the senate that we still have a resolution to discuss, item (j). A discussion about motions and resolutions being moved to the top of the agenda occurred. This was a situation though where at the last minute two administrators requested time to speak to the FS. This moved our business to this agenda alignment. Due to our rule approved last year we can take this particular item to an email vote. Upon a motion and second by a Senator and a vote by the FS, we can have a vote on this item.

i. **Announcement:**

- FSEC will work with administration to discuss the future MOA procedure and form for Tenure/tenure track, lecturers and clinical/research faculty

[The remaining portion of the agenda (see below) was tabled due to lack of a quorum after agenda item (i)]

j. **Memorandum of Appointment (MOA) discussion resolution**

k. **AOB (All other business)**



VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 PM

IX. Next meeting

Faculty Senate Meeting: November 16,
2018 BBRHB 1.222/EACSB 1.104 (Zoom)