

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley™

2018-2019 Faculty Senate Meeting VI
Edinburg: EACSB 1.104/Brownsville: BLHSB 2.312
Friday, January 25, 2019
2:00pm – 4:30pm
Minutes

Minutes prepared by Ernesto Ramírez, UTRGV Faculty Senate, Secretary

Senators Present: Punit Ahluwalia, Andrew Anabila, Elvia Ardalani, Sonja Arredondo, Sandra Atkins, Stephanie Atkins Sharpe, Jameela Banu, Karl Berg, Dumitru Caruntu, Steve Chamberlain, Chinwendu Chineke, Mark Dantzker, Frederick Darsow, Elizabeth Deven-Hernandez, Abdoulaye Diallo, William Donner, Richard Edmonson, Miryam Espinosa-Dulanto, Raquel Estrada, Louis Falk, Ibrahim Farooqi, Marcus Farris, Teresa Feria Arroyo, Firat Fuat, Lilia A. Fuentes, Anahit Galstyan, Margaret Graham, Jonathan Guist, Maria Miriam Herrera, Elamin Ibrahim, Murat Karabulut, Hale Kaynak, Dae Kim Dongchul Kim, Kye-Hwan Lee, Irving Levinson, Junfei Li, Richard Longoria, John Luna, Donald Jerry Lyles, Theresa Mata-Pistokache, Jung-II Oh, Cynthia Paccacerqua, Volker Quetschke, Ernesto Ramirez, Candace Robledo, Maria Romero-Ramírez, Clarissa Salinas, Gary Schneider, Andrea Schwarzbach, Denise Silcox, William Sokoloff, Owen Temby, John VandeBerg, Jorge Vidal, Michael Weaver, Jasang Yoon, Michelle Zeager, Aziza Zemrani

Senators Absent: Bruno Arthur, Arden Dingle, Laura Gephart, Eleftherios Gkioulekas, Wendy Innis, Sunand Kallumanda, Marci McMahan, John Newman, Sam Sale, Laura Seligman, Samuel Snyder, Garry Souffrant, Yingchen Yang

Senators Absent (Excused): George Amorim, Mircea Chipara, Kip Austin Hinton, Karin Lewis, Hilda Silva, Annelyn Torres-Reveron

Visitors(s): Rick Anderson, Letty Benavides, Justin White

Office Assistant III: Vanessa Ceballos

- I. Convene Meeting and Welcome Senators and Guests
Convene: 2:09 pm
Reminder to keep organized for speaking. We have members in Brownsville and Edinburg, and there will be technical issues as we are meeting in two separate areas.
Welcomed of our guests.

- II. Report from Rick Anderson on Natatorium and Shuttle Lines w/ Comments and Q&A (20 mins)
Mr. Anderson presented on the use of the indoor pool and the hours available.
Q: A question was raised about increasing the hours of access.
A: A presentation handout was provided to the attendees at this Faculty Senate meeting. There are proposed costs for maintenance that take priority this year. The average capital costs are calculated over a 10-year period. There is no cost recovery in place for the use of the natatorium, unlike REC center operations. To meet a proposed increase in availability would result in a cost recovery approach that would likely be cost prohibitive for the number of users involved.

[Break due to audio tech issues]

Q: Senator Carunto suggested that an indoor pool be built with the REC center.

A: Paying money for the REC center and for the Pool at the indoor area would not be a useful way to operate for faculty. The outdoor pool at the REC center is not useful for lap swimming and it is outdoors which presents a problem of sunlight and student use and instruction.

Q: In addition, the suggestion is that by allowing additional access to health facilities there will be a lower rate of absenteeism and a possibility to lower insurance costs. It also is suggested that access to a pool could be a benefit for recruitment and retention of faculty to this institution. Problem with the system is that there have been problems with water quality, hours of access, and the cleanliness of the locker rooms.

- III. Present Shared Governance Award to Dr. Ala R. Qubbaj and Mr. Paul Sharpe
A plaque was presented to both on behalf of the Faculty Senate for recognition of their service to the institution. It was based upon the work each has done for the faculty/staff on shared governance.

- IV. Action Item: Approval of Minutes December 7, 2018
Senator Caruntu moved; seconded by Senator Kaynak:
Approved by majority vote, 1 abstention.

- V. Report from the Faculty Senate President

Reported on shared governance resolution. The anonymous voting mechanism through HelliOS worked well. The resolution was approved by a vote of 48 in favor, 2 against, and 6 abstentions (by vote), and a few who did not cast a vote at all. There was really good participation in this election.

President Bailey responded to Dr. Quetschke about the changes in administration to three EVPs over one Provost. The response indicates that

this is a more cost-effective plan, reducing administration costs, and reflecting the manner in which the university is functioning. The document will not be shared at this point, but a response was provided by the President. This was also presented in an abbreviated fashion to the faculty/staff yesterday in an email from Dr. Bailey. The financial statement presented indicates that there are cost savings involved which are substantial in this approach.

The College of Education has elected Miryam Espinosa-Dulanto as representative to the FSEC.

VI. Announcements

- a. Shared Governance Resolution – results and responses.
- b. Comments on SOM – Dr. Arden Dingle.

Dr. Arden Dingle spoke to us about the situation she faces as a non-tenure track faculty member. She has been non-renewed with no reason provided; the appointment will expire on August 31, 2019. Even with all the successes, accomplishments, and considerable contributions, and honors she has garnered, her contract is not being renewed. There is no plan for her replacement at this time for the program she administers. It is a testimony to the situation all faculty similarly placed are facing. Dora Saavedra presented a drafted resolution on behalf of the Senate. It is a response in support of Arden and other faculty who are facing similar situations. There was speculation that some members of upper administration have been irritated by the expression of concerns about shared governance at the SOM and that is one reason this resolution has been brought forth. The Senate wishes to encourage the application of shared governance values. This situation highlights the vulnerability of faculty and the appearance of impropriety in respect to retributive and retaliatory practices in the Division of Health Affairs and the School of Medicine. A question was raised about no reason being given for her nonrenewal. The response was that no reason is necessary to terminate an employee. It is legal in Texas in regard to a term appointment.

A motion by Senator Sokoloff, seconded by Senator Levinson, with a friendly amendment by Senator Paccacerqua was made to ask for an explanation about the reason for termination. The amendment was not accepted by the creator of the resolution.

Senators on the Brownsville campus had issues with the process of the termination, i.e., why and how did this happen? Question: It is a non-renewal and no requirement is in place for a reason? Answer: There is no legal justification for us to have more information.

Q. How do resolutions work in general? Why can't we (the Senate) get an explanation from the administration once we pass one? Who sees them? Are they public?

A. Resolutions are placed on our website; and, the UT system receives also them.

Statement: Lecturers and other NTT faculty are treated horribly.

Q. Should lecturers and NTT faculty be treated differently? Was there a process involved in the decision to terminate?

A. There is no committee or review process. There are many in the SOM that are being impacted this way. The argument is that NTT should be treated in the same fashion as T/TT faculty in many ways. In the SOM, there are many changes in place that have the appearance of impropriety although legal, they may not be perceived as ethical/moral. These actions take place after faculty members have taken steps to exercise their duties and positions. Dr. Saladin was unaware of the non-renewal and explained there is no process for grievance. The actions taken by administration in non-renewing are unprofessional. A one-year warning should be provided. This is not an isolated situation. Last year in the Chemistry Department non-renewals occurred to a number of faculty. The policy should be clear and appropriate with respect to time and a possibility of an early warning.

Question called by Senator Levinson.

Aye: 40

Nay: 2

Abstain: 13

The resolution passed as proposed.

All three EVPs will be informed as this resolution is moved up.

VII. Presentation on status of workload guidelines

Meetings have occurred and there has been faculty representation on the committee; and issues are being fairly addressed. This group is also discussing the MOA that is being created for faculty appointments. These are two separate actions but are being worked on by the same committee.

VIII. HOP update – There have been non-substantial mechanical changes in various HOPS to change the title Provost to EVP

a. ADM 06-304 Academic Committees and Councils

b. ADM 06-502 Annual Faculty Evaluations

c. ADM 06-505 Faculty Tenure & Promotion

For information only – these changes do not require any action by FS because it is a terminology change which reflects the new status of administration and responsibilities to show EVP rather than Provost.

President Quetschke was encouraged to promote movement of the HOPs which reflect Carnegie designation terminology for approval by the HOP committee.

IX. Business

- a. Constitution Committee Status Report – chair Dora Saavedra – Deadline March 15.

A survey is ready for launch on Qualtrics to look at the Constitution and allow for suggestions about change. It will go live on Monday and needs to be completed by March 15. Only senators can engage with this, but we must share with our constituents to provide their feedback. A committee will meet to make recommendations for changes, and these will be brought back to the Senate for a vote.

- b. Chair Survey Committee Status Report – chair Aziza Zemrani.

The work is still in progress. McHatton has mentioned an interest in coordinating this effort with her own design to evaluate chairs. This can provide us with an opportunity to evaluate areas that administration may miss – the administration is aware of the need to get this done soon.

- c. Whitepaper Report Card Committee - chair Michael Weaver

This committee is investigating the potential overlap of the ModernThink survey results with the Administrator evaluations – Looking at the documents, do the concerns of the whitepaper still exist? Yes, as is also evidenced by ModernThink and the FS Administration Evaluation. The question now is whether the concerns have gotten worse or better. Work is still to be done on matching the information in these documents.

- d. Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) – presented by Justin White
OA publications have no traction with faculty because of current evaluation processes where focus is on publication impact factors. DORA suggests that the current metrics be replaced by a more inclusive process. Southwestern Medical Center is the only signatory in the state. It is being adopted in many places as a model, so this provides continuity for faculty and the respect their work will be provided by other signatories. We should take this back to our constituents to collect information about the suggestions and the resolution he (Justin) has provided asking the UTRGV President to be a signatory. What are the objections which administration may provide to this? Its association with Plan S and OA publishing relates this to an excuse that faculty may seek lesser quality journals for publication. There is a value in some way to the impact factor, but it is just one measure. Is there a requirement for impact factor? There is no clarity to this; some processes require the impact factor, and some do not. The math program does but no one else requires it. So, is there a problem?

X. AOB (All other business)

EVP McHatton discussed that SON and SSW need representation on certain committees (T&P) as they are now stand alone units which the rules indicate should have representation.

President Quetschke indicated we need volunteers for university committees across the board as appointments expire, but especially the T&P now.

XI. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Senator Levinson
Seconded by Senator Caruntu
Adjourned 4:09 pm

XII. Next meeting: Brownville: BSTUN 2.24/Edinburg: EACSB 1.104 2:00PM-4:30PM.