

Faculty Senate Meeting
April 9th, 2021
2pm - 4:30pm
via zoom

Minutes prepared by Nancy Nadeau, UTRGV Faculty Senate, Secretary

Senators Present:

Amy Cummins, Andrea Schwarzbach, Andrew Anabila, Arnulfo Mar, Ayleen Godreau, Aziza Zemrani, Bruno Arthur, Christine Gerin, Cynthia Cripps, Cynthia Paccacerqua, DaeJoon Kim, Dana Shackelford, Dean Kyne, Denise Silcox, Diana Paz, Donald Lyles, Dimutri (Micky) Caruntu, Eleftherios Gkioulekas, Emmy Pérez, Fuat Firat, George Diaz, Grant Benham, Hale Kaynak, Hansheng Lei, Irving Levinson, Jair Aguilar, Jameela Banu, Jimmy Gonzales, John Luna, John VandeBerg, Jonathan Guist, Jorge Vidal, Jun-fei Li, Karin Lewis, Karl Berg, Khalid Aada, Kip Austin Hinton, Kyehwan Lee, Linda Belau, Louis Falk, Lucia Carreon, Marcela Hebbard, Michael Machiorlatti, Michiyo Hirai, Mircea Chipara, Nancy Nadeau, Owen Temby, Paul Valadez, Punit Ahluwalia, Rachel Mann, Randall Monty, Raquel Estrada, Rene Gonzalez, Robert Gilkerson, Robert (Mike) Magee, Salma Mahmood, Sam Sale, Sandra Atkins, Sergey Grigorian, Sharon Helsley-Mcginley, Sonja Arredondo, Soojin Yoo, Stephanie Atkins Sharpe, Ulku Karabulut, Vejoya Viren, Volker Quetschke, Wendy Innis, William Yaworsky.

68 faculty

Senators Absent: Abdullah Faiz Rahman, Charles Olney, Clarissa Salinas, Mark Dantzker, Miguel Salazar, Narayan Bhat, Tekla Hawkins, Theresa Mata-Pistokache, William Sokoloff, Yingchen Yang.

10 faculty

Visitors(s): Young-Rae Oum

President: Cynthia Paccacerqua

President-Elect: Karin Lewis

Parliamentarian: Dimutri (Micky) Caruntu

Past President: Volker Quetschke

Faculty Senate Liaison: Vanessa Ceballos

I. Convene Meeting 2:00 pm

II. Report of the FS Secretary:

A. Minutes Update

- Senator Louis Falk approved the February Minutes, seconded by Senator Jair Aguilar. - Approved at 92% = 36 votes (more than half)
- Senator Sharon Helsley-Mcginley approved the March Minutes, seconded by Senator Jameela Banu. - Approved at 92% - 48 votes.

1. Blackboard Folders – reviewed by the Secretary Senator Nancy Nadeau sharing her screen: Blackboard – right side under Trainings & Organizations - UTRGV Faculty Senate 2020-2021 – Content – Folder by month to find agenda, minutes and other documentation discussed during FS meeting.

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III. Report of the FS Parliamentarian

- A. Senator Dimutri (Micky) Caruntu reviewed the document titled: “UTRGV Faculty Senate Rules of Orders” – 9 items and Robert’s Rules Cheat Sheet 5 pages (available under BBL FS 20201-2021 April folder).
1. Motion: To postpone or to table the discussions or the subjects not discussed during the meeting.
 2. To adjourn on time: need a motion and a second to adjourn the FS minutes with a vote as after 4:30 pm quorum is lost.
 3. Robert Rule says: no senator can speak more than 10 minutes – suggestions to limit to 2 minutes. Every senator will have 2 minutes then if need more after everyone had a chance to talk then can speak for a second time. Also if the FS President open the debate for a motion, time: 15-20 minutes.
 4. Senator Raquel Estrada (Library) upon request can send you the link for access the Rules of Order 12th Ed. <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,shib&db=nlebk&AN=2895663&site=ehost-live&custid=ns249986>

IV. Report of the President

- A. FS Representative Request for Academic Calendar Committee
1. To review and make recommendations to the President concerning the general academic calendar for 2-year period. This includes but not limited to the length of sessions beginning, spring break, holidays, commencement as examples to ensure that all applicable state guidelines are followed.
 2. Need a volunteer – to let FS President knows or the Secretary
 3. Need continuous dialogue between FS and this committee including the summer.
 4. Issues: Teaching schedule/parenting/kids schools in RGV + Spring Break
 - a) Senator Aziza Zemrani: concerns about graduate vs undergraduate calendar, including online & accelerated online program.
- B. Climate Survey Follow-Up: reported faculty provided emails feedback on issues of
- a) Anonymity/Confidentiality
 - b) Vagueness of Reference - feedback about whose performance
 - c) No input in design/revision/improvement
- C. FS Resource Support Request Submitted to Dr. Janna Arney
(see document attachment on BBL under April Folder)
1. Staff and technical support for FSEC and FS

- a) Senator Jorge Vidal suggest that our administrative staff support should be independent from the Office of the Provost as can be perceived as source of conflict of interest.
2. Compensation of FS Officers for FS President, President-Elect and Past-President and Secretary
 - a) summer stipend/workload release
- D. FS Elections
- a) Announcements will be sent this coming week. FSEC to facilitate the election process if needed.
 - b) Faculty will be given guidelines if interested to ensure participation and transparency. Electronic voting can be used to facilitate the process.
 - c) Deadline: April 23, 2021- May 7, 2021 to know the new senators.
- E. FS Meetings Calendar Change
1. Some reasons: Friday upper administration seems not be available. Parenting can be difficult to accommodate. FS officers have statewide or national engagement which include Friday and Saturday. Religious observance to respect.
 2. Looking for change to Thursday 3:30 pm to 5 pm after reviewing UTRGV class schedules for Fall.
 - a) Senator Eleftherios Gkioulekas reported that his department has their regular meetings on Thursday. Suggested to move the meeting on the morning for accommodating parenting. Maybe evening meeting to how schedule regular meeting and emergency meeting. Shorter meeting like 1hour to 1:15 minutes
 - b) Senator Fuat Firat brought 2 principles: senator must not be assigned a class during the faculty senate and the senator must review his obligations and time commitment before otherwise the person should withdraw. Another issue about if teaching online, there is not policy guidelines in place denying the person to be on campus for Fall or be in another state or country.
 - c) Senator Sharon Helsley-Mcginley proposed to do a monkey survey on what is the best day and time, and democracy prevails. Also, Minutes are available to the senators, new venues are raising with the new FS committee and have a voice.
 - d) Senator Emmy Perez raised the point if we will go back on face-to-face meeting or still be on zoom. (driving time between campuses & parental obligations). Online teaching and campus office hours.
 - e) Senator Ulku Karabulut suggest conversation between administration and the senate with “return back to campus” in fall such as air filters, etc.
 - f) Senator Aziza Zemrani raised the issues of double standards or inequalities with faculty tenure track or full time faculty whom do not live in RGV.

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3. There is more work done at the FS committees, there should be less discussion at the FS senate level but to review documents and to briefly discuss and vote.

F. Faculty Chats/Other

1. Vaccination/back to school in Fall:
 - a) Discussion about the idea of requiring students to get vaccinated in order to be able to participate in class face to face instruction or learning: Not an option
 - b) Dr. Krouse spoke as it is not an approved FDA vaccine but an emergency authorization vaccine = legally not probable waiting from the state or federal level for guidance.
 - (1) Senator Jorge Vidal commented on vaccination/providing safe environment/choice of feeling safe as an option to continue online class.
 - (2) Senator Eleftherios Gkioulekas commented on vaccination/not to mandate as it has side effects and the claim of 90% protection on yourself if you take it and if you want more than 90% to combine it with other things he had previously mentioned in prior meeting.
 - (3) FS President reviewed some of the questions on return face to face and at the department level on how is being introverted and implemented and having flexibility in the conversation at the departments level while making the Fall workload. Discussion on Fall vaccination requirement for students/staff or faculty as it can't be mandated. Some faculty received some resistance on the discussion on teaching modalities, it should be a faculty choice how the delivery is done still to the uncertainty for Fall and as the pandemic still on.
 - (4) Senator Christine Gerie raised the issues regarding the virus' variants not covered by the vaccine as some people cannot take the vaccine and are pro-vaccine or don't want to take the vaccine, faculty should not be made uncomfortable.
 - (5) Senator Fuat Firat raised concerned about the return face to face teaching with masks and no social distancing as well as faculty should have some control over one's classroom as it is parts of academic freedom. Faculty should feels safe and secure white teaching – discussion should be allowed.
 - (6) Senator Mircea Chipara raised concerns about the document expressing our gratitude to the SOM to be send. FS President reported it is on the process.

V. Report from Committees

A. Subcommittee, University Tenure & Promotion Committee

1. Recommendations (see attachment) To divide itself into 2 subcommittees: One subcommittee reviewing the dossiers of faculty applying for Tenure (Tenure Subcommittee) and one subcommittee reviewing the dossiers of faculty applying for Promotion to full professor (Promotion Subcommittee).

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- a) Issues regarding advantages and disadvantages the use of the University committee before or after the Provost for promotion procedure including appeal.
- B. FS Ad Hoc Committee on the Evaluation of Faculty Teaching
1. Senator Dimutri (Micky) Caruntu presented the document (Senate Committee on Teaching Evaluation (SCTE) and would like to pass it for the May meeting. Next step is to ask the upper administration to implement these recommendations.
 2. Guest: Young-Rae Oum, PhD, Lecturer, Department of Sociology shared as faculty the problems encounter with teaching evaluation and her recommendations to avoid discrimination in the process.
- C. Committee on Committees and Councils for the calendar of activities on nomination, call for nominations and selection & recommendations and appointments on a yearly basis.
- VI. Old Business
- A. Vaccination Program Resolutions
1. We will send the resolution concerning our gratitude to the vaccination program next week.
 - a) There is a task group working on the second resolution draft related to our residents with immigration status to be ready at the next meeting.
- B. Grievance Policy (see attachment): To refer to the Faculty Welfare Committee to finish it.
- C. New Committees Work
1. Committee Academic Freedom and Responsibility: Choice of modality and potential problems in Fall – meeting scheduled for next week reported Senator Cynthia Cripps.
 2. Committee Educational Policy: Senator Kip Austin reported concerned about pass and not pass and the second language requirement differs from Texas universities.
- VII. New Business
- A. Faculty Salaries: To postpone to the next meeting
1. Institutional Base Salary Initiative
 2. Merit Compensation
 3. Compression/Inversion
- VIII. Adjourned at 4:23 pm
- A. Motion by Senator Louis Falk, seconded by Sharon Helsley-Mcginley. All in favor.
- IX. Next Meeting: May 7 2021