

2021-2022 Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

Friday October 8, 2021

10 am – 12 noon

Via Zoom

Community Agreement

The UTRGV Faculty Senate is brought together in the spirit of shared governance to move forward in a positive, open manner for input that allows all stakeholders to speak regarding policy and process formation. To create a safe environment where everyone's opinions are valued and considered, let us observe the following:

- 1. Try to be on time to the meeting and actively participate*
- 2. Review the materials to be discussed, and if you plan to comment have your thoughts organized in advance*
- 3. Assume positive intent, seek to understand, be inclusive, bring productive energy to discussions*
- 4. Only one person speaks at a time (use raise hand feature to be recognized)*
- 5. Respect and acknowledge everyone's opinions, even if they differ from yours*
- 6. Confidentiality: some things shouldn't be repeated outside the meeting*

Minutes Prepared by Cynthia Cripps

Senators Present: Khalid Aada, Jair J. Aguilar, Tony Aguirre, Stephanie Alvarez, Sonja Arredondo, Jameela Banu, Grant Benham, Ben Brown, Lucia Carreon, Dumitru Caruntu, Joel H. Chirinos, Mircea Chipara, Cynthia Cripps, George Diaz, Louis Falk, A Fuat Firat, Christine Gerin, Rob Gilkerson, Jimmy Gonzales, Rene Gonzalez, Sergey Grigorian, Fred Guerra, Tekla Hawkins, Marcela Hebbard, Sharon Helsley-Mcginley, Kip Austin Hinton, Michiyo Hirai, Ulku Karabulut, Hale Kaynak, Sanjeev Kumar, Kye-Hwan Lee, Hansheng (Jet) Lei, Karin Lewis, Qinyu Liao, Yu Liu, John Luna, Michael Machiorlatti, Mike Magee, Salma Mahmood, Rachel Mann, Arnulfo Mar, Randall Monty, Nancy Nadeau, Cynthia Paccacerqua, Diana Paz, Volker Quetschke, Abdullah Rahman, Pad Rengasamy, Manuel Saldivar, Sam Sale, Andrea Schwarzbach, Dana Shackelford, Owen Temby, Paul Valadez, Jorge Vidal, Vejoya Viren, Aaron Wilson, Yingchen Yang, William Yaworsky, Soojin Yoo, Aziza Zemrani

Sign Language Interpreters: Sli J. Cabrera, Maria Cabanillas

Senators Absent: Andrew Anabila, Narayan Bhat, Amy Cummins, Dean Kyne (emailed excuse), Jonathan Guist, Theresa Mata-Pistokache (emailed excuse), Nilanjana Paul, Emily Perez, Riccardo Pizzinato, Henry Reinhart, Miguel Salazar, Clarissa Salinas, Sarah Williams-Blangero (emailed excuse)

Guests: Manuel Alcocer, Andres Amado, Janna Arney, Bruno Arthur, Guy Bailey, Seratna Guadarrama Beltran, Elizabeth Berger, Veronica Cano, Rogelio Ernesto Chanes, Fred Darsow, Laurie De Leon Escobedo, Esi Elliot, Nicole Englitsch, Joy Esquierdo, Christopher Gabler, Rebecca Gadson, Armando Garza, Noelynn Gillasos, Anna Gonzalez, John Gonzalez, Giorgio Gotti, Margaret Graham, Amy Hay, Andreea Stoian Karadeli, Mark J. Kaswan, Joseph Kochurani, Arlett Lomeli, Rita Oteka, Andrea Carlos Pena, Elodia Pérez, Carol Pool, Kelli Quin, Monika Rabarison, Neda Ramirez, Cordelia Rasa, Dora Saavedra, Paul Sharpe, Jitsy Sibi, Rosa Silvestro, Scott Spear, Constantine Tarawneh, Veronica Villarreal, Qing Zeng, Zhidong Zhang

I. Convene meeting– 10 am

- II. Welcome to senators, sign language interpreters, and guests by Faculty Senate President Lewis.** “On behalf of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, I’d like to continue to express our concerns for our campus community and beyond as we all confront the persistent coronavirus and its impact.” “I’d also like to ask for your patience today as we have a lot of topics to cover and people to hear from.” “We appreciate your attendance today. Thank you for being here.”

Dr. Lewis offers an overview of the agenda and reminders:

- Please use the wave feature so that anyone who would like to pin your screen to facilitate communication may do so.
- Mute your microphones upon entry into the zoom room
- Robert’s Rules guide was sent to all senators
- Parliamentarian, Volker Quetschke, will be moderating the discussion for today’s presentation (1 minute time limit, 2 comments/questions per item)
- Secretary, Cynthia Cripps, will monitor the chat for today’s presentation. Direct message the Secretary in the chat if you’d like your questions read aloud on the floor
- The chat will not be included in the official record of the minutes
- Please make your remarks focused, succinct, professional, and respectful.

III. Report of FS Parliamentarian - Volker Quetschke

- a. Roberts rules, Zoom guidelines
- b. Each senator may speak on a topic or agenda item twice – 90 seconds speaking time
- c. Everyone can make motions or suggestions, but please write them down in advance. Then as you are recognized and reading your topic, paste it in the chat for everyone to see. Then the Parliamentarian will put it on the screen or in a document for everyone to see.

IV. Report of the FS Secretary - Cindy Cripps

- September 17, 2021, Minutes approval (zoom poll vote)
Senator Sharon Helsley-Mcginley makes a motion to approve the Sept 17th meeting minutes.
Second: Hale Kaynak

54+ present:

Approve -48/54 + 2	89%
Reject – 0	0%
Abstain - 6/54	11%

Sept 17, 2021, meeting minutes approved with 89%

V.-Report – President-Elect Kip Hinton: Faculty Advising Council (FAC)- Includes all UT schools.

- a. *Family leave pool:* This exists at UTRGV (Sick Leave Pool), but to make it work it needs to be understood and information needs to be available explaining the process.
- b. *Theft of intellectual property:* Be careful and aware and UT has legal representation to assist if needed. If a conflict of interest arises, contact the compliance officers.
- c. Senator Hinton presented UTRGV’s plans for a *Football* team to the council. Others expressed concerns and the influence of athletics and the costs to its students.

- d. *Open Educational Resources*: Everyone is encouraged to use these resources to reduce the amount of money students are paying for books. Paying hundreds of dollars for textbooks becomes a hardship for students.
- e. *Limitations of Space*: This is a problem that is unresolved.
 - i. Senator Volker Quetschke adds: The final presentation of the Huron Committee report came out last week. It is noted that a computer-based system (inventory) needs to be developed so all of UTRGV can see what space is being utilized. Spreadsheets exist but are not easily used in a broad sense.

VI. Report - President Karin Lewis

- a. Research Policy Committee – There is ongoing work on the IRB process.
- b. Interim Department Chairs – Concerns expressed by faculty regarding selection process and limited faculty involvement. The Provost responded promptly to address this issue.
- c. Faculty Workout Spaces – They are working on staffing and will be opening soon.
- d. Space allocation: Huron Consulting Group wrote an assessment. An electronic system will take time to implement. We are awaiting the final recommendation soon.
- e. Dates of MOA – (Date on the MOA indicates Sept 1- August 31) Quoted from UTRGV Legal:

“Faculty members who were appointed on a nine-month academic year basis, September 1 through May 31, in prior physical years (September 1 through August 31 is the fiscal year) are again appointed by UTRGV on a nine-month academic basis for this fiscal year, unless the individual faculty member has been expressly told by their chair or dean, that they are now on a different appointment cycle. On this year's memorandum of appointment, the blocked title Period of Appointment: September 1, 2021 through August 31, 2022, in the table corresponds directly to the fiscal year, (the budget period in which the faculty members' appointment takes place). Identifying the budget period in this way was not intended to change a faculty member's academic year appointment. The faculty member's appointment basis academic memorandum of appointment academic year 2021-2022, meaning September 1 to May 31, is reflected immediately after the quote memorandum of appointment at the top of the MOA if a faculty member has questions about their MOA, they are encouraged to visit their chair, so I wanted to share that with you.”

- f. The motions passed in Sept 17, 2021; Faculty Senate meeting were sent forward to the Provost.
- g. FSEC met with Student Government Association Officers and one of their priorities is Open Educational Resources (OER).

VI. Guest Presentations and VII. FS questions, comments, points of information re: guest presentations

A. Ombuds brief report – Veronica Cano

- a. The ombuds office is a designated resource to help faculty with workplace related issues, in particular dispute resolution and conflict management. It is informal, confidential (with notable exceptions), impartial and advocates for equity.
- b. <https://www.utrgv.edu/ombuds/index.htm>

- c. "Faculty chats" were created to express concerns such as return to campus issues. A few more "Faculty Chats" are planned for October and November.

B. President Guy Bailey: (pre-reading handout)

- a. Legislative session: We had a very good legislative session.
 - Summer 2020: there was a 5% budget cut for fiscal years 2019, 2020 which were affected by the Pandemic.
 - Bad news: We went into the session 10% down and these funds were not restored.
 - Good news: We had best in the state Student credit hour growth, so we came out ahead by \$3 million.
 - The state funded enrollment growth: General revenue of 17.9% that's about almost \$24 million. This growth allowed for salary (equity and merit) adjustments.
 - Our students suffered with lost jobs. Federal CARES money allowed us to help students. We laid no one off.
- b. McKinsey Scott funds (pre-reading handout)
 - i. \$5-10 million for endowed chairs
- c. Luminaries Scholars Program – This will keep student debt low and encourage students to stay in the valley.
 - i. Recruit the best students out of high school
 - ii. Full four-year scholarship (covering tuition and fees)
 - iii. Will receive early admission to professional programs (examples: PA program, Med School, Engineering)
 - iv. Two years of guaranteed housing.
 - v. Students will sign a pledge to stay in the valley (x years) when they finish.
 - With a vision to transform healthcare in the valley.
 - We have now built debt capacity so we can start to build more facilities.
 - Cancer infusion center (with MD Anderson as advisory to transform cancer care in the RGV)
 - Surgery Center
 - Tuition advantage and Luminary Scholars program will help build the undergraduate student body.
 - Important partnerships with cities (Brownsville and Edinburg) to enhance student housing and dining.

UT Smart Book:

<https://www.utsystem.edu/documents/docs/publication/2021/ut-system-smartbook>

Question: Micky Caruntu: What are the intensions of the university in terms of supporting faculty research and faculty retention? ... secondly what are the plans for creating more space?

Response: Dr. Bailey: We recognize the need for salary adjustments and want to continue an ongoing merit program every year. This will be a long-term investment. We

are looking at facilities. Our debt capacity will allow us to free up and convert some space. Board of Regents will not make PUF (Permanent University Fund) allocations until special session has concluded. Huron analysis may help, and we will work on moving more office off campus.

Question for Dr. Bailey: Will there be requirement that Luminary Scholars have graduated from a RGV high school?

Response: We will start recruiting in the Valley. We envision the program growing so we can recruit outside the Valley.

Question: Randall Monty: What flexibility is provided for the students who commit as a Luminary Scholar for 8 years? What if there are no jobs, another opportunity arises, or they change their major? What assurances are provided to the students that is flexible yet beneficial opportunity?

Response: Dr. Bailey: Students have choices, there are other scholarship opportunities. We will make exceptions as needed. This does not replace other scholarship programs. It is another option.

Question: George Diaz: Research and travel support for faculty is only \$800. Is there something that the university can do to help provide more support for research and travel?

Response: Dr. Bailey: recommends: American Council of Learned Societies
<https://www.acls.org/>

Response: Dr. Arney: <https://www.utrgv.edu/facultysuccess/funding-opportunities/faculty-travel-support-program/index.htm>

Question: Marcela Hebbard: the PowerPoint centers around Med school, how does this support non-STEM areas, to support all faculty?

Response: Dr. Bailey – Money that comes into the Medical School comes through separate state appropriation, and it has to be accounted for separately. \$23.7 million is for general academic and cannot be used for the Medical School, and vice versa. Sources of funding for the Medical School and general academics are very different.

C. Provost Arney: Compensation philosophy, methodology, and future plans (pre-reading handout)

1. **Market equity**
2. **Internal equity**
3. **Merit**

- **Background:** Legacy institutions approached compensations differently.
- The methodology when we became UTRGV and now were about the same. We looked at discipline, rank, and tenure status compared to the market. Since becoming UTRGV over \$38 million have been invested in compensation.
 - 2015-21 equity adjustment (between UTB/UTPA faculty – based on Huron analysis)

- 2018-19 merit and equity adjustment
- 2019-20 merit with research incentive programs
- 2021 merit, incentive, and equity adjustment (includes faculty promotions and staff) with the idea to recruit, retain and remain competitive to the market.
 - Addressed: UTRGV's move to R2. When our classification adjusts so does our peer group. 56 institutions in the US (5 in Texas: A&M Corpus Christi, Kingsville, UTSA, Texas State) that are R2 and we use those for comparison. Hiring ranges move, so this immediately creates inequity which needs to be addressed.
 - Invested a 2% merit program
 - Equity was on top of that program
 - Non-Tenure Track at the college level also reviewed and adjusted to be competitive in R2
- Internal Equity is ongoing, and this is where "Inversion, compression, and gender equity" are addressed. Creating the data needed and consulting within the UT system to proactively address this on an annual basis was a commitment for this year. Enlisting a "team" (finance, HR, Provost, administration) rather than individuals to make recommendations. (see PowerPoint)
- Moving forward – we've shifted the ranges and the goal is to keep up within the 25th percentile of the market. We will continue to invest in Merit. Nuances of the discipline are only captured at the department level. All units/departments need to have a plan in place for distributing merit when the opportunity arises.
- Work together to create a compensation philosophy, develop a compensation strategy, and be proactive.

Question: Micky Caruntu: What has been done for faculty who have been productive for MANY years, but are still considered to be the lowest in their rank?

Response: Dr. Arney: We looked at every rank/range, and every faculty member is at least the 25% (or higher) of comparison groups (2021 academic year). It's not a perfect comparison. Now it needs to be addressed at the department or area level. It needs to be peer reviewed. We need to be proactive and plan for that.

Question: Louis Falk: How much money does it take, for equity and compression, for everyone?

Response: Dr. Arney: For Market equity up to the 25% it was \$2.4 million. The overall merit allocation was \$4.8 million for the 2%. The idea was to make the merit adjustment, but when UTRGV moved to R2, market equity was included in this adjustment.

Question: Louis Falk: Do you know what the internal equity would cost at this point?

Response: Dr. Arney: Now each department needs to do the comparison across ranks and discipline to analyze equity. A case would need to be brought forward if a problem is detected.

Question: Louis Falk: How is a case of this sort brought forward?

Response: Dr. Arney: Take the matter to your chair, then your dean, and forms are filled out and discussed and analyzed by a cross divisional team.

Question: Kye Hwan Lee: Can Internal Equity fill the gap for those who were recently promoted before the adjustment?

Response: Dr. Arney: Yes. If you were evaluated based on being an associate level, but the next year promoted to full, that was taken into consideration. There should not have been entire disciplines left behind or under the 25%. But the data would need to be analyzed and evaluated and addressed.

Question: Cynthia Paccacerqua: Where did “25%” come from?

Response: Dr. Arney: Budget. Based on modeling, that is where we could reach with the funds available. Institutionally, our goal was to NOT be at the bottom of the range.

VIII. Old Business

FS President Karin Lewis presentation: On Sept 13, 2021 Department of Political Science faculty met with FSEC to address concerns mentioned in the *Alternative Senate Agenda* document. Dr. Lewis also met with the Chair, Dr. Clyde Barrow, of Political Science on a separate occasion. They were a very collegial and productive conversations.

These are improvements that we have implemented:

- Established new FS committees
- Increased communication with *all* faculty via written updates and meeting invitations
- Updating website
- Disseminated agenda, documents, and materials several days before the FS meeting
- More structured FS meeting including Robert’s rules, community agreement, zoom guidelines
- Adding reports
- Timely distribution of minutes, including motions and resolutions
- Survey will go out soon, to all faculty, to gather information to improve the Faculty Senate
- Committee reporting forms

Question: Ulku Karabulut: The FSEC received the *Alternative Senate Agenda* document from Department of Political Science in May, why was it not discussed during the May 2021 meeting? The timeline mentioned by Dr. Lewis does not align with the dates noted in the alternative agenda document.

Response: Dr. Lewis and Paccacerqua confirmed that the document was received May 14th which was after the last FS meeting of the semester, and it was received during a transition of officers.

Question Hale Kaynak: Requests that the questions (such as research funding, travel funding, market equity, etc.) posed during the presentations today be asked again and addressed more specifically by the president.

IX. Report of Committees (please see pre-reading handouts from committees)

X. New Business

Motion: Kye Hwan Lee: “I move that the Faculty Senate (FS) endorse the expectation that all Department Chairs share department budgets and expenses with their department faculty. I furthermore make the motion for FS to endorse the document and send it to upper administration and the Council of Chairs.”

Second: Fuat Firat

- **Clarity from Karin Lewis:** If this motion passes, the motion will be sent to upper administration and Council of Chairs.
- **Yu Liu – Friendly amendment:** this disclosure will include a general overview, general department level budget.

Senator Aziza Zemrani motions to call for a vote, Senator Louis Falk seconds the motion.

Vote: Do you approve Dr. Kye-Hwan Lee’s motion w/Liu’s Friendly amendment?

Approve: 46/52 + 1 88%

Reject: 2/52 4%

Abstain: 4/52 8%

The motion passes with 88% approval.

XI. Next meeting: Friday, November 12, 2021 (10 am-Noon) via Zoom

XII. Meeting adjourned (12:02 Noon)

Jimmy Gonzalez: motion to adjourn

Louis Falk: seconds the motion