

Friday September 17, 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, Antonio Aguirre, Stephanie Alvarez, Andrew Anabila, Sonja Arredondo, Jameela Banu, Grant Benham, Ben Brown, Lucia Carreon, Dumitru Caruntu, Joel H. Chirinos, Cynthia Cripps, Amy Cummins, Louis Falk, Fuat Firat, Christine Gerin, Rob Gilkerson, Jimmy Gonzales, Rene Gonzalez, Sergey Grigorian, Fred Guerra, Jonathan Guist, Tekla Hawkins, Marcela Hebbard, Sharon Helsley-Mcginley, Kip Austin Hinton, Michiyo Hirai, Ulku Karabulut, Hale Kaynak, Sanjeev Kumar, Dean Kyne, Kye-Hwan (Kevin) Lee, 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, Nilanjana Paul, Diana Paz, Teri Pistokache, Riccardo Pizzinato, Volker Quetschke, Pad Rengasamy, Manuel Saldivar, Sam Sale, Clarissa Salinas, Andrea Schwarzbach, Dana Shackelford (& Fred Darsow), Owen Temby, Paul Valadez, Jorge Vidal, Vejoya Viren, Sarah Williams – Blangero, Aaron Wilson, Yingchen Yang, William Yaworsky, Soojin Yoo, Aziza Zembrani

Senators Absent: Narayan Bhat, Mircea Chipara, George Diaz, Ayleen Godreau, Emily Perez, Abdullah Rahman, Henry Reinhart, Miquel Salazar

Guests: Guy Bailey (UTRGV President), Dr. Janna Arney (Deputy President and Provost), Dr. Maggie Hinojosa (Senior Vice President for. Strategic Enrollment and Student Affairs), Mr. Chasse Conque (Vice President and Director of Athletics), Michael Abebe, Melissa Abeyta, Frank Ambriz, Megan Berk, Steven Block, Amie Bostic, Friedericke Bruhofener, Sli J. Cabrera, Matthew Cantu, Jorge Canchola, Eric Cardenas, Brian Cheslik, Michell Escajeda, Roda Galang, Francisco Garcia, Mario Gil, John Gonzalez, Margaret Graham, Michael Hocke, Daniel Hunter-Holly, Paul Jorgensen, Chandler S. Kang, Khalid Aada, Job Martinez, Carlos Mata, Yadira Mejia, Noelynn G. Llasos, Maria (interpreter), Dania Ochoa, Elizabeth Olatunbosun, Mayra Ortiz, Pamela Parker, Ala Qubbaj, Neda Ramirez, Sylvia Robles, José Rojas, Rebecca Rowe, Margaret Rubi, Jose Ruiz, Jeannean Ryman, Dora Saavedra, Shawn Saladin, Luz Silva, Silvia Solis, Andreea Stoian Karadeli Christopher Taylor, Susamma Thomas, John VandeBerg, Jose Velasquez, Sarah Warren-Riley,

I. Convene meeting/Attendance (10am):

- **Welcome to senators, 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:

- Interpreters, 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
- The Parliamentarian will be moderating the discussion for today’s presentation (1 minute time limit, 2 comments/questions per item)
- The Secretary will monitor the chat for today’s presentation, and bring questions to the floor
- The chat will not be included in the official record of the minutes
- Hold questions until after the presentation, during the topic discussion
- Please make your remarks focused, succinct, professional, and respectful.

II. Report of FS Parliamentarian- Volker Quetschke

- a. Roberts rules
- b. Zoom guidelines

III. Report of the FS secretary-Cindy Cripps

- a. May 2021 Minutes approved
 - 89 % 57/64 approve
 - 11% 7/64 abstain
- b. Blackboard Folders/Outlook Folders/Committee Report Forms

IV. Summer Action Report – President-Elect Kip Hinton

Resolution for Covid – 19:

- Gathered information from Senators, faculty, various UTRGV administrators, including Shawn Saladin (Associate Vice President for Faculty Affairs), Richard Costello (Director of Environmental Health, Safety & Risk Management), and Jonikka Charlton (Associate Vice President for Student Academic Success), and following up with them to ensure that UTRGV was taking steps to make our campuses safe enough for us to physically be on the campus. Further, we were in dialog with other universities in Texas, especially other UTs. We prepared and passed a resolution asking UT System to allow us to set our own local rules for masks and vaccinations. Unfortunately, UT System has not yet responded, but it seems that unlike the public school districts, most public universities have not been willing to appear to be working around the wishes of the governor.

Discussion and meeting with Political Science:

- We met with faculty from the department and identified some problems, addressed problems, and we hope to see improvement in the functioning of Faculty Senate this year.

Salary Task force led by Janna Arney

- As you may know, FS has for years asked administration for pay increases for both tenure track and non-tenure track faculty [note: Senator Ulku Karabulut clarified that Faculty Senate did not substantially pursue faculty pay increases during the 2020-2021 year]. Coordinating with Janna Arney (Provost), FS Executive Council worked with faculty in various colleges through task forces and committees on salary. These groups were to determine allocation of merit and market adjustments in salary. As you may know, cost-of-living raises are not allowed.

FSEC worked on Athletics and Football

- Apparently, the original report from 2017 was not implemented because of obstacles with conference membership [note: Bailey clarified that it was primarily fiscal problems with the plan from that report – that it cost too much, so it was “squashed”]. More recently UTRGV has taken steps towards implementing a football program, we met with Bailey and Conque over the summer and heard about the various aspects. SGA vote on the referendum in November.

V. Report - President Karin Lewis

Throughout the summer we collectively struggled with the impacts of the persistence pandemic. Please know that the concerns expressed by faculty and senators were consistently elevated to our administration and a whole cadre of people working to address those concerns. We hear you. It is a complex situation. Your concerns became FAQs for all faculty, staff and students on the Welcome Back website. Your concerns informed the Covid Response team, communications to our university community, and the Senate Resolution that was sent to the Board of Regents and Chancellor. It has been challenging as we endeavored to both protect the health and well-being of our university community members and find a way to return to campus safely, given the complexity of constraints imposed at the state level and SACSCOC's decision to allow waivers to expire that previously allowed the flexibility to choose course delivery modalities best suited to protecting our students and ourselves.

On August 28, 2020, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee sent our Provost, Janna Arney, recommendations for accommodating the effects of the pandemic through Adaptive Adjustment of Expectations during annual reviews. Those recommendation remain germane in our current circumstances.

“In all cases the review committees should be advised to follow a holistic approach and extend compassion in all review categories to accommodate the impact of COVID-19.”

VI. Guest Presentation UTRGV Campus Life proposal [Football program, marching band, women's swimming & diving program, spirit program, etc.]

Guy Bailey (UTRGV President), Dr. Maggie Hinojosa (Senior Vice President for. Strategic Enrollment and Student Affairs), Mr. Chasse Conque (Vice President and Director of Athletics)

Introduction: Dr. Bailey explained that expanding athletics is part of a bigger picture such as expanding housing, campus life, and scholarships (more scholarship announcements to come at a later date, including plans for the MacKenzie Scott Gift). Students who live on campus have better success rates. We have a plan to offer the “traditional” college experience that students want. This includes sports, bands on both campuses, and spirit programs. This will help recruit the best students and keep them in the valley. He believes we have done what we can do up to this point, and this is the next step.

Mr. Chasse Conque: referendum PowerPoint presentation

1. Marching bands – come together for events... but focus on both campuses
2. Spirit programs (Cheer and Dance – on both campuses)
3. Women’s swimming & Diving
 - a. Pharr Natatorium (expected to open later in fall 2021) – “top notch facility”
4. Division 1 FCS (Football Championship Subdivision) as opposed to FDS – (offers reduced expenses with this option)
 - a. existing stadiums for football: HEB Park (Edinburg - upper Valley) & Sam’s Memorial Stadium (Brownsville)

(aside: There are 24 Division 1 institutions in the state of Texas, 21 compete)

Dr. Maggie Hinojosa: This is a unique opportunity for students being involved in a referendum, regardless of the outcome. Expect at least 500 new opportunities for student involvement – student athletes, musicians, dancers, cheerleaders, student managers, student athletic trainers, student media, student employment. Expect expansions on both campuses in resident life, dining etc....

- proposed increase \$11.25/semester credit hour which will impact new students and students outside of tuition guarantee (beginning fall 2022, but currently enrolled would not pay the fee until 2025). (12 hour cap)
- No out-of-pocket expenses:
 - Over 44% of all students
 - Over 51 of all students receive financial aid - they don’t pay out of pocket costs
- UTRGV is committed to:
 - UTRGV is #1 in US in lowest student debt among public universities
 - Continue to advocate for Federal Pell Grant increase.
 - UTRGV Tuition Advantage (\$95K will increase to \$100K)

Mr. Chasse Conque:

- Fees (\$11.25) will be allocated:
 - 43% student aid and student support
 - 24% coaches and staff
 - 22% facilities
 - 11% operating
- Program Sustainability: student fee, external revenue (ticket sales, corporate sponsorships, philanthropy, game guarantees, merchandise sales), NCAA distribution
- Health and Safety: - Currently we have 275 student athletes, 16 division 1 programs

Brownsville, Edinburg, Harlingen

- NCAA takes safety seriously: rule changes to make football safer, physicians and athletic trainers, (concussion protocol—taken seriously)
- compares football to other contact sports like soccer and gymnastics
- everything athletics does is in communication with UTHealth and School of Medicine.

Economic Impact (\$13.2 M) (report from summer 2021): Commitment to both Brownsville and Edinburg. This will offer increases in jobs, labor income, Federal Taxes, student employment opportunities.

Western Athletic Conference (WAC) expansion – these are the FCS football playing institutions: Abilene Christian, Dixie State, Lamar, Sam Houston, Southern Utah, Stephen F. Austin, Tarleton – all are good academic and athletic profiles.

For many years UTRGV was independent without conference affiliation.

Dr. Hinojosa:

Timeline - next steps:

Student vote (Nov. 8-10, 2021) – following SGA guidelines

UT board of regents (Feb 2022)

Fall 2024 expanded spirit programs, first year of competition for swimming and diving (winter sport)

Fall 2025 first year of competition for football and visibility of marching bands

Fall 2025 – corresponds with UTRGV 10 yr. anniversary

VII. FS questions, comments, points of information re: presentation:

Concern: Micky Caruntu: Funds will be taken from faculty and moved to athletics?

Response: Dr. Arney –Fund allocated for faculty Salaries, instructional costs, and running the university cannot be spent on those things. There is no mechanism for crossing those boundaries with athletics.

*a spreadsheet is needed to outline where \$\$ is coming from and where it can be used

Question: Nancy Nadeau: what is the current fee that students are paying? Currently is \$180 if it is. So, it will increase another \$11/SCH per semester.

Response: Chasse: The intercollegiate athletics fee is \$15 currently taken from the Student Service Fee; it would increase \$11.25.

Question: Stephanie Alvarez – We are not in a traditional community, how is this culturally responsive?

Response: Chase: while we are non-traditional (living on campus, etc.), our students are traditional in age... example: UTSA good example they serve multiple populations – it has transformed its campus. Campus life is bigger than sports or band. We are proud of our student athlete cohort. We have a very diverse cohort over 40 countries represented (among 275 athletes) with 3.23 GPA.

Dr. Hinojosa: looking at peer institutions. Since the referendum 2008, UTSA has grown ~ 6000 students. With growth and expansion comes the responsibility to look at the cultural aspect. Always are evaluating and keeping this conversation open.

Question: Andrea Schwarzbach: How much will go toward the 4 areas? Is this mostly about football or is it equal?

Response: Chase: Built budgets for all programs to be successful. Football is more expensive. NCAA Limit: Football allows for 63 full scholarships (to be divided amount an expected 100-110 athletes), Swimming allows for 14 scholarships (to be divided among an expected 40 female athletes)

- Natatorium will be a top-notch facility for competitions and hosting events.
- Football will use non-competitive stadiums across the valley, not build a new facility.
- Approximately: \$5 million/year football, \$700K/year swimming, \$325K/year spirit and band
- Need for more Facilities such as on-campus practice fields etc.

Concern: Cynthia Paccacerqua: Since the early conversations of UTRGV football, there has been no conversation with faculty with regards to football. How did we get here with no faculty input... with no access to budget information... where does the original \$15 go? ... and please address the 10% yearly fee increase without student approval

Response: Chase: \$15 credit hour fee goes toward to support the current 16 sports and 275 + student athletes. The 10% may be an old statute from UTB and UPA. Will need to clarify this.

Concern: Stephanie Alvarez: Why swimming and not softball? We have a great softball club on campus.

Response: Chasse: Gender equity working group has worked 18 months analyzing equity within our athletic dept and is ongoing. The recommendation of this group was women's swimming and diving. It is a growing sport and will bring 10-15 more student athletes with a swimming and diving team. There will be a plan to continue to review female athlete opportunities.

Response: Dr. Hinojosa: Our students are traditional... they just don't live on campus... but their age is traditional. They want more campus life and to have opportunities... this is a way to bring excitement to things outside the classrooms.

Dr. Alvarez: How can they reflect the culture of the valley?

Response: Steve Block: It's been many conversations of budget over least 5 years. "We" do represent the culture in the arts. We have discussed the need to establish an identity that is different. Example: Southern University – Baton Rouge.

We were tracing the loss of 300 students during the UTRGV transition and Texas A&M Kingsville gained about that amount. This program will be a real game changer... people will come from throughout the valley for these games.

Question: Marcela Hebbard: How are they reaching our students and recruiting locally rather than

nationally?

Response: Chase: 25-30% are local athletes, in other words recruiting starts at home. We will be competing in markets and communities that we have not been in before.
We will have a consistent presence and be recognized statewide.

Question: Kip Austin Hinton: how much of Mackenzie Scott gift is going to football?

Response: Drs. Hinojosa & Arney: zero

Response: Dr. Bailey: \$40 Million MacKenzie Scott Gift is designated:

- \$25 Million will go directly for merit aid for students in an endowment
- \$15 Million will be divided to support residency program and endowed chairs
 - A couple new residency programs in medicine will be established
- Dr. Bailey thinks we probably can match the aid for students. – majority will not have to pay tuition and fees. Take great pride: in having the Lowest debt for any public university in the US.
- Athletics will not affect faculty salaries or academics. Money that goes towards academic enterprise from state appropriation cannot be used legally for this.

Athletics and football are not a big revenue generator, we expect ours will break even.
Football helps support other programs in athletics. Example: Texas TECH – will support baseball and diving, and other sports – but doesn't lose a lot of money.

Question: Cynthia Paccacerqua: Dr. Bailey will get back to her about the policy regarding the 10% increase without student approval. How fees are set.

FS President Karin Lewis: Send questions to us later if they were not addressed.

1:06 hours:

VIII. Old Business:

Motion from Senator Fuat Firat:

"I move that FS adopt a principle that instructors of UTRGV courses have the right to choose the mode of teaching their course (F2F, on-line synchronous, online asynchronous, hybrid) as long as the threat of a pandemic exists and/or continues, and that if any instructor is forced to teach F2F it be established that if any virus outbreak in class affecting students and/or the instructor occurs the authority that forced the F2F mode will be held responsible.

Jameela Banu- seconds the motion to continue discussion

58/58

78% 45/58 approve + 2

12% 7/58 reject

10% 6/58 abstain

IX. Report of Committees:

May 2021 Motion:

(See document in pre-reading handouts sent with the agenda)

Teaching evaluations document is a set of recommendations. not a policy, just a set of guiding recommendations.

Louis: second

Senator Hale Kaynak: written motion: Friendly amendment: I suggest to add this statement: The outliers in the student evaluations be dropped...

Senator Volker Quetschke makes an adaptation: "Outliers in the student evaluations shall be ignored in the evaluations. I furthermore make the motion to endorse the document by the FS and send it to upper administration."

Senator Hale accepts Volker's changes

Discussion comments:

- women of color: student evaluations are consistently negative – need something, does not reflect gender and race issues in evaluation
- this is a work of two years, it was sent to all faculty, not only faculty senate
- need to move forward to be sent to the administration
- vote on it
- another document would be recommended
- shouldn't stop senators from making friendly amendments.

Dumitru Caruntu wants the committee work to continue.

Friendly amendment and approval of Teaching evaluation document:

58% 32/55 +3 Approve

20% 11/55 Reject

22% 12/55 Abstain

Vote: Teaching Evaluation Poll – carries with the minor change

X. New Business

XI. Next meeting: Friday, October 8, 2021 (10 am-Noon) via Zoom

- Political Science Department "Alternative Faculty Senate Agenda" (pre-reading handout 9)
- The theme of the next meeting will be budget.

Brownsville, Edinburg, Harlingen

- Equity and Merit Pay – invitation extended to Dr. Bailey and Dr. Arney to explain the methodology behind distribution of these.

XII. Meeting adjourned

Move to adjourn: Fuat Firat 12:10