

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

2019-2020

Faculty Senate Meeting II
Edinburg Academic Services Building (EACSB 1.104) and
Brownsville Salon Gardenia (BSTUN 2.24) via zoom
Friday, August 30, 2019
2:00pm - 4:30pm
Minutes

Minutes prepared by Ernesto Ramírez, UTRGV Faculty Senate, Secretary

Senators Present: Khalid Aada, Punit Ahluwalia, Andrew Anabila, Elvia Ardalani, Bruno Arthur, Sandra Atkins, Stephanie Atkins Sharpe, Jameela Banu, Karl Berg, Dumitru Caruntu, Mircea Chipara, Cynthia Cripps, Amy Cummins, Frederick Darsow, Elizabeth Deven-Hernandez, George Diaz, Raquel Estrada, Louis Falk, Marcus Farris, Fuat Firat, Anahit Galstyan, Christine Gerin, Laura Gephart, Margaret Graham, Jonathan Guist, Kip Austin Hinton, Murat Karabulut, Hale Kaynak, Dongchul Kim, Daejoon Kim, Dean Kyne, Kye-Hwan Lee, Irving Levinson, Junfei Li, John Luna, Donald Jerry Lyles, Salma Mahmood, Rachel Mann, Arnulfo Mar, Theresa Mata-Pistokache, Randall Monty, Nancy Nadeau, John Newman, Cynthia Paccacerqua, Michael Persans, Volker Quetschke, Abdullah Faiz Rahman, Ernesto Ramirez, Sam Sale, Clarissa Salinas, Andrea Schwarzbach, Owen Temby, John VandeBerg, Jorge Vidal, Yingchen Yang, Michelle Zeager

Senators Absent: Sonja Arredondo, Steve Chamberlain, Chinwendu Chineke, Miryam Espinosa-Dulanto, Mohammad Ibrahim Farooqi, Zen Faulkes, Eleftherios Gkioulekas, Elamin Ibrahim, Wendy Innis, Sunand Kallumadanda, Karin Lewis, Candace Robledo, Laura Seligman, Samuel Snyder, Garry Souffrant, Linda Williams,

Senators Absent (Excused): Mark Dantzker, Charles Olney, Denise Silcox, William Sokoloff

Visitors(s): Veronica Cano, Patricia McHatton, Selina Mireles

Past President: Dora E. Saavedra

Office Assistant III: Vanessa Ceballos

- I. The meeting convened at 2:07pm (4 online) 47 Edinburg 12 Brownsville
- II. State of the Senate—Current Senate President (and Past President) Quetschke
 - a. Outlined the need for a new President-elect and proposed that a vote be held at the next senate meeting. (See explanation later in minutes.)
 - The Senate needs to focus on shared governance issues;
 - We should encourage our colleagues to step up and become involved.

- Committee work on Shared Governance Reports was successful, Policies that have been in the works for the last four years are online and accessible;
- The Workload policy has been completed;
- The Application for the Carnegie Designation has been completed;
- A Freedom of Expression, Assembly and Speech Policy needs to be developed; meanwhile a Q and A on Freedom is undergoing development;
- The Chair Survey Committee produced a tool which was administered;
- A Blue-Ribbon Committee was empaneled to address HOP/ADM policy development and review of current policies.
- Dr. Dingle resigned from UTRGV in July after learning her contract was not going to be renewed. We therefore lost our 2019-2020 Faculty Senate President.
- Therefore, President-elect Volker assumed the duties and title of President.
- We must work on transparency issues. We must approve our minutes and get them on our website more quickly.
- There is no current President-elect, and we will need to elect one.
- There was discussion about the requirements to be elected to the office of President.

III. Approval of Minutes of the May meeting of the Faculty Senate: A motion was made by Senator Levinson and seconded by Senator Carunto. The motion carried.

IV. Guests

- a. Dr. Selina Mireles, SAVP for Faculty Success & Diversity attended via ZOOM. Dr. Mireles introduced herself to this group. She is available 3 days in Edinburg and two in Brownsville. She invited us to drop in and meet with her. Part of her new responsibilities is to conduct New Faculty Orientation. The office reaches out immediately to new faculty members to provide information and begin a dialogue about mentors, tools for use, and about community building prior to arrival. Dr. Mireles will be meeting with chairs next week. President Quetschke asked about what may be done to increase the dialogue and elements of transparency – encouraging faculty groups (e.g., WFN, Faculty Senate) that already exist to exercise their rights to voice their ideas, concerns, etc.
- b. Ms. Veronica Cano, Faculty Ombudsperson, introduced herself to the Senate. She explained her role as an aide to navigation through university issues. She also described the elements of an ombuds office and the ethics and standards of practice. Her current schedule is MWF Edinburg (library), and TR Brownsville (EVP Suite with its own separate entrance). Her email is veronica.cano@utrgv.edu. The IOA (International Ombudsman Association) website provides useful information about the appropriate role of an Ombudsperson. <https://www.ombudsassociation.org/>

V. Report from Faculty Senate President

The Blue-Ribbon Committee for HOP and other faculty related topics has been meeting. The grievance policy, lecturer policy and guidelines for promotion (borrowing some verbiage from the existing promotion policy in place for TT/Tenure faculty), the annual evaluation process for lecturers (which is in the annual evaluation policy already) are the policies being developed and reviewed at this time.

- VI. Announcement--Reminder for Service in Academic Committees and Councils
We have received a number of nominations, but we can use more from School of Social Work. Volunteering is important and needed.

VII. Business

- a. Chair Survey Committee Status Report – Chair Aziza Zemrani

Postponed – Update from EVPAA, the data are gathered, and the committee will be meeting. The qualitative comments are currently being analyzed and the data are being disaggregated by college and departments for release in September.

- b. Teaching and Teaching Evaluation – Committee Chair Micky (Dumitru) Carunto
The committee met in July and will continue this fall. They are looking solely at teaching. Research and service will not be examined. Student evaluations and peer evaluations are to be reviewed. Departmental criteria are the purview of each department not of this committee.

Problems Identified: Sometimes the student evaluation is the only tool being used to evaluate faculty.

There are questions raised about this. Are students biased while evaluating. Another problem is how to conduct peer evaluations for online and hybrid courses.

Also, should numbers be set as a value by which to evaluate or should a more holistic approach be used? The committee wants to evaluate quality in education.

Students should be informed about what they are expected to do, and there should be a discussion about accountability for their evaluations.

FPT should be changed from a single evaluation year to multiple year evaluation. Student evaluations should have more questions.

Although they may not be used in the average calculation, if these (evaluations) are departmental, then they can be used there as part of the evaluation.

- c. Transparency in Budget Affairs Committee– Chair Owen Temby.

This committee is charged with investigating best practices and status of transparency in budget affairs at other UT System institutions.

There is nothing to report now.

- d. Constitution Committee Status Report. Chair Dora Saavedra

Everyone has Blackboard access to the suggestions for change or improvement to the constitution. Each academic unit represented in the FSEC should have representation on the committee. After the FS has the document completed, it will go to the faculty of UTRGV for a vote.

- e. A Working Group on Shared Governance needs to be established. Chair TBD
We know about this issue at Faculty Seate, but it needs to be shared with others all the way down to the newest faculty, their chairs, and maybe even Deans. EVPAA would like to have and share that information.

There must be engagement and meaningful engagement on shared governance. Maybe we take some time in each of our departments to present and discuss what we already have. Where is this needed? Is transparency an issue at the department level or at college level? Where is there a deficiency in shared governance and what do you need to address it?

The Division of Health Affairs was again raised as a unit lacking in shared governance. In some instance in this division, shared governance exists at the department and college level. However, at the EVPHA level there is not any evidence of shared governance. EVPHA does not even have representation at FS meetings. Decisions are made and explanations or dialogue fails to exist.

Upon exit from the university an exit survey is conducted by Academic Affairs. This is just one element of understanding what needs to be addressed.

There is a feeling among some faculty that the faculty are not being heard. For example, the FS has passed many resolutions, but the perception is we don't hear of the outcomes to these resolutions. This may be one reason for low Senator attendance at FS meetings.

Dr. Mireles indicated that Shawn Saladin is her counterpart in HA and that they are working diligently to parallel all the efforts of AA – this is a second element then that faculty from HA have identified which contributes to the confusion of to whom they report.

Another issue is that the Faculty Senate needs to know who is serving on committees and receive information about who is appointed and when, instead of just knowing what faculty we nominated.

- f. A suggestion was made to work on resolution for Dr. Dingle thanking her for her service and listing the support she received.

VIII. AOB (All Other Business)

IX. Open discussion for pressing issues

- a. Scheduling of meetings is not always good for us, but it is going to be done this way because of other schedules already in place.
- b. College and Departments must be up to date as well on tenure and promotion guidelines which reflects new workloads. We need to have HA present.
- c. It was suggested that Florence Nocar and Diane Shephard be invited to the next Faculty Senate meeting.

- X. Senate President Quetschke adjourned the meeting at 4:23 p.m.