



**2018-2019 Faculty Senate Meeting VI
Edinburg EACSB 1.104/Brownsville BSTUN 2.24 (zoom)
Friday, December 6, 2019
2:00pm - 4:30pm
Minutes**

Minutes prepared by Ernesto Ramírez, UTRGV Faculty Senate, Secretary

Senators Present: Aada Khalid, Punit Ahluwalia, Andrew Anabila, Sonja Arredondo, Sandra Atkins, Bruno Arthur, Stephanie Atkins Sharpe, Dumitru Caruntu, Amy Cummins, Frederick Darsow, Miryam Espinosa-Dulanto, Raquel Estrada, Louis Falk, Mohammad Ibrahim Farooqi, Fuat Firat, Anahit Galstyan, Christine Gerin, Eleftherio Gkioulekas, Rene Gonzalez, Margaret Graham, Sharon Helsley-Mcginley, Kip Austin Hinton, Elamin Ibrahim, Wendy Innis, Murat Karabulut, Hale Kaynak, Daejoon Kim, Dongchul Kim, Kye-Hwan Lee, Karin Lewis, John Luna, Salma Mahmood, Rachel Mann, Arnulfo Mar, Randall Monty, Nancy Nadeau, Charles Olney, Cynthia Paccacerqua, Michael Persans, Volker Quetschke, Ernesto Ramirez, Candace Robledo, Clarissa Salinas, Andrea Schwarzbach, Samuel Snyder, William Sokoloff, Owen Temby, John VandeBerg, Jorge Vidal, Yingchen Yang.

Senators Absent: Jameela Banu, Steve Chamberlain, Mircea Chipara, Cynthia Cripps, Mark Dantzker, Elizabeth Devin-Hernandez, George Diaz, Marcus Farris, Zen Faulkes, Alejandro Garcia, Laura Gephart, Jonathan Guist, Sunand Kallumadanda, Dean Kyne, Irving Levinson, Donald Jerry Lyles, Theresa Mata-Pistokache, John Newman, Abdullah Faiz Rahman, Miguel Slazar, Sam Sale, Laura Selligman, Denise Silcox, Garry Souffrant, Linda Williams, Randy Williamson, Michelle Zeager.

Senators Absent (Excused): Junfei Li, Elvia Ardalani, Karl Berg

Visitors(s): Jennifer McGehee -Valdez, Molly C., Chasse Conque

Past President: Dora E. Saavedra

Office Assistant III: Vanessa Ceballos

I. Convene Meeting and Welcome Senators and Guests 2.06PM

II. Action Item: Approval of Minutes tabled

III. Guests:

1. Chasse Conque – UTRGV VP and Director of Athletics. (5 mins)

Now at 100 days completed on the job. Focus of the work is currently on growing the brand, increasing revenue streams, athlete academic success, and uniting the valley.

About 50% split in gender, 27% of athletes from RGV currently. Ranked well in the WAC at this time for all sports, engaging more in Brownsville, 2 free tickets for Deans' Challenge February 13.

2. Jennifer McGehee-Valdez – Director of Public Relations & Nicole Englitsch/Judith Adame – Organizational Development Specialist: Employee Resource Center (10mins)

Employee Resource Center - A one stop shop for resources and policy/procedure for employees. The ERC website has links to this information in one place. It is accessible through www.utrgv.edu/employee-resources/ Since launching in May, there have been over 10,000 page views.

“Bravo, Vaqueros” – a manner by which to recognize the efforts/work/accomplishments of another employee (student/staff/faculty). There is a certificate that is emailed, or you may use the social media platform Yammer to get this out. It is an easier way to acknowledge the work of others at the university.

UTRGV Students Facebook Group has been growing well over the last few years. There is now a UTRGV Faculty Facebook Group. This can be used for sharing ideas and resources. It is a useful for connecting with others at UTRGV.

IV. Announcements a. Announcement of the Faculty Salary Compression Inversion handout.

b. BRC has met and is reviewing the feedback provided as a result of the last release.

c. Discussion has been had as well on the appointment of members to committee who are been appointed for a term while serving a term that was unexpired.

V. Policy readings, updates and votes

To review the most current ADM revisions from Blue Ribbon committee (see blackboard and/or handouts)

VI. Business Items

1. The letter to the Administration about the location of the Brownsville commencement ceremonies was discussed. (see Blackboard and/or handouts).

This letter is not a resolution from the Senate. It is a statement that reflects the discussion the FSEC had about concerns related to the change of venue. This change of venue further marginalizes a population that is already perceiving separation from decision making and its relevance to the university community.

Comments included a recommendation to remove the sentence about Edinburg from Item 1 as it is distracting rather than supporting the argument. With the Zika statement, remove it as it may be factually inaccurate. It should be reworded to:

The CDC reports that there have been no identified cases of mosquito-borne transmission of Zika virus anywhere in the U.S. during 2018 or 2019, and that Brownsville is not currently at risk for mosquito-borne transmission of Zika virus.

Question: Is this a student issue, why is the FS taking this up?

Answer: Our concern is whether students were involved in the process, especially since an opinion piece was written. We are endorsing that work and concern.

Action: A motion to endorse the letter was made by: Senator Caruntu and seconded by Senator Gkioulekas.

The motion passed unanimously.

2. There was no action on the Letter to Academic Affairs (see blackboard and/or handouts).
3. A brief report was given on the status of the Constitution Committee by Chair Cynthia Paccacerqua. The committee is looking into membership criteria.
4. Teaching and Teaching Evaluation –Committee Chair Dumitru Caruntu.

The committee is looking at the problems with existing tools and principles of evaluation. Online evaluations should be different. The current evaluations are not appropriate at this time for the course; decisions should be made on the objective quantified measures rather than any other criteria. We should not be tied to the numbers regarding the student evaluations. There should be working groups for evaluations. This committee will work with the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) and request input from the Senate.

The peer evaluation initiative through the CTE is for the creation of a peer evaluation tool (a component of Teaching Evaluation).

Student evaluation tools have problems as well, regarding the calculations of satisfaction which includes a value that is not a measure (i.e., the n/a or neutral category). New information to us is that the five questions may not be as required as once believed. EVPAA McHatton will confer with System to determine our ability as an institution to change these.

5. Transparency in Budget affairs –

This committee was formed to investigate best practices and the status of Budget Transparency at other UT System members. Chair Owen Temby.

The committee has been examining the publicly available documents. There was a 15.5% decline from 2017 in salary. This was highest in the first year. As a percentage of operating expenses, it has declined each year of UTRGV's existence.

The Committee is in the process of examining over 1000 pages available and comparing information from UTRGV to UTEP, UTSA, UT, UT-Tyler, UTD, among others.

Information is available about salary from the Texas LBB (Legislative Budget Board) pages and the number of faculty involved may be available as well from the right office. Administration Salaries are available from LBB as the Higher Education – Administrative Accountability Report.

6. Chair survey report – Aziza Zemrani & Linda Matthews

This initiative started two years ago, and it is now nearing completion. It took about six months to reach consensus about the survey; the group worked together to reach this end. There were 55 questions within 5 domains – support, management, decision making, positive work environment, and strategic focus.

Deans are being provided the data reports and qualitative data. Senators should expect to meet with their respective Dean to discuss these results.

AOB (All Other Business)

The former Chair of Surgery, SOM, presented his situation to the Faculty Senate. He had signed a three-year agreement, and then a one-year renewal. The disturbing news for us is that he is not being renewed as chair of surgery. There is a clear lack of appropriate notification/procedure by administration. There is concern that the replacement is with a younger faculty member: could this be a case of age discrimination? There had been no warnings, no probation, no process improvement plan to indicate his removal was impending or warranted. Again, the faculty at the School of Medicine, tenured and non-tenured, are not adequately protected. This issue needs to be brought forth.

Senator Firat will lead a committee to discuss the development of a resolution. We must remember that although HA is a separate division, it is NOT separate from UTRGV. As FS we have a responsibility to represent all faculty. Letter will be read into the minutes

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4.34PM.

Next Meeting:

Friday, January 24, 2019 2:00pm – 4:30pm
Edinburg: International Room (EITTB) 1.102 (In Person Meeting)