

# SENATE HIGHLIGHTS

UTSA FACULTY SENATE NEWSLETTER



## 2021-2022 OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- CHAD MAHOOD: CHAIR
- RENE ZENTENO: VICE CHAIR ELECT
- CHRIS PACKHAM: SECRETARY OF THE GENERAL FACULTY
- CURTIS BREWER: PARLIAMENTARIAN
- MARY MCNAUGHTON-CASSILL: SECRETARY
- DREW JOHNSON: CHAIR, ACADEMIC FREEDOM, EVALUATION AND MERIT COMMITTEE
- JURGEN ENGELBERTH: CHAIR, GRADUATE COUNCIL
- JOHN WALD: CHAIR, BUDGET COMMITTEE
- MATTHIAS HOFFERBERTH: CHAIR, HOP COMMITTEE
- ALEXIS GODET: CHAIR, FS RESEARCH COMMITTEE
- ANDREW LLOYD: CHAIR, CURRICULUM COMMITTEE
- DIANE ABDO: ADTS REPRESENTATIVE

**FOR FULL FACULTY SENATE MINUTES & REPORT, [CLICK HERE](#)**

**FOR MORE DETAIL, CONTACT YOUR SENATOR**

The purpose of the newsletter is to communicate updates from the Faculty Senate and to encourage faculty participation in the spirit of shared governance and the success of UTSA students, faculty, and staff.

## Consent Agenda

- Approval of minutes – February 17, 2022
- Nomination of Chris Packham for Secretary of the General Faculty
- Technology for Language Education Certificate proposal

**ALL ITEMS APPROVED**



## Leadership Report

**BERNARD ARULANANDAM, VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND KNOWLEDGE ENTERPRISE, JOHN SAYGIN, SENIOR ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH, AND JACLYN SHAW, ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT FOR STRATEGIC INITIATIVES & RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS**

### *For additional details see full presentation*

- VPREDKE gave a quick snapshot of the close of last year, the work that went in to attaining Carnegie R1 and the framework for Accelerate 2030 plan.
  - \$140M Total Research Expenditure
  - #145 out of 665 Institutional Rank (78th percentile)
  - #37 out of 150 Institutions without a medical school
  - #15 HSI R1 Alliance rank out of 20 Institutions
  - \$3.0 Billion in direct economic impact for 2021 (aggregate of new financing & investments | new sales, contracts & exports)
  - FY2020 Seed Grant Return on Investment: REDKE awarded \$490,000 to 35 faculty led projects, engaging 26 departments and six colleges.
  - Accelerate 2030 - a framework for a Bold New Knowledge Enterprise
    - many faculty have contributed to the ideation process
    - this is a living document so it can be adjusted over the next decade
    - Eight pathways identified with four key concepts
      - Pathways: Human Capital Development, Student and Postdoctoral Research, Outreach and Engagement, Research Infrastructure, Transformative Research Programs, Innovation and Economic Development, Global Visibility, and Scholarly Excellence
      - Key Concepts: Convergent, Creative, Entrepreneurial, and Diverse



**The travel funding support (\$200K) cannot cover all faculty or multiple conferences, is that the final number to cover these networking activities?**

*That is what we have right now, but the goal is to source out new funding because the need is great.*

**Over the last few years we've been targeting Carnegie R1 as the primary goal. What is the next target?**

*The only other designation in higher education is the AAU and it is something to aspire to, but we have a way to go. The next step is to be even more impactful in terms of the successes of faculty and students, those are the true measurements of success.*

**How do we do better access federal grants to bring recognition?**

*Packaging our applications with our R1 national recognition, should improve our success. We are working on creating proposals that are more competitive.*

**What is your target number?**

*The President's target is \$300M over a decade, we are halfway there and are moving in that direction.*

**What about the NRUF Tier 1 designation?**

*We are waiting on the Coordinating Board to issue their report, which is expected by the end of March. Once that is completed, there is an internal accounting process that would occur in late spring with final notification by Sept 1.*

**Will the list of Research Interests Groups (RIGs) evolve?**

*Right now we have multiple groups that have been launched. What we need to start a new RIG is a champion, a faculty member who is willing to help REDKE inspire faculty from across other colleges and departments to come together around a topic. REDKE has the funding and the infrastructure to support the processes. Contact REDKE if you are interested in championing a group.*



# Chair's Report

CHAD MAHOOD: CHAIR, FACULTY SENATE/DEPT. OF COMMUNICATION

For additional details see full presentation

- Lt. Governor Dan Patrick's statements regarding CRT and tenure, sparked a series of discussions regarding academic freedom at UTSA.
  - Ongoing Meetings and Discussions
    - 2/18: President, Provost, Faculty Senate Chair and others
    - 2/22: President, Provost, Faculty Senate Chair and others
    - 2/25: President, Provost, Faculty Senate Executive Committee
      - **President and Provost assured the Faculty Senate Executive Committee that they support faculty and academic freedom.**
        - The question was how do we communicate this support to faculty without giving fodder to politicians
    - Simultaneously, two other groups were also considering this topic.
      - Chris Packham gave a report of how the UT System Faculty Advisory Council (FAC) is addressing this issue with UT System. The FAC Chair, Nikos Vasilakis, was working with Archie Holmes, Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and the sense is that more turbulence is coming throughout election year so they should not push back yet.
      - Academic Freedom, Merit & Evaluation committee had similar response.
  - 3/2: University Leadership Council (includes Faculty Senate Chair)
    - Discussion of Town Halls to communicate support
  - 3/9: Department Chair's Council (includes Faculty Senate Chair)
  - Possible legislative process:
    - All recordings indicate Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick will charge the Chair of the Senate Committee on this to look into it.
    - In March/April, the interim charge will create discussion that this will be on legislative agenda
    - In Oct/Nov, a report will be issued for the committee. Before then, there will be testimony on this in Austin and it is possible that UT presidents will be called to testify.
    - At some point it will become draft legislation to be voted on.
  - There are multiple opportunities to respond and we need to choose when we want to do that and in what form that would take.
  - Students have expressed that they support academic freedom and want to have access to all avenues of thought

## Q & A

- **Have UTSA and the president or the UT System presidents decided not to take any action now?**  
*Response from President's office is: Don't believe that the decision to not make a statement now, is a decision not to make a statement.*
- **Can you clarify timing since the next legislative session is not until next year? What is happening now?**  
*The previous session sets the agenda for things that should be discussed in the next session.*
- **A March 6, SA Express News op-ed from Rogelio Saenz was presented and a proposal to support the op-ed was discussed.**  
*Chair recommended considering the op-ed but not proposing a formal motion until all possible paths were discussed.*
- **A proposal for a motion was discussed for Faculty Senate to issue a statement in support of Critical Race Theory and related theories, academic freedom, and tenure.**  
There was a second on the motion and discussion opened
  - the timing of the statement was discussed with some indicating a desire for the UT System to issue a statement first
  - concern was expressed over the misconception the public has about higher education and tenure, with a recommendation made to be clear about what tenure is, its origins, and why it benefits the community
  - a statement by UT System Faculty Advisory Council Chair, Nikos Vasilakis was read where Vasilakis suggested to FAC representatives to proceed with caution because of thought that those opposing academic freedom were seeking more media exposure and that denying them that opportunity was the best way to defend our values.
  - there was a discussion that an internal strategy/statement of support to reassure faculty, especially those most vulnerable, is needed
  - it was suggested that the strategy of saying nothing, allows those opposed to tenure, CRT, and academic freedom to organize, while we do not
  - COLFA's DEIJ committee presented statements they have submitted to the COLFA dean, president and provost. Committee representatives requested the Faculty Senate join the COLFA DEIJ committee in asking President Eighmy and Provost Espy to lead a university-wide town hall meeting to discuss the administration's views on academic freedom, tenure and CRT
  - the audience and purpose of the statement was questioned, it was suggested that crafting multiple statements to multiple audiences at multiple points might be appropriate. It was also suggested that to enact change, the statement should include how the action would have a negative effect on Texas business or the quality of education in general and should emphasize the university's economic impact on the Texas economy
  - it was suggested that defining CRT and what it does could be important to include in any statement issued

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## Chair's Report

**CHAD MAHOOD: CHAIR, FACULTY SENATE/DEPT. OF COMMUNICATION**

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- The Chair summarized the discussion and explained the Senate process:
  - There are a number of faculty who believe there is a need to write a summary right now.
  - There is not yet a statement before the Senate.
  - The Faculty Senate process is:
    - present a motion to the Faculty Senate for a statement to be crafted
    - the Senate would vote on the motion
    - the charge would be given to the Academic Freedom, Evaluation and Merit Committee to consider the audience and purpose for the statement and to propose a timeframe for statement development and release
    - AFEM would report progress back to the Chair of Faculty Senate at Exec
    - and it will be reported to all at the next Faculty Senate meeting
- Voting opened and passed for the motion: **Faculty Senate will write a statement in support of the issues discussed in the March Faculty Senate meeting.**
- In regard to the Faculty Senate meeting in person, the meeting room is currently being renovated with new technology for Fall. Senators were surveyed to gauge interest in meeting in a hybrid format with some in-person attendance, 41 out of 44 indicated they wanted a hybrid format but less than 50% indicated they would attend in-person. The Chair recommended continuing virtual meetings for the remaining two spring meetings and looking at hybrid in the fall.
- Climate Survey update focus groups will roll out over the next two months
- Suggest being more narrow in giving efforts for UTSA Giving Day

## New Business

- Diane Abdo shared that the students have written an editorial in the Paisano in support of academic freedom, tenure, and CRT. The students have also interviewed faculty and are covering the topic.
- Rica Ramirez conveyed that one of her faculty, Vittorio Marone, requested she ask Faculty Senate about forming a special committee or task force with voluntary representation from each college focusing on short and long term actionable projects to support the people of Ukraine.
  - Chair recommended taking the idea to SVP Heather Shipley to discuss possible partnerships and admin support
  - Matthias Hofferberth indicated they have been gathering international faculty for various issues, including this, so joining forces was suggested.



## 2021-2022 FACULTY SENATE MEMBERS

### UTSA COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND INTEGRATED DESIGN

- **JOHN ALEXANDER**, SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE & PLANNING
- **AUGUST (GUS) ALLO**, FIXED-TERM TRACK REPRESENTATIVE
- **KIRAN BHAGANAGAR**, DEPT. OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERING
- **DREW JOHNSON**, DEPT. OF CIVIL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING
- **SANDEEP LANGAR**, DEPT. OF CONSTRUCTION SCIENCE AND MANAGEMENT
- **SUE ANN PEMBERTON**, SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE & PLANNING
- **JEFFREY PREVOST**, DEPT. OF ELECTRICAL AND COMPUTER ENGINEERING
- **GABRIELA ROMERO URIBE**, BIOMEDICAL ENGINEERING AND CHEMICAL ENGINEERING

### COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

- **VICTOR DEOLIVEIRA**, DEPT. OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCE AND STATISTICS
- **RICK GRETZ**, DEPT. OF MARKETING
- **DANIEL HOLLAS**, DEPT. OF ECONOMICS
- **HUY LE**, DEPT. OF MANAGEMENT
- **CHARLES LIU**, INFORMATION SYSTEMS & CYBER SECURITY
- **DENNIS LOPEZ**, DEPT. OF ACCOUNTING
- **MAHO SONMEZ**, FIXED-TERM TENURE TRACK REPRESENTATIVE
- **JOHN WALD**, DEPT. OF FINANCE

### COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

- **SONYA ALEMAN**, DEPT. OF RACE, ETHNICITY, GENDER AND SEXUALITY STUDIES
- **CURTIS BREWER**, DEPT. OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND POLICY STUDIES
- **FELICIA CASTRO-VILLAREAL**, DEPT. OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY
- **BECKY HUANG**, DEPT. OF BICULTURAL-BILINGUAL STUDIES
- **RICARDO RAMIREZ**, DEPT. OF INTERDISCIPLINARY LEARNING AND TEACHING
- **DEVON ROMERO**, DEPT. OF COUNSELING

### COLLEGE OF LIBERAL AND FINE ARTS

- **WHITNEY CHAPPELL**, DEPT. OF MODERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES
- **BRIAN DAVIES**, DEPT. OF HISTORY
- **KIMBERLY FONZO**, DEPT. OF ENGLISH
- **MARCUS HAMILTON**, DEPT. OF ANTHROPOLOGY
- **DAVID HANSEN**, FIXED-TERM TENURE TRACK REPRESENTATIVE
- **MATTHIAS HOFFERBERTH**, DEPT. OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND GEOGRAPHY
- **KIM KLINE**, DEPT. OF COMMUNICATION
- **S. ANDREW LLOYD**, DEPT. OF MUSIC
- **HUMBERTO SAENZ**, DEPT. OF ART AND ART HISTORY
- **JOSH THUROW**, DEPT. OF PHILOSOPHY AND CLASSICS

### COLLEGE OF SCIENCES

- **HECTOR AGUILAR**, FIXED-TERM TENURE TRACK REPRESENTATIVE
- **RAJENDRA BOPPANA**, DEPT. OF COMPUTER SCIENCE
- **LORENZO BRANCALEON**, DEPT. OF PHYSICS AND ASTRONOMY
- **JAMES CHAMBERS**, MOLECULAR BIOLOGY AND IMMUNITY
- **MIKE DOYLE**, DEPT. OF CHEMISTRY
- **ALEXIS GODÉT**, DEPT. OF EARTH AND PLANETARY SCIENCES
- **DMITRY GOKHMAN**, DEPT. OF MATHEMATICS
- **BRIAN LAUB**, DEPT. OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE AND ECOLOGY
- **RICHARD LEBARON**, DEPT. OF NEUROSCIENCE, DEVELOPMENTAL AND REGENERATIVE BIOLOGY

### COLLEGE FOR HEALTH, COMMUNITY AND POLICY

- **GINA AMATANGELO**, FIXED-TERM TENURE TRACK REPRESENTATIVE
- **ROGER ENRIQUEZ**, DEPT. OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE
- **GINNY GARCIA**, DEPT. OF SOCIOLOGY
- **TIANOU ZHANG**, DEPT. OF KINESIOLOGY
- **MARY MCNAUGHTON-CASSILL**, DEPT. OF PSYCHOLOGY
- **EMILY NICKLETT**, DEPT. OF SOCIAL WORK
- **BRANCO PONOMARIOV**, DEPT. OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
- **ZENONG YIN**, DEPT. OF PUBLIC HEALTH
- **RENE ZENTEÑO**, DEPT. OF DEMOGRAPHY

### UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

- **LAUREN RIOJAS-FITZPATRICK**, FIXED-TERM TENURE TRACK REPRESENTATIVE

### EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

- **DIANE ABDO**, REPRESENTATIVE, ACADEMY OF DISTINGUISHED TEACHING SCHOLARS
- **EMILY BONNER**, PAST FACULTY SENATE CHAIR
- **JURGEN ENGELBERTH**, CHAIR, GRADUATE COUNCIL
- **CHAD MAHOOD**, CHAIR, FACULTY SENATE
- **CHRIS PACKHAM**, SECRETARY OF THE GENERAL FACULTY