

Faculty Voices

Senate Highlights

- **Interim Provost seeks faculty input**

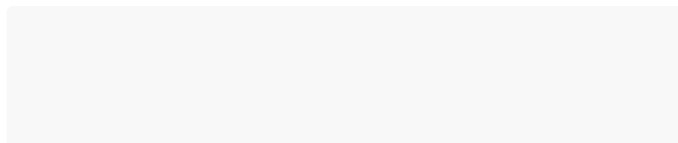
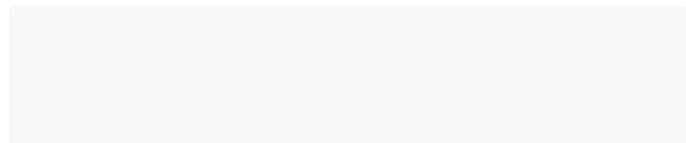
See below under "Provost's Report" for details.

- **Will DT campus get a mini-faculty center?**

See below under "Provost's Report" for details.

- **Other Senate News**

Members of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee met with the UT System Shared Governance Team on May 15th. The team thoughtfully listened to faculty concerns regarding shared governance at UTSA.



Chair's Report



Dr. Emily Bonner

At the April Senate meeting Dr. Bonner said that she and Dr. Hernandez attended the most recent SYSFAC meeting. Some of the items discussed with Chancellor McRaven included taking on challenges such as physician burnout, sexual assault, and shared governance. He said that students should be able to participate in topics of discovery, debate, and dissent. He cautioned against overthinking problems; encouraging action-oriented solutions, and urged faculty to make issues known and express their opinions on these issues.

Additionally, Dr. Bonner said that the UT System Faculty Advisory Committee is working on exploring an Online Education Project, looking at student “belonging” as a pillar of student success, and is conducting dual credit and workload studies for which taskforces have been formed.

The Dean's Advisory Council and Chair's

Provost's Report



Dr. Mauli Agrawal

At the April Senate meeting Dr. Agrawal asked for the Senate's input on 3 items: (1) Faculty development – for incoming junior faculty, courses on grant-writing and teaching are required in the first year. The Provost asked for input on what other services should be provided that would benefit new faculty; (2) UTSA's sexual environment – the Provost stressed the importance of faculty and staff involvement to combat a negative environment. He encouraged everyone to think about how they could better educate themselves to foster greater awareness of this issue. Dr. Agrawal said that the Senate should take the lead in forming recommendations, especially those that would address sexual assault prevention; (3) Textbooks – Dr. Agrawal said that students have expressed concern about the cost of textbooks. He encouraged faculty to consider utilizing free, online materials where possible.

Dr. Agrawal also said that he was looking into the possibility of the creation of a mini-faculty center at the downtown campus. He

Council are currently seeking to suspend HOP 4.09 which requires that each TA enroll in 3 hours during the summer session in which they teach. For many, the pay might be less than the course registration costs and the payment deadline is before payments to TAs are issued.

Dr. Bonner said that there are some other initiatives happening within the Senate. The budget subcommittee is planning to submit recommendations related to transparency to the Senate, and then to the members of the university's budget taskforce. A working group on sexual harassment will be gathering recommendations to submit to Dr. Reyes and the Presidential taskforce. The Senate's Academic Freedom, Evaluation and Merit committee is conducting research on annual reports in relation to merit, and will be sending a proposal on program evaluation to the President. Dr. Bonner said that the Senate may want to look at implementing an electronic "suggestion box" for topics to take up, as well as creating a Facebook page to stay connected and showcase current issues being addressed by the Senate.

At the May Senate meeting Dr. Bonner said that a shared governance meeting was set for May 15th. A Qualtrics survey was

said that although there are still overall space constraints, construction is underway for a new engineering building and additional parking on the main campus, which should help to alleviate some of these constraints.

At the May Senate meeting Dr. Agrawal said that he followed up on Senate concerns related to travel reimbursements. He said that some process issues were identified and that there is currently a lack of training for those involved in the process. He said that he is looking into mandatory training going forward. On another topic, Dr. Agrawal noted a correlation that has been identified between courses with the highest DFW rates and attendance. He encouraged everyone to think of ways to combat this and how to compel students to seek tutoring when needed. A question was asked regarding the new projects downtown. He said that a conference center is underway that is expected to hold about 300 people and will include breakout rooms. Student activities and advising will be moved to the same area, and there is the possibility of opening a small faculty center downtown. He confirmed that the BV theater will be used for some conferences, but will continue to be utilized as it is now. A question was asked regarding the status of the Presidential search. Dr. Agrawal said that he had no updates, but that a new President is expected to begin September 1st. A question

recently sent out to gather feedback from departments regarding shared governance. The information generated was shared with the UT System visitors at the governance meeting. Dr. Bonner gave an update on CLASS. She said that the LEAD academy is actively recruiting, financial aid is looking at restructuring in the future to better align resources, and the academic pathways curricula are being set to allow students to register. She said that there is a CLASS PowerPoint currently uploaded to SharePoint with more information. Lastly, Dr. Bonner thanked the Senate for their time and hard work this year.

was asked regarding hiring. Dr. Agrawal said that he has asked the Deans to provide him with lists of their top priorities for the budget.

Curriculum Committee



Dr. Alistair Welchman

At the April Senate meeting Dr. Welchman said that the Curriculum Committee reviewed a proposal from the College of Business to eliminate 5 Bachelors in Business Administration (BBA) majors (Human Resource Management, Sport, Event and Tourism Management, Entrepreneurship, Management with International Business concentration, and

Research Committee



Dr. Chris Packham

At the April Senate Meeting Dr. Packham noted that the Senate's research committee has been working with representatives from the Vice President for Research's office on a survey that was recently distributed to senators. The survey only yielded 22 respondents; although most of the results were as expected. The committee may consider re-running the survey again to

General Business). The committee recommended that the proposal to eliminate these programs be accepted. The Senate voted to unanimously approve the committee's recommendation. In addition, the committee noted that a clarifying point might be added to HOP 2.38 with regard to review committees providing an assessment independent of the initial administrative order.

At the May Senate meeting Dr. Welchman said that his committee reviewed the 2017-2018 undergraduate catalog. There were some minor issues identified and one major issue that the committee recommends be resolved: COS has offered a BA in Chemistry with a concentration in Grades 7-12 Chemistry Teaching Certification, but this program has not been given the appropriate approvals and should be removed from the catalog. The committee recommended that the Senate accept its recommendations and approve the undergraduate catalog. The Senate voted to approve the undergraduate catalog as follows: 29 approve, 0 do not approve, 1 abstention. Next, Dr. Welchman gave an update on the certificate proposal rules that the Senate proposed in 2015 and were approved regarding HOP 2.38 and program closures. He said that Dr. Williams will be including the proposal rules in the UTSA Curriculum Guide which is updated each summer. In addition, he said that the curriculum committee might want to review HOP 2.38 regarding independent

capture a larger sample size. The full survey results are available in the Senate's SharePoint meeting folder.

committees this fall.

The Senate is responsible for gathering stakeholder feedback related to HOP Policies. Be on the lookout for emails from your department Senator seeking feedback on these policies. This is one way that faculty provide important feedback for policy, so please send comments as indicated. Without your comments, your Senator cannot represent your voice.

Much of the content of this newsletter was taken directly from the minutes of Faculty Senate meetings. Many thanks to Sarah Soulek for preparing the minutes.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER?

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