

SENATE HIGHLIGHTS



UTSA Faculty Senate Newsletter

2023-2024 OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- Rene Zenteno:** Chair
- Alexis Godet:** Vice Chair-Chair Elect
- Chris Packham:** Secretary of the General Faculty
- Victor Villarreal:** Graduate Council
- Valerie Sponsel:** ADTS Representative
- Mike Baumann:** Parliamentarian
- Kirsten Gardner:** Secretary
- Ginny Garcia-Alexander:** Academic Freedom, Evaluation & Merit (AFEM)
- Mary Dixon:** Budget Committee
- Sonya Aleman:** HOP Committee
- George Perry:** Research Committee
- Andrew Lloyd:** Curriculum Committee



Consent Agenda - APPROVED

- Approval of Minutes – November 30, 2023, Faculty Senate Meeting
- Graduate Council item – approved at the December 5, 2023 meeting
 - Accelerated Master of Public Administration

CHAIR'S REPORT: René Zenteno

- Due to the evolving understanding of [SB 17](#) and ongoing voluntary changes in staffing and personnel reappointments, the decision has been made not to launch the new Office of Campus and Community Belonging. The services intended for the new office will be distributed among various other university offices.
- The Department Chair's Council is forming a working group to review faculty annual evaluations, intending to make recommendations on the use of scales in the evaluation process and consider the decoupling of the annual evaluation from the merit process.
 - Recommendations are expected by May 2024, and the group will include members from the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and the Faculty Senate.
- Dr. Zenteno encouraged the Faculty Senate members to attend the State of the University address on Monday, January 22, 2024, either in person or via the livestream.

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.



Leadership Update: Academic Affairs Update Heather Shipley, Ph.D., Interim Provost & Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

- An update on Senate Bill 18, the tenure bill, was provided. A committee is reviewing the bill bi-weekly and plans are for the group to make policy recommendations in early March.
 - A model template policy from UT System is under review to aid in drafting a relevant policy for UTSA, which will then go through the established shared governance procedures.
 - After approval, the university will seek UT System approval and update the HOP.
- UTSA's National Impact Travel Award is available to T/TT and FTT faculty, as well as college or academic support division staff. The award aims to enhance pedagogical skills and promote the university's achievements nationally.
 - Full-time FTT faculty can receive reimbursements up to \$2,000 with no matching funds required.
 - T/TT faculty and staff can receive up to \$1,500, with a maximum of \$1,000 if the college or support division provides \$500 through a 2:1 fund matching model.
- She reminded Senators that nominations for the University Excellence Awards and the Regents' Outstanding Teaching Award are open, with deadlines on February 2nd and February 22nd, 2024, respectively.
 - It was encouraged that faculty nominate deserving staff members and prepare nomination packets for the teaching award.
- Celebrate Teaching Week, hosted by the Academy of Distinguished Teaching Scholars, will take place from February 19-23, 2024. The event includes a Teaching Showcase, for which applications are due by January 19, 2024. Last year's Showcase featured 30 faculty members sharing insights on active learning, pedagogy, and other educational strategies.

Secretary of the General Faculty Chris Packham, Chair

- The UT System Faculty Advisory Council meeting will discuss topics like [SB 17](#) and [SB 18](#), research, and faculty evaluations on January 25-26, 2024, in Austin, TX.
 - A detailed report will be provided during the February Faculty Senate meeting.

Budget Committee

Mary Dixon, Chair

- Dr. Dixon reported on the Jan. 10th Budget Committee meeting with Sheri Hardison, the CFO and Sr. Associate VP for Financial Affairs, to review the university's year-end financial results and budget update. Open to all Faculty Senators, the meeting was attended by approximately twenty Senators and covered high-level financial information.
 - The university is generally in good financial health, with funds allocated towards merit and adjustments to faculty salaries.
- Concerns were raised about the administrative costs, their benchmarking and decision process. It was clarified that administrative positions and salaries are handled at the vice-presidential level and are not mandated to be benchmarked by the UT System or the State of Texas. The need for further discussions on this topic will be determined by the Budget Committee.
- The next topic discussed was the profitability of online programs for departments that have engaged in online learning. Initially, these programs were thought to be more profitable than residential programs. However, as the programs started, the finances did not confirm this. Further research into the topic was suggested and open to further discussion.
 - The related presentation can be accessed on the Faculty Senate Sharepoint site.



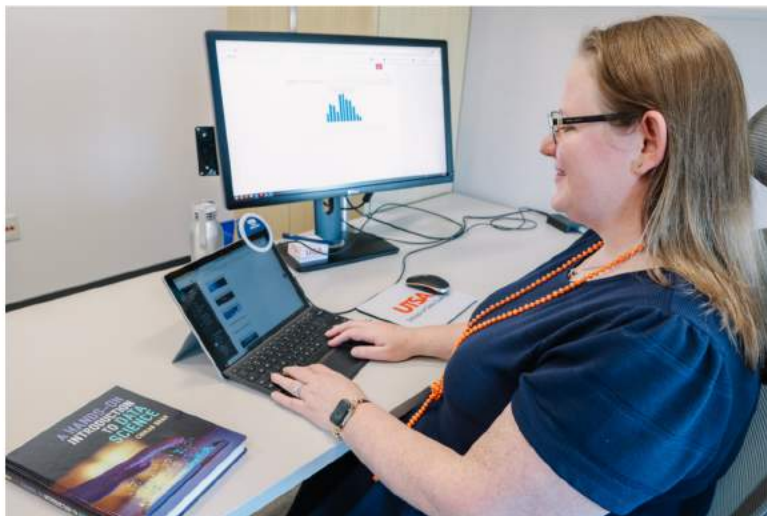
It was mentioned that initially, the online classes were profitable, but now it's unclear if they are still generating revenue. Can this statement be clarified?

- *The university's online programs, initiated five years ago, were expected to be financially beneficial by increasing student enrollment and recruiting from diverse groups. Costs were to be absorbed by the Online Learning Programs Office during the program's growth phase. However, the program hasn't become profitable due to increased student fees and double taxation, where the department pays both for the development and marketing of the online program, resulting in the same cost to the department as the residential program.*

Additional comment - *Concerns were raised about the tax structure for online programs. The structure was recently amended to include a 33% VPBA IRM tax, with the remaining funds distributed between Academic Affairs, Academic Innovation, and the department. There was concern that this would result in double taxation for departments with online programs.*

To clarify, the previous 25%, 25%, and 50% distribution, which totaled 100%, now only accounts for 67% as 33% is allocated to VPBA/IRM. Additionally, are students enrolled in fully online classes eligible to use the gym if they reside in San Antonio?

- *The calculation may vary depending on how IRM is determined. However, it's indeed the case that funds are deducted first and then taxed. Also, it's possible for students enrolled in a fully online program to live in San Antonio and use the UTSA gym.*



University Curriculum Committee Andy Lloyd, Chair

- The University Curriculum Committee reviewed and unanimously approved nine Core Curriculum proposals for the 2024-2026 Undergraduate Catalog:
 - MUS 2733: History of the American Musical Theater
 - COM 2313: Introduction to Media Studies
 - PHI 2093: Philosophy of the Americas
 - ART 1113: Image Culture
 - REGS 2003: Intersectional Approaches to Social Justice
 - NDRB/BIO 1033: Drugs and Society
 - SWK 1013: Intro to Social Work
 - KIN 2123: Exercise as Medicine
 - NDT 2043: Introduction to Nutritional Sciences
- The University Curriculum Report served as the motion to approve the nine (9) Core Curriculum Proposals. The proposals were unanimously approved.
- Dr. Lloyd presented the University Curriculum Committee's report, which reviewed five new program proposals. Each proposal was unanimously approved:
 - Undergraduate Certificate in Creative Writing
 - Minor in Medical Humanities
 - B.A. in Digital Media Influence
 - B.S. in Software Engineering
 - B.A. in Commercial and Digital Music
- The University Curriculum Committee's proposal acts as the motion to approve each degree proposal.
 - The University Curriculum Committee's proposal acts as the motion to approve each degree proposal. The motion was approved and the five new degree programs were unanimously approved individually as well.
- With no further discussion or objections to any proposal, the motion was approved. Consequently, the five new degree programs were unanimously approved individually as well.



To which aspects of the core were these courses mapping?

- *There was no specific information on hand, but Dr. Mahood stated that COM 2313 maps to Language, Culture, and Identity. Dr. Davis added that MUS 2733 maps to Critical Thinking, Communication, Teamwork, and Social Responsibility.*

Regarding the B.S. in Software Engineering, will the program seek ABET accreditation? This is relevant as there are several mathematics courses required for this accreditation.

- *The new degree being developed in the Computer Science department reduces the math requirement, allowing a wider range of students to focus on software. As it is not an engineering program, it does not require ABET accreditation, and there are no current plans to pursue such accreditation.*



Unfinished Business: Faculty Senate Bylaws

- Dr. Zenteno presented changes to the Faculty Senate Bylaws at the November 30th meeting and followed up with an email to the Senators. The motion for discussion and voting at the current meeting is the memo from the Faculty Senate Executive Committee.
- Dr. Baumann, as Parliamentarian, discussed the changes to officer roles, election schedules, and updates to allow for online meetings. He presented this as the Executive Committee's recommendation.
- The Faculty Senate Executive Committee has updated the Bylaws, including adding directors, removing the reference to the Secretary of the General Faculty, and reassigning those duties to the Secretary. The term of the Secretary's position has been extended to three years for continuity, and the Parliamentarian's term has been extended from one year to two years.
- The Faculty Senate Executive Committee's proposal for new bylaws was unanimously approved by the Faculty Senate.



2023-2024 FACULTY SENATE MEMBERS

Alvarez College of Business

- **Dennis Lopez**, Dept. of Accounting
- **David Beheshti**, Dept. of Economics
- **Zijun Wang**, Dept. of Finance
- **Maho Sonmez**, Fixed-term Tenure Track Representative
- **Glenn Dietrich**, Dept. of Information Systems & Cyber Security
- **Huy Le**, Dept. of Management
- **Victor DeOliveria**, Dept. of Management Science and Statistics
- **Ashwin Malshe**, Dept. of Marketing

College of Education and Human Development

- **Armando Trujillo**, Dept. of Bicultural-Bilingual Studies
- **Devon Romero**, Dept. of Counseling
- **Curtis Brewer**, Dept. of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
- **Michael Karcher**, Dept. of Educational Psychology
- **Rica Ramirez**, Dept. of Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching
- **Sonya Aleman**, Dept. of Race, Ethnicity, Gender and Sexuality Studies
- **Zaid Haddad**, Fixed Term Track Representative

Klesse College of Engineering and Integrated Design

- **John Alexander**, School of Architecture and Planning
- **Jeffrey Prevost**, Dept. of Electrical and Computer Engineering
- **August (Gus) Allo**, Fixed-Term Track Representative
- **Alex Mejia**, Department of Biomedical and Chemical Engineering
- **Harry Millwater**, Dept. of Mechanical Engineering
- **Jie Huang**, School of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Construction Management

College of Liberal and Fine Arts

- **Marcus Hamilton**, Dept. of Anthropology
- **Humberto Saenz**, School of Art
- **Kim Kline**, Dept. of Communication
- **Kimberly Garza**, Dept. of English
- **Mary Dixon**, Fixed-term Tenure Track Representative
- **Kristen Gardner**, Dept. of History
- **S. Andrew Lloyd**, School of Music
- **Xunwu Chen**, Dept. of Philosophy and Classics
- **Neil Debbage**, Dept. of Political Science and Geography
- **Valeria Meiller**, Dept. of Modern Languages
- **Neil Debbage**, Dept. of Political Science and Geography

College of Sciences

- **Kirk Schanze**, Dept. of Chemistry
- **John Quarles**, Dept. of Computer Science
- **Alexis Godet**, Dept. of Earth and Planetary Sciences
- **Hector Aguilar**, Fixed-term Tenure Track Representative
- **Edwin Barea-Rodriguez**, Dept. of Integrative Biology
- **George Perry**, Dept. of Neuroscience, Developmental and Regenerative Biology
- **Dmitry Gokhman**, Dept. of Mathematics
- **James Chambers**, Dept. of Molecular, Microbiology and Immunology
- **Cristian Botez**, Dept. of Physics and Astronomy

College for Health, Community and Policy

- **Marie Tillyer**, Dept. of Criminology & Criminal Justice
- **David Weber**, Fixed-term Tenure Track Representative
- **Branco Ponomariov**, Dept. of Public Administration
- **Ginny Garcia-Alexander**, Dept. of Sociology & Demography
- **Jimi Francis**, Dept. of Kinesiology
- **Jelena Todić**, Dept. of Social Work
- **Mike Baumann**, Dept. of Psychology
- **Jusung Lee**, Dept. of Public Health

University College

- **Lauren Riojas-Fitzpatrick**, Fixed-term Tenure Track Representative

Ex-Officio Members

- **Rene Zenteno**, Chair, Faculty Senate
- **Alexis Godet**, Vice Chair
- **Chris Packham**, Secretary of the General Faculty
- **Victor Villarreal**, Chair, Graduate Council
- **Mark Bayer**, Department Chair Council Representative
- **Valerie Sponset**, ADTS Representative
- **Justin Marmolejo**, Staff Senate Representative