SENATE HIGHLIGHTS

UTSA Faculty Senate Newsletter

UTSA Faculty Senate

2022-2023 OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Rene Zenteno: *Chair*
Chad Mahood: *Past Faculty Senate Chair*
Chris Packham: *Secretary of the General Faculty*
Corey Sparks: *Graduate Council*
Valerie Sponsel: *ADTS Representative*
Curtis Brewer: *Parlimentarian*
Mary McNaughton-Cassil: *Secretary*
Felicia Castro-Villarreal: *Academic Freedom, Evaluation & Merit (AFEM)*
Kirsten Gardner: *Budget Committee*
Sonya Aleman: *HOP Committee*
Alexis Godet: *Research Committee*
Andrew Lloyd: *Curriculum Committee*

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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 – October 13, 2022, Faculty Senate Meeting
- Approval of Graduate Council in Graduate Programs
  - New Concentration in Biochemistry for PhD in Chemistry
  - New Concentration in Learning, Motivation, and Development for MA in Applied Educational Psychology
  - New Concentration in Program Evaluation and Applied Research for MA in Applied Educational Psychology
  - Proposal for Graduate Certificate in Foundations of Learning, Design, and Technology
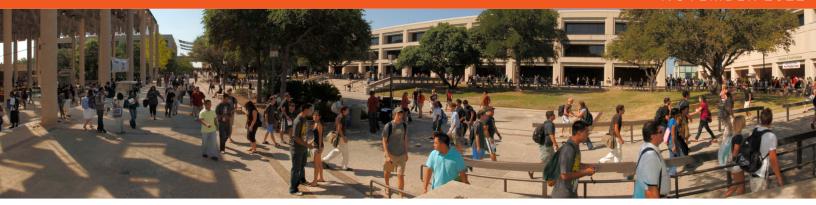
ALL ITEMS APPROVED

CHAIR'S REPORT: *Rene Zenteno*

- Dr. Zenteno recently attended a University Leadership Council meeting where President Eighmy discussed the UTSA Strategic Plan refresh. UT System requires all UT System institutions to review their strategic plans. The president will lead the effort with each Dean leading the charge in the colleges. The process will begin this semester and continue into Spring 2023. The president will host a town hall where he will announce the process for the Strategic Plan refresh.
- UT System Executive Vice Chancellor, Dr. Archie Holmes was asked to testify on behalf of UT System at a hearing regarding tenure at the Senate Higher Education committee on Friday, November 18, 2022.
- Dr. Zenteno met with the provost and discussed merit increases, the need for recent historical data, and the news that the university will have a merit increase this year. Regarding questions from the last Senate meeting on how the COVID statements are being used on faculty evaluations, the provost will discuss with Dr. Heather Shipley and will report back at the December Senate meeting.

Leadership Update: VPREDKE
Jaclyn Shaw, Interim VP for Research and Economic Development
Veronica Stoller, Assistant Vice President for Research, Economic Development and Knowledge Enterprise (REDKE)

- **Strategy for Post Award & Financial Support Services**
  - In the summer, VPBA started an in-depth assessment of the post-award enterprise working with the president and provost. Post awards include Post Award Administration, Grants, Contracts, and Fiscal Services, and also touch units outside of REDKE, such as VPBA Financial Affairs, Academic Affairs, and the colleges. Ensuring efficient processes among all units is a priority in REDKE.
  - The goal is to improve sponsored programs and financial management for principal investigators to assist the college business service centers as well as the REDKE staff.
    - Improved timeliness of financial management on grants and contracts
    - Expanded expertise in research administration.
  - The office of VP for Research, Economic Development, and Knowledge is comprised of 5 areas:
    - Strategic Research Development – Jaclyn Shaw
    - Sponsored Project Administration – Sandra Garcia
    - Research Finance & Operations – Veronica Stoller (post-awards, grants & contracts)
    - Research Integrity & Infrastructure Support – Michelle (Mickey) Stevenson
    - Innovation & Economic Development – Rod McSherry
  - Project Lifecycle for a Sponsored Project
    - Proposal development - where budgets and the scope of work are created
    - Post-award phase – managing the award with College Business Service Centers.
    - Closing out the project
  - Key personnel in VPREDKE for pre and post-award services:
    - Dr. Dan Riechers – Sr. Director Strategic Research – Proposal Development Support Services
    - Liana Ryan, Director, SCI/EID Research Service Centers
    - Jesse Hernandez, Asst. Director, HEBA, Research Service Centers
    - Jessica Fernandez, Sr. Director, Contracts and Industry Agreements
    - Jennifer Silver, Director, Post Award Administration
      - This team monitors all project milestones and expenditures in accordance with Uniform Guidance –reviewing scopes of work to ensure they are set up for success
      - Coordinates adherence to sponsor & UTSA requirements
      - Provides direct service to PI(s), project personnel, BSC's and sponsors
    - Sandra Claiborne, Director, Grants, Contracts & Financial Services
      - Completes project setup, invoicing, financial reporting, and project closeouts
      - Manages billing, collections, and A/R reconciliation of grants and contracts revenue
      - Processes, reviews and approves internal NOAs, NCEs, LOCs, and cost transfer requests
      - Implements federal cash requests and state drawdowns
      - Troubleshoots financial issues throughout the duration of the award

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Leadership Update: VPREDKE (continued)
Jaclyn Shaw, Interim VP for Research and Economic Development
Veronica Stoller, Assistant Vice President for Research, Economic Development and Knowledge Enterprise (REDKE)

- For efficiency, email postaward@utsa.edu or gcfs@utsa.edu. These addresses are monitored throughout the day.
- UTSA has seen rapid acceleration since 2015 in research and development expenditures contributing to some of the issues experienced today. They are reviewing the workload to address the growth and find solutions including adding knowledge to PAA staff.
- Contracted Huron to help with the backlog. Phase I is to catch up/clean up invoicing and project closeout. Create Accounts Receivables/Collections team. Hire quality assurance lead. Lower the backlog before the winter break. Huron will assess UTSA's maturity as a research administration unit, system improvements, and best practices. Phase II will implement system improvements and automation. Huron will analyze process efficiencies and recommendations will be implemented beginning January 2023.
- Due to their volume of research awards, a pilot project was started with the College of Sciences to locate post-award staff within COS Dean's suite 2-3 days a week to answer questions, troubleshoot issues, and improve customer service and relationships. A matrix of roles and responsibilities will be developed for PIs to know whom to contact with questions. A template will be designed for reconciliations.

How will the new post-award administration hires help in the long term, given the research expenditure trajectory and projection for the future?
- *Clearing the backlog will mean that new hires can focus on current accounts. It is also essential to train new and current staff to be knowledgeable in various sponsors-supported, complex contracts and best practices. Fast growth has prevented training at the level, but Huron will help with that. Additional staff will be needed and that is being assessed. Automation will also make an impact.*

Has staff turnover exacerbated the problem at UTSA? And if so, how can it be solved?
- *Before he left, Can Saygin did work to get salaries commensurate with peer institutions for pre- and post-award because the staff was being poached. Staff well-being is also a continued focus. Hiring personnel will help to lighten the workload. Leadership will continue efforts to retain knowledgeable staff.*

Sahara has been a challenge to use — Is support available to understand accounts in Sahara?
- *Part of the COS pilot is to establish templates and tools for faculty to use Sahara. Additional training for college BSEs is also being implemented regarding reconciliation and Sahara.*

What is being done to prevent issues that result from a centralized RSC?
- *The pilot program that adds staff to the Dean's office provides access to the post-award team. The Research Service Centers are spread out. Feedback will be considered in the future. The Rules of Responsibilities matrix was created to outline any process of post-award management.*

What is being done to cultivate the work spirit between the post-award and BSC teams?
- *Work has begun to train post-award and BSC staff together. They also meet monthly. They will start co-locating together 2-3 days a week soon, so the situation is being addressed.*

Process for arranging cost share is a challenge, this should be addressed in the future.
- *As part of the President's Strategic Plan Refresh, REDKE will launch an initiative to redesign the Sponsored Project Lifecycle to align with R1 status.*

Secretary of the General Faculty Report:
Chris Packham, Chair

- The Chair of the UT System Faculty Advisory Council will be in San Antonio on Friday, November 18, 2022 (same day as UT Health Faculty Senate meets).

Research Committee Report:
Alexis Godet, Chair

- The Research Committee considered two items:
  - The hiring of additional staff.
  - The culture of being an R1 institution.
- The committee's plan going forward is to continue probing other R1 institutions and peer institutions as to how faculty work with post-awards and present those findings at the next Senate meeting.
- Dialogue needs to continue with Jaclyn on faculty issues beyond post awards, including research.

Unfinished Business

- Reminder of the Faculty Senate Strategic Priorities. Steps have been made toward the objectives, such as faculty equity and compensation.
  - Faculty equity and compensation: The Budget Committee is gathering data from other institutions regarding faculty reward as they move from assistant professor to associate professor and associate professor to professor. There is still uncertainty about salary compressions at the college level.
  - Maintaining R1/NRUF: R1/NRUF was discussed at the last meeting, but more information is needed on GRA support.
  - Shared governance: Shared governance questions were submitted to the provost and Dr. Shipley and addressed at Senate meetings. The Executive Committee will discuss additional questions to submit to the provost's office or the president's office.

Unfinished Business (continued)

- Effective use of meetings: Meeting time has been used more effectively to deliberate issues of importance to the faculty.
- There is still work to do to improve transparency on budget, IRM, funding colleges, and hiring. The Budget Committee is working on this and will be meeting with Sheri Hardison soon.
- Greater research administrative support and funding: more administrative support for research and funding was discussed today.
- Advocate for faculty: need to address inflation, more transparency in the merit and other compensation processes, competitive salaries to retain faculty, especially FTT, and systemize annual merit increases.
- Important to keep these issues at the forefront. How are these issues brought to administration in an organized manner? How does the Senate define success on behalf of faculty at UTSA? Same for NRUF— how is success defined on this priority? Dr. Zenteno attended the Department Chair's Council meeting on November 9, 2022 and the Chair's agree.

New Business

- The 15th Annual COEHD Research Colloquium will be held on March 2, 2023, in the H-E-B Ballroom on the Main Campus. Proposals are due by February 18, 2023. If you have any questions, contact Dr. Rosalind Horowitz at rosalind.horowitz@utsa.edu.

2022-2023
FACULTY SENATE MEMBERS

Alvarez College of Business
- *Dennis Lopez*, Dept. of Accounting
- *Don Lien*, Dept. of Economics
- *Zijun Wang*, Dept. of Finance
- *Maho Sonmez*, Fixed-term Tenure Track Representative
- *Charles Liu*, Dept. of Information Systems & Cyber Security
- *Huy Le*, Dept. of Management
- *Victor DeOliveria*, Dept. of Management Science and Statistics
- *Rick Gretz*, Dept. of Marketing

College of Education and Human Development
- *Sidury Christiansen*, Dept. of Bicultural-Bilingual Studies
- *Devon Romero*, Dept. of Counseling
- *Curtis Brewer*, Dept. of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
- *Felicia Castro-Villareal*, 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
- *Sue Ann Pemberton*, School of Architecture and Planning
- *Gabriela Romero Uribe*, Dept. of Biomedical Engineering and Chemical Engineering
- *Drew Johnson*, School of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Construction Management
- *Jeffrey Prevost*, Dept. of Electrical and Computer Engineering
- *August (Gus) Allo*, Fixed-Term Track Representative
- *Kiran Bhaganagar*, Dept. of Mechanical Engineering

College of Liberal and Fine Arts
- *Marcus Hamilton*, Dept. of Anthropology
- *Humberto Saenz*, School of Art
- *Kim Kline*, Dept. of Communication
- *Kerry Sinanan*, Dept. of English
- *Mary Dixson*, Fixed-term Tenure Track Representative
- *Kristen Gardner*, Dept. of History
- *Whitney Chappell*, Dept. of Modern Languages and Literatures
- *S. Andrew Lloyd*, School of Music
- *Xunwu Chen*, Dept. of Philosophy and Classics
- *Neil Debbage*, Dept. of Political Science and Geography

College of Sciences
- *James Chambers*, Dept. of Molecular Microbiology and Immunology
- *Kirk Schanze*, Dept. of Chemistry
- *John Quarles*, Dept. of Computer Science
- *Brian Laub*, Dept. of Integrative Biology
- *Alexis Godet*, Dept. of Earth and Planetary Sciences
- *Hector Aguilar*, Fixed-term Tenure Track Representative
- *Lorenzo Brancaleon*, Dept. of Physics and Astronomy
- *George Perry*, Dept. of Neuroscience, Developmental and Regenerative Biology
- *Dmitry Gokhan*, Dept. of Mathematics

College for Health, Community and Policy
- *Marie Tillyer*, Dept. of Criminology & Criminal Justice
- *Ying Huang*, Dept. of Demography
- *David Weber*, Fixed-term Tenure Track Representative
- *Tianou Zhang*, Dept. of Kinesiology
- *Mary McNaughton-Cassill*, Dept. of Psychology
- *Branco Ponomariov*, Dept. of Public Administration
- *Zenong Yin*, Dept. of Public Health
- *Candace Christensen*, Dept. of Social Work
- *Ginny Garcia*, Dept. of Sociology

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

Ex-Officio Members
- *Rene Zenteno*, Chair, Faculty Senate
- *Chris Packham*, Secretary of the General Faculty
- *Corey Sparks*, Chair, Graduate Council
- *Arturo Schultz*, Department Chair Council Representative
- *Valerie Sponsel*, ADTS Representative
- *Chad Mahood*, Past Faculty Senate Chair
- *Justin Marmolejo*, Staff Senate Representative