

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO

DOCUMENTS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

**SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE
FACULTY SENATE MEETING
Of November 10, 2022**

The regular monthly meeting of the Faculty Senate for the 2022-2023 academic year was held November 10, 2022 at 3:30 p.m. via Zoom (online meeting) with Dr. René Zenteno, Chair of the Faculty Senate, presiding.

I. Call to order and taking of attendance.

Present: René Zenteno, Chris Packham, Curtis Brewer, Kirsten Gardner, Sonya Aleman, Alex Godet, Andrew Lloyd, Corey Sparks, Valerie Sponsel, Chad Mahood, Felicia Castro-Villarreal, Hector Aguilar, John Alexander, August Allo, Kiran Bhaganagar, Lorenzo Brancaleon, Whitney Chappell, Xun Chen, Candace Christensen, Sidury Christiansen, Neil Debbage, Victor DeOliveira, Mary Dixson, Rick Gretz, Zaid Haddad, Marcus Hamilton, Ying Huang, Kim Kline, Don Lien, Charles Liu, Dennis Lopez, Justin Marmolejo, George Perry, Branco Ponomariov, Jeff Prevost, John Quarles, Lauren Riojas Fitzpatrick, Devon Romero, Gabriela Romero Uribe, Humberto Saenz, Arturo Schultz, Maho Sonmez, Marie Tillyer, Zijun Wang, Zenong Yin

Absent: Mary McNaughton-Cassill (excused), James Chambers, Ginny Garcia, Dmitry Gokhman, Brian Laub, Sue Ann Pemberton, Rica Ramirez (excused) Kirk Schanze, Kerry Sinanan (excused), David Weber and Tianou Zhang

Guests: Jaelyn Shaw, Sandra Garcia, Veronica Stoller, Rosalind Horowitz, Debra Del Toro, Yvette Milo, Ximena Barbagelatta Grau, Debbie Howard Rappaport, Kaitlin Popielarz (for Rica Ramirez), and Maggie Nerio (for Kerry Sinanan)

Total members present: 47 Total members absent: 11 Substitutes present: 2

II. Consent Agenda

- Approval of Minutes – October 13, 2022 Faculty Senate Meeting
- Approval of the following proposals which were approved at the November 1, 2022 Graduate Council meeting:
 - 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
- The Minutes and the Graduate proposals were approved.

III. Reports

VPREDKE Update – Post Awards: Jaclyn Shaw, Interim VP for Research and Economic Development

Strategy for Post Award & Financial Support Services

- Starting in July, working with President, Provost and VP for Business Affairs started a deep assessment with post award enterprise. Post awards includes Post Award Administration, Grants, Contracts and Fiscal Services, but also touches units outside of REDKE, such as Financial Affairs within VP Business Affairs, Academic Affairs and the colleges. All three needs to work together and have efficient processes or the faculty feel it. Provide background on the assessment and know that this is a priority in REDKE.
- Goal is to improve sponsored programs financial management for principal investigators which will also assist the college business service centers as well as the REDKE staff.
 - Need to improve the timeliness of financial management on grants and contracts
 - Need to expand expertise in research administration. UTSA has grown significantly in the complexity of the types and number of contracts and grants that are coming in.
 - We have a great, dedicated team of staff, they need help.
- Jaclyn reviewed the structure of the Office of VP for Research, Economic Development and Knowledge Enterprise consisting of 5 areas:
 - Strategic Research Development – Jaclyn Shaw
 - Sponsored Project Administration – Sandra Garcia
 - Research Finance & Operations – Veronica Stoller (focusing on today's presentation as post-awards and grants & contracts falls under her area)
 - Research Integrity & Infrastructure Support – Michelle (Mickey) Stevenson
 - Innovation & Economic Development – Rod McSherry
- Jaclyn described the Project Lifecycle for a Sponsored Project.
 - Proposal development – can make a PI's experience smooth or can be the starting point for downstream challenges. This is where budgets and scope of work is created. If it's not set up correctly in the pre-award phase it can cause some downstream affects in the post-award phase/process.
 - Post-award phase – managing the award – where the colleges come in. College Business Service Centers. Closing out the project—everything that occurred prior to this impacts closing out the project.
- Jaclyn informed the Faculty Senate on 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
 - Her 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 – ensure we are not getting ahead of the sponsor and doing things that will not be approved

- Provides direct service to PI(s), project personnel, BSC's and sponsors
 - Sandra Claiborne, Director, Grants, Contracts & Financial Services
 - Completes project set up, invoicing, financial reporting and project closeouts; they are aware there are delays in project set ups
 - 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 draw downs
 - Troubleshoots financial issues throughout the duration of the award
- The two email addresses are monitored throughout the day – more efficient to email postaward@utsa.edu or gdfs@utsa.edu
- Jaclyn described the rapid acceleration UTSA has seen since 2015 in research and development expenditures which has contributed to some of the issues experiencing today. She stated VPREDKE has not structured the office to absorb the growth. They have looked at the workload/accounts the staff is servicing. The staff supports 298 PIs and 1,900 awards in FY2022. Ten staff members in post-awards responsible for 1,900 awards, each responsible for 98 active projects per person. Value and complexity of projects have hindered in servicing some of the awards. They are working on solutions, which include adding knowledge to PAA staff.
- Contract with Huron to help with backlog. 1st phase – catch-up/clean up – invoicing and project close out. Create Accounts Receivables/Collections. Hire quality assurance lead. Hope to lower backlog before the Christmas break. Huron will assess UTSA in our maturity as a research administration and system improvements, and best practices. Huron assisted University of Houston and MD Anderson with their post-award issues. Phase II – analyze process efficiencies and adopt best practices, which will begin in January 2023.
- Pilot with College of Sciences due to their volume of research awards. Locate their post award staff within COS Dean's suite 2-3 days a week to answer questions, troubleshoot issues, to improve customer service and relationships. Develop a matrix of roles and responsibilities so PIs know who to reach out to when they have a question. Develop a template for reconciliations.
- Q&A
 - Additional positions VPREDKE is hiring will help make a difference in cleaning up backlog, but also need to train current staff so they are knowledgeable regarding the sponsors we support and the complex contracts and getting best practices. Huron will assist VPREDKE with these tasks. Automation will make a huge difference.
 - UT System Faculty Advisory Council mentioned staff turnover at sister institutions. Jaclyn confirmed that we were losing good people. She mentioned that Can Saygin was working on salary adjustments for the staff, which was accomplished. Need to care for the staff. Pre and Post awards are tough fields. Hiring one person will lighten the load. Every university is growing like we are.
 - Sahara – challenging to use. Can we get help using this system? Jaclyn mentioned that it is a Business Affairs function; however, Veronica Stollers stated that her team will be piloting a template to assist PI's so that faculty can track their spending, expenses, burn rate. The template will provide a balance sheet summary, starting with a beginning balance, reduces with

expenditures and encumbrances, with details, ending balances and burn rates.

- Two issues: 1) Disconnect with RSC and 2) reconciliation system one faculty overspent her budget. The pilot should help identify ways to help communication with the RSC (being in the Dean's office). For the faculty member, Jaclyn asked the faculty member to reach out to her or Veronica so they can directly assist her.
- Disconnect in training between Post Award teams and BSC teams – Jaclyn has heard this as well. However, Jaclyn has heard they are now training together, so hoping for improvement in this area. With co-locating 2-3 days a week should also see improvements.
- Faculty member thanked Jaclyn for her presentation as he feels like faculty are being heard on this topic since it's been going on for quite some time. Cost sharing is another topic that needs to be addressed and is a source of frustration for faculty. Jaclyn appreciated the feedback. She mentioned that the President is going into the refresh of the university's strategic plan and all of the VP's and university leadership are being asked to consider the next 5 years. One of the strategic initiatives VPREDKE will launch will be redesigning the Sponsored Projects life cycle – from beginning to end - how do act like a R1. We are addressing what is on fire right now which is post awards. Jaclyn would like to see improvement with post awards before we invest energy in areas that are working well. But, next spring and summer VPREDKE will begin the redesign of the Sponsored Projects life cycle and cost sharing is in that life cycle (it's a pre-award function). It's a complicated function especially on the large, competitive opportunities. She suggested coming back to Faculty Senate to talk about the re-design and that topic will be in that subject.

Dr. Zenteno thanked Jaclyn, Veronica and Sandra for attending the Faculty Senate to discuss Post-Awards. He also thanks Alex Godet and the Faculty Senate Research Committee for their communication and partnership with the office of VPREDKE.

A. Chair's Report – René Zenteno

Dr. Zenteno stated that he recently attended a University Leadership Council meeting wherein President Eighmy mentioned that the university will undergo a refresh of the UTSA Strategic Plan. UT System is requiring all UT System institutions to update their strategic plans. President Eighmy will lead the effort, but each college will take the lead on disseminating information and following up with its faculty. The process will start towards the end of this semester and into the Spring 2023 semester. President Eighmy will host a townhall meeting where he will announce the steps regarding the Strategic Plan refresh.

UT System Executive Vice Chancellor, Dr. Archie Holmes has been 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 updated the Faculty Senate on his meeting with the Provost. They spoke about merit increases and recent data and received positive news that the university will have a merit increase this year. Also, at the last Faculty Senate meeting there was discussion surrounding how faculty are unclear as to how the COVID statements are being used on

faculty evaluations. The Provost plans to speak with Dr. Heather Shipley and will report back at the December meeting.

The next Faculty Senate meeting will be held on Thursday, December 1st via Zoom.

B. Secretary of the General Faculty – Chris Packham

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).

C. University Curriculum Committee – no report

D. Graduate Council Chair – no report

E. Academic Freedom, Evaluation and Merit Committee– no report

F. Budget Committee – no report

G. HOP Committee – no report

H. Research Committee – Alexis Godet

Jaclyn's presentation is similar to the one she presented to the Research Committee on Oct. 17, 2022. The Research Committee was able to consider two items 1) the hiring of additional staff and 2) culture of being an R1 institution. The plan going forward for the research committee is to continue probing other R1 institutions and peer institutions as to how faculty work with post awards. Alex hopes to present results of emails he and his committee has sent to colleagues at next month's meeting. Also, needs to keep dialogue open with Jaclyn on issues faculty have, not just with post awards, but other areas regarding research. Jaclyn is receptive to the feedback.

IV. Unfinished Business:

Reminder of the Faculty Senate Strategic Priorities:

- Faculty equity and compensation
 - We've made small steps towards our objectives, such as faculty equity and compensation. The Budget Committee, led by Kirsten Gardner, is working to obtain more data from other institutions on how they reward faculty as they move from assistant professor to associate professor and associate professor to professor. There is still uncertainty about salary compression were done at the college levels. We lack information about how many people received it, what levels of professors, what was the compensation and the methodology used for the exercise.
- Maintaining R1/NRUF
 - We have already discussed R1/NRUF at the last meeting, but we need to have more information on how to support GRA's.
- Shared governance
 - In terms of shared governance, we have submitted our questions to the Provost and Heather and they have been here to answer those questions. Executive Committee will discuss additional questions that we will submit to the Provost's office or the President's office.
- Effective use of meetings
 - I hope we have been effective in using meeting time well.
- Improve transparency on budget, IRM, funding colleges, and hiring

- We still have work to do in this area. The Budget Committee is working on this and will be meeting with Sheri Hardison soon.
- Greater research administrative support and funding
 - What we heard today is connected with more administrative support for research and funding. We need to maintain R1 and the two issues are connected.
- Advocate for faculty
 - Need to discuss in more detail.

Important to keep these at the forefront. How do we bring these issues to administration in an organized manner? During September's meeting we broke out into separate groups to discuss faculty equity and compensation. How do we define success and advancing this issue on behalf of faculty at UTSA? Same for NRUF—how do we define success on this priority?

One faculty member appreciated the measures to keep up with cost of inflation, especially for faculty who are FTT. The faculty member also mentioned the recent changes in FTT titles and whether or not that comes with a salary increase. The faculty member was unclear whether or not department chairs know if the FTT title changes come with a salary increase. Another faculty member mentioned FTT and adjunct salaries as we hire more research faculty—these faculty members may not receive merit increases as they may not qualify for the increase. Need to be mindful of this. Dr. Zenteno mentioned that the Senate needs a more systematic way to review compensation for all faculty, especially FTT and adjunct and develop questions for administration.

Dr. Mahood- mentioned that when he worked on the FTT title changes, there was no compensation associated with the title changes. However, in some cases, Deans tried to provide a salary increase along with the title change, but that was not guaranteed.

V. **New Business: 15th Annual COEHD Research Colloquium - March 2, 2023**

Dr. Rosalind Horowitz attended the Faculty Senate meeting to promote the 15th Annual COEHD Research Colloquium which will be held on March 2, 2023 in the HEB Ballroom on the Main Campus. Proposals are due by February 18, 2023. If you have any questions, please contact her at rosalind.horowitz@utsa.edu

VI. **Adjournment:**

There being no further business, a motion was made by Andy Lloyd, seconded by Alex Godet and the meeting concluded at 4:56 PM