The regular meeting of the University Assembly for the academic year 2011-2012 was held November 8, 2011 at 3:00 p.m. in the Travis Room, UC 2.202 with Amy Jasperson, Secretary of the General Faculty, presiding.

I. Call to order and taking of attendance

Present:  John Frederick, Amy Jasperson, Carola Wenk, Mark Allen, James Chambers, Joshua Davidson, Belinda Dovalina, Donna Fiedler, Christopher Goldsberry, Suat Gunhan, Laurie Long, Jennifer Lozano-Lowe, Krisellen Maloney, Laura Murray (delegate for Marjie French), Ana Navarro, Harrison Pierce, Mariela Rodriguez, Jose Weissmann, Deanna White, David Yang, Jesse Zapata

Absent:  Jordan Bittner, Marjie French, Samantha Garcia, Daniel Gelo (excused), Robert Gracy, Xavier Johnson, Kerry Kennedy, Anne Macintosh Speights (excused), John McCray, John McGee, Goutham Menon, Gage Paine, Elba Ramos (excused), Alex Roberts, Ricardo Romo (excused), Jude Valdez (excused), Huang (Michael) Yue, Ryan Zapata

Guests:  Victor Hinojosa, Sarah Leach, Kenneth Pierce, Sandy Welch

II. Approval of the Minutes

The minutes were approved.

III. Reports

A. President/Provost – Dr. John Frederick (for Dr. Ricardo Romo)

Dr. Frederick greeted the University Assembly and said that he would be conducting the meeting for President Romo who is currently returning from an overseas trip. Dr. Frederick pointed out that Sandy Welch and Ken Pierce would be talking about FAIR later in the meeting. He said that Dr. Welch has also been leading a special assignment -- a report that is sent to the Regents which identifies strategies to improve the 4-year graduation rate at UTSA. Dr. Frederick said that although it is important to focus on improvements to admission standards, there must be efforts at all stages of the student
experience. The graduation rate improvement plan focuses on all student stages at the University starting from the time a student applies, to the time they are accepted, go through orientation, registration, and finally graduate from UTSA. By implementing this plan, UTSA should be able to improve its student completion rates each year. He said there are a number of taskforces currently in place to help accomplish this goal, including the Freshman Focus Initiative and the Graduation Initiative. Dr. Frederick reminded the Assembly that the University’s mission is ultimately to help all students succeed. He said that if we are successful at this initiative, we should see great transformations on campus. He noted that there will be more information on this topic in upcoming months. Dr. Frederick also mentioned that the North Paseo Building (NPB) is now open and houses departments such as the office of research, graduate studies, ROTC, and the writing center.

B. Secretary of the General Faculty – Dr. Amy Jasperson
Dr. Jasperson said that there was a UT System Faculty Advisory Council (SysFac) meeting in September just after the last UA meeting. One of the main policies to be considered this week at the UT System Regents meeting in Austin deals with intellectual property. Dr. Jasperson said that this issue is currently being addressed and that she would keep everyone updated. She reminded the Assembly that although Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs David Prior resigned in late September, he will be staying on until a replacement can be found. Dr. Jasperson conveyed the faculty’s regret to see him leave, but said she will keep everyone up to date with any new information that arises about his replacement. Dr. Jasperson said that SysFac members were happy to speak with Regent Cranberg at the last UT System meeting. He spoke about the new technology initiative, www.myedu.com, which will be adopted among all UT System campuses. This unprecedented investment by the Regents has led to the formation of a UT System Task Force to continue development of this new resource. Dr. Jasperson encouraged dialogue between students, faculty, and administration to develop ways to make it most effective for UTSA. She noted that Ken Pierce (along with Larry Williams) is the university liaison on the Task Force, and will continue to keep everyone updated on new developments. Dr. Jasperson mentioned that the Voluntary Separation Incentive Program (VSIP) packages have been distributed by HR. She said that it is recommended for everyone who is eligible to attend an information session hosted by the HR department. She also said those who are eligible can officially declare their intent to retire in January. More information can be found on a special website that can be accessed from the Provost’s webpage at http://provost.utsa.edu/vsip/index.asp. Dr. Jasperson mentioned that teaching evaluations will be available for students to complete starting November 14th. The last item Dr. Jasperson brought up was the Freshman Focus Initiative. She said that many subcommittees have been working on various aspects of the program to improve retention rates and provide a great college experience to 1st year students. She encouraged Assembly members and their colleagues to contact the committee chairs in order to provide input.
C. Chair of the Faculty Senate - Dr. Carola Wenk
Dr. Wenk discussed the plan for the new faculty club area opening on the 4th floor of the JPL. Dr. Wenk thanked Krisellen Maloney for involving both the Retired Faculty Association and the members of the Faculty Senate in the design process. The hope for this new faculty gathering area is to lead to increased collaboration amongst faculty and add another element to reaching Tier One status. Dr. Wenk said that an electronic vote has been conducted by the Faculty Senate on the three degree plans she mentioned at the last Assembly meeting. All three proposals have been approved: 1. Revisions to the BS in Health; 2. Revisions to the BS in Kinesiology; and 3. Proposed Minor in Professional Writing. She said that the Faculty Senate has been working on various HOP policy revisions including 2.25 Faculty Development Leave, 10.11 Use of Animals in Research, Teaching, Testing, or Public Exhibitions, and 2.33 Faculty Proficiency in English. She said that this last policy applies to students that serve as teaching assistants and encouraged the students to review this policy. Dr. Wenk mentioned some agenda items for the upcoming Faculty Senate meeting on Thursday, including a MS degree in Advanced Materials Engineering submitted by the Graduate Council. She also said the Senate will look at revisions to the undergraduate catalog and review an increased set of freshman admissions criteria.

D. Chair of the Staff Council - Mr. Christopher Goldsberry
Mr. Goldsberry said that at the last Staff Council meeting, the Issues Committee resolved to start posting any issues received and their resolutions on the Staff Council website. This information should be available within the next month. He said these issues not only relate to staff, but also to faculty and students. For more information, see the Staff Council website: www.utsa.edu/sc. Mr. Goldsberry said that the tobacco survey went out via email to all faculty, staff, and students last week. He said that the survey closes at midnight on Thursday morning and encouraged everyone who has not taken it to participate. Mr. Goldsberry said that the survey had received 3,271 responses so far; 67% of respondents are students and 8% are faculty, with the remaining 25% staff. So far, the results have shown that there is a very small margin of people between the percentage of people who prefer no smoking anywhere on campus (39.6%) and those that prefer allowing smoking at least 100 feet from entryways (39.2%). Mr. Goldsberry said that the final results will be shared with President Romo to get his input. Mr. Goldsberry invited the Staff Council Student Affairs representative, Jennifer Lozano-Lowe, to give an update. Ms. Lozano-Lowe informed the Assembly that the Student Affairs conference will be held this spring - on March 28th with a repeat held on April 17th. She encouraged anyone interested in submitting a proposal to do so by the January 17th deadline. She also mentioned that the final football game of the season will take place on November 19th at 1:00 pm and encouraged everyone to attend. Ms. Lozano-Lowe said that an email will be going out to faculty, staff, and students next week for volunteers to help with commencement staffing which will be held the week of December 15-17th. She said that if anyone was interested in volunteering, there would be one ceremony on Thursday, one on Friday, and three on Saturday. She also encouraged staff members to check out the scholarships offered through the Financial Aid office. The UTSA Staff Council Annual Scholarship awards two $500 scholarships for undergraduates and two $500 scholarships for graduate studies. The UTSA Staff Karen Whitney Endowed Scholarship awards one
scholarship to an undergraduate or graduate student with varying amounts. Staff members can apply for both scholarships via the online general scholarship application which should be available sometime within the next week. More information on financial aid and scholarship opportunities can be found on the www.utsa.edu/scholarships website.

E. Student Government President – Mr. Victor Hinojosa (for Mr. Xavier Johnson)

Student Government Association (SGA) Vice President Mr. Victor Hinojosa said he would be filling in for Mr. Xavier Johnson who was unable to attend the meeting. He said that SGA had been working on two resolutions. The first resolution is in response to an article posted in the Paisano about a hate crime off campus that resulted in the injury of a UTSA student over the Halloween weekend. Mr. Hinojosa said that Mr. Johnson and fellow SGA members are currently speaking with the President of GLBTQ to write a resolution on behalf of the student body for the victim. This resolution will enforce that UTSA students aim to promote a zero tolerance policy for hate crimes. Mr. Hinojosa brought a draft of the second resolution to pass around to the Assembly. This resolution is in reference to a national survey published in the Huffington Post that identified UTSA freshmen as being in the top 3 least happy college freshmen in the nation. However, the survey data was based solely on retention rates and did not include any personal interviews or other qualitative data. He said that in response to the article, SGA has created a “UTSA Spirit and Pride” resolution. A copy of the resolution can be accessed on the University Assembly webpage: http://www.utsa.edu/assembly/uaminutes/2011-2012/SGA%20UTSA%20Pride%20and%20Spirit%20Resolution.pdf. SGA’s goal is to work with higher administration to ensure that freshman stay involved at the university and remain content. Mr. Hinojosa reminded the Assembly that a student leader luncheon would be held following the volleyball game on Thursday. He invited all student leaders to attend the luncheon to discuss ways to improve student attendance for the final football game of the season. He said the student attendance was over 11,000 at the beginning of the inaugural season, but it has now dropped down to about 1,000. In addition, he said the SGA University Advancement committee was working to get a roadrunner statue to display as a campus icon. He mentioned that the Alumni Association supports the idea, and that Sigma Pi and SGA are currently taking donations by the McKinney Humanities building. Mr. Hinojosa also reminded everyone that the SGA Green Fund committee is currently accepting applications from students, faculty, and staff. Anyone who is interested can submit their project ideas via email to thegreenfund@utsa.edu.

IV. Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.
V. New Business

- Dr. Sandy Welch – Vice Provost for Accountability and Institutional Effectiveness and Mr. Ken Pierce – Vice Provost for Information Technology

Dr. Welch gave a brief description of how the FAIR system is used. She said it is a web-based data system for faculty information that allows items to be collected for faculty reports or re-accreditation. She said that it is a more formal, organized way of obtaining the information for more complete data. When FAIR was bought, a faculty roster needed to be developed that would include information on a faculty member’s teaching, academic credentials, etc. Since then, the workload module has been modified to respond to UT System requirements each semester. She said that the information obtained is also used to send data to the Texas Coordinating Board for the faculty workload reports. Dr. Welch said that the Curriculum Vitae module allows faculty members to capture information about their academic or university-related activities and serves as an ongoing or “living document” that is never frozen. Only the workloads are frozen and archived each semester. In addition, faculty members can use hyperlinks to link their CV to their other materials or publications. An Annual Report module was also added and has been modified to replicate categories to conform to annual reports standards. In addition, items like course enrollments are already loaded for faculty use so there is no need to copy and paste information. She said that all of a faculty member’s information for the current year can be loaded into the annual report so that the faculty member only needs to add comments to the document. She also mentioned that there are several reporting tools in addition to the faculty roster, like having the ability to look at and how much service a faculty member has accomplished for the current year. Dr. Welch explained that the system is currently in the middle of a re-write. She said that over the summer, her team met with faculty and staff members to improve FAIR for faculty members. They have been able to expand its capability so that a faculty member’s full UTSA career can be captured in one location. This data is preserved and archived each year.

A question was raised regarding the ability to upload a pdf document in place of the FAIR faculty vita. Dr. Welch explained that the rewrite will offer customizable CV formatting options, including a feature that allows the faculty member to organize their information in the order of promotion and tenure requirements according to the HOP. Dr. Welch and Mr. Pierce explained that everything in the FAIR system is categorized as an official document and is subject to open records according to HB 2504. They encouraged faculty not to list their references for security reasons because of this. They also explained that there is an abridged version of the vitas for FAIR provided through bluebook and said that a fuller version of the CV will be included in the rewrite. Dr. Welch and Mr. Pierce mentioned that Bluebook could be more widely used by students to view their class curriculums and other resources. Mr. Pierce said that the re-write was needed to develop the structure of the application and remove restrictions from the system. The main goal was to provide more functionality for the faculty members and their departments by improving and offering new CV formats. Mr. Pierce explained that in order to preserve the formatting options, it is easier to input information into FAIR, and then transfer it out after the formatting is set in the FAIR system. Faculty members
will also be able to link a shorter version of their CV (as posted on Bluebook) to their full CV.

- **Revisions to HOP 4.30 Criminal Background Check Policy**
  Dr. Jasperson explained that the Assembly normally does not review policies but that the Assembly had been listed as a stakeholder in this policy review. She encouraged all Assembly members to bring their information and questions to their respective governance organizations. She said that this issue has been under review for awhile, and that last year the issue was discussed in relation to running criminal background checks on all current employees, in order to meet a UT System requirement. Dr. Jasperson said that this is in relation to a newly established UT System policy. At UTSA, every position on campus is security sensitive. The policy requires everyone with a security sensitive position to be reviewed. She advised everyone to pay particular attention to the appeal rights in section b. This section clarifies who has the opportunity to appeal, and how the process works. It explains how to address an adverse result in a criminal background check. Dr. Jasperson asked if there were any additional comments or questions and there were none. She advised the Assembly members to send their comments to her or email them directly to Barbara Centeno in Human Resources. She said that December 9th is the deadline for any additional comments to be submitted directly to Barbara Centeno.

VI. **Questions to the President / Provost**

The question was asked if there would be an additional building attached onto the North Paseo Building (NPB). Dr. Frederick said not at this time.

VII. **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:55pm.