

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO**  
**DOCUMENTS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY**

**SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE  
FACULTY SENATE MEETING  
Of September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

The regular monthly meeting of the Faculty Senate for the 2024-2025 academic year was held September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 3:30 p.m. via Zoom (online meeting) with Dr. Alex Godet, Chair of the Faculty Senate, presiding.

**I.** Call to order and taking of attendance.

Present: Alan Whittington- (Sub), Alex Godet, Alex Mejia- (Sub), Andrew Lloyd, Anthony Rios, Catalina Zarate, Chantal Fahmy, Chris Reddick, Cristian Botez, Curtis Brewer, David Beheshti, David Weber, Devon Romero, Edwin Barea-Rodriguez, George Perry, Ginny Garcia-Alexander, Humberto Saenz, Huy Le, Jelena Todici, Jimi Francis, John Alexander, John Quarles, Jusung Lee, Kimberly Garza, Kim Kline, Kirsten Gardner, Lauren Hoffmann- (Staff Senate Rep), Marcus Hamilton, Marguerite Newcomb, Marie Tillyer, Mark Bayer, Mary Dixon, Michael Karcher, Michael Baumann, Miltos Alamaniotis, Minghe Sun, Nancy Membrez- (Sub), Neil Debbage, Rahul Raghavan, Rene Zenteno, Rica Ramirez, Sidury Christiansen, Sonya Aleman, Susan Thomas, Valerie Sponsel, Zachary Tonzetich- (Graduate Council), Zaid Haddad, Zhigang Feng- (Sub), Zijun Wang

Absent: Juan Mao, Jie Huang, August (Gus) Allo, Xun Chen, Kirk Schanze, Alperen Ergur, Ashwin Malshe, Emily eAmrein

Total members present: 49    Total members absent: 8

Guests: Heather Shipley- (VP), Abi Caceres- (AA), Aydan Villarreal- (SGA), Debra Del Toro- (AA), Josh Gerken- (AVP for Asset Management), Kelly Nash- (SAVP), Mason Hickok- (Rep. from KSAT), Rebecca Luther- (AA), Sarah Soulek- (AA), Ximena Barbagelatta Grau- (AA)

**II.** Consent Agenda

- Approval of Minutes – May 2, 2024
- Graduate Council Item – approved at the May 7, 2024, Graduate Council Meeting
  - Online Bilingual Education Graduate Certificate

There was a motion made to approve the consent agenda. The motion was seconded, and the consent agenda was unanimously approved by the senate.

### III. Reports

#### *A. Academic Affairs Update – Heather Shipley, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs*

Dr. Shipley provided a presentation that began by thanking the senate for its' work last year and shared her enthusiasm about continued collaboration with the senate.

Dr. Shipley provided an update on the new full-time faculty that have started at UTSA and insight on the upcoming clusters and connected proposal results.

Dr. Shipley continued her presentation by going over the priorities of the academic year 2024-2025. Under the priorities, she presented updates about the new collage, the launch of her three initiatives for this academic year, encouraged the senate to participate in the new initiative of Career-Ready Roadrunners, and finished the section by re-affirming the investment she has for all faculty at UTSA, their success, and provided additional information on resources and tools available to all faculty.

In the final section of her presentation, Dr. Shipley spoke about the UTSA-UT Health San Antonio Integration confirmed by the UT System Board of Regents. She will be going to every department at UTSA to inform about the integration, but encouraged everyone to find the latest updates and plan under the UT System website [utsystem.edu/san-antonio](https://utsystem.edu/san-antonio). There are upcoming town halls that will be open to students, faculty, and staff, as well as information on opportunities for faculty and staff to be part of the planning.

Dr. Shipley's full presentation can be accessed through the Faculty Senate SharePoint site.

#### *B. Real Estate and Property Management/District Planning Update – Josh Gerken, Associate Vice President for Asset Management*

Mr. Gerken began his presentation talking about District planning and the next steps happening with the 2019 master plan in regard to physical space planning over the next five to ten years.

Next, Mr. Gerken presented the University Stakeholder Objectives. The main objectives for support and service are to understand current functionality and work on capacity analysis, and develop initial scenarios to accommodate growth and adjacencies. The next set of objectives were in regard to academic spacing. The three objectives for this set are to optimize space for department success, enhance student engagement, and foster departmental collaboration. In regard to research space, the main objectives are to focus on lab needs and future resiliency, collaboration and efficiency, and core lab suitability and growth.

**Question:** How do they get input for all the objectives, especially for the downtown campus?

**Answer:** His team has reached out to department leads, and their expectation is that those representatives from the department are the ones who also meet with the faculty and staff. Based on the feedback from the Senate in this meeting, Mr. Gerken will reach out to the Deans and Department Chairs to make sure they are also talking to the appropriate faculty. Mr. Gerken also

encouraged the Senate and any faculty at UTSA to look for an email coming to them soon to provide feedback about these matters directly.

**Question:** What approaches will be used to get feedback about lab spaces and utilization information?

**Answer:** Wi-Fi and Bluetooth data tracking are one method that is currently being used, but will follow up with focused conversations.

**Question:** How can we help in upgrading buildings on Main campus, and how does the funding work for approval of any upgrades to classrooms?

**Answer:** There is different funding for different areas, but they need to be approved by the government. Since May of 2024, they have been trying everything they can to plug in money in the areas of biggest need. So far, they have upgraded 50 out of 140 currently utilized classrooms. In regard to the question on how to help, Mr. Gerken would love to meet with a group of Senate members to discuss it further.

**Question:** In the School of Architecture and Planning, Mark had been in touch with him and his team. The master plan he presented was an effort from all faculty. Will it be included in the district planning?

**Answer:** It will be used in the District Planning. He is looking forward to continuing collaboration.

Mr. Gerken's full presentation can be accessed through the Faculty Senate SharePoint site.

### *C. Report of the Chair – Alex Godet*

1. Update from the University Leadership Council
  - Little Runner downtown – It has been a success
  - Expressive activity and Institutional neutrality– Alex Godet was able to meet with LaTonya (LT) Robinson - Senior Vice Provost and Dean of Students
  - Athletic Strategic Plan – The Faculty Senate will be receiving a presentation from the Athletics Department later this fall
2. Provost Heather Shipley hosted a reception for the Faculty Senate and the Department Chairs' Council on 09/04/2024 which was much appreciated
3. Chair and Secretary to attend
  - Texas Council of Faculty Senate – September 27-28
  - UT System Faculty Advisory Board – October 10-11
4. Need a faculty senate representative on: Dining Committee  
If anyone in the Faculty Senate would like to volunteer to participate in the upcoming fall meeting to represent UTSA's Faculty Senate, please let Alex know

### *D. Report of the Secretary – Marie Tillyer*

Marie Tillyer collected information from the summer Faculty Senate retreat about setting the senate's top goals and priorities for 2024-2025. Please find the results in the Faculty Senate SharePoint folder. The senate discussed the proposed goals and some questions arose.

**Question:** How can the senate obtain transparency and see payoff directly to departments through the university's strategic initiatives?

**Answer:** There is an upcoming panel on the IRM budget model coming up that should provide more opportunities to achieve transparency.

**Question:** Is the goal to have measurable achievements through this process?

**Answer:** Yes, when able. The expectation is that committees will be able to provide intermediate goals and reports to the senate.

There was a motion to approve the senate goals for 2024-2025, which was seconded. The senate voted to unanimously approve the proposed goals.

#### *E. Reports of the Committees*

- Academic Freedom, Evaluation and Merit Committee – Ginny Garcia-Alexander
  - None
- Budget Committee – Mary Dixon
  - The budget committee will have a meeting soon regarding IRM review. Mary Dixon thanked the team for all their hard work. All senators were asked to participate to discuss the IRM review. If you have not RSVP'd, please do so soon.
- Curriculum Committee – Zaid Haddad
  - None
- Graduate Council Chair – Zachary Tonzetich
  - The Grad Council had their first meeting on Tuesday. More to come.
- HOP Committee – Sonya Alemán
  - None
- Research Committee – George Perry
  - None

#### *IV. Unfinished Business – Faculty Senate Statement*

Update from René Zenteno: The senate met about supporting free speech. They started with a draft, but the executive committee could not agree on the exact statement, so it will be brought back to the whole senate for discussion.

**Question:** Was there clarification about whether the statement can be made by the senate due to the recent university message about supporting free speech?

**Answer:** Yes, it was confirmed that a support statement can be made by the Faculty Senate.

#### *V. New Business*

– None

**VI.**    *Adjournment of Meeting*

Meeting end time: 4:47p.m.