

# THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO

## DOCUMENTS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

### SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE MEETING Of October 3rd, 2024

The regular monthly meeting of the Faculty Senate for the 2024-2025 academic year was held October 3rd, 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, Ashwin Malshe, Catalina Zarate, Chris Reddick, Cristian Botez, Curtis Brewer, David Beheshti, David Weber, Devon Romero, Edwin Barea-Rodriguez, Emilie Amrein, George Perry, Ginny Garcia-Alexander, Humberto Saenz, Jelena Todoc, Jie Huang, Jimi Francis, John Quarles, Juan Mao, Jusung Lee, Kimberly Garza, Kirk Schanze, Kirsten Gardner, Marcus Hamilton, Marguerite Newcomb, Marie Tillyer, Mark Bayer, Mary Dixon, Michael Baumann, Michael Karcher, Milos Alamaniotis, Minghe Sun, Nancy Membrez- (Sub), Neil Debbage, Pepe Lee Chang, Rahul Raghavan, Rene Zenteno, Rica Ramirez, Sidury Christiansen, Susan Thomas, Valerie Sponsel, Xunwu Chen, Zachary Tonzetich- (Graduate Council), Zaid Haddad, Zhigang Feng- (Sub), Zijun Wang

Absent: Alperen Ergur, August (Gus) Allo, Chantal Fahmy (excused), Hongjie Xie (excused), John Alexander, Kim Kline, Lauren Hoffman (excused), Sonya Aleman (excused), Valeria Meiller (excused)

Total members/substitutes present: 50      Total members absent: 9

Guests: Heather Shipley- (VP), Abi Caceres- (AA), Ann Ryan, Debra Del Toro- (AA), Gregg Michel (UTSA Athletics), Hongyi Zhu, Katie Meersman- (AA), Lisa Campos (UTSA Athletics), Nori M., Ruyan Guo, Sarah Soulek- (AA), Vanessa Sansone, Ximena Barbagelatta Grau- (AA)

#### II. Consent Agenda

- Approval of Minutes – September 5, 2024
- Graduate Council Items
  - MED – Higher Edu Administration Leadership Concentration
  - MS – Adv. Materials Engineering Semiconductor Materials and Manufacturing Concentration
  - MS – IT Cyber Analytics Concentration)
  - MS – Management of Technology (Program Closure)

The Chair of the Faculty Senate, Alex Godet, called for the approval of the consent agenda and it was unanimously approved by the senate with no objections.

Dr. Alex Godet welcomed Dr. Heather Shipley, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, to the Faculty Senate.

### **III. Reports**

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

Dr. Shipley provided a presentation with recent highlights. The first highlight was the UTSA and UT Health integration. She encouraged the Senate to watch for email updates, and to visit the official website with the latest information about the integration. In addition, new information about the integration task force has been sent out. One of the first priorities is accreditation to ensure a seamless merger date. Town halls are expected soon where feedback will be solicited for research and academic programs.

The second highlight for her presentation was about the latest update on the new college. The survey mentioned in the last meeting closed with 650 responses that will continue to be reviewed to finalize the structure and naming of the college. The name of the college is expected to be finalized by the end of this fall semester.

The final highlight of her presentation was about the latest fall enrollment report. The report shows that UTSA is up 3% in overall student enrollment, with 4% increase in undergraduate FTIC or transfer students, 8% increase in Ph.D. students, and 14% increase in online students, all compared to last fall. Continuing with the good news, Dr. Shipley gave a shout-out to all faculty who have participated in any type of professional development, as the latest report shows that 60% of UTSA faculty have participated in professional development compared to the national average of 30%. She continued by talking about the three Academic Affairs Initiatives for '24-'25: Enriching Wellbeing, Advancing Open Educational Resources, and Expanding Peer Mentoring and Leadership Programs. All invitations for faculty representatives on these taskforces will be sent out soon, along with the websites, with more information about the initiatives and their structures.

In the last section of her presentation, Dr. Shipley talked about the National Impact Travel Awards. Academic Affairs continues to fund faculty, with the only difference being the funding awards will be requested and approved pre-travel instead of post-travel (as they have been in the past). More information can be found on the official website along with all materials needed for the requests.

***Question:*** Is the First-year Faculty Institute still available?

***Answer:*** Yes, mainly for first – third year faculty, as well as mid-career mentoring.

***Question:*** Do you know how UTSA looks in terms of enrollment trends compared to other schools in Texas?

**Answer:** I think we are on the higher end compared to other UT system numbers, but we do not have the official numbers just yet.

**Question:** Do you have a breakdown of the student enrollment increase by college?

**Answer:** Yes, the dashboard with that information is currently being updated, so your Dean and Associate Dean will have those numbers soon.

**Question:** What does the ratio of Hispanic Students to Hispanic faculty look like and are there steps being taken to match these ratios?

**Answer:** We are a part of the Hispanic Serving Research Universities Alliance which has programs and other activities to recruit qualified faculty. We continue to look at our data and provide programming and other development to support all our faculty including our Hispanic faculty.

**Question:** Is there an update on the budget each college has for summer classes?

**Answer:** The final IRM numbers are going out now, and most colleges are doing well. Enrollment and research activity are primary indicators for the budget. For most colleges, the numbers have increased, but I will talk to each Dean about any issues, and consider support from Academic Affairs where needed.

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

***B. Athletics Update – Lisa Campos, Vice President for Intercollegiate Athletics and Gregg Michel, Faculty Athletics Representative***

Lisa Campos gave a strategic overview of UTSA's Athletic program called the Roadrunner Game Plan. The goal of this plan is to achieve excellence, integrity, and unity, all with the overall goal of ensuring that all student athletes have an exceptional experience culminating in graduation. During the presentation Dr. Gregg Michel introduced himself as the university's Faculty Athletics Representative. Dr. Michel discussed the Intercollegiate Athletic Council. The council advises the UTSA President on all matters of policy and procedures for Intercollegiate Athletics program, and meets at least three times each academic semester. Some Senators serve in this council as well as students, faculty, and staff from different areas around the university.

Dr. Michel discussed the current academic success rates for all athletes. Currently 89% are graduating by the NCAA measure, have an average 3.08 team GPA, and 60% of UTSA student-athletes maintain a 3.0 GPA or better. Student athletes are also very involved in the community, with 3,551 hours of community service in total for 2023-2024 Academic Year.

Vice President Campos spoke about the American Athletic Conference and the incredibly successful year UTSA has had. She talked about the additional Bold New Announcement presented the news for a 57-million-dollar investment. It is expected that Athletics will break ground for the new building between December 2024 and January 2025.

**Question:** They use to send a report when an athlete was struggling with a class, but this is not happening anymore – will that come back? Also, how are classes for athletes scheduled so student athletes are not being pulled between their coaches and professors?

**Answer:** They received very low responses on the report being sent out so they began to rely on Canvas for more accurate reporting.

They run into scheduling issues once in a while, but they do prioritize class time over practice time. So please reach out if you are experiencing any issues with your student-athletes.

The full Athletics' presentation can be accessed through the Faculty Senate SharePoint site.

*C. Report of the Chair – Alex Godet*

- Texas Faculty Governance Leaders meeting

Alex Godet and Marie Tillyer were able to attend the Texas Faculty Governance Leaders Meeting. The meeting was very beneficial as they were able to discuss the role of Faculty Senate at universities, they identified action items, and were able to network with other faculty senate representatives from UT Tyler. The goal of attending this meeting was to learn and network to bring growth to UTSA.

- New mission statement for the UTSA UT Health integration – feedback requested

Alex Godet shared the new mission statement to be considered during the meeting. The new statement was also sent by email and all senators were encouraged to send their thoughts by October 11<sup>th</sup> for consideration.

- SACSCOC and Academic Programs

SACSCOC will freeze the approval of new programs from Jan. 1, 2025 until July 2026.

*D. Report of the Secretary – Marie Tillyer*

- Senate representatives on committees and task forces

Marie Tillyer shared who are the current representatives for different committees and task forces, and presented the need for a Snack Vending RFP Committee senator representative.

*E. Reports of the Committees*

- Academic Freedom, Evaluation and Merit Committee – Ginny Garcia-Alexander
  - Update on draft of statement for free speech

The committee unanimously agreed that no statement is needed at this time. Instead, one should be issued out once a need is presented. There was a recommendation made to approve the current draft statement on SharePoint and hold it for future use. There was no further discussion and the senate agreed.

- Budget Committee – Mary Dixon
  - IRM focus group update

The committee was invited to the IRM review session, and it was very beneficial. All the notes are in the Faculty Senate SharePoint site. Some of the comments brought up by the faculty during the IRM meeting were about the lack of transparency and impact to students. The Budget Committee will go over everything that was discussed in a few weeks and provide more information, but the whole senate was encouraged to review the document in SharePoint.

- *Curriculum Committee – Zaid Haddad*
  - BA Interdisciplinary Studies — Program Closure (Requires SACSCOC)

A motion from the University Curriculum Committee to approve the closure of the IDS program was made. The motion was seconded. There were no objections from the senate and the senate unanimously approved the closure.

- BA Communication — Closure of Digital Communication Concentration (Does not require SACSCOC)

A motion from the University Curriculum Committee to approve the closure of the Digital Communication Concentration within the BA in Communication was made. The motion was seconded. There were no objections from the senate and the senate unanimously approved the closure.

- Graduate Council Chair – Zachary Tonzetich
  - **None**
- HOP Committee – Sonya Alemán
  - **None**
- Research Committee – George Perry
  - **None**

**IV.**    *Unfinished Business – None*

**V.**     *New Business- None*

**VI.**    *Adjournment of Meeting*

Meeting end time: 4:44 p.m.