

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO

DOCUMENTS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE MEETING Of November 11th, 2024

The regular monthly meeting of the Faculty Senate for the 2024-2025 academic year was held November 11th, 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, Chantal Fahmy, Chris Reddick, Cristian Botez, Curtis Brewer, David Weber, Devon Romero, George Perry, Ginny Garcia-Alexander, Humberto Saenz, Jelena Todic, Jie Huang, Jimi Francis, John Alexander, John Quarles, Juan Mao, Jusung Lee, Kimberly Garza, Kimberly Kline, Kirk Schanze, Kirsten Gardner, Lauren Hoffmann, Marguerite Newcomb, Marie Tillyer, Mark Bayer, Mary Dixon, Michael Baumann, Michael Karcher, Miltos Alamaniotis, Minghe Sun, Nancy Membrez- (Sub), Neil Debbage, Pepe Lee Chang, Rahul Raghavan, Rene Zenteno, Rica Ramírez, Sidury Christiansen, Sonya Aleman, Susan Thomas, Valerie Sponsel, Xunwu Chen, Zachary Tonzetich- (Graduate Council), Zaid Haddad, Zhigang Feng- (Sub), Zijun Wang

Absent: Alperen Ergur, August (Gus) Allo, Edwin Barea-Rodriguez, Emilie Amrein (excused), Hongjie Xie (excused), Marcus Hamilton, Valeria Meiller (excused)

Total members/substitutes present: 51 Total members absent: 7

Guests: Heather Shipley- (VP), Kelly Nash - (VP), Abi Caceres - (AA), Andrew Konove - (Guest), Debra Del Toro - (AA), Katie Meersman - (AA), Paul - (Guest), Rebecca Luther - (AA), Sarah Soulek - (AA), Ximena Barbagelatta Grau - (AA)

II. Consent Agenda

- Approval of Minutes – October 3rd, 2024
- Graduate Council Items –
 - MS in Biology (addition of concentration in Pre-Professional Human Health)
 - Graduate Certificate in National Security Studies – University College
 - Graduate Certificate in Data Engineering – University College
 - PhD in Electrical Engineering (addition of concentration in Power and Energy)
 - MS in Electrical Engineering (addition of concentration in Power and Energy)
 - MS in Mathematics Consolidation (Closure of MS in Applied Industrial Math and MS in Mathematics Education, and addition of new concentrations to the MS in Mathematics)

- Graduate Certificate in Predictive Analytics and Modeling – Management Sciences and Statistics

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.

Provost Shipley addressed the recent tragedy on campus. She announced the upcoming day of reflection. All classes will be canceled and the workload for staff will be reduced to allow faculty, staff, and students to reflect and attend the training and counseling options on campus on November 8th, 2024. There will be more opportunities throughout the semester to receive training and counseling, so those who cannot attend on November 8th will have the opportunity to do so later in the semester. In addition, the areas helping with the day of reflection will be gathering feedback from students, faculty, and staff on how to improve wellness on campus. Provost Shipley reminded the senate that any concerns regarding a student, faculty, or staff member can be addressed through the many resources UTSA has available, including the Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT).

III. Reports

A. Report of the Chair – Alex Godet

Alex Godet began his presentation by going over one of the senate's priorities– the evaluation of administrators (deans and chairs). Dr. Godet was able to meet with Provost Shipley to discuss this. Dr. Godet is working with the Provost on a plan to communicate this with the rest of the senate. Provost Shipley will also present to the senate during their December meeting about the guidelines for evaluation of chairs and deans, and again later in the spring regarding the completion of evaluations.

Dr. Godet continued his report by talking about the UT System Faculty Advisory Council that took place on October 10th and 11th. The goals for the meeting were to gather and circulate ideas between Faculty, Board of Regents, Executive Chancellor, Chancellor, and UTS Administrators. Topics included the next legislature and the upcoming UTSA – UTHSA integration.

Dr. Godet notified the senate that a survey will go out in the spring to all faculty requesting them to rate their satisfaction level with Canvas, Simple Syllabus, Adobe, and Gen AI. The results will be shared with the senate in the spring. Next, Dr. Godet reported on his meeting with Tammy Wyatt in regard to Student Disability Services. There is a projected increase in student requests for accommodation, so they are looking to hire critical staff in the coming weeks and months. During the meeting, the senate discussed the issues downtown with scheduling related to accommodations. Dr. Godet will bring up this issue in his next meeting with Tammy Wyatt.

Lastly, the University Leadership Council (where Dr. Godet serves as a member) received a presentation from the Office of Sustainability and Energy where they talked about the plans to reduce the university's footprint in terms of carbon dioxide, energy, and water consumption in the next 15 to 20 years. During the meeting, they also discussed how the Institute of Texas Cultures

has been designated as a historical landmark, and there is discussion on how the building will be used in the future. As for the upcoming UT Health integration, SACSCOC will conduct a site visit in the fall of 2025. Currently, integration task forces are being set up and volunteers are encouraged to reach out.

B. Report of the Secretary – Marie Tillyer

Marie Tillyer uploaded a PowerPoint presentation provided by the Office of the Registrar in the senate's SharePoint site, and asked senators to share with their departments, and email her any questions about the information presented no later than November 18th.

C. Reports of the Committees

- Academic Freedom, Evaluation and Merit Committee – Ginny Garcia-Alexander
- **None**
- Budget Committee – Mary Dixon

The budget committee decided not to meet this month given that the IRM review has not yet been completed. The IRM report will be completed in early spring, at which point they will keep the senate updated on the results.

All faculty are encouraged to meet with their departments and start the conversations about summer classes and summer salaries so they can start planning early. Mary Dixon encouraged the senate to share updates with all adjunct and FTT faculty as they tend to have more involvement and questions about summer courses.

The Budget committee will meet again in November with the main topic being one-time merit and the impact of inflation and salary raises. These topics have now become their number one issue, with IRM a close second.

Question: What was the rationale for the one-time merit payment this year? Was it because of the integration with UT Health?

Answer: This wasn't initially communicated via the email that was sent out, but the committee will reach out to try and get an answer.

Question: Is there a formula they will use for the one-time payment?

Answer: It will be calculated based on your evaluation.

Question: Did UT Health receive a merit raise? Do they use IRM?

Answer: The committee has a meeting with the UT Health chair to address some of these questions.

Question: What is the rationale behind the raises for administrators?

Answer: Mary Dixon was able to reach out to the administrators in Financial Affairs during the meeting. Their response confirmed that no permanent merit increases will be applied for faculty

or staff for fiscal year 2025. The announced one-time merit payment applies to all eligible faculty and staff.

- *Curriculum Committee – Zaid Haddad*
 - **None**
- Graduate Council Chair – Zachary Tonzetich
 - **None**
- HOP Committee – Sonya Alemán
 - **None**
- Research Committee – George Perry
 - Update on meeting with JoAnn Browning, Interim Vice President, Office of Research

The research committee chair, George Perry, met with the Interim Vice President for the Office of Research to discuss increasing the process efficiency of grants and grants accounting. Data were provided to show that the approval time has improved, and the new average time for the setup of a grant is 15 days. They are also expecting further improvements with upcoming processing updates to the program being used. The F&A distribution has changed, with faculty remaining the same at 5%, but with a change in distribution for the colleges and VPs. There was also discussion of potential support on publication costs and how to do it locally as well as at the UT System level. Dr. Browning confirmed that the onsite NSF review went well, and noted that for research funding, the overall funding level has increased by 10 million annually, but federal funding has remained the same.

IV. *Unfinished Business – None*

V. *New Business –*

There was some general discussion on topics at the UT System FAC, and Drs. Godet and Tillyer said they will continue to represent the senate and UTSA.

VI. *Adjournment of Meeting*

Meeting end time: 4:44 p.m.