

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO

DOCUMENTS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE MEETING Of March 20th, 2025

The regular monthly meeting of the Faculty Senate for the 2024-2025 academic year was held March 20th, 2025, at 3:30 p.m., in person, with Dr. Alex Godet, Chair of the Faculty Senate, presiding.

I. Call to order and taking of attendance.

Present: Alex Godet, Andrew Lloyd, Anthony Rios, Ashwin Malshe, August Allo, Catalina Zarate, Chantal Fahmy, Cristian Botez, David Beheshti, David Weber, Devon Romero, Edwin Barea-Rodriguez, George Perry, Hongjie Xie, Humberto Saenz, Jelena Todoc, Jie Huang, Jimi Francis, John Quarles, Juan Mao, Jusung Lee, Kim Kline, Kirsten Gardner, Marguerite Newcomb, Marie Tillyer, Marissa Wechsle, Mary Dixson, Michael Karcher, Mihai Popa, Mike Baumann, Miltos Alamaniotis, Marcus Hamilton, Minghe Sun, Neil Debbage, Rahul Raghavan, Rene Zenteno, Rica Ramirez, Sidury Christiansen, Susan Thomas, Valerie Sponsel, Zachary Tonzetich, Zaid Haddad

Absent: Chris Reddick, Curtis Brewer, Emilie Amrein (excused), Ginny Garcia, John Alexander (excused), Kimberly Garza, Kirk Schanze, Lauren Hoffmann (excused), Marcus Hamilton, Mark Bayer, Pepe Chang, Sonya Aleman, Valeria Meiller (excused), Xun Chen, Zhigang Feng (excused), Zijun Wang

Total members/substitutes present: 44

Total members absent: 15

Guests: Dr. Heather Shipley, Dr. Kelly Nash, Carlos Martinez, Jason King, Sheri Hardison, Sapna Naik (Sub), Hung-Da Wan (Sub), Stephen Wirkus, Katie Meersman, Rebecca Luther, Abi Caceres, Debra Del Toro, Ximena Barbagelatta Grau, Chris Packham, John Bricout, Oscar Reyes, Milton Beadle III, Karen Galindo, Emilia Gaither, Adriana Biddle, Carlos Candanosa, Megan Piel, Jacob Pike, Ashly Motola, Diego Valdes Cavazos, Ernesto Rodriguez, Jacob Mirdjani, Raul Garcia, Emilio Hinojosa, Jasmine Williams, Sarthak Mohanty, Adriana Cortes, Diane Elizondo,

II. Consent Agenda

- Approval of Minutes – February 20, 2025
- Graduate Council Item – approved PhD – Aerospace Engineering

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. Godet welcomed Dr. Heather Shipley, Provost & Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, to the senate.

III. Reports

- A. Report of Dr. Heather Shipley, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs; Sheri Hardison, Vice President for Financial Affairs and Chief Financial Officer; Jason King, Chief Legal Officer and Associate Vice President of Strategic Risk Management; and Carlos Martinez, Senior Vice President for Institutional Strategic Planning, Compliance Risk Management, and Office of Operations, Chief of Staff

Dr. Shipley's presentation was the same town hall that she gave to all colleges and academic support divisions. The town hall included timely updates around the integration with UT Health San Antonio, the 89th legislative session, our state and national advocacy efforts, federal matters, the current fiscal year budget, and preparation for the FY26 budget. After completing her presentation, she, Sheri Hardison, Jason King, and Carlos Martinez took questions.

Question: Regarding SB37, having senators appointed will change how colleges and departments are represented in Faculty Senate. Have there been discussions about that?

Answer: The hearing is currently going on so nothing is finalized. As the bill currently reads, the selection process would be different, with the number of members limited to two faculty per college. One would be appointed by the president and the other would be elected by the college faculty.

Question: What is the university doing to address the grant freezes that are affecting faculty and students? What grants have been canceled?

Answer: There are currently 16 grants that have been paused, and three that have been canceled that were mainly DOD related. We are considering different scenarios and potential models so we can adjust as needed.

Question: Have we lost our identity as an HSI?

Answer: No, HSI is a federal designation, and that has not changed.

Question: What is One Riverwalk Place for?

Answer: The School of Architecture and Planning will move there and there are existing outside tenants there, who bring revenue to the university.

Question: One of the strategic investments was related to retaining employees – what are the strategies for that?

Answer: The staff compensation study is ongoing. Beyond that, People Excellence is leading the faculty and staff wellbeing initiative for the benefit of all employees. Through Faculty Success and other offices, we will continue to expand on all these initiatives and implement recommendations.

Question: What can Senate do to help?

Answer: When UTSA is asked for information from System, we work with Deans and subject-matter experts to gather information related to the request, along with colleagues in our Government Relations Office.

- B. Follow up on proposed position statement

Dr. Godet convened the Senate for a follow-up on the statement shared during the previous meeting. Paper copies of the statement, highlighting the latest updates, were distributed during the session. The Senate engaged in a thorough discussion regarding the statement and the necessary follow-up actions. A motion was presented to task the AFEM Committee with determining the next steps and to also include members who created the statement in the committee meeting. With no objections, the motion was seconded and subsequently passed.

C. Report of the Chair – Alex Godet

Dr. Godet opened his presentation by discussing the brand socialization listening session that had occurred February 27th. He then called for two representatives to join the Organizing Committee for the UT System Research Symposium and informed the Senate that the Research Committee will be responsible for overseeing nominations, which are due by March 27th. Those interested in participating or have any questions can reach out to either Dr. Godet or Dr. Tillyer. Dr. Godet also highlighted an opportunity to contribute to the HOP revision concerning FTT titles. He called for one representative from the Senate, with nominations due by March 31st. Finally, Dr. Godet noted that the next Faculty Senate meeting in April will be held virtually, while the meeting in May will take place in person.

D. Report of the Secretary – Marie Tillyer

Dr. Tillyer provided an update on the senator elections. Elections will be held soon, so everyone will be receiving an email with further information in the upcoming days. For those with terms ending soon a separate email will be sent out as well.

E. Reports of the Committees

- Academic Freedom, Evaluation and Merit Committee – Ginny Garcia-Alexander
 - None
- Budget Committee – Mary Dixon
 - None
- Curriculum Committee – Zaid Haddad
 - None
- Graduate Council Chair – Zachary Tonzetich
 - None
- HOP Committee – Sonya Alemán
 - None
- Research Committee – George Perry
 - None

IV. Unfinished Business – None

V. New Business

The Math Department has submitted a proposal to implement an alternative approach for managing NCB Math instruction. The full proposal is now available on the Faculty Senate SharePoint. A motion was made to forward this request to the Curriculum Committee for review. The motion was seconded and approved.

VI. Adjournment of Meeting

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and unanimously passed at 5:10 PM.