

SENATE HIGHLIGHTS

UTSA Faculty Senate Newsletter



MARCH 2025

FOR FULL FACULTY SENATE MINUTES AND REPORT

FOR MORE DETAIL, CONTACT YOUR SENATOR

The purpose of the newsletter is to communicate updates from the Faculty Senate and to encourage faculty participation in the spirit of shared governance and the success of UTSA students, faculty and staff.



Consent Agenda - Approved

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

CHAIR'S REPORT: Alexis Godet

- A recap was provided on the brand socialization listening session held on February 27.
- A call was made for two representatives to serve on the Organizing Committee for the upcoming UT System Research Symposium.
 - The Research Committee managed the nomination process.
 - Questions or expressions of interest can be directed to the Research Committee chairs.
- An opportunity was announced to contribute to the HOP revision related to FTT titles.
 - The Faculty Senate is asked to nominate one representative.
- It was noted that:
 - The April Faculty Senate meeting will be held virtually.
 - The May meeting will be held in person.



Leadership Update

Heather Shipley, Ph.D., Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

- Dr. Shipley presented the same town hall presentation that she gave to all colleges and academic support divisions.
- Topics included the integration with UT Health San Antonio, the 89th legislative session, state and national advocacy efforts, federal matters, current fiscal year budget and preparation for the FY26 budget.

Question and answer

Regarding SB37, how will faculty representation in the Senate change under the proposed structure?

- The proposal is still under review. The current draft suggests a modified selection process where each college would have two representatives: one appointed by the president and one elected by faculty.

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

- Currently, 16 grants are paused and 3 DOD-related grants have been canceled. We are evaluating various scenarios and models to help us adjust as needed.

Has UTSA's designation as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) changed?

- No, UTSA continues to hold its federal designation as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI), and that status remains unchanged.

What is the purpose of One Riverwalk Place?

- One Riverwalk Place will serve as a future home for the School of Architecture and Planning. The building also includes existing tenants whose presence contributes to generating revenue for the university.

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

- 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.

How can the Faculty Senate support ongoing university efforts?

- When information is requested by the UT System, the university collaborates with academic leadership, subject-matter experts, and the Government Relations Office to provide informed responses. Continued engagement and communication from the Faculty Senate help support these efforts.



Follow up on proposed position statement

- The Faculty Senate held a follow-up discussion on a previously shared statement, with updated copies provided during the meeting.
 - Members discussed the statement and potential next steps.
- A motion was approved to have the AFEM Committee explore possible actions moving forward, with plans to include input from those involved in drafting the original statement.



Secretary of the Faculty Senate

Marie Tillyer

- An update was provided regarding upcoming senator elections. All eligible participants will receive an email with additional details in the coming days.
- Individuals with terms concluding soon will receive a separate communication with next steps.

New Business

- The Math Department has submitted a proposal outlining an alternative approach to managing NCB Math instruction.
 - The proposal is now available for review on the Faculty Senate SharePoint.
- A motion to refer the proposal to the Curriculum Committee for further review was approved.



2024-2025 Officers and Executive Committee

- **Alexis Godet:** Chair
- **Marie Tillyer:** Secretary
- **Zachary Tonzetich:** Graduate Council
- **Valerie Sponsel:** ADTS Representative
- **René Zenteno:** Past Chair
- **Mike Baumann:** Parliamentarian
- **Ginny Garcia-Alexander:** Academic Freedom, Evaluation & Merit (AFEM) Committee
- **Mary Dixon:** Budget Committee
- **Sonya Aleman:** HOP Committee
- **George Perry:** Research Committee
- **Zaid Haddad:** Curriculum Committee

2024-2025 Faculty Senate Members

Alvarez College of Business

- **Juan Mao,** Dept. of Accounting
- **David Beheshti,** Dept. of Economics
- **Zijun Wang,** Dept. of Finance
- **Catalina Zarate,** Fixed-term Tenure Track Representative
- **Anthony Rios,** Dept. of Information Systems & Cyber Security
- **Pepe Chang,** Dept. of Management
- **Minghe Sun,** Dept. of Management Science and Statistics
- **Ashwin Malshe,** Dept. of Marketing

College of Education and Human Development

- **Sidury Christiansen,** Dept. of Bicultural-Bilingual Studies
- **Devon Romero,** Dept. of Counseling
- **Curtis Brewer,** Dept. of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
- **Michael Karcher,** Dept. of Educational Psychology
- **Rica Ramirez,** Dept. of Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching
- **Sonya Alemán,** Dept. of Race, Ethnicity, Gender and Sexuality Studies
- **Zaid Haddad,** Fixed Term Track Representative

Klesse College of Engineering and Integrated Design

- **John Alexander,** School of Architecture and Planning
- **Miltos Alamaniotis,** Dept. of Electrical and Computer Engineering
- **August (Gus) Allo,** Fixed-Term Track Representative
- **Marissa Wechsler,** Department of Biomedical and Chemical Engineering
- **Zhigang Feng,** Dept. of Mechanical Engineering
- **Jie Huang,** School of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Construction Management

2024-2025 Faculty Senate Members

College of Liberal and Fine Arts

- **Marcus Hamilton**, Dept. of Anthropology
- **Humberto Saenz**, School of Art
- **Kim Kline**, Dept. of Communication
- **Kimberly Garza**, Dept. of English
- **Mary Dixon**, Fixed-term Tenure Track Representative
- **Kristen Gardner**, Dept. of History
- **S. Andrew Lloyd**, School of Music
- **Xunwu Chen**, Dept. of Philosophy and Classics
- **Neil Debbage**, Dept. of Political Science and Geography
- **Valeria Meiller**, Dept. of Modern Languages
- **Neil Debbage**, Dept. of Political Science and Geography
- **Emilie Amrein**, Interdisciplinary School for Engagement in Humanities and Social Sciences

College of Sciences

- **Kirk Schanze**, Dept. of Chemistry
- **John Quarles**, Dept. of Computer Science
- **Hongjie Xie**, Dept. of Earth and Planetary Sciences
- **Susan Thomas**, Fixed-term Tenure Track Representative
- **Edwin Barea-Rodriguez**, Dept. of Integrative Biology
- **George Perry**, Dept. of Neuroscience, Developmental and Regenerative Biology
- **Alperen Ergur**, Dept. of Mathematics
- **Rahul Raghavan**, Dept. of Molecular, Microbiology and Immunology
- **Cristian Botez**, Dept. of Physics and Astronomy

College for Health, Community and Policy

- **Chantal Fahmy**, Dept. of Criminology & Criminal Justice
- **David Weber**, Fixed-term Tenure Track Representative
- **Chris Reddick**, Dept. of Public Administration
- **Ginny Garcia-Alexander**, Dept. of Sociology & Demography
- **Jimi Francis**, Dept. of Kinesiology
- **Jelena Todić**, Dept. of Social Work
- **Mike Baumann**, Dept. of Psychology
- **Jusung Lee**, Dept. of Public Health

2024-2025 Faculty Senate Members

University College

- **Marguerite Newcomb**, Fixed-term Tenure Track Representative

Ex-Officio Members

- **Alexis Godet**, Chair, Faculty Senate
- **René Zenteno**, Past Chair, Faculty Senate
- **Marie Tillyer**, Secretary, Faculty Senate
- **Zachary Tonzetich**, Chair, Graduate Council
- **Mark Bayer**, Department Chair Council Representative
- **Valerie Sponsel**, ADTS Representative
- **Lauren Hoffman**, Staff Senate Representative