

# SENATE HIGHLIGHTS

UTSA Faculty Senate Newsletter

## 2022-2023 OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Rene Zenteno:** Chair

**Chad Mahood:** Past Faculty Senate  
Chair

**Chris Packham:** Secretary of the  
General Faculty

**Victor Villarreal:** Graduate  
Council

**Valerie Sponsel:** ADTS  
Representative

**Curtis Brewer:** Parliamentarian

**Mary McNaughton-Cassil:**  
Secretary

**Kerry Sinanan:** Academic  
Freedom, Evaluation & Merit  
(AFEM)

**Kirsten Gardner:** Budget  
Committee

**Sonya Aleman:** HOP Committee

**Alexis Godet:** Research Committee

**Andrew Lloyd:** Curriculum  
Committee



## Consent Agenda - APPROVED

- Approval of minutes – March 9, 2023
- 2023-25 UTSA Graduate Catalog

## CHAIR'S REPORT: René Zenteno

- Dr. Zenteno provided a recap of the legislative update presented by Carlos Martinez.
- The Faculty Senate and the Department Chair's Council will convene for an in-person only, joint listening session to discuss the summary of the Strategic Plan Refresh on Tuesday, April 11, from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. in the Regents' Room (M.B. 3.106).
- Provost Espy is hosting an end-of-year reception for the Faculty Senate and Department Chair's Council on Wednesday, May 3.
  - Additional details will be shared as the event date approaches.
- Next faculty senate meeting is scheduled for May 4, 2023. via Zoom.

**FOR FULL FACULTY  
SENATE  
MINUTES & REPORT,  
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**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.*



## VPREDKE Update: Post Award & Grants and Contracts Financial Services (GCFS) Processes

**Jaelyn Shaw, Interim Vice President for Research, Economic Development and Knowledge Enterprise**

Complete presentation available on the [Faculty Senate website](#).

- Ms. Shaw introduced her team and said that Associate Vice President of Research Integrity Dr. Mickey Stevenson is leaving UTSA. Research has a plan to temporarily fill the role using a temp agency while they conduct a national search to find a permanent replacement.
- UTSA leadership has decided to temporarily pause the search for the new Senior Vice President for Research (VPREDKE). The search will resume in a few months.
  - Ms. Shaw will continue to serve as Interim and is available to address any questions regarding research enterprise.
- The completed economic impact study of UTSA, the [Economic Contributions of UTSA Report FY 2021](#), may be helpful to your research.
- The Spring edition of the [Discovery](#) magazine is now available in print.
- UTSA is currently in the counting year for Carnegie R1 (a 3-year cycle).
  - A graph was shared displaying research expenditures from FY2015-2022 to demonstrate the growth that has occurred during this timeframe. Work will be done across campus to maximize the Carnegie counting period.
  - Research expenditures for 2023 are 10% higher than last fiscal year, which bodes well for the Carnegie counting period.
  - NRUF audit is expected to commence within the next 30-60 days.
- UTSA's top 5 federal sponsors are:
  - NIH/HHS: \$9.07M
  - DOE: \$5.41M
  - NSF: \$3.37M
  - DOD: \$3.22M
  - ED: \$1.15M
- Ms. Veronica Stoller, Interim Director of the Office of Research and Finance & Operations, provided an update on Post Award Administration and Grants, Contracts, and Financial Services.
- The grant life cycle includes:
  - Discovery
  - Proposal development
  - Proposal submission
  - Negotiate and accept award
  - Set up "Project ID"
  - Administer project
  - Closeout project
- Post awards starts at Setup a Project ID and ends at Closeout project.
- In FY 2022, their office supported 298 principal investigators (PIs). Currently, their office is supporting 322 PIs.
- In FY 2022 they supported 784 projects and is now up to 840 projects. They have a dedicated sub-award person to oversee monitoring, billing, and collection.
- In 2022, they processed 76 sub-awards amounting to \$6.5 million. This FY, to date, their office has processed 48 sub-awards totaling \$3.97 million, with expectation to surpass FY 2022 at this rate.

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## VPREDKE Update (continued)

- The team has taken feedback provided by faculty and developed an improved plan to provide more proactive vs reactive service. Steps for invoicing and financial report process, a lengthy process, were provided.
  - They are currently working on over 3K projects and are actively working with Huron to catch up on the backlog.
  - One of the priorities is to work with Huron to prioritize the fixed-priced closeouts and return the residual distributions to faculty.
- Their office prepared 213 financial reports in FY2022 and has already prepared 144 reports in the current fiscal year. At this rate, they are on track to exceed the number of reports from FY2022.
- They have improved the project setup/modification area. In November 2022, they revised their process to activate and grant principal investigators access to their project funds within 10 days of setting up their accounts.



### Is the expected timeframe for accessing accounts 10 to 12 business days?

- *Yes, the timeframe is 10 - 12 business days, not calendar days. Provided all necessary documentation has been submitted and checked, access can be granted within the specified timeframe.*

### How will UTSA's rapid growth be addressed in the future?

- *To address this challenge, job postings have been increased in the areas of post-awards and grants, contracts, and fiscal services. VPREDKE has increased staffing lines to assess the current structure and anticipate the needs for the next 3-5 years. We are working with Huron to assist in the assessment and potential reorganization. Huron is also benchmarking UTSA with other R1 institutions above UTSA to ensure that we can be properly staffed as growth occurs. We have completed Phase One of the contract with Huron and are currently in Phase Two, which focuses on identifying long-term changes and automation tools to improve efficiency.*



### Regarding older fixed price contracts and unspent monies, do you plan to try to collect or will you improve processes and move forward?

- *Contracts dating back to 2012 are under review with Huron to determine what is feasible to recover. In some cases, the return on investment may not be worth the effort of trying to recover receivables. However, significant progress was made to contracts between 2012 and 2018 during Huron's last visit. If you have a fixed-price contract during that period, please contact Veronica Stoller to conduct further research for you.*

### Are there updates on the hiring process for VPREDKE and how it may affect the operations and implementation of post-award administration and other long-term initiatives occurring now?

- *The President and Provost will keep the community updated on progress to hire a Sr. VP for REDKE as information becomes available. In the meantime, the office is working to make improvements that may be completed before a new VPREDKE is hired to move the unit forward. The VPREDKE team will continue to focus on what needs to be done to improve the office and support faculty.*

## FTT Faculty Task Force Update

*Dr. Valerie Sponsel, Academy of Distinguished Teaching Scholars (ADTS)*

- Complete presentation available on the [Faculty Senate website](#).
- Dr. Sponsel provided an overview of the ADTS NTT Faculty Committee. This committee was established in 2012, along with the ADTS, and is now referred to as the FTT Faculty Task Force.
  - Any member of the ADTS interested in the welfare of the NTT/FTT faculty can participate on the committee, made up of 9 members representing 4 colleges.
- A timeline was presented outlining new titles and promotion guidelines, which is still an ongoing process. Input was collected from various stakeholders. The process has included the following steps:
  - 2014: The Committee conducted focus groups of FTT Faculty.
  - 2015: A white paper titled "Moving Towards One Faculty at UTSA" was prepared outlining the concerns of NTT Faculty.
  - 2016-2019: The Committee continued its efforts, updated the white paper, met with the provost, reviewed data from aspirant institutions, and drafted revised policies and procedures in collaboration with Academic Affairs. The working group comprised of the ADTS group, several department chairs, and the 8 NTT faculty senators.
  - 2020: Changes were made to [HOP 2.02](#) Faculty Appointments and Titles and [HOP 2.50](#) Fixed Term Track Faculty Recruitment, Evaluation, and Promotion Processes, and were approved in November 2020.
- Changes adopted from the process include:
  - Renaming NTT faculty to FTT (Fixed Term Track) faculty, as suggested by the provost to define the faculty based on what they are, rather than what they are not.
  - Introducing new titles, such as the Professor of Instruction Series.
  - Implementing a new university-wide process for the promotion of FTT faculty that mirrors the process for tenure-track faculty. Packets are due on Jan. 31 each year for review during the spring semester.
- Following the first round of promotion, almost all FTT faculty received new titles and 120 FTT faculty members were promoted, effective Fall 2021.
  - In FY2022, the FTT Task Force conducted additional focus groups.
  - In the next round of reviews, 80 FTT faculty members were promoted, effective Fall 2022.
    - Almost 30% of the FTT faculty have received promotions thus far.
- Two workshops were held for FTT faculty who were eligible for promotion. These workshops were offered to help faculty understand the process and ask questions. The policy modifications included:
  - Senior lecturers can be either part-time or full-time.
  - College-level committees (CRC) have been established for promotion review.
  - Colleges have the discretion to set eligibility timeframes for promotion of part-time FTT faculty.
- In March 2023, a working group was convened to review [HOP 2.02](#) and [HOP 2.50](#) policies. The group recommended clarifications and small changes to the policies, which were approved and adopted.
- The ten-year process was made possible thanks to the support of many individuals and the input of various stakeholders.
  - Efforts are ongoing to assist with peer mentoring, as well as the development of promotion materials, grant proposals, etc.





### Are the titles, Professor of Practice and Professor of Instruction the same?

- *No, they are not the same title. They are two different series. While both titles involve teaching, the Professor of Instruction requires a terminal degree. The other difference is that the Professor of Instruction series is a full-time appointment, whereas the Professor of Practice series may be a part-time appointment. Often, these instructors work during the day and teach classes in the evening, bringing their professional experiences into the classroom. Both titles are teaching faculty, but they have been appointed to different titles and may have been advertised differently.*

### If a faculty member is currently serving as a senior lecturer, how long must they wait before applying for the assistant professor in practice position?

- *There are specific timelines detailed in [HOP 2.50](#), to determine the length of service a faculty member must serve to be eligible to apply for promotion. The modifications to [HOP 2.02](#) and [HOP 2.50](#) have provided additional flexibility to the colleges, particularly in Business and the professor of practice series.*



### Please provide clarification on the service requirements, including post-grad supervision, for FTT faculty to ensure the terms are consistent with their contracts. How is past service addressed and how are the changes balanced in FTT positions and the impact of service requirement of tenured faculty in terms of advising dissertations and other matters?

- *There was hope that a uniform policy could be established for all faculties. However, after two review cycles, some colleges have requested their own criteria for promotion. The revised version of [HOP 2.50](#) allows for a college review committee, in addition to a department review committee, which provides greater flexibility in the promotion process.*

## University Leadership Report: Legislative Update

### Carlos Martinez, Senior Vice President for Institutional Strategic Planning, Compliance Risk Management and Office Operations, Chief of Staff

- It is the 96th day of the legislative session. The final day is scheduled for May 29, 2023. The House is reviewing the budget bill, which includes over 300 amendments that will require careful review.
  - The Senate will soon present its version of the budget bill, after which both versions will go to conference committee to be reconciled.
  - This process will continue until the end of May. The budget bill includes a rider that prohibits the use of appropriated funds for DEI initiatives.
- On the Senate side, Lt. Governor has brought attention to two bills:
  - [SB 8](#) – Pertains to public education and vouchers.
  - [SB 9](#) – Bill for increasing teacher pay.
- [SB 17](#) (DEI) is also on the docket. There is a Senate rule prohibiting subcommittee hearings while the full Senate is in session, so that subcommittee hearing will be postponed.

- **SB 18**, the tenure bill, has been voted out of the subcommittee and has moved forward to the committee. The Senate is more flexible at suspending its own rules and may bring it to the Senate floor soon. It was passed out of committee without amendments.
- **SB 16**, the CRT bill, has also been passed out of committee and forwarded to the full Senate. It is now available for debate and may be heard at any time.
- During this period, House and Senate members will utilize the media to emphasize that time is running out for their bills, which may result in disagreements among legislative members.
  - Members will use this time to ask questions.
  - There are also several deadlines that legislators must meet for bills to be placed on various calendars.
- Active Texas Bills can be viewed at [LegiScan](#).



#### Does SB 9 only provide a pay raise for public school teachers?

- Yes, **SB 9** is specifically related to increasing salaries for public school teachers.

#### Do we have any information on the House's position on these issues?

- There have been some media reports on the Lt. Governor and Speaker of the House expressing their priorities, and we have not heard that tenure and DEI issues are a priority for the House.

#### SB 18, as it currently stands, could end the granting of tenure by higher education institutions starting from 9/1/2023. In the event that tenure is impacted by this bill, what plans or actions is UTSA taking for colleagues who have yet to receive tenure appointments?

- This is a concern for higher education institutions across the board. At this time, it's uncertain what the final bill will look like, so we cannot speculate. Once the bill has been finalized, the administration will work with UT System and the Coordinating Board internally to determine next steps.

### Secretary of the General Faculty Report: Chris Packham, Chair

- Dr. Packham and Dr. Zenteno will be attending the final meeting of the UT System Faculty Advisory Council of the year in Austin on April 27 - 28, 2023.
- He anticipates that these meetings, as well as others he will participate in, will involve engaging discussions on the legislative issues.



## Graduate Council: Victor Villarreal, Chair

- The Graduate Council is currently discussing FTT faculty serving as sole chairs of master thesis committees.
  - The next step involves graduate council members taking this topic to their respective departments to further discuss and determine if changes are warranted other recommended changes and to prepare to vote once appropriate.
- There is a new discussion over the SACSCOC requirement that only faculty members with terminal degrees can teach graduate courses. However, SACSCOC does allow for exceptions in cases where faculty members have appropriate alternate credentials, expertise, or experience in the specific area of the course to be taught.
  - In such situations, strong evidence must be presented to support the exception. It is important to align with SACSCOC principles to ensure compliance.

## Budget Committee Report: Kirsten Gardner, Chair

- The memo on promotion and tenure raise recommendations was sent to Academic Affairs and received positive feedback.
  - The provost expressed gratitude toward the Faculty Senate for the thoughtful recommendation.
  - The provost has appointed an ad hoc representative committee to research compensation practices across UT System and beyond, including P&T increases, CPE, post-tenure review and shared administrative services.
- The provost invited Dr. Gardner and Sidury Christensen to participate on the ad hoc committee which expects to produce the data in the next few weeks.
- Dr. Gardner and Dr. Zenteno discussed the IRM with Drs. Espy and Shipley. They determined that the Faculty Senate did not need to formally request the information at this time. Instead, the deans will distribute the information through a town hall or newsletter.
  - However, if there is a lack of information, the Faculty Senate may revisit the idea of submitting a formal request for information on the IRM.



**As the memo was shared, some faculty members questioned whether the raise was approved and if it would be retroactive for those who recently received promotion and tenure or for those who received it within the last five years. Does it begin in the year 2023-24 or would it apply to the future only?**

- *The goal is to move forward. A second request to Academic Affairs may be needed to address timing for implementation.*

## Research Committee: Alexis Godet, Chair

- The research committee is currently updating the dashboard and providing faculty with training. A pilot program is being conducted in KCEID to test the efficiencies of these updates.
  - Their office will be offering one-stop training to faculty, providing training when needed without any delays.
  - Some faculty raised concerns about the reconciliation process in Sahara, and Jaclyn is researching ways to make it more user-friendly.





## Academic Freedom, Evaluation and Merit Committee: Kerry Sinanan, Chair

- The AFEM Committee is waiting for progress on the legislative bills before taking any definitive action. One proposal that was discussed during the Faculty Senate Executive Committee meeting was to request that the AFEM Committee draft a broad resolution in support of tenure and to provide an explanation of what tenure is, since many students and community members are not familiar with the concept.
  - More information on tenure can be found on the [AAUP website](#).
- Dr. Sinanan asked the Faculty Senate whether they would support the notion of voting to assign the AFEM Committee the task of drafting a resolution that would delineate the role of tenure in higher education, as proposed.
- Dr. Zenteno reminded the Senate that, as a body from UTSA, they are not allowed to take a stance in favor or against any legislation. However, the discussion on the proposal presented by Dr. Sinanan regarding tenure and academic freedom is still open for discussion.
- The Faculty Senate members discussed the possibility of publishing a resolution as a public document. It was stated that such resolutions are a statement of values and using a public platform to share those values.
  - While there are limitations on what the faculty can do, creating a document that defines and explains tenure and making it available to students and community members is an achievable goal for the Senate at this time.
- It was decided to request the AFEM committee to start drafting the resolution.
  - The Executive Committee would then review and approve the draft resolution.
  - After the Faculty Senate Executive Committee's approval, the entire Faculty Senate would review and vote on the resolution.



### Alvarez College of Business

- *Dennis Lopez*, Dept. of Accounting
- *David Beheshti*, Dept. of Economics
- *Zijun Wang*, Dept. of Finance
- *Maho Sonmez*, Fixed-term Tenure Track Representative
- *Charles Liu*, Dept. of Information Systems & Cyber Security
- *Huy Le*, Dept. of Management
- *Victor DeOliveria*, 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 Aleman*, 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
- *Sue Ann Pemberton*, School of Architecture and Planning
- *Gabriela Romero Uribe*, Dept. of Biomedical Engineering and Chemical Engineering
- *Drew Johnson*, School of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Construction Management
- *Jeffrey Prevost*, Dept. of Electrical and Computer Engineering
- *August (Gus) Allo*, Fixed-Term Track Representative
- *Kiran Bhaganagar*, Dept. of Mechanical Engineering

### College of Liberal and Fine Arts

- *Marcus Hamilton*, Dept. of Anthropology
- *Humberto Saenz*, School of Art
- *Kim Kline*, Dept. of Communication
- *Kerry Sinanan*, Dept. of English
- *Mary Dixon*, Fixed-term Tenure Track Representative
- *Kristen Gardner*, Dept. of History
- *Whitney Chappell*, Dept. of Modern Languages and Literatures
- *S. Andrew Lloyd*, School of Music
- *Xunwu Chen*, Dept. of Philosophy and Classics
- *Neil Debbage*, Dept. of Political Science and Geography

### College of Sciences

- *James Chambers*, Dept. of Molecular Microbiology and Immunology
- *Kirk Schanze*, Dept. of Chemistry
- *John Quarles*, Dept. of Computer Science
- *Brian Laub*, Dept. of Integrative Biology
- *Alexis Godet*, Dept. of Earth and Planetary Sciences
- *Hector Aguilar*, Fixed-term Tenure Track Representative
- *Lorenzo Brancaleon*, Dept. of Physics and Astronomy
- *George Perry*, Dept. of Neuroscience, Developmental and Regenerative Biology
- *Dmitry Gokhan*, Dept. of Mathematics

### College for Health, Community and Policy

- *Marie Tillyer*, Dept. of Criminology & Criminal Justice
- *Ying Huang*, Dept. of Demography
- *David Weber*, Fixed-term Tenure Track Representative
- *Tianou Zhang*, Dept. of Kinesiology
- *Mary McNaughton-Cassill*, Dept. of Psychology
- *Branco Ponomariov*, Dept. of Public Administration
- *Zenong Yin*, Dept. of Public Health
- *Candace Christensen*, Dept. of Social Work
- *Ginny Garcia*, Dept. of Sociology

### University College

- *Lauren Riojas-Fitzpatrick*, Fixed-term Tenure Track Representative

### Ex-Officio Members

- *Rene Zenteno*, Chair, Faculty Senate
- *Chris Packham*, Secretary of the General Faculty
- *Victor Villarreal*, Chair, Graduate Council
- *Arturo Schultz*, Department Chair Council Representative
- *Valerie Sponset*, ADTS Representative
- *Chad Mahood*, Past Faculty Senate Chair
- *Justin Marmolejo*, Staff Senate Representative