

# THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO

## DOCUMENTS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

### SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE MEETING Of December 1, 2022

The regular monthly meeting of the Faculty Senate for the 2022-2023 academic year was held December 1, 2022 at 3:30 p.m. via Zoom (online meeting) with Dr. René Zenteno, Chair of the Faculty Senate, presiding.

- I. Call to order and taking of attendance. Dr. Zenteno welcomed Lisa Jasinski, Sr. Director for Strategic Initiatives from the President's Office who will be leading the charge for the Strategic Plan Refresh. He also welcomed the faculty from KCEID who will be discussing the undergraduate certificate program later in the meeting.

Present: René Zenteno, Chris Packham, Curtis Brewer, Mary McNaughton-Cassill, Sonya Aleman, Kirsten Gardner, Alex Godet, Andrew Lloyd, Corey Sparks, Valerie Sponsel, Chad Mahood, Hector Aguilar, John Alexander, Kiran Bhaganagar, Lorenzo Brancaleon, Whitney Chappell, Xun Chen, Candace Christensen, Sidury Christiansen, Neil Debbage, Victor DeOliveira, Mary Dixson, Ginny Garcia, Rick Gretz, Zaid Haddad, Marcus Hamilton, Ying Huang, Drew Johnson, Kim Kline, Brian Laub, Huy Le, Don Lien, Charles Liu, Dennis Lopez, Justin Marmolejo, George Perry, Branco Ponomariov, Jeff Prevost, John Quarles, Rica Ramirez, Lauren Riojas Fitzpatrick, Devon Romero, Gabriela Romero Uribe, Humberto Saenz, Kirk Schanze, Arturo Schultz, Kerry Sinanan, Maho Sonmez, Marie Tillyer, Zijun Wang, David Weber, Zenong Yin

Absent: August Allo, Felicia Castro-Villarreal, James Chambers, Dmitry Gokhman, Sue Ann Pemberton, Tianou Zhang

Guests: Kimberly Andrews Espy, Heather Shipley, Lisa Jasinski, Chunjiang Qian, Arturo Montoya, Ram Krishnan, Debra Del Toro, Ximena Barbagelatta Grau, Angela Griffith, Yvette Milo and Debbie Howard Rappaport

Total members present: 52 Total members absent: 6

- II. Consent Agenda
- Approval of Minutes – November 10, 2022 Faculty Senate Meeting
  - The Minutes were approved.

Before moving on to the next agenda item, Dr. Zenteno took a moment to acknowledge the significant loss from the UTSA community, associate dean of students and director of student activities, Barry McKinney. He asked Mary Dixson to update the Senators and say a few words on behalf of the Faculty Senate. Mary mentioned that Barry and his wife, Jan, both work at UTSA and she referred to them as the “Marvelous McKinney’s.” Mary further stated that Barry

worked at UTSA for 18 years and was instrumental in many of the traditions we currently enjoy at UTSA such as BestFest, Roadrunner Days, and Día en la Sombrilla, to name a few. Mary stated that Barry was very passionate about the students he worked with and their success. Outside of UTSA, he was involved with the Fiesta Commission. More information about his life, impact at UTSA, and memorial services can be found on [UTSA Today](#),

### III. Reports

**Academic Affairs Update** – Kimberly Andrews Espy, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Heather Shipley, Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs

Dr. Zenteno thanked both Dr. Espy and Dr. Shipley for the preliminary conversations which have taken place surrounding the following topics which have been identified as top priorities for the Senate:

- Faculty salary compression exercises which have occurred in the past. The Faculty Senate will be involved more in future compression exercises
- Support FTT faculty and to have a conversation with the Academy of Distinguished Teaching Scholars (ADTS) as to how we can better support the FTT faculty; Dr. Shipley will take the lead in setting up the meeting.
- Budget – discuss with the Deans; create a cross-functional group; Dr. Espy will set up meetings.

Dr. Espy hopes everyone gets to rest over the winter break. Dr. Espy addressed the following items Dr. Zenteno addressed:

Budget committee conversation Kirsten Gardner hosted with Business Affairs

- How does IRM work within departments and within the college? While each Dean has specific methods of disseminating budgetary information, Dr. Espy stated that she and Dr. Zenteno thought it would be beneficial to host a meeting of the Deans, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and the Faculty Senate Budget Committee. The meeting can also include the entire Faculty Senate if so desired. The purpose would be to address how the Deans incorporate IRM in their decision making and how they communicate it back to their colleges. Dr. Espy's office will coordinate scheduling the meeting and will take place early February.
- With regard to compensation and compression, Dr. Espy reiterated last year, and earlier this year at the Southwest School of Art meeting, she suggested creating cross-functional committee to look at our peers, in terms of promotion and tenure raises, as some use percentages instead of a flat amount. Dr. Espy stated she doesn't personally believe our flat amounts have kept up with the market or are keeping with our peers. She would like for the Faculty Senate Budget Committee to see if there is any data to compare to what UTSA is distributing to faculty. Dr. Espy reminded the Faculty Senate that she was open to a salary increase or performance increase/salary adjustment with CPE as these are important reviews. She suggested creating a committee that would include faculty senators, department chairs and deans that would think about a course of action since it would include resources. Dr. Espy mentioned this to the Department Chair's Council and they were amenable to creating a committee to review the data, starting with UT System schools, other Texas schools and institutions outside of Texas. Dr. Espy suggested working on this in the Spring semester and submitting recommendations in the Fall as obtaining

data takes time. If you are interested in serving, please email the Provost, with a copy to Rene Zenteno. Dr. Espy mentioned that she would want a committee that is well-represented from each college and at each level (faculty, chair, dean).

- Dr. Shipley mentioned there is a meeting scheduled early next academic semester to address the FTT topics with the ADTS. The FTT senators will meet with the ADTS to talk through what is working and what is not working and to provide updates on the guidelines to the FTT promotions outlined in HOP 2.50. Dr. Shipley is looking forward to continuing the work to support the FTT faculty and acknowledged working with many faculty senators including Valerie Sponsel who is the ADTS representative to the Faculty Senate.

#### UTSA Strategic Plan Refresh 2022-2023 | Strategic Plan Refresh Steering Committee

- Today's presentation is a highlight, focusing on the process that will unfold over the Spring and less on the rationale and trends as those were covered in President Eighmy's townhall that took place on Monday, November 28, 2022.
- Dr. Espy encouraged the Faculty Senate to watch the YouTube video of the townhall session and provided the link to the strategic plan presentation and website [www.utsa.edu/strategicplan](http://www.utsa.edu/strategicplan)
- The Strategic Plan process is guided by UT System's 10-year frame. Dr. Espy reminded the Senate that although the plan outline is dated for 2018-2028 doesn't indicate that's where the university started the progress towards our destination of being a model for student success, a great public research university, or innovative things that have occurred at UTSA. This plan leverages and is dependent upon all the great work that has occurred ten, fifteen, thirty years and beyond by leaders on this campus.
- UT System requires all institutions to create a ten-year strategic plan as it is a reasonable amount of time to create and implement initiatives within the institution and to see changes and outcomes. Yet ten years isn't such a long period of time so the plan isn't outdated or irrelevant. UTSA's strategic plan began in 2017 at the time of President Eighmy's arrival. The outcome the group developed are the three strategic destinations, among which is becoming an innovative Hispanic thriving great public research university. Now we are at the middle point of the plan and need to ask does the plan still make sense – hence the "Refresh." Dr. Espy pointed out that the university is not redoing the strategic plan, but the process will be to review the plan, to think about current factors on the ground, does the original strategic plan make sense, to see if there is anything that needs to be refined and are there things we want to add or discard. It is a time to reflect and refresh the plan, especially since we have gone through a pandemic which upended operations, yet provided innovation and opportunities.
- The process will be carried out by a Strategic Plan Refresh Steering Committee, chaired by the Provost and will be comprised of members of the University Leadership Council, chairs from the Shared Governance bodies (Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, Department Chair's Council and SGA), vice presidents, and key personnel that support the strategic planning process such as facilities and HR. The PowerPoint has a slide with the committee member's names and titles (page #27)
- Dr. Espy continued discussing where UTSA is at in the current strategic plan. Questions that will be asked during this process are: 1) do we need to refine the destinations or discard any of them? 2) do they need to be talked about in a different

way? 3) are there ways to connect them in a different way, etc. Dr. Espy is confident in the academic community that great ideas will be brought forth as part of the process that allows the university to refresh and to continue to thrive.

- Dr. Espy restated the three destinations:
    - Model for student success
    - Great public research university
    - Exemplar for strategic growth and innovative excellence
- She further stated that the university utilizes KPI's to track the outcomes of the initiatives/vision (i.e., what's the % of students who graduate on time) to make sure we are making progress towards our goals. Finally, the university looks at the impact to see the benefit, improvement and positive change.
- Dr. Espy mentioned she receives questions regarding the status of all of the initiatives the university has undertaken. Lisa Jasinski and her team have analyzed initiatives and have them cataloged on the strategic planning website. This will also set the stage for the Strategic Plan Refresh process which may perhaps initiate new initiatives in the future that may align with the Refresh goal.
  - Dr. Espy reviewed the progress report of the destinations at the university level and also stated that the deans will host college presentations identical to this one, but will also include details which highlight progress college-specific advancements during this time period. The progress reports include the rationale and outcome for the three destinations, outcomes or markers for the destinations, select key initiatives which contributed to the outcomes are highlighted, some of which are completed and some of which are underway. Also included are key performance indicators (KPIs) which indicate how we are transforming the university. Dr. Espy stated these progress reports will help in thinking about the Refresh and whether or not we need to think about whether or not the goals need to be revised or redefined.
  - Dr. Espy explained the reason we are engaging in this process now is to allow us to affirm and evolve our strategic vision. How we think about this point in time, informed and influenced by our past successes? Dr. Espy again encouraged everyone to watch the [Townhall](#) video with the President and Lisa Jasinski.
  - Dr. Espy mentioned the university is at a pivotal point at this time:
    - What will we need to be in 5, 10, 20 years? What may be the new normal?
    - Further evolve and expand experiential learning, explore online growth credentialing, life-long learning.
    - Use the next five years to continue to mature from a young university to a large, impactful student success-focused discovery enterprise.
  - Strategic Plan Refresh process:
    - Dr. Espy emphasized the success of the Refresh will depend on the inclusive, transparent and engaged nature of the process, which includes stakeholder participation and elective representatives as a faculty member. Good ideas cannot be incorporated into the Refresh unless stakeholders participate in the process.
    - Ways to participate:
      - Townhalls
      - Surveys
      - Focus Groups
  - A refreshed plan will allow:
    - Acknowledge what we have achieved since 2018
    - Map our progress and chart our future directions up to 2028

- Adapt to changes in the higher education landscape
  - Capitalize on lessons learned during the pandemic
  - Align our goals and pro forma (long-range financial plan) as required by UT Regents; this is a high-level plan which ensures that the institution has considered our financial aspects along with the decision-making at the beginning. The IRM model provides a natural opportunity to ensure this scenario.
- Presidential charge to the Steering Committee (led by the Provost):
  - Leadership in affirming and revising our strategic plan, determining our big, bold bets for the future by using local-level leadership in part that's where interesting conversations occur and because our campus is large and diverse; and
  - Facilitate widespread communication about the revision effort and take the lead in engaging feedback from faculty, staff and student stakeholders.
- Dr. Espy reiterated the importance of stakeholder participation to the success of the process. She pointed to the KPI's from earlier slides and how many of them were positive and indicated we are ahead on some of our goals. She further stated this could not have occurred without the dedication of faculty and other stakeholders. But now is the opportunity to re-set the bar in a careful and thoughtful way.
- Dr. Espy outlined the "Town Hall" iterative feedback process which at this time do not have specific dates assigned to them—those dates will be announced later. It is built on an iterative, input-and-dissemination engagement strategy using town halls, surveys and focus groups.
  - The process kicked off earlier this week with President Eighmy's town hall; the colleges and other units will host their town halls/conversations in November/December.
  - January – March – the university will begin utilizing the other methods of input/feedback such as surveys and focus groups so people can provide their input.
  - March – the Strategic Plan Refresh Steering Committee (SPRSC) will incorporate the feedback into a draft.
  - May – Summer – drafts revised by SPRSC
  - Fall – more iterative feedback and present draft to President Eighmy. Finalize and present Refresh Strategic Plan to UT System Board of Regents at their November meeting.
- Dr. Zenteno thanked Dr. Espy for presenting the outline and process for the Strategic Plan Refresh. He added that he felt it was timely to look at the Strategic Plan at this time due to the fact that we have been through a pandemic in addition to the university obtaining the Carnegie R1 classification. Dr. Zenteno further stated that the institution needs to be thinking about future goals, which has been a topic among the Faculty Senate. Also, we need to think about the infrastructure that is needed to maintain the R1 status for our students, faculty and staff. He opened up the time for Q&A on the Strategic Plan Refresh or other items the Senate has discussed with Dr. Espy in the past.

### ***Q&A Portion of the Meeting with Provost Espy***

***Question*** – What is the strategy for the recruitment of Latino/a faculty, especially since we are a Hispanic Serving Institution. In addition, her department did not fill all of its recruitment this year.

***Answer*** - Dr. Espy was unclear as to what transpired with this particular faculty member's recruitment, but she indicated that this is a good conversation for the faculty to have with their respective deans. Dr. Espy stated that in the spring she usually has a conversation with the deans, senators and her to talk through these issues. She also knows there is a concern about how the COVID Impact Statements are being used. Dr. Espy stated that for the broader issue, this would be a wonderful time to talk about the strategy/goal for recruitment. Dr. Espy mentioned the current goal is to increase the current representation by 50% over the 10-year period. She also mentioned the faculty hiring programs (FDP, DCP) that go beyond the traditional departmental recruitment plans. We have new NRUF hires. Dr. Espy has heard that some of the pools have been smaller than in the past which has affected hiring. She is hoping that stakeholders will weigh in on this topic during the Refresh process.

***Question*** - Destination 2 – UTSA will be a great public research university. But we are searching for the new VP for Research. As we focus on what is next after R1, would you comment on as it seems awkward that we are search for a new VP while we are setting up a research goal.

***Answer*** -Dr. Espy understands that it would be ideal to have a VP Research in place now, but it would be difficult to wait until someone is in place to set standards and goals, especially for a university that is dynamic, people are successful and go on to other things. A strategic plan, or refresh, is not set in stone roadmap, plus it's a gift to the incoming VPR because so many people have had an opportunity to participate and provide input. The new VPR can take the plan can then take the plan and help get us to that destination.

***Question*** – Question regarding facilities. Disparity among classrooms, especially in the Main Bldg. and technology is behind and sometimes does not work. Lights do not work. The faculty member heard there was an effort to update classrooms ~ 75 classrooms. She asked for an update on updating the classrooms

***Answer*** - Dr. Espy stated that the Budget Committee recently met with VPBA and this topic was discussed in their meeting. Also, that the initiative to upgrade classrooms is more than 75—that phase three is around 75 classrooms. The overall upgrade over the past three years has been to upgrade one-third of the general-purpose classrooms with technology only, fit and finish, or technology and fit and finish. Dr. Espy indicated that the university devoted institutional funds and CARES funding. Dr. Espy suggested having one of the Senate meetings in one of the updated classrooms, much like we hosted the October meeting at the new Southwest Campus so that faculty could see first hand one of the new classrooms as not everyone teaches in an updated classroom and are not aware of all of capabilities of the classroom technology. Dr. Espy also reiterated the classrooms that were updated were the general-purpose rooms and not ones that the colleges are responsible for maintaining. Dr. Espy also offered to reach out to Sr. VP for Business Affairs, Veronica Salazar and ask her to come speak to the Faculty Senate in more detail about classroom renovations, maintenance, etc.

**Question** – Follow-up to the previous question is one faculty member has ceiling tiles that are loose and falling. Some of this is a safety issue. Some of the rooms are not ADA compliant. Wondered if there is a repository to report that the classroom is not safe and needs to be updated. Or, technology is not working at all. McKinney, MS and Arts Bldg.  
**Answer** - Dr. Espy mentioned that it would be more helpful if CFO Veronica Salazar heard about these instances directly, but confirmed there is a place where someone can report maintenance issues. Dr. Espy offered to send the items to Veronica Salazar, but felt a direct conversation with her would be the best course of action.

**Question** – Teaches in one of the updated classrooms and the technology is lightning fast. With reaching R1 status, there is the need for increasing enrollments, increasing facilities, how to attract students and majors – one of the major items we need is infrastructure – the building of labs, especially teaching labs.

**Answer** - Dr. Espy acknowledged that we need to make investments in infrastructure. We need to capture this in the strategic plan refresh. Think about how to talk about these ideas. Chad Mahood indicated this idea sounded like a good SIF (Strategic Investment Fund) proposal.

#### **A. Chair's Report – René Zenteno**

Dr. Zenteno stated that he recently attended a University Leadership Council meeting wherein Business Affairs presented the FY2022 Financial Results. This was presented this week to the Faculty Senate Budget Committee which Kirsten Gardner will review in her report.

Dr. Zenteno updated the Faculty Senate on his meeting with the Provost and Senior Vice Provost Heather Shipley. This was discussed earlier in the meeting with the Provost and Heather Shipley

- Future compression exercises – occurring in the spring and the Senate will be more involved in the way the exercises are conducted and provide input.
- Cross-functional study groups to share questions and information directly with the dean in regards to budget and other issues
- FTT's concerns

The next Faculty Senate meeting will be held on Thursday, January 19<sup>th</sup> via Zoom unless the Assembly Room in the Faculty Center has re-opened. Stay tuned—the Outlook meeting requests will be updated with location for spring meetings.

#### **B. Secretary of the General Faculty – no report**

#### **C. University Curriculum Committee – Andy Lloyd**

- Undergraduate Certificate in Computer Programming for Engineers

Dr. Lloyd mentioned the University Curriculum Committee met to review the Undergraduate Certificate in Computer Programming for Engineers. He said that the committee unanimously approved the proposal and has no questions or concerns regarding the certificate.

With no further discussion regarding the curriculum proposal, Dr. Zenteno confirmed the Faculty Senate would conduct the vote on the certificate using the Chat in Zoom.

Drew Johnson made a motion to approve, disapprove or abstain the Undergraduate Certificate in Computer Programming for Engineers. Kerry Sinanan seconded the motion. There was no additional discussion.

***The Faculty Senate vote was as follows:  
Approve: 35; Disapprove: 0; Abstain: 0***

**D. Graduate Council Chair** – no report

**E. Academic Freedom, Evaluation and Merit Committee**– no report

**F. Budget Committee** – Kirsten Gardner

Kirsten mentioned the Budget Committee opened the meeting to all Faculty Senators to review IRM 2023 and the FY2022 Financial Report with Sheri Hardison and Veronica Salazar from Business Affairs. She thanked everyone who was able to attend. The meeting was recorded and the presentation is on the Faculty Senate SharePoint site. Kirsten pointed out the numbers are straightforward and encouraged the senators to listen to the presentation is easy to follow. The Q&A spoke to some of the concerns the Faculty Senate have been addressing this year. In particular, how they are categorizing research money and how they allocate money in IRM, especially for those colleges that teach a heavy load of core courses. One question they try to answer, but needs some clarification is to give an example on how IRM is helping departments. Kirsten stated she felt the conversation has been shifted and VPBA is very responsive from the algorithm of IRM to what does mean to us as faculty, what does it mean for departments, what does it mean for deans, etc. Kirsten felt it was a presentation, but Sheri and Veronica were very open to a dialogue and were transparent. The presentation is divided into two parts, Annual Financial Review and then IRM.

The second item from the Budget Committee is they are considering fast-tracking a memo expressing support to upgrade the promotion standards. The committee is collecting data that Provost Espy had previously spoken/requested from the Senate. Kirsten indicated that the Budget Committee found that UTSA's increases for promotion are major outliers. No one is lower than our increases, but we are far behind UT Austin and the UT System. Kirsten thanked Felicia Castro-Villarreal and Mary McNaughton-Cassill for obtaining data from other UT System and Texas universities. The Budget Committee has the data on a spreadsheet and will be happy to share it.

Dr. Zenteno asked if we should include the CPE as part of the increases and as part of the memo. Kirsten agreed that it should be a part of the data and memo. It also seemed that the Provost was in favor of adding CPE as part of faculty increases/promotion in addition to the promotion/increases faculty receive through the promotion/tenure process.

Kerry Sinanan, representing the AFEM Committee on behalf of Felicia Castro-Villarreal, confirmed their committee is supportive as well. She also mentioned their committee has been reviewing merit exercises and seeing disparate processes. Dr. Zenteno mentioned that Kerry will be assuming the role of Chair of the AFEM Committee for the Spring



semester while Felicia is on faculty development leave. He thanked Kerry for stepping into that position in Felicia's absence.

Q&A – Strategic Investment Funds – will they be managed at the university level or the college?

Dr. Zenteno said his understanding was the SIF is a university-level initiative. Chad Mahood, who previously participated on the SIF committee, confirmed it is a university-level initiative. All of the colleges have an opportunity to submit a proposal. Most of the Deans are all on the committee. However, the Provost asked for volunteers to participate on the committee, so if interested, please email René and Provost Espy.

**G. HOP Committee** – no report

**H. Research Committee** – no report

IV. **Unfinished Business** – none, other than continuing to work on Faculty Senate Strategic Priorities throughout the year

V. **New Business:** none

VI. **Adjournment:**

There being no further business, a motion was made by Alex Godet, seconded by Rica Ramirez and the meeting concluded at 4:40 PM