

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 17, 2020 | 8:30-10:30 A.M.
Virtual Meeting - Zoom

The first regular meeting of the UTSA Staff Senate for fiscal year 2020-2021 was held virtually through Zoom. The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m., with Matt Keneson, Chair, presiding.

Members present: Amanda Graves, Amanda Perez, Amy Fritz, Anna Boyer-Chadwick; Brandy Barksdale; Brian Packer; Crystal Martinez, Cynthia Orth, Damaris Ibarra, Diana Almaraz, Dominick Morales; Kelley (Elle) Marbach; Jade Martinez, Jaime Fernandez, Jason Trevino, Jerry Smith, Jessica Dawson, Jovany Vega, Judith Quiroz, Kathryn (Kat) Carrillo; Matt Keneson, Nnennaya Ikwuagwu, Robert Ramirez, Sarah Sanchez, Shannon Rios, Sylvia Mansour, Terri Reynolds, Wanda Guntz, Yvonne De Leon, John Schaffer, Kim Kline (Faculty Senate Liaison)

Members Absent (Excused): Tamala Boyd, Venetta Williams, Paul McDonald, Jeffrey Miller

Members Absent (Unexcused): Reuben Aleman, Andrew Roybal

WELCOME: Matt Keneson, Chair welcomed all to the first meeting for 2020-2021. Before proceeding with the agenda, the Chair explained we needed to address a special request of support sent recently to the Executive Committee. The Staff Senate had been asked to join other university senate components by adding our signature to a campus-wide "Inclusivity Statement". After discussion concerning the verbiage used and the more recently accepted terminology it was agreed there was historical reference as well as ties to outside organizations using the terms in question. Motion was made and seconded that the Staff Senate participate and add signature to the document.

Campus Climate Survey: Dr. Myron Anderson (Vice President for Inclusive Excellence)

- ❖ Dr. Anderson shared the "... Your Voice Counts" power point presentation which can be found on this link: <https://www.utsa.edu/inclusiveexcellence/programs/climatesurvey/index.html> He also shared that though the survey was originally scheduled for Spring 2020 and due to the issues related to the Covid-19 Pandemic, the updated plan is to distribute the document in mid-October.
- ❖ The results will be shared with everyone in the spring, but certain groups (including Staff Senate) may be asked to look further into specific topics that arise.
- ❖ The goal is to earn the "Great College to Work For" designation from ModernThink.

University Updates: President Taylor Eighmy, Veronica Mendez (CFO and Senior Vice President for Business Affairs)

- ❖ President Eighmy began by welcoming all back for the new academic year and expressing his thanks to all for service in these deeply unprecedented times and challenges. He provided an update that as preparations were in order the Spring Semester course schedules, we should expect the next semester to look much like this one. An updated dashboard on COVID testing is coming soon. Plans for the Downtown Campus are moving ahead.
- ❖ Dr. Mendez added her thanks and welcome back. She added her appreciation to all for their efforts in these times and asked that everyone do their part to stay safe. We were reminded the VPBA offices are available to assist in all areas for support. We were asked to be patient and understanding of others who may be dealing with the challenges of working at home with children who are being schooled remotely as well.
- ❖ There were several questions shared with the President and VPBA

Old Business:

- ❖ The meeting minutes from the 9-14-20 Retreat were approved.
- ❖ The meeting dates for the rest of the 2020-2021 year were confirmed.
 - Oct 22, Nov 19, Dec 17, Jan 28, Feb 25, Mar 25, Apr 22, May 27, Jun 24, Jul 22

New Business:

- ❖ The following were presented and discussed

1. Revise the process for filling vacant positions

a. Our bylaws specify that vacant positions will be filled through additional elections, but our practice has been to offer a vacant position to the person with the next highest vote total. For instance, if someone elected in 2019 to represent Academic Affairs resigns, the position is offered to the person with the next highest vote total from the 2019 Academic Affairs election pool. This section of the bylaws could be updated to reflect our actual practices.

b. Proposed addition to the bylaws: A vacant position from the prior election year may be offered to someone from the most recent election cycle if there are no additional candidates from the prior year's election pool. For instance, if someone elected in 2019 to represent Business Affairs resigns, the position would first be offered to other nominees from the 2019 Business Affairs election pool. If the 2019 Business Affairs election pool is exhausted without someone accepting the position, the position could then be offered to someone from the 2020 Business Affairs election pool.

c. Proposed addition to the bylaws: If a vacant position is not filled through one of the two methods listed above, Staff Senate will ask that the leadership of the respective area(s) nominate a replacement member.

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2. Oversight of the University Excellence Awards (UEA) a. Proposing that the Staff Appreciation & Scholarships committee (in conjunction with the Executive Officers) oversee the UEA nomination and review process. (agreed)

b. Proposing that at least 2 Staff Senate member be on each award's review committee. Additional members of the review committees may be pulled from all university staff as needed. Brandy agreed but noted volunteers would be needed for actual reviews.

3. Oversight of the Roadrunner Staff Emergency Fund (RSEF) a. Proposing that the Health & Wellness committee (in conjunction with the Executive Officers) oversee the RSEF review process. (agreed)

4. Potential merger of the Elections & Finance committees a. Both committees tend to have waves of busy/idle periods throughout the year that don't overlap much. Having fewer committees overall reduces the number of committee chairs we need and ensures we have enough members for each committee rather than being spread too thin. There was general support for this proposal.

5. Formalize the succession process for the UT System Employee Advisor Council (EAC) a. Our current practice is that the outgoing Chair rolls onto the EAC as the Alternate member (and later one of the voting members), but we need to clarify how the term lengths work for the EAC.

b. We may also want to establish a process for appointing new representatives in the event that an EAC representative for UTSA needs to step down before their term has ended.

Goals for 2020-2021 – Matt

❖ The following were shared and discussed briefly.

1- Continue improving the communication & visibility of Staff Senate; 2- Continue to promote the personal & professional development of staff; 3- Continue to improve the organization of our activities & records; 4- Identify ways to raise funds for Staff Senate initiatives ; 5-Miscellaneous. A full copy is found in the Staff Senate Team general files.

Committee Memberships for 2020-2021 – Matt

❖ The list can be found in the Staff Senate Teams pages.

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 am.