



Brownsville, Edinburg, Harlingen

2023-2024 Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 5, 2024, 3:00–5:00pm CST Via Zoom

Senators Present:

Mohamed Abdel-Raheem, Jair J. Aguilar, Antonio Aguirre, Mataz Alcoutlabi, Michelle Alvarado, Bruno Arthur, George Atisa, Roseann Bacha-Garza, Norma Beardwood-Roper, Ben Brown, Erica Buchberger, Sonia Chapa, Joel Chirinos, Ruth Crutchfield, Louis Falk, Marcus Farris, Fuat Firat, Christopher Gabler, Suad Ghaddar, Cynthia Lopez Guerrero, Marcela Hebbard, José Esteban Hernandez, Kip Austin Hinton, Wanrong Hou, Joseph D. Hovey, Krista Jobson, Pauline Jojo, Ulku Karabulut, Jeong Han Kim, Megan Keniry, Dean Kyne, Kye-Hwan Lee, Qinyu Liao, Denise Longoria, Gladys Maestre, Salma Mahmood, Pedro Martinez, Ferenc Moldovanyi, Randall Monty, Noushin Nouri, Tamer Oraby, Cynthia Paccacerqua, George Padilla, Marisa Palacios Knox, Mahmoud K. Quweider, Monika Rabarison, Genaro Ramirez-Correra, Padmanabhan Rengasamy, Jack Ruelas, Clarissa Salinas, Laura Seligman, Silvia Patricia Solís, Hooman Tabatabai-Mir, Owen Temby, Ahmed Touhami, Mohammed Uddin, Viren Vejoya, Sarah Williams-Blangero, Aaron Wilson, Haiyan Zhou

Guests Present:

Ney Alliey-Rodriguez, Frank Ambriz, Ana Canedo, Alyssa Cavazos, James Fahey, Sergey Grigorian, Michael Guerrero, Amy Hay, Daniel Hunter-Holly, Erik Plata, Igor Ryabov, Alma Rodriguez, Cinthya Saavedra, Paul Sharpe, John VandeBerg, Thuy Vu, Jeff Ward, Rey Villanueva, Luis Zayas, Aziza Zemrani

Senators Absent:

Mircea Chipara, Elizabeth Deven-Hernandez, Laurie De Leon Escobedo, Jimmy Gleason, Jonathan Guist, Sanjeev Kumar, Lisa Longoria, Nancy Nadeau, Nilanjana Paul, Ricardo Pizzinato, José Antonio Rodriguez, Jeannean Ryman, Robert Velez, Christian Zuniga

Minutes:

I. Meeting Called to Order at 3:00pm

- II. **Report of FS Parliamentarian – Senator Falk**
 - a. Reminders: Robert’s Rules; Senators can speak up to two times per topic, second time after anyone else has had a chance to talk; guests are here to gather information; be kind, make UTRGV a better place; need at least 10 minutes for new business at the end
- III. **Report of FS Secretary – Senator Monty**
 - a. Election bylaws now on FS website
 - b. Supplementary materials now on FS website
 - c. Update website
 - i. UTRGV Provost
 - ii. Samples from other schools
 - d. Approval of February minutes
 - e. Motion to approve: Gabler; Seconded: Falk
 - f. **Approved: Majority Against: 3 Abstain: 0**
- IV. **Report of FS President-elect – Senator Gabler**
 - a. We (Gabler, Paccacerqua, Hinton) attended the Texas Council of Faculty Senate meeting in San Antonio to meet and liaise with senators and assemblies from other Texas schools
 - b. SB18: Committee on Academic Freedom & Responsibility group sent documents to full faculty; Received comments from my academic unit
- V. **Report of FS Past-president – Senator Hinton**
 - a. SB17: Over-compliance common across state
- VI. **Report of FS President — Senator Paccacerqua**
 - a. Cede floor to Provost Zayas
 - i. Zayas: Ombuds should be a faculty member. Proposed process of transitioning to making this a tenured-faculty position
 - ii. Paccacerqua: Majority of schools have faculty ombudsmen
 - 1. Beardwood-Roper: What’s going to happen to the current ombudsperson?
 - 2. Paccacerqua: They will stay on until the end of summer and then likely be re-appointed.
 - b. Elections: Polls most likely open Monday after Spring Break
 - i. Keep Tuesday afternoons free for meetings
 - ii. 10% service workload expectation that assumes working on a committee
 - 1. Temby: Is that all faculty senators? We should tell our chairs that we should get 10% workload for my work in the Senate?
 - 2. Paccacerqua: Yes, assuming that senators are involved with committees
 - 3. Beardwood-Roper: Is the 10% a suggestion or expectation? Has it been approved?
 - 4. Paccacerqua: No, it’s based on our own experiences.
 - iii. FS will help SOM with their faculty assembly elections
 - c. Faculty Senate resources

- i. Time & Staffing
- d. Few Faculty Orientation
 - i. Expectations of faculty and that we have of administrators
- e. Faculty Handbook
 - i. Compliments HOP policy
 - ii. PDFs, web-accessible
- f. CTE workshops
 - i. Focus on faculty needs and strengths in addition to what our students need
 - ii. Cavazos: Mission & Vision of CTE is to create learn-centered environments; workshops that our faculty colleagues lead center student learning; provide opportunities for faculty to reflect, improve, and grow; we send out a needs assessment survey for faculty feedback; welcome the opportunity to meet individually with faculty
 - iii. Paccacerqua: Faculty have different dis/abilities; Senators should contact FSEC with concerns so that we can have the data and create a committee and then we can enter into systemic conversations with CTE.

VII. Guest Presentations:

- a. Saavedra: Provost sets vision and tone; I work with Zayas to carry out those goals
 - i. Tenure-track reviews: trajectory from promotion and beyond (presentation document will be uploaded to website archive)
 - ii. Constant quantity (rubrics & checklists); how do we document and review quality?
 - 1. Clear & consistent research agenda
 - 2. Contribution to the field
 - 3. Funding or continued development of scholarly activities
 - 4. Impact factors
 - 5. Future potential
 - iii. Teaching
 - 1. Teaching values & beliefs
 - 2. Curriculum alignment/Course designs
 - 3. Mentoring: What is the growth/impact; what is the faculty learning from this?
 - 4. Course evaluations
 - 5. Peer observation of teaching
 - 6. Professional development: What impact did that have on your syllabus/teaching?
 - iv. Pilot program
 - 1. Review committee would be a review & advisory committee
 - 2. Faculty Narratives: document impact & quality
 - 3. Faculty Reviews: review impact & quality; purposeful and intentional feedback to help faculty grow
 - v. Monty: Evals & Narratives

1. Saavedra: Contextualize course evaluations, move away from numbers, faculty should still reflect on evaluations; Graphing & tables are fine in narratives (to reduce length and make it easier for faculty reviewers), include nontraditional impact factors; Don't have to talk about *everything*, but you should talk about *every impactful thing*; Expand and compact at the same time
- vi. Atisa: Do departments need to revise their policies to move away from quantity towards quality?
 1. Saavedra: For departments participating, they will need to revise their policies to use new criteria; we can massage criteria for different departments
- vii. Maestre: Bibliometric analysis tools can be used to create visual representations of contributions; Librarians are good at this!
 1. Saavedra: Could speak to the fact that there are very few journals w/i the field, so to get in one is a big deal; books/edited collections are a bigger deal in humanities
- viii. Falk: How do you anticipate filling these committees at the department level?
 1. Saavedra: Process could be more transparent and supportive w/ valuable feedback. Maybe a committee that you select to review and write your evaluation?
- ix. Firat: (1) Good idea to recognize impact. Problem is that impact doesn't happen annually, can't tell impact until some years later; but "high-impact" journals publish papers that are forgotten. (2) People internalize marketing logic without thinking about what it means. Academic institutions are about contributions to knowledge, it's not about telling others how much we do and how well we do it—marketing ourselves. Peers should recognize others' success & accomplishments. Narratives & FPT are counter to major academic principles. Committee should be able to recognize, shouldn't be up to the person spending their time writing narratives. I don't think that the correction to the discriminatory practices of the past is through new misguided practices.
 1. Saavedra: If the journal is a good journal, you're more likely to have more impact, but that's just *one* way to measure impact, there are *multiple* ways to measure impact. It's about showing I'm doing this work, it contributes to this, the future potential of this work is meaningful to these communities, etc.
- x. Keniry: Will this new model be in parallel with current annual reviews?
 1. Saavedra: We're urging you to think about these things, to move into more qualitative standards. And nothing's uniformed. We're going to try to make it helpful for the departments to put them in particular areas. Move towards more qualitative standards versus quantitative.

VIII. Old Business

a. FS Committee Reports

i. Council on Academic Freedom & Responsibility re: SB18

1. Gabler: Added Karen Adams (University Lawyer) to this committee; we're in the changes/revision steps
2. Firat: We can do something about the process, but not the specific principles of this document, such as in the constitution of the tribunal (hearing panel).
 - a. Gabler: There's a different panel for each case, drawing from the same pool. 50% of the pool is selected by the FS; 50% by the President. Based on HOP (which was written by administrators and then handed to faculty w/o possibility for change). One of the three faculty members on tribunal must be from faculty 50%. *This is the kind of language that we can change.*
3. Monty: Is there room for change in full/tenured faculty being in the pool and on tribunals?
 - a. Falk & Gabler: Need to protect faculty from retaliation.
4. Paccacerqua: Suspension with pay.
 - a. Gabler: Texas Tech only entertains Suspension w/o pay in cases of summary dismissal
5. Mestre: Who will make that determination of unprofessional behavior?
 - a. Gabler: One of our biggest concerns is defining terms. We can't change the wording because that would be legislating. We now have a guidance document on faculty standards of conduct.
6. Gabler: Bring your concerns to the committee!

ii. Education Policy: AI poll

1. Hebbard: Academic dishonesty policy considering AI; created an AI experience survey, FSEC reviewing, we will send it out, forward it to your units

iii. Research Policy Committee

1. Karabalut: Met with Saygan, committee is overall optimistic about his vision, will meet with them regularly; committee identified action items and will move forward; reach out to your faculty to get their concerns

iv. Ad Hoc Faculty Salaries & Resources Working Group

1. Williams-Blangero: (presentation will be uploaded to website archive) Currently reviewing guidelines for merit increase across units; Comparing salary compression & inversion at comparable institutions and competitive fields; Compensation for summer

service work not consistent across colleges; Retention and faculty and student success impacted by salaries

IX. New Business:

- a. Oraby: Publication fees for open-access journals
 - i. Gabler: Brought up at the Faculty Assembly Council of for UT System. Some discounts have been negotiated at UT System level
 - ii. Paccacerqua: Humanities and Arts faculty should volunteer for research councils so that they're represented; Council should reach out to those faculty for their feedback and research needs

X. Meeting adjourned

- a. Motion to adjourn: **Gabler**; Seconded: Tabatabai-Mir
- b. Meeting adjourned at 4:54pm; closed at 4:55.
- c. Next meeting:
 - i. April 2, 2024
- d. Attachments:
 - i. Presentation: Tenure-track reviews: trajectory from promotion and beyond, Saavedra
 - ii. Presentation: Ad Hoc Faculty Salaries & Resources Working Group, Williams-Blangero