TAMIU Faculty Senate Meeting

November 1, 2019; WHTC Rm 126

I. The meeting was called to order by the Faculty Senate President, Dr. Lola Norris, at 12:05 p.m.

II. *Roll Call:* Dr. Lola Norris, Dr. Frances Rhodes, Dr. Marvin Bennett, Ms. Malynda Dalton, Ms. Vivian Garcia, Dr. Puneet Gill, Dr. Ariadne Gonzalez, Mr. Jose Gutierrez, Dr. Runchang Lin, Dr. Abby Lloyd, Dr. Gilberto Martinez, Dr. Neal McReynolds, Ms. Angela Moran, Dr. James Norris, Ms. Kimber Palmer, Mr. Keaton Powers, Dr. Kenneth Tobin

III. *Our Guests* were given the floor.

Mr. Griz Zimmermann (Director of Athletics)

Mr. Zimmermann introduced himself to the Senate as the Director of the Athletics Department and assured the Senate that his Department is always available to assist in the success of our Student Athletes in their classes. He also presented the Senate with a copy of their last Staff meeting agenda as an example of the kind of work they do and gave an open invitation to the Senate, if they wished, to attend a Staff meeting (attached). He also reported that as of last Spring semester 98 of our Student Athletes had a 3.0 or higher grade point average (that is 50+ percent of all Student Athletes).

Dr. Mehnaaz Momen

Dr. Momen presented the Senate with a list of concerns dealing with the 'vagueness' in the Faculty Handbook's description for the promotion of Faculty to the rank of Full Professor (see attachment).

IV. The minutes of the October 4, 2019 Senate meeting were approved with minor corrections.

V. Old Business

1. The pending Faculty voting on Senate-approved Handbook revisions.

Dr. Rhodes reported that she finally received the Focus Report that she needs to set up voting and all pending Handbook changes should be ready for voting on the following week.

Since one of the pending changes, "Anti-Discrimination/Title IX" and "Improper Consensual Relationships" has passed the 60 day inaction period, the Senate voted to reapprove this change and the vote was unanimously in favor of it.

VI. New Business

1. New Signature Course Pilot.

Mr. Gutierrez announced that in Spring 2021 the University College will be piloting several Signature Courses, where an individual course would be taught based on a given theme and by multiple faculty and that each faculty member would get a small amount of overload monies (approximately $300 a week extra) for their participation in the course(s). The goal is to be able to pilot several of these courses in the new format along with courses in the original format.

After much discussion it was agreed to ask Dr. Mitchell and Dean Weitman to come to a future Senate meeting to address some of the questions that were raised concerning these course pilots.

2. Report from the Texas Council of Faculty Senates.

Dr. Lola Norris reported on her recent participation at the biannual Texas Council of Faculty Senates meeting.

- One of the future focuses is going to be on 'diversity' and there will be a system-wide event in February to honor those universities that have programs established to enhance diversity.

- There was a lot of talk about recruitment and enrollment and how to recapture students who have dropped out.

- There was also discussion on legislature coming down on setting credits and meta-majors and students coming out of high school into college having already taken a large number of college courses.

- Many universities are now involved in coming up with various procedures for Academic Professional-track Faculty to help guide them and prevent them from being misused.

- Finally, they (the Texas Council) are currently in the process of trying to organize a National Council of Faculty Senates. Representatives from about 15 universities outside of Texas were present at the meeting to begin discussion of by-laws for this new council.

3. Parking Appeals Committee.

Ms. Dalton reported that there have been a lot of changes to the committee on the administrative side and that she is currently recruiting another faculty member to serve on this committee. Dr. James Norris volunteered to serve on this committee.

4. Policy regarding substitution for the University P&T committee.

Dr. Mitchell requested that the Senate develop a policy for selecting a substitute(s) for the University P&T Committee in case a member is unable to participate in the actual meeting. This was forwarded to the Handbook Committee for their review and discussion.

5. Ongoing Technology and Distance Education issues.

It was requested that OIT not upgrade computer systems during the grading period as we have only a very limited amount of time to finish the semester.

VII. Committee Reports

1. Academic Oversight Committee: did not meet.

2. Budget and Finance Committee: did not meet.

3. The University Ethics Committee: did not meet.

4. The Committee on Creation, Composition, and Responsibilities of Committees: see previous notes.

5. The Awards Committee: sent out an email to all faculty about the 3 awards and is in the process of sending out the needed information to all of the Deans.

6. The Handbook Committee: we will be meeting to discuss the P&T substitution policy.

7. The Assessment Committee: did not meet.

8. The Distance Education and Instructional Technology Committee: Dr. James Norris announced that this committee will meet next week.

9. The Technology Advisory Committee: this committee met and the minutes are included in this report (see attachment).

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10. Fixed-Term Promotion Committee.

Ms. Palmer reported that the School of Business is still working with the Provost trying to finalize the Fixed-Term Faculty Procedures for inclusion in the Faculty Handbook.

Dr. Lola Norris reported that she recently visited Dean San Miguel about the COAS procedures for Fixed-Term Faculty and was told that they are planning to work on a policy for the College of Arts & Sciences and that they are going to do it administratively.

It was requested that the Fixed-Term Promotion Committee visit system-level policy to see if the System has defined the phrase 'fixed-term'.

11. Student Evaluations Task Force: Ms. Palmer reported that they have met with David Allen and he is currently looking at the statistics from previous years to see if they will reveal anything about the current low response rates on student evaluations of courses.

VIII. Other Business

1. Mr. Powers reported that there seems to be a disconnect at the Writing Center in services between Graduate and Undergraduate Students. It was then announced that the new TAMIU ARC program is in the process of hiring someone whose job will be to work only with Graduate Students.

IX. The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

"Anti-Discrimination/Title IX" and "Improper Consensual Relationships."

Civil Rights / Title IX

Texas A&M International University (TAMIU) does not discriminate or permit harassment against any individual on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity in admissions, educational programs, or employment.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 specifically prohibits discrimination based on sex in educational programs and activities. As such, TAMIU strictly prohibits all forms of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, and related retaliation. Any person (student, faculty, administrator, staff, or guest) who believes that discriminatory practices have been engaged in based on sex may discuss their concerns and file a complaint of possible violations of Title IX with the TAMIU Title IX Coordinator (contact information below) or with the Office of Civil Rights (Dallas Office), U.S. Department of Education, 1999 Bryan Street, Suite 1620, Dallas, TX 75201-6810, (214) 661-9600.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO REPORT: All TAMIU employees and students are responsible for ensuring their work and educational environments are free from sex discrimination, sexual harassment, and related retaliation. When alleged or suspected sex discrimination, sexual harassment, or related retaliation is experienced by, observed by, or made known to an employee, the employee is required to promptly report that information. More information is available in System Policy 08.01, *Civil Rights Protections and Compliance* and System Regulation 08.01.01, *Civil Rights Compliance*.

IF ALLEGED OFFENDER IS:	REPORT INCIDENT TO:
Student, Student Athlete, Employee (staff, administrator, student worker) or Third Party	***Lorissa M. Cortez*** *Director of Equal Opportunity & Diversity | Title IX Coordinator* *KLM 159B | Report It: www.tamiu.edu/reportit* *(956) 326-2857 | TitleIX@tamiu.edu*
Faculty Member	***Dr. Kevin Lindberg*** *Associate Provost | Title IX Deputy Coordinator* *KLM 332B* *(956) 326-2601 | klindberg@tamiu.edu*

Consensual Relationships

In accordance with System Regulation 07.05.01, *Consensual Relationships*, TAMIU is committed to maintaining work and educational environments that are free from conflicts of interest, favoritism, and abuse of authority. The following explains requirements regarding consensual relationships. If you have questions or need assistance regarding consensual relationships, please call the Compliance Office at 326-2855.

Employee and Undergraduate Student Relationships – As stipulated in Section 3 of the Regulation, full-time and part-time employees (**see note), including graduate assistants, are prohibited from pursuing or having a consensual relationship with an undergraduate student. (**NOTE: Student workers are excluded. "Student worker" is defined as a part-time employee who is also a currently-enrolled student.) Exemptions may be granted in exceptional circumstances and only by the President. Written documentation is required and is placed in HR file. A consensual relationship in violation of Section 3 may result in disciplinary action against the employee, up to and including dismissal.

Individuals Under Employee's Authority or Supervision – As stipulated in Section 4 of the Regulation, a consensual relationship is prohibited between an employee and other individual (graduate student, staff, administrator, faculty, third party) who is under the employee's authority or supervision. Authority or supervision means "authority over any term or condition of the other individual's employment or academic status; job duties making the employee directly or indirectly responsible for the other individual's hiring, supervising, evaluating, teaching, coaching, grading, advising, mentoring, or providing benefits to or obtaining benefits from the other individual, including employment." The employee with the authority or supervision must notify their immediate supervisor to discuss alternate arrangements. The immediate supervisor must report the alternative arrangements to the President. Written documentation is required and is placed in HR file. An employee's failure to promptly self-report a consensual relationship or to remedy through approved alternative arrangements may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

TEXAS A&M INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS-STAFF MEETING
OCTOBER 9, 2019 – 5:00 P.M.
DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS CONFERENCE ROOM - KCB103

5:00 pm **Topics for Presentation and Discussion**

- Compliance (Henry Miller)
  - Transcripts
  - Secondary Violation on 13.11
  - Tryouts 13.11.2.6 Medical Examinations
  - 201 SA on CAI
  - CARA hours need to be submitted the Monday from the previous week.
  - Travel Roster
  - Reminder
  - Counseling Center
  - Disciplinary documentation
  - Reinforce institutional team rules
  - Documentation for official and unofficial visit 48 hours prior to visit tryout documentation.
  - Learning moment CARA hours

- External Operations (Kelly Higgins)
  - **6:00 pm – 9:30 pm -Wednesday, October 23, 2019 -** Maroon Madness
  - Team Involvement
  - Raffle

- Facilities and Game Operations (Dan Lathey)
  - Community Engagement Hours Update
  - Habitual Resources
  - Work Orders
  - SAAC

- Sports Information (Jake Hudspeth)
  - 50th Year Patch
  - Keemotion
  - Spring Sports Headshots

- Athletic Trainer (Kayla Zambanini)
  - Game Day Training Room Hours
  - Talk Space
  - Travel Availability
  - Schedule Changes/Practice Times

- Department Update (Petra Vela)
  - REMINDERS: Leave/Vacations/Attendance Calendars/Trainings/Travel Lists/Itineraries
  - **8:00 am – 5:00 pm - Monday October 14, 2019** - Future Dustdevils Sports Camp

- Internal Operations (Rocio Garcia)
  - Study Hall
  - Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act (EADA)
  - Budgeted Occasional Meals
  - 5th year aid application – ARMS
  - Dusty Tryouts

- AD Update (Griz Zimmermann)
  - **Green Dot**
  - Drug Testing
  - Calendar Updates
  - Student Referendum

Next Staff Meeting: Tuesday, November 5, 2019 @ 5:00 p.m.

TEXAS A&M INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

A Member of The Texas A&M University System

Department of Social Sciences
College of Arts and Sciences

Statement to the Faculty Senate: Policy Issues in Promotion criteria

Dear Colleagues,

I have served on the Department and College P&T Committee for many, many years, and I thought I knew the requirements for promotion to Professor. Going through the process as an applicant, I now realize how our policies can be applied unevenly and provide for a wide disparity in their application and interpretation. The process allows subjectivity, which can foster uneven and, even unfair treatment of the candidates. I want to point to a number of questions regarding TAMIU's policy and requirements and the interpretations of such provisions.

As a student and teacher of Public Administration, I understand that strategic ambiguity may be necessary for the criteria of promotion when we are applying the same standards to very different disciplines across the board. However, if this ambiguity leaves room for subjectivity, selective bias, unfair treatment, disregard or lack of understanding of organizational culture, then the very rationale for the framework fails and selective faculty suffer much harm. As I am grappling with these questions personally, I also recognize how they can be relevant in future cases and set precedence. So, I am here to request changing the language of our handbook to clarify and objectively define some of the requirements that can close the gap for interpretation and subjectivity in all of our much desired career paths.

Here is the description for promotion to Full Professor by our Handbook:

> 1. Teaching: Has demonstrated maturity and skill in teaching, a proven record of teaching excellence, and continued demonstration of interest in improving pedagogical skills. Has assumed leadership in curriculum development and issues related to teaching improvement in the discipline. Is thoroughly familiar with University and college degree requirements and other matters related to academic advisement, career development and opportunities, and placement. Is a teacher and advisor to colleagues.
>
> 2. Service: Has assumed a position of leadership and service to the University on committees, councils, and special projects. May also participate and lead in professional and community service insofar as the activities relate to the candidate's teaching or research and/or serve the University's mission.
>
> 3. Scholarship: Has recognized achievements in scholarly or creative activities and is capable of advising colleagues in such activities.

Faculty Handbook (pp. 27-28)

Here are my issues with this succinct description and I am using the way I was categorized by the Social Science department chair as examples.

Selective Bias in Assessment of Teaching

The Social Science department chair assessed that I don't meet the criteria for promotion in teaching solely based solely on my teaching evaluations (average score of 4.06). I teach large freshman classes with 200 students and until this academic year, was on a 4-4 teaching load. Our handbook is actually most explicit in this section and does mention curriculum development, mentoring, and other pedagogical skills along with student evaluation. The Chair's letter is an important step in the process, but the chair categorically ignores my work on curriculum development, QM certification, mentoring junior faculty, all of which are essentially, "assumed leadership in curriculum development and issues related to teaching improvement in the discipline," as defined in the faculty handbook. In my case, only one aspect of teaching was selected and the assessment was based entirely on student evaluation scores.

The student evaluations are the most tangible part of the overall evaluation of teaching. As part of the committee, we often discuss the challenges of large classes, but rarely have we elaborated the other aspects such as core curriculum, WIN, online or other teaching challenges although they are mentioned in the handbook. I think it would serve us well if we can provide weight to these different criteria. Student evaluation should be the core and the most important aspect of teaching, but we need to take into account the inherent flaws of this measurement.

Can we come up with a more precise and detailed method of measuring teaching effectiveness? Some universities list various examples of teaching effectiveness, all of which are considered as valid measurement like student evaluation. For example, the University of Houston mentions explicitly mentions five different methods of evaluating teaching competence.

Can we come up with the language and a method that includes all pedagogical skills as part of teaching and weight them accordingly? For example, 75% (or whatever my colleagues deem appropriate) of the teaching can be graded based on student evaluation, and the rest on other aspects that we already acknowledge are important by including in our handbook. This will eliminate the scope of selectivity and bias and allow a more holistic evaluation, which we all are striving for.

Omission

The two basic ideas in our faculty handbook for service (for promotion to full professor) seems to be providing leadership and serving the university's mission. Out of my seventeen years of service, the two-years as MPA director and Urban Studies Director, the two-years of co-editor of the university journal, only four years are considered leadership service by the Social Science department chair. Any service where I was not a director or co-director was not regarded as providing leadership or serving the university's mission. My years of serving at the graduate council, library committee, or any other committees even at the university level are completely disregarded as they did not meet "leadership criteria" or "service to the university," even though all of these are university level services. I was a co-chair of the Women and Gender Studies Committee for five years, which is not counted as the committee does not exist anymore. Most shockingly, my years of service to the MPA program, securing and maintaining NASPAA accreditation and reaccreditation, program assessment for three years, none of the

program activities are deemed worthy of "serving the university's mission." I am unable to understand how service for MPA program is not serving the university's mission. Our five-faculty MPA program involves a lot of work and I have done more than my share for its transition, and recurrent quality maintenance. Nowhere I have been accorded credit for program service, neither in teaching, nor in service. How is it possible to erase someone's contribution while making an important decision about faculty promotion? How can we address this problem where a part of the service (or teaching or research) are completely deleted from the letters of administrators that are very important part of the promotion process? How can we deal with a situation if assessment of a candidate excludes his/her achievements? There was no clue in any guideline regarding this problem.

Subjective Interpretation

I was a very active co-chair of the Women and Gender Studies committee for five years, but (I even secured an external grant for the minor), but I was told that it does not count since the committee does not exist anymore. Is that the definition we follow now? There are many committees, which do not exist anymore. Does that mean the work done for those have become obsolete? Those of you with institutional memory may remember how active we were in WGST committee. The committee simply could not exist after we eliminated the Women and Gender Studies minor when the new Chancellor required universities in the system to eliminate low enrolled minors. I do not believe this interpretation and connotation of service leadership prevails throughout the university community. If this selective interpretation of service leadership is truly our definition of serving the university's mission, then my colleagues, who like me, spend a lot of time in program-level activities need to know that this portion of the service will be discounted for promotion to the full.

We take so much pride in our "international" mandate, but my international service (a resident scholar in Voice of America Bangla where I discuss American politics for millions of non-American listeners every few weeks) has not been regarded as my service leadership activity. What is, if I may ask, is the definition of "international" for our university? Please come up with a definition, or even a list of examples, for what counts for "leadership in service" and "serving the university's mission" for promotion to Professor. We can define service objectively rather easily compared to teaching and research.

Unfair Standards

Based on personal experience for numerous years serving on P&T committees, I can attest that we spend most of our time deliberating on research, and yet, the faculty handbook defines this criterion rather vaguely. In my experience in these committees, we have always required one book (sometimes even dual-authored or edited volumes have been deemed sufficient) for promotion to the Full Professor. With two sole-authored books by reputable publishers, eleven peer-reviewed journal articles, two book chapters, and an active research agenda, I was told by the Social Science Department Chair that I only meet the "minimum" criteria for research. The Chair focuses on the gap years in productivity, the years I was extremely sick. Regardless of my personal problems, I have met the criteria for scholarship and yet, the Chair stated that the publication of my third book is "critical" for me to get promotion. I know that we have not followed this standard for anyone else, which is, in fact, the textbook definition of **unfair treatment**. Why would some faculty required to do more after meeting the standard for scholarship? Can we please come up with an objective definition of the

"minimum" criteria? I do understand that room for interpretation is essential to fairly evaluate candidates across disciplines and take into account the quality of journals/publishers and impact of research. I believe we can allow for such factors even after establishing the "minimum" standard so that we can have an easier and fairer model of evaluating our colleagues.

Disregard for Organizational Culture

The Social Science department chair started his current job in August 20019 and wrote the recommendation letter in a few weeks for me. It is likely that he does not have a grasp of our organizational culture (the way he disregards the Women and Gender Studies Committee and misstates that it went defunct a few years after it was formed; his level of disrespect for the services rendered for our MPA program). Can we add a provision that administrators who are in charge of providing important input for promotion, need to be in their positions for at least one semester?

In conclusion, I was shocked to see how I was evaluated and how my seventeen years in this university has been tarnished. I would like to see concrete definitions in our handbook, which will eliminate room for subjectivity, bias, and selective interpretation that can take away valuable time and energy from our actual mission. I really believe that our efforts will be well spent if we can redefine the criteria for promotion to the full more clearly and thoroughly.

I would like to end with a list of guidelines of promotion to Full Professor that I researched. While we need to adopt a policy that is relevant for our university, these guidelines can help us articulate the details without being restrictive, come up with a language which is applicable for a broad spectrum of disciplines and yet objective, and an overall clarity and transparency that we all strive for.

https://admin.artsci.washington.edu/promotion-full-professor-guidelines

https://www.utrgv.edu/cobe/_files/documents/faculty/resources/vcobe-approved-policies/vcobe-tenure-and-promotion-criteria---approved-revisions.pdf

https://www.american.edu/provost/academicaffairs/term/soc-guidelines.cfm

http://uh.edu/class/ccs/people/faculty/guidelines-for-promotion-and-tenure/ccs-promotion-and-tenure-guidelines-revised-06-2019.pdf

Thank you for this opportunity. I hope my difficult journey to full professor will open up these fissures and allow us to chart a more logical, objective, and fair process of promotion for my peers. This process of applying for promotion has been an unexpected learning experience for me and I hope all my colleagues will benefit from fixing the flaws in the process and enjoy a smoother transition in their career path.

Mehnaaz Momen

Texas A&M International University/ Technology Advisory Committee

Minutes

October 17, 2019
9: 00 a.m. KLM 253

Meeting Facilitator: Dr. Maria de Lourdes Viloria
Invitees:
Kenneth Tobin– COAS,
Cynthia L. Piña, COE,
Hugo Garcia –ARSSBA,
Lisa Heard – CNHS,
Elizabeth DeZouche – KL,
Jose Maria (Joe) Gutierrez, University College
President's Appointee, Marvin E. Bennett, III
Fred Juarez III, VP for Finance & Admissions Appointee,
Albert Chavez, VP for IT Appointee
Athena Cortez, VP for Institutional Advancement Appointee
Gina Gonzalez, VP for Student Success Appointee
Leebrian Gaskins, VP for Informational Technology/CIO, ex-officio
Patricia Abrego, Director of Instructional Technology & Distance Education
Pablo Reyes, Associate Director of User Services
Ricardo Ramirez, Associate Director of Student Information Services
Roberto Gonzalez, Associate Director of Instructional Technology Services

I. Welcome/ Roll call

II. Review/Approve September 26, 2019 Minutes

III. New Business

1. Refresh Status- The OIT Department is currently conducting computer refresh. OIT runs 3 shifts per day with a goal of 5 machines per shift – with a total of 15 machines daily. Overall, approximately 200 computers will be replaced.

2. Graduate Students would like to get an increase (printing options)- Dr. Gaskins suggested to conduct a statistics report to find out how many the amount of usage by graduate and undergraduates from the beginning of the semester to the present. OIT will also explore the possibility of conducting a student survey to find out the preferred mode of printing (hard copy or PDF). Elizabeth DeZouche suggested that a scanner be placed in the library so that students could scan documents instead of printing.

3. Status on Accessibility Concerns- ALLY was purchased for the faculty use and currently all online classes are being assessed for accessibility. There will be faculty trainings in the future.

IV. Open Agenda