

TAMIU Faculty Senate Meeting

February 4, 2022; WebEx

I. The meeting was called to order by the Faculty Senate President, Dr. Lourdes Viloría, at 12:02 p.m.

II. *Roll Call*: Dr. Lourdes Viloría, Dr. James Norris, Dr. Marvin Bennett, Ms. Malynda Dalton, Dr. Li-Zheng Brooks, Dr. Deepak Ganta, Dr. Melissa Garcia, Dr. Puneet Gill, Dr. Ariadne Gonzalez, Dr. Tatiana Gorbunova, Dr. Hayley Kazen, Dr. Runchang Lin, Dr. Gilberto Martinez, Dr. Mehnaaz Momen, Mr. Alejandro Mojica, Ms. Angela Moran, Dr. Lola Norris, Dr. Leonel Prieto, Dr. Ruby Ynalvez

III. *Our Guests* were given the floor:

Dr. Pablo Arenaz

Dr. Arenaz announced that according to the State Department of Health Services website the number of city-wide Covid cases are decreasing. Our hospitalization is still listed as high, but we have fewer beds than other cities of comparable size (we have 345 beds here in Laredo for ICU). We have tested 250 faculty and staff in surveillance checking this week and we did not seem to have any major jump in the number of positive cases. We will continue random surveillance testing and on February 12th we will start testing students.

We have selected an architectural firm to assist us in rewriting our TAMIU Master Plan. This is required, especially for SACS, since we have recently added new buildings to our campus. The long-range plan is to move all of athletics to the other side of the east loop and use the space they currently occupy to add additional academic buildings.

We are also currently working on TAMIU's Strategic Plan, which will be co-chaired by Dr. Stephen Duffy and Mr. Juan Garcia. At this stage they are selecting people to be part of the Strategic Planning Committee and are looking for younger people who might have new ideas to bring to the table. They are looking for no more than 25 people that will be divided into three subcommittees.

Dr. Arenaz also reported that we have started the project design for the new Health Sciences Building. TAMIU received \$45M to build it and was given some flexibility in the money usage as long as the bulk of it goes to where it was originally intended. We are looking at possibly placing the new building behind the Physical Plant near the greenhouse. They would like the price of the building to come in at between \$30M to \$32M and to be a three-story structure about the same size as Pellegrino Hall (~60,000 square feet). The remainder of the monies could then be used to add some space to the Fine and Performing Arts Building and to help sound-proof the offices and the classrooms in that building. Also they are looking into the possibility of adding a small auxiliary building to the Western Hemispheric Trade Center in order to be able to further expand some of the current business centers that are in place.

TAMIU is currently in its early stages for developing its Legislative Appropriation Request (LAR), which is usually done about a year before a legislative session starts. That way the information can go to the Legislative Budget Board by the end of the summer and TAMIU

can do its presentation to the Legislative Budget Board in the early Fall. It looks like our major LAR will go towards adding new programs to the Health Sciences.

Also, it was reported that TAMIU is going to take \$0.25M monies from the MacKenzie Scott fund to start five \$50K projects that will be centered at looking at innovative ways to increase retention and graduation rates.

Dr. Alfredo Ramirez (Interim Associate Provost)

Dr. Ramirez introduced his guest Dr. Carmen Macharaschwili, the Academic Strategy Consultant for the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) to give a presentation of her role in working to help TAMIU staff and teachers with faculty development through ACUE.

For the past few years, the Texas A&M University System (TAMUS) has sought to offer professional development (PD) opportunities to faculty at all levels of development—novice to experienced—and at all system universities. These courses are nationally-recognized and delivered by the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE).

These PD opportunities have multiple starts throughout the calendar year, and the TAMUS, through ACUE, offers three structurally different programs. The first is a full course with only one start a year. For TAMIU, it's fall. The second is a series of stackable micro-credential courses equivalent to the aforementioned full course. The third is a stand-alone Inclusive Teaching for Equitable Learning (ITEL) series of courses. Please see attached pdf for a more detailed description of each of these three programs.

TAMUS offers all of these programs in either a TAMIU or TAMUS cohort. Both are available to all our faculty, and all faculty are eligible to enroll. Additionally, non-teaching professionals—who work a significant amount of time directly with students—are also invited and eligible to enroll in these courses.

For more information, see the following link: <https://www.tamus.edu/academic/student-success/scaling-instructional-excellence/>

IV. The minutes for the December 3rd Faculty Senate meeting were approved without further corrections.

V. New Business

A. Handbook Edits, Grievance Procedures SAP:

Senator Dalton reported that the language in our Faculty Handbook is not quite the same as that in the Grievance Procedures SAP. In the handbook it states that recommendations go to the President, whereas the SAP indicates that recommendations go to the Provost. The Handbook Committee will edit the handbook so that it is in line with the SAP and no vote is required for this edit to take place. Also, Senator Dalton will be sending out an all-faculty vote within a week or so about the modifications for release time for Senate Officers that was approved by the Senate at the last meeting.

B. Technology Issues:

Senator Kazen requested that if any Senator had any technology issues to please forward them to her so they can be presented at the next TAC meeting.

C. Conversation with President Arenaz will take place on February 23, 2022 (Virtual) at 1:00 p.m.

VI. Old Business:

A. Awards committee: met to discuss recommendations made by president Arenaz at last faculty senate meeting to extend the number of years requirement for Distinguished Teacher of the Year and Distinguished Scholar of the Year to five years and to change the name of the awards (drop the 'of the YEAR').

Senator Gill reported that the Awards Committee would like the Senators to take the discussion back to their respective faculty and see how they feel about these changes. It was suggested that the Senate bring this back up in the April Senate meeting to give the Senators enough time to discuss this with the Faculty. It was also requested that the Awards Committee send a brief description of the changes to all Senators so that they could present a uniform message to all Faculty for discussion.

Senator Brooks reported that in the Division of International Banking and Finance, 8 out of the 9 senior faculty voted to extend the timeline from 3 years to 5 years and to drop the 'of the Year' from the award titles.

B. Request to review the possibility of 3 Sick days changed to 3 Personal Days in Workday (for personal situations that are not emergencies yet unexpected):

Senator Viloría reported that she met with Mr. Juan Castillo and he did not think that it would be permitted by the System, but that he would look into it further through System Legal.

VII. Committee Reports:

A. The Academic Oversight Committee: did not meet.

B. The Budget and Finance Committee: did not meet.

C. The University Ethics Committee: did not meet.

D. The Committee on Creation, Composition, and Responsibilities of Committees:

Senator Dalton reported that there was one appointment replacement on the DEITC.

E. The Awards Committee:

Senator Gill reported that the Awards Committee has emailed all of the Academic Units reminding them of the deadlines for submitting their nominees as well as the portfolios.

F. The Faculty Handbook Revision Committee: see previous report.

G. The Assessment Committee: did not meet, but Senator Ynalvez announced that the committee will meet next week.

H. The Distance Education and Instructional Technology Committee:

Senator James Norris reported that the committee met and a couple items were discussed:

- Adding some new capabilities to TurnItIn to negate some of the new tricks students have been using to avoid having their papers checked.
- The committee is currently reviewing a new Training Track training for accessibility.
- It was announced that we are now approaching 300 QM certified courses.
- On February 17th there is a QM online research conference. The conference costs \$25 to register for it, but the DEITC will pay the registration fee for any faculty wishing to attend.

I. The Technology Advisory Committee: Senator Kazen announced that the committee will meet next week.

J. Fixed-Term Promotion Ad Hoc Committee: did not meet.

Senator Martinez did ask a general question to the Senate as to when the official changes in faculty titles that were voted on and approved would take place. Senator Vilorio responded that she would bring this item back up with the Provost who, in turn, will have to consult with HR.

VIII. The meeting was adjourned at 1:20 p.m.