

Texas A&M International University
TAMIU Faculty Senate
Friday November 4, 2022
12:00 p.m.– 2:45 p.m.
WHTC Rm. 125

I. The meeting was called to order by the Faculty Senate President, Dr. Ruby Ynalvez at 12:11 p.m.

II. *Roll Call*: Dr. Ruby Ynalvez, Dr. Hayley Kazen, Dr. Marvin Bennett, Ms. Jeanette Hatcher, Dr. Li-Zheng Brooks, Dr. Seong Kwan Cho, Dr. Deepak Ganta, Dr. Ariadne Gonzalez, Dr. Tatiana Gorbunova, Dr. Andrew Hazelton, Dr. San Juanita Hernandez, Dr. Kate Houston, Dr. Kameron Jorgensen, Dr. Runchang Lin, Dr. Diana Linn, Dr. Gilberto Martinez, Dr. Mehnazz Momen, Ms. Marcela Moran, Dr. James Norris, Dr. Leonel Prieto

III. *Our Guest* was given the floor:

Dr. Pablo Arenaz

Dr. Arenaz announced that the application for the Presidential Research Development Awards have just been emailed to all eligible faculty.

Most of the institutions in the System in the state have a separate Office of Student Engagement and Office of Enrollment Management. We combined the two offices in the past, but have decided to separate them again and will begin looking to fill the position for a VP of Student Engagement.

Dr. Arenaz has a Board meeting next week and our POR for the new Health Sciences building and for the renovation of WHTC will be on the agenda.

At the last Counsel of University Professors and Chancellors meeting there was a presentation concerning 'adult learners', people who started college and didn't finish. Apparently, there is a large untapped pool of these individuals that could help boost our student enrollment.

IV. The minutes for the October 7th Faculty Senate meeting were approved with no corrections.

V. Old Business

a. Senator Ynalvez presented the senate with Dr. Mitchell's compromise statement concerning the addition of a 4-day campus presence in the Faculty Handbook:

" Because direct engagement with students and colleagues in the life and work of the university is essential, faculty are expected to teach their classes, maintain office hours convenient to their students, engage in university service, and, if tenure-track or tenured faculty, conduct research on a regular on-campus schedule spread over much of the work week. Typically, the expectation is that faculty will maintain a regular on-campus schedule for four days a week. In special

circumstances, exceptions to this expectation may be made by the chair of the department and the dean of the college and approved by the provost."

Senator Ynalvez also reported that the 4-day presence was not in any other Handbook that could be obtained within the A&M system. It was suggested that senators give this compromise some thought and then it can be fully discussed and brought to a vote during the December senate meeting.

b. There was a general discussion about how the various academic divisions organize their Promotion and Tenure committees for their colleges. It was pointed out that there was very little consistency in how P&T committee members are chosen even though the Handbook states that members should be elected by the faculty.

c. Senator Jorgensen presented a proposal for the addition of an assessment committee as a standing university committee (see attachment). It was suggested that the committee be an *ad hoc* committee for a year in order to evaluate it before voting to make it a standing committee. This proposal was voted on and approved by a majority of the senate.

d. Senator Kazen reported that the Academic Oversight Committee is recommending that both the mean and the median of the median scores should be reported on faculty PPE reports. The Senate took a vote on adding a box on the faculty electronic portfolio to include the mean of the median and the vote passed

VI. New Business:

a. Senator Moran reported that the Awards Committee has sent out the announcement for calls for award nominations to the deans and the chairs. The Senate voted to approve the submission of the portfolios electronically. It was also asked of the senate to consider whether or not it is a conflict of interest for senators to be nominated for awards.

b. Senator Houston presented a report on the faculty comments solicited on behalf of the Senate Ethics Committee. There were 15 comments that were summarized in the minutes of the October Ethics Committee meeting (see attached). It was proposed that faculty be given a 'relief' time by not tying their merit pay to their PPE for one year.

VII. Committee Reports

a. Academic Oversight Committee:

Senator Kazen announced that on November the 8th we will be hosting a Faculty Assembly and that questions and answers will be done through Top Hat to keep the discussion anonymous.

b. Assessment Committee:

Senator Brooks reported that the new Administrator Evaluations will be distributed soon and we will be voting on them in the December meeting.

c. Awards Committee: see previous report

d. Budget and Finance Committee:

Senator Ganta reported that he attended a Student Advisory Committee meeting where they discussed whether or not to increase student fees. Also, student enrollment is back to near pre-pandemic levels. There was also a proposal to increase the pay scale for part-time students.

e. Committee on Creation, Composition, and Responsibilities of Committees: see previous report and attachment.

f. Distance Education and Instructional Technology Committee:

Senator Momen reported that OIT just finished their Institution Technology Week. They are also attempting to implement new software to help make classes more manageable.

g. Ethics Committee:

Senator Houston reported that they received a number of issues that they are currently following up on (see attachment).

h. Faculty Handbook Revision Committee: no report.

i. Fixed-Term Faculty Committee: no report.

j. Technology Advisory Committee:

Senator Kazen reported that if you are having trouble with being locked out of your email that you need to report it to OIT so that they can unblock you. Also, it was announced that distribution lists are not cleaned on a regular basis by OIT. So that if you need one cleaned you need to contact OIT.

VIII. The meeting was adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

Kameron Jorgensen, Jeanette Hatcher, Deepak Ganta

I. Proposal for Institutional Assessment and Effectiveness Committee by Karol Batey and Bob Wilkerson in the University Institutional Effectiveness Office

Committee Mission:

The mission of the Texas A&M International University Institutional Assessment and Effectiveness Committee is to:

1. oversee, review, and guide the coordination of all assessment processes and activities;
2. represent and coordinate with academic, student support services and administrative offices on assessment policies and procedures;
3. monitor use of department, office, and institutional-level assessment results for programmatic and institutional improvement;
4. provide feedback to departments, offices and the institution on assessment activities and results.

Committee Membership:

- College of Arts and Sciences – 3 from different departments
- College of Education – 2
- School of Business – 2
- University College – 2 (1 for Academic and 1 for student services)
- College of Nursing and Human Services – 2
- Graduate School – 1
- Institutional Advancement – 1
- Student Services/Student Success – 2
- Finance and Administration – 2
- President - 1
- SGA President
- Faculty President
- Staff Senate President

II. Committee on Committees Observations

- This proposed committee has members appointed by the deans and upper administration so is it necessary to have this group be a "Standing Committee" as part of the university committees under faculty senate oversight?
 - If this proposed committee is made official through faculty senate, what does that entail? Handbook addition, who is responsible for appointment members, etc?
 - There are unanswered questions regarding the time commitment and the structure of the committee in terms of obligations of members. They stated faculty will score assessments. The chairs already do this so what is the purpose or extra value of this additional scoring?
 - Can the business of this proposed committee be handled by existing committees such the University curriculum committee?
 - It was mentioned that other universities already have a committee for this, but no concrete examples of what or how this was being done at other universities was given.
-

Kameron Jorgensen, Jeanette Hatcher, Deepak Ganta

III. Faculty Handbook References Regarding Creation of Committees

The Committee on Creation, Composition, and Responsibilities of Committees. The purpose of this committee is to make recommendations to the Senate concerning the management of University committees and to provide guidance to the colleges with regard to the composition of college and department-level committees. Membership in this committee will be by appointment by the President of the Senate, with the Chair elected by the committee membership.

University Committees

At the University level, there will be various standing committees as deemed necessary by the administration and faculty to ensure the accomplishment of the mission of the University. Additionally, ad hoc committees may, from time to time, *be appointed as needed and as approved by the Faculty Senate*. The exact number of these committees will change over time. *The control and administration of these committees is the responsibility of the Faculty Senate*; by concurrence it is meant that the Senate shall ensure that committee assignments are apportioned equally and that no individual is assigned to an inordinate number of committees. In the interest of clarity and flexibility, the phrase "free-standing academic unit" applies to any academic unit (e.g. the Killam Library) not aligned with one of the colleges and whose head, therefore, reports directly to the Provost. In cases where the appointments are made by department chairs, it is understood that chairs will do this in consultation with their Deans. (Continued on page 16)

Committee Assignment Procedure

While both the *composition and general standards will be set by the Senate* with regard to University committees, only standards will be promulgated to the colleges pertaining to committees at the college and department level. The intent is to provide equality in the area of committee assignments for members of the faculty. In that regard, the following guidelines are established pertaining to committee service by faculty and the functioning of committees at all levels within the University. (Continued on page 20)

TAMU Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Committee for the Evaluation of PPE Rubric Change in COAS

To whom it may concern,

On September 13th 2022, an ad hoc committee of the Faculty Senate met. The purpose of this ad hoc committee was to evaluate a proposed change to the annual evaluation rubric for Faculty progress (hereafter referred to as the PPE instrument). As the proposed changes only affect the PPE instrument for Social Sciences, Humanities and Behavioral Sciences, Faculty Senators from only those programs were selected for inclusion on this committee. The purpose of the committee was to evaluate the proposed change and create a report. The report will be disseminated in the first instance to Department Chairs of the relevant programs, and the Dean of COAS, before being shared with program Faculty in the relevant departments prior to a Faculty vote on the changes.

What follows herein, is a report of those discussions. Any questions about this report may be directed to the report author: Dr. Kate A. Houston (Kate.Houston@tamiu.edu).

Committee Members: Drs. Kate Houston, Andrew Hazelton, Mehnaaz Momen, Marcela Moran, James Norris and Ariadne Gonzalez.

Proposed Change to the Rubric and Subsequent Discussion

It has been proposed to the Faculty Senate that citation counts be removed from the PPE instrument. Currently, citations are given equal weight to grant applications and publications in the Departments of Social Sciences, Humanities, and Behavioral Sciences. As such, 2-4 citations is sufficient to earn a Faculty member a 5 on the research rubric, the highest research ranking a Faculty member can achieve. As the aim of the PPE instrument is to measure active progress in the areas of Research, Teaching and Service, a concern was raised by COAS Office of the Dean that it is unfair for citations to count as the highest level of research achievement commensurate with the effort for publishing a paper or submitting a grant application.

Faculty Senators evaluated the proposed removal of citation counts from the PPE instrument and the reasoning behind it, and unanimously agreed that removal of citation counts from the 5 level of the PPE instrument is a fair change. Faculty Senators concluded that citation counts are not commensurate with the effort to publish a paper or secure a research grant.

However, Faculty Senators also reasoned that citation counts do highlight and demonstrate the impact of a publication in an easily measureable way, and that the ability to measure impact is important to ensuring high-quality research output. For this reason, Faculty Senators encourage the COAS Dean's office to include citations in the lower tiers of the PPE instrument. Faculty Senators encourage that citation counts be included in level 4 and level 3 of the rubric. At level 4 the citation counts would need to come from papers published in the last 4 years. If included in the level 3 of the rubric, then citations may come from any year of publication.

Summarized Outcome:

Faculty Senators agree with removal of citation counts from level 5 of the PPE instrument as they do not demonstrate the degree of effort commensurate with publishing a paper or securing a research grant.

TAMU Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Committee for the Evaluation of PPE Rubric Change in COAS

However, Faculty Senators do encourage Administration to consider retaining citation counts at lower levels of the PPE instrument to ensure Faculty are recognized for the impact of their research. At a 4 level the citations should be for articles published in the last 4 years, at the 3 level the citations can be for older articles.

On behalf of the ad hoc committee for the Evaluation of PPE Rubric Change in COAS,

Kate A. Houston

Dr. Kate Houston

Kate.Houston@tamui.edu

Committee Member: Dr. Kate Houston, Andrew F. Johnson, Melissa Korman, Marissa Moran, James
Woods and Ashabne Gonzalez

Proposed Change to the Rubric and Subsequent Discussion

It has been proposed to the Faculty Senate that citation counts be removed from the PPE
instrument. Currently, citations are given equal weight to grant applications and publications in the
Departments of Social Science, Humanities, and Behavioral Science. As such, 3 citations is sufficient
to earn a Faculty member a 2 on the research rubric, the highest research ranking a Faculty member can
achieve. As the aim of the PPE instrument is to measure active progress in the areas of Research,
Teaching and Service, a concern was raised by COAS Office of the Dean that it is unfair for citations to
count as the highest level of research achievement commensurate with the effort for publishing a paper
or submitting a grant application.

Faculty Senators evaluated the proposed level of citation counts from the PPE instrument
and the reasoning behind it, and unanimously agreed that removal of citation counts from the 2 level of
the PPE instrument is a fair change. Faculty Senators concluded that citation counts are not
commensurate with the effort to submit a paper or secure a grant.

However, Faculty Senators also reasoned that citation counts do highlight and demonstrate the
impact of a publication in an easily measurable way, and that the ability to measure impact is
important to ensuring high-quality research output. For this reason, Faculty Senators encourage the
COAS Dean's office to include citations in the lower tiers of the PPE instrument. Faculty Senators
encourage that citation counts be included in level 4 and level 3 of the rubric. At level 4 the citation
counts would need to come from papers published in the last 4 years. If included in the level 3 of the
rubric, then citations may come from any year of publication.

Summarized Outcomes:

Faculty Senators agree with removal of citation counts from level 2 of the PPE instrument as
they do not demonstrate the degree of effort commensurate with publishing a paper or securing a
research grant.

**Meeting Minutes for Faculty Senate Ethics Committee
October 2022 Meeting**

Members Present: Drs. Kate Houston, Mehnaaz Momen and James Norris.

Chair: Dr. Kate Houston

Date: October 27th from 12pm – 1pm

1. Review of issues submitted to the Ethics Committee

As of October 27th, five (5) issues have been submitted to the Faculty Senate Ethics committee for review. The five (5) complaints were read out to the committee members and upon conclusion, remedies were discussed for how to address them. The issues are highlighted below with an action plan noted for each.

- i. **Student complaints against Faculty.** Concerns that Department Chairs are not following the handbook for how to investigate such complaints and that Department Chairs are in some cases colluding with students in order to ensure discipline of some faculty or to put pressure on the Faculty member to leave their position at TAMU.
 - a. IT IS RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate Ethics Committee will review the guidelines for how student complaints against Faculty are to be handled and will send an email out to all Department Chairs with a copy of these policies attached.

- ii. **Student Newspaper.** Distribution bins removed from campus without notice being given to the Newspaper. No replacement option for distribution of the newspaper has been discovered despite the Newspaper being promised new distribution outlets were provided. Extra bureaucratic obstacles put in the way of the distribution of the newspaper with no reasonable explanation (such as requiring multiple levels of approval before the paper can be distributed at any location). Concerns about the limits this places on free speech on campus. In addition, Student Newspaper lost their location and have yet to be given a satisfactory new location, instead have been allocated a study room in the library which does not operate at hours that can support the Newspaper's timely production.
 - a. IT IS RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate Ethics Committee will take steps to bring this matter to the attention of the entire Faculty Senate at the meeting scheduled for November 4th.

- iii. **Adding of administrators or other staff to Blackboard Course Shells without the instructor of record's permission or knowledge.** Concerns about FERPA issues if the "ghost" members have access to the gradebook.
 - a. IT IS RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate Ethics Committee will work with OIT to determine the protocol for adding administrators or other staff to Blackboard course shells, and will discuss these protocols at the November Ethics Committee meeting.

**Meeting Minutes for Faculty Senate Ethics Committee
October 2022 Meeting**

- iv. **The review process for Faculty using their own books in their own classes.** Multiple concerns raised that no-one outside the instructor of record's/book author's department evaluates the book for suitability. Also concern about a lack of clear guidelines and transparency over the review process.
 - a. IT IS RESOLVED that Faculty Senate Ethics Committee will gather information on the procedure for reviewing course materials that are authored by the instructor of record and will discuss this issue further at the November meeting.

2. Other Complaints

Faculty Senate Ethics Committee received two complaints that they were unable to move forward with.

- i. One was a one-item submission of "unethical practices involving administration" which did not contain the context or substance required for further discussed by the Senate Ethics Committee.
- ii. A second complaint, while detailed, involved allegations of harassment by an administrator towards specific Faculty members. Faculty Senate Ethics committee RESOLVED to pass this complaint on to Faculty Senate President for further guidance. This decision was taken in light of comments made at the Faculty Senate Meeting in October by Provost Dr. Mitchell that the Faculty Senate Ethics Committee is not the appropriate place for investigating allegations against specific Faculty. Dr. Mitchell pointed out that there is a Faculty Grievance process available for any Faculty member to engage with who wishes to bring a complaint against fellow faculty or an administrator. The Faculty Senate President is currently reviewing the complaint that was submitted to the Faculty Senate Ethics Committee and will notify Faculty Senate Ethics Committee of her course of action in due course. Faculty Senate Ethics Committee also RESOLVED to do an awareness campaign of the resources Faculty have for submitting complaints and grievances to ensure their complaints are received by the relevant offices. Faculty Senate Ethics Committee will review these procedures and report back during the November meeting.

3. Other Business

There was no other business to discuss.

4. Meeting Adjourned.

The meeting was adjourned at 1pm.

Technology Advisory Committee

Minutes

November 15, 2022

1:00-2:00

WHTC 126

Meeting Facilitator: Dr. Hayley Kazen-present

Invitees:

San Juanita Hernandez– Faculty Senate Appointee,-absent

Devang Khambhati-COAS-absent

Hugo Garica-SSB-present

Cynthia Pina-COED-present

Sumalai Maroonroge-CNHS-present

Omar Ramirez-UC-present

Eva Hernandez-KL-absent

Marvin Bennett-President's Appointee-absent

Fred Juarez-Finance and Administration-absent

Tony Ramirez-IT-present

Enid Nuez-IT-present

Elizabeth Smith-Institutional Advancement-absent

Rene Prado-Student Success-present

Mike Munoa-IT; ex-officio-present

- I. Review and approval of minutes
 - a. Cynthia Pina moved to approve
 - b. Enid Nunez seconded
- II. Old Business
 - a. Distribution lists:
 - i. Please let your colleagues know that these lists are not automatically updated; they must contact OIT. For "All Faculty", users need to know administration also receives these emails. If the message is not for admin, please put a disclaimer at the beginning of the email.
 - b. Blocked emails:
 - i. Anyone having issues with this should contact IT security.
- III. New Business
 - a. Faculty receiving old emails (Omar Ramirez)
 - i. IT does not know why this is happening, but they will investigate it

- ii. This was recently an issue with old voice mails showing up on email. This was a system synch issue and has been resolved.
 - iii. May also be a BB course message issue
- b. Issues with Wi-Fi
 - i. Many new access points recently installed
 - ii. Large classes logging on for exams should turn phones to airplane mode to help with bandwidth.
- c. Open Agenda
 - i. Using outlook off campus
 - 1. Be aware that cloud archive is retained for one year only
 - 2. Archived mail on your work machine is there indefinitely except in the case of machine failure
 - 3. Retention policy needs to be updated
 - 4. You may archive your email from home (not on the cloud) if you request a VPN.
 - 5. You are able to unlink email threads and see them individually if you change the settings.
 - ii. Student access to OneDrive
 - 1. The default is A1 and OneDrive requires A5. For now, students must request access. IT is working on a fix.
 - iii. For next meeting, IT will present information on A1 vs A5 and an updated retention policy.
 - iv. Next meeting will be in February.