

Texas A&M International University

Faculty Senate Agenda

Friday, April 4<sup>th</sup> 2025

12:00pm -2:30pm

STC 231

In attendance: Li-Zheng Brooks, Malynda Dalton, Puneet Gill, Andrew Hazelton, Andrew Hilburn, Ediza Garcia, Marvin Bennett, Runchang Lin, Viridiana Vela, Won Kim, Cynthia Sosa, Timothy Rubel, Seong Kwan Cho, Leonel Prieto.

I. Approval of March Minutes

- Sen. Garcia moved to approve, Sen. Vela seconded, unanimously carried.

II. Old Business

A. Update on Higher Ed Bills in Texas Legislature

- Senate Bill 37 is still the one to watch. It passed out of Senate and will move to the House now. It is likely to be changed in the House, and then it may result in a compromise bill through the reconciliation process.
- There are other bills concerning higher education, many of which are still pending in Senate committees.
- Sen. Gill will continue to monitor and update faculty senators about these bills when and if they advance.
- There may be legal challenges to some of these bills if they pass.
- Faculty Senate will want to be involved with upper administration in terms of how these things get implemented.
- Of major concern is the lack of representation in SB 37 for non tenure track faculty on faculty senates/councils. As currently written, they would be barred from serving on faculty senates/councils.

B. Draft of Letter Concerning Drag Ban

- Discussion of draft letter. Senators reviewed the draft letter.
- Discussion ensued concerning the scope of the letter's contents and rationale for various sections in the letter.
- The letter would be housed on the Faculty Senate website if approved.
- Lengthy discussion ensued concerning the wisdom of issuing a letter on this topic at this time. Senators shared concerns on both sides of the issue concerning the appropriateness and scope of such a letter.
- Senators also noted that the Draggieland event did take place because of legal action by outside groups and a federal court's intervention into the matter.

- Sen. Garcia raised a motion to table the letter, seconded by Sen. Sosa.
  - i. Vote to table the letter: 9 in favor; 3 opposed, 2 abstained
  - ii. Motion to table carried.
- Discussion ensued concerning drafting an alternative statement. Recommended to go discuss with faculty constituents.

### III. New Business

#### A. Update on positions - Faculty Senate President and VP

- Sen. Gill will continue as interim president until May 2, with elections at our last meeting.
- Sen. Dalton will take over as interim vice president in addition to her parliamentary duties.

#### B. Faculty Senate position openings

- There are two vacancies at present.
- Both are at-large
- Nominations/elections to be held

#### C. College of Education Rubrics Update

- New rubrics are coming for us to vote on at the May meeting.

#### D. UCC Faculty Senate Member - Ex Officio

- We have been requested to add an ex officio faculty senate member to UCC.
- Discussion ensued concerning value of having another faculty member there to help provide feedback to faculty senate concerning these procedures.
- Can this be delegated to someone on Academic Oversight Committee?
- Sen. Gill noted that although this would be a non-voting member, they would provide a new set of eyes on the process.
- Discussion ensued about adding this duty to a member of Academic Oversight Committee.
- This suggestion was taken up, and ex-officio member will be added.

#### E. Science Lab Meeting Times

- Sen. Jorgensen was unable to attend and requested that she be present before we take any actions on this.
- Faculty senators discussed the basics of the issue
  - i. Labs count for 2 hours of load despite being 3 hours long
  - ii. There would be staffing issues if this were changed to 3SCH, so it's unlikely that admin would be amenable to such a change
  - iii. If this can't be addressed, perhaps there are other mechanisms to reduce the burden on faculty who teach labs
- Senator Gill tabled this discussion until the May meeting.

#### IV. Committee Reports

##### A. Academic Oversight

- Proposed change: language to apply for full professor
  - i. “Certification” requirement by deans in the faculty handbook
    1. There was disagreement between deans and provost office regarding “certification” of faculty who want to apply for full professor.
    2. Deans seem to feel they can control someone’s ability to apply
    3. Academic Oversight Committee is suggesting language that will align more with the provost’s reading. The provost is concerned that people are trying to apply for full professor but are being denied by their deans from even applying.
    4. The process is 1) Notify the provost of intent to go up, then 2) Dean then certifies that they meet the requirements.
    5. In practice this is happening the same way as promotion and tenure processes, where chairs gather names, then send to dean, then up to the provost.
    6. Certification happens in August with dossiers due in September.
    7. Discussion ensued concerning ambiguous handbook language that we can tighten to clarify the procedures for applying to full.
    8. The faculty senate president and the provost want to make it clear that there are only 2 requirements: 1) earned doctorate or terminal degree, and 2) 10 years full-time employment in higher education and 5 years at Associate Professor.
    9. Discussion ensued concerning whether or not deans even need to be involved in the application certification process.
    10. Academic Oversight will reexamine this issue and language to suggest the handbook revisions to enable applications to move forward.
  - Discussion on curriculum processes per college
    - i. There’s nothing in the UCC handbook about shared governance in curriculum processes at the college level
    - ii. Sen. Gill: Should something be added to the handbook concerning the functioning of these committees at the college level?
    - iii. Issues have cropped up where curriculum changes and program changes are not following set established procedures.
    - iv. Who oversees curriculum committee at these levels?

- v. Perhaps the UCC handbook needs to be revised to lay out the procedures clearly as different colleges handle these committees very differently.
  - vi. Discussion also noted problems with attendance and participation at committee meetings
- B. Budget and Finance—no report.
- C. University Ethics—no report.
- D. Committee on Creation, Composition, and Responsibilities of Committees
  - Working on one item and will report back at next meeting.
- E. Awards
  - Assignments will go out to faculty senators to conduct their observations.
  - Blackboard shell is being set up to examine the portfolios and rubrics.
  - Recording links will be sent to faculty senators to do their observations.
  - Reminder emails will go out as the deadline approaches.
  - Voting on awards will happen at the final meeting.
- F. Faculty Handbook
  - a. Promotion to Full Professor: Timelines and external letters.
    - i. Current: If you want to apply for full professor, you notify the provost by Aug. 1, but the problem is finding external evaluators by Sept. 1.
    - ii. Provost is asking that we change the timeline for the letter of intent. Suggestion is to move it up to an earlier time frame in order to allow solicitation of external letters.
    - iii. January? February?
    - iv. Discussion ensued concerning aligning this process with the timeline for associate professor, which would be May 1.
    - v. Sen. Gill moved for May 1, Sen. Hazelton seconded, motion carried unanimously.
  - b. Updates to Chapter for Fixed-Term Faculty
    - i. Needs to go out for all faculty vote
    - ii. This change will pull Appendix E and bring it into the main body of the faculty handbook.
    - iii. They will then batch that change with the reclassification language and growth plan/professional improvement plan language for the all-faculty vote.
- G. Assessment
  - Met and compiled results from the administrator evaluations.
  - Handouts were distributed and we examined response rates at around 32%, about 10% lower than last cycle.

- Sen Brooks then reviewed the Faculty Senate evaluation, with 86% with strongly agree and agree, so we're looking good in terms of performance among respondents.
- Senators reviewed comments and survey results.
- Results will go out to the evaluated administrators next week or the following.

#### H. Distance Education and Instructional Technology

- Discussed proctoring software.
- Licensing of Coursera and new rules for credentialing and certifications.
- Next meeting is April 28<sup>th</sup> at 3PM.
- Discussion of whether or not to post these minute meetings to the Faculty Senate website.

#### I. Technology Advisory

- a. Meeting April 22<sup>nd</sup> to go over VPAT and after-hours tech support concerns.

#### J. Fixed-Term Faculty—no report

### VI. Announcements and Other Business

- Discussion ensued concerning the general trends in the administrator evaluations and comments.
- Patterns, highlights, lowlights, etc. Concern over irregularity in faculty search processes.
- Will we share these results with the rest of the faculty? They have not been shared in the past as they are confidential.

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Sen. Garcia, Sen. Hilburn seconded, unanimously carried.