

Faculty Senate Agenda  
Friday, November 1, 2024  
12:00-2:30  
STC 230

Present: Hayley Kazen, Kate Houston, Andrew Hazelton, Malynda Dalton, Li-Zheng Brooks, Leonel Prieto, Seong Kwan Cho, Andrew Hillburn, Kameron Jorgensen, Puneet Gill, Runchang Lin, Tatiana Gorbunova, Mavin Bennett, Ediza Garcia, Tim Rubel, Synthia Sosa, Won Kim.

I. Guests

a. Dr. Claudia San Miguel: Provost and VP of Academic Affairs

i. Concur change spring semester

ii. Hiring for grants

1. Spoke with Jan Aspelund in Human Resources, we need standard job descriptions for positions, and maybe we can post the descriptions on Office of Grants and Sponsored Research to improve hiring times for grant-funded employees. Mr. Castillo agrees should be more accessible. Template for hiring positions is being discussed.

iii. Update on post tenure review

1. Draft is coming on Monday from Ari Gonzalez.
2. Looked at policies from around the system.
3. Looked at tenured faculty. There are 77 tenured faculty. Those tenured more than 5 years will be entered into lottery system, will be told what year they'll go up, starting Sept. 2025. Those tenured under 5 years will be placed into the rotation as time goes on.
4. Question of whether reviewing these post-tenure review dossiers should be folded into existing university P&T process, or should there be a separate committee? There will be a lot of dossiers to review if it goes to standard P&T.
  - a. Discussion ensued concerning workload for committees, trending toward a feeling that separate committees would be preferable vs overloading P&T committees.
  - b. Discussion ensued concerning administrators who are faculty and how they would be evaluated.
5. Met with Interfolio regarding PPE. Provost's question for Senate—when will faculty want to get trained and implement?—spring 2025 or spring 2026?
  - a. Widespread agreement that Heliocampus is cumbersome, Interfolio switch may be warranted for Spring of 2025 PPE cycle.

iv. Update on interim president

1. Upcoming board meeting at Board of Regents, and will likely discuss there.
2. Earliest is March, latest is June for start of search for new TAMIU president.
3. Do we know pool of who they'll pull from for interim?
4. They may go internal, they may leave Juan Castillo in place, or they may bring someone in from retired presidents.
5. BoR may be concerned about upcoming legislative session and may not want to bring in any newcomers.

- v. Texas Council of Faculty Senates has expressed concern regarding legislature's higher ed subcommittee designs on DEI subjects/topics in the classroom, and that
  - 1. Discussion ensued concerning academic freedom and legislative proposals to restrict classroom instruction topics.
- vi. Update on director and coordinator positions and confusion concerning release time, stipends, etc.
  - 1. May be isolated to one or two departments, but:
  - 2. Here is a rule on workloads: 12.03.99.L1
    - a. There are provisions for course releases
    - b. There are provisions for large-enrolled classes of more than 125.
    - c. Provost wants to start doing following this policy more closely in spring 2025 if possible.
    - d. Language is there concerning a range of additional duties and workload adjustments that can be made for different positions
    - e. Wants to look at workload for these coordinator/director roles on case by case basis to see which positions warrant release time.
    - f. Will discuss with Provost's Council.
- vii. Hiring and failed searches
  - 1. This issue has been more or less resolved. The hire was hired out of necessity, and on a one-year contract, and should a position open, will have to apply like anyone else.
  - 2. Discussion ensued concerning faculty role in these failed search-turned-limited term hire. Can administrators return to faculty if a search fails and ask which of these would be acceptable for a one-year position to plug a gap in coverage? May present problems if faculty cannot be reached to give advice, such as over summer
- viii. WIN courses
  - 1. Upcoming Provost Council will hear presentation of WIN data
  - 2. Generally, data indicate that scores are somewhat inflated on assessments
  - 3. Perhaps reducing WIN requirement and courses.
  - 4. Is AI being incorporated into these discussions? Not yet.
  - 5. WIN is open for some debate.
- ix. QEP—Experiential Learning
  - 1. Drafting narrative for it, deciding on the focus—career readiness, internship, incubatorships, or should it be service-learning based, or both?
  - 2. More details forthcoming on where the focus of the QEP will be.
- x. Update on CNHS dean
  - 1. Academic Search has been providing services, and are looking to have someone in place by Fall 2025.
  - 2. In the interim, partnering with The Registry, which puts together retired deans, administrators, etc., and will hire from there for someone starting January on interim basis.
- xi. Discussion ensued regarding availability of P&T university-wide committee workload and post tenure review dossiers potentially being added to that workload. Timelines and workload also discussed.
- xii. Examining faculty efficiency to look at which courses and departments are lopsided with respect to student to faculty ratios, also looking at who is carrying the core with respect to staffing and student to faculty ratios.
  - 1. Looking at expanding Language, Culture, and Philosophy
  - 2. Expanding options to bring more courses into LPC requirement.

3. What is the timeline? Everything should be wrapped up by Dec. Whoever is added in to that category will be notified by then.
- b. Mr. Gilberto Perez: Assistant Chief Information Officer
  - i. SafeZone
    1. Some talking points
      - a. Data shared with the app: email, full name, and a phone number, if you upload a picture they will also have that.
      - b. Their privacy statement, which has caused some concern, goes beyond what SafeZone actually collects, because if you sign in with your Facebook or Google Accounts, they will share data because you grant permission via the sign in linkage.
      - c. Phones will warn you about data sharing across platforms.
      - d. Location data: When you first install the app, you're asked for four permissions: location, motion, Bluetooth, and notifications. If you enable all that at all times, SafeZone will have access to your location and won't share it with UPD unless you raise an alert, or if you check in. When you leave campus, location is no longer being shared.
      - e. If you have privacy concerns:
        - i. Location while using the app only setting will still allow you to raise alerts from the app and share your location, but you won't be able to check in.
        - ii. Can just turn off locations entirely, then you can use it to receive the notifications and sms messages when they get sent out.
        - iii. If you don't want the app at all, you'll still get email notifications.
      - f. Discussion ensued concerning removal of classroom phones. Phones were due to be retired, and the thinking was that with SafeZone and with the QR code for AV services, piloted that, and found less waiting time/faster response times for AV requests, which was the primary use of the phones.
        - i. Improved upon the old system.
      - g. Is there a desktop version of SafeZone? So that there's a way to notify if your phone is dead.
      - h. Faculty have raised the idea of panic buttons or some other way of notifying.
        - i. In discussions with administration, the points have been that this is a customizable app
        - ii. It appears that there will be other systems, emails vs. text-message based alerts.
        - iii. How long is the contract with SafeZone? Didn't know
      - i. Discussion ensued concerning app's handling of the data, app policy, security review, and what constitutes grounds for termination of the contract, assurances provided by Mr. Perez. Discussion ensued concerning potential for UPD personnel to gossip about location. We may want to bring the chief to discuss this.

## II. Approval of October Minutes (Senator Hazelton)

- a. Li Zheng Brooks moved to approve minutes. Ediza Garcia seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
- III. Old Business
  - a. Study Abroad
    - i. No changes are being made to the study abroad review process, but greater scrutiny of contact hours as classroom/class time instruction, and ensuring that activities/excursions align with SLOs,
  - b. Fixed term faculty promotion document-Senate approved; awaiting faculty vote
    - i. Approved it, goes out to faculty vote, but are waiting to batch with some other items pending for faculty vote.
- IV. New Business
  - a. December meeting
    - i. Dec. 6, Hayley Kazen will be out, will find another day/time, or meet as scheduled under new Faculty Senate incoming president.
  - b. Senate president replacement
    - i. Discussion ensued concerning who would stand for election for president, as there haven't been any takers.
    - ii. Question is who would walk into VP position because that person eventually wants to take over as president.
    - iii. Discussion then turned to willingness of candidates to stand for election, rotation of office, intentions of officers to serve and for how long, etc.
  - c. Accessibility law
    - i. All of our course content will have to comply with accessibility standards by June 2026. Every video will need captions, every document accessible to a screen reader, etc. Everything in the LMS will need to comply with accessibility requirements.
    - ii. Discussion ensued concerning the large amount of work this will entail for faculty. Might hear about some training about how this will unfold.
    - iii. Can DEITC members advocate for training and resources?
  - d. Course Hero/Chegg and academic integrity
    - i. Issue of course materials being uploaded. Honor Council is seeking language about uploading to these sites included in course policies in SYL, allowing Honor Council to be able to adjudicate on it more easily.
    - ii. Test banks, tests, essay prompts, etc. have all been uploaded to these cheating sites.
- V. Committee Reports
  - a. Academic Oversight
    - i. Main item is organizing the faculty forum. Things that worked in the last forum and things they'd like to see in the next one. Goal is to hold it earlier in the spring semester.
  - b. Budget and Finance
    - i. No report
  - c. University Ethics
    - i. Working on flowchart for grievances, etc.
  - d. Committee on Creation, Composition, and Responsibilities of Committees
    - i. Issue of democracy task force becoming a faculty committee. Will be taking that up.
  - e. Awards

- i. Administration has agreed to issue awards at the beginning of the year assembly rather than at convocation.
    - ii. Party for nominees/winners is up to provost office to figure out when to hold (year nominated vs. year award issued). The Awards Committee will be keeping the Awards schedule as it presently stands.
  - f. Faculty Handbook Revision
    - i. Committees working on updates
      - 1. Had to update handbook to comport with title changes.
      - 2. Fixed term faculty language will have to go in, etc.
    - ii. Timeline
      - 1. P&T issues with timelines and parameters of what dept chair and dean can do to the binder after it's been submitted.
      - 2. Issues have emerged with things being added/removed from binders.
      - 3. Discussion of what can be done in the handbook to tighten P&T language to protect faculty members from administrators' removing or adding materials from applications. Where might such language be best housed?
  - g. Assessment
    - i. Held email meeting, will update in December with news on timeline for administrator assessments
    - ii. Try to get surveys out late spring.
  - h. Distance Education and Instructional Technology
    - i. Accessibility, Chegg/Course hero concerns (see above minutes)
  - i. Technology Advisory
    - i. Spirited discussion ensued concerning frustrations over slow PCs for faculty, VPAT questionnaire
    - ii. VPAT update
      - 1. Will come in either Dec. or Jan. to discuss VPAT flowchart, process, etc.
  - j. Fixed-Term Faculty
    - i. No report
- VI. Announcements and Other Business
  - a. Dr. Kazen reviewed the to-do list for next faculty senate actions and any other questions/announcements.
  - b. Dr. Hilburn noted the TAMIU Environmental Studies Initiative symposium keynote and panel on water takes place 1-5PM next Friday.
  - c. Motion to adjourn by Dr. Sosa, seconded by Dr. Kim, and the motion carried unanimously.