

Faculty Senate Meeting
February 4, 2022
11:30 am - 1:00 pm
MINUTES

WebEx Link:

<https://tamusa.webex.com/tamusa/j.php?MTID=mef5a5171a850b874ada46d5424454bc3>

In Attendance: Aida Almanza, Amanda Lindner, April Najjaj, Arturo Olague, Bob Shelton, Cherylynn Moody, Cynthia Matson, Daniel Delgado, Daniel Glaser, Dawn Weatherford, Deirdre McDonald, Diana White, Edlin Roldan, Elizabeth Hasseler, Elizabeth Leyva, Esther Garza, Eun Kwon, Gabby Tellez, Gary Coulton, Gilbert Barrera, Hatice Inan, Ho Huynh, Hoyt Garner, Hsiao-Ping Wu, James Finley, Jimena Guerra, Joseph Simpson, Karen Burgard, Karen Kohler, Katherine Bridgman, Keming Li, Kimberly Grotewold, Leonard Love, Lisa Jennings, Marcos Del Hierro, Margaret O'Quinn, Marianne Phillips, María V. Acevedo-Aquino, Mariya Davis, Marc Weichold, Marta Saywell, Matthew Mangum, Megan Wise de Valdez, Merritt Rehn-DeBaal, Michael Boucher, Pablo Calafiore, Pride Abongwa, Ramona Pittman, Richard Green, Robert Alonzo, Sabina de Vries, Sandra Lara, Scott Gage, Sonya Eddy, Syed Harun, Teresa Talerico, Thomas Beaumont, Ursula Vaughan, Vincent Creazzo, Weixing Ford, William Erickson, William Kiser, Xingyuan Fei, Zechun Cao

Meeting Called to Order at 11:30am

Approval of Minutes: Joseph Simpson called to vote on approval of the minutes. Vote:

- Yes: 19
- No: 0
- Abstain: 1

Question: What does it mean when people abstain from voting on the minutes?

- It is not inappropriate; it can mean many things. The abstain option has been placed as a matter of course. They are voting present, but not having an opinion.

Administrative Update

1. Interim Provost (First time addressing the full Faculty Senate)
 - Looks forward to the next several months.
 - Described the FS Constitution & Bylaws as well written. From the FS Constitution & Bylaws, the Faculty Senate is intended to be the representative faculty body in terms of interacting with the President and Provost.
 - Is in the process of reading the Faculty Handbook and will provide feedback soon.
 - Met with the five Bilingual faculty in January and listened to their concerns. The immediate plan is a meeting on Monday between the faculty, the Provost and the President to work together from this point forward. There might be a follow-up meeting toward the end of next week. There are no plans at the college level or university level to end the program. Still receiving applications and admitting students into the program.
 - Plans to attend all FS meetings in their entirety.

Question: Could you elaborate on where we are at with the Bilingual program?

- Interim Provost: Will meet next week. Has identified a few off-campus experts in the field for consultation, if needed. However, prefers to work out solutions with the Bilingual faculty.
- President: There is a disconnect in how to solve the problem. The goal is not to close the program. There have been no changes to the admission or advising process or advising processes. Students are still applying through APPLY TEXAS and they continue to be advised into the different Bilingual degrees.

Question: Will the Provost and/or President also meet with Chairs and Dean who have been key players in the process?

- Open to the possibility. However, the next set of people to meet with should drive from the conversation with faculty. Will seek as many sources as needed.

Joseph Simpson: The faculty senate Executive Committee meets weekly with the Provost. If faculty has any further questions, we can bring those to our weekly meeting.

2. President (Updates not included in the President's Report)

- Employee Compensation Study: A contract was issued with a third-party firm. The survey will include faculty and staff. The goal for completion is the end of the summer, in order to implement findings in the fall.
- Employ Survey and Engagement Survey (Strategic Plan, Goal 5) with University of Texas. Should receive the link next week.
- University Health: Conversations around the land acquisition - 68 acres acquired by Bexar County University Health. The third party is acquiring 3 parcels, one located across TAMUSA. A&M-San Antonio, A&M Health Science Center and University Health working with System Office to co-creating an affiliation agreement around their long-term partnership and research agenda.
- Last legislative session: The university's legislative request was 7million (approx.) for Public Health (not granted). Will go back for another round.
- Clarification around the Research and Graduate Studies bifurcation: Still moving in the same direction. Has set up a different account code structure to track expenditures that are occurring in each budget: Academic Affairs and Graduate Studies. Any organizational change will be held until the new Provost is hired. A campus message will be delivered next week.
- An Administrative Tabletop Exercise took place this week around cyber security attacks.
- Internal operations were changed to respond early to weather-related announcements.

Question: Will there be a budget update during this meeting?

- Joseph Simpson: Might include the budget update as part of the future special session on Shared Governance. If not, will include it in the FS March meeting.
- President: We presented a budget overview during the Faculty Senate.

Question: Is there a committee to review the data from the Employment Engagement Survey?

- There are representatives from across the university (can email names, if requested). The survey has a standardized set of questions provided by the organizer, plus 20 personalized TAMUSA questions. A committee reviewed the questions and offered suggestions. The instrument was revised accordingly. The goal is to have the data around the end of March beginning of April and engage in conversations around how to disaggregate the data (employee type, classification, gender, race, age, etc.). There might be a group of other faculty scholars interested in looking at the data for other research purposes. May come back and dive deeper through focus groups.
 - Dan Gleser on conducting Attitude Surveys (English and Spanish) about every two years. Three main categories: Very satisfied – Satisfied -Very dissatisfied. Survey answers might not capture all the nuances of satisfaction/dissatisfaction. Talking with individuals and building trust can help identify the actionable things that can be worked on.
3. COVID Reporting (No representatives at the meeting)
 - Joseph Simpson will forward response from representative. As of right now, the office has caught up reporting to cases.
 4. Textbook Selection Process, by Ursula Vaughan
 - On December 3rd, 755 course sections were missing their book adoption.
 - HB 1027 Book adoption should be on the website within 30 days of class.
 - Consider exploring the different ISBN numbers that a book might have.
 - Student Satisfaction Survey from last semester:
 - 20% of our students purchase all their materials from the Bookstore.
 - 41% do not purchase any materials from the Bookstore.
 - Adaptions for Summer are due around the end of March.

Old Business

1. Update Evaluation of Chairs and Deans ad hoc committee, by Megan Wise de Valdez
 - No updates
2. Faculty Handbook Draft Feedback, by Matthew Mangum
 - The goal is to have a revised Faculty Handbook available in fall 2022.
3. Update from AdHoc committee investigating changes to the Bilingual program, by James Finley
 - Shared a report draft during the last FS meeting. Interviewed faculty and administrators. Tried to understanding multiple issues. Focused on academic freedom and shared governance. Received conflicting information across various points. Described disciplinary limits to the committee's understanding and limits in time and access. Revisions and cuts were made to the draft based on feedback from those interviewed. Some people disagree with the conclusions. Some people question the committee's motives and goals. The committee's major conclusion is that the big decisions about the program were made by the administrators. These decisions shape degree plan, contents, careers and professional identities of

faculty, and student experience. Faculty should have oversight of the curriculum and program, as stated in university policies. The committee support the idea of a special session in academic freedom and shared governance to better understand program-department movements, and to support the growth of the university.

4. Update on Provost Search, by Daniel Delgado

- About 18 members in the committee (can share names, if requested). The names are also in a prior President Report. The committee is using a consulting agency to recruit and organize candidates. Consultants organized and ranked a total of 57 candidates in groups A, B, C.
- Co-chairs, Carl Sheperis and Kathleen Welch, created a sub-committee composed of: both co-chairs, plus Andrew Sanders, Ramona Pittman, Elizabeth Marukami, and Sajjhur Rahman. This sub-committee moved forward 39 of the candidates.
 - This division (sub-committee) could be interpreted as an unorthodox approach to a search committee. It seems to have been implemented to alleviate workload and it also seems to be working well.
- The whole committee will review the 39 candidates and identify the finalists. The committee is scheduled to meet Feb. 9th for about two hours.

President: March 14th is the tentative week for in-campus interviews. Context: Nationally, there are three system searchers for Provost right now; a very competitive market.

New Business

1. Resolution for Creation of an ad-hoc Committee on Employment After Retirement (Dr. Dan Glaser & Matthew Mangum-10 minutes)
 - Matthew moved to accept resolution and read resolution
 - Megan Wise de Valdez seconded.
 - Discussion:
 - TAMUSA has no campus specific policy neither procedure to clarify or guide this process of employment after retirement. TAMUSA has several faculty operating after employment.
 - Joseph Simpson: Someone from System will work with the Provost to look at TAMUSA's current policies and procedures and offer feedback.
 - President: Recommended an expert in retirement and re-employment to be part of the proposed committee.
 - Vote:
 - Yes: 21
 - No: 0
 - Abstain: 2
2. The role of AAUP versus Faculty Senate in speaking on behalf of A&M-SA faculty- Informal Discussion, by Megan Wise De Valdez
 - Megan read the introduction. She spoke on behalf of several faculty from the department of Life Sciences who expressed issues related to AAUP speaking on behalf of all faculty. Some of these faculty do not share the same views as AAUP.

AAUP does not seem to be clarifying who they represent. The faculty would like to discuss: is there a process to balance voice? is there a process to limit AAUP representative? how can FS and AAUP collaborate to represent all faculty? They had appreciated many issues brought up by AAUP. Their concern is that AAUP does not seem to make efforts for the media to understand that they are not speaking for all faculty. AAUP is only made up of 30 some members, not representing faculty across departments and colleges.

- Joseph Simpson explained his approach when talking with media (twice with San Antonio Media; 3-4 times with Mesquite), saying things like “I can’t speak for all faculty”. “I don’t feel they [AAUP]’re misrepresenting themselves”.
- Daniel Delgado: AAUP seems an organization that is open to all faculty. Decisions made by AAUP are made with faculty representation. Multiple universities have multiple representations for faculty like AAUP, FS, and unions. It is not uncommon to have diverse voices representing faculty. When interviewed by the media, the result always looks different. Daniel Delgado motioned to allow Scott Gage to talk on the issue. James Finley seconded the motion. Vote:
 - Yes: 14
 - No: 2
 - Abstain: 2
- Joseph Simpson: Explained that he speaks frequently, issues letters to deans and chairs, talks to media, and has weekly meetings; no specific strategy. It is not true that FS has not expressed itself. Not always at the FS meeting. If a senator wants to express something, they need to bring it to the meetings.
- AAUP is not representative of the body of the faculty. It is a privileged group that can pay for it. They tend to always take an adversarial position.
- Daniel Delgado made a motion to extend the meeting 20 minutes. Thomas Beaumont seconded the motion. Vote:
 - Yes: 17
 - No: 1
 - Abstain: 0
- Gilbert Barrera: FS can consider passing a resolution that faculty who want to represent others than themselves, to communicate with the FS before they make the publication, given the FS a space to respond.

Joseph Simpson experienced technical issues around 1:00pm. Leonard Love took over.

- Scott Gage: Anyone can attend an AAUP meeting because no membership is required to attend the meetings. Administration has also been invited to those meeting. Adjuncts making a range of 40K and struggling with cost of living in SA are not privileged faculty. AAUP membership is comprised of faculty with various roles. Many do not think they have fair representation or advocacy. “I have not once claimed that I’m the voice of faculty”. At the beginning of every conversation with a reporter Gage is asked: name? role? who are you representing? Due to editorial decisions on the media’s part, that information never makes it into the final cut. Last fall, the media reached AAUP, not the other way around. They read the Mesquite articles and reached out to the university but couldn’t get a comment.

Several reporters complaining that they could not get an official comment from the university, that they submitted requests that were not responded to. For the KENS5 Story, Scott referred reporter to Joe. The report goes back between Joe and Scott. The KSAT story was also referred to Joe. There are things that AAUP can do that FS can't do. For example, putting pressure on administration in ways that can result in action. AAUP's membership is 35. However, AAUP is a national organization that is over a hundred years old with a history of advocating for shared governance and academic freedom with thousands of members across the country. AAUP is not an isolated chapter. Open invitation to talk and have a relationship with FS. Wishes to work at an institution were AAUP is not needed. Wondered if the FS Executive Committee has previously decided not to engage with AAUP.

- Matthew Mangum (response on the chat): The Executive Committee made no such decision.

Announcements

1. Workshop by Dr. Barbara Hong, TAMU, "Debunking Myths About How Students Learn" February 10, 1:00-2:30pm.

The meeting adjourned at 1:14pm.