

Faculty Senate Meeting

Jan. 22, 2021

[Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)

2:00-4:00 p.m.

1. Call to Order at 2:02 p.m.

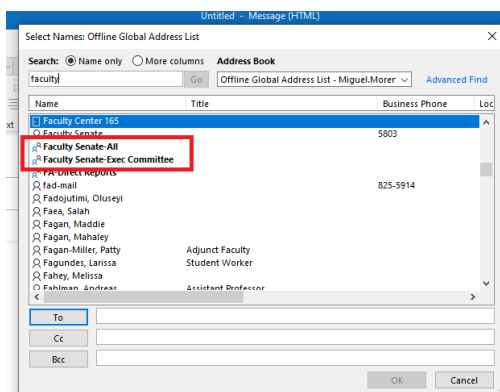
ATTENDANCE: Faculty Senate

Senator		Senator	
Ross Bernhardt	X	Kyoung (Kellie) Lee	X
Kelli Bippert	o	Elizabeth Loika	o
Randy Bonnette	X	Mark McNamara	X
Sean Britt	X	Emily Metcalf	X
Chuleeporn (Nikki) Changchit	X	Miguel Moreno	X
Lisa Comparini	X	Dorina Murgulet	X
Liana Davis	X	Bethanie Pletcher	X
Shelley Dinkens	X	Pablo Rangel	X
Dave Edwards	o	Mohan Rao	X
Pam Greene	X	Michael Starek	X
Patricia Hernandez	X	Abu Waheeduzzaman	X
Philip Johnson	X	Quihong Zhao	X
LaNiece Tucker: Administrative Assistant			X

Ex-Officio	Visitors/Guests	
Clarinda Phillips	Kevin Houlihan	Brenton Day
Amy Aldridge Sanford		Jennifer Sorenson
	Kelly Bezio	Jared Wieke

2. Approval of Agenda: Agenda was approved by consensus vote with the amendment.
 - Amendment: The guest speaker, Lisa Louis from the library, asked to be rescheduled for the February meeting to allow time for senators to review the proposal introducing “course markers” for courses with zero textbook costs in response to recent state requirement.
3. Approval of December 11, Minutes (Link for voting poll was made available in meeting chat): Minutes were approved with two amendments:
 - Amendments
 - i. 4a – Change Marion to Moreno
 - ii. 4b – Change CLS to CLA
4. Speaker’s Report
 - With assistance from Ed Evans, the Faculty Senate and the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate have their own email contact in Microsoft Outlook. These contacts appear just like any other university employee in the University’s Global Address list. The contacts are “Faculty Senate-All” and “Faculty Senate-Exec Committee” (see image below). The contacts are managed by Mrs. LaNiece Tucker and the Speaker. These

contacts will hopefully address concerns regarding the need for listservs. There are considerations for developing similar contacts for the other standing committees.



- Plans for CLA and COB Dean searches
 - i. The job posting for both searches have been posted to a wide range of advertising venues for both positions.
 - ii. The links for the CLA ad ([Dean, College of Liberal Arts - WittKieffer](#)) and for the COB ad ([Dean, College of Business - WittKieffer](#)) have been provided to share the job posting with interested colleagues.
 - iii. Both search committees will be meeting in the next two weeks to continue with next steps in the search process.
- COVID-19 vaccination efforts on campus
 - i. The University is dependent on Nueces County (Not TAMUS) for vaccinations.
 - ii. The first 100 doses received by TAMUCC were designated for UPD, Health Service Staff, and Athletic Training staff.
 - iii. The next round of doses will be designed for Counseling Center staff, Nursing Faculty involved in patient/frontline care, and nursing/health science students who need patient interaction for degree completion.
 - iv. For each round, any remaining doses not used by the designated groups will be distributed to University employees based on availability, risk group, and exposure to students so as not to waste any dose of the vaccine.
- Spring 2021 Semester Courses & Enrollment
 - i. Speaker Moreno referenced information from President Miller's most recent virtual address:
 1. Enrollment is not following typical patterns, so forecasting is challenging. The most current enrollment numbers:
 - a. First-time in college - up 112% over 2020 (highest in four years)
 - b. First-time transfer in – up 11.9% over 2020
 - c. Re-entry up 9.6% over 2020
 - d. New Graduate (masters & doctoral) up 45.3% over 2020
 - e. Continuing graduate enrollment (masters & doctoral) up 18.8% over 2020 and is at the highest point in four years.
 - f. Plans are being implemented to address the 800 students yet to register for spring 2021.

- g. More students are enrolled for spring 2021 than fall 2020.
 - ii. CARES act stimulus funds (approximately \$5 million) is expected to encourage student enrollment.
 - iii. Provost Phillips also provided a report of the Instruction Method (i.e., blended, face-to-face, fully online) by college which was sent out today by email. There are variances by college (see attachment).
- Implications for Summer semester plans
 - i. Faculty should not count on the same access to summer courses as in the past.
 - ii. Per the Provost, anticipate keeping the current patterns regarding online courses for summer.
 - iii. Priority will be given to the summer courses that contribute to degree completion.
- Course Evaluations changes to address online courses.
 - i. Provost Phillips discussed plans to incorporate questions in the course evaluations system for course features specific to online courses.
 - ii. Faculty have identified the irrelevance of some items on the current course evaluation survey and the need to consider deleting as well as adding questions.

Discussion: Senator Changchit provided an example of student feedback which illustrated one of the issues with the current evaluation survey tool. Senator Waheeduzzaman added the need to use the survey results in the spirit of helping faculty use the feedback for improvement rather than for evaluation of faculty. He further identified concerns regarding the low number of students who respond to course surveys and the validity. Others raised support of both Senator Changchit and Waheeduzzaman in the *chat*.

- iii. The time frame for distributing the course evaluations also needs to be re-evaluated so students are providing input before the final grades are posted in all courses. This may be a problem for some 7-week courses.

Discussion: Senator Changchit provided an example illustrating the problems related to the timing of the evaluations.

- Annual Faculty Activity Reports and the Pandemic
 - i. Provost Phillips will be sending out a form allowing faculty to document if and how the pandemic has influenced their ability to fulfil faculty expectations. Some deans have seen drafts of the form and have mentioned the form at college meetings.
 - 1. Before seeing the form, faculty have begun to express concerns and questions to their senators regarding:
 - a. How the form will be used?
 - b. Who will have access to it?
 - c. Timing of the form's release and the FAR submission date
 - d. Anonymity if the forms are analyzed in aggregate.
 - e. Underreporting to avoid perceptions of "failing" at their job.

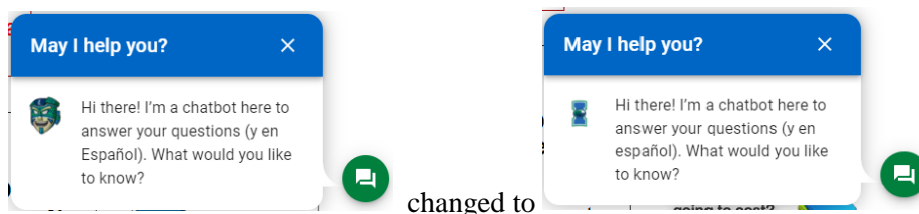
- ii. Speaker Moreno invited Provost Phillips to provide information either at this time or in her comments later in the meeting that would help senators ease the anxiety faculty are expressing regarding the form.

Response: Provost Phillips indicated Kellie Smith, Director of Center for Faculty Excellence and Michael Rendon, Assist. VP Academic Affairs will be appointed to an Ad Hoc group along with others to evaluate the current evaluation form. It has been about three years since an Ad Hoc group reviewed alternative ways to evaluate faculty. The Provost acknowledge the deep concerns about the process as well as usefulness. (In her liaison report, the Provost did address the form related to COVID-19 – see her comments below.)

5. Old Business

- Mascot concerns

- i. President Miller has instructed staff to begin to clean the university website of the mascot image. Aloha days will be renamed. Other similar measures are underway. For example, the chatbot from the OSFA was updated once the President was made aware:



- ii. Progress on forming the Mascot committee will begin in earnest now that the semester has begun. President Miller made assurances that there will be faculty senate representatives on the committee to review and recommend changes. There will be a variety of stakeholders involved.
- iii. The Speaker indicated he had received e-mails which still contained the mascot. He encouraged senators to use these types of experiences as opportunities to raise awareness related to the image. Senators were encouraged to help raise awareness in their respective colleges regarding the replacement of the mascot image to support university-wide communication related to the need to replace the mascot image and the name “Izzy.”
- iv. Senator Comparini suggested considering a campus-wide message that would highlight the urgency and reasons for changing the mascot (that it is fundamentally racist). Such a message should go beyond the largely unexplained ‘unmasking’ of Izzy in the email requesting feedback from the Islander community.”

6. Committee Reports

A. Academic Affairs – Senator Britt

1. Introduction: Masters and PhD in Data Science from COSE

The proposal was introduced at this meeting, anticipating a Faculty Senate vote at the February meeting. A meeting is scheduled with UCC on February 5 to review the proposal. Senator Britt indicated concerns have been expressed regarding resources and the possible duplication of existing programs within the COB. He invited those

with familiarity regarding questions and concerns to contact him or committee members to ensure concerns would be represented at the meeting on February 5.

Added information: Amy Aldridge-Sanford verified, there were people from the COB who have reviewed this proposal.

2. Transfer of catalog to new platform and the request for faculty review/editing: Senator Britt explained information is currently migrating from two different sources into the new *Course Leaf* platform. Due to the way information was entered in the existing system, there are potential problems with the appearance and accuracy of the information when migrated into the new system. Faculty in colleges are asked to review because they are more likely to catch inaccuracies with hours and other details.

Advocacy for Faculty: It was noted, faculty have been assuming progressively more “tasks” and responsibilities as the needs arise, contributing to unofficial workload without receiving acknowledgement for the increased work.

B. Faculty Affairs – Senator Comparini

1. Recommendations regarding:
 - i. 07.03.01.C1 Political Campaign Events on Property Under the Control of TAMUCC
 - ii. 31.02.13.C0.01 Wellness Release Time
 - iii. 34.02.01.C1 Drug and Alcohol Abuse and Rehabilitation Programs

The committee presented these for approval. They were introduced previously and have been posted in the I-drive for review. There was a vote on the motion to approve. Motion passed.

2. The committee is still working on 15.01.01.C0.01, Administration of Research Enhancement Program, collaborating/consulting with R & I. This should be ready for a vote at the February meeting of the Faculty Senate.

C. Awards, Bylaws, & Elections – Senator Pletcher

1. Faculty Excellence Awards – Portfolios are due February 15. The committee will review the portfolios and make a recommendation.
2. Elections - In accordance with the BYLAWS, elections are linked to the timing of spring break, which is only one day this year. Preparation will begin in February.

D. Budget Analysis – Senator Murgulet

1. There is a meetings schedule on Feb. 18 with VP Mahlmann, this is after the next meeting of the Faculty Senate. Senator Murgulet reviewed agenda items including financial support for the recruitment of PhD applicants for fall 2021. Speaker Moreno added the possibility of being able to recruit more international students. Added comments were made related to students’ concerns regarding financial security in context of COVID-19. Andy Benoit, VP of enrollment is a resource to consider when looking for solutions.

E. Committee on Committees – Senator Metcalf

1. The committee is making preparation for the annual committee survey, consulting Michael Rendon AVP Academic Affairs regarding updated committee titles and other information for accuracy before the survey is distributed.

7. New Business

- Practice vs. Policy discrepancies:
 - i. 15.01.01.C0.01, Administration of Research Enhancement Program: 7b “A statement by the appropriate department chair/supervisor and dean indicating that if the project is funded, proposed release time from instructional duties will be granted.”

Senator Comparini described discrepancies found in practice related to the above quote. She indicated faculty are not consistently receiving release time, even though the policy indicates release time will be provided. The Speaker described how this can undermine graduate student opportunities when faculty do not have the time allowed for research and the time needed to actively involve students.

Keven Houlihan indicated the quickest way to address discrepancies is to refer to the bottom of the page of the rule or procedure to find the office listed. In this situation, it is R & I and they are involved. Discrepancies need resolution. This includes procedures that do not align with actual process or processes that are not in alignment with the procedure.

The question was raised as to how to ensure chairs and deans provided release time in accordance with the written procedure.

Senator Bonnette raised the question of whether the size of the grant was an issue when “buy-out” was involved.

8. Liaison Reports (Written reports were provided to the Speaker and were shared with the senators.)

- ODELT:
 - i. South Texas Digital Strategies Symposium (sponsored by TAMUCC IT) will be Feb. 25 & 26. Call for Proposals closes Monday and registration is free. There is more info on the ODELT website under events.
 - ii. The first cohort of the Best Practices for Online Instruction course will run from Feb 15-March 13. Registration link will go out Monday via the Digital Learning Digest.
 - iii. To request an online course review, faculty are asked to submit a service request to ensure reviews are timely.
- Information Technology

Information Technology has several new initiatives underway this Spring:

 - Technology Management Program: Connecting campus through modern computing equipment to enable work and heighten security. IT will be contacting each employee to confirm their primary computer is correctly identified to aid in upgrade planning. Watch for a campus announcement next week with more information.
 - Distance Education Strategic Plan implementation is beginning. IT will be working with programs to prepare new online course offerings and collaborating for new communications and enrollment efforts for online students.
 - Watch for new information from ODELT as they increase their support for online quality. A new Quality Matters (QM) workshop series launches in February including: Introducing QM, Applying the Quality Matters Rubric (APPQMR), and Improving Your Online Course (IYOC).

Important Dates to Remember:

- Student COVID-19 training & block date – As of Thurs, Jan 21, 5,575 students have completed their COVID training in Blackboard. Students who have not completed the certification will have Blackboard Learn course

access blocked on **Mon, Jan 25**. SEAS is sending a text message to students today (January 22).

Senator Waheeduzzaman requested notification to faculty regarding students being blocked due to the potential impact. The Speaker agreed to follow-up.

- Blackboard Learn course deletion cycle - delete all courses that were offered prior to Jan 1, 2018. The cycle will begin **Jan 31, 2021**. Contact ODELT if you need assistance backing up a course.
- TAMU-Corpus Christi's past Digital Strategies Symposiums have been so impactful and well received by our faculty that this year, we decided to celebrate Digital Learning Day by sharing our symposium with all higher education institutions of South Texas! The **2021 South Texas Digital Strategies Symposium (February 25-26, 2021)** call for proposals has been extended until **January 25, 2021**. Links to register, submit proposals, and other details are in the January 12 Digital Learning Digest.
- The aim of the Digital Scholars grant program is to increase scholarship in digital practices produced by Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi faculty. The program is open to all full-time faculty in any discipline and provides participants the opportunity to explore digital strategies and address the need for high-quality digital innovation. The call for proposals closes Friday, **January 29, 2021**. Details are in the January 12 Digital Learning Digest.

SecUrity is not complete without yoU! Keep TAMU-CC ready for our upcoming IT Audit:

1. Perform a weekly check for updates by typing Windows Update into the search bar, selecting the application, and clicking on the link "Check online for updates from Microsoft Update."
 2. Connect to the virtual private network (VPN) once a week for a minimum of 3 hours to avoid any unnecessary deactivations*. Information on using VPN is available at it.tamucc.edu.
 3. Leave office computers powered on in campus spaces.
- Faculty Center for Excellence –
 - Women in Leadership Panel in early March
 - Regents Professor Award Event honoring Dr. Gregory Stunz on March 25th
 - Inaugural Adjunct Excellence Awards on April 9th.
 - ACUE pinning ceremony in mid-May to honor the 53 TAMU-CC faculty who are working toward finishing the course.
 - For further information on any of the above events, contact Kellie Smith, Director CFE.
 - Expressive Activity Committee – Senator Dinkens
 - Texas Senate Bill 18 (passed in 2019) related to having policies in place for free speech by students, faculty, and staff: TAMUCC does have the policies in place. Anyone on campus (student, faculty, or staff) who interferes with legitimate expression can be held to disciplinary action. Policies clearly define campus areas open for public, free speech.

Senator McNamara asked for clarification. The Speaker called on Kevin Houlihan to assist with clarification – He indicated there are designated open

spaces and there cannot be unnecessary limits (restrictions). In further discussion, it was acknowledged that an individual can engage in disagreement with someone speaking, but not restrict or interfere with the expression of views.

- CPIRA – COVID-19 graduate student survey – Senator Starek
 - More than 600 graduate students responded to a survey regarding the impact of COVID-19. The responses were anonymous except for identification by program. Keeping response anonymous may be a factor contributing to the robust response.
 - Faculty Senate can request the results to see the influence of the pandemic. R & I plans to conduct a similar survey with faculty and staff. Faculty Senate may want to connect with R & I to partner on this initiative.
 - Report from John Dawson –
 - The speaker indicated plans for changes in the crosswalks to improve safety are underway. Recognition was given to Faculty Senate and CPIRA for bringing the safety concern forward.
9. Provost’s Comments - Spring 2021, a time of possibilities.
- First year to second year retention rate = 58%
 - First year to third year retention rate = 44%
 - Undergraduate fourth year graduation rate = 19%
 - Undergraduate sixth year graduation rate = 37%
 - We (TAMUCC) can be an R-2 institution AND have successful students. Students need validated. They can learn. We need to show students how to learn. We need to serve *our* students. Our (faculty) scholarship informs our teaching. The Provost emphasized the role of students as “consumers” that need to be our focus. “The other stuff is gravy.”
 - There is strong support for attendance policies in courses; students need structure. This includes “cameras on” or explanation if the student cannot have a camera on.
 - Enrollment – 87% of first year undergraduate students enrolled at this point for 2nd semester. Typically, it would be 90%. It is possible to reach this.
 - Year to date – we are down about 300 students.
 - Spring – to – spring: in 2020 there were about 42 new 1st year students. This spring (2021) - 87 new 1st year students. There is also an increase in transfer in students. Spring-to-spring **overall**, we are down a little, but up at the graduate level. The provost reviewed other information that has an impact, including revenue sharing with academic partners in the MBA program.
 - There are 903 students who are eligible for the diploma parade January 23.
 - Summer 2021 undergraduate enrollment is expected to be down – there is still work on the summer schedule.
 - Fall 2021 is also still in development. Schedule changes are anticipated. There will be less 200 level *sections* needed to meet the demand. It is necessary to follow degree plans promised to students for their path to graduation. The courses needed for graduation are also part of what has to be incorporated into the schedule of courses offered. All of this to say, there may be a need to reallocate resources from where enrollment is lower to where the needs are.
 - Faculty Activity Report (FAR) – There will be a form to use with the annual evaluation form. There will be an option to have, in writing, a form that addresses how the pandemic has had an impact. This form does not make anyone exempt from performance expectations but is used as supplemental information. For instance, at a minimum, the faculty are still expected to enter mid-term grades, meet with their classes, etc.

- The form would have two check boxes. One to indicate COVID-19 has not impacted faculty performance and the other COVID has had a negative impact in one or more ways. The faculty completing the form would have the option of a 500 word statement to explain further. For consistency – all faculty will be asked to complete the form.

Discussion/questions: What happens to the form? Will it stay with the evaluation? Will it be considered with the evaluation with promotion and tenure? Will there be a possibility for the form to be used in 2021-2022 as well? Faculty may feel complicit in describing their own “failures.”

These comments and questions brought the conversation back to the need for an anonymous survey of faculty regarding the impact of COVID-19 and the impact on performance, possibly expanding on the work done with graduate students by CPIRA.

- Power Hour: There will be invitations to have a conversation with the Provost – to get connected around the purpose of serving students. It is intended to energize. It is not about focusing on COVID-19 or the budget.
- Follow-up with students who drop out. Senator Bonnette asked the Provost about follow-up with students who drop out, citing the fact that often students are passing when they drop out or do not reenroll. The Provost indicated names of students are tracked through a clearing house to see if they enrolled elsewhere. Attempts are made to contact those who drop, but the majority do not respond. Enrollment management is asked to “replace” those students who drop. The Provost added, when we admit a student, we are saying to them “You can do the work, how do we help?”

Senator Waheeduzzaman indicated international students have left for other universities. Amy Aldridge-Sanford indicated there is one school in Missouri with lower tuition, but generally TAMUCC is competitive, in fact, the International Agents have reported TAMUCC is one of the best priced universities in the U.S. We do have the same number of new international students in 2021 as in 2020. With Consulates opening again, we anticipate an increase in enrollment of international students. President Miller has discretionary funds which she has chosen to set aside for financial aid specifically for international students.

3:59 p.m. Senator Murgulet made a motion to continue the meeting 15 minutes beyond the 4 p.m. ending time. The motion was seconded by Senator Bernhardt; the motion passed.

Senator Murgulet continued the discussion related to international students (IS), addressing the rate of out of state fees for these students. Amy Aldridge-Sanford explained the programming fee and her commitment to review actual student bills to evaluate first-hand. She requested anyone who knew a student who would share this information be directed to her. (Senator Murgulet committed to follow-up.) Additionally, Amy Aldridge-Sanford explained IS qualify for in-state tuition IF they compete for scholarships that Texas students could get. She advised encouraging IS to apply for those scholarships (March 1 deadline.) If IS students applied, next academic year the March 1 scholarship application can be re-evaluated, but only if there was an application already on file. Graduate and undergraduate students are eligible. There are people in Corpus Christi who are wanting to fund IS.

10. For the good of the order

- Senator Comparini congratulated Senator Murgulet on receiving a new grant.

Submitted by Pam Greene 1/30/21
Secretary, Faculty Senate

- Black History Month: Kick off will be Wednesday, January 27 at 11:30 am in the Lone Star Ball Room. Don Trahand, alum of TAMUCC, CLA will be the guest speaker. This will be streamed. (Tickets are required for attendance in person.)

11. Adjourn – Senator Metcalf moved to adjourn at 4:14 p.m.