

Meeting: Faculty Senate
 Date: Oct 6, 2020
 Time: 2:00 p.m.
 Location: Video Conference via Zoom
 Adjournment: 4:20 p.m.

Minutes

Members present: Jennifer Ashcraft, Tina Lancaster, Hongmei Jia, Bob Williams, Stephen Starnes, Omar Elariss, Lavelle Hendricks, Laura Isbell, Julia Ballenger, Vipa Bernhardt, Joshua Ege, Jason Davis, Sandy Hayes, Yasemin Atinc, Thomas Boucher, Brock Johnson, Matt Wood, Robert Rodriguez, Benton Pierce, Gracie Brownell, Andrea Williams, Zachary Palmer, Johanna Delgado Acevedo, Mark Moreno, Christian Hempelmann, Dimitra Smith, and Ava Munoz

Members absent: Brandon Randolph-Seng

Issue/Topic	Summary of Discussion	Decision/Action
<p>Invited Speaker: Provost John Humphreys</p> <p>Dr. Nick Patras and Dr. Tina Yang Counseling Center</p>	<p>The September meeting minutes were approved with no revisions.</p> <p>At the moment, it is believed that the spring semester will be similar to fall semester with regards to COVID-19 precautions, course scheduling, etc.</p> <p>Dr. Humphreys requested feedback on the current quarantine policy with regards to students, faculty, and staff returning to campus and classrooms. Currently, a negative test result is required for return. We are the only school in the Texas A&M system that requires this, our sister institutions are following the CDC guidelines on quarantine. Most of the senators who spoke were in favor of maintaining the current guidelines. Others believe that this is hurting student psychologically because some students end up being away for months.</p> <p>Dr. Humphreys was asked if rooms still had fans and ventilation going 24/7, as that helps to minimize risks of infection. Dr. Humphreys said he would find out and let the senate know.</p> <p>Some faculty seem to be frustrated regarding feedback on the administration surveys that were conducted, with some stating that their college had not held a feedback meeting.</p> <p>The faculty senate had recently written up a proposal on a university-wide department head rotation policy, voted unanimously on its approval. The policy was brought to the attention of the Provost. However, it was rejected.</p> <p>Senator Atinc asked Dr. Humphreys why he rejected it, and he stated that he could not support any proposal that did not give the deans the final say. He thinks this would create chaos.</p> <p>The sub-committee chair Senator Atinc stated that they would revise it and resubmit for approval.</p>	<p>Dr. Williams moved to approve and Dr. Lubiani seconded.</p>

<p>Dr. Karyn Miller and Dr. Jacqueline Riley (Department of Curriculum & Instruction)</p>	<p>They are working on a single document to get into the hands of all faculty & staff to help assess situations w/ possible appropriate responses to student mental health issues. Services for students who like to get counseling are being provided via zoom & phone, as well as drop-ins. After-hours crisis support information can be found at the back of the student cards. Dr. Hendricks stated that TAMUC students also reported high levels of anxiety in the survey that was administered by the counseling/psychology department.</p> <p>There has been an increase nationally in employees spending more time on home duties, with many considering leaving the workforce. This situation affects all, but particularly has a higher impact on women. They reached out to university faculty and found that faculty feel overwhelmed. Faculty overwhelmingly feel overworked, feel pressured, report that the expectations of them being very high, and their research productivity to decline significantly. Faculty reported higher mental stress, loss of personal life, and a need to prioritize meetings with students during nights and weekends over time with family. Faculty liked teaching online, the ability to attend meetings online, and the option to "stop the clock" Some faculty indicated they are hesitant to speak up due to fear of repercussions (intended or not). Faculty feel left out of decision making during this crisis - heavier course loads without input on individual course schedules: "Decisions made for us and not with us" Many expressed doubt in the T&P process being fair with regard to the crisis. Frustration because of lack of clear guidelines on the process. Some asked for adjusted expectations rather than a stopped clock. Concern among faculty that administrators are not being sensitive enough to the toll of all of this on faculty – "They just don't care". Asking administrators to acknowledge the issue and start dialogues.</p>	
<p>Maxine Mendoza-Welch (Clinic Director - Student Health Services)</p>	<p>Testing every morning, 1400+ plus tests done, 180+ positive In-house, we have over 1,900 tests available, another 500 coming by the end of the week – open to faculty, staff, & students with results typically within 24-48 hours.</p>	
<p>Dr. Sandi Patton (Director of Student Disability Resources and Services) - Disability Awareness Month</p>	<p>Celebrating the month of October as "Disability Awareness Month" 92% retention rate for students with disabilities. They will be administering a survey among students to rename the 'Student Disability Center'. Soon, they will be sending out survey to faculty in order to understand their expectations and needs.</p>	
<p>Dr. Fred Fuentes (Office for Latinx Engagement and Outreach)</p>	<p>"Latinx" is a more popular term among the student age population - gender neutral</p>	

	The Latin population accounts for approximately 22% of the TAMUC student population. They may not have US citizenship, financial aid (not Federal level) available for those identifying as undocumented, many have families paying in cash for tuition.	
Communications	Nominations for the Piper Professor Award must be sent by November 6 th to Gracie Brownell. Employee Engagement Survey results coming out soon: 252 faculty / 295 staff and 22 administrators indicated a lack of civility on campus, faculty morale and creativity is stifled, they do not feel valued.	
Committee Reports	<p>Academic Life: Senator Hendricks stated that the DEI committee is working with academic life on senior faculty awards. Dr. Hendricks also reminded the Chuck Arize Faculty Awards.</p> <p>Academic Practice: The senate is looking for a chair for the committee.</p> <p>Admission and Retention of Students: Senator Robert Williams- Nothing to report.</p> <p>Budget: Senator Johanna Delgado Acevedo- Nothing to report now. She will be getting questions to address in her meeting with the administration.</p> <p>Curriculum: Senator Benton Pierce-Nothing to report.</p> <p>Faculty Awards: Gracie Brownell- Nothing to report. The Faculty award system policy will be reviewed.</p> <p>Organization of the Senate: Senator Mark Moreno took over the charge and the committee will be working on cleaning up the senate constitution.</p> <p>Scheduling and Facilities: Nothing to report.</p>	