

Meeting: Faculty Senate
 Date: December 7, 2021
 Time: 2:02 p.m.
 Location: Video Conference via Zoom
 Adjournment: 3:31 p.m.

**Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
 December 2021**

Present: Hongmei Jia, Maggie Salem (sub for Bob Williams), Joshua Ege, Stephan Starnes, Tina Graves Lancaster, Omar Elariss, Samantha Klassen (secretary), Marta Mercado-Sierra, Kathryn Dixon, Ava Munoz, Jason Davis, Sarah Mitchell (sub for Michael Oldham), Michael Ponton, Andrew Baker, Sandy Hayes, Christian Hempelmann, Yasemin Atinc, Brandon Randolph-Seng, Brock Johnson, Jane Kosarek, Bahar Modir, Robert Rodriguez, Benton Pierce, Andrea Williams, Julia Ballenger (president)

Guests Present: Dr. Mark Rudin, Dr. Joyce Miller, Dr. Yvonne Villanueva-Russell, Ms. Sandi Patton, Ms. Alexis Duggan

Not present: Emily Newman, Thomas Boucher, Johanna Delgado-Acevedo

Summary of Discussion	
<p>November Faculty Senate Meeting minutes: Senator Ponton motioned to approve the November minutes, and Senator Greaves Lancaster seconded the motion. November meeting minutes were approved with no changes.</p>	<p>November Faculty Senate meeting minutes were approved.</p>
<p>Guests: <i>Dr. Mark Rudin, President of Texas A&M University-Commerce University Update</i></p> <p>President Ballenger invited Dr. Rudin to the December Faculty Senate meeting to provide an update regarding the state of the university. Dr. Rudin provided the following updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Rudin stated that the new Dallas campus was close to being ready and indicated that faculty would be slated to move into the new building in mid-to-late December, with classes offered beginning Spring 2022. Dr. Rudin stated there would be a ribbon cutting on 2/2/22 with the Chancellor in attendance and some Texas legislators. • Dr. Rudin reaffirmed the importance of the main campus in Commerce and described upcoming improvements to campus buildings and facilities. • Dr. Rudin discussed the struggles that some students are facing on campus regarding their mental health, and that other institution leaders are facing similar issues on their campuses post-pandemic. Dr. Rudin requested that President Ballenger have a discussion with the Faculty Senate about the mental health and physical welfare of our faculty members and students. • Lastly, Dr. Rudin reiterated the importance of recruitment and retention and highlighted a recent plan put forth by Nechell Bonds (VP of Enrollment Management) and talked about ways that faculty can contribute to supporting students and preserving 	

retention.

Dr. Rudin asked for questions from the Faculty Senate body.

Senator Palmer asked about the role of academic concierges as compared with academic advisors, noting a concern about disconnection between these areas. He noted that as a faculty member, what he would like is more connection with the academic advisors, especially with regard to assessment of student engagement and performance. Senator Palmer indicated that an evaluation prompt later in the semester would be helpful for alerting academic advisors to different issues faced by students. He also recommended an additional space in the form to alert others about concerns that students may be facing, including issues like mental health.

In response to Senator Palmer's request, **Senator Mercado-Sierra** noted that she had been informed by Judy Sackfield that the university has a tool called EAB to make referrals to a student's advisor to support early intervention for both undergraduate and graduate students. Senator Mercado-Sierra stated that Amanda Scott could provide training for each department. Dr. Rudin noted that he would work with his staff to make others aware that this resource is available.

Lastly, **Senator Davis** inquired about the Spring 2022 schedule shifting to a different start date. He indicated he was concerned that these schedule changes had not been communicated with faculty members or students. He requested clarification from Dr. Rudin about this change. Dr. Rudin stated he would follow up with Provost Humphreys regarding the issues with communication surrounding the shift. President Ballenger asked Dr. Rudin what the rationale was for adjusting the schedule. Dr. Rudin stated that they changed all start dates align with the start dates of universities in Dallas to support the opening of the new Dallas campus.

*Dr. Villanueva-Russell, Dr. Miller, Mr. Vaugh, and Mr. Douglas
JEDI Certificate Committee Presentation*

Dr. Villanueva-Russell, along with JEDI Committee members Dr. Miller, Mr. Vaugh, and Mr. Douglas, were in attendance to review the JEDI Certificate. Dr. Villanueva-Russell discussed the JEDI Certificate and how it is designed to prepare university students to operate with cultural competence in the workplace and more broadly in society. She noted that the certificate is open to any undergraduate major regardless of their program of study, though the certificate itself is housed within the College of Innovation and Design. Dr. Villanueva-Russell asked for feedback from members of Faculty Senate about how they could spread the word about the certificate. Dr. Villanueva-Russell also noted that faculty members could make course suggestions for inclusion in the JEDI Certificate to CDI Administrative Associate Ms. Ginny Haight. Dr. Miller asked that Faculty Senators take this information back to their Department Meetings at the beginning of the Spring 2022 semester.

*Ms. Sandi Patton and Ms. Alexis Duggan
Student Disability Services Presentation*

Ms. Patton and Ms. Duggan provided information about Student Disability Services training for departments. Ms. Duggan provided a brief overview of the Student Disability Services workshop, which could be provided to the Faculty Senate body or reviewed in senators' specific departments as well.

Reports from Committees:

- **Scheduling and Facilities:** Senator Greaves Lancaster indicated the website is now up to date and thanked Senator Klassen for sending out the agenda and approved minutes early. She indicated that Chris Gage had provided her with access to the website database with new photographs and asked that Faculty Senators and asked everyone to go to <http://www.tamuc.edu/smile> to schedule photographs. Senator Greaves Lancaster also asked for clarification about the assigned tasks of her committee and indicated that we needed to elect a Faculty Senate Webmaster who could manage this. She asked if the Faculty Senate could make this an official position through revision of the Senate Constitution. Senator Palmer stated he would keep this in mind as he worked on the Constitution. Senator Greaves Lancaster requested that senators provide her with a photograph for the Senate website when possible.
- **Awards Committee:** Senator Jia stated she would be collecting information about Faculty Senate awards for the last year and would e-mail President Ballenger for clarification prior to distributing a call for awards to the Senate body.
- **Academic Life:** Senator Ponton reviewed that his committee was charged at the last Faculty Senate meeting with developing revisions to the university tenure and promotion policy to incorporate Senator Pierce's suggestion about having full professors adjudicate the portfolios submitted for consideration of associate to full professor. Senator Ponton indicated he would send these suggested changes to President Ballenger for distribution to the Faculty Senate as a whole. Senator Ponton also provided an update about fostering positive cultural interactions; the committee finished developing a survey which will be administered through Qualtrics assessing metrics around civility, cultural competence, and humility. President Ballenger requested Senator Ponton send this information to her and Senator Klassen (secretary) for distribution and discussion at Faculty Senate Executive Council.
- **Academic Practice:** Nothing to report
- **Budget:** Nothing to report

Senator Palmer will consider the creation of a Faculty Senate Webmaster position when revising the Faculty Senate Constitution.

Senator Jia will contact President Ballenger to discuss Faculty Senate awards.

Senator Ponton will provide information to President Ballenger for discussion at Faculty Senate Executive Council.

- Curriculum:** Senator Pierce shared that he is working through submitted program changes and has approved quite a few. In reference to the issue with University Procedure 11.99.99.R0.12 discussed at last month's meeting, Senator Pierce noted that he had not seen the COB 595 courses in CourseLeaf yet, but would roll the requests back if and when they were submitted per our discussion at November's Faculty Senate meeting. President Ballenger asked for additional Faculty Senate body feedback about this matter. Senator Ponton asked whether we ought to vote on this as a Senate body. Senator Starnes requested that the Faculty Senate create a statement to reject college-level changes to research courses in support of their design at the department level. Senator Ponton recommended that Senator Pierce deny the proposed COB 595 curriculum changes upon receipt in CourseLeaf based upon University Procedure 11.99.99.R0.12. Senator Starnes agreed with this recommendation. President Ballenger acknowledged the decision and the Faculty Senate supported the actions taken by the committee.
- Admission and Retention of Students:** Nothing to report.
- Organization of the Senate:** Nothing to report

Unfinished Business

Reaffirmation of Policy 11.99.99.R0.12 re: Curriculum Changes for 585 Research Courses – Senator Pierce.

This item of unfinished business was discussed in the Curriculum Committee report, detailed above.

President Ballenger called for a motion to adjourn. Senator A. Williams moved to adjourn, and Senator Davis seconded.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:31 pm.