

FACULTY SENATE MEETING AGENDA – March 2025

Date: 03/04/2025

Meeting held virtually due to weather and class cancellations.

Attendance: Brandon Randolph-Seng, William Kuracina, Zachary Palmer, Jeanette Vaughan, Furlich, Dongmei Cheng, Hunkar Gizem Yesilyurt, Jangsup Choi, Julee Walker, Leslie Ekpe, Carrie Klypchak, Hongmei Jia, Stephen Starnes, Carlos Bertulani, Maggie Salem, Tami Morton, Jason Lee Davis, Julia Ballenger, Nikolay Sirakov, Avril Knox, Rusty Fox, Adam Northern, Kelly Featherston, Yasemin Atinc

Dr. Atinc called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.

Dr. Atinc asked if there were any comments about the February meeting minutes.

Dr. Salem motioned to approve minutes. Dr. Morton 2nd and minutes were approved.

Dr. Romero presented about the summer model. The goal is to describe the work that the committee has completed. This summer 2025 will be 'as usual' but the committee has been formed to make recommendations that would go into effect 2026. The committee has wide representation from faculty across the whole university. Dr. Romero reminds all that the focus of this committee is to align practices around our students and make sure the model serves our 'student needs and also student demand.' Student regression, completion and demand. Sufficient revenues must also cover expenses.

Other goals /targets of the committee:

- Produce revenues that can be shared across departments and faculties (help support operations).
- What incentives can be given related to student hours and distribution of revenues?
- Student credit hour targets (46,000 per summer offering with realistic #s around 26,000)
- Parameters: Expenses 36,000 student credit hours at \$100/credit hour; \$400,000 pay out, goal is to try and keep instructional costs at 3.2 million (includes department head cost).
- Finance, institutional effectiveness, and academic affairs have been helping and contributing.
- Performance of all colleges have been examined based on different variables.
- Efforts are ongoing and the committee is open to others.

Dr. Atinc asked Dr. Romero –

- How does the current model fail to meet the student needs?
- She also mentioned revenues are different by college (which impact faculty development) and that the extra summer pay helps to motivate faculty (i.e., research, pay adjustment).

Dr. Bertulani mentioned concerns from astronomy and math. The basic concern is that faculty are being replaced by adjuncts and that salaries are too low but teaching in the summer helps with overall annual compensation.

- Dr. Romero shared that adjuncts have not been mentioned (less than 5 times) during summer model discussions. A great deal of time has been spent on understanding the past rather than next steps. He does not feel that is the disposition of the committee to make a recommendation related to adjuncts. Distributions were made focused primarily on the tenured and tenure-track faculty, related to committee recommendations.
- 15% of department head pay is supposed to be paid by the department, maybe that pay can be prorated or other faculty salary can be prorated (suggested by Dr. Atinc)
- Dr. Sirakov asked, where is our university in the teaching market? He paraphrased that he heard talks about revenue and student readiness but not about teaching, research and service.
- Dr. Romero mentioned that he is available, and Senators should know who is on the committee and to feel free to contact them. There are 2 Senators on the committee.
 - There needs to be an appropriate rate of pay to encourage and motivate participants in the model (teaching summer courses).

Dr. Ballenger shared her appreciation and reiterated that transparency and faculty input is important. Her recommendation was to keep sharing the information with the Faculty Senate.

Dr. Starnes also reminded that faculty do not get paid for student mentorship in the summer (just one potential improvement example).

Dr. Romero (and committee colleagues) left the meeting at 2:37pm.

Dr. Atinc welcomed Tina Livingston.

Dr. Klypchak organized the google document sent out to Senators beforehand. The Faculty Salary study presentation will occur sometime in later spring. Some aspects of the budget can only be answered by the Provost, but Ms. Livingston will respond to as many questions as she is able.

Ms. Livingston went through a few specific questions from a google document (pre-questions from Senators):

- Q: Why is there money in the budget for VP positions but not for faculty salary?

- New VP positions have replaced other VP positions that no longer exist, rather than new positions. Some positions have specific tasks (i.e., VP of enrollment for academic programs in Dallas). Other examples: Fundraise and growing enrollment is a part of the VP positions (sustain position with longevity).
- Q: How are monies allocated for new structures (i.e., dorms) but not for updated classrooms that help with classroom instruction?
 - The state of planning takes multiple years with health and safety being a priority (i.e., students need dorms). Dr. Vacca-Hasse has plans for the faculty development center, but classroom condition is a priority. Ms. Livingston has shared that she has noticed there are deficits around campus.
- Ms. Livingston shared that Faculty Salary Study will be presented to the Senate and changes or decisions will not be made without the input of Faculty Senate.
- Q: What changes are coming up related to salary (multiple roles)?
 - Merit-based pay is a priority, with adjunct pay based on market. GA salary is being evaluated at this time.
- Q: The CHESA has a greater responsibility for teaching a majority of courses, how does that impact compensation?
 - This question should be directed to Dr. Romero
- Q: What are the updates related to research, limitations, incentives, and export control (executive order)?
 - Research-related questions should go to Dr. Donham.
- Q: Why has no money been allocated for teaching labs? Possible Higher Education Assistance Fund (HEAF) allocation?
 - Budget allocation is based on need. Maintenance and safety (elevators), parking lot, library updates have been a priority.
 - Dr. Atinc reminded all that Faculty Senate can make recommendations from Senators based on specific classroom need around campus.
- Q: Housing is on a lottery system for fall 2025 are we changing requirements? And expecting continued increases?
 - This is a question for Judy Sackfield. We have 2,300 beds on campus, it takes 4 years to build a new building (dorms). Binnion is being converted to housing facilities. Waiting on approval from the board of regents. Housing is expensive (upkeep and payment). Example: A sister university has had housing cost estimates at: 200 beds = 50 million. Binnion Hall, 165 beds = 24.8 million budget. The goal is to benefit our students.
- Salary questions will be covered with the Salary study.
- Dr. Palmer asked: If enrollment is up, why does it feel like money is so tight these days?

- Ms. Livingston shared visuals of a 12 year enrollment trend (no fee increases are projected for the next 4 years)
 - Columbia Advisory Group (CAG) used to manage but now that 1 million is being reallocated as we no longer use CAG services.
- Q: What if a department has an upgrade request?
 - Go to your Dean first for equipment but if its computers they are on an upgrade rotation.
 - Indirect costs can cover research needs.
- Q: Adjunct funds are being limited. Can department request more funds for faculty to replace adjuncts?
 - Faculty pay is based on need and number of students, some departments rely on GAs for teaching. Dr. Vacca-Hasse could offer more information related to increasing faculty lines (connected to growth and goals). The goal is to grow graduate enrollment in STEM areas.
- Q: How many and in which areas are we paying outside entities for various tasks and jobs?
 - VP Bonds can respond to this.
- Q: We have new VP director positions; how are their salaries being funded (ROI)?
 - The goal is to self-sustain and break even. Some projects require seed money.
- Q: Who is funding the rodeo area (74 million)?
 - Student and athletic fees and USF. Central HEAF money will help as it will be a multi-purpose center (basketball, graduation).
- Reminder from a Senator: Lot 35 needs maintenance and striping.
 - Ms. Livingston will share with Chief Vaughan.
 - Progress for parking lot changes has been slow but there is a systematic plan. Revenue generated from parking (parking tickets and passes) will include 24hour security, PRIDE alert software, cameras, and university maintenance.
- Dr. Atinc shared concerns about updates to the parking changes (color code systems and faculty/student parking).
 - Ms. Livingston shared that feedback is being noted.
- Q: What is planned for bringing west halls (already configured as dorms) back for student housing? What is driving the need to change an academic building into dorms for additional space?
 - This is a race against time, it is quicker to renovate an existing building rather than building a new structure. The capacity is already there (mechanical, water, electricity). West halls are still on the capitol plan.

- Q: Are there any plans on allocating the merit funds for this year and/or towards faculty salary increase (now that the compensation studies are done), or for after the summer salary model committee's work done?
 - Ms. Livingston shared that this should be separate, merit is on top of the salary study.
- Q: Is the Dallas campus being fully utilized and paying for itself? Is there an impact on enrollment for graduate classes?
 - There were additional floors being added and they are being used (Floors 8 and 9). The landlord paid for improvements. The goal is to keep classes filled and teach classes that are relevant to the Dallas area students. The Chief Academic Officer for Dallas is working on these areas.
- How healthy are we financially as a university (department closures)?
 - We have about 3 months of reserves. We are financially healthy right now. We have this balance because we do not have a 'use it or lose it' budget structure. Faculty and departments are very helpful in managing and maintaining this healthy balance. Fiscal responsibility and being good stewards of funds start with faculty.
- There are no known department closures.
- Q: If adjunct budgets are being cut, how do we manage this?
 - Question should be directed to Provost and Deans.
- Other comments from Ms. Livingston: Summer budget needs to break even. We are funded on 9 months (fall and spring). State gives formula funding on 9/1 and fall and spring includes 90% of business. Overhead is paid for ahead of time which is funded for those 9 months. Salary cannot spend more than is earned during the summer. In the past colleges would receive allocation earning and use for faculty development or travel funds. It can be used to support education in other ways as well.
- Q: Where will departments in Binnion be moved to?
 - There is a contact group working on this and they plan to reach out to you if you are directly impacted.
- Academic affairs must work with teams who will be developing the Dallas campus. All parties will have some type of overlap.
- Q: Will there be a faculty salary cap (CUPA data)? Based on peer institutions or based on other majors and departments?
 - Dr. Atinc will follow up as this will be related to the Faculty Salary Study.

Chief Vaughn and Sarah Baker came to the Faculty Senate executive meeting and Dr. Atinc will distribute a handout at the next in person meeting related to updates.

- Removal of color zones was on the list and Dr. Atinc (and others) communicated that this was not the most effective strategy.

- Dr. Bertulani added that some faculty lots are very small and some faculty have to walk very far away to classes. Dr. Salem shared that in agriculture, faculty are on and off campus with classes and students and some parking is not available throughout the day as they return to campus.

- Other suggestions: VPs could pay a higher amount for priority parking.

Dr. Fox asked about freshman level dorms and how do those decisions get made. Question was directed to Dr. Starnes. Dr. Starnes shared that the committee he is on relates to 'space requests only' and filling those requests as needed.

Dr. Atinc reminded that some of the requests discussed can be made in the upcoming 'coffee and pie' meeting.

Dr. Atinc shared updates from TCFS and A&M Assembly of Faculty Senates, Dr. Hallmark took all 11 representatives to lunch.

- New Chancellor name will be announced in the next few weeks. Dr. Hallmark spoke about new legislation; including: elimination of shared governance (452, 1459); Faculty Senate should be advisory only; and curriculum decisions.
- Shared governance statement would be an A&M policy (draft begun) and Dr. Hallmark stated that work should be halted on this document.
- There was some discussion about administration turnover (with tenure) and movement back into faculty.
- Workload policy clarification is a concern for sister universities.
- Other schools are going through the same Salary Study policies.
- Now that we are officially R2, (Carnegie designation) spending and research requirements have changed (lowered).
- Other Senate Bill discussions:
 - SB 17 (origin form), exemptions may be removed. SB 18 (tenure)
 - Temple University had an issue with ICE, discussions occurred about parameters of the law.

Faculty Success Center representatives will join at the next Senate meeting.

Dr. Atinc shared University Faculty Handbook Update. Deadline to share feedback via survey is March 7.

Dr. Klypchak shared about the Student Success Meeting Update

- Dr. Dobbs shared updates at the meeting. Our student's readiness for college is connected and influenced by family socioeconomic status.
- Areas of struggle for students: submitting and understanding assignments.
 - There are coaches on campus working to assist some of these issues (encourage notifications).

- Early intervention is now being called a progress report and faculty can fill out a report on a student at any point during the semester (use the apps in MyLeo).
- Some concerns were shared about difficulty locating forms.
- Dr. Atinc will attend the March 18th meeting.

Dr. Atinc shared, Faculty Senate Awards will take place on April 22, 2025, attendance is important as last year attendance was low. She is still looking for a speaker at the event, if any Senators have a suggestion.

April 17th will be the Regents ceremony.

Coffee and Pie with President and Provost. April 2, 3:30 pm in BA 290.

Dr. Atinc reminded all Senators to share information with their department.

Dr. Ballenger motioned to end the meeting and Dr. Vaughn 2nd the motion. Meeting adjourned at 4:06pm.