

Faculty Senate Minutes

28 September 2022

Trinity 104

Senate Leadership in Attendance

Jackie Fay, Chair

Andy Milson, Chair Elect

Venkat Devarajan, Parliamentarian

Kathryn Warren, Secretary

Senators in Attendance, followed by the unit they represent

(Department for TT, College or School for NTT)

Jonathan Asaadi	Physics
Amy Austin	College of Liberal Arts
Karabi Bezboruah	Public Affairs
Alan Bowling	Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering
Lauren Brewer	College of Business
Alan Cannon	Information Systems and Operations Management
Jivas Chakravarthy	Accounting
Imre Demhardt	History
Venkat Devarajan	Electrical Engineering
Carlos Donjuan	Art and Art History
Sarah El Sayed	Criminology and Criminal Justice
Sergio Espinosa	Music
Julienne Greer	Theatre Arts and Dance
Doug Grisaffe	Marketing
Andy Hansz	Finance and Real Estate
Song Jiang	Computer Science
Theresa Jorgensen	Math
Un-Jung Kim	Earth and Environmental Sciences
Douglas Klahr	Architecture
Andrzej Korzeniowski	Math
David Levine	College of Engineering
Qing Lin	Psychology
Fred MacDonnell	Chemistry and Biochemistry
Jeff McGee	Management
Joyce Myers	College of Education
Anne Nordberg	Social Work
Taner Ozdil	Landscape Architecture
Sally Parker-Ryan	College of Liberal Arts
Mark Pellegrino	Biology
Cindy Plonien	College of Nursing and Health Innovation
Nicholas Pollack	College of Science
Stefan Romanoschi	Civil Engineering

Cristina Salinas	History
Brent Sasley	Political Science
Ioannis Schizas	Electrical Engineering
Aaron Smallwood	Economics
Amy Speier	Sociology and Anthropology
Christy Spivey	College of Business
Amy Tigner	English
Jodi Tommerdahl	Curriculum and Instruction
Nilakshi Veerabathina	College of Science
Shouyi Wang	Industrial, Manufacturing, and Systems Engineering
Jeff Witzel	Linguistics
Ling Xu	Social Work
Leaf Zhang	Education Leadership and Policy Studies

Ex officio Members in Attendance

Jennifer Cowley, President

Tamara Brown, Provost

Guests

Yolanda Bevill, VP for Marketing, Messaging, and Engagement

Alicia Gill, SAC (Staff Advisory Council) Representative

Kayunta Johnson-Winters, Associate Prof. of Chemistry and former Faculty Senate Secretary

Hanli Liu, subbing for Georgios Alexandrakis (Bioengineering)

Kate Miller, VP for Research and Innovation

Toni Sol, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs

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Call to order by Jackie Fay 2:31 pm

- A sonnet Jackie made from words and phrases spoken by Senators at the last meeting marked the call to order:

Faculty Sonnet

One day I was at a meeting
 And so I missed a meeting
 And by an election not my own
 With happystance I found myself
 Here, in the Faculty Senate.
 And I found a place where we work hard,
 Get things done and make a difference.
 A place where we share information,
 The highs of not being siloed,
 Communication. And brownies.
 With coffee and T. T and NTT. Shirts.
 A place where “we *can*” becomes “we *did*.”

A place where we can be blunt;
Because, we're faculty, we're always sharp.

- Thank you to NaKasha Brown, in Faculty Affairs, for her work on behalf of Faculty Senate (making nameplates, booking and arranging room, getting food)

Remarks from President Jennifer Cowley

- Introduces [Kate Miller, UTA's new VP for Research and Innovation](#)
 - 26 years in Texas – excited to be back
 - Willing and eager to come speak with Faculty Senate in the future
- Introduces [Yolanda Bevill, UTA's new VP of Marketing, Messaging, and Engagement](#) (aka the chief storyteller)
 - Charged with raising the profile of the university
 - Will be coming to us for stories
- Investiture coming up on Friday
 - It's an opportunity to talk about our future and where we can go together
 - After the investiture, the next week, there will be an email making an announcement about next steps the administration will be taking. In other words, the conversation about UTA's immediate future doesn't end with the investiture – there will be more communications coming
- The DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) unit on campus is being reorganized
 - Renamed Talent, Culture, and Inclusion
 - #1 thing she has heard from faculty and staff is that recruitment and retention is our biggest challenge – the reorganization will help discover what the environment's like in our departments and what approaches we are taking to recruitment and retention.
 - Provost and Vice President for Student Affairs charged with leading conversations about what diversity, equity, and inclusion look like from a curricular and co-curricular perspective.
- Legislative affairs
 - Next legislative session starting soon
 - President has asked legislature for a lot of money. Cautions us that that doesn't mean we'll get everything, but “go big or go home.” Her asks:
 - That the state fully fund the formula (the student credit hour money that we receive) to keep up with inflation.
 - Formula funded based on enrollment and student credit hours, so it's important to understand where we stand:
 - Enrollment has been declining for last two years. Down in coordinating board headcount about 1.2% (We have two enrollment counts, one in state in person and online, and the other for out-of-state online enrollment.)
 - Good news: we are up 2.4% in SCHs (student credit hours)
 - Increase in first-time college students, a 6-year trend
 - More students coming to study full time, contraction in number of part-time students (that accounts for lower headcount but higher SCHs)

- Enrollment at community colleges are down, and transfer numbers from community colleges are down.
- These trends reflect the strength of the economy.
- Concerning part is our online global count number: this fall, our total enrollment as of Census was about 44,500 students – that’s down significantly. We’re down 15% in SCHs in broader online enrollment, driven by declines in nursing programs and in education
 - Lots of possible explanations
 - It is a national trend for online education, but it’s disproportionately high for us, so we need to keep our eye on this. Need to think about what our overall online strategy is and what partnerships we’ll keep and which we’ll change.
- All over the place across the state in terms of who’s up and who’s down, but universally there’s been a surge in first-time college enrollment.
- For research funding
 - That the state grow the NRUF (National Research University Fund), which goes to Texas Tier 1 universities. This ask has some legs because all research universities across state benefit from growing this amount of money. It doesn’t just benefit UTA.
 - That the state pay off TRIP (Texas Research Incentive Program, matching funds for gifts that enhance research) – we’re owed about \$10.3 million in back state funds.
 - These are great asks because the state has a lot of one-time money right now (due to a surge in oil prices), but it won’t be there forever. They need a place to park one-time cash. Can grow the corpus of NRUF significantly.
- For more money for core research – this is an ongoing expenditure, which makes it more challenging to get
- For UTA-specific-funds
 - \$20 million to support a Maverick Energy Institute – this would build off of our fledgling Energy and Resource Engineering Program to be broadly encompassing of energy-related efforts across university. It hasn’t been fully fleshed out. Kate Miller is charged to create a plan for what this could be. Likely to get legislative support for this given Texas industries.
 - \$16 million to grow our efforts in Health Informatics and Biomanufacturing, which builds off of our existing strengths.
 - If they decide to fund buildings: \$85 million for a Fine and Performing Arts building; \$100 million for deferred maintenance

Remarks from Provost Tamara Brown

- Excited about “Talent, Culture, and Inclusion” – is giving a lot of thought to how DEI efforts can proliferate through the university. Ideas about that in the Academic Affairs space:

- Faculty Fellows program to advance diversity in leadership
- Thinking about creating a DEI-related Institute and is meeting with the leaders of the Center for African American Studies, the Center for Mexican American Studies, and the Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies program to talk about this.
 - Desire to create some kind of synergy and collaboration, centrally located on campus for greater visibility, that would reflect the university-wide commitment to DEI.
 - It would be an enhancement of integration of efforts among faculty, staff, and students to concentrate expertise around emerging areas of research.
 - Could encourage new courses and degree plans if people are thinking together in this kind of space.
 - We might also develop other centers, e.g., Centers for Asian American Studies, Native American Studies.
- Faculty diversity remains on her list – considering how the new leader of Talent, Culture, and Inclusion can be a thought partner for faculty diversity
- Curriculum – how to take it to the next level
 - At the course level (looking at a syllabus – what and who gets included, excluded) – interested in being a conversation partner with us and creating structure for continuing to improve.
 - Beyond courses to the program level, thinking about downstream outcomes – if a student graduates with X degree, what does that mean – what will they know, what can they do – and how are the outcomes promoting DEI goals?
- Annual review process – how we might add a category for DEI to the annual review process as a way for people to be able to report what they’re doing and have it factored into the way they’re reviewed and being given appropriate recognition for that work.
- Update on faculty salaries
 - Salary study for full-time faculty is underway.
 - A first draft of the salary study for TT faculty has been completed.
 - Salary study for full-time NTT faculty is underway. Hope is that that will be completed in the next few weeks.
 - Next step will be for her to meet with a subgroup of Faculty Senate to talk through the results and solicit input about how to proceed in light of what we know, and given our constraints, to address inequities and make market adjustments.
 - Conversation will probably happen in October, and then we’ll proceed from there.
 - Stresses that this will be a multi-year effort.
 - Anecdotally, we (faculty) have an idea of the magnitude of the gap between where we are and where we should be. Asks us to think about that across all of our full-time faculty and the resources we have – we won’t be able, in one fell swoop, to get everyone up to where they ought to be. An important part of this is the study, getting an appraisal of where the gaps are (they’re not everywhere), and then identifying a multi-year strategy with priorities until we get everyone to where, we agree, is the place we want them to be.
 - Careful and deliberative process, not rushing
- A celebration for NTT promotions in the works

- Goal is to have a celebration for NTT faculty that is commensurate with what is done, historically, for TT faculty – and make it “equally grand and fine.”
- Plans already underway – this year, it will be a separate ceremony; a save-the-date will be coming out soon – making that happen immediately
- Going forward, idea is to have the ceremony all at once. Inclusive celebration of faculty promotions will become normative.

Questions/Discussion

Senator: Which subgroup in the Senate will you be meeting with? Will you be meeting with the Budget Liaison committee?

Provost Brown: I don't have the list of names.

Chair: Great question. The Budget Liaison committee already has quite a workload.

Senator, following up: Maybe there could be *volunteers* from the groups, if they have the desire?

Chair: Good idea. I will see if there's time to add that idea to the process.

Senator: Thank you for doing the salary study, which is well overdue. Could you explain, briefly, what kind of criteria you're taking into account – gender, race, subject matter? Are there other factors involved?

President: We had our HR team pull data on all our faculty and their characteristics. We gave it to the University Analytics team, and there are protocols for how to conduct these kinds of studies. Discipline (linked to a CIP code), rank, number of years in rank, race, gender, ethnicity – and we have market data from public R1 institutions (as comparison group). We then make a prediction based on what we can see in our comparison data – where should you be? How close are you to where we predict you should be? What we know from the preliminary data is that our salaries are about 97% of what the salaries overall would be on that public R1 list. What that signals to me is that we don't necessarily have a comprehensive tenure-track compensation problem – we have targeted areas where there are real challenges. We need to dig in more – bigger question is are we compensating fairly based on race, gender, and ethnicity. We're trying to find the best way to get at that.

Senator: Thank you for planning an NTT promotion celebration.

Senator: We used to have a third-year reapportionment of faculty work: TT faculty in their third year, if they receive an unconditional pass, they get one semester off from teaching. This helped faculty have time with their research. But it was taken away. It was a great tool for recruitment. Requesting that you consider discussing reinstating it.

Provost: Absolutely. I'll have a conversation with Deans and Department Chairs about it.

Senator: When will we know the results of the asks made of the legislature? And when will things start happening?

President: Right now is the pre-legislative work. The legislature meets in the spring. I'll be in Austin once a week from January through March and will be telling our story and asking for support. The timing of when they'll make decisions is hard to say – sometime in spring – and that money becomes available for the next fiscal year. There are some different pieces and parts. For example, for the formula, they count our enrollments effective April 15. That money then comes to us the following fall. So let's say we get our \$85 million for the Fine and Performing Arts building, that money will be allocated the following fall, but we can't build a building in a single fall. We have a few things we're going to be looking at – we're launching our Campus Master Planning process, which will help us to determine locations for facilities. In the last legislative session (two years ago) we got money for a Life Sciences building. Planning is happening now, construction next year. So we're talking about something like 5 years from now before you'd see a new building.

Provost: Just to add: formula funding is on a two-year cycle, and this is a count year for us. How we do in enrollment really matters on count years because it's the number that determines allocation of state funds. We live with that for two years. Anything you can do to make sure that we're enrolling at high numbers matters in a count year so that disbursements are as high as possible.

Senator: I'm thrilled to hear Provost Brown talk about a central space for a new Institute. Visibility matters. I'd advocated previously to get the Office of Sustainability at the CAPPA building on street level for that exposure, so I get it. I urge you to consider the proposed Center for the Earth-Human System in Curriculum [an initiative authored by this Senator; the proposal is currently with the President and Provost] as being part of the Institute you're thinking about. It would bring visibility to our environmental climate change initiatives and help voices from underserved communities to be heard, which has a curricular and a reputational aspect.

President: There had been plans to locate multicultural space as part of the renovation expansion of the University Center. It was taken to a vote by our students, and it lost by 6 votes. There were a lot of contentious issues going on in the student body at the time the vote was held. When can we revisit that vote? Can we go back next year? Or should we think differently about the project? We don't have a lot of space in the center of campus, unfortunately (the UC was a good spot).

Senator: Are adjunct faculty being included in the salary study?

Provost: It's on our radar. We're doing several salary studies, but today I talked about those that pertain to full-time faculty, for this audience. But we're also looking at staff, grad students, and adjunct salaries – there are multiple layers to this, and we can't do it all at once. We're starting with staff and full-time faculty.

President: We've allocated 1% of our salaries to be set aside for a market pool to be divided between staff and faculty. The faculty study is easiest to do because we have the most robust data to work with. The staff side is happening in two pieces. We're looking at highest turnover

positions and where we can make immediate impacts for better retention. That will be rolled out at the same time as the faculty piece in terms of announcing the changes we're making. And then there's a longer-term staff salary study looking at pay-bands and classifications, and where we need to be, longer term. To set realistic expectations: somebody might get a big raise, but most people will not – the committee being convened will have to think about how to invest the money available in order to create the most significant impact.

Senator: How fresh is the R1 salary data? If inflation is 8-9%, and you're using data from two years ago . . . it might be off.

Provost: You have to take a snapshot in time. Implementation will be done on the basis of a new run, a more up to date snapshot. We'll use the most recent data that we have.

President: The database we're using is 2021-22 data. It's almost current. That's the database we're comparing against. We took a snapshot of faculty salaries this summer. Your point is well taken, but it's the best data we have available.

Senator: Surveys show that graduate student support is a priority for us – what pot is that in, in terms of getting money from the legislature?

President: Grad student credit hours are weighted at a higher level, and the money from them goes into the general fund budget. We've heard you loud and clear about graduate student funding. Stay tuned.

Senator: Two presidents ago there was a big push to increase enrollment, but then we were told that there's a switch at which increasing credit hours doesn't matter anymore. Is that true?

President: Not exactly. It's just that the count happens every other year.

Minutes from May 4 and August 31, 2022, meetings approved.

Remarks from Toni Sol, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs

- Fall Faculty and Associates meeting is October 11 at 4:30 pm.
- We have a ROTA winner to celebrate! Iya Price, Assistant Professor of Instruction in Modern Languages
- This announcement was followed by some playful back and forth about which department has won the most ROTAs. Among those who piped up, MODL has 5, History has 4, and English has 6 (a count that includes one Professor Emeritus and one professor who is now at another institution – just for the record).
- NTT promotion dinner will be the week of November 14-19, but a room hasn't been reserved yet. When it has, the save-the-date will be sent out.
- New faculty and families invited to the zoo – first come, first served, space for 60 people – new faculty should respond soon because space is limited.
- 51 CPEs (comprehensive periodic reviews) this year. Refreshers on how to use Digital Measures (DM) available during two training sessions on October 10 and 13; you can register on the [DM page on the Faculty Affairs webpage](#).

- Opening faculty reviews that are due Nov. 1 during the first week of October. That will be the CPE, tenure track years 4+, and all tenured faculty.
- Retirement account problem has been fixed

Senator: Is it possible to go half-time and keep tenure?

Toni: No. You're asking about phased retirement. You give up your tenure and you work half time for half pay for 1-3 years. You have to apply for it, and the Dean has to approve it. It's not automatic. HR is preparing an information page on it and with a copy of the contract.

Senator: Are full-time NTT annual reviews being done in DM this year?

Answer: Yes, if chairs can get their clean up their titles. We have it planned. It will be opened and then departments can decide whether to do it in fall or spring. There will be trainings to learn how to do it. It shouldn't be that different from what is done now. You run your report and then the change will be that it goes through workflow.

Presentation by Amber Smallwood, Assistant Vice Provost for Academic Planning and Policy

- Dr. Smallwood gave a presentation to update the Senate on the eLearning Transformational Model project, which wraps in December.
- She invites us to attend the eLearning eVent on October 25, 9-11, in the Central Library's 6th floor atrium
- The project has a lot of goals/outcomes
 - Developing consistent processes and policies for approval of online courses
 - Developing accessible platforms for colleges and schools
 - Embedding certificates into degree programs (microcredentials)
 - Creating high-quality digital course content
 - To repurpose or supplement existing resources and skills
 - To support "upskilling" and "reskilling"
- She worked with 4 colleges and 1 school to
 - Develop and launch 6 different certificate programs, gathering lessons and recommendations from across colleges and divisions
 - The Transformational Model project team followed those certificate programs – when problems came up, they launched a project to address the problem
 - What they discovered will inform future programs, serving as the foundation for transformational learning at UTA.
- Working on getting new technology in classrooms on campus
- For help figuring out how to market programs, they are contracting with a marketing vendor for one year.
- They have developed an online orientation for new students coming in online because there is a need for it at the UTA (not just the program) level, focusing on compliance
- They have also developed a student readiness assessment to determine whether students are ready to learn online
- Phase 1 of the project is supporting faculty; Phase 2 is reaching and supporting learners
- See the [UTA eLearning website](#); the projects are listed on the righthand side

- Ongoing discussions about sustainability and scalability
- Growing interest in flexibility
- Would love to welcome a Faculty Senate member to the eLearning steering committee

Five Things Faculty Should Know about . . .

- This new series invites VPs and leaders of non-academic leaders on campus to visit the Senate and tell us about what they do.
- In future, the Chair and Vice Chair will be collecting questions from Senators, but this time they generated them themselves.

First in the Series: UTA Athletics, with [UTA's new Director of Athletics, Jon Fagg](#)

- Coming from the University of Arkansas, where he was Deputy Athletic Director and an active ex officio member of their Faculty Senate, which he believes is an important body – so much so that he sought an invitation to come speak with us.
- His father was a football coach, and he has spent time at a wide variety of institutions, including (but not limited to) Arizona, Davidson, Mars Hill University, Arkansas, and NC State.
- “I love the idea of making the impossible possible,” he says.

Five questions were posed to Mr. Fagg

In what ways does Athletics further the mission of UTA?

He thinks athletics is a thread that can tie the institution together. It's an important piece of the puzzle that makes us great. It can be the thread that ties a lot of disparate things together. It can be a source of pride for us and sometimes is something we have to defend. He hired a football coach at Arkansas who went on to lose 18 SEC football games in a row – he had to defend that a little bit. But athletics should be an enrollment driver. It's also about making memories. The beauty of the event is in the memories that get made, not the win or the loss.

UTA is the largest and most highly ranked of all the universities in the WAC (Western Athletic Conference), many of which are R3 and some of which are regional universities. Do we have long term plans to move to a conference with a membership that matches UTA's overall institutional status?

Not any time soon. We are in a good position in the WAC as the flagship institution in the conference. The conference office is moving to Arlington.

What should the role of faculty be in relation to athletics?

Working with them as ambassadors of the institution. Our student athletes wear the brand differently from anyone else on campus. Understanding that that's what they're doing – they're not goofing off, they're spending a lot of time and energy. Understanding that when they have conflicts with their class schedules, they're not just being flippant.

How are the costs of the Athletics program funded?

By a combination of institutional support, tickets, private donations, and business sponsorships.

What are your goals as AD?

To continue to graduate students, first and foremost. To produce incredible alumni that represent our institution well. He wants athletics to be an integral part of the campus community and a source of pride for UTA. He wants us to be as financially independent as possible. (Being totally self-sufficient is unusual – maybe 12 schools.) He also wants to win a lot. 😊

Questions/Discussion

Senator: Please resist the siren call to establish a football team. We have to pay attention to conversations happening around the safety of football. If you get pressure to reestablish football, please resist.

Jon Fagg: My whole life has been driven by football. The President told me that a major question I'll get is are we going to add football – and the answer is no (not now). I didn't come here to add football. There's not a core need for us.

Senator: The Dallas Wings, a WNBA team, play on campus at College Park Center.

Jon Fagg: Yes, there's value in the credibility that comes from professional sports – it's wonderful that they play in our arena.

Senator: Can you give us an idea of the percentages of the funding?

Jon Fagg: I don't know off the top of my head. I'd venture to say that well over 50% is from institutional funds. Probably 60/40.

Senator: I was contacted by one of the recruited players. He wants to do research. After a year he'll be an assistant for the team. How much time will he have to do his research?

Jon Fagg: Depends on the sport and the area of research. Individual athletes (e.g., track, tennis) can juggle demands better than a team player can. But yes, they're allowed to, and we encourage it.

Senator: We don't always know who the athletes in our classroom are. Sometimes we get messages from athletics asking for their grades. I never pay attention because I have no sports background. I heard from a student once that our professors should be proud of us. And that's right! But I don't know who the athletes are! How can I figure out who they are?

Jon Fagg: I will encourage them to come in, introduce themselves, say hello.

Senator, following up: Maybe some get together between student athletes and faculty. I'd like to get to know what their needs are.

Jon Fagg: We have a student-athlete advisory council – maybe they need to say hello too.

Senator: Is it a *possibility* that we get a football team? If the stars aligned? Financially possible?

Jon Fagg: Yes, it's a possibility. It's expensive, but not as expensive as some people think.

Senator: What's your perspective on student-athlete compensation?

Jon Fagg: I could talk about that for days. I am a pioneer in name-image-likeness. I love it. But I do not believe student athletes should get paid to play their sport. Name-image-likeness – that term means that student athletes can make money using themselves. In the past, they weren't allowed to do that. Now they can (e.g., write a book, when before they couldn't make money using their name). The center for the University of Kentucky basketball team has made \$2 million. For the first time in history of NCAA, student athletes can go to school, play sports, and work at the same time – that's incredible. I think that's good.

Senator: The President was asking for money for new buildings. The indoor pool needs to be updated – I'd like to convey the idea that updating something of the existing sports buildings would help students and faculty is helpful.

Senator: I did sports in my college years, and I felt a personal honor being able to do that. I'm interested in hearing your thoughts or seeing some data about what our regional/local advantages are, being close to an entertainment district. Would that help in terms of funding? Could we highlight other cross-cultural opportunities, maybe with kinesiology, nursing?

Jon Fagg: Athletics is an integral part of campus. There's equipment that it would be beneficial for us to have access to that isn't being granted. We have to pay for it. But let's use athletes as part of the research. There's a disconnect on campus with athletics – it's not understood as having an integral place.

Faculty are invited to submit questions for visitors in the “Five Things Faculty Should Know about . . .” series. Upcoming visitors: in November, John Davidson, VP for Financial Affairs and Chief Financial Officer, to discuss UTA's finances and budget; in December, Jeff Jeter, VP for Government Relations, to discuss government relations and the legislature.

Breakout groups meet to discuss Senate planning priorities at the college level. The idea is to pull committee charges from these brainstorming sessions.

Abbreviated Chair's Report (Jackie Fay)

- Investiture procession on September 30 – please join it! Be at College Park at 2.
- Ongoing leadership searches
 - VP for Talent, Culture, and Inclusion – Jackie Fay is on this search committee, which is an internal search
 - Dean for the College of Liberal Arts – Amy Austin, Sergio Espinosa, Andy Milson, and Kathryn Warren are Senators on the search committee

- “Chat with the Chairs”: Jackie and Andy are having office hours
 - Andy and Jackie: in-person or on Teams, Mondays 1-2 in Trinity Hall 102
 - Jackie: On Teams, Tuesdays 11-2
 - Andy: On Teams, Wednesdays 12-1

New Business

Senator: Would it be possible for events with campus-wide appeal if there could be something like a UTA calendar so that we don’t run into multiple scheduling problems? Is this possible? Can we make it so that everyone has access to it?

Chair: We will investigate.

Adjourned at 5:00 pm

Next Meeting: November 2, 2022