# Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

February 10, 2023 UC 251 and Zoom

**Invitees:** Dr. Emily Cutrer (absent), Dr. Melinda Arnold (absent), Ms. Kathryn Montgomery (absent), Dr. Corrine Hinton, Dr. Brian Matthews (Zoom), Dr. Craig M Nakashian, Dr. Brian Billings (Zoom), Dr. Vikram Bhadauria (absent), Dr. Joy Cooper, Dr. Rebeca Cooper (Zoom), Dr. Kelly Cordray (Zoom), Dr. Sheila Moore (Zoom), Dr. Lisa Myers, Dr. James Nguyen, Dr. Godpower Okereke, Dr. Sebastian Schmidl (Zoom), Dr. Faycal Znidi

I.	Call to Order at 1:35 pm
II.	President's Report
III.	Provost and VPAA's Report
IV.	DEIB Director's Report
V.	Approval of Minutes from 12/09/2022
VI.	President of Faculty Senate Report
VII.	Committee Reports & Business Items  a. Curriculum Committee
	<ul> <li>b. Core Curriculum Assessment</li></ul>
	c. Educational Technology
	d. Academic Rules & Procedures

ii. Recommendation to revise UR 21.08.01.H1 (*Granting of Emeritus Status to Faculty*) to clarify the procedure on nominating a university President

# for *emeritus* status (**consent agenda**)

- iii. March meeting will be the 24<sup>th</sup>, not 31<sup>st</sup>.
- - i. Recommendation for the VPAA to sign the Texas College Bridge MOU (consent agenda)
  - ii. Recommendation to amend the Academic Appeals Process
    - 1. See attachment 4.
    - 2. Dr. Okereke moved, seconded by Dr. Matthews. Motion to approve passed 13-0-0.
- - i. No report.
- - i. Recommendation to approve two FRED proposals (S. Chen for \$3000; C. Hinton for \$1000) (consent agenda)
  - ii. March 31 is next meeting; submit proposals by March 20.
- - i. No report.

# VIII. Ad hoc Committee Reports

- - i. After receiving notification that no faculty submitted letters of interest for the OTAFA Director position starting with the spring 2023 semester, I requested from Dr. Arnold an opportunity develop and submit an FY24 budget request on OTAFA's behalf. This way, we should be able to locate a director to help start up the office for AY23-24, funding would be secured. This budget proposal aligned with the collaboratives Year 1 funding proposal request. That budget was delivered and then presented to the Academic Affairs Budget Advisory Council (AABC) on January 24, 2023. Dr. Arnold has also requested an opportunity to meet with the OTAFA collaborative this spring, so we are in the process of setting up that meeting.
  - ii. Meeting to be held Feb 21st with Dr. Arnold to discuss.
- - i. No meeting since December; reach out to members of the committee to offer suggestions.
  - ii. Question- will statistical analysis be performed on results from existing document and new document?
- c. Developing No Confidence Vote Language......Dr. Brian Matthews
  - i. Proposed language developed and sent to Rules & Procedures committee for suggestions and approval.

## IX. Unfinished Business

- X. New Business
  - a. Faculty Performance Evaluation Form and Guidelines.....Dr. Corrine Hinton
    - i. Recommendation to amend the 2022 faculty performance evaluation

timeline to the following:

- 1. Faculty submit their supporting documentation and self-evaluation to the Department Chair and Dean (from *Last Friday in February* to *Last Friday in March*)
- 2. Faculty Members meet with their Department Chair/Dean to review their performance evaluation (from *Second Friday in April* to *First Friday in May*)
- 3. Submitted to Provost office for review & approval (from *Last Friday in April* to *Last Friday in May*)
- ii. Further discussion ensued on broader changes to the 2023-2024 faculty evaluation form and process- remanded to Faculty Welfare committee.
- b. Undergraduate students in graduate courses......Dr. Angie Parmentier-Sikorski
  - i. Motion made to streamline the process for undergraduates enrolling in graduate courses. Dr. Myers moved, seconded by Dr. Okereke. Motion to approve passed 11-0-0.
- c. Promoting faculty scholarship/achievements......Dr. Craig M Nakashian
  - i. Provided an update on efforts to highlight faculty achievements on the website and in community-facing communications moving forward.
- d. Selection of the Quality Enhancement Program is the primary responsibility of faculty in the SACSCOC reaffirmation.
  - i. Will solicit a faculty senator to chair the QEP committee.
- e. General discussion on whether to eliminate college structures in favor of departmental structures reporting to a single dean/administrator.
- XI. Meeting adjourned at 3:24 pm
- XII. Next Regular Meeting Friday, March 10, 2023 at 1:30pm in UC 251 (Zoom option available)

From: Ms. Kathryn Montgomery, Director – Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

Date: February 10, 2023 Re: DEIB Report

Since I am out of the office and unable to attend the Faculty Senate meeting in person, I am submitting the DEIB update via written report for February 2023. Following are key milestones to note from my Office.

- The Viewfinder Campus Climate survey was sent to all full-time and part-time faculty, staff; and students on February 1, 2023, as planned. The survey will remain open until March 1<sup>st</sup>. In the meantime, Viewfinder will continue to send weekly reminders to those who haven't submitted a survey. I am also receiving weekly preliminary survey results.
- The anonymous survey responses will be reported back to me about a week after the survey closes on March 1. However, I do realize there are some concerns that faculty members who work in small departments could be identified by their answers to the demographic data requested in the survey. To clarify, the survey responses will not be shared outside of the Office of DEIB until the data has been reviewed by Jill Whittington (Compliance) and I to identify instances where an employee could logically be identified by their responses. If so, we will roll up that data to the highest level within the department or area where we can assure anonymity for individuals.
- I believe the Viewfinder Climate Survey insights will be helpful information for our incoming President to receive a recent, detailed assessment about the climate of inclusion, engagement, and overall satisfaction among constituencies on campus.
- The DEIB Committee and subcommittees are continuing to work collectively and individually toward our Inclusive Excellence objectives. For example, the Cultural Events and Celebrations subcommittee, chaired by Dr. Craig Nakashian, launched a successful Chinese Lunar New Year Celebration in January, quickly followed planning for a robust series of events to celebrate Black History Month, some of which are already underway. The planning for Women's History Month is has also started, and Craig and other Events subcommittee members are collaborating across the university to offer relevant programs and opportunities to celebrate during March.. Enhancing our cultural celebrations through various programs and events is one of our DEIB Strategic goals under Inclusive Excellence.

If you have questions or concerns about the climate survey or any other DEIB issue, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Thank you,

Kathryn

Kathryn Montgomery, CDP

Director

Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

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#### FACULTY SENATE PRESIDENT REPORT

Dr. Corrine Hinton 02/10/2023

For a more robust accounting of our fall senate business, please see the Fall Senate Review document emailed to all faculty on January 24, 2023 (and included in this month's minutes).

# I. "Between Meeting" Business

a. An *ad hoc* Faculty Complaint and Appeal committee was established to investigate a complaint that arrived 01 Dec 2022. As of today (2/10/2023), that committee filed both of its reports (one per complaint) to Dr. Cutrer on January 30<sup>th</sup> and in accordance with the deadline Dr. Cutrer provided to that committee. Per our policy, Dr. Cutrer has 10 working days to provide a written response to the complainants.

# II. Report from University Leadership Team Spring Planning Meeting

The University Leadership Team (ULT) met for a spring planning meeting/retreat on January 11, 2023 at Farmers Bank & Trust. The meeting included a review and discussion of the team's commitments, a review of each unit's university goals (as established in PAC in September *prior* to the formation of ULT), and a review of forthcoming goals for each division.

Of note, Dr. Arnold shared the report compiled by Ruffalo Noel Levitz, LLC who met with a variety of university constituents, including department chairs, in the fall. I noted that the findings that RNL generated about the department chair meeting failed to account for many of the items shared by Drs. Matthews and Nakashian in their joint report from December. I forwarded that report to Dr. Arnold, so she could incorporate these notes as part of the objectives/goals table that she and Toney Favors constructed to address the concerns outlined in the RNL report. Dr. Arnold intends to share the RNL report and this table of objectives/goals through the VPAA's office sometime soon.

# Texas A&M University - Texarkana Faculty Senate Fall 2022 Activities Report

This report contains the following information:

- (1) a review of fall Senate business including issues/concerns remanded to Senate committees, Senate committee reports, and recommendations from the fall,
- (2) updates on unresolved/continuous issues/concerns as expressed by faculty,
- (3) a report on department Senator attendance,
- (4) what's on the agenda for spring 2023, and
- (5) a note from me.

Readers are strongly encouraged to review carefully the <u>Faculty Senate meeting minutes</u>, available on the Faculty Senate webpage. These minutes also include copies of the *Faculty Senate President Report* for each month, documenting "between meeting" business/votes, reports from the Senate Leadership, University Leadership Team, and Council/Senate leadership meetings, and other items of interest.

# REVIEW OF FALL SENATE BUSINESS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Faculty Senate oversaw the election of faculty to the following committees:

- Student Fee Advisory Committee (Dr. David Yells)
- Academic Affairs Budget Advisory Council (AABC) (Dr. Kevin Ells, Nicole Fant, Dr. Nelson Irizarry, Fred Norton, Dr. Luz Mary Rincon, Dr. Angela Sikorski)

## Issues/Concerns Remanded to Senate Committees

- Workload document revisions remanded to Rules & Procedures (9/9)
- Commencement honors/societies designations to Academic Standards (9/9)
- Senate involvement in/oversight of Developmental Education concerns brought forward to Curriculum Committee (10/14)
- Faculty Morale Survey revision and redistribution remanded to Faculty Welfare 10/14
- Recommendation to develop No Confidence Vote procedures as part of Senate Constitution (vote to create an ad hoc committee to draft a proposal for R&P; Dr. Matthews elected chair; 10/14)
- Recommendation to revive faculty evaluations of Deans and establish review of Department Chairs to Rules & Procedures (10/14)
- Recommendation to help clarify procedure and process for the Enrollment Appeals Committee & Academic Appeals Process approved last year, remanded to Academic Standards (11/11)
- Recommendation to review electronic portfolio/dossier application (e.g., Interfolio) for faculty use remanded to Educational Technology from Senate President (11/23)

Summary of Committee Reports

Committee Name	Chair	Sept. 9+	Oct. 14	Nov. 11	Dec. 9
Academic Rules &	Craig Nakashian				Meeting
Procedures		N/A	R3-5	R <sub>7</sub>	dates for spring
				•	1/27,

					2/24,
					3/31, 4/21
Academic Standards	Lisa Myers				Update
				Report	on
		N/A	NR	(see <u>11/11</u>	appeals
				<u>minutes</u> )	process
					(see <u>12/9</u>
					<u>minutes</u> )
Budget Committee	Jim Nguyen	N/A	NR	R8	Same as R8
Core Curriculum	Kelly Cordray				Request
Assessment					to
		27/4			review
		N/A	NR	NR	Core
					Process
					to Faculty
Curriculum Committee	Godpower	N/A	R6	NR	Faculty NR
Curriculum Committee	Okereke	IN/A	KU	INK	INK
Educational Technology	Faycal Znidi			Arranging	Report
				meeting	filed (see
		N/A	NR	with CIO	<u>12/9</u>
				to discuss	minutes)
				needs	
Faculty Welfare	Joy Cooper				Update
		D.T. / A	NID	D 0 D	on
		N/A	NR	R9 & R10	Survey Monkey
					& R12
FRED	Rebeca Cooper		Meeting		Q 102
	1	N/A	held to	NR	R13
			discuss		
			timelines		
DEI (ad hoc)	Brian Matthews & Doug Julien	Rı	N/A	N/A	N/A
OTAFA (ad hoc)	Corrine Hinton	NR	Meeting	R11	Meeting
,			to be		to be
			held		held
			10.25 to		with Dr.
			discuss		Arnold
			spring		12/13 to
			funding		discuss
			proposal		spring
					funding
Faculty Committee 0	Indian (C)	n.			proposal
Faculty Complaints & Appeals (ad hoc)	Julien (Sept)	R2			#
Course Evaluation Review	Vikram Bhadauria				Meeting
(ad hoc)					held 12/8
		N/A (est.	NR	NR	to
		9/19)			discuss
					revisions

No Confidence Language (ad hoc)	Brian Matthews				Meeting held;
		N/A (est. 10/14)	N/A (est. 10/14)	NR	expect draft language Feb.
					2023

<sup>\*</sup>NR = no report filed/no recommendations

## Recommendations

- 1. Recommendation to dissolve the DEI ad hoc committee and, in return, ask DEIB Director, Kathryn Montgomery to offer a standing report to Senate each meeting (approved, 9/9)
- 2. Revisions to UR 32.01.01.Ho.01 (*Complaint and Appeal Procedures for Faculty Members*) to clarify timeline (remanded to Rules & Procedures, 9/9)
- 3. Revisions to UR 12.01.99.H1 (*Extension of the Tenure Probationary Period*; approved 10/14)
- 4. Revisions to UR 12.01.99.H2 (*Academic Freedom and Responsibility*; approved 10/14)
- 5. Revisions to UP 32.01.01.Ho.01 (*Complaint and Appeal Procedures for Faculty*; approved 10/14)
- 6. Faculty requests to add EL designations for Experiential Learning courses will be approved through Curriculum Committee as the QEP Committee is now defunct (10/14)
- 7. Recommendation for revisions to UP 12.06.99.Ho.01 (*Post-Tenure Review*; approved 11/11)
- 8. Recommendations in Response to the Faculty Salary Study (see <u>Update on Unresolved/Ongoing Issues</u>, *Faculty Salary Study & Equity Adjustments* for details)
- 9. Request to purchase a Survey Monkey license to facilitate the faculty morale survey in response to concerns about Google forms security and confidentiality (approved 11/11)
- 10. Request to take up issue concerning department chair and program coordinator responsibilities, selection and evaluation processes, and compensation document (see <a href="Update on Unresolved/Ongoing Issues">Update on Unresolved/Ongoing Issues</a>, <a href="Department Chair/Program Coordinator Document">Document</a>)
- 11. Proposed usage of the Provost's \$40,000 spring start-up funding (approved 11/11)
- 12. Faculty Welfare proposed Dr. Craig Nakashian as the 2022-2023 nominee for the Minnie J. Piper foundation award (approved 12/9)
- 13. Recommendation to reject proposal by FRED (approved 12/9)

# <u>UPDATE ON UNRESOLVED/ONGOING ISSUES</u>

## Credentialing

Senate has been involved in ongoing discussions with Dr. Arnold regarding the concerns and frustrations many faculty have expressed about credentialing: credentialing new or potential faculty, the re/de-credentialing of existing faculty, and a lack of faculty

<sup>+</sup>Committee members were reviewed/approved during this meeting

<sup># -</sup> new ad hoc committee was formed in early December to investigate a complaint filed 12/1/2022

empowerment and transparency in the process and in credentialing determinations.<sup>1</sup>

# The Credentialing Template

After a Senate leadership meeting with Dr. Arnold in September, Dr. Arnold shared with faculty a template of terminal degree listings (via email to all faculty on 9/12/2022) and requested that faculty and chairs work together to submit revisions (if requested) to this document no later than December 9, 2022. Our understanding is that these changes would be reviewed between Dr. Arnold and members of IER and that faculty/chairs would hear back on any issues on their submitted changes. I sent an email on 12/2/2022 reminding department chairs of the upcoming deadline to submit changes.

At the Senate leadership meting with Dr. Arnold on January 18, 2023, Dr. Matthews and I requested an update on any discussions or progress regarding the proposed changes. At that time, Dr. Arnold indicated that two departments had not yet submitted their template changes and, as a result, she had not moved forward with initiating the review with IER. **Dr. Matthews and I are following up with the chairs of the two departments whose templates are outstanding** to request that they comply so the rest of us can see some movement.

# Current Credentialing

While the credentialing template is, ideally, supposed to assist the university with making credentialing decisions moving forward, our current credentialing process is also fraught with difficulties. Even as recently as our January leadership meeting, Dr. Matthews and I reiterated that three notable gaps continue to plague us with the current credentialing process: (1) the iSite request only permits us to attach transcripts and not any additional documentation/justification when attempting to credential faculty, (2) when IER determines a faculty does not possess the credentials to teach a course, we receive no justification or substantiation as to why that faculty was not credentialed, and (3) faculty can be pre-credentialed to teach a course (informally, for example) but then a determination is made later that they cannot, in fact, teach the course they were pre-credentialed to teach. Dr. Arnold has made note of these concerns and has offered to address them.

While our faculty broadly remain divided on this issue (that is, who holds/should hold ultimate authority in credentialing decisions), I remain adamant that the disciplinary faculty hold the greatest amount of expertise in determining who should be teaching what to whom within their disciplines and the subspecialties within those disciplines.

# Faculty Morale Survey

Some folks have been asking for an update on the relaunch of the faculty morale survey. While some may have automatically assumed we would just relaunch the survey again this year, as with all business through Senate, the issue itself required a vote. We undertook that issue during the October 14 Senate meeting and remanded it to the Faculty Welfare committee for discussion and recommendation. That body agreed to a relaunch of the survey, while also recognizing the need to revise some questions and change the delivery platform from Google forms (some faculty felt it was less secure/confidential and did not feel comfortable answering) to Survey Monkey. Senate voted at the November 11 meeting to approve the committee's request to spend money on a Survey Monkey license. After working, back and forth, with the VPAA's administrative assistant (the keeper of Senate's budget), **this license was finally procured in January 2023**. Therefore, we anticipate more progress in getting the survey built in Survey Monkey and distributed this spring 2023

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Credentialing concerns have also been voiced through the Cross-College Chairs Council (the collection of all department chairs) and were shared with the representatives from Ruffalo Noel Levitz (RNL) during their site visit on November 30, 2022.

# **Faculty Performance Evaluation Form**

At the end of the previous Senate year (May 2022), the faculty evaluation form had not yet been developed. While revisions to the guidelines and procedures had been reviewed and finalized through Rules & Procedures, the actual creation of the form we use to complete our annual performance evaluations had not been completed. When it was clear that the work would need to be undertaken over the summer, I agreed to take that on as incoming President.

I worked with Linda Scott, our former Instructional Technologist, during May to outline the details of the fillable PDF form we would need. Sometime later, Linda left the University. I was offered another IT contact with whom I could work with on this project in September. That IT person never replied to my request for support. So, I worked on the form myself in early fall. During that time, I raised the concerns I was experiencing with creating the form to the department chairs group and solicited input on what kind of form faculty wanted. They shared that faculty found a fillable PDF *more* cumbersome and wanted, instead, a Word-enabled fillable document. I then designed a Word-enabled form with protected fields (to ensure certain aspects of the review document could not be changed).

In November and December, I asked several faculty and a few department chairs/program coordinators to pilot test the new form (and the accompanying completion instructions/process) to see if it worked for them. I received feedback, and one issue raised to the level of requiring Dr. Arnold's input. That input was received in January 2023 and final revisions have been made. The new form will be presented to Faculty Senate for approval at the February meeting and then forwarded to the Provost. I'm happy to share the draft (unapproved) version of this form with anyone interested.

# Faculty Salary Study & Equity Adjustments

As you may know, Senate hosted a special meeting on October 25, 2022 for the Provost to share the results of the Faculty Salary Study (aka "the CUPA report"). This presentation included a three-year implementation plan to make systematic adjustments to impacted faculty. *The Provost has continued to reiterate that no adjustments to faculty salaries will be made until after the Staff Salary Study is complete.* During my most recent conversation with Staff Council leadership (January 2023), the Staff Salary Study is slated for completion by mid-February. We continue to express concern about the amount of funding available for equity adjustments as well as the tethering of merit raises (not just for faculty but for staff, as well) to the revenue from enrollment. As of yet, no alternative structure has been developed, and the next benchmark will be to see how spring revenue translates into any available funding for merit raises.

# IT Needs/Concerns

After hearing about multiple IT-related concerns from faculty, I brought forward a list of concerns and presented it to the University Leadership Team meeting on November 1, 2022. This list was then shared by CFO, Jeff Hinton with CIO, Aaron Harding. Aaron Harding offered an email response on November 10 and then an email update on November 30 [see **Appendix A**]. Aaron has indicated he intends to meet both with the Senate Educational Technology Committee as well as with departments to identify additional areas of concern for improvement. We look forward to receiving updates on any progress (or lack thereof)

during the spring.

# Department Chair/Program Coordinator Document

Before I outline Senate's involvement in this issue, let me put aside my Faculty Senate President hat and put on my Department Chair hat. My department chair involvement/knowledge is outlined in a different font to separate it from when and how Faculty Senate became involved.

In April, several of the department chairs co-drafted a proposal to Dr. Arnold regarding compensation, department administrative support, and other issues preventing department chairs from doing their best work. This action led to the formation of the Cross-College Chairs Council (CCCC), encouraging the department chairs to come together, share ideas and opportunities, voice concerns to identify mutual areas of interest, and help enact some decision making to address issues raised. That proposal led to meetings with Dr. Arnold, beginning in May 2022, to discuss the role of department chairs [see **Appendix B** for Dr. Arnold's synthesis of this first meeting.]. From this meeting came her request for the group to take up a broader outline of department chair and program coordinator responsibilities, selection and evaluation processes, and compensation arrangements. The initial document came from Dr. Arnold (see **Appendix C**).

Throughout these meetings (May – October), Dr. Arnold and any present representative department chairs met to discuss and make revisions to the department chair and program coordinator document. Throughout these meetings, Dr. Arnold and other faculty expressed the need to communicate the contents to their respective faculty and program coordinators to solicit feedback.

At the November 11 Faculty Senate meeting, Joy Cooper, Faculty Welfare Committee Chair, brought forward concerns that the Department Chair/Program Coordinator document did not align with the process CBET faculty had outlined and agreed upon in October. After not seeing resolutions to the issues Dr. Cooper expressed through the CCCC group, she and other faculty raised concerns about feeling left out of the process. I discussed these concerns with Dr. Arnold, who was supportive of pausing progress to invite more folks into the conversation (which she assumed had been done throughout the previous 6 months of CCCC discussions). On December 14, I sent an email to Faculty Senate(see **Appendix D**) calling for a vote on hosting some listening sessions and collecting faculty feedback via a secured online form. This vote passed, and faculty were informed of the issues and listening sessions via email on January 6, 2023.

Senate hosted two listening sessions, on January 10 and January 13, and collected feedback through an electronic form on university website through January 22. This feedback was then collected and forwarded, by email, to both members of the Cross-College Chairs Council and Dr. Arnold (see **Appendix E**) on January 23. Dr. Arnold offered a response to this feedback (**Appendix F**).

# **REPORT ON SENATOR ATTENDANCE**

Knowing when and how often your department and college-at-large senators are attending Faculty Senate meetings can be critical to determining how much information you might expect from them as well as how engaged they might be in the business of Faculty Senate

(conversations, voting, etc.). So, here's a look (note: Senate leadership is bolded)...

Name	Representing	Sept. 9	Oct. 14	Nov. 11	Dec. 9
Brian Billings	CASE Senator-at-Large	IP	IP	IP	IP
Vikram Bhadauria	Computer Sci, Math, MIS	Z	IP	A	A
Joy Cooper	CBET Senator-at-Large	Z	IP	Z	Z
Rebeca Cooper	Ed Leadership & Instruc Tech	IP	Z	IP	Z
Kelly Cordray	TPPE	Z	Z	Z	A
<b>Corrine Hinton</b>	Arts, Comm, Media & Engl	IP	IP	IP+	IP
Brian Matthews	Mgmt, Mktg, GBus, & Sp Ch	A	IP	IP	IP
Sheila Moore	Nursing, Kines., and Soc Wk	IP	Z	Z	Z
Lisa Myers	BAAS, BGS, MSIS	IP	Z	IP	Z
Craig Nakashian	History & Political Science	IP	IP	IP	IP
Jim Nguyen	Acctg, Finance, & Econ	Z	Z	A	A
Godpower Okereke	Social & Behavioral Sciences	IP	IP	IP	IP
Sebastian Schmidl	Natural Sciences	Z	Z	Z	Z
Faycal Znidi	Engineering & Physics	Z	IP	A	Z

<sup>\*</sup>IP = in-person; Z = zoom; A = absent; + = arrived late

If you are not receiving regular updates from your department or college Senators, I encourage you to explore electing a representative who will represent your interests, attend meetings regularly, and engage in the business of Faculty Senate.

# **SPRING 2023 AGENDA**

For the spring 2023 term, Senate already has several items up for discussion.

- First, of course, is attempting to make continued progress on the unresolved issues from fall term (credentialing, faculty salary adjustments, faculty morale survey, IT needs/concerns, etc.).
- I've been priming Dr. Arnold for forthcoming conversations regarding any revisions to the summer compensation model and process (so faculty have plenty of time to prepare themselves).
- Through Dr. Arnold and Dr. Sharma, we know Faculty Senate support will be requested as we work toward selecting our next Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP).
- The February Senate meeting will also include a budget update on Senate expenses for FY23 and an overview of the proposed budget for FY24.

#### A NOTE FROM ME

At the end of the December Senate meeting, I shared with Senators that I would be taking the winter break to consider whether or not I felt I could continue as Senate President. Throughout the fall term, I had endured contentious conversations and anonymous messages about Senate's lack of effectiveness, and that "many faculty" felt Senate leadership (and me, at the head of that leadership) could not be trusted, was not working in their best interest, was not being transparent, and meddling in things outside of our purview. In particular, Dr. Matthews and I were told that "many faculty" believe the only things with which faculty should concern themselves are teaching their courses and taking care of their students. All the other issues (compensation, academic freedom, etc.) were not issues on which Faculty Senate should have any say.

Most of you will not find it surprising that ideological divisions exist between the faculty when it comes to such matters. Some faculty do believe that our jobs are to teach and to

fulfill the obligations of our employment (teaching, service, and scholarship). More structural issues, then, are the responsibilities of our Deans, our Provost, and our President. *Let me be clear:* I believe there to be a vital difference between someone who teaches, even full-time, at a postsecondary institution and a faculty member of that institution. In brief, I believe faculty play an important role in institutional governance, in promoting inquiry and discourse, and in helping an institution develop and cultivate its identity.

Many of my senior colleagues have already come to a realization to which I arrived only this last year: our ability to make change depends on our power to enact change. In most ways, Faculty Senate's ability to enact change, real change, is dependent not upon the will of the faculty or the vote of the Senators who serve on Senate but rather upon the will of those who actually wield power at this institution. We, whether as Senators or as Senate leadership, can provide ideas, can ask questions, can offer perspective, can recommend, can advise. Heck, we can even *demand* change, and still, we do not possess the power to enact change. But if we stop asking, if we stop offering, if we stop recommending, if we stop advising, we don't stand a chance.

So, I return to you as Faculty Senate President this spring not just to see what modicum of good I can do (for faculty and for this institution) but also to serve as a model (the quality of which is to be determined by my peers) for the next Faculty Senate President and for other faculty who wish to engage in service related to institutional governance, faculty advocacy, and what is (and is not) in our purview. Faculty Senate knows how it can rid itself of my leadership; our Constitution, thankfully, has a process for that. I take no offense if the Senate decides I am not suited to lead. As I said to them in December, I want every one of my colleagues happy, healthy, and productive, and I do not wish to be an obstacle to seeing those wants realized.

# **APPENDIX A**

Email response from Aaron Harding, dated 11/10/2022 (shared in 11/11/2022 Senate meeting minutes)

#### All.

Hello. I wanted to provide a follow up to the issues that were shared with leadership and I.T. from the Faculty Senate. First, I would like to say that I appreciate the opportunity to address these issues because it not only gives us the opportunity to improve processes and frankly, shortcomings within our department, but it also confirms some of the issues that we ourselves had already identified and were working to address. In reviewing the listed needs and concerns of the faculty who provided feedback, it was obvious that most, if not all, of the issues could be summarized into very distinct categories. Those include the following:

- Poor communications and follow-up
- Unacceptable ticket/issue resolution times
- Broken processes (i.e., Software/hardware vetting/procurement/installation)
- Problematic virtual lab environment
- Lack of accessibility to resources
- Inefficient configuration of the ticketing system

Again, some of these issues were known to us, and we were already putting changes in place to address these. Here is a summary of what we are doing to address these issues.

- Providing training and direction to our personnel on good customer service practices. This is key
  and would address several of the issues from a base perspective. We are, after all, a service
  department and customer service must be our first objective. Changes to this aspect of our
  department should reflect in improved responses, timely resolution, and improved customer
  satisfaction.
- We have hired an Operational Manager to increase the efficiency of the department and to help assure that the day-to-day operations are running smoothly and without interruption. This role will also focus on customer service throughout the issue lifecycle.
- Redefining roles and responsibilities within the I.T. department to increase efficiency and help manage a workload that continues to increase with new technology and faculty/staff needs.
- Reconfiguring our ticketing system so that it becomes easier for the end-user to create a ticket. This will also add automation to some processes that have been manual up until now.
- Rework processes for software/hardware vetting and installation. This includes working with Texas A&M University Shared Services to ensure we follow the proper accessibility guidelines and with Texas A&M University Security Operations Center to ensure we are following federal, state, and system guidelines for security practices.
- Per Dr. Hinton's suggestion, Adam and I will be meeting with the department chairs to listen and discuss the concerns and needs they have, and to share what we are doing to address those.

# Email update from Aaron Harding, dated 11/30/2022 (shared in 12/09/2022 Senate meeting minutes)

#### Corrine.

Hello. Just a quick update to let you know where we are with the mitigation of the faculty concerns/needs items that you provided. We have not yet scheduled the meetings with the department chairs, but we will now start scheduling those. We wanted to have some new processes in place in order to discuss those with the department chairs when we met. I wanted to make sure that the faculty senate and you knew that we had not forgotten about the documented issues and concerns. Below are a few things that we have implemented since we last communicated about those. These changes do not reflect all that we are doing to improve services and support, but they represent a start.

• We have added focused attention to the software/hardware vetting process; that is a primary concern from the faculty. Judy Martin, End User Support Specialist, is now the primary agent for those requests as they are submitted. She is now coordinating the security, accessibility, and technical feasibility tasks that we are required to perform on every new request as well as software license renewal requests. Even with these steps in place there are additional steps that we are looking to add which we hope will vastly improve the turnaround time on these.

- We continue to migrate the service desk personnel to more focused assignments; breaking down the
  requests by disciplines and automatically assigning them to agents more familiar with the
  issues. We are also internally assigning "primary" and "secondary" agents for each
  discipline. Example: Classroom Technology: Primary Jayson Ferguson, Secondary Lance
  Taylor.
- Customer Service Focus Adam is working with the service desk personnel to ensure that we are meeting customer needs from a "human" perspective; being more courteous and offering assistance beyond the systems and processes we have historically supported. (example: End-users reporting Blackboard Issues which are typically handled by the Learning Technologist in the VPAA division are directed to create a ticket for Blackboard (*typical response*). Instead, we offer to create the ticket for them. (*better response*).
- We have a dedicated team addressing issue in the virtual environment and are recommending a more "hands-on" approach to resolving them. We are now sending team members to the labs to see the reported issues in real-time. This gives us a better sense of what the root cause may be. This also gives us a presence in the classroom environment that demonstrates our commitment to making it right.

We will keep you updated as we schedule these meetings, and we will share outcomes and updates with you as we move forward.

Best, Aaron

## **APPENDIX B**

**From:** Melinda Arnold < <u>MArnold@tamut.edu</u>>

**Sent:** Tuesday, May 17, 2022 7:30 AM

**To:** Divya Choudhary < <u>DChoudhary@tamut.edu</u>>; David Reavis < <u>dreavis@tamut.edu</u>>; Brian Matthews

<bmatthews@tamut.edu>; Mohamed Morsy <mmorsy@tamut.edu>; Heather McKnight

< <u>HMcKnight@tamut.edu</u>>; Lisa Myers < <u>lmyers@tamut.edu</u>>; Angela Sikorski < asikorski@tamut.edu>;

Craig Nakashian <cnakashian@tamut.edu>; Nurul Alam <nalam@tamut.edu>; Sara Lawrence

<slawrence@tamut.edu>; Corrine Hinton <chinton@tamut.edu>

Cc: Norma McCormick <nmccormick@tamut.edu>; Melinda Arnold <MArnold@tamut.edu>

**Subject:** Chair Council Meeting--May 16, 2022

All:

Thanks again for taking the time to meet yesterday. I think we are making progress on clarifying the role of the Department Chair. Below I have made an attempt to distill the highlights of our conversation. If you would take a look and make sure I have represented everything properly, I would appreciate it. Norma will set up another meeting for us likely in early June so that we may continue this conversation.

- Department Chairs are faculty first. This means that chairs are faculty with an administrative assignment, not administrators with a faculty assignment.
- The CBET chair job description was derived from the CASE chair job description which includes (but is not limited to) chairs being responsible for scheduling and faculty evaluations.
- Deans are the hiring authorities for the college. This means that they have the ultimate authority to hire full-time faculty. All faculty (including chairs) report to deans although faculty in departments have a dotted line reporting structure to chairs.
- Chairs will assist deans with preparing faculty evaluations. Chairs will generate the evaluation (per Faculty Senate, there will be one form for all full-time faculty types for the next evaluation cycle (i.e., tenured, tenure-track, lecturer, instructor, etc.) and discuss with deans. There will be a signature line on the form that allows the Department Chair to sign off.
- Adjunct faculty are hired and managed by chairs.

- There is an issue regarding untenured chairs. This often puts untenured faculty in difficult positions regarding some decision-making including assisting with faculty evaluations. The question is how to navigate this. Perhaps we should think carefully about requiring only tenured faculty to hold chair positions. This matter requires more discussion.
- Credentialling will be discussed in detail at the beginning of the next academic year. Information on a new credentialling process with be shared (the outline of a process has been created as has a form that is currently being beta-tested). Deans/chairs will make determinations regarding what degrees (terminal or otherwise) will be accepted for positions (full-time or adjunct) in their departments. Discussions related to how to manage justifications will also take place. A form will be created and integrated into the credentialling process. Once this process has been finalized this will become the arbiter of credentialling for TAMUT.
- Training for CLSS Scheduler will be provided. After the current iteration of the Spring 2023 schedule that is being built from the ground up, we will begin rolling schedules again. I will check with the Registrar to determine if we can roll even/odd year schedules.
- We discussed the problems associated with having admins input schedules. I have conflicting information on whether or not this was done. It should not be done and should not be an issue moving forward given that schedules will 'roll' after the completion of the Spring 23 schedule that is being built from scratch.
- We began the conversation about chair compensation in summer. I indicated that I am not opposed to it with the expectation that Spring schedules would be initiated the Spring prior (i.e., schedules for Spring 24 would be initiated in Spring 23 and completed by end of August 23). This would allow us to move schedule production up several weeks and student registration to begin sooner. A longer registration window enables Advising to have more time with students and for more students to be registered.

Again, please advise if I have not represented something properly. I look forward to continuing the conversation-

Melinda S. Arnold Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs University Center Suite 414N 7101 University Avenue Texarkana, TX 75503-0597



Phone: 903.223.3003 Fax: 903.223.3134 Marnold@tamut.edu

#### APPENDIX C

**From:** Melinda Arnold < <u>MArnold@tamut.edu</u>>

**Sent:** Tuesday, June 28, 2022 1:25 PM

**To:** Divya Choudhary < <u>DChoudhary@tamut.edu</u>>; David Reavis < <u>dreavis@tamut.edu</u>>; Brian Matthews

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< <u>HMcKnight@tamut.edu</u>>; Lisa Myers < <u>lmyers@tamut.edu</u>>; Angela Sikorski < <u>asikorski@tamut.edu</u>>;

Craig Nakashian <<u>cnakashian@tamut.edu</u>>; Nurul Alam <<u>nalam@tamut.edu</u>>; Corrine Hinton

<chinton@tamut.edu>

Cc: Norma McCormick Taylor < <a href="mailto:nmccormick@tamut.edu">nmccormick@tamut.edu</a>; Melinda Arnold < <a href="mailto:MArnold@tamut.edu">MArnold@tamut.edu</a>;

Sushil Sharma < SSharma@tamut.edu>

Subject: RE: Chair Council Meeting--June 29, 2022

#### All:

Here's hoping you are well. I am writing to remind you all about the Chair Council meeting tomorrow at 10AM in the 414 Conference Room. In preparation for that meeting, please take a moment to review the notes located in this thread below along with the attached document. I have made an attempt, from existing TAMUT chair job descriptions, to distill the relevant job duties and responsibilities for the chair position. I have also done the same with the program coordinator position, as well. Please feel free to review this document and to come to the conversation with your thoughts and ideas in tow.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to let me know. My long-term, larger goal? To have all of this ironed out before the beginning of the new AY so that everyone is clear on responsibilities and compensation. I imagine that goal will require at least one additional meeting in July and August.

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#### APPENDIX D

Email from Corrine Hinton to Faculty Senators, dated 12/14/2022

#### Dear Senators:

Over the last couple of weeks, several faculty from across both colleges have engaged me in conversations regarding the current drafts of the department chair and program coordinator responsibilities as well as selection and evaluation processes (document attached). Ultimately, the thoughts shared illustrate two areas of concern, creating the potential for Senate involvement.

First, not all faculty have been invited to participate in the process of drafting this document. These conversations began, and continue, with the cross-college chairs group and Dr. Arnold. While department chairs were routinely requested to share the document with the faculty for feedback, not all chairs have done so. Second, faculty who attempted to raise awareness about the lack of input within more narrow venues (e.g., within the department or college) had not experienced a satisfactory resolution (thus, engaging me as Senate President with a request for assistance).

# Here is what I propose:

- 1. Faculty Senate shares the document attached with all faculty for their review.
- 2. In January (prior to the start of the spring term and then the first week of spring term), Senate will host two Zoom-based listening sessions for faculty to attend, provide commentary/ask questions. Senate will gather the feedback, questions, etc. received.
- 3. Faculty who do not feel safe sharing aloud in a Zoom session (or who are unable to attend) can provide their comments/questions through a confidential, cloud-based form (similar to what Dr. Arnold is making available for public comment on the Academic Affairs strategic plan) between the day the form opens and no later than Friday, January 20.
- 4. Senate will gather and funnel that feedback directly to Dr. Arnold and the cross-college chairs group (and make a copy of that feedback document available to faculty via the Senate minutes).

I've spoken with Dr. Arnold about the concerns and the proposed plan. She is supportive. To ensure significant Senate issues are managed through the full body of the Senate, I'm asking for each of you to consider this proposal and vote, "aye" in favor of the above, "nay" if you are not in favor, or "abstain." Please send your vote to our parliamentarian and secretary, Dr. Craig Nakashian, by 5pm on Friday, December 16<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you for your attention and your service, Corrine

#### APPENDIX E

# **Chair/Program Coordinator Input**

(Listening Sessions)

Listening Session #1 – 29 attendees Listening Session #2 – 15 attendees Feedback form submissions – 4 received

## Responsibilities

- A. In the PC job responsibilities, bullet 3 should be #1, given that the program coordinator's area of expertise and authority is in all matters related to the program curriculum.
- B. Comparatively, bullet #6 in the DC responsibilities should include working with program coordinators to achieve the curricular changes
- C. "Department Chair—Position Responsibilities" -Delete bullet point #6 "Facilitate departmental curriculum revisions (CBET has a college curriculum committee. CASE needs one?)" The reason is that programs, not departments, oversee program curricula. Replace bullet point #6 with "Assist program coordinators with oversight of program curriculum." "Program Coordinator—Job Responsibilities" -Move "Oversee the curricular content of the program" to the first bullet point since it follows from the SACs description. Everything else in the coordinator description is secondary to that responsibility. [form submission]

#### Selection

- A. We need an alternative timeline/process for chair and coordinator selection in the event a DC or PC vacates the seat prior to the end of the official term (e.g., midyear).
- B. Chairs should be elected by their department faculty. A nomination/interest process should occur prior to (to ensure everyone who may want to serve is permitted an opportunity to express their interest), but ultimately chairs should be elected by their department faculty.
  - 1. We note that there may be some cases where accrediting bodies make broader determinations as to the criteria for those serving in program leadership or department leadership roles. Those criteria should be used as the guiding principles.

- 2. What happens if no one steps up? Rather than a direct appointment by the Dean, the department should be told that no one volunteered and be given the opportunity to appoint an ad interim Chair or PC on a one-year term with the opportunity to revisit the vacancy again for the next year (or assign another interim on a rotating basis). That is, every effort should be made to ensure leadership is handled within the department, rather than outside of it.
- C. Faculty not involved enough in selection of department chairs. Why don't we elect chairs? Do we value shared governance? Eliminate 4<sup>th</sup> bullet point to ensure election of chair; if no one stands for election, an interim chair will be appointed for a year, then it rotates yearly if still no one stands?
- D. The parenthetical (*if necessary*) in the PC selection process leaves the interpretation that neither the Chair nor the Dean need to consider the input of the faculty. Chairs should consider the input of the faculty.
- E. Could there be something about the need to be sure that department chairs are from the same curricular content area as those in the department for which they have oversight? For example, a history department being led by a math professor may not have the requisite background information to be effective as a leader. This is particularly troublesome in content areas that have highly complex certification components are led by someone with no knowledge of the process. [form submission]
- F. I am fine with the document as is. However, providing some criteria for selection such as minimum and preferred requirements would be helpful. Some chairs are not tenured; that can be problematic during annual evaluation. Forming search committees for these positions might also help chairs and deans select the right candidates. One-year term for program coordinators seems quite short. Another option is to make chairs and coordinators positions by election within the entire department. [form submission]

# Compensation

- A. For DCs also acting as PCs, not being provided with both compensations (or something more than DC-only compensation) should be considered.
- B. One course release per year for department chairs does not provide adequate enough time to seriously undertake that work.
- C. PCs should receive a course release per year and compensation. PCs should work with their department chairs to identify a compensation that best suits the needs of the department and program as well as the faculty. A stipend rhetorically communicates to PCs that the time they take to do the job is not valued, because administration doesn't show any effort to provide them with that time. So, why would any faculty want to do that amount of work (uncompensated labor)?
- D. Stipend of \$4000 for program coordinators, while equal amongst all, is not reflective of the degree of differences it takes to coordinate some programs. Some PCs have accreditation responsibilities, or their programs are more robust or complex. Therefore, the stipend should reflect that. Additionally, \$4000 might be a lot for a faculty in the Humanities but may not be "worth it" for a faculty in, for example, engineering or the sciences.
- E. There is some policy that anyone on a course release who then takes an overload forfeits that release; this is likely an attempt to prevent folks from getting time and taking more for their time. However, in smaller programs or in the event of unforeseen personnel changes, it may simply be unavoidable. In this case, faculty should be fairly compensated for their labor, no matter what it is or how it occurs. Noted that this policy does say this can be turned over by the Dean.
- F. Nobody wants to do work that isn't valued. Morale will erode and lead to disengagement and that erosion/disengagement will be used to justify ignoring faculty- vicious cycle.

# **Other Concerns/Input**

- A. In the event a program experiences a personnel change (faculty leaves, for example) that requires the department faculty to "step up" as PC and/or DC, the department should have the ability to petition the college or provost for a portion of the funds from the salary of the departing faculty. This would permit them to reallocate some of that funding to compensate the faculty for the additional, hopefully temporary, work.
- B. While faculty recognize it would be impossible to limit chairs to tenured faculty in the department only, there should be some language that speaks to the need to protect the time of our untenured and junior faculty from taking on significant program or department responsibilities while attempting to meet tenure and promotion benchmarks.
- C. Faculty expressed concern over the administration's threats to dissolve departments and reorganize them with other existing departments when faculty do not step up to take on a chair role. (See Selection, section B, sub-section 1)
- D. No movement on replacing administrative staff, or if there is movement there is no communication. We do not have adequate administrative support.
- E. The structure of how this document is developed seems very inconsistent and confusing. So, the provost is leading chair council meetings to discuss chairs and program coordinators responsibilities/benefits. Something seems wrong here. What is the role of deans in reviewing the documents? Why does the provost need to lead this discussion with chairs instead of both deans? What is the role of the faculty senate in developing this document? What is the role of rules and procedures subcommittee? Why faculty senate committees do not work on developing this document? Right now, it seems that this document just came from the provost to both colleges. That also applies to other academic rules (professional development fund going back to departments after April 1) being sent from the provost to both colleges. I think the faculty senate needs to be involved in developing and reviewing these documents. [form submission]

#### APPENDIX F

From: Melinda Arnold

Sent: Monday, January 23, 2023 11:06 AM

To: Corrine Hinton <<u>chinton@tamut.edu</u>>; Angela Sikorski <<u>asikorski@tamut.edu</u>>; Brian Matthews

<<u>bmatthews@tamut.edu</u>>; Carol Cordray <<u>CCordray@tamut.edu</u>>; Charles Blaylock <<u>CBlaylock@tamut.edu</u>>; Craig Nakashian <<u>cnakashian@tamut.edu</u>>; Heather McKnight <<u>HMcKnight@tamut.edu</u>>; Kevin Williams <<u>kevinwilliams@tamut.edu</u>>; Lisa Myers

 $<\!\!\underline{lmyers@tamut.edu}\!\!>; Mohamed Morsy <\!\!\underline{mmorsy@tamut.edu}\!\!>; Nurul Alam <\!\!\underline{nalam@tamut.edu}\!\!>; Vikram$ 

Bhadauria < vbhadauria@tamut.edu>

Subject: RE: Collected Input from Faculty on the Department Chair & Program Coordinator Document

#### Corrine:

Thanks for forwarding these comments from faculty. They are much appreciated and very helpful. I do wish folks had—during the months-long discussions we all had regarding department chairs and program coordinators—better involved faculty in the process. It would have been most beneficial to receive this information/these comments before now. Having said that, we find ourselves with an impending 'due date' of February 1<sup>st</sup> for department chairs to receive letters of interest from faculty interested in the position. I am wondering how you all might wish to move forward? Please let me know your thoughts when you have a moment-

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A Degree of Distinction

# Texas A&M University - Texarkana RECOMMENDATION TO FACULTY SENATE

**SUBCOMMITTEE: Academic Standards** 

**RECOMMENDATION DATE: 02/06/2023** 

#### RECOMMENDATION

Academic Standards recommends amending the current Academic Appeals Process as follows:

Admissions Appeal Process	Suspension Appeal Process		
Student completes the Admissions Appeal	Student completes the Suspension Appeal		
Application using the link at no	Application using the link at no		
later than 15 business days prior to the first	later than 15 business days prior to the first		
day of classes.	day of classes.		
Admissions Office sends application packet to	Advisor sends application packet to the		
the Department Chair along with a form of	Department Chair along with a form of		
recommendation providing chairs the	recommendation providing chairs the		
opportunity to recommend or not recommend	opportunity to recommend or not recommend		
the approval of each appeal.	the approval of each appeal.		
Within 2 business days, Department Chair	Within 2 business days, Department Chair		
returns recommendation form to the	returns recommendation form to the advisor		
admissions office where the form will be	who will add the form to the application		
added to the application packet.	packet.		
Within 3 business days, Admissions Office sends application packet to the Enrollment	Within 3 business days, advisor sends application packet to the Enrollment Appeals		
Appeals Committee (EAC) along with a form	Committee (EAC) along with a form for		
for recording each committee member's	recording each committee member's decision.		
decision.	<u> </u>		
Within 3 business days, all EAC members	Within 3 business days, all EAC members		
review application, and each member records	review application, and each member records		
on the provided form their decision to	on the provided form their decision to		
approve or deny application.	approve or deny application.		
The EAC forwards form with recorded	The EAC forwards form with recorded		
decision to the Admissions Office	decision to the Registrar's Office		
Within 3 business days, the Admissions	Within 3 business days, the Registrar's Office		
Office notifies student of the decision.	notifies student of the decision.		

#### RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The new academic appeals processes that were approved in the last academic year are now being implemented through the admissions and advising offices. On February 1, 2023, the Academic Standards Committee voted to recommend amending one piece of the policy to streamline the routing process. Currently, academic department chairs receive the appeals from the admissions and advising departments and then disperse the appeals to the Enrollment Appeals Committee (EAC). The chair is then responsible for collecting and sending the EAC's decision back to admissions and advising. Because the chair changes with each appeal, depending on the degree each student is seeking, the routing of the appeal changes with each appeal. One way to streamline the process further while remaining true to the intent of the policy is to remove the chairs from the routing process and place them in the application's collection section of the process. This would allow the chair to recommend or not recommend the approval of each appeal and add that recommendation to the appeal while removing them from the responsibilities of routing the packets and tallying votes. This amendment will also allow the routing process to remain the same no matter the discipline. The advising and admissions departments may send appeals packets with chair recommendations directly to the EAC and automate the process if desired.

Further amendments may be recommended after the University hires a retention specialist.

Dr. Lisa Myers, Chair Dr. Brian Billings Dr. Joe Burzynski Dr. Sean Bailey Dr. Mary Beth Womack Dr. Nelson Irizarry (not present)				
# Vote For:5 # Vote Against: Action by Faculty Senate:	00	# Abstained	0	
Approved Not Approved		enate President	 Date	
Approved Not Approved	·			
	Provost a	and VPAA	Date	

**Subcommittee Members:**