

# The University of Texas at Tyler

## Office of the Faculty Senate

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Thursday January 21, 2021  
12:30-1:55 p.m.  
Zoom Meeting

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### Minutes

#### Zoom Attendees:

Lynette Sutter, Jerry Stuff, Mary Fischer, Joshua Neaves, Colin Snider, Erin West, Christopher Thomas, Kathryn Martinez, Sarah Bowdin, Christine Forisha, Sarah Meisch-Lacombe, Hannah Buchanan, Paul Roberts, Bonnie Davis, Sheldon Davis, Heshium Lawrence, Thomas Guderjan, Saren Spicer, Richard Kenney, Rick Helfers, Cindy Strawn, Margo Duncan, Alecia Wolf, Jon Seal, Colleen Swain, Andrew Krouse, Barbara Wooldridge, Kathleen Helgesen, Mary Fischer, Brittani Riley, Sonja Morale, Arun Kulkarni, Muthukrishnan Sathyamoorthy, KoudierMokhtari, Yanira Oliveras Ortiz, Joseph Vandehey, Rhonda Toole, EBattle, Matt Stith (Matthew Stith), Amentahru Wahrab, Julie V. Philley, Rebecca McKay Johnson, Lynn Harris, Marcus Stadelmann, Premananda Indic, David Barron, rodrigorocha, Barbara Wooldridge, Gary Miller, Wycliffe Njororai Simiyu, Amir Mirmiran, Rachel Lengua Lopez, Kerrie Anne Ambort-Clark, Gina Doepker, Rochell McWhorter, Karen Walker, Melinda Hermanns, Sarah Sass, Ashlea Wilson, Beverley Golden, Jeffrey Howlett, Barbara Haas, Matthew Brinton, Brenda Burton, Vandy Dubre, Lou Ann Viergever, Sooah Park, Christine Gipson, X. Neil Dong, Ona Tolliver, Paula Tate, Janice Helfers, Scott Dillingham, Belinda, Julie Anderson, Woonhee Sung, Sarah Norrell, Randy LeBlanc, Janet Gehring, Nicole Schugel, Joshua Menhennett, Osama Shoair, E. Cory Sills, Mohammed Ali, Paul Streufert, Cynthia Martinez, Katheryn Courville, Cheryl Parker, Kim Livingston-Cobb, Katherine Stone, Amy Hayes, Catherine Ross, Julie Delello, Benjamin Tseng, Kathryn Ramirez, Joe Glavy, Sarah Norrell, Andrew Pettee, Yonjoo Cho, Dominick Fazarro, Dr. Glenn Barnes, jwyman, Althea Arnold, fnjororai, Tamela Kimbro, Lauren Kirby, Lorri Allen, Jennifer Klein, rossman, William Geiger, Howard Patterson, Terra Gullings, Nary Subramanian, Kim Nimon, Samantha Estrada, Sam Carrell, Ona Tolliver, Josh Banta, WoonheeSung, Danielle Bailey, David Criswell, Amanda Cartwright, April Moore, Colleen Marzilli, Raejean Griffin, Ashleigh Day, Kyle Gullings, Letitia Heidelberg, Rachael Thornell, Mitzi Harris, Marsha Matthews, Joseph Woelkers, Lauren Hendley, Veronica Viesca, Nathan Flory, Ashley Bill, Joe Glavy

12:30            **Welcome and Call to Order**            Rick Helfers

12:35            **Approval of November Meeting Minutes**            Amentahru Wahrab

- Assuming that there are no corrections: motion to approve November's senate minutes; motion was approved.

12:40            **President's Updates**            Kirk Calhoun

- Dr. Calhoun was called away to Austin and regrets not being present.
- Dr. Helfers took the time to ask for last minute comments and a vote from Faculty Senate on recommending that the Student Financial Appeals Committee be renamed to the "Student

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Appeals Committee” upon the request of that committee in order to help students more easily understand that the committee is a resource for them for broader reasons than simply financial concerns. Motion was made to vote on the name change and the motion carried.

- Dr. Helfers presented the faculty with a recommendation from the faculty senate to recommend the creation of a formal onboarding program for transfer students to be coordinated with Dr. Swain. In discussion, recommendations were made to include the library and other university resources. Some language suggestions were made to broaden the scope of who counted as a transfer student. These friendly suggestions were added and the motion was voted on and approved.

12:55

### **Provost Updates**

Amir Mirmiran

- Dr. Mirmiran welcomed everyone back and began discussing the reasons for the delay of face-to-face classes for two weeks (creating a buffer between return to campus and return to classes).
- Highlight: if you are not comfortable returning to face to face, then meet with your chair to make changes as needed. Dr. Mirmiran indicated any faculty who wanted to continue online would not be required to teach face-to-face.
- QandA: Provost was asked by a faculty member to address the community rates of infection and hospitalization. Provost reiterated that faculty are not required to teach face-to-face.
- QandA: provost was asked about students who might not be able to attend face-to-face due to health concerns. Provost indicated that students also would not be required to attend face-to-face. Dean of students Ona Tolliver also said that students should contact accessibility office.
- QandA: Provost was asked about IRT recommendation regarding returning to face to face.
- Julie V. Philley was introduced (by Joseph Woelkers) at about 38 minutes and asked a question about vaccinations. Noted that UT Tyler has put 10,000 shots in arms and hopes that soon more shots will be given.
- Joseph Woelkers stepped in and reminded us that we are a state institution and we have to follow state and federal rules for vaccine distribution.
- QandA: rumor that in December nonhealthcare workers at UT Health were getting the vaccine. Dr. Philley responded that initial vaccine lines were too short and in order to use the supply before it went bad (about 500 doses) gave them to those who lived with people who had underlying conditions or lived with healthcare workers (around 46 minutes). Dr. Woelkers added that many initially were hesitant to get the vaccine and now the lines are long.
- Dr. Woelkers added that Dr. Calhoun invites the Senate president is formally invited to join the President’s cabinet meetings.
- Dr. Mirmiran stepped in and updated SACSCOC process (50minutes in). site visit in April. Everything is moving in a timely manner. Already met with deans of both campuses to more



**The University of Texas at Tyler**  
**Office of the Faculty Senate**

Dear UT Tyler Faculty & Staff,

Welcome to the Spring 2021 semester, I hope everyone found some time to relax over the holidays and enjoyed the snow to start off the semester. We will be having our first virtual Faculty Senate meeting of the semester on Thursday, January 21 from 12:30-1:55PM. At this meeting, all of us will have the opportunity to welcome our UT Tyler President, Dr. Calhoun, and receive updates from Dr. Mirmiran. We will also have information on Athletics, Recycling Initiative, and Student Engagement.

Attached is the Faculty Senate agenda for the January 21<sup>st</sup> meeting along with the following links—

- [November Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes](#)
- [Zoom link for the virtual Senate meeting](#)

Welcome back and enjoy a great semester. The entire Faculty Senate hopes you will be able to join us on the 21<sup>st</sup> at 12:30pm.

Thank you for everything you do for the entire UT Tyler community. I look forward to seeing you online and being of service to you throughout this Academic Year.

Rick Helfers  
President, Faculty Senate