

The University of Texas at Tyler  
Office of the Faculty Senate

Thursday, February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024

12:30 – 1:50

Hybrid Meeting

[https://uttyler.zoom.us/rec/share/9t4XO\\_7P0pO70tutdXDQg\\_5jbeTln9loGIStgnJRkJOBxUxG1PCEyYOC1JDsrImS.zj2d9kSba\\_BzG\\_IG](https://uttyler.zoom.us/rec/share/9t4XO_7P0pO70tutdXDQg_5jbeTln9loGIStgnJRkJOBxUxG1PCEyYOC1JDsrImS.zj2d9kSba_BzG_IG)

Passcode: xJ^c6ht3

|                                   | Class of 2024          | Class of 2025      | Class of 2026                                |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|--|
| <b>At Large</b>                   | Yonjoo Cho *           | Nelson Fumo *      | Staci Zolkoski *                             |
| <b>CAS</b>                        | Joseph Vandehey        | Vacant             | Elizabeth (Cory) Sills *<br>Kenneth Bryant * |
| <b>Soules College of Business</b> | Rochell McWhorter *    | Vivek Pandey       | Brent Beal                                   |
| <b>CEP</b>                        | Lauren Kirby *         | Forrest Kaiser *   | Ramona Grad *                                |
| <b>COE</b>                        | Mohammad (Rafe) Biswas | Chung Goh          | Aaditya Khanal                               |
| <b>CNHS</b>                       | Julie George           | Dixie Rose *       | Gina Dudley                                  |
| <b>COP</b>                        | Yanyan Wang            | Ayman Hamouda      | Santosh Aryal *                              |
| <b>Library</b>                    | Lori Fregoso           | Nicholas Bambach * | Michael Skinner                              |
| <b>SHP</b>                        | Kimberly Elliott       | Jessica Escareno * | Ahmed Abdelal *                              |
| <b>SOM</b>                        | Jessica Bracks         | James Menard       | Pierre Neuenschwander *                      |

\* means member was in attendance.

**Senate Executive Officers 2023 - 2024**

|                     |                   |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| Amentahru Wahlrab * | Joshua Banta *    |
| President           | President-Elect   |
| Harrison Ndetan *   | Richard Helfers * |
| Past President      | Parliamentarian   |
| Staci Zolkoski *    | Dixie Rose *      |
| Secretary           | Treasurer         |

\* means member was in attendance.

**In attendance:**

Amentahru Wahlrab, Staci Zolkoski, Dixie Rose, Josh Banta, Harrison Ndetan

Richard Helfers, Sarah Sass, Yvonne Ralph, Ramona Grad, Santosh Aryal, Mena Souliman, Lou Ann Berman, Poonam, Kumar, Kenneth Bryan, Wendy Duncan, Kouider Makhtari, Terra Gullings, Ashley Bill, Becky McKay, Viveil Pandey, Ahmed Abdelal, Rochell McWhorter, Yonjoo Cho, Dominick Fazarro, Pierre Neuenschwander, Kirk Calhoun, Stephanie Fenter, Dwain Morris, Amir Mirmiran, Kevin Kjosa, Colleen Swain, Dawn Sousa-Hearn, Mary Logan

### **Zoom attendance:**

Gina Nickels-Nelson, Kerrie Anne Ambort Clark, Lauri John, Nick Bambach, Cory Sillis, Cheryl Parker, Roger Lirely, Anjali Parti, Rhiannon Yeyer, Michael Kennedy, Jaema Krier, Joy Pitts, Kristine Duncan, Cara Wreyford, Gina Nickels-Nelson, Nelson Fumo, Jessica Escareno, Austin Seybert

### **12:30 Welcome and Call to Order Dr. Amentahru Wahlrab**

- Welcome to everyone!

### **Approval of January Meeting Minutes: Staci Zolkoski**

- Minutes have been posted.
- Staci asked for everyone to sign in via the chat box on zoom or the papers on each table.
- Minutes were approved.

### **Dr. Amentahru Wahlrab and Dr. Josh Banta – Comments about President Calhoun**

- Thank you for your work, Dr. Calhoun.
- Brought in a team who trusted and respected him – meant a lot to everyone, particularly faculty senate.
- From Dr. Banta:
  - Appreciate emphasis on involving faculty in decision making on campus.
    - We have Faculty Senate in the Cabinet meeting, so we literally have a seat at the table.
  - In our meetings with you, one on one.
    - Always focused on faculty and student representation on the different committees
    - Worked with us to make sure that there's a transparent process, for how faculty are involved in the decision making.

### **Update - President Calhoun**

- Thank you for the kind words
- Communication from all over the state is that UT Tyler is booming and a very special place.
- Always wish to have gotten more done. For example,
  - We still need a daycare center – it hasn't been forgotten.
  - There are always other things to complete. – No one accomplishes everything they wish they could.
- Will miss all the people.

- UT Tyler president for 22 years and has been with UT System for 32 years.
- Getting ready to go into an interesting and challenging legislative session.
  - Discussed with Chairman Eltife and the Chancellor – want to give the new president the opportunity to be well prepared.
  - Came 22 years ago as president of the Health Science Center in November with the legislative session being in January.
    - Was not prepared for the legislative session, didn't know who the committee chairman was or how much power they had, no influence on meeting with the Lieutenant Governor's office or the Governor's office, and no knowledge of the appropriations process, particularly for higher education. Presidents of other institutions were prepared.
      - Never again will he be caught off guard and ill-prepared.
    - The Chairman of the Board of Regents will chair the search committee.
      - This is very rare.
      - Shows the importance of this position.
      - Get person in soon enough to work with team here: Dwain, Amir, Dr. Philly, Faculty Senate leadership have time to work with all of you to prepare for the next legislative session and ensure that UT Tyler **comes out of it with as much in the way of resources as it can.**
- The other thing I was sort of told that, you know it'd be best to do it at the end of graduation is that I was told that on the academic side, not so much on the medical side, but on the academic side, successful Presidents leave after giving their last remarks at graduation. It's the unsuccessful ones that leave in the middle of the year.
- Since not doing 2025 legislative session, better retire now. I can leave as a successful president, and not one who was asked to leave off cycle.
- This has been a great experience.
- Bringing both campuses together could benefit and be much stronger, and it is a much stronger.
  - That's the legacy I hope to leave much stronger, much better positioned university that is growing.
- We've been celebrating a record a semester here in terms of semester credit hours, and students that are enrolled at UT Tyler.
  - Health system is doing extremely well.
    - well enough where some of those revenue dollars are actually helping the academic side.
      - That's okay. Bringing two campuses together benefits everyone.
- Dwain and the team will tell you - not taking foot off the pedal.
  - Still pushing through on a number of things to make the campus better.
    - Made an adjustment in the finance department.
      - Talking about that for a long time.
      - Virtually every other area of the university has merged come together fully - police department, you know. Things like that. We all have one, and it's working really. Really well.

- IT now – one leader
- Finance and budgeting – two different leaders, two different ways of doing things – wasteful.
  - Contributed to some confusion when trying to do the budget this time.
  - Number of managers had feet in both camps.
    - Two different budgets, two different systems, two different rules to deal with all the time.
    - After Dwain joined team – made a priority to try to address the issue.
  - Thought of trying to save money – Dr. Calhoun believes they have been transparent, even talked to Faculty Senate.
    - We want to put more money in education and student support – we are not going for faculty.
    - We will look for administrative cost savings to make strategic investments going forward.
    - Not trying to be tricky or deceptive.
    - Feel bad for those who lost their jobs.
      - Relatively few people impacted.
      - Technology has actually contributed because it does it faster and better.
    - Said we were doing it and then did it.
  - Talked to financial management experts with budget expertise who showed how we needed to streamline operations to be more efficient so there wouldn't be budget problems and wouldn't have 2 different ways of doing things.
- We have also heard that people think we don't have a budget – Dwain will tell you, everyone has a budget.
  - Getting ready to start the process for next fiscal year's budget so we get that completed and in place much earlier.
- Retention and enrollment are up.
- Student success is important.
  - Expand online opportunities – will learn more about in the future – great opportunities for the community and good for the institution.
  - More agreements with community colleges – we want those well qualified students to pick UT Tyler.
- Presenting final approval of funding and construction for the new Science building – 103 million dollars – overlooking the lakes.
- Much smaller project – 10 million dollar – Longview – SIM lab for the nursing school and other areas necessary.
- Preparing for Board of Regents meeting to ensure we walk away with our money and buildings.

## Provost Updates – Dr. Amir Mirmiran

- One update – coming from Library.
- Echo what has been said about Dr. Calhoun and an appreciation for what he has done for the main campus.
  - Elevating shared governance – faculty are so proud at FAC – we have best shared governance.
  - Appreciation and financial support for liberal arts – holistic approach and appreciation of what liberal arts has to offer.
  - Elevating all strategies to help the main campus and initiatives we have on how to grow.
    - Idea of partnering with community colleges.
      - Hope to sign agreements with community colleges – want to do in other areas as well (Houston).
- Terra Gullings
  - No cost course savings for students.
    - So there was in fall of 23. There were 146 sections where we were able to provide a free textbook to the students.
    - if every student enrolled in those sections used, our library provided materials instead of purchasing a textbook on their own. They saved over \$300,000 just for fall of 23.
    - Fall of 2,023 open educational resources information.
      - This is just what was reported to the bookstore.
      - If you use an open educational resource and you did not report it to the bookstore. We don't have that data included in this information today.
      - Based on information we do have – there is a savings of almost near \$190,000
    - Library has overview of no cost course materials and sections for fall 2023.
      - We had 1,379 sections that had at least one student.
      - We verified 31 of the 1379 sections had no course materials, library provided text or open educational resources.
    - Goal – library is running a portion of the strategic plan to save students money on course materials.
      - Library is purchasing books and encouraging the use of free materials.
        - They are happy to help with this.
        - Send course syllabus and description – they can see if there is something available electronically or available for the library to purchase.
          - Preference of open educational resources because it doesn't cost library or Provost office anything.
    - Spring of 2024 is currently listed – please check it out if you haven't.

- The website has a link for the Affordable Textbook Adoption grant – money left for summer and fall of 2024.
- Reach out with questions or support.

### **QEP Update – Wendy Duncan**

- Dr. Lou Ann Berman
  - Thanked Wendy for her work and Katie Stone for what she did.
  - QEP – Quality Enhancement Plan
    - Evolving plan and process – 5 year process – where we started looks different from where we are now.
- Wendy Duncan
  - Timeline of implementing QEP since Fall 2022
  - Goal of our QEP is to strengthen students’ problem-solving competencies through the process and application of discipline, specific knowledge in real world context.
  - Activities will repeat themselves until we report in 5 years the final impact.
  - 10 courses from 2022-2023
    - 13 undergraduate programs across 6 colleges and schools
    - Courses identified as learning real world problem-solving skills in context of their discipline.
      - Signature assignment that allows students to showcase their problem-solving skills within the connect of their discipline.
  - 7 courses added to the original in 2023-2024.
    - 17 programs represented with 20 undergraduate programs across 6 colleges and schools.
  - As of today, for 2024-2025, we have another 6 courses planned to launch next year which brings us to 23 courses representing 26 undergraduate programs across all 6 colleges and schools.
  - Thanked faculty for teaching the courses as lead QEP faculty members, thanked QEP leadership teams in their respective colleges and schools serving as the QEP steering committee.
    - Each college and school has one lead QEP faculty member with the exception of Arts and Sciences – 3 due to diversity of disciplines.
  - QEP Faculty Fellows – develop supportive peer group to share, discuss, and learn how to develop real-world problem-solving skills in the classroom.
    - Launched in 2022-2023
      - Returning members serves as mentors to new fellows.
    - Current year – welcomed another 7 members to the cohort, and 6 members returned for a second year.
  - Developed 4 key takeaways from year 1 of the QEP – based on instructors of record, QEP steering committee, and QEP assessment team:
    - The importance of instructor of record participation on the scoring panel.
    - The need to continually review and clarify the UT Tyler Real-World Problem-Solving rubric based on faculty feedback.

- The importance of rubric calibration and practice with curated student artifacts.
  - The need for continually review and update signature assignments and student deliverables based on faculty feedback.
- Please reach out to Wendy if you'd like to participate – the goal is to elevate and expand.

### **Head of Facilities Update – Andy Kraus**

- Talk about connectivity on campus and everything done in terms of projects, improvement, investment in the physical campus.
- Look to see how to better connect pedestrians, vehicular transportation, and everything else in the community.
- Actively looking at an improved pedestrian network of sidewalks around the perimeter of campus and improved Southern entrance of University Blvd.
  - Part of grant request – meeting with city tomorrow to discuss adding a stoplight at Lake and University Blvd.
    - Worked with College of Engineering and City of Tyler to obtain justification for a stoplight and crosswalk there.
      - Actively working on these things – easier and safer
  - Designs for a turn lane at Liberty Dr. to turn right on University to help alleviate some congestion.
  - Some of mentioned the Crossing from Lot 15 to Souls College of Business – there's a sidewalk that doesn't connect – there are plans for that right turn lane to connect that sidewalk to Lot 15.
  - We have a lot of plans:
    - We have pedestrian sidewalk networks and pedestrian bridges.
    - We have an improved Southern entrance to campus.
    - Can't do them all.
      - Priorities change, funding mechanisms change, sometimes we have to choose.
    - We have conceptional drawings for the entire pedestrian network around campus.
      - The crushed granite path that goes down by the lake – kind of a trail – plans to improve that again to be more sustainable, clean, and safer.
    - Concerns getting to Souls College of Business
      - There is a pathway – look for ways in the future to improve.
    - Looking at parking improvements, sidewalk improvements
      - Growth means we are always looking for improvements – it's a good thing.
    - 2011 the City of Tyler did an area development plan – there is a median on University Blvd for part of the area development plan – whether it gets into the final version that is yet to be seen.
    - Price coming in for improving Hawk light to provide an audible notification for visually impaired coming on our campus.
    - Question –

- Getting to HPR is a nightmare if you have any sort of mobility differences.
  - We meet ADA requirements – accessible pathways.
  - Not ideal – we have designs, but plans are not active right now.
- What plans do we have for getting from Souls to HPR – one path to stay on sidewalk – goes all the way around the lake, over by pharmacy. Going the other way goes through the mud.
  - Is there an improved pathway without going through the mud?
    - This is a long-term plan – we have not gotten into design or any engineering.
    - Lot 15 is the only parking lot to have to walk through to get to Souls.
    - Trying to avoid the parking lot.
- Andy is happy to go on a walk to talk accessibility.
- Dawn – new Director of SARs office
  - Any students who are registered with our office and experience issues, please reach out to us so we can follow up.
    - Look for accommodations available – works closely with Andy – hard to recognize issues that don't come to their attention.
  - Never been to a campus with more automatic doors than UT Tyler – it's fantastic – not norm for many higher education institutions.

### **Vice President for Athletics: Dr. Howard Patterson**

- Students will be voting on a referendum to increase athletic fee for 2025, 2026, and 2027 by \$2 per credit hour each year.
- We've only been around for 22 years.
- Jumped into much bigger conference now in the Lone Star Conference.
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> largest campus
  - We haven't kept up now that we have moved conferences – we have a much larger travel budget and scholarships.
  - 1-6 hours = \$96 extra charge.
  - up to 15 hours or more than 15 hours – max is \$240 extra charge.
  - If this passes – the next year goes up to \$18 which comes out to \$0.40 per day.
  - We have approximately 308 active members in Division II – no schools break down their fees.
- Enhance institutional branding – a few years ago the softball team was in the National Tournament in Salem, Virginia.
  - One of the best hitters from the other team crushed a ball to center field – ESPN camera was there – center fielder runs after ball, leaps over the fence, and catches all right in front of the camera.
    - #1 play for two days in a row
    - This is great exposure – athletics enhances the brand of the institution.



- The athletes benefit – fees and money go to them. Athletics will be getting more money but are taking less money from the school.
- We share facilities with having the REC sports, employ students.
- Student athletic fees totally depend on enrollment.

### **Dean Pete filling in for Josh Neeves**

- Parenting and pregnancy – last year the state legislature put in some additional requirements.
  - Blake Bombard, Josh Neeves, and Kim Livingston Cobb were part of a working group at system to develop a model policy for how we fulfill our obligations under state law.
  - HOP Policy 5.14.3 – look at the policy – if you have questions.
  - [parents@uttyler.edu](mailto:parents@uttyler.edu) – support faculty or students related to the policy and obligation to the law.
  - Work with everyone to triage and support in any way we can.
  - Always ask question – parent liaison – Ashton Maisel – [parents@uttyler.edu](mailto:parents@uttyler.edu)
  - Link with more information from student engagement and resources from coordinating board will be coming.
  - Online report form will be sent to ensure all resources needed are provided.

### **Open floor for last minute questions**

- March – begin process to send announcement for incoming faculty senate president.
- Email to deans – consider nominating people for committees and senate positions.
- Elections and nominating – done at the end of March. Participate in shared governance to work with new administration.

1:48 adjourn.