Minutes

Welcome and Call to Order

12:35 Approval of November Meeting Minutes

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

President’s Updates

- 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
Applies 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 that 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 suggested 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 (50 minutes in). site visit in April. Everything is moving in a timely manner. Already met with deans of both campuses to more
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closely manage and discuss shared interests of health programs. Also, mentioned R2 status and ways to bring research and graduate affairs together to support new R2 status.

1:10  Athletics  Howard Patterson

- Update on transition to div 2: lone star conference. 177 students on honor roll. Softball ranked #2 in country. (only second year we’ve offered scholarship.). We were ahead of the curve on Covid and the other members of the conference adopted our protocols. Formation of Committee X address social justice issues (with help of Dr. Kenneth Bryant). Paying attention to mental health concerns of student athletes.

- Dr. Gary Miller. Chair of intercollegiate ethics committee. Report starts around 1 hour mark. There is a newsletter too that will be sent out from the Athletics department/Dr. Miller.

- Dr. Paul Roberts. Faculty athletic rep. mandated for Div 2 status. Any issue/concern contact Dr. Roberts.

- QandA: will there be a track and field complex built? Howard said yes but not sure when.

1:25  Facilities Management Recycling  Bonnie Davis/Andrew Krouse

- Bonnie Davis announced that UT Tyler is (finally) getting a single stream recycling program. It’s been done at no extra cost to the University. Bonnie will happily answer questions.

1:35  Student Engagement Update  Joshua Neaves

- For lack of time, this was tabled till February

1:40  Faculty Senate Update  Rick Helfers

- Adhoc committees (free speech and family care) will meet soon.

- Working on merging faculty senate of health science and main campus senate.

- Please reach out to adjuncts to be sure we are representing their interests too.

- Thanks for all the support.

1:55  Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn approved.
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 21st 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 21st 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