

The University of Texas at Tyler

Office of the Faculty Senate

Thursday May 21, 2020
12:30-1:30 p.m.
Zoom Meeting

AGENDA

Zoom Attendees: (get the zoom attendance printout)

Colin Snider, Amy Hayes, K.T. Helgesen, Rick Helpers, Mary Fischer, Wycliffe Njororai, Michael Tidwell, Sarah Sass, Catherine Ross, Kerrie Anne Ambort Clark, Venu Gopalakrishna, Belinda Deal, Chris Thomas, Domick Fazarro, Denise Duncan, Jerry Stuff, Amir Mirmiran, Amanda Midgett, Amentahru Wahlrab, Brenda Burton, Gracy Buentello, Sheldon Davis, Peggye Mahfood, Lisa Jett, Melanie Mogle, Melissa Hill, Margo Duncan Christine Forisha, Mandy Link, Sarah Norrell, Frank Dykes, Mark Sidey, Jacki Wyman, Nathan Smith, Paula Tate, Andrew Pettee, Ona Tolliver, Cynthia Martinez, Colleen Swain, Gina Doepker, Emily Standridge, Kim Laird, Lou Ann Berman, Katie Anders, Lynn Harris, Cheryl Parker, Blake Bumbard, Charles Brown, Janet Gehring, Cory Sills, Gregory Bock, Ramona Grad, Charles Barke, Yong Tai Wang, Vivek Pandey, Tina Taylor, Trisha Brinton, Tamela Kimbro, Saren Spicer, Sarah Bowdin, Neil Gray, Mena Souliman, Matthew Vechione, Marti Halbbrook, Lou Ann Viergever, Lorri Allen, Kouider Mokhatari, Kerri Camp, Kent Stucky, Katheryn Courville, Julie Delello, Jon Seal, Jonathan Belew, Jimi Francis, Jennifer Chilton, Jay Galeon, Jason Smee, Heshium Lawrence, Gloria Duke, Fredericka Brown, Barbara Haas, Elizabeth Lisot, Sydney Blundell, Kassie Archer

12:31	Welcome and Call to Order	Colin Snider
12:32	Approval of April Meeting Minutes	Amy Hayes
12:33	President's Updates	Michael Tidwell

- Budget Updates
 - Texas Governor Greg Abbott send out a letter to heads of governmental agencies (including presidents of higher ed institutions) that said that presidents should create a budget for the upcoming 2020-2021 that includes a 5% budget reduction. There was no announcement of any budget claw back of our existing monies. The governor also left open the possibility that it could be higher than 5%.

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- All VPs are working on plans to reduce those budgets as well. More details forthcoming at the townhall tomorrow. They are working on several different strategies for capturing the funds needed for that holdback.
- There are three major budgetary buckets at the university: Tuition and fees, state appropriations funding, and auxiliary funds. The only number in the budget that is going to be affected by the 5% holdback is the portion that is state appropriations. This means effectively 5% of 30% of our budget will be affected by the Governor's holdback.
- Right now, our administration is planning for a 10% cut just to be safe.
- Current restrictions in hiring, travel, will go towards that 5% budget holdback as well.
- Task force is still working on a plan for returning face to face in the Fall of 2020.
- Merger with UTHSC and the plans for the medical school are going forward (reminder that these are separate initiatives).
- Fall semester updates: Some of the campuses are coming up with plans that will allow them to end the semester earlier (like at Thanksgiving). There are different ways to do that, either having students be finished at Thanksgiving, or just not return in person and finish online. He wants the faculty to make 99% of the decision on this. President Tidwell suggested maybe a rapid response task force to look at when the periods are concern are with potential flair ups and what might make the most sense.

12:51

Provost Updates

Amir Mirmiran

- Dr. Mirmiran thanked the faculty for completing the Spring Semester under difficult conditions.
- Dr. Mirmiran said that the grades looked good at the graduate and undergraduate level in Spring, although the number of withdraws and incompletes did increase from Spring 2016.
- He said that course evaluations overall looked very good as well and increased about 3-5% overall course evaluations (although the response rate was about 10% lower- but course evaluation requirement for grade released was taken away this semester as well).
- Reboot task for has four members of the faculty represented on it. The task force is working on strategies to maintain social distancing in classes. They are working with chairs and faculty to figure out which classes should move online and which can be hybrid or face to face. Dr. Mirmiran suggested that faculty take advantage of the resources in the Office of Digital Learning.

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- Dr. Mirmiran also hoped that Faculty Senate can weigh in on options for the end of Fall 2020 semester, either ending early, ending in a virtual format, or keeping it the same.
- Academic Affairs is asking individual academic units to think about ways that they can save funds as well (holding off on hiring, travel, etc).
- Dr. Mirmiran asked that faculty try to reach out to students enrolled for Fall as much as we can to make sure that they come back.
- Question: is there any possibility of starting the fall academic calendar a week early to adjust for potentially ending the semester early? Answer: there are challenges with that because of the nursing program summer schedule. Also, they thought about whether it is appropriate to ask faculty to cut summer II short. Again, this is something that faculty need to discuss and think about.

1:03

Faculty Senate Matters

Faculty & Faculty Senate

- Rick Helfers (president-elect): senators who are already serving on university committees in an ex-officio role please email Rick in the next week and let him know if you would like to continue in this role.
- Upcoming senate executive committee elections: treasurer and secretary position elections coming up soon. Please let Rick know if you are interested in running for it.
- Institutional Response Team (summer session task force) update: how to keep high touch and high traffic areas safe (how to identify these areas and how to protect them), and where there would be needs for hand sanitizer stations. Please email Rick Helfers if there are areas in your unit that would benefit from either protection (e.g., plexiglass shields), sanitizer, or other resources.
 - Updates on Task Force & Survey results
 - Faculty survey results: plurality of faculty preferred to teach online if given the option. Comments revealed that faculty are concerned about health, but also that some programs/courses cannot be taught well in an online context.
 - Reports on Committees
 - Update on university committee business report is out and will be available on the senate website.
 - Resolution on the UT-Tyler/UTHSCT merger
 - Vote on resolution: 16 yes, 0 no
 - Faculty Matters and Concerns
 - There may or may not be a senate meeting in June depending on events between now and then.

1:25

Adjournment

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<https://uttyler.zoom.us/j/96650005339?pwd=bVIUbWhSci9JZ3RHNFplQzZzNmZSZz09>

Meeting ID: 966 5000 5339

Password: 032702