

The University of Texas at Tyler  
Office of the Faculty Senate

Thursday, September 21<sup>st</sup>

12:30 - 1:40

Hybrid Meeting

Due to the Internet Outage throughout the entire campus, the zoom recording was cut short. Below is the recording of what occurred prior to the outage.

[https://uttyler.zoom.us/rec/share/10huq-rTFn\\_jRA2IrDixn54H5GmCAO6iGhgT5VFDWSOI-fi40Ob\\_x2aGts9TSsKk.j8\\_nQvRjjSeYnhll](https://uttyler.zoom.us/rec/share/10huq-rTFn_jRA2IrDixn54H5GmCAO6iGhgT5VFDWSOI-fi40Ob_x2aGts9TSsKk.j8_nQvRjjSeYnhll)

Passcode: pg8G4\$=w

**Faculty Senate**

	<b>Class of 2024</b>	<b>Class of 2025</b>	<b>Class of 2026</b>
<b>At Large</b>	Yonjoo Cho *	Vacant	Staci Zolkoski *
<b>CAS</b>	Joseph Vandehey *	Vacant	Elizabeth (Cory) Sills * 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	Vacant
<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

**In Person Attendance:** Steven Metcalf, Mark Stark, Gracy Buentello, Cindy Scott, May Abdelaziz, Ayman Hamouda, Farah Deba, Santosh Aryal, Dixie Rose, Stephanie Fenter, Colleen Swain, Rosemary Cooper, Jared Squires, Wei-chin Ho, Joanna Matuszak, Kouider Makhtari, Cory Sills, Pierre Neuenschwander, Josh Banta, Sara Memarian, Andy Krouse, Mena Souliman, Javier Kypuros, Isai Ramirez, Kirk Calhoun, Amir Mirmiran, David Barron, Aaditya Khanal, YanYan Wang, Fletcher Njororai, Dominick Fazarro, Ahmed Abdelal, Marti Halbrook, Sarah Norrell, Forrest Kaiser, Sarah Sass, Yonjoo Cho, Nelson Fumo, Brant Beal

**Zoom Attendance:** Joseph Vandehey, Nicholas Bambach, Tina Melamed, Kim Nimon, Julie George, Danielle Bailey, Gina Doepker, Yvonne Ralph, Heshium Lawrence, Jaema Krier, Nicholas Bambach, Mary Fischer, Mohammad (Rafe) Biswas, Lauri, John, Christopher Thomas, Gina Nickels0Nelson, Rochell McWhorter, Hannah Buchanan, Kevin Gosselin, Lorri Allen, Rhiannon Meyer, Carla Lacerda, Mohammed Ali, Cathy Ross, Joesph Vandehey, David Milian, Jessica Escareno, Lynn Harris, Cheryl Parker, Lauren Kirby, Gina Dudley, Kimberly Elliot, Jennifer Garner, Brandy Meadows, David Christian, Roger Lirely, Christian Alvarado,

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

- Importance of shared governance
- Moment of Remembrance – Mike Morris

### **Approval of July Meeting Minutes Drs. Julie George and Staci Zolkoski**

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

### **Welcome Special Guest SGA President Chloe Dix**

- Eager and excited to share student voice
- Elections occurred and all seats are filled for the first time since she's been at UT Tyler
- Student government is growing
- Representatives from each College
- Please reach out if you want to speak to the students, or if you'd like a student voice.

### **President Dr. Kirk Calhoun Updates**

- Honors shared governance and wants to work with Faculty and Staff Senate to hear voice of faculty and staff
- Has meetings with Chloe (SGA President) to hear student voice
- Working to ensure good communication – although no one is perfect, the President's office sees the importance of communication.
  - Talk with them and together we will work to fix it
  - Communication is key to drive the university forward
- Record enrollment
  - Critical because we are limited in raising tuition – growth is how we get revenue

- Enrollment
  - Research
  - Other opportunities that bring revenues in for us to use
- Able to provide raises, particularly for faculty to ensure we are competitive with other universities.
  - Competitive salary allows us to recruit good people
  - Not completely done.
    - Reallocate resources to process takes a little time.
      - Work with Cindy Scott from HR with questions or concerns
- SC17 – DEI bill passed
  - Legislation is aimed mostly at what university administration can do and how things are organized on campus.
  - Does not impact student organizations or what students say on campus
  - Does not impact individual faculty, staff, or employees except in a few areas outlined.
    - We cannot have an Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
    - Cannot have a workforce specific to DEI.
    - Students are able to have student groups
    - Faculty are able to have faculty groups and can meet on campus but can't get money from the university.
  - Does not say we cannot recruit students
    - Does say you cannot recruit students solely based on race.
    - You can recruit underserved, underrepresented students. You can recruit students from specific communities, those communities that are lacking in higher education opportunities.
  - You can adversity for faculty in a variety of media and cast a broad net.
    - We cannot have situations where we imply qualities and things like that
  - It is federal law to state we are an equal opportunity employer.
  - We are looking at setting up on our website a space for frequently asked questions like many other campuses.
  - Stephanie Fenter is our Chief of Staff and is in charge of our campus planning.
  - Our legal team is helping interpret the law
  - We are here to meet the needs of each and every one of our students. The law does not say you cannot do that. It says you have to do it in a fair and open process.
  - We can celebrate Cinco De Mayo. We can celebrate Black History month and things like that. We cannot have Divisiveness. It's about uniqueness and the teamwork that can be built between people.
  - We need to ensure our students are ready to meet with a wide variety of people because that is what our world looks like.
- SC18 – Tenure bill
  - Tenure is not being taken away
  - Tenure still exists

- They said it cannot be granted by the university; it has to be granted by the board.
  - Board of Regents
    - This has always been the case.
    - After it goes through the whole process here, recommendation goes to the regents – this process did not change.
- Made changes to things like tenure review and how that should be done
- Relatively minor changes
- Regents were easily able to modify Regent’s rules to accommodate that.
- Summary dismissal process has been created – you did something so egregious that Calhoun is going to get you off campus.
  - High crime
  - Other good cause – feedback in our shared governance
- Parking
  - Couple of new parking lots around campus – will lose some green spaces but parking has become a major issue.
  - Long range campus plan with multi-level garages
  - 300-400 spaces added next year
  - Multimillion dollar deal.
    - 5K-10K per space
    - 35K-50K per space to build a parking garage
    - Can’t use state dollars for this – have to have the cash flow for this.
  - Buses helping with off campus spaces

### **Provost Dr. Amir Mirmiran Updates**

- Growth in recruitment, retention, and research
  - Recruitment – broken record in terms of freshmen, transfer students, and graduate students
    - Increase significantly from last year
    - Institutional record in terms of new freshmen
    - Higher quality students
    - Need to make sure we keep them
    - Semester credit hours (SCH) is higher than ever before
      - Taking more courses
      - Interest and engaged – want to make sure we retain that
    - Diverse students – Hispanic freshman and graduate students (29% Freshman, 14% African American)
      - Qualify for Department of Education HIS – Hispanic Serving Institution classification
  - Retention
    - Hiring 6 or 7 advisors to make sure to strategize to best keep students, motivate them, and address their needs – financial, academic, or whatever we can do to help
  - Research

- Senate Secretary and Colin Snider are on search committee for Senior Vice President of Research
      - Going through the process of narrowing down the applicants
      - Hoping to have next steps identified soon
  - Brought in Associate Provost for Student engagement and student retention from University of North Carolina, Wilmington
    - Looking to find ways to have better retention – good comments from her – hoping to strategize
  - Program Health assessment
    - Looking at data of enrollment, retention, program size, admission criteria – program by program
      - Opportunity to expand our QEP to real world relevance – make sure our programs are still relevant
      - Make sure our programs are more based on career skill sets that industries need
      - Strong value proposition for all programs
  - Three-year baccalaureate degree programs are coming up
  - Micro credentialing
  - We want to rethink our programs – we need to work on programs to ensure our market share or particular program within the state is where we think it should be
    - Make improvements as necessary
  - Working with the library to provide OER – open educational resources for students
  - Working with Dr. Kumar from the Office of Online Education
    - Work on micro credentialing and stackable certificates within programs
  - Career Success Conference – working with advisory board with chairs and faculty to ensure it's stronger than in years past.

### **Career Success Conference – Rosemary Cooper**

- Hosting Career Success Conference since 2018
- October 19<sup>th</sup> please join the conference
  - Tightened the schedule a bit to drive attendance
    - Fewer options – at least 100 different options of sessions for students
      - Start with networking breakfast at University Center
      - First two sessions
      - Networking lunch at UC
      - Wrap up day with 3<sup>rd</sup> session (2:45p.m.)
    - 170 different speakers are coming from all over the country
      - Coming on their own – not paying for them to come
      - 65 are our alumni
      - Special sessions this year

- Micro credentials – want to make our students more competitive – job market has changed over the last 5 years
  - HR sessions for reviewing resumes
  - Professional headshots for students – first floor of the library
  - Free leather portfolios for first 500 students who check in
  - School of Medicine and our graduate school
    - Hosting sessions about programs
    - Target audience
    - Undergraduates who may be considering advancement
  - Archer fellowship folks from UT system will talk to our students about opportunities in that program
  - We need an additional 30 moderators to facilitate sessions
  - We need 15 to 20 additional staff
  - University Academy students, Houston, Longview, Palestine and our 100% online students – availability for them
- Career Closet – donate professional clothes
  - Happy to come pick them up for us
  - Students are walking out with a complete outfit for an interview

### **Artificial Intelligence Technology – Isai Ramirez**

- Suppose to talk about artificial intelligence (AI) but will talk about why internet is down
  - Power issues on North Campus
    - Through process of consolidating campuses, our internet traffic flows through the North Campus
      - Consolidated firewalls makes things easier to manage the generators that normally kick in when there's a power outage, but it didn't this time
      - Trying to figure out why – look to figure out why
- ChatGPT and other AI
  - Being used by faculty and students
    - Be very careful
    - Policy/guidance is coming
  - We do not have a contract as an institution that protects information that you or anybody might put into an AI tool – not contract obligation to keep our data safe.
  - Do not put any confidential information into any of the tools
  - Getting closer to offering Microsoft AI products
    - Bing chat enterprise is Microsoft's version of ChatGPT – preview mode – not under our contract – next couple weeks (October)
      - You can type into the chat window and the information doesn't leave our institution.
- Bullet points will be shared with Tahru to share with everyone.

**Graduate School/ORSSP – Dr. Kouider Mokhtari – notes provided by Dr. Mokhtari**  
Office of Research, Scholarship, and Sponsored Programs (ORSSP) and Graduate School  
Updates by Dr. Kouider Mokhtari, Interim Senior Vice President for Research and Interim  
Dean of the Graduate School

1. **Faculty Recruitment and Retention.** Deans, chairs, and search committees are to be commended on hiring a talented group of tenure track faculty during the past two years across all colleges and schools. The Office of Research, Scholarship, and Sponsored Programs (ORSSP) collaborates with schools and colleges on recruiting faculty and assists by providing start-up funding when needed. The hiring of high-caliber faculty contributes significantly to strengthening research and scholarship at the university. On the UT Tyler main campus, during AY 2022-2023, the number of proposals submitted went from 75 to 106, and the number of active awards went from 83 to 135. This accomplishment is due in large part to recruiting and retaining high caliber faculty as well as to the expert guidance and services of the ORSSP pre-award and post-award teams.
1. **Research and Scholarship Showcase.** At a July 2023 dean's retreat, deans reviewed research, recruitment, and retention data pertaining to their colleges and discussed several ideas aimed at improving student recruitment, retention, and research. One of these ideas pertains to hosting a monthly Research and Scholarship Showcase (one per college per month). The goals of this yearly event are to share core research and scholarship focus areas with the university community, showcase selected research and scholarship projects, programs, or initiatives, and encourage research and scholarship networking and collaboration.
2. **Research Compliance Training for Faculty, Staff, and Students.** Starting in October 2023, Dr. Anna Kurdowska, Associate Vice President for Research Compliance, will be hosting a few sessions focused on research compliance topics of interest to faculty such as Intellectual property, research misconduct, export control, conflict of interest. These sessions, which will be offered in person with zoom options, are in addition to the Responsible Conduct for Research (RCR) training sessions offered via CITI-Training.
3. **CAYUSE Upgrades.** Five additional modules are being acquired to enable investigators to collaborate with ORSSP team when submitting grant applications and managing awards via CAYUSE software platform.
4. **Dr. George P. Smith Presentation.** If you missed Dr. George P. Smith Presentation, 2018 Nobel Prize Laureate in Chemistry, entitled "RNA Vaccines for COVID-19: Scientific Achievement, Economic Failure" on Tuesday, September 12, you can watch it here:
5. [https://uttyler.zoom.us/rec/share/4IR\\_CBG2TlcUgVoasOw5Fbby79veT2XrMGJpd3yFKYHMNy0ymW2f-BIMWUEWi9M.2inLyp3dkJIX4PDk](https://uttyler.zoom.us/rec/share/4IR_CBG2TlcUgVoasOw5Fbby79veT2XrMGJpd3yFKYHMNy0ymW2f-BIMWUEWi9M.2inLyp3dkJIX4PDk)
6. **Proposal to Explore Removing Barriers to Graduate Admission.** The Graduate School is collaborating with graduate program faculty, department chairs, and deans to minimize ways in which the application process may act as a barrier to admission. Examples of potential barriers to admission include GRA/GMAT, letters of recommendation, interviews, statements of purpose, samples of writing, Resumes, admission interviews. The goal of this review is to determine whether

current admissions requirements are effective in identifying candidates who will be successful in graduate programs, fulfill professional accreditation requirements, are consistent with admissions requirement trends among peer programs. Deans will work with leadership teams to review admission criteria and determine whether they wish to retain or remove certain admission requirements.

### **End of Course Evaluations – Dr. Josh Banta**

- Updated in past
- Quantitative analysis done by Chris Thomas and Cindy Strong
  - Extend course evaluation window through the finals period
    - Based on feedback from our stakeholders including students
    - Differing opinions – Josh will be talking to all departments to better understand concerns/opinions – over next few semesters.

1:40 – Meeting was adjourned