

# The University of Texas at Tyler

## Office of the Faculty Senate

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Thursday March 18, 2021  
12:30-1:30 p.m.  
Zoom Meeting

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### AGENDA and Minutes

**Attendees:** Lynette Sutter, Katheryn Courville, Mary Fischer, Rochell McWhorter, Colleen Swain, M Gail Weatherly, Amentahru Wahlrab, Yordi Tiruneh, Osama Shoair, Christopher Thomas, Galina Florova, Yonjoo Cho, Pam Maryon, Cindy Strawn, Yonjoo Cho, Mike Kennedy, Amir Mirmiran, Lauren Hendley, Rick Helfers, David Barron, Amy Hayes, Thomas Maryon, Sarah Bowdin, Patricia Royal, Gina Doepker, Kerrie Anne Ambort-Clark, Gisele Abron, Karan Singh, Matt Stith, Sheldon Davis, Barbara Wooldridge, Randall Holland, David Christian, Lou Ann Viergever, Christine Forisha, Chuck Brown, Koudier Mokhtari, Ashley Bill, Colin Snider, John Yoder, Sherry Howard, Margo Duncan, Cheryl Parker, Erin West, Sarah Norrell, Kirk Calhoun, Saren Spicer, Kathleen Helgesen, Robert Muntz, Sarah Sass, Harrison Ndetan, Greg Bock, Malcolm Landess, Michael Vick, Nicole Schugel, Katherine Hensley, Brista Hurst Kent, Melissa Salgado, Sarah Meisch-Lacombe, Kay Jenkins, Rodrigo Rocha, Guohua Yi, Racheal Harrington, Kim Elliott, Sherri Whatley, Torry Tucker, Hannah Buchanan, Janet Gehring, Jessica Escareno, Kathryn Ramirez, Sarah Chadee, Pierre Neuenschwander, Kenneth Bryant Jr. , Jacki Wyman, Gracy Buentello, X. Neil Dong, Kim Laird, Alicia Krenek, Kevin Moore, Kim Nimon, Jeannie Hurst, Lucas Roebuck, Arun Kulkarni, Ericka Freeman, Kim Livingston-Cobb, Jenifer Chilton, Vanessa Casanova, Christian Chesnut, Ginny Fender, Karen Walker, Michael Morris, Nagarjun Konduru, Venkata, Olga Berkout, Nathan Smith, Andrew Barnson, Vivek Pandey, Woonhee Sung, Randy LeBlanc, DEEPAK, Gracy Buentello, Dominick Fazarro, Sydni Blundell, Amanda Pierce, Julie, Andrew Pettee, Janet Gehring, Michelle Crum, Dr.Konduru, Emmanuel Elueze, Colleen Marzilli, Christina Graves, Ashleigh Day, Kim Stapp, Joshua Neaves, Lynn Harris, Woonhee Sung, Marti Halbhook, Ashley Bill, Jessica Holm, Elizabeth Sills, Andrew Krouse, Joshua Menhennett, Mohammed Ali, Brenda Burton, Audrey Komissarov

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|-------|--|-----------------------|
| 12:30 | Welcome and Call to Order  | Dr. Rick Helfers      |
|       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Please write your names in your zoom box</li><li>• Vaccine distribution, message from Gracy via HR and survey to sign up for vaccination so that all can get vaccinated.</li></ul>   |                       |
| 12:35 | Approval of February Meeting Minutes   | Dr. Amentahru Wahlrab |
|       | Minutes were approved  |                       |
| 12:40 | President's Updates  | Dr. Kirk Calhoun      |
|       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dr. Calhoun thanks us all for welcoming him in as the new president. He is excited to see UT Tyler move to its new levels. He had a meeting with Executive Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs Holmes where he was asked about UT Tyler's strategic plan. Dr. Calhoun focused his response on his first 100 days: bringing two campuses together; how to implement any organization changes that needed to be made; change in senior leadership at hospital (new CEO); SACS substantive change review and site visit in April; pandemic response in various locations within the institution; how to open campus back up safely; want to be hopeful about the future but flexible if need be; outdoor graduations (six over two days); all UT will do in-person graduation (except Dallas); masking will be required; if it rains there will be a delay and then a smaller affair; site visit for NCAA division 2...everyone did a great job, site visit recommendation is to recommend UT Tyler become full member; surveying community,</li></ul> |                       |

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students, staff, and students about forming one unified development board for UT Tyler rather than two based on the two campuses; search senior vice president for development; hoping this will result in 4-5 fold increase in donations; Legislature presentation went really well: working on medical funding and accreditation; asked for a unified budget, asked for return of 5% cut from last year and full formula funding return; told vice chancellor Holmes that starting in June the strategic plan will begin to be updated to indicate additional successes or setbacks, any additions (health for example), and to be completed by December 31<sup>st</sup>; Starting in the new year the goal is to create a new strategic, five-year plan during spring of 2022 and get ready by fall 2022. Dr. Calhoun will let everyone know more as we get closer to June. But, this gives an idea of where we are and we are going.

- Q and A: question of what SACS was looking at during its visit (future visit in April), ie, Health or Academic side? Answer: SACS wants to see that the university is actually merging and that there is not something fishy going on. Also want to see if financial situation changed due to merger. This merger equals a substantive change and therefore merits a “substantive change visit” which may put our regular visit into 2023. But the site visit is to physically verify and measure our progress.
- Q and A: branding question about merger; larger university plus health system = 1.5 billion in expenditure thus Eltife wants a better marketing/branding of the university in its new merged form. Bringing in marketers who market UT Austin. System is helping with this. Question from President Calhoun: Do we change the logo? Something that would allow us to leverage our connection to the larger University of Texas. He’s heard lots of complaints about the logo because it doesn’t tie into the rest of the UT system. The goal should be to sell our university as part of the University Texas brand. He was told that system is not excited by the logo. Likely logo change.
- Q and A: will there be an increase in parking in front of the UC; Answer; Dr. Calhoun heard lots of complaints about it but it’s a question of whether we can spend the money to redo it that could be spent on more important things. It’s not a major priority this year and was not on his list. He asked that we remind him of it in the future and not to let him forget about it.

12:55

Provost Updates

Dr. Amir Mirmiran

- Year of SACSCOC; will be hiring an internal faculty member to be a provost liaison/provost fellow to oversee QEP process; Dr. Berman will send out announcement;
- On behalf of Dr. Ross: announcement coming out; inaugural conference academy of teachers; title: where do we go from here; virtual teaching in Texas; Chancellor will be keynote speaker; conference coming soon and all will be interested in the topics presented there;
- good news: extending the tenure clock of faculty who joined in fall 2020;
- lastly: fall 2021 things will be “normal”; want to make sure that there is same composition of face-to-face as fall 2019; at the same time, what permissions needed if that does not happen, we need coordinating board and SACSCOC; so, need departments to look at whether they are interested in offering their degrees or programs online; if not the nothing needs to be done.
- Q and A: The radio station is coming to fruition, hopefully on air in April, 2021

1:10

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Dr. Rick Helfers

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(Continued from February Meeting)

- Last month Ona Tolliver presented on diversity equity inclusion work group and we weren't able to leave a lot of time for any sort of questions. To reiterate: it was created at the beginning of 20/21 academic year. The goal is to create a survey (hired out) and a dashboard (FERPA compliant). The group hopes to promote events as well that will promote a broad conception of diversity. Dr. Calhoun is fully behind this so it has institutional support.
- Q and A: is there room to integrate the medical school which already plans to have an office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). Answer; yes.
- Q and A: offer from Galina Florrova and colleague who has experience with RO1 grants promoting DEI in the research area. Very cool (around minute 52). They already have several grants and want to include undergrads. Dr. Helfers should have contact information as does Chair of Chemistry.

1:20

Faculty Senate Update

Dr. Rick Helfers

- working on writing updates for the HOP that bring together academic/health senates into one body. Goal is to have equitable representation from all areas
- President-elect nominations and elections
- Senator at-large nominations and elections (must be a full professor)
- The last couple of months in the in the Senate through our meetings we had a couple of discussions in regards to the undergraduate and graduate fellowships. Katie Stone, Dr. Helfers, Dr. Kouider Mokhtari, and Dr. Bill Geiger have met a couple of times over the last few months, to look at having an advisory committee that will be able to assist our undergraduate and graduate students to be able to apply for various fellowships. We are trying to identify faculty members that have gone through the process of applying for various fellowships whether it was as a student or as a faculty Member. Again, the goal is to provide mentorship to students to help them win some of these awards.
- Ad-hoc committee for helping to make the campus more family friendly
- Hopefully as the pandemic slows, we start to see more athletic events so look forward to that.
- Q and A about sustainability of office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Dr. Helfers made clear that Dr. Calhoun supports it.

1:30

Adjournment

- KT Helgeson moved to adjourn and Colin Snider seconded: vote to adjourn passed at 1:36pm

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

Dear UT Tyler Faculty & Staff,

Welcome back to the second half of the Spring 2021 semester. Everything we hear about COVID-19 and the vaccine distribution should elevate our belief that controlling the pandemic is right around the corner and we can return to a regular format sometime in the next AY. Recently, everyone received an email from Gracy Buentello in HR requesting your feedback on a survey to determine the amount of vaccines we would need to vaccinate all faculty and staff that want to get one, if University personnel are included as an authorized group in an upcoming tier. (Please take the survey even if you already received the vaccine or do not intend to get the vaccine. We really need a high response rate to ensure optimal planning). If you have not already participated, please fill out the survey. You can access the survey by clicking on the link [https://uttyler.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_8BSY6kY7q9DeCeG](https://uttyler.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8BSY6kY7q9DeCeG).

Your entire Faculty Senate looks forward to seeing everyone on March 18 at 12:30pm. We will have updates from Dr. Calhoun and Dr. Mirmiran. Also, since last month we did not have adequate time to field questions about the work of our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Taskforce, we will dedicate more time this month for updates and questions.

Attached is the Faculty Senate agenda for the March 18<sup>th</sup> meeting along with the following links—

- February Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
- Zoom link for the virtual Senate meeting

Thank you once again for your flexibility and understanding over this past year as we have navigated the challenges associated with the pandemic. I look forward to seeing you online and being of service to you throughout the Spring Semester.

Rick Helfers  
President, Faculty Senate