

TAMIU Faculty Senate Meeting

March 4, 2022; WebEx

I. The meeting was called to order by the Faculty Senate President, Dr. Lourdes Viloría, at 12:02 p.m.

II. *Roll Call*: Dr. Lourdes Viloría, Dr. James Norris, Dr. Marvin Bennett, Ms. Malynda Dalton, Dr. Li-Zheng Brooks, Dr. Deepak Ganta, Dr. Puneet Gill, Dr. Ariadne Gonzalez, Dr. Kameron Jorgensen, Dr. Hayley Kazen, Dr. Runchang Lin, Dr. Gilberto Martinez, Dr. Mehnaaz Momen, Mr. Alejandro Mojica, Dr. Lola Norris, Dr. Leonel Prieto, Dr. Ruby Ynalvez

III. *Our Guests* were given the floor:

Dr. Pablo Arenaz

Dr. Arenaz announced that for the city of Laredo the new covid cases have dropped down into the double digits, with a hospitalization rate currently a little over 7%. However, TAMIU is not going to change its mask and social distancing policy, based on the new CDC guidelines. We will continue to encourage people to wear masks, both indoor and outdoor, and to practice social distancing.

Dr. Arenaz attended a Board meeting a couple weeks ago at College Station. At this meeting, the Committee on Academic and Student Affairs (CASA) had a lengthy discussion about using ACT and SAT test scores for student admission. They want to diminish the impact that these test scores have on admissions, however, TAMIU still uses these scores for the purpose of awarding student scholarships and for regional university funding based on the number of 'at-risk' students (those whose test scores fall a certain amount below the average).

At the Century Council Meeting at College Station there was a discussion centered on college affordability and there was talk of redoing the "Texas Tomorrow Fund", whereby parents start to pay ahead of time for their children's future college. Another suggestion was to use the Purdue University model where students could pay back the university after they graduate by promising a certain percentage of their job income over a specified period of time. A possible system-wide work-study program, where the system paid for the work-study, was also suggested. While at this meeting Senator Lola Norris was honored by being inducted into the Chancellor's Academy of Teacher Educators. She was one of only three individuals in the entire System to receive that honor for this year.

It was also reported that TAMIU is in the middle of a budget cycle, and we are currently putting the budget together. The President will travel to Austin at the end of August to present this budget. Our Legislative Appropriation Request (LAR) for this cycle is going to focus on enhancing our Health Sciences programs. We are also going to attempt to obtain funding for a new Nursing Building.

Daniel Berndt (Environmental Health & Safety Coordinator)

Mr. Berndt had two announcements for the Senate:

- The Office of Environmental Health and Safety is planning several EHS Workshops designed to delve deeper into health and safety topics and to provide individuals with actions so that they can then incorporate them into their work areas. The workshops are hosted on the 3rd Wednesday of each month during the semester and will be held both in person and online at 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. The next workshop will take place on Wednesday March 16th and the topic will be fire safety. For more information and/or to register for a workshop go here:

<https://www.tamtu.edu/adminis/safety/health-and-safety/index.shtml>

- Their office has just recently revised the campus' Emergency Assembly Areas (the areas assigned for people to safely assemble during an emergency building evacuation). This information, as well as a revised map of the new assembly areas, is also on their website.

Dr. Robert Wilkinson (Associate Vice President for Institutional Assessment, Research & Planning)

Dr. Wilkinson reported that the current process for calculating student evaluations has to be performed manually for each individual faculty member because the AEFIS system is not capable of doing the calculations as they are currently reported. This is a process that requires a staff member at least 6 weeks to complete using our current reporting of the mean of the median. If we moved to reporting the average instead, AEFIS can do this automatically and thus free up a staff member to help perform other critical duties.

It was requested that the Senate Academic Oversight Committee meet with Dr. Wilkinson to look at what would be, if any, possible ramifications to changing this metric for faculty assessment. It was also requested that the Assessment Office send the Academic Oversight Committee some examples of calculations done by both methods so that they can study the differences more closely

Gloria Sanchez (Associate Director of Academic Technology)

It was announced that a new one-time-only Accessibility Training is available now on TAMU's Single Sign On and has been made a required training for all faculty who teach online. It was proposed by The Distance Education and Instructional Technology Committee that this training be made a required training for all faculty. This was brought to the Senate for a vote and the motion carried.

IV. The minutes for the February 4th Faculty Senate meeting were approved without further corrections.

V. New Business

A. Teacher of the Year, Scholar of the Year and Distinguished Teacher of the Year Dossiers in the Provost Office (Awards Committee Senators Prieto, Brooks, Gonzalez, & Gill). The Awards Committee had the following questions for the Faculty Senate to address:

- Electronic and paper binders have been submitted for OTY and DTY. Should we allow electronic binders to be emailed to faculty senators during the time faculty senators evaluate these binders (April 16-30th) so that faculty senators can view them at home and in the provost's office conference room? A vote from the Senate was 7 no, 6 yes, so the motion failed.

- Should we ask nominees for OTY and DTY that submitted electronic binders to print out the electronic binder in a paper copy? A vote from the Senate was 13 no, 2 yes, so the motion failed.

- Should we ask OTY and DTY nominees for a video of in-class teaching and then send the video to evaluators rather than request evaluators to conduct in-class observation for this year? A vote from the Senate was 10 no, 4 yes, so the motion failed.

B. Statement by the Texas Council of Faculty Senates in response to Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick's comments concerning abolishing tenure for all new faculty and revoking the tenure of all faculty who teach Critical Race Theory. The Texas Council of Faculty Senates requested that individual Senates add their own voices to the statement that they made opposing the Lieutenant Governor's comments. It was suggested that Senator Vilorio reach out to the Texas Council of Faculty Senates to ask them what the difference is between presenting a statement as a response or a resolution as a response.

C. Technology Issues:

Senator Kazen reported that all faculty who need it should now have access to SPSS statistical software.

An issue was put forward by Senator Lola Norris that computer refreshes always take place during mid-semester, meaning that a faculty member may be without a computer for several days, or even weeks, during the time in which it is needed the most. It was requested that refreshes take place during a time of the year when the faculty member is not teaching classes.

VI. Old Business:

A. It was brought up that the faculty still do not know whether or not we will be migrating to AEFIS for our Teaching Portfolios in the future. This is something that the Senate would like to

see some clarification and asked the Senate Academic Oversight Committee if they could look into this further.

B. Awards committee: to discuss recommendation made by president Arenaz at the last faculty senate meeting to extend the number of years requirement for Distinguished Teacher of the Year and Distinguished Scholar of the Year to five years and the name change of the awards. It was asked of the Senate to please discuss longevity questions for DTY and OTY in faculty department meetings and bring discussion points to the April Faculty Senate Meeting for a vote of the Senate.

C. Fixed-Term Faculty Titles:

Senator Viloría reported that she would follow up on the incorrect titles with Dr. Mitchell to make sure they are the same as the ones voted on and approved by both the Senate and the Faculty.

VII. Committee Reports:

A. The Academic Oversight Committee: no report.

B. The Budget and Finance Committee: no report.

C. The University Ethics Committee: no report.

D. The Committee on Creation, Composition, and Responsibilities of Committees: no report.

E. The Awards Committee:

Senator Gill reported that the Awards Committee will be emailing the evaluators next week to begin the teaching evaluation process for the University Teaching Award candidates.

F. The Faculty Handbook Revision Committee: no report.

Senator Dalton reported that the faculty vote on the Handbook change to increase the releases of the Senate Executives passed.

G. The Assessment Committee:

Senator Ynalvez announced that the committee did meet and are currently working on the Administrator Evaluations for next year. The Committee reached out to the Deans asking them which questions need to be altered and/or replaced in their questionnaires and three deans responded with changes that they would like to be made. The Chairs responded for no change in their evaluations.

H. The Distance Education and Instructional Technology Committee:

Senator James Norris reported that the upgrades to TurnItIn should be complete by the end of the semester to make it harder for the students to cheat on their written assignments.

I. The Technology Advisory Committee: see previous report and attached minutes.

J. Fixed-Term Promotion Ad Hoc Committee: no report.

VIII. Announcements

Senator Vioria announced that the Conversation with the President has been changed to March 30th.

Senator James Norris announced that the Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society has just sent out invitation letters to qualifying students.

IX. The meeting was adjourned at 2:16 p.m.