

Texas A&M International University
TAMIU Faculty Senate
Friday May 5, 2023
12:00 p.m.– 2:30 p.m.
WHTC Rm. 125

I. The meeting was called to order by the Faculty Senate Vice President, Dr. Hayley Kazen at 12:05 p.m.

II. *Roll Call*: Dr. Ruby Ynalvez, Dr. Hayley Kazen, Dr. Marvin Bennett, Ms. Jeanette Hatcher, Dr. Li-Zheng Brooks, Dr. Seong Kwan Cho, Dr. Deepak Ganta, Dr. Ariadne Gonzalez, Dr. Tatiana Gorbunova, Dr. Kameron Jorgensen, Dr. Kate Houston, Dr. Runchang Lin, Dr. Diana Linn, Dr. Gilberto Martinez, Dr. Mehnaaz Momen, Ms. Marcela Moran, Dr. James Norris, Dr. Lola Norris, Dr. Leonel Prieto

III. *Our Guest* was given the floor:

Dr. Thomas Mitchell

Dr. Mitchell presented the Senate with some suggestions for consideration as possible future Faculty Handbook changes for Fixed-Term faculty who wish to be reclassified as Tenure-Track faculty (see attached). Also presented for reference were the current versions of the A&M System Policy 12.07 - Fixed Term Academic Professional Track Faculty and the TAMIU SAP - 12.99.99.L0.04 - Faculty Participation in Shared Governance, for the Senates' consideration (see attached).

Dr. Mitchell also announced that Senate Bill 17 was approved along a party line vote. This bill would ban diversity programs in public universities. The bill will now move on to the House for a vote. Senate Bill 18, dealing with tenure, also passed and has moved on to the House. It was mentioned that the Speaker of the House has not made Senate Bill 18 a priority for House Legislation.

IV. Senator Ynalvez lead the welcoming of our new Senators: Juan Hinojosa, Timothy Rubel, Lourdes Vilorio (At-Large), Cynthia Piña (fixed-term representative) and returning Senator Ariadne Gonzalez.

V. The minutes for the March 31st Faculty Senate meeting were approved with minor corrections.

VI. Old Business

A. Faculty Senate President's Updates (Senator Ynalvez):

Senator Ynalvez provided the Senate with several informational items:

- Certificates of Service for the 2022-2023 Faculty Senate will be sent via email when they are prepared.

- The results for the Faculty Fall Assembly have been compiled and are awaiting responses from Dr. Arenaz. The results of the Administrator Assessments have also been sent to all administrators and we are waiting for responses from the deans and the chairs.
- Senator Ynalvez provided the Senate with an updated "Statement in Defense of DEI, Tenure, and Academic Freedom", as discussed in the previous senate meeting, for approval (see attachment). After some deliberation the statement was voted on and approved 13 for and 1 against. After further discussion a motion was made and seconded that we release this statement only internally via email to the faculty and the President. This was approved by a majority vote. A question was made as to 'when will the statement be released'? A motion was made to release the statement internally to all Faculty and to the President immediately. The motion was seconded and also approved by a majority of the Senate.

B. University Committees and Faculty Senate election results: Senator Hatcher reported that she sent out an email to the Senate about the election results and that an updated University Committees list will be sent to all senators in the coming week. Also, due to recent changes in administration, we should expect another updated list in the Fall.

C. Results of the Faculty Senate Assessment by the Faculty: Senator Brooks presented the evaluation summary for the Faculty Senate (see attached). It was pointed out that even though we had a relatively low response rate for the evaluation, the majority of the evaluators agreed that the Senate is responsive to the concerns of the faculty.

VII. Committee Reports:

A. Academic Oversight Committee:

Senator Kazen reported that the Committee did present the Faculty Assembly Report to Dr. Arenaz, Dr. Mitchell and Mr. Castillo. Dr. Mitchell has responded to his section of the report and Dr. Arenaz will get back to the Senate with his responses. Also, the results were presented to the three Provost candidates.

B. 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 Moran announced that we will be voting for the awards at the end of this meeting and reminded the Senators that they have to refrain from voting if they did not review the candidates' portfolios.

F. Faculty Handbook Revision Committee: no report.

G. The Assessment Committee: see previous report.

H. Distance Education and Instructional Technology Committee:

Senator Moran reported that the new-and-improved Blackboard Ultra will begin to be phased in this summer and the DEITC was asked to help test the new version during the summer. Also, there will be up and coming OIT trainings on the use of AI in the classroom.

I. Technology Advisory Committee:

Senator Kazen reported that there is an AI statement issued by Dr. Mitchell that should go into all Fall syllabi. Also, they plan on redoing the definition of the Technology Advisory Committee because the old definition in the Handbook makes reference to a technology strategic plan, which does not exist. Senator Kazen also mentioned that OIT will be coming out with short quick-tip sheets for the faculty concerning items such as email retention and getting new software installed. The university is currently working on a university-wide common syllabus that will be fully implemented by the Fall of 2024.

J. Committee on Fixed-Term Faculty: no report.

VIII. Senator Ynalvez acknowledged our out-going Senators for their service: Senator Marcela Moran, Senator Mehnaaz Momen, Senator Ruby Ynalvez and Senator Gilberto Martinez.

IX. The 2023 - 2024 Faculty Senate was called to order.

Senator Hatcher, our Senate Elections Officer, lead the elections for the 2023 - 2024 Senate Executive Committee.

- For Senate President, Senator Kazen was nominated and accepted the position.
- For Senate Vice President, Senator Houston and Senator Vioria were nominated.
 - Senator Vioria will be the next Senate Vice President.
- For Senate Secretary, Senator Gonzalez and Senator Bennett were nominated.
 - Senator Gonzalez will be the next Senate Secretary.
- For Senate Parliamentarian and Elections Officer, Senator Hatcher was nominated and accepted the position.

X. The 2023 - 2024 Faculty Senate was adjourned and the 2022 - 2034 Faculty Senate was called to order.

XI. Senator Moran lead the debate and voting for the 2022 - 2023 Faculty Awards:

- Distinguished Scholar of the Year Debate and Vote,
- Outstanding Teacher of the Year Debate and Vote,
- Distinguished Teacher of the Year Debate and Vote.

XII. The meeting was adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

Some Suggestions for the Faculty Handbook

Under “Definition of Faculty Status” and the Major Subheading of “Tenure-Track and Tenured Faculty” (p.37)

Fixed-Term faculty completing their initial 3-year appointment or later who wish to be reclassified as tenure-track faculty must apply for this reclassification following the time-line for promotion and tenure.

1. In order to be reclassified from fixed-term to tenure-track at the assistant professor rank, faculty members must submit to the department chair a letter of application along with a dossier in support of the application by September 1. The letter and the supporting documents should make the case that the faculty member has demonstrated the ability to conduct and publish research of a quality that suggests the ability to be successful eventually in earning tenure and promotion to the rank of associate professor.
2. The department chair will make these materials available to members of the department promotion and tenure committee for at least one week prior to its annual meeting in September to consider all applications for reclassification, tenure, and/or promotion.
3. The department promotion and tenure committee will follow its customary procedures for a confidential discussion and vote on the merits of the application. A member of the committee will write a report to the department chair stating its recommendation and rationale.
4. The department chair, college dean, and provost will then write letters of recommendation to the president following the time-line required in the promotion and tenure process.
5. The president will consider the recommendations of the department's tenured faculty, the department chair, the college dean, and the provost and make a final decision.
6. Fixed-term faculty successful in being reclassified as tenure-track assistant professors will then be eligible to receive a 3 SCH course release to conduct research from the default tenure-track/tenure load of 12 SCH a semester. Unless credit toward tenure is granted by the president when reclassifying the faculty member, the faculty member will be eligible to apply for tenure and promotion at the beginning of the 6th year as a tenure-track assistant professor.

12.07 Fixed Term Academic Professional Track Faculty

Approved September 26, 2008 (MO 327-2008)
Revised August 8, 2013 (MO 192-2013)
Next Scheduled Review: August 8, 2018



Policy Statement

This policy establishes an option for the universities (academic institutions) of The Texas A&M University System (system) to provide long-term stable academic positions for non-tenure track faculty whose focus is heavily weighted toward either teaching or research.

Reason for Policy

Faculty who have a singular focus or area of expertise in teaching, research or service may experience impediments meeting the necessary requirements of the tenure track process and, as a result, are restricted to positions with little or no long-term stability. This policy is designed to provide a means to recruit and retain faculty whose excellence in teaching, research or service make them beneficial members of the system academic institution, while providing them with stable, long-term employment.

Procedures and Responsibilities

1. FACULTY DIFFERENTIATION

- 1.1 It is imperative that members of the faculty at system academic institutions are able to meet and sustain the highly competitive requirements necessary to excel in their positions. The granting of tenure is a recognition of excellence in the areas of teaching, research **and** service (See System Policy 12.01, *Academic Freedom, Responsibility and Tenure*). And, while system academic institutions are able to recognize the contributions that these individuals make, it is also essential that recognition be given to faculty whose interest, excellence or discipline does not include all three areas required for tenure.
- 1.2 The creation of the non-tenure track of Assistant Professional Track Faculty, Associate Professional Track Faculty, and Senior Professional Track Faculty provides a means of securing and retaining faculty who bring to the system academic institution excellence in teaching, research **or** service. This would include faculty whose position is in applied or clinical settings. These individuals provide a specific, professional skill to the system academic institution, faculty, staff and students. In creating these new

ranks, the system academic institution is acknowledging that its skills are an essential part to the overall success of the system academic institution and its mission.

2. PROFESSIONAL TRACK FACULTY RANKS

- 2.1 Assistant Professional Track Faculty. This is an entry-level rank. Appointment to this rank generally requires the appropriate terminal degree. Promotion criteria include excellence in teaching for faculty with teaching responsibilities, or excellence in research or service, as appropriate for other appointments. Overall superior performance and potential for development are also expected as criteria for promotion.
- 2.2 Associate Professional Track Faculty. Appointment to this rank generally requires the appropriate terminal degree. It also requires significant experience related to the position responsibilities. Individuals holding the rank of Assistant Professional Track Faculty are eligible to be considered for promotion to the rank of Associate Professional Track Faculty after at least five years as an Assistant Professional Track Faculty.
- 2.3 Senior Professional Track Faculty. Appointment to this rank generally requires the appropriate terminal degree and a record of sustained excellent performance in all areas of appointment. Individuals holding the rank of Associate Professional Track Faculty are eligible to be considered for promotion to the rank of Senior Professional Track Faculty after at least five years as an Associate Professional Track Faculty.
- 2.4 System academic institutions may adopt titles that vary from those listed above as long as they are differentiated from tenure track faculty titles.

3. APPOINTMENT OF PROFESSIONAL TRACK FACULTY

- 3.1 All new Professional Track faculty members shall be provided with an appointment letter stating the initial terms and conditions of employment. Any subsequent modifications or special understandings in regard to the appointment, which may be made on an annual basis, should be stated in writing and a copy given to the faculty member. The appointment letter shall explicitly indicate the necessary teaching, research and/or service requirements expected of the Professional Track faculty member. Essential job functions for a position may vary depending upon the nature of the department in which the faculty member holds expertise, external funding requirements attached to the position, licensing or accreditation requirements, and other circumstances. It is, therefore, important that essential job functions for each faculty position be listed in the initial appointment letter. For example, all of the following that are applicable should be listed: teaching responsibilities, responsibilities for advising students, independent and/or collaborative research responsibilities, engaging in patient care, committee assignments, conditions imposed by external accrediting agencies, conditions for holding a named professorship or endowed chair, or a position that combines academic and administrative duties, and any other specific essential functions for the position in question. All appointment letters must indicate that the appointment is non-tenure track, and will expire upon the completion of the appointment, unless the appointment is extended pursuant to Section 3.2 of this policy, or unless the faculty member is dismissed pursuant to Section 5 of this policy.

- 3.2 Professional Track faculty member appointments may be made for periods not to exceed five years in length. If, during the course of an existing appointment, the system academic institution chooses to extend the duration of an existing appointment, the extension may not exceed an additional five years. For beginning Assistant Professional Track Faculty, an appointment of no more than three years may be appropriate.
- 3.3 The system academic institution shall notify faculty members annually, in writing, of their salary. Any other changes or additions to the appointment also should be included.
- 3.4 Faculty members are expected to fulfill the terms and conditions of employment for the following year unless they resign prior to thirty (30) calendar days after receiving notice of the terms. This provision should be included in all letters of appointment and annual reviews.

4. EVALUATION OF PROFESSIONAL TRACK FACULTY

All Professional Track academic faculty will be reviewed on an annual basis by their department head or supervisor. Such review will include all requirements established in the initial letter of appointment and any additional requirements added during annual reviews.

5. DISMISSAL OF A PROFESSIONAL TRACK FACULTY MEMBER

- 5.1 Professional Track Faculty members whose appointment has not expired may be dismissed for cause on the same basis that tenured faculty may be dismissed for cause under System Policy *12.01*, Section 4.3.
- 5.2 System academic institutions shall follow System Policy *12.01*, Section 6, when dismissing a Professional Track faculty member for cause.
- 5.3 Professional Track faculty members may be placed on administrative leave pending investigation as described in System Policy *12.01*, Section 5.
- 5.4 Professional Track faculty are subject to the provisions of System Policy *12.01*, Section 9, relating to financial exigency or termination or reduction of existing programs, and may be dismissed subject to this policy.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

[System Policy 12.01, Academic Freedom, Responsibility and Tenure](#)

Member Rule Requirements

No rule is required to supplement this policy.

Contact Office

Office of Academic Affairs
(979) 458-6072



Standard Administrative Procedure (SAP)

12.99.99.10.04 Faculty Participation in Shared Governance

First Approved: March 24, 2023

Next Scheduled Review: March 24, 2028

Procedure Statement and Reason for Procedure

Texas A&M International University recognizes the need for its faculty to be deeply invested in the creation, monitoring, and revision of academic policies, procedures, and programs. Faculty share with academic and institutional administrators the responsibility for creating and maintaining high quality educational programs in a healthy work environment. This Standard Administrative Procedure is meant to document the means by which faculty routinely participate in the shared governance of Texas A&M International University.

Procedures and Responsibilities

1. FACULTY SENATE

Tenure-track and tenured faculty, as well as the fixed-term professional faculty serve on the Faculty Senate as representatives of their academic units. These Faculty Senators are elected according to the criteria and process specified in the *TAMIU Faculty Handbook*. The Faculty Senate is the official institutional organization to represent faculty in all governance matters. The Faculty Senate must approve additions and revisions to the *TAMIU Faculty Handbook*. It consults regularly with the university administration over any issue affecting the academic enterprise. The President of the Faculty Senate is a member of the President's Executive Council, which meets bi-monthly.

2. FACULTY HIRING

Faculty are involved in the hiring processes of their colleagues. Though final decisions about hiring reside with the provost, faculty search committees are composed of faculty in the discipline and/or related discipline of the faculty position to be filled but with at least one committee member from another department. Appointment to these committees is made by the college dean. These committees draft job descriptions, review applications, check references, invite finalists for on-campus interviews with the committee and other relevant parties, and make recommendations to

the dean of their college, who in turn makes a recommendation to the provost, who is charged with making official job offers.

3. FACULTY PROMOTIONS AND TENURE DECISIONS

3.1 Tenure-Track and Tenured Faculty

- 3.1.1. Mid-Term Reviews: Tenured faculty members of a department participate in evaluating a tenure-track faculty member's progress toward tenure and make written recommendations to the department chair and college dean as to whether the faculty member is making adequate progress, needs to improve in one or more areas, or is not making adequate progress and should be given a terminal year.
- 3.1.2. Tenure & Promotion: Tenured faculty members participate in making recommendations regarding faculty applications for tenure and for promotion at all levels – department, college, and university. The *TAMU Faculty Handbook* provides extensive detail on the process.
- 3.1.3. Post-Tenure Review: Tenured faculty members form the committees which work with tenured faculty members placed on post-tenure review to improve their performance. These same committees issue a final recommendation to the dean and provost as to whether or not the faculty member has successfully completed their improvement plan and thus should retain their tenured status.

3.2 Fixed-Term Professional Faculty

- 3.2.1. Appointment: Fixed-Term Professional Faculty begin as either Instructional Assistant Professors or as Clinical Assistant Professors. Their first appointment is for no more than 3 years and is renewable in subsequent appointments for up to five years at a time. See Texas A&M University System Policy 12.07.
- 3.2.2. Promotion: Fixed-Term Professional Faculty may apply for promotion after 5 full years in rank. The process for promotion will follow the process in place for tenure-track and tenured faculty (see 3.1.2 and the *TAMU Faculty Handbook*).

4. ANNUAL FACULTY EVALUATIONS

College faculty members in consultation with their deans develop and approve the specific criteria for annual evaluations of teaching, research, and service and submit their recommendations to the Faculty Senate for approval.

5. CURRICULUM

Faculty members constitute curriculum review committees at the department, college, and university levels. Faculty assess the quality of their degrees and course offerings through systematic assessment of learning outcomes. Based on the results of those assessments, they recommend revisions to both degree and course offerings as well as propose new course and degree offerings. The addition of new programs or courses or the revision of current degrees

and courses requires the approval of the faculty serving on curriculum committees at the department, college, and university. Academic administrators at each of these levels must also approve of these changes.

6. GRADES AND GRADE APPEALS

Faculty control the assessment of student work and course grades. Should a student challenge a grade and not be able to persuade the instructor of the course, the student may request that the department chair form a Faculty Grade Appeals Committee of tenured faculty members in the discipline or related discipline to hear the student's appeal and the instructor's justifications for the grade. Should this committee find that the grade was incorrect or unjustified, the committee may rule, in writing, that the grade should be changed. Then, and only then, would a department chair or dean be allowed to change the grade.

7. GRIEVANCES

Tenured faculty members serve on a rotation basis as members of the faculty Grievance Pool, from which grievance committees are formed to hear formal grievances of faculty members against other faculty members, including academic administrators, and to make recommendations to the provost for resolutions of the grievance.

8. STANDING COMMITTEES

As detailed in the *TAMU Faculty Handbook*, faculty serve on a variety of committees that directly impact faculty work. They have representation on the Budget Advisory Committee, Technology Committee, Distance Education and Instructional Technology Committee, University Risk Management Committee, University Library Committee, University Promotion and Tenure Committee, and the Grievance Pool. Faculty also have representation on ad-hoc search committees for deans, provosts, and presidents.

Related Statutes, Policies, Regulations, or Rules

[TAMU Faculty Handbook](#)

Contact Office

Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, 956-322-2240

Statement in Defense of DEI, Tenure, and Academic Freedom
by the Faculty Senate of Texas A&M International University

The Faculty Senate at Texas A&M International University (TAMIU) strongly supports the academic freedom, diversity, equity and inclusion policies, as well as established and continuing tenure policies that have collectively ensured success for our public universities in Texas. We stand opposed to any attempt to undermine such efforts.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives (hereafter DEI) are of critical importance to institutions of higher education. DEI policies ensure that Texas institutions of higher education serve Texans, regardless of their gender, race, social, religious or political identity. Knowledge generation and research thrive on difference. There is a growing concern that the gains we, as public universities, in Texas, have made in research rankings will be undermined and lost if DEI policies are removed.

Removal of tenure may further reduce our research impact on the global stage. It may also make it increasingly difficult, if not impossible, to attract top-tier scholars, professors, and teachers to our institutions without being able to afford them the possibility of tenure. Furthermore, those currently employed faculty with active research portfolios will likely be top-tier targets for out of state institutions who wish to poach their prestigious research programs and funding. Such out of state institutions will be able to offer opportunities that Texas public institutions cannot: tenure, DEI, and academic freedom.

Abolishing tenure will weaken Texas institution's ability to recruit and retain faculty and to establish a reputation as a destination for both faculty and students. Diversity, and freedom of thought, and tenure are essential to teaching and research. Collectively, these core principles of higher education enable universities to develop cutting-edge research and to graduate students with critical thinking skills, relevant competencies, and academic expertise that empower them to become the next generation of leaders.

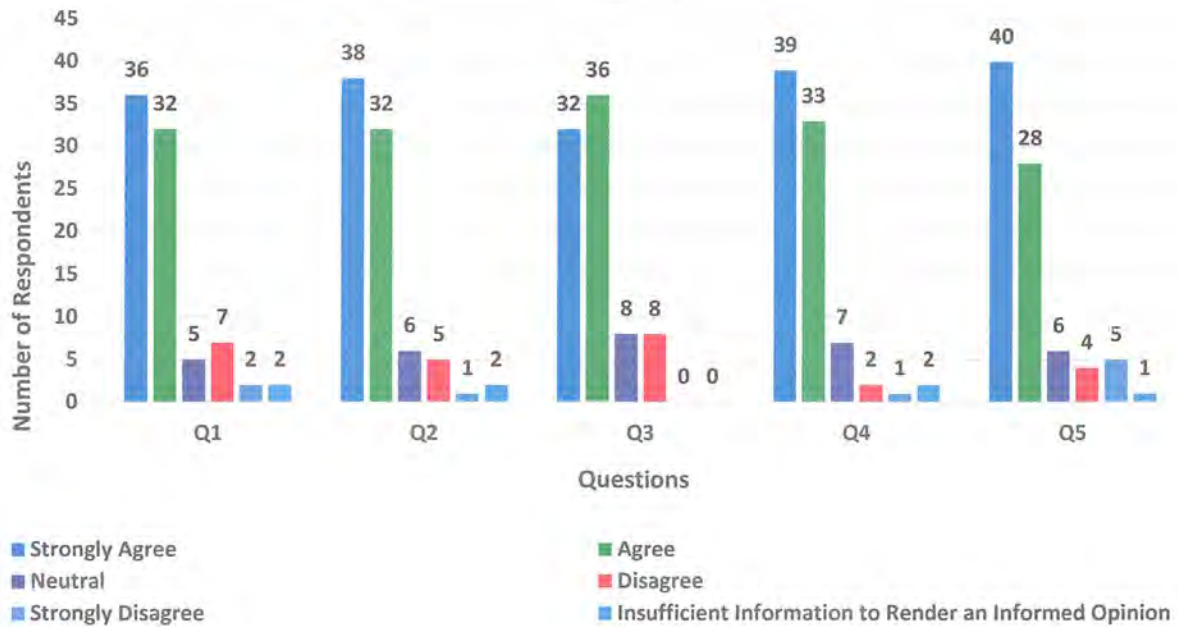
The TAMIU Faculty Senate stands in solidarity with our colleagues at public universities in Texas in expressing profound concern related to the limits which are set to be placed on Texas colleges and universities. We encourage all parties to consider the impact the removal of DEI language and policies, the end of tenure and limits on academic freedom would have on the ability of Texas to conduct innovative research at our public institutions of higher education. In addition, such constraints would also limit Texas' ability to have a global presence as a recognized and innovative state, rising to the challenges of the 21st Century and beyond.



2023 Administrator Evaluation Summary - Faculty Senate							
Response Rate: 36.84% (84 of 228 Expected Respondents)							
#	Question	Strongly Agree (#)	Agree (#)	Neutral (#)	Disagree (#)	Strongly Disagree (#)	Insufficient Information to Render an Informed Opinion (#)
1	The Faculty Senate positively advocates to the administration on behalf of the faculty.	36	32	5	7	2	2
2	The Faculty Senate is responsive to the concerns of the faculty.	38	32	6	5	1	2
3	The Faculty Senate engages in meaningful dialogue with the faculty	32	36	8	8	0	0
4	The Faculty Senate keeps the faculty apprised of developments between faculty and administration.	39	33	7	2	1	2
5	The Faculty Senate serves an important role in the overall university governance.	40	28	6	4	5	1

Note: This table reports the 2023 administrator evaluation survey results on the number of respondents who consider “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Neutral”, “Disagree”, “Strongly Disagree”, or “Insufficient Information to Render an Informed Opinion” for the above five questions regarding Faculty Senate.

**Figure 1 2023 TAMIU Administrator Evaluation Results
Summary - Faculty Senate**



Note: This figure shows the 2023 administrator evaluation survey results for Faculty Senate on the number of respondents consider “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Neutral”, “Disagree”, “Strongly Disagree”, or “Insufficient Information to Render an Informed Opinion” for the following five questions/statements (Qs):

Q1: The Faculty Senate positively advocates to the administration on behalf of the faculty.

Q2: The Faculty Senate is responsive to the concerns of the faculty.

Q3: The Faculty Senate engages in meaningful dialogue with the faculty.

Q4: The Faculty Senate keeps the faculty apprised of developments between faculty and administration.

Q5: The Faculty Senate serves an important role in the overall university governance.

Additional comments for Faculty Senate:

- 1) The Faculty Senate's role is to be an advisory unit for administration. That is shared governance. The faculty senators (a few of those in the Senate now) cannot act or lead based on their own volition or special interests. Faculty Senators represent their respective units and faculty-their role is one of representative leadership and that is a wholesome and organic role that needs to be respected by leaving their own personal agenda at the door when the Faculty Senate meetings are in session.
- 2) Thank God for Faculty Senate. I feel like they give us a voice. Institutions are responsible to themselves, and thus the interests of professors often get overlooked.
- 3) Faculty Senate is largely impotent.
- 4) I appreciate the efforts of our faculty senators, especially Kate Houston, in addressing faculty concerns and ensuring they are heard during senate meetings.
- 5) While Ruby has done a good job as president, the faculty senate as a whole seems to be about nothing but whining (going back to covid). This body could be great but seems intent on being confrontational with the higher administration.
- 6) I appreciate the faculty senate, especially Senators Houston and Senator Kazen, for all the work they have done to make sure our voices as faculty are heard and represented.
- 7) I wish that the Faculty Senate has more power to promote the faculty position on certain decisions made by the administration that are in conflict of fair, welcoming, and free working environment.
- 8) Faculty Senate at TAMU is an ineffective lapdog that just lets admin show up and talk at them for upwards of half of its meetings. Grow a spine and push back for once.
- 9) What's the point of a faculty senate when administration can override it at will?
- 10) Thanks for standing up for a non four day presence and for changing the fixed-term faculty titles!
- 11) The Senate seems more concerned with appeasing admin than advocating for faculty. Minutes remained unpublished for months at a time.
- 12) Faculty Senate appears to have been bullied by admin.
- 13) I appreciate all efforts that the Faculty Senate does for the faculty and TAMU.
- 14) Great job!
- 15) Faculty senate needs to engage more to resolve faculty's concern regarding OIT issues - email access, software usage, prolonged paperwork for simple issue, and many more. Internally open

dialogue between the 'faculties and concerned department' could be an option to resolve this long-awaited issue in a systematic way. We all are committed to maintain institutional advancement and students' success. Imposing unnecessary state rules excuses is a burden to maintain this commitment.

- 16) The Faculty Senate seems to have a tough job. And it appears as though sometimes there is an intransigence that the F.S needs to deal with, from upper administration, because The F.S. keeps having to vote on several versions of upper administration initiatives that have been previously voted down, but that have to be reconsidered repeatedly.-it does appear that FS does a good job of pushing back on knee jerk reactions from upper administration from The System.
- 17) Faculty Senate has been rather active and its operations more visible over the immediate past year.
- 18) The role of the Faculty Senate is to advocate for the faculty, not to bow to the whims of the upper administration. With a few exceptions, they should all be ashamed of themselves.
- 19) Faculty Senate keeps faculty up to date with major administrative and dean's council meetings-- this is extremely valuable and timely. Faculty Senate is an integral part of the community, though I will observe that Faculty Senate should focus more closely on supporting, encouraging, and advocating for *research-productive* faculty first and foremost.
- 20) Faculty senate does a great job. Thank you.

TAMIU Administor Evaluation 2023 Response Rate

Admin Name	Responses	Expected Respondents	% Respondents
Pablo Arenaz	81	221	36.65%
Thomas Mitchell	84	228	36.84%
Faculty Senate	84	228	36.84%
Dean Hong	2	12	16.67%
Dean O'Meara	7	18	38.89%
Dean San Miguel	57	123	46.34%
Dean Sears	13	37	35.14%
Dean Torregosa	15	34	44.12%
Chair Faltis	7	18	38.89%
Chair Ghosh	9	21	42.86%
Chair Goonatilake	9	12	75.00%
Chair Khasawneh	7	13	53.85%
Chair Kidd	7	17	41.18%
Chair Kock	4	16	25.00%
Chair Lelekis	13	24	54.17%
Chair Lozano	9	17	52.94%
Chair Luo	12	27	44.44%
Chair Moyer	7	17	41.18%
Chair Zschrnt	13	23	56.52%
Library Director	2	4	50.00%
Average			43.38%

Technology Advisory Committee

Minutes

4.25.23

3:00-4:00

KL 420

Meeting Facilitator: Dr. Hayley Kazen

Invitees:

San Juanita Hernandez-- Faculty Senate Appointee-absent

Devang Khambhati-COAS -present

Hugo Garcia-SSB-absent

Cynthia Pina-COED -present

Sumalai Maroonroge-CNHS-absent

Omar Ramirez-UC -present

Eva Hernandez-KL -present

Marvin Bennett-President's Appointee -present

Fred Juarez-Finance and Administration-absent

Tony Ramirez-IT -present

Enid Nuez-IT -present

Elizabeth Smith-Institutional Advancement-absent

Rene Prado-Student Success-absent

Mike Munoa-IT; ex-officio-present

- I. Review and approval of minutes
 - a. Marvin Bennet moved to approve minutes
 - b. Cynthia Pina seconded
- II. Old Business
 - a. AI information
 - i. Turnitin: now has AI detection
 - ii. OIT training: Trainings have been conducted and more will be offered, likely this summer. Trainings will include BB and other detection tools.
 - iii. Student Code of Conduct-Dr. Houston working on new policy, Dr. Pina suggested that we ask Faculty Senate and Honor Council to form a committee or committees to work on this to be ready for fall. TAC believes the policy should be on all syllabi in the fall.
 - b. TAMIU app
 - i. No new information as per Carlos Bella: Mr. Munoa expects a new app by spring. The old app is being retired, and a new one has not been selected. We may not replace the old app. This will likely be decided this summer.
 - c. AEFIS information not being updated to TAMIU Faculty Profiles
 - i. Resolution: Mr. Munoa said IT is working on it.

III. New Business

- a. Email retention policy (Enid): Ms. Nunez sent out an email to TAC for feedback. Working on final changes and then it will be sent out to all faculty.
- b. Emails being blocked: Mr. Munoa said he has made some changes to help offset this issue. Domains can be unblocked by IT if necessary. Mr. Munoa will work on this issue more this summer to make it easier for faculty to conduct their work without emails being flagged.
- c. Committee Purpose
 - i. Refocus? Please review information below: Line between DEITC and TAC. Most student learning issues fall under DEITC. Anything that is not directly related to teaching and learning is TAC.
 - ii. Dr. Pina suggested having 2-3 issues for TAC to tackle next academic year. Mr. Munoa believes this is a good idea, but TAC is really a connection to OIT in order to disseminate information to faculty and explain why things are done the way they are.
 - iii. Dr. Pina also suggested that IT pilot new things with TAC
 - iv. Ms. Hernandez suggested that we have more input into how technology in students' spaces should be designed.
 - v. Dr. Kazen mentioned the perhaps creating steps for faculty to obtain free software. Quick reference sheets for email retention, downloading software, etc.

IV. Open agenda

- a. Ms. Hernandez asked about imbedding library information into BB. This is under DEITC.
- b. Discussion of how TAC can support course evaluations. Tony mentioned integration with BB (course eval).
- c. Dr. Pina suggested we change the wording of the TAC description in the Faculty Handbook.

For next year's TAC:

- A. Serve as a pilot group for IT initiatives
- B. Have more input into how to incorporate technology in student spaces
- C. Creating tip sheets for email retention; installing free software, etc
- D. TAC supporting course evaluations
- E. Rewriting TAC description in faculty handbook

The Technology Advisory Committee. The purpose of this committee is to monitor matters related to the development and implementation of the University-based strategic technology plan. The member appointed from the Faculty Senate will serve as a co-chair of the related University Technology Advisory Committee. Other senators with expertise in Information Technology may also serve as appointed by the Faculty Senate President.

From the Strategic Plan

Utilize current and emerging technologies to enhance classroom learning and expand distance-learning opportunities.

1.3.1 Monitor and evaluate the use of technology to support student learning, expose students to off-campus instructional experts, and connect faculty to remotely located students.

1.3.2 Support faculty development for use of technology in the classroom.

1.3.3 Increase the number of online academic programs.

1.2.5 Plan new buildings and renovate existing ones to effectively and efficiently utilize learning spaces, support “best practice” pedagogy, and incorporate new technologies.

STRATEGIES TO INCREASE COURSE EVALUATION RESPONSE RATES

The best way to increase the response rate, and usefulness of course evaluations is to demonstrate to students that the evaluations are important to a faculty. Here are some strategies to do so:

- Give students time in class: Devoting class time shows students that the evaluations are important to you. Announce ahead of time to students to bring a device to class, so that they are able to complete the survey (e.g., smartphone, laptop); Walk the students through the procedure of completing the evaluation in class
- Inform students about the purpose of evaluations:
 - Let students know that you will use their feedback to make changes in the course. This is where utilizing an option to add personalized questions to one's online evaluation form for any given course will be useful (responses to these personalized questions do not get reported, and are available to the instructor only).
 - Give students some examples of useful feedback you have received in the past, and how the course/pedagogy has benefited in response.
 - Use a recent example so students can see how the feedback from prior students benefited them and how their feedback will thus benefit future students.
- Check/monitor the response rate throughout the survey window, and immediately after the in-class allotted time for survey completion. Use the real-time response rate to further prompt students to complete their surveys, and provide additional encouragement.
- Give students periodic updates about the response rate. During the evaluation period, let students know what percentage of the class has responded and that your goal is to receive feedback from everyone.
- Send personal reminder email to students
- Treat course evaluation as one of the course requirements in the syllabus. Include the dates the evaluation is available and explain its importance. Including the evaluation in the syllabus as a course requirement conveys the message that it is an important part of the course - similar to a homework assignment, but a non-graded one.
- Make it an assignment on your syllabus: Listing the Course Evaluation in the same category as the other course assignments, even if no points are at stake, may help raise response rates.
- Offering an incentive of extra points to all students if a set response rate is achieved. (?)
- Provide a non-point-based incentive. Be creative with what is appropriate for your discipline and is motivating for your students, like an additional review session, extending a deadline, or allowing a note card on the final exam; institutional incentive in which those who completed course evaluations got early access to their grades.
- Faculty incentives: Depending on department/college/university resources, offer an incentive to faculty members who reach a certain percentage of response rates. The incentive could be a gift card to Amazon or a local bookstore to use for research and professional development purposes, a gift card to a coffee shop on campus.

"Goodman, Anson, and Belcheir surveyed 678 faculty across a range of disciplines asking them to report how they were trying to boost online response rates. Among those surveyed, 13% reported that they did nothing to improve the rates and that, on average, 50% of their students completed the forms. Those who

did something to encourage students to complete the evaluations generated response rates of 63%. The most common approaches faculty reported were the ones we'd expect. They reminded students to complete the forms, which upped the response rate to 61%, and they explained how the results helped them improve instruction, which bumped the rate up to 57%. But what improved response rates the most (roughly 22%) was to provide students with incentives." (Goodman et al., 2015)

Reminder: Don'ts

- Do not tell students that they should complete the course evaluations because they are important for merit pay, tenure and promotion decisions. Research suggests that students will be less motivated to tie their evaluations to how well they personally are doing in class if this is given as the main purpose of the evaluations.
- Do not use extra credit incentives for course evaluations.
- Do not hold grades for a test or exam until a high percentage of class complete the evaluations. This approach is considered punitive and not recommended.

References:

Web links

<https://support.canvas.fsu.edu/kb/article/1713-increase-student-response-rates-for-end-of-course-evaluations-using-the-response-rate-tracker/>

<https://teaching.berkeley.edu/how-can-instructors-encourage-students-complete-course-evaluations-and-provide-informative-responses>

<https://www.uhd.edu/academics/university-college/centers-offices/teaching-learning-excellence/instructional-excellence/Documents/How%20to%20increase%20course%20evaluation%20response%20rates.pdf>

<https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/faculty-development/course-evaluations-can-improve-response-rates/>

Articles:

Chapman, D. and Joines, J. (2017) Strategies for increasing response rates for online end-of-course evaluations. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 29, 47-60.

Goodman, J., Anson, R. and Belcheir, M., (2015) The effect of incentives and other instructor-driven strategies to increase online student evaluation response rates. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 40 (7), 958-970.