

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

March 10, 2023

1:30-3:00pm

Invitees: Dr. Emily Cutrer, Dr. Melinda Arnold, Ms. Kathryn Montgomery, Dr. Corrine Hinton, Dr. Brian Matthews (Zoom), Dr. Craig Nakashian, Dr. Brian Billings (absent), Dr. Vikram Bhadauria (absent), Dr. Joy Cooper (Zoom), Dr. Rebeca Cooper (absent), Dr. Kelly Cordray (absent), Dr. Sheila Moore (Zoom), Dr. Lisa Myers (Zoom), Dr. James Nguyen (Zoom), Dr. Godpower Okereke (Zoom), Dr. Sebastian Schmidl (Zoom), Dr. Faycal Znidi (absent), Burns Barr (invited guest)

- I. Call to Order at 1:33 p.m.....Dr. Corrine Hinton
- II. President's Report.....Dr. Emily Cutrer
 - a. Update on Better East Texas 3.0; see attachment A
 - b. CUPA salary data will be presented to the Strategic Plan and Budget Board
 - c. Administration does not believe proposed Senate bill 18 will pose a major risk to tenure in Texas
- III. Provost and VPAA's Report.....Dr. Melinda Arnold
 - a. No official report
 - b. Canvas training will be recorded and made available to those who cannot attend sessions
 - c. Adjuncts will be given access to Canvas training in the summer
- IV. DEIB Director's Report.....Ms. Kathryn Montgomery
 - a. See attachment B
- V. University Website Update.....Burns Barr (guest)
 - a. Burns showed the new website to the senators, answered questions on its functionality, and offered a timeline for implementation (late Spring 2023).
- VI. Approval of Minutes from 02/10/2023 and 02/28/2023.....Dr. Corrine Hinton
 - a. Dr. Matthew's moved, Dr. Myers seconded. Minutes approved 9-0-0
- VII. President of Faculty Senate Report.....Dr. Corrine Hinton
 - a. See attachment C
 - b. Reports from ULT meeting (attachment E) and Texas Council of Faculty Senate's meeting (attachment F)
- VIII. Committee Reports & Business Items
 - a. Curriculum Committee..... Dr. Godpower Okereke
 - i. No report.
 - b. Core Curriculum Assessment.....Dr. Kelly Cordray
 - i. No report.
 - c. Educational Technology.....Dr. Faycal Znidi
 - i. The committee has finished reviewed software for electronic portfolios for tenure and promotion

- d. Academic Rules & Procedures.....Dr. Craig M Nakashian
 - i. Proposed revision to Faculty Senate Constitution to insert a quorum requirement and clarify the curricular oversight of Senate
 - 1. Dr. Okereke moved, Dr. Joy Cooper seconded. Motion approved 9-0-0
 - ii. Revising UP 32.01.01.H0.01 (*Complaint and Appeal Procedures for Faculty*)
 - 1. Dr. Okereke moved, Dr. Moore seconded. Motion approved 9-0-0
 - e. Academic Standards.....Dr. Lisa Myers
 - i. No report.
 - f. Faculty Welfare.....Dr. Joy Cooper
 - i. Faculty morale survey has been distributed.
 - g. FRED.....Dr. Rebeca Cooper
 - i. No report.
 - h. Budget Committee.....Dr. James Nguyen
 - i. No report
- IX. Ad hoc Committee Reports
- a. OTAFA.....Dr. Corrine Hinton
 - i. See attachment D
 - b. Course Evaluation Review.....Dr. Vikram Bhadauria
 - i. Recommendations will be considered at the April Faculty Senate meeting
 - c. Developing No Confidence Vote language.....Dr. Brian Matthews
 - i. Proposed language will be officially considered by the Rules & Procedures committee and will be returned to Faculty Senate with a recommendation.
 - ii. Motion made to dissolve the *ad hoc* committee. Dr. Myers moved, Dr. Nguyen seconded. Motion approved 8-0-1
- X. Unfinished Business
- a. QEP Selection Committee.....Dr. Corrine Hinton
 - i. An update on volunteers will be sent out
 - ~~b. Undergraduate students in graduate courses.....Dr. Sikorski or Nakashian~~
 - i. Item withdrawn
- XI. New Business
- a. Ready department Senator recommendations for the 23-24 Senate session
 - i. A reminder to departments who need to elect new senate representation that the handover meeting will be May 12th.
 - b. Respondus v. Proctor U results from department chairs (open to further discussion)
 - i. Departments were in favor of using Respondus rather than Proctor U by a 2:1 margin.
- XII. Next Regular Meeting – Friday, April 14, 2023 at 1:30pm in UC 251 (Zoom option available)
- XIII. Adjourned at 2:58 p.m.....Dr. Corrine Hinton

Kathryn Montgomery

Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Belonging Report

Faculty Senate – Friday, 3/10 at 1:30 pm

Climate Survey

The Climate survey launched February 1 and Closed on March 1. One version was distributed to faculty and staff, and a similar but separate version was distributed to students.

As an incentive, students could voluntarily provide their email address at the conclusion of the survey to register to win one of 5 \$20 Amazon Gift Cards.

I'll just share some of high-level data from the survey today and then let you know what to expect in the weeks and months ahead regarding the analysis and sharing the results with the campus.

Looking at the Student Data – Who Responded to the Survey?

- We had about 350 students complete the survey - 82% of which were Full Time and 16% Part Time
- 84% of the respondents were undergrad
- Students said they primarily chose A&M due to the cost and proximity to their home (Not Mutually Exclusive, 61% chose proximity as the #1 factor in their choice and 44% cited the cost.
- 25% of students indicated size, degree program offered and the reputation of A&M as significant factors in choosing A&M Texarkana
- Students also said they chose due to interesting classes, having the #3 nursing program in the state, great professors and the attitude and kindness of the people who work here.
- The students who answered the survey said they pay primarily through grants and loans although, family contributions and employment followed closely behind.

Faculty and Staff – Who Responded?

Over 200 respondents – 60% Staff, 35% Faculty and 5% Administration

Why A&M _ System Reputation by far, followed by location, EE benefits, and Student diversity

57% of faculty have been here less than 5 years compared to 50% of staff.

The breakdown into colleges: CASE 85% of respondents; CBET about 15%

Analyzing the raw data and working on a report – Expect to share in 4-6 weeks

FACULTY SENATE PRESIDENT REPORT

Dr. Corrine Hinton

March 10, 2023 Meeting

I. “Between Meeting” Business

- a. Annual Faculty Performance Evaluation form, guidelines, and completion guidance (including an amended timeline for the 2022 performance review year) were discussed during the February 10 meeting; however, these items were not officially voted upon. Items (with revisions based on feedback collected during the February meeting) were distributed to Senators for an electronic vote. Voting was open from February 20 to February 23. Final vote was 10 approvals, 0 disapprovals, 0 abstentions)
- b. At the conclusion of the Feb. 10 meeting, no Senator volunteered to chair the QEP Selection Committee. I then sent an email (dated 2/24/23) to **all faculty** calling for volunteers and a reminder email (dated 3/6/23). This issue will be taken up in Unfinished Business as part of the March 10 Senate meeting.
- c. The Senate Executive Committee met with Dr. Arnold on March 7 for discussions regarding summer compensation guidance for summer 2023. Dr. Arnold will take lead on disseminating the results of this meeting.

II. Report from University Leadership Team

- a. University Leadership Team met February 28, 2023. A summary of that meeting is provided as Appendix A, documented by Senate Vice President, Dr. Brian Matthews

III. Report from Texas Council of Faculty Senates Spring Meeting

- a. TCFS met in Austin for its spring meeting on February 24 and 25. A summary of those proceedings is provided as Appendix B, documented by Senate Vice President, Dr. Brian Matthews.

IV. Report from Senate Leadership Meeting

- a. Dr. Matthews and I met with Drs. Cutrer and Arnold on Monday, February 27th
- b. Our agenda [**and responses received thus far**] included:
 - i. Update on salary studies: Jeff Hinton is calculating and reviewing revenue post-census. Emily hopes to have a meeting after spring break with the SPBB (Strategic Planning and Budget Board).
 - ii. We updated Drs. Cutrer and Arnold on the status of the faculty evaluation form and documentation and QEP committee progress
 - iii. Update on the credentialing template: because there was a department reorganization in CASE, Dr. Arnold gave the new Ed Leadership chair an opportunity to weigh in, and conversations will commence after.
 - iv. Dr. Cutrer provided input on inquiries from Governor Abbott’s office regarding use of state funds to support offices of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and informed the state that our DEIB office is not supported by state funds.

V. Other Items of Note:

- A. Commencement is scheduled for Saturday, May 13, 2023 with ceremonies at 9:00am and 11:30am. Faculty who plan to attend should ensure they have regalia (rentals can be obtained through the Eagle Bookstore no later than April 14) and

should be looking for requests to RSVP to Shannon Gustafson as we get closer to the main events.

- B. Reminder to faculty that spring 2023 grades must be submitted no later than 8am on Monday, May 15 to ensure the Registrar and Financial Aid have enough time to complete end-of-term processing.

APPENDIX A

ULT Meeting Recap Feb. 28, 2023

- Kara McDonald, Learning Technologist II, presented Technology Innovation and Digital Education (TIDE) and the significance of digital innovation.
- Kara emphasized her department's focus on University Design for Learning (UDL) and the restoration of Quality Matters (QM).
- Kara is working with Dr. Arnold to hire additional support for her office and envisions expansion to provide digital services for TAMU-T and to become a premier destination in the region for digital learning and innovation.
- Kara expressed plans to highlight amazing faculty who are implementing digital learning in their courses and plans to host technology conferences on campus.
- Canvas training for adjunct faculty to take place on March 24 and March 31. The training sessions will be recorded.
- Michael Stephenson gave a brief presentation on the Big Event (April 1) and encouraged everyone to sign up and participate.
- Jill Whittington and Ayla Baldwin presented an updated wellness policy inclusive of the following changes:
 - Updated to allow off campus activities with the approval of the supervisor.
 - Removed requirement that a program maintain record of activity (exercise at home, walkers, etc.) but maintain that supervisors may require verification of participation.
 - Require application to the program be resubmitted if there is a job change resulting in new supervisor or changes to work schedule.
 - Allow for supervisor to deny participation in program if performance rating is below meets expectations or if there is a PIP.
- Dr. Cutrer gave an update on Salary Equity Study and shared that once the Spring revenue is calculated and verified, the information will be shared SPBB to consider recommendations concerning salary adjustments and to take action.
- Dr. Cutrer stated the system institutions have agreed to keep tuition flat if the legislature can increase the funding formula which will consequently impact low income and at-risk students.
- Dr. Cutrer provided a recap of the presentations given to the Finance Committee in Austin pertaining to the request for BET 3.0 funding. Dr. Cutrer feels optimistic based on the questions asked by the Committee.
- Toney Favors announced that Dr. Alytrice Brown was selected as the new Vice President of Student Life and will start on April 3.
- Jeff Hinton provided an update on the maintenance for Bringle Lake Village scheduled to occur during Spring Break.

APPENDIX B

Texas Council of Faculty Senates Spring Meeting Recap Feb. 24 & 25, 2023 (Austin)

- Primary discussions and presentations focused on the effect of the following house bills:
 - [HB 859](#) prevents undocumented students in public institutions of higher education from being considered residents of Texas.
 - [HB 1006](#) requires that each institution of higher education “maintain political, social, and cultural neutrality” and prohibits institutional support for DEI programs.
 - [HB 1046](#) prohibits requiring affirmation of DEI in admissions, employment, and promotion.
 - [HB 1607](#) places limits on teaching about racial and/or gender identity.
 - [SB 518](#) requires standardized tests for admissions for first-time-in-college, graduate, and professional studies.
- Among the [top 30 priority bills by Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick](#), five (5) bills will focus on higher education:
 - SB15 Protecting Women’s College Sports
 - SB16 Banning Critical Race Theory (CRT) in Higher Education
 - SB17 Banning Discriminatory “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion” (DEI) Policies in Higher Education
 - SB18 Eliminating Tenure at General Academic Institutions
 - SB19 Creating A New Higher Education Endowment Fund
- Dr. James Hallmark, Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs for Texas A&M University System, and Dr. John Hayek, Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs for Texas State University System share their thoughts on the nuances of shared governance in the current academic climate.
- Jeff Blodgett and Brian Evans, President and Vice President of AAUP, respectively, shared ways to effectively respond to threats to higher education and how to speak to state legislators:
 - Go as a private citizen, not a representative of the institution.
 - Use your personal email only.
 - Do not use state-issued resources (i.e., laptops or cell phones).
 - Tell your story about how scholarship impacts student success.
 - Encourage alumni to share their stories.
- Dr. Harrison Keller, Commission for Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), was the keynote speaker and shared the Board’s commitment to the 60x30 initiative (Building a Talent Strong Texas) and workforce education, its support of tenure and DEIB to attract faculty talent and diverse students to Texas, and their work to continue dialogue with state legislators to emphasize the importance of the work performed at the post-secondary level which contributes the economic vitality of the state.

OTAFa Report

Summary of Feb. 21, 2023 Meeting

Dr. Arnold expressed her gratitude for the collaborative members for all of their hard work over the last year and a half in developing the proposal we sent forward some time ago. In her opinion, it came with the general support of all faculty in establishing such an office/center.

She was surprised and disappointed, however, when no one applied for OTAFa Director and wanted to see if we had any indication as to why there was seemingly no interest.

Some of our faculty then provided input as to why there may have been no interest in starting the OTAFa this spring and serving as its inaugural director. That input included: (1) not having a lot of time to complete the interest application, (2) the seemingly overwhelming nature of being the first person responsible for establishing the center, (3) the provost's decision to depart from the collaborative's recommendation for a two-director model to a single-director model, and (4) that a spring start when folks had already made their course plans for spring may simply have not been "the right time" for them to volunteer for this administrative role. All in all, the collaborative members felt the idea of an OTAFa is still worthwhile, still largely supported by faculty, and confidence that leadership of OTAFa could be located.

Dr. Arnold asked if we still felt the responsibilities of the OTAFa leadership were still representative of the group's desires. The group expressed that they were still in agreement, but reiterated the importance of sharing the work through a collaborative leadership model and the importance of allowing that leadership to work with Dr. Arnold directly in shaping the direction of the office and its priorities (essentially, the group provided some recommendations but recognizes that these may evolve in conversations between the actual OTAFa leadership and Dr. Arnold).

Dr. Nakashian, a current faculty fellow focused on faculty engagement, was invited to provide input at this meeting. He suggested Dr. Arnold consider tying the OTAFa leadership to the faculty fellows program, which would help work toward a two-person leadership structure, even if just at the initial first year or two where most of the heavy lifting in starting the office would be. Dr. Arnold seemed really open and supportive of that particular idea.

Dr. Arnold asked if any of us had experienced any negative faculty input with regard to the idea of OTAFa. Dr. Murray shared that some senior faculty expressed the lack of need for someone else to teach senior faculty "how to teach." I shared that budgeting for the office and ensuring we aren't taking from other units/offices in the funding for OTAFa has also been a concern. Dr. Nakashian indicated that he originally wasn't supportive of the idea, because it relied on older concepts he had of an office for teaching. However, in actually seeing our group's proposal, he changed his mind because of its wider focus on faculty engagement and recognition (not just teaching tools and resources).

Finally, Dr. Arnold shared a timeline for a new call for OTAFa leadership. She intends to put out a new call for interest after spring break and a due date of early- to mid-April (in order to announce the leadership to campus before the end of spring and to work with those leaders on summer responsibilities and support).

Texas A&M University - Texarkana
RECOMMENDATION TO FACULTY SENATE

SUBCOMMITTEE: Rules & Procedures

RECOMMENDATION DATE: February 24, 2023

RECOMMENDATION

Revise the first sentence of UP 32.01.01.H0.01 Section 4.5 to read, "The President shall forward a written decision to the faculty member, **along with a copy of the committee report**, within ten (10) working days of the receipt of the Faculty Complaint and Appeal Committee report."

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

By including a provision for the faculty member to receive the report, the complainant will have a fuller accounting of how their complaint was addressed. The new language is in bold.

Subcommittee Members:

- Dr. Craig M Nakashian (Chair)
- Dr. Alan Blaylock
- Dr. Patricia Humphrey
- Dr. Nelson Irizzary (abs)
- Dr. Sara Lawrence
- Dr. Sheila Moore
- Dr. Kim Murray
- Ms. Jill Whittington (non-voting)
- Ms. Jennifer Willis (non-voting)

Vote For: 6 **# Vote Against:** 0 **# Abstained** 0

Action by Faculty Senate:

 Approved Not Approved _____
Faculty Senate President Date

 Approved Not Approved _____
Provost and VPAA Date