

Faculty Senate of the University of Texas at El Paso
Minutes of the Online Faculty Senate Meeting of October 13, 2020

Meeting was held via Zoom:

<https://utep-edu.zoom.us/j/81779667466?pwd=NkZ6K1RZb0hHdFlsem45eG9qNlJodz09>

Meeting ID: 817 7966 7466

Passcode: 468612

Zoom meeting opened at 2:50 pm to allow faculty to check early. During this time, faculty discussed how to reach out to students and to each other.

I. Announcements

The meeting began at 3:02 p.m. with some announcements. Jeff Shepherd (chair of the history department) was invited to discuss UTEP efforts to create a Native Land Acknowledgment.

Núñez reminded senators to check in with colleagues and students; we're in the middle of the semester and some may be struggling and would appreciate knowing others are concerned for their well-being.

Núñez created an informal poll of senators to ask whether we should consider offering a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grade option, similar to the one offered at the end of Spring 2020, given the ongoing epidemic. 56% of those present and responding thought it would be a good idea to explore this option.

Núñez reminded the senate of the State Employee Charitable Campaign and the ideals of Miners helping Miners and others in the community even in modest amounts

II. Determination of a Quorum

A quorum being present online, motion to seat the alternates approved unanimously.

III. Consent Agenda

The minutes of the September 8, 2020 meeting of the senate were mentioned. The motion was made (Padilla) and seconded (Zubia) to accept the minutes as posted. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Additional Announcements

Núñez mentioned the meeting of the UT System Faculty Advisory Council. Dorgo provided additional detail about that meeting. The Chancellor's Office intends to grant a one-year extension of the tenure-clock to all tenure-track faculty. On the question of Annual Evaluation, the Chancellor's Office seems to want to leave this up to each individual campus to address according to local circumstances. Nunez mentioned the formation of FAC committees including a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee in addition to Academic Affairs, Governance, and Faculty Welfare.

Tillman provided a preview of upcoming discussion of "Student Concern Reports." From the Student Grievance committee's perspective, there is a desire to offer compassionate relief to students, but typically those requests reach the committee when it is too late to do very much. In cooperation with the Dean of Students' Office, there is an effort to develop a more overt, clear process for reaching students going through challenging circumstances when there is still time to assist them. Perhaps the available and forthcoming resources could

be featured prominently on syllabi. In Q and A, Warak asked whether the “change of appearance” warning sign could be misconstrued and create stigma for certain students (such as those going through transition). Tillman said that was certainly not the intention.

V. Reports from Standing and Special Committees

Provost Wiebe presented the final draft of a proposal to create structures and pathways for advancement for Non-Tenure Track (NTT) faculty. This policy is the result of several years of effort, beginning with an effort to regularize the titles given to NTT. The second part of the process has been to develop a framework to allow NTT faculty to seek promotion and professional advancement. The policy provides structure, but with broad language that allows individual units (colleges, departments) to create more specific details within that framework. This policy will help some NTT faculty have a bit more stability about the terms of their employment.

Two related friendly amendments were accepted to make final tweaks to the policy. Jeffrey Weidner had emailed Núñez to ask that the phrase “employed by UTEP in that role for more than one year” in 4.4.9.5.2 and 4.4.9.5.3, in part because the August 1st notification date would create problems otherwise. The policy was then discussed.

Zubia asked whether Research/Non-Research faculty ought to be more clearly distinguished in the policy. Wiebe replied that they are distinct in some parts of the policy and not in others, to acknowledge the different sorts of outputs expected of them and partly due to the source of funding for different sorts of NTT faculty. Zubia asked about different colleges’ (for example College of Engineering’s) need for different qualifications for roles such as “Professor of Practice.” Would the policy allow for different colleges to impose different requirements. Wiebe replied that the policy can be tailored according to individual academic units’ needs. Zubia asked, given that units’ budgets tend to be annual, how would multiyear contracts for NTT be budgeted. Wiebe replied that these multiyear contracts would be treated in the same way that tenured faculty salaries are. In general, other cuts would be sought before cuts to full-time faculty.

Núñez moved the question. The policy passed unanimously. (In appendices following the minutes below, the policy and other related information is provided).

Duval then presented proposed changes from the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee. These included: Chicano Studies requesting that CHIC 4308 and CHIC 4309 be counted in Block Electives; Psychology allowing MATH 1309 to satisfy their (a correction: insert “B.A.” here; the B.S. is unchanged) majors’ math requirement; Theater and Dance fixing a series of typos and inconsistencies in their catalog and deleting two courses (THEA 3311 and THEA 4119); and Electrical and Computer Engineering adding EE5391 to its fast-track program. Morales moved the question and this set of changes was approved unanimously.

Tillman spoke about news from the Student Grievance Committee. At the present, all cases have been resolved. The committee is working on ways to offer compassionate assistance to students at an early enough point for the intervention to be meaningful. They are examining best practices around the system. They want to find ways to get struggling students to the Dean of Students early enough for it to be helpful, perhaps with information on syllabi in a prominent place. They are working on the idea of a “Student Concern Report” that could be

generated for the Dean of Students to get a student assistance earlier in the semester. During Q and A, Moya asked whether students get an undue benefit of the doubt. Tillman replied that in his experience, the Grievance committee defaults to faculty wishes, though they try to highlight the special cases of some students and persuade some faculty to offer compassionate assistance.

Jimenez reported on the new leadership of the Teaching Effectiveness committee (he is the new chair, Frederick is new vice chair, Golding is new secretary). The committee has selected UTEP's nominee for the Piper award and are sending the nomination forward.

VI. Presentations

The Recovery Task Force reported on current events. They are trying to get accurate accounts of who is coming to campus presently. This will help with evaluating the effectiveness of protective measures and the campus positivity rate. Faculty are asked to respond to the survey. Núñez reminded the senate of the need to be proactive about setting up the spring schedule, particularly around the problematic issues of synchronous and asynchronous classes. If faculty plan to meet with students, they should have time and date reflected in the spring schedule. Kreinovich mentioned that many faculty “frontload” the in-person part of hybrid class meetings to the start of fall, to avoid the expected late-semester spike in cases. Wiebe remarked that the campus would benefit from knowing if large classrooms that were reserved for hybrid classes will not be used in the last weeks of the semester – some in-person classes could be moved to large lecture halls that are not going to be used for the rest of the term or possibly outdoors if weather permits. Conwell asked about the spring term and the needs of international students in response to federal immigration requirements about attending classes. Wiebe said that the university has this issue in mind, though many things are still up in the air. UTEP is committed to assisting its international students.

Wiebe then reported on the surveys sent out from the Provost's office. Large number of responses. Much to be reassured in these responses – students and faculty realize that the present circumstances are challenging and they seem to be tolerant of these challenges. Some notes of concern in the survey: Students feel that they are “on their own” in some online classes, especially in asynchronous ones; they would like to feel the faculty member's presence in these online spaces. Also, many students report feeling a great deal of stress. Wiebe hopes to get students more information about the counseling resources available through the university. On the faculty survey, many faculty report feeling that they need more help to teach effectively online. Some are also struggling with technological issues. Wiebe hopes to promote the helpfulness of the Help Desk and IT. There are resources for faculty, if they will only reach out or make clear that they need help. Rosas-Acosta reiterated that asynchronous classes can make everyone feel disconnected from the learning experience. Kreinovich reiterated that everyone is capable of giving at least a bit of help or emotional support to colleagues and students.

Then Sirin and Brunk-Chavez jointly presented on potential resources for responding to the challenges of online teaching. Those facing technology deficits should know that the Library, Help Desk, and Tech Support have resources to loan. Because some students wish there were consistency across classes in the Blackboard environment, faculty might like to know

that CID has templates that can be put into a Blackboard shell so that navigating class A and class B will seem similar. Some are upset that classes that were supposed to be asynchronous have instituted synchronous requirements at specific times; faculty must remember to adhere to the sort of class they signed up to teach. Some students wish the faculty member's presence were more sustained, especially in asynchronous courses. The CFLD has many resources that can help faculty do this. Some students miss having peer interactions; some faculty could consider "flipping" the classroom, recording lectures for later viewing and using the synchronous time for peer groups (most platforms have a "subgroup" meeting option). Some students worry about procrastination, without the reminders that come from in-person meetings. Faculty should keep checking in with their students and posting reminders about due dates. Many students feel added stress. Kreinovich recommended having video chats and video office hours to check in with students. Núñez recommended breaking up routines to try new things. Ordaz suggested calling students directly to check in with them. A personal conversation might really help.

Then, Villalobos made a presentation about Community Engaged Scholars. The College of Liberal Arts is encouraging Community Engagement and Leadership (CEL) and has a program for designating courses as part of the CEL movement. The deadline for applying to have a course designated as CEL is approaching at the start of November. With enough CEL courses, the College hopes to allow students to have a CEL designation in their academic programs and a certificate in Community Engaged Leadership. The program is not exclusively for the College of Liberal Arts, so any faculty member with an interest is encouraged to contact Villalobos.

VII. Final Announcements

There is a mindfulness workshop on 10/14. Link shared in the chat: Miners caring for Miners – An Invitation to Mindfulness and Focused Meditation

October 14, 2020 (Wed) 5:30pm – 6:30pm

<https://utep-edu.zoom.us/j/82596505342?pwd=VW95V1NacHB0TjYemlOV0VKcGsxZz09>

President Wilson has asked about the spring semester "How do we come back better?" We should all consider this question.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:37 p.m. Villalobos (move).

Next Faculty Senate Meeting: November 10, 2020 at 3:00 via Zoom

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1. Proposed addition to HOOP with friendly amendment at 4.4.9.5.2 and 4.4.9.5.3 from Jeffrey Weidner.

4.4.9 Initial Appointment and Promotion for Non-Tenure Track Faculty

Initial Appointments: All initial appointments will generally be for a period of up to one year. Appointments will be eligible for renewal based upon satisfactory performance, University needs and funding, and the terms and rank of the appointment.

4.4.9.1 Clinical/Research/Instruction Faculty

4.4.9.1.1 The following are minimum qualifications for initial appointments to and promotions within lines for clinical faculty, research faculty, and faculty of instruction (C/R/I). Refer to 4.1.2.2 for the definitions of each title, including the primary domains of responsibility (i.e., teaching, service, research, creative activity, clinical practice, or administration). Individual colleges, schools, and departments may impose additional or more specific standards, as long as such standards do not conflict with those contained herein, are approved by the Dean and the Provost, and are applied consistently within the academic unit.

4.4.9.1.2 Clinical Instructor: The Clinical Instructor will generally possess the education necessary to meet the respective certification requirements as required by the discipline and/or regional accrediting bodies, and the potential for developing excellence in each domain of responsibility assigned.

4.4.9.1.3 C/R/I Assistant Professor: The C/R/I Assistant Professor will generally possess a terminal degree appropriate for the discipline and the potential for developing excellence in each domain of responsibility assigned.

4.4.9.1.4 C/R/I Associate Professor: The C/R/I Associate Professor will generally possess:

- (1) A terminal degree appropriate for the discipline.
- (2) Five years of time at the level of C/R/I assistant professor or equivalent experience.
- (3) A demonstrated record of excellence in each major domain of responsibility assigned.
- (4) Evidence of significant impact in the discipline beyond the University.

4.4.9.1.5 C/R/I Professor: The C/R/I Professor will generally possess:

- (1) A terminal degree appropriate for the discipline.
- (2) Five years of time at the level of C/R/I associate professor or equivalent experience.
- (3) A demonstrated record of leadership.
- (4) A demonstrated record of excellence in each major domain of responsibility assigned.
- (5) Evidence of significant impact in the discipline beyond the University and the region.

4.4.9.2 Lecturers

4.4.9.2.1 The following are minimum qualifications for initial appointments to and promotions within lines for Lecturers. Individual colleges, schools, and departments may impose additional or more specific standards, as long as such standards do not conflict with those contained herein, are approved by the Dean and the Provost, and are applied consistently within the academic unit.

4.4.9.2.2 Lecturer: The Lecturer will generally possess the experience or education necessary to meet the respective certification requirements as required by the discipline and/or regional accrediting bodies, and the potential for developing excellence in each major domain of responsibility assigned.

4.4.9.2.3 Senior Lecturer: The Senior Lecturer will generally possess:

- (1) Five years of time at the level of Lecturer or equivalent experience.
- (2) A demonstrated record of excellence in each major domain of responsibility assigned.

(3) Evidence of significant impact in the discipline beyond their own classroom.

4.4.9.2.4 Distinguished Senior Lecturer: The Distinguished Senior Lecturer will generally possess:

- (1) Five years of time at the level of Senior Lecturer or equivalent experience.
- (2) A demonstrated record of leadership.
- (3) A demonstrated record of excellence in each major domain of responsibility assigned.
- (4) Evidence of significant impact in the discipline beyond the University.

4.4.9.3 Faculty of Practice

4.4.9.3.1 The following are minimum qualifications for initial appointments to and promotions within lines for faculty of practice. Individual colleges, schools, and departments may impose additional or more specific standards, as long as such standards do not conflict with those contained herein, are approved by the Dean and the Provost, and are applied consistently within the academic unit. The Chair or Program Director in consultation with the Dean will consider teaching or instructional experience in the determination of rank.

4.4.9.3.2 Assistant Professor of Practice: The Assistant Professor of Practice will generally possess:

- (1) At least ten years of significant relevant professional experience that qualifies him or her to teach within the field, or five years of professional experience in the field and a terminal degree; and
- (2) The potential for developing excellence in each major domain of responsibility assigned.

4.4.9.3.3 Associate Professor of Practice: The Associate Professor of Practice will generally possess:

- (1) Significant relevant professional experience within the field; or five years as an Assistant Professor of Practice and a demonstrated record of excellence in each major domain of responsibility assigned, and
- (2) Evidence of significant impact in the discipline beyond the University.

4.4.9.3.4 Professor of Practice: The Professor of Practice will generally possess:

- (1) Significant relevant professional experience within the field; or five years as an Associate Professor of Practice and a demonstrated record of excellence in each major domain of responsibility assigned;
- (2) A demonstrated record of leadership; and
- (3) Evidence of significant impact beyond the University and the region.

4.4.9.4 Promotion

Deans have the option of filling higher-level Non-Tenure-Track positions through a promotion process. The promotion process for Faculty of Instruction, Lecturers, Clinical Faculty, and Faculty of Practice is as follows:

1. The promotion process is initiated by the faculty member in consultation with the Chair.
2. Promotion to a higher rank position requires satisfactorily meeting the requirements for the position as evaluated by:
 - a. A statement by the candidate regarding accomplishments within each major domain of responsibility assigned and evidence of achievement.
 - b. A written assessment by a faculty committee to the Chair or Dean of each major domain of responsibility assigned .
 - c. Other appropriate criteria as established at the discretion of the unit.
 - d. Chair or Program Director's written recommendation to the Dean.
 - e. Approval by the Dean.
 - f. Review of the recommendation by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

3. The candidate for promotion will be informed by the Department Chair of all recommendations at the departmental level upon transmittal to the Dean, though individuals who do not receive a promotion are not entitled to a statement of the reasons upon which the decision is based.

4.4.9.5 Length of Appointments

4.4.9.5.1 For Lecturers, Assistant Professors of Instruction, Assistant Clinical Professors, and Assistant Professors of Practice, an appointment may be for a period of up to one academic year.

4.4.9.5.2 For Senior Lecturers, Associate Professors of Instruction, Associate Clinical Professors, and Associate Professors of Practice, employed by UTEP in that role for more than one year with a faculty appointment greater than 0%, in the event of a decision not to reappoint a faculty member outlined within this section, written notice will be given no later than August 1st that the subsequent year will be the terminal academic year of appointment, except in cases where termination is for good cause.

4.4.9.5.3 For Distinguished Senior Lecturers, Professors of Instruction, Clinical Professors, and Professors of Practice, employed by UTEP in that role for more than one year with a faculty appointment greater than 0%, in the event of a decision not to reappoint a faculty member outlined within this section, written notice will be given no later than August 1st that the appointment will end after two subsequent years, except in cases where termination is for good cause.

Appendix 2: Background on Proposed policy change 4.4.9 Initial Appointment and Promotion for Non-Tenure Track Faculty

Dear Colleagues, in our Executive Committee meeting of the Faculty Senate we asked Provost Wiebe for a brief background and context for understanding the proposed change in policy. Please take a few minutes to review his memo emailed to me. I am attaching the memo along with the policy for us to discuss and vote upon in the Faculty Senate meeting at 3 pm 10/13/2020 via Zoom- see your agenda for zoom link. Join us at 2:50 pm to make sure we make quorum and start on time.

Faculty in the College of Engineering have reviewed this draft and are proposing an amendment. Emails from Provost Wiebe and Dr. Jeff Weidner are included with the proposed policy change. Thank you. Gina NM

Email contextualizing proposed policy change by Provost Wiebe:

Wiebe, John

Wed 10/7/2020 3:32 PM

Inbox

To:

Nunez-Mchiri, Guillermina Gina;

Cc:

Gates, Ann;

Keating, Tami L;

You replied on 10/7/2020 3:41 PM.

Dear Dr. Nuñez-Mchiri:

I write to provide some background for faculty senators on the faculty titles proposal that they will consider in the next meeting of the Faculty Senate.

As many of you know, we've been engaged for some time in an effort to bring UTEP's policies around faculty titles into line with our practices and with policies of other major research universities. Until recently, our Handbook of Operating Procedures (HoOP) did not contain any provision for the budgeted non-tenure-track faculty who make up a significant number of our ranks. A faculty workgroup has been spearheading this policy development effort, with representatives of all the colleges and schools. Additionally, the workgroup included ex-officio members from the Office of the Provost, HR, and the Budget Office.

As important context for the current proposal, last fall the workgroup proposed, and the Senate adopted, new faculty titles defining the roles of various types of faculty, now located in Section 3, Chapter 4 of the HoOP (4.1.2.2). The current proposal is meant to codify processes and criteria for the appointment and promotion of budgeted non-tenure-track faculty, as well as to provide for multi-year contracts for those faculty who have demonstrated a commitment to excellence in their work at UTEP. Process and criteria for appointment and promotion have been designed, like the corresponding University-wide process and criteria for faculty on the tenure track, to provide structure, while being flexible enough for each college and/or department to add appropriate specificity if desired. Length of appointments is defined in 4.4.9.5. Faculty would start with a one-year renewable appointment. Those who achieve initial promotion would be eligible for a two-year "rolling" appointment as outlined by the notice requirements in 4.4.9.5.2. Those who attain full promotion would be eligible for a three-year rolling appointment, as outlined by the notice requirements in 4.4.9.5.3. Regrettably, multi-year appointments are not available to research faculty, who are typically funded by "soft" money and whose appointments are generally limited by the availability of funding from a grant or contract.

Growth and development of the tenured faculty is essential to furthering UTEP's mission as an R1 university. Also essential to that mission is the ability to assign workload differentially, permitting some faculty to focus more on teaching, some on clinical work, and others on research. This policy will help provide a professional trajectory for budgeted non-tenure-track faculty who play a vital role in the life and work of the institution.

This policy has been preliminarily reviewed by Chairs, Deans, the Office of the Provost, Legal Affairs, and the Faculty Senate Executive Council and is ready for review and vote by the Faculty Senate.

Sincerely,

John

John Wiebe, Ph.D. Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

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Appendix 3: Task Force Membership addressing appointment and promotion guidelines for non-Tenure Track Faculty at UTEP

Voting:

Candyce Berger, Professor, Interim Chair of Social Work, and Associate Dean of Health Sciences

Cesar Carrasco, Professor of Civil Engineering

Eric Devos, Professor and Associate Dean, College of Business Administration

Sandor Dorgo, Professor of Kinesiology and President of the Faculty Senate

Art Duval, Professor of Mathematical Sciences

Roger Gonzalez, Professor and Chair, Engineering Education and Leadership

José Maria Herrera, Clinical Assistant Professor of Teacher Education

Amanda Loya, Clinical Associate Professor and Chair, Pharmacy Practice
Denise Lujan, Lecturer and Director, Developmental Math
Gina Nuñez-Mchiri, Associate Professor of Sociology and Director of Women's and Gender Studies
Leslie Robbins, Associate Professor and Assistant Dean, School of Nursing
Laird Smith, Instructor of Marketing and Management
Shane Walker, Associate Professor of Civil Engineering
Ex-Officio:
Joanne Richardson, AVP Business Affairs, Budget
Sandy Vasquez, AVP Human Resources
Arizvé Ochoa Retana, Director Human Resources
Tami Keating, Director of Academic Personnel Services