

University of Texas at El Paso
FACULTY SENATE Meeting
Tuesday, March 18, 2025, 1:30 pm
Blumberg Auditorium, University Library

MINUTES, approved

1. **Call to Order** – Bruce Cushing, Faculty Senate President, 1:35
2. **Determination of a Quorum and the seating of Alternates** – Jose Herrera, Parliamentarian
3. **Consent Agenda** – Nigel Ward, approval of Senate Minutes from February 11
4. **Acceptance or Modification of the Agenda**
5. **Announcements** –
 - Faculty Grievance (ad hoc) Committee: Cushing announced that this will be part of the Faculty Welfare Committee”, and he already has some volunteers for members.
 - Nomination Committee. Cushing announced that he has constituted this committee and will announce the names later by email.
6. **Reports of Standing or Special Committees**
 - Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (Friedman): approved by voice vote.
7. **Old or Unfinished Business** - none
8. **New Business** –
 - Faculty Athletic Representative (FAR) report, Steve Aley. Introduction of the incoming FAR, Ronnie Stout, Nursing. The FAR’s primary role is student-athlete well-being. List of the Inter-Collegiate Athletics Council members, including one faculty member per college. Overview of key rules regarding student athletes. Mention that Denise Holguin, director of the Miner Athletic Advising Center, is also available to answer questions and concerns. Many statistics, including an average GPA of about 3.3, which matches the average GPA for our students overall.
 - Tenure Clock Stopping Idea: Cushing shared various thoughts on the issues raised by federal funding uncertainties. Cushing’s bottom line: “I want the faculty to know that we (the Senate Officers) are here and we care.”
 - Announcement: Cushing noted that President Wilson will be attending the April 8th meeting. He is intending to invite her to speak on the topic of Shared Governance and on Senate Bill 37. He said that he would send an email inviting Senators to send in questions to ask her, with the aim being not to filter them but to collate them.
 - Aside: Cushing called Jack Chessa forward to discuss his thoughts regarding the nominating process. Chessa read an email that he had sent to Cushing advocating for a direct nomination process, in which a mail soliciting nominations would be sent to the entire faculty, not just senators, and the nominating committee would be eliminated,

in the interest of being more democratic. There were questions from the floor about what this would mean in practice.

Bylaws Modification Ideas. Cushing raised the possibility that changes, if voted on in April, could go through a second reading in May and thus meet the criteria for adoption this year. Herrera projected on the screen a draft Bylaws revisions document with proposed changes highlighted in yellow, and walked through it. He noted that much work remains to be done, including re-specifying the roles of the various Senate committees. Cushing referred to a survey that he had sent out regarding possibly changing the Bylaws regarding the term of officers. Question from the floor: could the pronouns be fixed, such that “he” is replaced by “he/she”, etc. Question from the floor: could the results of the survey that Cushing mentioned be made public. Cushing said he would. Comment from the floor: since the survey questions were poorly worded, it would be unwise to rely on the responses. Comment from the floor: one of the senators did not receive an invitation to the survey that was being referred to. Cushing said he’d send the invitations again. Request from the floor: In future for surveys please include a due date and please provide reasonable time to respond.

Senate Bill 37. At Cushing’s invitation, Provost Wiebe spoke about the draft of SB37. He noted that it is very unlikely to pass as written. He discussed the things that the UT System and other players are doing to educate the legislative staff. Comments from the floor noted many specific aspects that could negatively impact UTEP. Cushing noted that he could invite members of the El Paso delegation to the Texas legislature to attend a future Faculty Senate meeting, then called for a vote on whether he should try this. By voice vote, there were an overwhelming number for yes, and 2 for no.

8. Adjournment – 2:48

next meeting: April 8th, 1:30 in the Blumberg