Faculty Senate of the University of Texas at El Paso

Minutes of Faculty Senate Meeting of September 10, 2019

ITEM 1. Call to order Faculty Senate President Sandor Dorgo called the Faculty Senate to order on September 10, 2019 at 3:03 PM in the Blumberg Auditorium of the UTEP Library.

ITEM 2. Determination of Quorum was made by President Dorgo, who called for a motion to seat the alternative members. That motion was made by Guillermina Gina Núñez-Mchiri (Liberal Arts) and seconded by Meagan Kendall (Engineering). The motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 3. Consent Agenda: President Dorgo indicated that minutes were approved electronically for the June 11 2019 meeting, and hence no minutes need to be approved today.

ITEM 4. Acceptance or Modification of Agenda There being no modifications to the agenda as electronically posted, President Dorgo called for a motion to accept the agenda. The motion was made by Hugo Gutierrez (Science) and seconded by Ramon Ravelo (Science). The motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 5. Announcements:
   A. President Dorgo
      a. Welcome new and returning senators. President Dorgo extended his welcome to senators. He stated that he had communicated with all department chairs to ensure each department is represented and that representation is proportional to the number of faculty in each department. He encouraged senators to review faculty senate (FS) agenda items in advance and review with faculty in their respective departments prior to FS meetings so that they come prepared and that their vote truly represents the collective voice of their department.
      b. President Dorgo requested that dissemination of Senate meeting minutes to departmental faculty be timely, as they are sent on the same day or the next day at the latest to all members of the FS.
      c. UTEP Fall Convocation: it will take place September 17th, 3:00 pm, Fox Fine Arts Recital Hall. President Dorgo indicated that UTEP’s President Dr. Wilson was very responsive when he communicated with her regarding the convocation, and she ensured that gets scheduled in a timely manner.
      d. Provost Office representatives to attend Senate committee meetings. It was agreed that there should be representatives from the Provost Office on Senate committees to ensure first hand and two-way communication and that everyone is aware of any matters or business being discussed by these committees. The names of these reps to the FS committees is provided in the attachment on the FS website and below.

      - Academic Policy Committee: Toni Blum
      - Undergraduate Curriculum Committee: Toni Blum
      - Faculty Welfare, Responsibility and Ethics Committee: David Ruiter; Tami Keating
      - Teaching Effectiveness & Development Committee: Beth Brunk-Chavez
- Student Welfare Committee: Virginia Fraire
- Library & Information Technology Committee: Steve Crites

e. State Employee Charitable Campaign started September 1st. President Dorgo stated that Dean Dharamsi (CHS) is the chair of SECC and that he is invited to the next FS meeting to present their goals, and what they hope to accomplish. The goal from last year was exceeded by 14% and the faculty and staff participation increased by 16% (further information can be found on the relevant document on the FS website). Staff’s participation still exceeded that of faculty and one of the goals this year is to increase faculty participation. Also, another goal is to raise the most funds “win” at the state level.

f. Upcoming email approval of meeting minutes. President Dorgo stated that approval of the minutes from today’s meeting will be done via electronic vote. This is to allow the Committee on Committees nominations of faculty on FS committees to take effect immediately, instead of having to wait for next FS meeting to approve minutes. Some of our committees are not functional because of the need for new/additional members, and hence the need to approve the minutes ASAP.

ITEM 6. Reports of Standing or Special Committees

A. Executive Council: membership was announced and President Dorgo indicated that membership is the same as last year (see proposed Executive Council document), except Dr. Diane Monsivais who replaced Dr. Leslie Robbins, as the representative of the School of Nursing. A vote to approve the membership was called by President Dorgo. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Nominating Committee. Dr. Carl Lieb stated that the main function of his committee is to recommend membership for the Committee on Committees and the names of new members are listed on the document on the FS website. A Vote was called by Dr. Lieb and the motion passed unanimously.

C. Committee on Committees. The chair of the Committee on Committees Dr. Maria Duarte announced 16 nominees (with names and the college affiliation) to fill vacancies on various committees (see attachment on FS website). Motion was made to have nominees appointed and the motion passed unanimously.

D. Undergraduate Curriculum Committee. Ms. Carla Ellis, Committee Chair). The committee met on August 28, and approved eight proposals (see attachments). The proposals were presented by Ms. Ellis. A motion was made to approve these proposals and passed unanimously.

ITEM 7. Presentations:

a. President Heather Wilson’s remarks. President Wilson said she has been at UTEP for three weeks now. She mentioned that there is an admin forum on September 12th which is more like a townhall and would allow for individuals to ask questions. Dr. Wilson also stated that it is time to update UTEP’s strategic plan. We need to put strategies together to get us where we want to be, but that it will take one year of listening and talking to colleges and departments. Enrollment is roughly flat (1% increase). We will look at demographics, geography of where we are recruiting, and how to enhance our enrollment. President Wilson also said that we looked/are looking at how we can keep our R1 research status, but also to try to grow into an R01 research institution. She also said that she is looking at the
budget process, and that she may change it a little. Dr. Wilson believes in transparency and would like to allow greater input into this process. President Wilson stated that she meets regularly with Senate President Dorgo for open communication. She said she tries to respond to all emails she receives from UTEP faculty and students, but indicated that it may take her time as she is still learning the process and that she may refer some questions to others to address. Dr. Wilson took some questions and one senator asked if she could look at IT issues on our campus.

b. Provost John Wiebe – Provost Office Core Functions. Shared with FS what the core functions of the Provost’s Office are (see attachment on FS website for further information). The document included the organizational structure within the Provost’s Office and Provost Wiebe highlighted the “Faculty Fellows” who provide faculty perspective, and also receive administrative experience. Provost Wiebe presented members of his office (see attachment). He also reminded faculty that he has started holding office hours and encouraged faculty/FS members to visit with him. He also indicated that faculty may communicate with the Provost Office/him via email or phone.

c. David Ruiter and Roy Matthews – Student Success Framework. Dr. Ruiter stated that the framework is based on our rich history and recognition of student success at UTEP and the quality enhancement plan (10 year plan). They were put under one umbrella called the UTEP EDGE. The purpose of framework include articulating a shared understanding of student success (please see attached document on FS website for further information). The document provides primary outcomes, holistic program outcomes, indicators, etc. Dr. Ruiter emphasized that it is us (faculty) who can help our students and that our support and dedication and investment in our students is what helps them succeed. CIERP tracks many of these outcomes/measures. A senator asked about retention and Dr. Wilson responded by indicating that it has been trending upwards the last several years (about 82% with Fall retention). Another question was about how we compare with other institutions. The response was that we do compare to institutions that are “selective” and in fact we are better than institutions who are UTEP “Peers” in terms of “Access” mission. A question was about graduation rate and the response was that we are doing well (have more than 3000 graduate per year and many complete their degrees within six years). Dr. Wiebe stated that we have to keep in mind that we also look at degrees awarded and that the metrics we measure are chosen carefully in light of our Access and Excellence mission.

d. Marc Cox and Erika Villegas – Bienvenidos Office Hours Initiative. Dr. Cox said that positive professional relationships with our students are very impactful (even a few seconds), and we should strive to acknowledge them in any setting we meet them. The Bienvenidos Office Hours Initiative goal is to encourage students to take advantage of office hours, which is something required of us to have as faculty. We hope to message to our students that office hours are not just for those who have problems. They could get career advice, and this can be very impactful. The face of this initiative started with Dr. Guillermina Gina Núñez-Mchiri, Vice President of the FS. It relates to every type of contact a faculty member has with a student, even incidental can be impactful. The functional interaction, which happens in office hours are also critical, and Dr. Cox encouraged FS members to spread the word to other faculty, to use the door hangers and also put messages on our syllabi. This will help in many outcomes in the Student Success Framework (e.g., degree earning). Dr. Cox indicted that if anyone is interested in being on a poster they should contact him. Dr. Cox also stated that there are some development workshops for faculty (e.g., virtual office; via Blackboard collaborate).

e. Charles Gibbens, Asst. Vice President – New Student Orientation Modules. Since five years ago, the process was developed for student orientation. Students are now required to do online modules before they come for orientation (step 1), but there are two more steps
(step 2 and step 3) that need to be completed (in October). These modules include suicide prevention, alcohol, etc., and some allow us to meet State and our Federal mandates. If students do not do these, they will have a hold on their Goldmine account (effective October 1) until they have completed these modules.

ITEM 8. Old or Unfinished Business none

ITEM 9. New Business: none

ITEM 10. Adjournment: There being no further business before the Senate, President Dorgo entertained a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by John Moya (Engineering) and seconded by Paul Carrola (Education). The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 4:28 PM.

Next Faculty Senate Meeting: October 8, 2019