

Sampling of University-Wide Discussions from a Faculty Perspective

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November 10, 2019 (Version 3.106)

Note: Underlined text is a hyperlink to a Web resource, site or page.

Priorities of the 2019-2020 Faculty Council Chair Brian Evans

- Promote safe, diverse, equitable, inclusive, supportive environments for all students, staff faculty
- Support mental health and counseling services for students, staff, faculty to meet demand
- Strengthen shared governance at the University for students, staff, faculty, administrators

Shared Governance

- Collegial, cooperative, and trust-based organizational leadership
- Involves faculty/staff in decision-making to create a highly effective “all-in” team culture
 - Allows organizations to excel in the generation of knowledge and ideas
 - Sustains high quality education
 - Protects quality and productivity from short-sighted decisions
- Shared Governance at the University of Texas System Institutions: A White Paper (2016)

Sampling of On-Going University-Wide Councils, Committees, and Task Forces

- Faculty Council (111 members) and Faculty Standing Committees (250+ members)
 - Evaluates, monitors, recommends on undergraduate curriculums & degree programs
 - Educational policies and procedures
 - Requirements for admission, honors and degrees
 - Catalog changes requiring approval by UT System or Coordinating Board (THECB)
 - Develops, updates, recommends on University policies for faculty, staff and students
 - Faculty evaluation, workload, compensation, academic freedom, grievances
 - Student services, activities, admissions, and employment
 - Budgets, libraries, research, and information technology
- Faculty Council Task Forces launched in 2019
 - Student Feedback on Teaching
 - Holistic Review of Faculty Teaching
 - Difficult Dialogues and Trauma-Informed Pedagogy in Classrooms
- Graduate Assembly (faculty) academic affairs, admissions, enrollment, employment
- President’s Council for Texas Impact: faculty-led; ideas to shape UT for next decade
- Provost Office
 - University Faculty Gender Equity Council: equity in pay, endowments, promotion
 - Council for Racial & Ethnic Equity & Diversity (CREED): fair policies, inclusive climate
 - Council for LGBTQ+ Access, Equity & Inclusion (Q+AEI): equity w/r gender & sexuality
 - Future of the UT Libraries Task Force for student learning and faculty/staff scholarship ✓
 - Graduate Education Task Force: compensation, time-to-degree, placement, well-being
 - Non-Tenure Track Task Force: contracts, career development, governance, climate
 - First-Generation Commitment Working Group: improve retention, timely graduation
- Student Government including Graduate Student Assembly

Sampling of University-Wide Faculty Council Discussions in 2018-2019

- Faculty issues
 - Impact of faculty workload policy on duties, evaluations and promotion trajectories
 - Gender, racial and other equity issues, esp. on all employment matters
 - Underrepresented faculty recruiting, mentoring, promotion, retention, endowments
 - Faculty retrenchment policy in a financial emergency in fifth year of deliberation
- Freedom of expression: externally facing (window) signage in faculty/staff offices
- Faculty/staff/student issues
 - Increase student mental health services, esp. in colleges for earlier intervention
 - Title IX: need one-stop reporting, timely due process (~500 cases/yr; 6-9 mo. each)
 - Protecting faculty, staff, and students who report allegations of wrongdoing
 - Processes, trends, and goals for undergraduate admission, recruiting, and retention

Sampling of 2018-2019 Faculty Council Resolutions and Administrative Responses

- Resolution: *Academic Analytics* software not be used in individual faculty evaluations
 - Provost Office created a task force to draft recommendations
 - Task Force Report <https://utexas.app.box.com/s/61oicwhfhv1utntlfz21ond0c4w86w0i>
 - Provost Response <https://utexas.app.box.com/s/zp1c10zjtsi3tl2868z0t4u6qauytpfn>
- Added non-tenure-track titles Asst/Assoc/Full Professor of Practice/Instruction
- Implementation of Fields of Study concerning external transfer students
- Created committee to streamline university-level faculty review of curriculum proposals
- Created task forces on course surveys, holistic teaching evaluation, and difficult dialogues

Sampling of Additional General Faculty Concerns Across Campus

- Improve faculty/staff/administrator *connectedness* (e.g. simple notes of thanks, mixers)
 - Seek faculty/staff feedback on administrator job performance (as w/ Dean Iverson)
 - Hold college faculty meetings for Dean to convey vision and discuss long-term ideas
 - Train faculty/staff in same unit *together* to shift unit culture and build relationships
 - Have all faculty/staff in same unit take compliance modules at same time
- University processes to handle allegations of sexual misconduct by faculty/staff
 - Increase transparency in processes and outcomes
 - Add safeguards against retaliation for students, staff, faculty who report allegations
 - Better campus-wide communication from administration to students, staff, faculty
 - Hold Town Hall to facilitate campus-wide dialogue on these issues
 - Restorative Justice for academic units by Prof. Noel Busch-Armendariz (Social Work)
- Uncertainty in promotion outcomes for tenured, tenure-track, non-tenure track faculty
 - President makes final decision: all other evaluations are advisory to the President
 - Increase due process for faculty member being evaluated for promotion
 - Notify candidate when Dean's letter and Dept. Chair's letter available in file
 - Some candidates with unanimous support from dept. & college denied by President
 - Ask President or Dean to provide written explanation of the final decision
 - Uncertainty in early cases affects recruiting faculty from other univ. (UT zeros clock)
 - Guidelines for H index and other quantitative faculty performance measures
- University facing retirement "bubble": hire into all ranks to prevent future bubble
- Provost Faculty Investment Initiative (FII) for tenured faculty
 - Recruit/retain "star" tenured researchers/scholars

- Disrupts morale, equity, salaries, and incentive structures in an academic unit
 - Creates extraordinary salary differentials for equivalent records in academic unit
 - Sends a message that teaching and service are not valued
- Some units receive disproportionate share; others face starvation of tenure-track ranks
- Let academic units advise on FII priorities and decide criteria for FII allocations
- Include dept. faculty in deciding what happens to positions when faculty retire/resign
- Improve research support for faculty retention (UT does not have Sabbatical Leaves)
 - Deans establish faculty workloads as combination of teaching, scholarship and service
 - Deans could award research fellowships to tenured faculty (1 semester paid leave)
 - Review impact of new workload policies on tenured faculty w/r to quality of teaching and opportunities for promotion (e.g. the “12-year rule” for 3-3 teaching load)
 - Increase faculty travel grants (\$1200) to cover costs in presenting at conferences
- Other issues for faculty retention
 - Create pre-emptive offers/awards beyond FII awards and faculty endowment awards
 - Add ways to identify faculty for pre-emptive awards beyond going through chair/dean
 - Define process and allocate annual funding for counteroffers (both currently ad-hoc)
 - Streamline compliance training and reporting, and remove implicit biases in them
 - Provost increased raises due to promotion (now \$10k for Assoc. Prof. to Professor) ✓
- Improve environment for ethical decision-making
 - Faculty/staff to brainstorm on inspiring ethical conduct by faculty/staff
 - Safeguard faculty/staff/students who report unethical conduct from retaliation
- Encourage and value university service
 - Provost created Distinguished Service Academy proposed by Gender Equity Council ✓
 - Include service as part of a faculty member’s workload due to new workload policy
 - Value service in tenure, promotion, annual, comprehensive faculty evaluation
- Interdisciplinary centers/institutes
 - Enhance international reputation of UT and report to a Dean or the VP of Research
 - Could help define goals and benchmarks for cluster and bridging disciplines hiring
 - Could share admin resources & space among related centers/institutes for efficiency
- Increasing administrative positions/costs in upper administration and Dean’s offices
- Provost office set targets for semester credit hours generated from courses each year
 - Semester credit hours (SCH): proxy for *gross revenue* from tuition & State funding
 - Academic units not meeting targets have had their lecturer/TA budgets “taxed”
 - State formula funding adjusts funding per SCH based on field (cost to deliver SCH)
 - Use *net revenue* from courses (i.e. *gross revenue minus cost*) instead or discontinue tax
- Non-tenure-track (NTT) faculty, i.e. those with teaching responsibilities
 - Require NTT search committees for due process, esp. for underrepresented hires
 - Include input, and voting when eligible, in decisions in academic units (see below)
 - Stable long-term employment (rolling three-year contracts; recurring funding)
 - Mentoring and feedback (e.g. annual reviews; third-year reviews in CNS)
 - Compensated professional development (teaching/service/scholarship for promotion)
 - Expand eligibility for Faculty Travel Grants (current NTT need five years at UT)
- Staff issues
 - Difficulty in affording to live in Austin: many salaries below a living wage for Austin
 - Compensate, and provide release time for, professional development (inc. UT courses)

- *Workday* for accounting functions (3x as much time to complete the same task)
- Need to have dedicated Staff Ombuds instead of combined Student/Staff Ombuds
- Increase access to on-campus childcare for faculty/staff/student recruiting/retention
 - UT Child Development Center (Hara Cootes, Director) has 3 locations and 480 spots
 - Waitlist 6/19: 534 infants, 94 toddlers, 8 four-year olds; adding 40 spots downtown
 - Full-time staff (30+ hours), faculty, students have highest/equal priority
 - University added drop-in child/elder care for faculty w/ 50% or more appointments
- Undergraduate studies to career efforts under “student success” initiatives
 - Encourage/provide more lifetime/career pathways “free of judgment”
 - What fields are graduates going into? College Career Assistance Center data?
- Graduate students (Graduate School, Graduate Assembly, Graduate Student Assembly)
 - Increase gradually university minimum salaries for TAs, AIs, RAs to a living wage
 - The Graduate School now covers gaps in covering full tuition for all TAs and AIs
 - Shortage of on-campus housing; lack of opportunities for input on housing policy
 - Faculty compiled Resource Guide to Mental Health Services for Graduate Students
- Graduate studies (Graduate School, Graduate Assembly, Graduate Student Assembly)
 - Guidelines for implementation and oversight of new graduate certificate programs
 - Option III programs: faculty oversight to evaluate financial risks, quality, effects on option I programs and faculty/staff workload, and access by non-traditional students
 - Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) – size ceilings and/or floors, eligibility guidelines
 - Guidelines on graduate student mentoring for studies, career paths, etc. Underway.
- Student wellbeing and wellness
 - Involve faculty and TAs to promote student well-being in learning environments
 - Increase access to mental health professionals in CMHC, colleges/schools, dept., etc.
 - One full-time Psychiatrist for 52,000 students (APA recommends five Psychiatrists)
 - Confidential, private, and non-confidential counseling and other resources
 - Add food pantries in dorms to supplement UT Outpost (2609 Univ. Ave.), La Tiendita (24th St./GWB/MALS) and Social Work Council food pantries

Faculty Governance in Departments and Non-Departmentalized Schools

- Graduate Studies Committee: graduate curriculum, graduate degree requirements. All tenured/tenure-track (TTT) faculty in dept./program and invited UT TTT faculty
- Budget Council / Executive Committee: faculty hiring, promotion, tenure, annual, post-tenure, and mid-probationary review. Default is Budget Council of all full professors.
- General Faculty Committee: undergraduate curriculum, student life/activities, honors. TTT faculty, and NTT faculty with 50% or more appt. for four fall/spring semesters.

Sampling of State Laws to Take Effect in 2019-2020

- Senate Bill 18 on Free Speech Reforms on campus
 - All common outdoor areas are traditional public forums, which are difficult to regulate
 - UT Austin Web site for SB 18; UT System is working on new policy for its 14 campuses
- Senate Bill 25 Transferability of Courses and Credits for undergraduate degrees/majors
 - Adds academic counseling early in student’s studies
 - Universities report how many courses didn’t transfer
 - THECB coordinates two-year curriculum discussions with two-/four-year institutions
- Sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence and stalking laws

Please feel to disseminate this file to others. Feedback welcome.

- SB 212 faculty/staff face termination and misdemeanor charges if failing to report promptly or filing false report concerning an incident involving a student, staff or faculty as victim or perpetrator; THECB can fine institution \$2M for non-compliance
- HB 1735 alleged victim and/or alleged perpetrator can drop class if both enrolled
- HB 449 add “notation” on a student’s transcript when “the student is ineligible to reenroll in the institution for a reason other than an academic or financial reason.”
- UT Austin initial announcement, Title IX Office, and campus resources
- Texas Exes analyzed new State Laws affecting UT: <https://www.texasexes.org/get-involved/advocate-ut/advocacy-resources/briefing-room/briefing-room-may-28-2019>

Resources

- UT Austin Faculty Council Web site <https://facultycouncil.utexas.edu/> and handout
- The University of Texas System Faculty Advisory Council, *Shared Governance at the University of Texas System Institutions: A White Paper*, Spring 2016
- The Chronicle of Higher Education
 - UT Libraries subscription at <https://www-chronicle-com.ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/>
 - Sign up for free newsletters at <https://www.chronicle.com/page/Newsletters/621>
- American Association of University Professors
 - Defined widely adopted Principles of American Academic Freedom in 1915 & 1940
 - Issues facing higher education <https://www.aaup.org/issues-higher-education>
 - Free public access to its *Academe* magazine <https://www.aaup.org/academe>