

**Faculty Senate Minutes**  
 7 May 2025  
 Student Government Chambers (UC 225)

**Senate Leadership in Attendance**

Rhonda Prisby, Chair Elect  
 Adam Annaccone, Parliamentarian  
 Cindy Plonien, Treasurer  
 Kathryn Warren, Secretary

**Senators in Attendance**, followed by the unit they represent  
 (Department for TT, College or School for APT)

Ishfaq Ahmad	Computer Science and Engineering
George Alexandrakis	Bioengineering
David Arditi	Sociology and Anthropology
Amy Austin	College of Liberal Arts
Mahmoud Bayat	Architecture
Kim Breuer	College of Liberal Arts
Janet Burka	Libraries
Christopher Chambers-Ju	Political Science
Heather Charles	College of Science
Morgan Chivers	Libraries
Manfred Cuntz	Physics
Imre Demhardt	History
Thomas Dombrowsky	College of Nursing and Health Innovation
Yaowu Hao	Materials Science and Engineering
Darlene Hunter	School of Social Work
Penny Ingram	English
Theresa Jorgensen	Math
Carie Kapellusch	College of Liberal Arts
Vinayak Kaushal	College of Engineering
James Kelsay	Criminology and Criminal Justice
Andrzej Korzeniowski	Math
Laura Kunkel	College of Nursing and Health Innovation
Catherine LaBrenz	Social Work
Joohee Lee	Teacher and Administrator Preparation
Stephen Mattingly	Civil Engineering
Fred MacDonnell	Chemistry
Rachael Mariboho	College of Liberal Arts
Jessica McClean	Libraries
Hyejin Moon	Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering
Joyce Myers	College of Education
Kaci O'Donnell	College of Liberal Arts
Patti Parker	College of Nursing and Health Innovation

Liliana Pérez-Nordtvedt	Management
Alejandro Rodriguez	Public Affairs and Planning
De'An Roper	School of Social Work
Ritesh Saini	Marketing
Phillip Schroeder	Theatre Arts
Aaron Smallwood	Economics
Whitney Tholen	College of Science
Dan Trott	Kinesiology
Jack Unzicker	Music
Venu Varanasi	Graduate Nursing
Nilakshi Veerabathina	College of Science
Jingguo Wang	Information Systems and Operations Management
Shouyi Wang	Industrial, Manufacturing, and Systems Engineering
Logan Watts	Psychology
Shelley Wigley	Communication
Naoko Witzel	Linguistics
Tim Wunder	College of Business
Xinbao Yu	Civil Engineering
Leaf Zhang	Higher Education Adult Learning and Organizational Studies

**Senators Not in Attendance**, followed by the unit they represent  
(Department for TT, College or School for APT)

Linda Barasch	College of Engineering
Alan Bowling	Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering
Carlos Donjuan	Art and Art History
Donna Firouzbakht	College of Architecture, Planning, and Public Affairs
Ceil Flores	College of Nursing and Health Innovation
Tom Graca	College of Business
Tom Hall	Accounting
Andy Hansz	Finance and Real Estate
Muhammad Huda	Physics
Andrew Hunt	Earth and Environmental Sciences
Joowon Im	Landscape Architecture
Aimée Israel-Pelletier	Modern Languages
Song Jiang	Computer Science Engineering
Cynthia Koomey	College of Nursing and Health Innovation
Aera Leboulluec	College of Engineering
Mark Pellegrino	Biology
Cheryl Prachyl	College of Business
Don Schuman	School of Social Work
Eli Shupe	Philosophy
Gregory Turner	College of Engineering
Regina Urban	Undergraduate Nursing
Rachel Voth Schrag	Social Work

David Wetz	Electrical Engineering
Richie White	College of Liberal Arts

### **Ex officio Members in Attendance**

Tamara Brown, UTA Provost

### **Guests**

Shanna Banda, Faculty Success  
 Mark Cooper, Academic Affairs  
 Minerva Cordero, Faculty Success  
 Ann Hawkins, Faculty Success  
 Andrew Hippisley, Academic Affairs  
 Jennifer Murphy, SSW  
 Anne Nordberg, SSW  
 Morgan PettyJohn, SSW  
 Ashley Purgason, Student Success  
 Peggy Semingson, Faculty Success/CRTLE  
 Holly Slater, SSW

### **Meeting called to order by Faculty Senate Chair Elect Rhonda Prisby at 2:32 pm**

#### **Minerva Cordero, Vice Provost for Faculty Success**

- FDL outcomes
  - 23 applications, 10 were selected; every college represented
  - Two faculty received Fulbrights, so they got FDLs as well
- CPEs (Comprehensive Performance Evaluation, happens every 6 years for tenured faculty)
  - Completing the cycle for this academic year. Mostly completed at Dean's level, but a couple that haven't.
  - 69 undergoing CPE (last year only 35; next year 49).
- T&P outcomes
  - 36 went up; Assistant to Associate 25 total, 22 approved (now submitted to System); 11 to Full, all approved
  - Next year, 59 going up for T&P: 38 for tenure, 21 for full (largest number in one year at UTA)
- Workshops and resources
  - A workshop was held on April 14 for faculty going up for tenure and promotion; most of the 59 attended.
  - There will be biweekly meetings with all the candidates for the next cycle starting Wednesday, May 28. There is a Teams channel where info will be posted (2025-26 Tenure and Promotion). Polled group to find best day of the week.
  - May 14, nuts and bolts workshop for Chairs, committee chairs, admins, anyone who would like to meet and talk about everything that will need to be entered in Digital Measures and what the process is.
  - All the dates for the promotion cycle are on the Faculty Success website.
- N.B.: The tenure and promotion guidelines in place right now are those approved by units; the revisions being finalized right now are NOT the ones to be used for this round.

Senator: Will our new incoming Chair be part of that orientation? (Grad nursing)

Minerva Cordero will double check.

Senator: Could the deadline for external letters be moved so that letter writers don't have to work over the summer, since they don't get paid over the summer?

Minerva Coredero: The dossiers are due by September 2, and requests for letters should go out by May 1. It's the decision of the unit when that happens, though. The tenure and promotion schedule comes from the Regents. It's not just our deadline, but the System deadline. By March 24, candidates let Chairs know they're going up. That's a good time to start asking for the letters.

### **Shanna Banda, Assistant Vice Provost for Faculty Success**

- APT promotion updates
  - 55 APT faculty started the process for promotion, 9 withdrew; 46 completed the entire process
  - 25 applied for Level 1 promotions (e.g., Lecturer to Senior Lecturer, Assistant to Associated); 19 applied for Level 2 promotions; 9 in CONHI still pending, so working with Dean to get that finalized
  - 32 have been noted as successful, 5 denied; 18 successful at Level 1; 14 successful at Level 2
  - This year, two part time faculty participated in the promotion process (in CONHI)
  - Three of the 32 successful promotions included faculty who switched tracks and whose titles will be changed from Senior Lecturer to Assistant Professor of Instruction
- Workshops in October, November

Senator: Why did people switch tracks? Is it because they got their PhD?

Shanna Banda: Yes, to be on the Instruction track you need a terminal degree.

April minutes approved by acclamation.

### **Remarks from Provost Brown**

- Lots of shifts, uncertainty this spring
- Gainful employment work
  - Our process has evolved beyond legislative talking points about salary; what we're doing should be owned by us. It's a statement about what we mean by "student success." We need a new term (TBD).
  - Units asked to submit action plans by April 30; thank you. Over the summer, we'll be looking at the plans and figuring out how units can receive support to implement the plans.
- Summer is a very important time for realizing new student enrollment goals. It is not a down time.

- Enrollment projections are up significantly. Now the challenge is yield. Getting students to actually show up. We need to “minimize the melt.”
- Three “student solution hub” days planned (5/31, 8/2, 8/9); Saturdays when students can come to campus and find all hands on deck: financial aid, advisors, health professionals—everybody. When students apply to multiple places and other places get them enrolled in 15 hours, but UTA doesn’t, they don’t come to UTA. So, the goal is to have all students who attend enrolled in 15 hours by the end of those days.
- Orientations running all summer.
- Commencement
  - Over 5000 students graduating this spring
  - 4300 registered for commencement
  - For the 7pm commencement exercise: there is a big concert happening at AT&T stadium at the same time, so give yourself extra time.
- Visa terminations for international students
  - Students and those on OPT (graduated and working) who had visas terminated; most of those got reversed. Government restored those records. All reversed except for one; there was an error in the record. Student Affairs supporting affected students.
- Student Experience Project (SEP): a community of practice where faculty come together, learn about, and work on infusing proven practices for student success into the curriculum. Deadline for faculty to apply is June 8; questions, ask Ashley Purgason.

Senator: What is hyper orientation as opposed to regular orientation?

Provost: It all matters. We require students to do an orientation, which covers all sorts of stuff that the state says we have to cover. They get assistance picking their classes. But with the student hub dates, there will be more people there. It’s about adding a layer of institutional folks who will also be on site and solving problems, whatever they might be. Making it so that students don’t have to go around.

Senator: What has prevented this from being done earlier?

Provost: Nothing. Personnel. One of the challenges we’ve had in the past is that we’ve gotten responses from faculty who say they can’t attend events that are held on Saturdays. But faculty are often needed to advise about discipline-specific requirements. So when you get called on, that’s what it’s about. We’re not expecting all faculty to do that, but there should be someone designated in the department to do it. Department Chairs, who have summer appointments, can do it.

Provost’s remarks, continued:

- Budget updates
  - Enrollment outlook for fall
    - Fall 24 number was 25,674; Fall 25 target is 26,295; based on students who have applied and we’ve admitted, it could be 26,695; so we are planning for that projection. The bulk of that increase is new FTIC (first time in college).

We'll need extra sections in the core curriculum. Provost's Office providing funds to hire APT faculty to scale up to offer sections.

- There are also transfer students who might be missing something in the core.
- We are in an enviable position. Around the country, many universities are seeing decline.
- Even so, we're not expecting tuition revenue to increase. It will be flat because of the residency status of the students who are contributing to the increased numbers. Not all students pay the same amount. So headcount numbers can significantly increase without the money significantly increasing. We charge out of state students more because we don't get formula funding for them. So the formula funding rate gets passed on to the students. The numbers of non-resident and international students, who pay more, have declined.
- High unpredictability related to international enrollment for the fall. Projecting to be up in international, but given current federal rhetoric, the actual yield is uncertain. International students simultaneously applying to a lot of places.
- Should know in a few weeks what the state's allocation will be and can make better predictions then.
- FY 26 projected revenues
  - State appropriations: combination of formula funding and performance-based funding, which will see an increase of \$16 million (needs to last two years, the legislative cycle); hoping for \$20 million in start-up funds to build out UTA West; non-formula items we hope to benefit from, North TX Water Institute \$10 million; one-time funds from TRIP matching (Texas Research Incentive Program, strategy used to increase research at universities)—donors give, state will match; the state is about 17 years behind paying on the match. Now they're so far behind they're going to call it off, but they're going to pay out what people are owed. If they do that, that's \$17 million in one-time money.
  - Performance-based funding: the state wants more of what we do well, so that's good for us.
  - Tuition likely to be flat
  - We're going to be short because we did merit last year, borrowing against this year
  - Accelerated online in CONHI is trending slightly up
  - Federal grants and contracts, talk of IDC caps (uncertainty)
  - Budget decisions will happen a little later; Provost has not requested hiring proposals from deans. During legislative years things take a little longer.
  - Asked for 3% budget reduction scenarios from all units. Likely to be some kind of cut. Will know more when more of the budget is certain.
- Draft priorities for spending
  - All of this coming off the top
    - Debt (deferred merit)

- Health insurance premiums going up; commitment that employees pay \$0 toward health coverage (state does not give money for health insurance)
- Salary increases with promotions
- Facilities

Senator: With the expectation of adding sections of core classes, how will we have classroom space?

Provost: I'm having conversations with the Registrar about our core scheduling and how to spread is out a little bit more. We need to schedule outside of prime time. We also have a lot of different instructional schedules beyond what is recommended. The more complexity, the more class times conflict. We do have fundamental things to fix to get the space. We run a lot of classes that are underenrolled in large rooms with few students that create space challenges. We need to make sure we're canceling underenrolled classes.

Senator: The scheduling problem is an NP-complete problem. If we raise course caps now, the classrooms we've been put in are no longer available to us. It's difficult.

Provost: I'm still walking around the campus and paying attention to space. I remember visiting a class in COLA, in a big auditorium with 10 students. Why? That class requires a piano, and that's the room with a piano in it. That's a real issue . . . so how can we relocate pianos? Equipment needed for instructional purposes leads us to schedule small classes in a place that could fit more students.

Senator: I'm curious about the TRIP funding. Can you talk about what you've been floating? Are these eligible to be put into an endowment of some kind so it isn't just a one and done expenditure?

Provost: Under the TRIP program, if a donor gives \$100K to create an endowed scholarship, the state matches it with \$100K. The matching funds don't necessarily need to go to what the donor gave for. We are 17 years behind. So there will be conversations about what they money will be going toward. It depends on the gift and the conversations. It's complicated.

Provost's remarks, continued:

- Legislative updates
  - SB 37 being revised. A lot is in there. The latest version says you can't teach one race is inherently superior to another in the core curriculum.
  - SB 17 on housing for Chinese persons (can't buy property) was referred back to committee, working on better language, e.g., people who are legally permitted to be here can buy a house. Reassurance that positive movement is happening. Moving in a better direction.

**David Arditi, Chair of the Research Committee** (Members: Shelley Wigley, Catherine LaBrenz, Janet Burka, Philip Schroeder, Regina Urban)

Spent the year compiling a report, a research needs assessment

- Started with a qualitative look: talking to Associate Deans of research; simple questionnaire about what the University is getting right for their college, where things are coming up short, and ideas for furthering UTA as an R1
- Report has been shared with senators
- Goal is to take the data and create a survey for next year for all faculty, focusing on research
- Wanted to focus on research at an R1; people in different colleges have different viewpoints on what that means; we noticed inequities between colleges; understanding that different faculty have different needs; big emphasis on research inputs these days (how to get more funding), but AAU also looks at research outputs (number of books, citations), so how can we as a university think about research in terms of output?

Committee moves that the Faculty Senate accept the report; seconded. Discussion follows.

Senator: One of their findings is related to the IRB and the time it takes. I've had the experience of having an IRB approval take an entire semester. It's hard to be an R1 researcher with that wait time. They don't have enough people at the unit to do it efficiently.

David Ardit: Every ADR mentioned a problem with the IRB.

Senator: What are you hoping to measure with the survey?

David Ardit: It will be geared toward looking at some of these issues and trying to figure out how widespread they are and to what degree faculty think the problems have an impact on their productivity.

Senator: We in English were asked to take a survey like that.

David Ardit: That was the ADR of COLA who circulated the survey. Some ADRs went to research committees in order to answer our questions, and that's what happened with COLA.

Chair Elect: What ultimately are you hoping to happen?

David Ardit: It will be the VPRI, the Provost, and individual deans. Not all of it is handled by the VPRI. A big complaint that came up was access to software licenses. But it might be that some colleges pay for those licenses and others don't. So how do we negotiate that? We need to provide the data and show where the gaps are.

Senator: Not having the license for NVivo is a real issue because we're all encouraged to do mixed research methods.

Senator: Regarding limited leave opportunities. Do you think we at UTA can address this, or is it a system issue, or a legislative issue? Where is the roadblock? How can we get the trajectory significantly improved?



David Arditi: 23 people applied for FDLs and only 10 got one; that seems to be a budgetary issue. One of the comments we received about FDLs has to do with concerns that the rules about how to get it don't align with what people actually need time off to do. A lot of it is the completion of a project, but for many people the completion isn't the problem. The fundamental framing of the FDL might be the issue.

Senate votes to endorse the report (with one abstention, the rest yeas)

Senate moves into Faculty Senate forum (executive session)

**Meeting adjourned 4:35 pm**