

The University of Texas Health Science Center at Tyler
Faculty Senate Meeting
BMR – 612.2 Conference Room
April 25, 2018
2:00-3:00 PM

Attendees:

Vijaya Rao (Lella), Ph.D.
Pattie Olusola, MD
Hua Tang, Ph.D.
Torry Tucker, Ph.D.
Vijay Boggaram, Ph.D.
Barbara Elliott – MS, MT
Leo Holm, M.D. – via. Skyped (briefly)

Others Present:

Anna Kurdowska, Ph.D.
Katie Hall – Academic Admin Coordinator
Paula Austin - Secretary

Approval of Minutes:

Minutes from February's meeting were approved as written. Since there was no Faculty Senate meeting in March, there were no minutes for March.

FAC Update:

Dr. Rao and Dr. Holm both attended the April Faculty Advisory Council meeting in Austin. They attended a reception for the Chancellor where the FAC thanked him for his leadership to the UT System and guidance to the FAC, particularly initiating the mechanism of Shared Governance. Other UT administrators also attended the reception.

In cooperation with the US census, the UT system developed a website called UT Seek. The purpose of the site is to show students as well as parents the demographics of UT System and the educational value that schools in the UT System bring. UT Seek is a public website where you select any campus, enter your major or college of interest and the site will give you the costs for education, including loan burden and earnings of UT graduates. It is a wonderful tool and very transparent for students, but one should be cautious in interpreting the data as there may be caveats (it does not include information from the unemployed pool).

Dr. Rao stated that a national symposium on physician burn out held at MD Anderson in Sept 2017, whose idea came from the FAC, was highly successful. National leaders in this area attended these meetings and gave good personal testimonies. There are an extensive collection of video interviews

with presenters and attendees. They are available at the FAC or MD Anderson web sites. It was believed that the material could make a good documentary film. This will be explored in future.

The FAC also discussed the issue about high school students taking the 80/90 college credit classes in high school and then finish and graduate college in less than a year. There is a lot of debate concerning students and studies show that it may not a good idea because they are missing the college experience and the standards are not viewed the same across the state. The dual credit in community college is different from that in high school. The goal is to help students get the proper education so they will not end up in a class they do not understand.

Another topic that was discussed is Paid Parental Leave for faculty. There are some campuses (academic campuses) that do not provide paid vacation leave. If a woman is on maternity leave, she has no pay, and the committee is seeking possible ways of helping this issue. The committee suggested using sick leave pool donations and spoke with the counselor from UT System. Unfortunately, the laws in the state of Texas will not allow these donations to be used, unless there is a change in the rules to compensate the paid leave. The committee may have to explore various options, including talking with legislatures and lobby the state to change this law, but it will be a long process.

UTHSCT Website:

The Senate previously discussed having a website for UTHSCT that may be different from UT Health East Texas. It was learned that Office of Academic Affairs had been working on this. Dr. Neuenschwander sent his representative, Katie Hall, to provide an update on this. Ms. Hall first explained that the website is a work in progress and then she gave a demonstration of how it will look and how everything is progressing. The website will represent all three schools, and one feature will be that students will be able to download the school catalog as a pdf file. Additional recommendations and suggestions were given to Ms. Hall, and she reminded the committee that there was no definite completion date and that it would be months before the project will be complete.

Faculty Senate Committee Formation:

Formation of three Faculty Senate committees - Academic Affairs, Faculty Governance, and Faculty Status and Welfare – were initiated. There were a few volunteers from Research and the School of Community and Rural Health to serve on these committees and one from clinical faculty. The Senate prefers to have at least one member from the clinical side in these committees. Dr. Rao stressed that if anyone had any names of people who are interested and willing to participate to please send the names to him. Assigning a committee chair to each committee from the Faculty Senate was suggested so that each committee could inform their working to the Faculty Senate. Dr. Rao discussed with the Senate about the Faculty Senate committee's responsibilities. For example, the governance committee will handle any policies related to faculty or the university, such as working on a grievance policy and reviewing and revising IHOP, etc. Faculty Status and Welfare committee can work on fair faculty compensation policies, promotion and tenure policies, and other policies relate to faculty whereas Academic Affairs can work on reviewing course catalog, curriculum and other academic issues, and

assist in SACS accreditation. Dr. Rao stated that the structure of these committees is critical and it could be really beneficial for everyone.

Compensation:

The Senate thought it is important to gather information on faculty compensation before discussing it objectively. Although this information is public and can be found online, it was outdated. Furthermore, it was also difficult to analyze this information as they show total compensation and not the base salary. It is better to get accurate information from the department or Human Resources. It was suggested when requesting the information from Human Resources, it would be better for the chair member to go and explain that you are working for the Senate Committee instead of going personally. It was also suggested to request “blind” data from Human Resources when requesting information. For example, only request titles and salaries, but no names and this may make it easier for them to share information. Dr. Rao reminded the committee that the goal is to make everything fair and transparent.

Mandatory Policies:

Some members of the Senate expressed that that patient care policies are being made during the new transition and some are not conducive for Research. One example was given regarding latex gloves and the mandate that ALL employees should only use latex; however, on the Research side, nitrile gloves are sometimes used. Another example was asking all employees to take annual training module that applies to patient care. It was suggested that the language of the policies should be written with consideration of Research and Academic entities before implementation. A minor modification, including a clause of exclusion for Research and Academic entities, who are not involved in patient care, from mandatory policies that are applicable to patient care.

Research Integrity:

Dr. Rao spoke about the responsible conduct of Research and training and that Dr. Idell suggested that we have some kind of policy of how you maintain lab documentation and have the principle investigators sign off on it. Dr. Rao searched other universities for a policy of this kind but could not find one. It was strongly suggested that maybe a new policy was not needed, but a firm reminder of the mandate that is given by federal bodies that give federal money to Research is to document data on what you are researching and store the data in appropriate forms where it can be easily retrievable. It was also suggested to offer data recording training to post docs and other lab staff and ask the PIs to check on it. The committee agreed that a reminder memo should be drafted, attach a template and given to Dr. Idell and suggest that it be given to each PI with a general reminder regarding the scientific misconduct policy and for this template to be permanently placed there.

Meeting adjourned

3:05 PM

Rao/PA