**Faculty Advisory Council Meeting**

**UTS Administration Building, 210 West 7th Street, Austin, TX  
2nd Floor Multi-Purpose Conference Room**

**April 28, 2022 – Day 1**

Meeting called to order at 10:06 am

Faculty Advisory Committee Chair Dr. Nikos Vasilakis welcomes the attending FAC members and previews the agenda of the meeting. He lays out the intention to talk about tenure during an executive session with FAC leadership and gives a preview about the work being done by the committees.

Chair-Elect Dr. Coursey joins in welcoming the group. He reports that the EC work on COVID and the resolution that the EC generated in Fall 2021 “UT-System FAC Resolution on COVID-19 Guidelines for Fall 2021” was distributed widely. He also thanks the FAC EC for the “FAC Exec Committee Statement on Tenure” that was sent out before the meeting. He shares that FAC is going to talk with Dr. Holmes about the actions by the current Texas government and the thread to tenure.

D. Coursey takes roll but finds that a quorum is not reached.

D. Coursey prepares the attending members for the upcoming presentation by providing a background about the parental leave history and the FAC involvement. During the last session the legislature passed a parental leave law and that FAC will receive an update later in the meeting. He praises the overall changes in workload policy and parental leave that allow chairs to be more flexible and offer more options to faculty. He reminds the attending members about the recommendation from FAC with regards to the review cycles for tenure and post-tenure reviews in 2020.

**Presentation on Parental Leave** by Stephanie Gill, Manager, HR Business Partners, UT System.

N. Vasilakis asks for what campuses need to do. Asks for an overview what is required by law and rules.

S. Gill: Parental leave (PL) runs concurrently with FMLA. There are pools that are funded by time donations from employees.

10:32am N. Vasilakis: States that quorum has been reached and he gavels in the meeting.

S. Gill: People are still learning about it. PL has a limit of 90days for requests, but the leave pools might not have enough hours. Some campuses distinguish between the cause of the request. Family events (like birth) are taxable, but emergency cases are not taxable.

N. Vasilakis: Endowment of UT system is passing Harvard. Are there considerations to use that to build up the pool?

S. Gill: Building up the pool is still the biggest problem, and she does not have any additional information. She states that the issue is still considered by OGC (office of general council)

V. Quetschke: How is confidentiality handled when medical data is needed. S. Gill: The state statue lays out the documentation needs. There are “leave specialists”

R. Prakash: Asks for clarification about taxability of donations. S. Gill: It is tax exempt for emergencies, taxed otherwise. R. Prakash: That is pushing towards emergency donations.

C. Packham: UTSA has had no information sent to faculty. Information is lacking. S. Gill: That is a general problem. We need information and guidance.

J. Fay: How is accountability handled, are there reports. S. Gill: It’s a manual logging. The institutions do the data entry and also the assignments or allocations of the leave.

D. Coursey: Please send the information to the FAC members and asks for more details about the tax implications. He mentions the growth of the PUF fund and that all UT system universities are cash flow positive despite enrollment drops. He asks for firm guidance to implement easy ways to donate for catastrophic events that are tax-exempt. S. Gill: The institutions are working to find consistent rules among different HR systems.

D. Catsam: Building up pools without clear usage guidance is an unexplained cost, maybe even “wage theft”. S. Gill: Communication is lacking.

S. Gill: Explains that hourly donations of employees are converted into rates. The donations are not counted as hours but are treated as money donations.

D. Catsam: A systemwide initiative for clarification is needed. Donations are unclear, usage of PL is also unclear.

D. Coursey: FAC will work on a motion to ask for guidelines and minimizing or avoiding tax implications, the possibility to accrue hours/donations before distribution to avoid tax and secondly ask for a clear guidance document.

A suggestion to create a FAC whitepaper about the implementation and use of leave pools is made.

11:12am N. Vasilakis thanks the speaker. He reminds the audience to nominate president-elect candidates. 2min break.

**Campus reports – Part 1**

Academic campuses:

11:19am UT Arlington reports.

11:26am UT Austin reports.

11:32am UT Dallas reports.

D. Coursey reminds the audience about information sources: <http://seekut.utsystem.edu/> for median salary data, also <https://data.utsystem.edu/> for general UT System data.

11:43am UTPB reports.

**Lunch with Dr. Archie Holmes and Omar Syed, Associate Vice Chancellor & Deputy General Council**

12:02pm Motion to go into executive session by Chris Packham, seconded by Derek Catsam

1:29pm Executive session ends

1:30pm Open discussion and Lunch

**Campus Reports – Part 2**

1:46pm UTEP reports.

1:47pm UTRGV reports.

1:50pm Open discussion about the use of Huron Consulting for salary determinations on multiple campuses.

1:58pm UTSA-reports.

2:04pm UT Tyler reports.

Health Institutions:

2:11pm UT Southwestern reports.

2:16pm UTMB reports.

2:25pm UT Health Science Houston reports.

2:30pm UT Health San Antonio reports.

2:47pm Campus reports are completed.

**Committee overviews**

2:50pm The Committees lay out their charges and memberships

**Academic Affairs and Faculty Quality**

Charge: Work on the Covid-19 Legacy Project document; Discuss Regents Teaching Award -- grad award possibility.

Chairs: Derek Catsam, Gina Nunez-Mchiri

Attending members: Derek Catsam, Gina Nunez-Mchiri (Virtual), Ravi Prakash, Domino Perez, Jen Moon, Karin Lewis, Sarah Sass, Rene Zenteno

**Health Affairs**

Charge: The Health Affairs Committee (HAC) will pursue further implementation and execution of the Physician Burnout Working Group initiative. Secondarily, the HAC will query member institution leadership and faculty regarding past, present, and future wellness initiatives

Chair: Chris M. Messenger

Attending members: Caroline Park, Isabella Glitza, Veronica Coleman, Syed Hashmi

**Governance**

Charge: Examine graduate student support (GRA/GTA) and benefits across the institutions; Determine whether campuses have a separate graduate council or assembly.

Chair: Jacqueline Fay

Attending members: Jacqueline Fay, Joanna Hadjicostandi

Chris – Research ad hoc

Research: Change in system rules how endowment money can be spent. Concern supplement salaries from endowment. Review about how the rule change was implemented and if the donors were asked.

Chairs: Chris Packham, Volker Quetschke

Members: Kwong K. Wong, Michael Nelson, Daniel Tillman, Maria Danet Lapiz Bluhm, Chris Packham, Volker Quetschke

3::05pm Committees break into breakout rooms

4:00pm The meeting goes into recess until Friday morning

**April 29, 2022 – Day 2**

8:30am Working breakfast with free discussion.

9:07am N. Vasilakis stops the recess and opens the meeting. He introduces the next speaker, Jonathan Cheng.

**Burnout presentation** by Dr. Jonathan Cheng

J. Cheng presents an overview about the history of the Burnout work in the FAC. He resents prior work and the current plans of the working group that originally met from 2019 to 2021 and resulted in a letter to EVC Health Affairs Dr. Zerwas “10/13/2020” and a status report on Physician Burnout 09/2021. He lays out the past work and intentions to the FAC members. He suggests that the working group syncs with FAC and suggests to have the FAC chair elect/chair from health affairs on the Burnout WG for 2 years.

D. Coursey suggests presenting the WG output at FACs BoR presentations.

G. Nunez-Mchiri: Historically burnout was focusing on Physicians, but especially after COVID this needs to be broadened to other fields. Burnout is a problem for academia.

J. Cheng: The next meeting of the WG will be in May and that a FAC representative would be helpful and welcome.

10:34am N. Vasilakis thanks J. Cheng.

15 min break

**Committee Meetings**

10:55am committee meetings until noon.

**Lunch / Committee Reports**

12:02pm D. Catsam – AA : Reports that the Covid legacy project is done. It was sent up and down the chain from Dr. Holmes to the senates. Incudes forward looking plans in there. The committee discussed Regents Teaching Award -- decided on no action for now.

D. Catsam states that the document is improved, but no substantial changes were made. It is ready for a vote in the FAC.

D. Coursey makes a small suggestion that is accepted and included in document as distributed.

N. Vasilakis asks for votes for adoption. The vote passes unanimously.

C. Packham – Research Committee: The committee suggests seeking UTS funding for a pan-UTS research symposia, with each symposia needing to have a multi-disciplinary nature. This could help to bootstrap research across the system, and especially could help those campuses that are struggling with research.

Wish list: N symposia across the UT system campuses, with a winning key science getting additional money for seed funding to go after NIH/NASA/NSF etc. funding. The meetings need to be across disciplines and cross-campus to ensure collaborations, innovative research.

N. Vasilakis: Recommends to talk to state or federal funders about major funding initiatives. Consider whitepaper or roadmap for publishing.

C. Messenger – The Health Affairs Committee (HAC) will pursue further implementation and execution of the Physician Burnout Working Group initiative. Secondarily, the HAC will query member institution leadership and faculty regarding past, present, and future wellness initiatives.

N. Vasilakis: Asks for the plan for continuity on burnout. C. Messenger: States the plan is to have FAC representation through the HAC committee chair or the FAC medical chair/chair elect from the HA campus side.

J. Hadicostandi – Governance: The committee will complete an ongoing project from last year, “Shared Governance at the University of Texas System Institutions: An Assessment of the Impact of the Spring 2016 FAC White Paper.” The committee is designing a checklist/survey to collect data on how many of the action items from the 2016 White Paper have been implemented on the campuses. The checklist will be sent to the Chairs of the Faculty Senates on each campus.

The committee will address the first current charge (Examine graduate student support (GRA/GTA) and benefits across the institutions) by researching available information. Prior work has revealed that it is extremely difficult to collect and compare data surrounding GTA/GRA pay and benefits, even within one institution, due to the variety and number of titles and packages across disciplines. However, what is clear is that GTA/GRAs are underfunded across disciplines and that many also must pay a percentage of their tuition and health insurance costs.

The second current charge (Determine whether campuses have a separate graduate council or assembly) by collecting information from each institution’s website or, if this is not clear, following up with the FAC representative.

Derek: Ask grad council if it exists, otherwise ask senate.

R. Prakash suggests to have graduate student representation on university committees.

V. Quetschke: Suggest to also ask for additional/hidden costs or obstacles to students. I.e., forced enrollment in summer.

N. Vasilakis: Suggests to consider recommending uniform graduate student payment across campuses. Like NIH does for postdocs.

1:02pm End of reports.

**Elections**

1:11pm N. Vasilakis starts the elections. As per the bylaws the EC has a slate for the chair-elect. The rotation for FAC chairs requires a candidate from the medical campuses. Slate: Chris Messenger

The chair asks for floor nominations- none. Dr. Messenger introduces himself.

Ballots are issued, in person pink stickers, anonymous zoom poll.

Results: Dr. Messenger is elected.

D. Coursey: Hands the honorary gavel to N. Vasilakis and a cigar. The group thanks N. Vasilakis for his service.

N. Vasilakis says that it had been an extremely difficult year, it has been challenging, but we learned a lot. He thanks for the council of the group with special thanks to the other officers.

1:26pm Meeting adjourned