**Faculty Advisory Council Meeting**

Via Zoom - October 1, 2021

Meeting called to order at 9:02 am

**Welcome**

Faculty Advisory Committee Chair Dr. Nikos Vasilakis welcomes the attending FAC members. He announces AVC Dr. Kevin Lemoine has stepped down from being the UT System liaison to the Faculty Advisory Committee and that that EVC Dr. Archie Holmes is the new liaison to UT System. Dr. Vasiliakis thanks Dr. Lemoine for the great work and for being a great partner to the FAC.

FAC Chair-Elect Dr. David Coursey and FAC Secretary Dr. Volker Quetschke also thank Dr. Lemoine for the outstanding work he did with the FAC.

**Campus reports (Academic and Health) Part 1**

9:06am UT Arlington reports

9:13am UT Austin reports

9:16am UT Dallas reports

9:19am MD Anderson reports

9:21am UT El Paso reports

9:25am UT Permian Basin reports

9:28am UTRGV reports

9:31am UTSA reports

9:35am UT Tyler reports

9:37am UT Southwestern reports

9:39am UTMB reports

**RR30204 Family Leave Pool**

9:45am Dr. Coursey provides a report about the involvement of FAC in realizing the Family Leave Pool at UT System over the last years. He points out that working together has led to regents’ rule RR30204 and the corresponding Texas law. He emphasizes the importance of faculty shared governance in achieving shared goals.

9:47am Julie Goonewardene, Senior Advisor to the Chancellor and Chief Talent and Innovation Officer presents the current implementation and status of RR 30204 and the new Texas law allowing Family leave pools for employees. She elaborates on the goal of allowing for more flexibility for childcare in the first year and taking care of sick family members. She explains that there can be one pool per institution and each institution needs to set up their own policies and implementation details. The pool requires donations of leave time to the general pool and does not allow for targeted donations.

She provides sage examples in the form of 3 case studies. She also presents some possible caveats, including possible tax liabilities for donor or recipient.

Question from Dr. Coursey: The leave pool is limited to 9 days, but in academic settings courses are usually longer. How will this be implemented? Answer: This does need to be decided on the institutional level and is and institutional decision. Dr. Coursey: Guidance from UTS would be helpful.

Dr. Núñez-Mchiri emphasizes the problem.

Dr. Nikos: Follow up un tax liability and the creation of sub-pools. Aw: Situation is being investigate and not clear yet. Sub-pools might be a solution.

Question Dr. Vasilakis: What are those sub-pools exactly? Answer: medical and non-medical pools.

Dr. Goonewardene: The presentation will be made available to the FAC members.

Dr. Coursey: The presented model is comparable to the buyout model. It likely is cost neutral when adjuncts are hired.

Dr. Goonewardene offers help should questions arise. She can be contacted through her office.

**Welcome by EVC Dr. Archie Holmes**

10:09am EVC Dr. Holmes introduces himself and lays out his plans for working together. He places importance on the communication between the UT system leadership and the FAC executive committee. He says FAC and UT System need to work together, he emphasizes the advisory function and the importance to hear from faculty at the UT System institutions. He plans to have frequent meetings with the FAC executive committee.

Dr. Holmes provides an overview about UT system and presents that the enrollment at UT system overall is stable and is optimistic towards growth for the future.

Question Dr. Coursey: There were no pay raises or promotions for members of the “admin class” as opposed to faculty at certain institutions. What is UTS view? Answer: Dr. Holmes thanks for the question and that he was not aware of this problem.

Question Dr. Ross: Are there curriculum reform plans? Answer: A process has started, with additional funding from Lumina, to investigate more equitable pathways in the curricula. Dr. Holmes says that experts from across the university and faculty members will be members of the group that looks into this.

Question Dr. Ross: What is currently the most important work with the Texas legislator? Answer: Applying for and finding areas to spend $16 billion dollars federal aid for public education. The money is based on grants and needs to be approved and received. Dr. Holmes emphasizes counciling for students, addressing food insecurity, and more general student issues. He also points to the ongoing need to work on bonds for construction projects at UTS institutions.

Dr. Holmes finishes his presentation and the audience thanks Dr. Holmes.

**Report about work on and dissemination of FAC COVID resolution**

10:22am Dr Coursey reports on how the COVID FAC resolution was distributed to newspapers and TV outlets. He points out that the Chancellor’s office was very helpful in the process. He reports that the individual campus resolutions were also distributed together with the FAC resolution. He points out that “regular” news outlets and student newspapers were contacted. He presents that a fair amount of request came to the FAC executive committee, and he expresses his impression that the Presidents and Provosts at the UTS institutions had their hands tied because of state law, but that the resolution was appreciated and generally helpful to the institutions. Dr. Coursey said “We made a bit of a difference”.

Dr. Vasilakis Nikos emphasizes the success.

**Undisclosed foreign affiliations – Theft of research data and IP**

10:26am A presentation by Omar A. Syed, J.D., Associate Vice Chancellor & Deputy General Counsel and Trey Atchley, J.D. UT System’s Chief Inquiry Officer and Chief Research Security Officer.

The presenters provide an introduction and their career background. The presentation will outline the threats to researchers and how FAC can help.

Dr. Syed: Starts with research security and satisfying federal requirements. He notes that historically international involvement goes back a long time, but the federal government is scrutinizing this. His approach is to “disinterest” the government so that the researchers are unencumbered by federal investigations. He points out that following the rules and proper disclosure of conflicts of interest is very important to achieve this.

Dr. Atchley: Reports that there is funding provided to the institutions to address the risk and provide help to improve the process. Non-disclosure of foreign affiliations is a red flag to trigger investigations. He gives an example that looked bad from the outside, but under a closer look was resolved without harm. A proper disclosure could have avoided the problems in the first place.

He states that PIs are encouraged to provide their examples how foreign involvement was involved in their research and how this can be used to make the process better. Addressing FAC he says: “If you have suggestions, let us know. On screen or off.”

Question: Dr. Prakash: At the universities accounting needs to be verified by faculty, but the information is frequently not provided in a form that is understandable by non-accountants. This is a possible hazard for faculty to unknowingly violate the law. Can UTS help?

Answer: UT system leadership is perceived to have a bias towards federal law enforcement, but we will help the faculty to clear the case if conflicts or problems are voluntarily disclosed.

Question Dr. Vasilakis: Has your office educated the local offices at the universities? Answer: The compliance offices work closely with the funding agencies on having a uniform structure and provide guidance. Disclose problems now and we will continue to discourage conflicts in the first place. The emphasis is on not discouraging the international collaboration, but address conflicts of interest that might arise before harm is done.

Question Dr. Ross: How is the quality of the compliance officers assured at the universities? For example, if graduate students are working in the compliance office. Answer: We will continue to try our best that the institutions are well informed.

Question Dr. Ross: Faculty often think the lawyers are always on the side of the university, but is there a way to represent the faculty? Answer: We are not after you, but reaching out to a mediator might be appropriate.

Question Dr. Núñez-Mchiri: Asks if it is possible to share case studies of actual problems? This would be informational and would look less punitive. Answer: This is a good idea, we will share examples.

Dr. Vasilakis thanks the presenters and suggests future sessions.

**Campus reports (Academic and Health) Part 2**

11:02am UT Health Houston – no representatives are available

11:02am Health Science center San Antonio – no representatives are available

**Committee Meetings (Virtual Break Out Rooms)**

11:03am Dr. Vasilakis introduces the FAC committees and asks the FAC members to select and join a committee.

FAC committees and brief overview of the committees

Ad-hoc Research Committee: Research topics, current chair Dr. Packham

Ad-hoc DEI Committee: No standing committee, the diversity, equity and inclusion work shall be included in the regular committee work. (Dr. Núñez-Mchiri)

Academic Affairs: Current chairs Dr. Catsam and Dr. Núñez-Mchiri provide an overview about previous activities and plans and suggest to start by looking into equity, how COVID-19 has affected faculty and further fallout from hidden pandemic challenges.

Health Affairs: No former chair present.

Governance: Current chair Dr. Leonard, committee plans include family leave, tenure process and review structures.

11:15am Break into committees

11:45am Lunch – return at 12:15pm

**Momentum on OER (MOER)**

12:15pm Presentation by Dr. Rebecca Karoff, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

Dr. Karoff presents the status of OER at UTS and shows the new information hub website. <https://www.utsystem.edu/sites/moer> . Currently there are primarily participants and contributors from the academic campuses, but the momentum indicates that health campuses will follow. She reports that up to now OER at UTS has been driven by individual institutions, but that support is available in Texas from various angles, including the legislature, UTS, THECB TLCUA. She presents 10 recommendations, but in summary declares the result is that UTS should invest in OER.

There are 4 priorities: Finding best practices, how to incentivize, find a system wide approach and find metrics to measure OER impact. Additionally, how to find more funding.

Dr. Karoff says UTS is asking FAC to help in advancing OER. This can be done by helping to incentivize, expand promotion and rewards structures, and to build awareness of OER.

Question Dr. C. Park: The cost of journals and publications has risen, does that influence OER? Answer: There are statewide negotiations ongoing on high levels. The library coalition is working on this, but different institutions have different needs and that finding a consensus is hard.

Question Dr. Paccacerqua: While we acknowledge that students are financially stretched, faculty are experiencing the burden being placed on their backs. Dr. Paccacerqua suggests that it would be good for FAC to know what the problem areas are? Where is work needed? How can the burden be reduced? Answer: A statewide survey is coming to create data, in addition there is more material available than people think, but the dissemination of information is needed to spread awareness.

Question: Dr. Prakash: The rising costs of journals are widespread, and deals are made in various states, but the costs are still very high. Is there any improvement to be expected? Answer: This is the 1-million-dollar question. FAC should ask the libraries to give a presentation to get an overview once the situation is more resolved.

**Campus reports (Academic and Health) Part 3**

12:41pm UT Health Houston – no representatives are available

12:41pm Health Science center San Antonio – no representatives are available

**Committee Reports**

12:42pm Academic Affairs and Faculty Quality

Co-Chairs Derek and Gina Núñez-Mchiri

Members: Chad Mahood, Ravi Prakash, Bill Carroll, Kip Austin Hinton, Domino Perez

Committee report: The committee plans to work on contract duration for lecturers. Some institutions, because of COVID-19, have reduced lecturer contracts to 1 year. This needs to be addressed. Furthermore, compression is a huge issue, and the committee needs to investigate this systemically. The committee will also investigate transparency, for example record numbers of denied promotions at certain institutions. Other issues are DIY and COVID-19 fallout.

Health Affairs

Co-Chairs Chris Messenger and Guillermo Garcia-Manero

Members: List is available from the co-chairs

The committee plans to work on burnout and parental leave. Faculty wellness and how to address stress.

Governance

Co-Chairs: Harrison Ndetan and Cynthia Paccacerqua

Members: List is available from the co-chairs

The committee looked for new ideas and how to get started. The committee plans to look at shared governance principles and to review prior documents and whitepapers. On diversity, equity and inclusion, the committee will work with the other committees. Cultural diversity is an important aspect. The committee plans to compare shared governance implementations at the different UTS institutions.

Research Ad-Hoc Committee

Chair: Chris Packham

Members: Daniel Tillman, Michael Nelson, Sarah Sass, Kwong Wong, Volker Quetschke.

The committee plans to contact the faculty senates of the institutions and to collect what is going well, and what is lacking with respect to research and research support.

The committee will investigate the climate impact of the institutions. The goal is to find ways to quantify the impact and to educate. UTSA has started this process and the committee plans to expand this to FAC/UTS.

**Campus reports (Academic and Health) Part 4**

12:57pm UT Health Houston – no representatives are available

12:57pm Health Science center San Antonio – no representatives are available

**General Discussion, Suggestions and New Topics**

Question: Dr. Prakash: Can the UT Austin representatives talk about the advertisement that didn’t air during the football game. Answer: This question was submitted to the institution’s leadership, but the only answer so far was that the UT Austin leadership was not involved in that decision.

Dr. Coursey: The game was on the longhorn network, that might make a difference.

Dr. Vasilakis: Asks for any other topics?

Dr. Coursey suggests inviting Dr. Jonathan Cheng and Dr. Ann Killary to the next meeting to report on the state of affairs on the faculty wellness report and status of their workgroup.

**FAC EC and Committee Chairs meet**

1:06pm until 1:33pm

**Meeting Adjourned at 1:33pm**