

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

Faculty Senate Retreat
Friday, December 6, 2024
Embassy Suites Denton and Zoom

The meeting was called to order at 10:02 AM.

Roll Call

Abbott X	Acho X	Barnett X	Burke, A. X	Burke, M. X
DelloStritto	Dice SUB	Dillon X	Du X	Dunlap X
Elkins X	Ernst X	Gates X	Gullion X	Hynds X
Lambert X	Landrum X	Lucero Jones X	Miketinas X	Morgan X
Petersen X	Richmond X	Rosa-Dávila X	Sen X	Sit X
Smith X	Talleff X	Terrizzi X	Trujillo-Jenks. X	Van Erve X
Woods X				

TCFS Representative: Dr. Shawnda Smith
Parliamentarian: Dr. Jacob Blosser

Substitute:

Dr. Luciano Garcia

Substitute for Dr. Jenifer Dice, Physical Therapy / HOU

Faculty Guests:

Dr. Vivian Casper

English, Rhetoric & Spanish

Dr. Brandi Falley

Division of Mathematics

Dr. Rebecca Fredrickson

School of Education

Dr. Jackie Hoermann-Elliott

English, Rhetoric & Spanish

Dr. Catherine Mbango

College of Nursing / HOU

Dr. Linda Rubin (*attending in person*)

Faculty Ombudsperson / Professor, Division of Psychology & Philosophy

Staff Guests:

Dr. Henry Torres (*attending in person*) Chief Information Officer

Approval of Minutes

November 11, 2024, Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve, M. Burke., second, J. Dunlap

Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve, M. Burke; second, J. Dunlap

Motion passed unanimously.

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

Chancellor's Forum – Dr. Carine Feyten

The Chancellor began by wishing the Faculty Senate Happy St. Nicholas Day.

With guidance from the Faculty Senate Leadership, Dr. Feyten provided highlights on advancement and budgets.

University Advancement: Noted that FY25 1st Quarter commitments include \$32 million with 470 donors contributing. The increasing trend continues from a \$10 million commitment in 2005 to \$113 million in commitments in 2024. Assets for the University have increased from \$120 million in 2023 to \$174 million in 2024. Noted that, depending on the market, departments receive about 4% annually from interest from endowments, and clarified differences between pledged gifts and endowments. University Advancement routes funds from restricted gifts to the appropriate programs and departments, while they consider other needs across campus for application of funds from unrestricted gifts.

Budget Questions: Responding to the inquiry about what funds are used for leadership positions. Chancellor noted that there are no “pots” or dedicated accounts that are used for funding the leadership positions. Rather, funds from open lines are often reallocated. Also, sometimes, as was the case with Dr. Torres, positions are funded with soft funds initially and then solidified in the next budget as funds can be reallocated. Sometimes unfilled positions at higher levels are not filled, but the funds recouped are reallocated to increase salaries of current employees. Also noted example of how administration positions are also being eliminated (i.e., the AVP position in J. Tomlinson’s office was eliminated rather than filled).

For buildings, we do have HEF monies that come from the state that can be used to maintain and improve facilities. TWU can also request funds from the state through a TRB (when made available in a legislative session) to build a new building or make major reservations. Noted that the Graduate Research Building will be removed and replaced with the new College of Business. The Chancellor did note that the state provided TWU with two agency numbers so there are two funding accounts – one for the system (new) and one for the University (established). This will support TWU with building capacity. Senators inquired about the Chancellor’s approach to annual budgeting including how decisions are made to add administrators to the budget. The Chancellor noted unfunded mandates from the state and federal government, student financial aid concerns, compliance issues, and audits shape some budget decisions. TWU has consistently had clean audits demonstrating that the university is compliant in its practices.

Engagement: Chancellor noted an increased trend in student engagement including a 33% increase in the start of the year block party (800+ to 1300+ students), and over 3500 students and community members engaged at this fall’s Boo at the U. Family weekend also experienced significant increases in engagement. In previous years, we would have ~100 families/participants, this fall over 400 families/participants. Though it created challenges, they are good challenges.

Managing Ambiguity: The feeling of weariness is upon us, but we will remain focused on our mission. The Chancellor is cautiously optimistic that we, as a unique university, may all be in the same storm with the other universities, but we are not all in the same boat and may be able to navigate the storm differently from other institutions of higher education. She also noted that while we are heavily dependent on the state (38% of budget), we are not heavily reliant on Federal funds. Regarding concerns about LGBTQ+ related issues, the Chancellor noted that while we will follow the law, we will not overcompensate or overrespond to the mandates and will focus our attention on engaging with our LGBTQ+ community members to support them and make sure that their voices are being heard. A similar approach will be used to support first generation students and DACA students. Chancellor noted that TWU does not track a student’s status, but some programs do. For example, departmental food supports may not require sign in but Minerva’s Market does require them to sign in so students may not access those resources.

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

TWU System Updates: TWU is unlike other university systems that expand by absorbing or acquiring other campuses with established practices, so our process of becoming a system is also ambiguous. At the Houston campus, there were many politicians who showed their support for TWU Houston at the President's installation. Dr. Christopher, at TWU Dallas, hopes to receive a large grant to support and fund a strategic planning process. TWU hopes to replicate the grant process for the Houston campus. These efforts will assist with the reports that must be submitted annually to the state, documenting our progress in becoming a system. TWU has another grant in development to launch a version of continuing education that will be housed in Dallas. Partnerships, including building partners, are also being investigated with businesses adjacent to the Houston and Dallas campuses. SAAC accreditation is also an expensive and time-intensive process. The Chancellor hopes to have the whole system to be accredited rather than each campus. Discipline-specific accreditation will remain, but the whole system would be accredited. The Chancellor noted that the design team is finalizing the plan for the Denton campus. There will be a strategic planning summit to update the TWU community on progress to date and final plans. Faculty are encouraged to attend the summit in early 2025.

Construction Updates: Breckenridge is taking shape and will be a focal point for campus. The intersection of Bell and Administration will become an all-way crossing. Also, roundabouts will be added on Bell Ave at Texas Drive and at Chapel Drive. Regarding Bezos Academy, the building will be ready to open for the fall of 2025, but the Academy is not ready to launch/open for the fall. They are projecting a fall 2026 opening, though TWU continues to work to open it earlier to meet childcare and educational needs in the community. A retention pond and storm water drain has been built on the east side of campus to mitigate flooding issues that benefits both TWU as well as the surrounding neighborhoods. An additional lane/lot of parking has also been added on the east side of campus. While some trees are being removed with the construction, there is a replanting plan to replace trees on campus.

Provost Forum – Dr. Angela Bauer

Academic Affairs Budget Advisory Committee (AABAC)

- Dr. Bauer noted that in the document outlining the Academic Affairs Budget Advisory Committee (AABAC) was shared in the Faculty Senate folder and is accurate with the exception of one update – faculty representatives nominated for the AABAC are expected to have at least six years of service at TWU with budgetary experience. The AABAC will: a) serve as a collaborative advisory body for Academic Affairs; b) provide strategic recommendations on resource allocation, financial planning, and investment priorities; c) facilitate transparent communication and shared governance; and d) promote operational efficiency and resource stewardship.
- AABAC will be comprised of 8 faculty members (one from each college, one faculty senator, one at-large from Dallas and one at-large from Houston) along with ex officio members (Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost [non-voting], Chief Financial and Operating Officer, Director of University Budgets and Capital Planning, Institutional Research representative, Curriculum and Strategic Planning representative, ORSP representative, one Dean).
- Faculty Senate inquired whether Provost would inform Faculty Senate on when and why final decisions deviate from AABAC recommendations. She indicated that she expects that of herself as the provost and plans to move forward in that manner.

Retention Strategies

- Provost shared FTIC persistence and graduation data for Fall 2015 to Fall 2024. She noted that while total enrollment has increased, our FTIC retention rates have a downward trend for year 1 to year 2 and for year 2 to year 3; hovering around a 70% retention rate.

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

- Common strategy for institutions of higher education is to implement at First Year Experience (FYE) program with benefits of increasing student success, student retention and graduation rates.
- TWU looking to implement FYE program inclusive of learning communities (living learning communities and other learning communities) with academic advising and shared experiences including holistic coaching, core curriculum courses taught by FT faculty, supplemental instruction, and developmental education efforts.
- There has been some discussion of a General Education Advisory Council, a faculty-governed group/body, to oversee core curriculum experiences as the General Education Committee does not have the ability to take on this charge.
- Additional faculty will be hired to support the developmental education courses and support the established needs of students and departments.
- Faculty Senate inquired whether the traditional UNIV courses would be retained or would “contemporary” topics be looked at as a part of offerings. Provost indicated that the FYE classes that are most impactful are those with “interesting topics” that allow students to engage in substantive reading and writing experiences (rather than those focused on study strategies or a specific discipline). Faculty Senate asked how faculty would be compensated for teaching the FYE courses, Provost noted that the General Education Advisory body would need to make recommendations on this (e.g., FTEs awarded, or a stipend awarded for additional workload). Faculty Senate inquired about integration of mental health into FYE. Dr. Torres noted that a University guide could also be integrated into the FYE so that students understood how TWU operates (e.g., organization structure, accessing resources).
- Provost noted that when full-time faculty teach core courses, the 6-year graduation rate is 10% higher. When developmental education efforts are implemented, retention rates are also significantly higher. Students who came to TWU being TSI complete, have a 80% retention rate. For students who don’t come to TWU being TSI complete and don’t take the TSI/enroll in UNIV 1123, retention rate is 58%. However, if those same students take UNIV 1123, their retention rate increases to 75%. Provost also noted that academic advisors will no longer be allowed to lift the TSI academic hold for students to route them to UNIV 1123. If we increase FTIC retention by 5% (from 53% to 58%), we could retain/recoup \$2.8 million in funding.

Other Updates

- A TWU Online Learning Task Force is being convened to see how other systems handle this and they will be making recommendations soon.
- Searches are ongoing for the Deans of COPE and CHS, the Executive Director for the Center for Faculty Success, and Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs. Position for Dean of CAS to follow in the spring.
- Regarding evaluation criteria for the Dean’s discretionary funds, the Provost heard the Faculty Senate clearly that the number associated with the scale is irrelevant if there isn’t transparency in how the evaluation criteria is being implemented.

Presentation of the Resolution of Support for Academic Affairs Budget Advisory Committee (AABAC) – Dr. Emarely Rosa-Davila

Faculty Senate and the Council of Chairs joined to recognize Dr. Bauer for her efforts to build transparency and trust and uphold the principles of shared governance through the establishment of the AABAC.

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

Speaker Report - Dr. Emarely Rosa-Dávila

- There has been a change in the Student Religious Holiday Policy related to the timeline for requests and that requests do not apply to clinical courses. The new policy will be included in the new syllabus template with a link to the policy embedded for student access.
- The Speaker noted that gown rental may be a barrier to faculty participation in commencement and the Provost is committed to looking for gown rental or other options to support faculty attendance.
- The AABAC nomination form is being drafted so that it can be distributed for elections by the Faculty Senate in early 2025. The Provost's Office will be supporting our distribution efforts this year to expedite the process.
- Faculty Grievance and Appeal Process Policy URP 02.350: Delays in communication outside the Faculty Senate control have delayed the feedback to the Faculty Senate so it could not be discussed today.
 - Motion to table to January by M. Burke; second, P. Landrum
 - Motion passed unanimously.
- Speaker reiterated that the Center for Faculty Success continues to conduct trainings that are concerning related to how faculty should be evaluated and whether individuals could receive exceptional ratings. Chancellor clarified her understanding that evaluations should be accurate and reflective of merit. As an exemplar, the Speaker provided noted a faculty member had 6 publications in one year when the criteria were 3 publications across 5 years, yet an excellent rating in scholarship was not awarded. Speaker reiterated that the Faculty Senate is concerned that the evaluation is being lowered because it is tied to merit funding. The Chancellor clarified that the pool of funds that are allocated does not change based on ratings. Regardless of whether 10 or 50 faculty are rated as excellent, the amount of money being divided does not change. The Provost is working to investigate the training being provided to the Dean's and PRC chairs and bring clarity to this process.
- Speaker noted that following the meeting, lunch would be served.

New Business

Change in what used to be 11.425 Accounts

- Faculty Senate discussion of previously allowable food expenses now being denied. Chancellor noted that the state rules did not change and that the expenses were never allowed, but that the changes to the automated system are now not allowing the expenses to be processed. Faculty Senate noted training on allowable expenses had indicated food was allowable. Issue will be followed up on by Faculty Senate.

Promotion from Associate to Full Professor

- Faculty Senators inquired with their departments as to why faculty weren't choosing to go up for Full Professor. Faculty response was that the step from Associate to Full was recently reduced and may have disincentivized people from going up for Full. Further, that people were looking to leave their options open if they chose/needed to move to a different university as it's harder to get hired as a Full Professor than an Associate Professor. Chancellor commented that there may be fewer supports for Associate Professors than there are for Assistant Professors, which may need to be addressed. Chancellor also noted that the University invests a lot in faculty, so we want them to be successful and advance, and are not setting up obstacles to faculty advancement. Faculty Senate noted that some Associate Professors get pulled into administrative duties, which negatively impacts their research and makes it more difficult for them to advance to Full Professor.

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

Reports

Motion to suspend reports to January, M. Burke; second, J. Lambert
Vote by acclamation. Motion passes unanimously.

Speaker Pro Tem - P. Landrum
Secretary - S. Dillon
Speaker Ex Officio - J. Terrizzi
TCFS Representative - S. Smith

Standing Committees:

1. Academic Freedom and Responsibility – D. Hynds
2. Academic Standards Committee – W. van Erve
3. Administrator Evaluations – C. Acho
4. Budget and Planning – M. Burke
5. Committee Selection Committee – J. Talleff
6. Constitution and Bylaws – A. Elkins
7. Elections – R. DelloStritto
8. Equity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism – J. Lambert
9. Faculty Handbook – J. Dunlap
10. Ad hoc Committee for Student Success

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn, M. Burke; second, C. Acho
Meeting adjourned at 12:35 PM.

Submitted Suzanna Dillon, Secretary
December 6, 2024



THE TWU FACULTY SENATE

RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR DR. ANGELA BAUER, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND PROVOST OF TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

WHEREAS, the Texas Woman's University Faculty Senate and the Council of Chairs recognize the importance of transparency and trust in the administration of University resources;

WHEREAS, recognizing the importance of transparency in financial decision-making, we acknowledge the value of fostering greater trust and collaboration between faculty and administration;

WHEREAS, shared governance is a core value that strengthens our academic community, fosters collaboration, and enhances the University's ability to fulfill its mission;

LET IT BE IT RESOLVED,
that the Texas Woman's University Faculty Senate and the Council of Chairs express their full support for Dr. Angela Bauer, Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost of Texas Woman's University, in her commitment to establish an Academic Affairs Budget Advisory Committee;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,
that we commend Dr. Bauer for her dedication to promoting transparency, rebuilding trust, and upholding the principles of shared governance within the University community;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,
that we, as faculty representatives, stand ready to collaborate with Dr. Bauer and the Academic Affairs Budget Advisory Committee to ensure faculty voices are heard and valued in the budgeting process and support Texas Woman's University's continued growth and success for her outstanding leadership and commitment to social justice, appreciating her significant contributions to the University community and beyond, and wishing her continued success in all her future endeavors.

December 6, 2024

Dr. Emarely Rosa-Dávila - Speaker
Dr. Juliet Spencer - Council of Chairs

Budget Advisory Committee

Purpose

The Academic Affairs Budget Advisory Committee (AABAC) serves as a collaborative advisory body to provide strategic recommendations regarding Academic Affairs resource allocation, financial planning, and investment priorities. The committee facilitates transparent communication and shared governance in financial decision-making processes, while promoting operational efficiency and responsible resource stewardship.

Committee Composition

Faculty members* (8):

- One faculty representative from each academic college, elected by their respective faculty
- One faculty senator
- One at-large faculty representative from the Dallas campus
- One at-large faculty representative from the Houston campus

**Note that the Provost will work with the Faculty Senate Speaker to ensure equitable representation of all colleges on the committee.*

Ex officio members (7):

- Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost (non-voting)
- Chief Financial and Operating Officer
- Director of University Budget and Capital Planning
- Institutional Research representative
- Curriculum and Strategic Planning representative
- Office of Research and Sponsored Programs representative

Primary Responsibilities

1. Strategic Planning and Resource Alignment

- a. Review and provide recommendations on annual budget priorities

- b. Analyze alignment between resource allocation and university strategic goals
- c. Evaluate long-term financial sustainability of current and proposed programs
- d. Assess financial implications of new strategic initiatives

2. Budget Analysis and Monitoring

- a. Review university revenue streams and expenditure patterns
- b. Monitor budget performance and identify areas for optimization
- c. Analyze trends in academic program costs and revenues
- d. Examine efficiency of resource utilization across colleges and programs

3. Efficiency and Cost Management

- a. Identify opportunities to optimize state formula funding through strategic enrollment management and course scheduling
- b. Develop faculty-driven proposals for cost savings that preserve academic quality
- c. Research and recommend best practices for operational efficiency from peer institutions
- d. Monitor and report on the success of implemented efficiency measures

4. Investment Recommendations

- a. Propose strategic investments in academic programs, research, and infrastructure
- b. Evaluate proposals for new initiatives requiring significant resource allocation
- c. Recommend criteria for prioritizing competing resource needs

5. Faculty Engagement in Resource Optimization

- a. Solicit and evaluate faculty-generated proposals for efficiency improvements

- b. Develop menus of efficiency options for departments to consider and implement based on their unique needs
- c. Create incentive structures for units that achieve efficiency targets while maintaining quality
- d. Facilitate sharing of successful efficiency practices across departments
- e. Ensure faculty voice in determining which efficiency measures are appropriate for their programs

6. *Communication and Transparency*

- a. Facilitate open dialogue between administration and faculty on budget matters
- b. Provide regular updates to Faculty Senate and other constituent groups
- c. Promote understanding of university financial processes and constraints
- d. Gather input from various stakeholders on resource needs and priorities
- e. Share efficiency success stories and lessons learned

Operating Procedures

1. Meetings shall be held monthly during the academic year, with additional meetings as needed
2. Members serve staggered two-year terms to ensure continuity, Some inaugural members will be asked to serve a third year to ensure continuity.
3. The committee shall elect a chair and vice-chair from among the faculty representatives
4. Subcommittees may be formed to address specific issues or projects
5. Annual reports will be submitted to the Chancellor and Faculty Senate

Deliverables

1. Annual budget priority recommendations
2. Strategic investment recommendations
3. Regular updates to Faculty Senate and administration
5. Long-term financial sustainability assessments of new existing programs (number of programs assessed per year to be determined)
6. Efficiency reports
 - Cost-saving initiatives and their outcomes
 - Formula funding optimization strategies
 - Faculty-generated efficiency proposals
 - Implementation success metrics
7. Annual menu of recommended efficiency options for departmental consideration

Authority and Limitations

The committee serves in an advisory capacity, providing recommendations to university leadership. While the committee's input is integral to the decision-making process, final budgetary decisions remain with the Provost, Chancellor and Board of Regents, in accordance with university policies and procedures. The committee will ensure that efficiency recommendations respect academic freedom and program integrity, with departments maintaining autonomy in choosing and implementing appropriate efficiency measures that allow for sustainable operations.