

# TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

Faculty Senate General Session  
Friday, September 12, 2025  
LIB 101 and Zoom

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am.

## Roll Call

Akinleye x	Acho x	Barnett x	Beatty x	Beins x
Blosser x	Burke x	Chen x	Dice x	Dillon x
Du x	Dunlap	Elkins x	Ernst x	Fredrickson x
Gates x	Gullion x	Immanuel x	Landrum	Lucero Jones x
Maier x	Miketinas x	Night x	Petersen x	Rosa-Dávila x
Sen x	Smith x	Trujillo-Jenks x	van Erve x	Williams x
				Woods x

Parliamentarian: Dr. Parker Hevron

TCFS Representative: Dr. Shawnda Smith

## Recognition of Guests

### Faculty:

Dr. Gretchen Busl	English
Dr. Ellina Grigorieva	Division of Mathematics
Dr. Katherine Landdeck	Division of History
Dr. Ednah Madu	College of Nursing / Houston
Prof. Britney Morgan	College of Nursing / Dallas
Dr. Junalyn Navarra-Madsen	Division of Mathematics
Dr. Catherine Mbango	College of Nursing / Houston
Dr. Alicia Ramirez	College of Nursing / Houston
Dr. Alannah Rivers	Division of Psychology and Philosophy - Psychology

### Staff:

Ms. Stephany Compton	Academic Outreach – TWU Libraries
Ms. Wonny Lervisit	General Counsel

## Approval of Minutes of May

Motion to Approve, Gates second, Dillon

Motion passed unanimously.

## Approval of Minutes of July

Motion to Approve, Gates; second, Gullion

Motion passed unanimously.

## Approval of Agenda

Motion to Approve, Gates; second, Van Erve

Motion passed unanimously.

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## Chancellor Remarks — Dr. Carine Feyten

- Congratulates Senate on their first meeting, one of few institutions in the state that has a Senate.
- Wants to show support for Senate.
- Worst thing we can engage in is fear, doesn't want to engage in that. Try to defuse problems, focus on the positive and our institution's mission. Focus on what really matters. You are leaders, what the senators do has a great impact on the rest of the institution.
- Discussion occurred on academic freedom in light of recent events, and questions arose on how the university will protect its faculty. Chancellor notes that she has a lot of conversations behind the scenes and wants to be prepared. Chancellor is also committed to academic freedom in faculty's fields. Also highlights a commitment to due process. Question was raised regarding due process, and how we could direct students to follow the process as well, given concerns about bypassing the process by students. Chancellor does emphasize that there is little we can do to prevent students from reaching out to their legislators. Notes that de-escalation is important and may reduce odds of students reaching out to the outside world. Make sure people are informed of conflicts—Kevin Cruz can be helpful in making sure legislators know that situations are being handled.
- Encourages senators to speak to constituents, and bring questions to ACAs, Provost, etc.
- Provost responds and emphasizes the university's commitment to academic freedom in teaching and research. Be mindful of what you bring in the classroom. Invites faculty to reach out if they have questions about their course content and compliance.
- Academic Affairs will provide resources for de-escalation training to help deescalate conflicts in the classroom.

## Provost Forum – Dr. Angela Bauer

- Project Thrive:
  - Desire to provide raises to faculty despite reduction in state funding. Freeing up resources by finding efficiencies. Institutional sustainability.
  - Two working groups:
    - Budget literacy and transparency: providing information about budget to faculty, providing opportunities to learn; decide what data to make available and how.
    - Program viability. Currently, some programs can be doing better. Find ways to bring them up to speed. Curriculum efficiencies, recruiting improvements, retention focus. Working group develops frameworks to evaluate programs. Provide strategies to reorganize programs to bring them in the black.
  - When groups are done, they hand off their products to the Budget Advisory Committee; they will then run with it.
  - Provost is hoping for broad institutional buy-in.
  - In the meantime: the framework is still being developed, but there are programs that are operating in the negative where decisions have to be made about allocating faculty lines. Provost will meet with those programs to discuss financial data as the framework is being developed by working groups; iterative process and will meet with faculty to talk through data and development of improvement strategies.

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- Travel Guidelines:
  - Recall travel freeze last year when last year's request for tuition increase was denied.
  - Provost became aware of significant inequities in faculty travel. Developed guidelines in effort to increase equity. Vast majority of faculty travel falls within the new \$3,000 guideline. Guidelines also see to amount of time spent traveling, encouraging faculty to not miss more than one week per semester as a result of traveling. Exceptions are possible, will be decided on a case-by-case basis.
  - Discussion follows, raising concerns about faculty in the performing arts (Dance in particular) for whom travel and performance-related travel specifically is especially important. Concerns are being raised from the College of Professional Education as well, whose faculty are active in their professional organizations and those positions requiring travel. Provost wants to emphasize link to student benefit and performance; wants to be true to purpose especially if programs charge differential tuition: those costs should benefit students. Encourages faculty to divide and conquer on professional responsibilities and to see if some of these engagements can be joined by Zoom. Provost encourages compromise: does not want to jeopardize reputation of institution but wants expenses aligned with institutional mission. Travel does not have to be consecutive; attending more than one conference per semester is fine as long as duration does not exceed time; want to minimize disruption. Travel guidelines are shared across all campuses. Discussion with regards to asking for permission before submitting abstracts; Provost emphasizing that this is to counter faculty to cast a wide net and getting abstracts accepted at too many conferences.
  - Provost will conduct further research into the needs of some specific programs like Dance. Will speak with COPE Dean to ascertain specifics of their programs and grants as well.
- Retention: Academic Advising Hub is in development. Bringing them together on the first floor of ACT. Want to make advisors available on a drop-in basis in a visible environment.
- Transfer Student Center: improving recruiting and retaining transfer students. Wants to make transfer acceptance more efficient. Reduce length of time for transfer students to get answers re: credit transfer. Will also serve as point of connection once students are on campus; speaks about Transfer Interest Groups. This center will be located in Brackenridge. Two transfer navigators who will work under Terrell Shaw.
- Cultivating Transfer Agreements: Under Jorge Figueroa we established partnerships with many 2-year institutions; his role has now transformed into Dean of Undergraduate Studies, as we focus on transfer experience and first year experience and a growing emphasis on the Core.
- Dashboard: Henry Torres is working on developing a dashboard to present data that departments need with regards to recruitment and retention-relevant data so that it can be used for program decision-making. Proof of concept will be ready before Project Thrive is finished; it will continue to be added to.
- Process Engineer: Dr. Armstrong is working with Tony Sanchez to make hiring process more efficient. Determination of needed changes in Oracle. Efforts have been reinvigorated after a brief delay.
- Post-Tenure Faculty Tracks: Will be on the agenda next Faculty Senate. Provost and Dr. Armstrong have engaged Hanover to take inventory of peer institutions with models like this. Hanover have since broadened their scope because peer institutions didn't provide the needed data. Provost will return to Faculty Senate with findings from this data gathered by Hanover.

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- Hispanic Serving Institution Designation: TWU will lose HSI funding designation. Impact of approximately \$3 million in the next three years.

**11:03 am: Dr. Armstrong leaves.**

**Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs – Dr. Erika Armstrong**

- Watermark: Preferred to have CV up on Watermark by October 15; but by end of January at the latest. October deadline for those who are up for performance review.

**Speaker Report – Dr. Emarily Rosa Dávila**

- Preparing for November Board of Regents Meeting.
- Received emails from concerned faculty who are in programs that are being evaluated for viability. Encourages programs to assist in making sure that evaluations are being made based on the correct data.
- Provost responds and says that there is a significant equity issue with regards to workload.
- Speaker will attend TCFS meeting with Dr. Shawnda Smith.

**Unfinished Business**

- Constitution and Bylaws: Speaker anticipates changes to Constitution and Bylaws once Board of Regents sees what other institutions are doing during the Fall semester. The Board of Regents oversees the Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws.

**New Business**

- Welcome to New Senators: mugs are handed out to welcome new senators.
- Approval of 2024-25 Faculty Senate Meeting Calendar and Scheduled Exceptions: Motion to approve: Blosser; Dillon, second. Motion approved unanimously.
- Approval of Parliamentarian: Parker Hevron approved as Parliamentarian. Motion to Approve: Rosa-Davila; Dillon, second. Approved by acclamation.
- Component Representation Assignments 2025-26: Speaker emphasizes that some senators represent additional disciplines and/or departments, and that is indicated on the list of Senators. Make sure those disciplines are informed. Some corrections to the list are made.
- Faculty Senate Membership Transition (after first year of SB37): we are constituted as a brand-new Senate. However, we were all elected in May or continue to serve in the terms Senators were previously elected to. Some Senators serve in elected positions, some serve in appointed positions. Those appointed by the Chancellor serve 1-year terms, and can be reappointed for a total of 6 subsequent terms. Elected Senators serve 2-year terms, after which they have to roll off. Speaker's proposal is to recognize our previous years of service, and that those in an even year of their original term would roll off at the end of this year. Under the old rules, those in year 2 or 4 would be able to run for re-election; under this proposal the 10 senators who serve in an even year cannot run for reelection or appointment for 2 years.

Discussion follows, and other suggestions are made to ensure increased continuity in the Senate. Suggestion for senators from each college meet together and decide who will roll off at the end of the year. Speaker agrees to take this up in the Executive Committee Meeting and return to Senate next time with a modified proposal.

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## **Speaker Pro Tem Report – Dr. Suzanna Dillon**

- No report.

## **Secretary Report – Dr. Wouter van Erve**

- No report.

## **Report from TCFS Representative – Dr. Shawnda Smith**

- No report.

## **New Concerns:**

### Faculty Issues and Concerns:

- New Policies/Guidelines made without any discussion with faculty: faculty are concerned with the number of new policies issued without faculty input, specifically with regards to office hours and Zoom meetings.
  - Provost said Administration's hand was forced on a number of issues that were passed down from the Texas Legislature. Implementation of some of these guidelines are possibly in need of tweaking, and Provost is open to that. Provost wants to align with the law, but also wants to do it in a way that makes sense and leave room for exceptions and accommodations. Provost will reinforce this with academic leadership, and encourages faculty to reach out academic leadership as well.
  - Provost commits to including Speaker in policy deliberations, even if school is not in session.
- IT Issues: limitation on licenses for Adobe Acrobat. This was not brought to Faculty Senate, but faculty need Acrobat.
  - Provost will reach out to Henry Torres to discuss the issue of Adobe Acrobat, but reinforces that giving everyone a license was cost prohibitive.
- IT availability: Problems with Chat and Phone availability and faculty are concerned with ongoing concerns with IT issues. Senate requests Dr. Torres to attend Faculty Senate in October to address IT issues. Faculty highlight that there are some structural issues with reports of updates, incompatibilities, security updates etc. that keep occurring. This year, computers were found to not be working at the beginning of the semester both in Visual Arts and Biology; Senate requests that there is evaluation of operations over the summer so that faculty have the access to teaching tools they need by the beginning of the semester.
  - Dr. Torres informed the Speaker that personnel changes had impacted availability. Speaker will relay message to Dr. Torres about the need for backup plans or backup infrastructure.
  - Senate suggests that we should make this meeting with Dr. Torres as productive as possible by offering solutions for individual departments or needs.
- Faculty Workloads: Formula for calculations workloads working with masters' students is different from PhD students. Difference between workload is not in terms of intensity (time spent per semester) but rather in duration (number of semesters working with those students). Additional issue raised of releases for those with administrative duties not being able to take the releases provided for grants because of a minimum teaching requirement or advising duties that cannot be transferred.
  - Provosts notes concerns and will evaluate.

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## **Consent Agenda**

### **Standing Committee Chair Reports**

Academic Freedom and Responsibility:

Academic Standards Committee:

Administrator Evaluation:

Budget and Planning:

Committee Selection Committee:

Constitution and Bylaws:

Elections:

Faculty Affairs:

Faculty Handbook:

### **University Committee Liaison Reports**

Academic Affairs Budget Committee:

Athletic Council:

Curriculum Committee:

Distance Education Advisory Committee:

Faculty Evaluation & Development Committee:

Graduate Council:

Honorary Degree Committee:

Undergraduate Council:

### **Ad Hoc Committee**

Ad Hoc Committee for Student Success:

### **Adjournment**

Motion to Adjourn: Fredrickson; Second, Trujillo-Jenks.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:27 pm.

Wouter van Erve, Secretary