ITEM #3

APPROVED AND CORRECTED MINUTES

These minutes are disseminated to provide timely information to the Academic Senate. They have been approved by the body in question, and, therefore, they are the official minutes.

ACADEMIC SENATE MEETING

September 16, 2020

Present: Richard Benson, Rafael Martin, Inga Musselman, Ashiq Ali, Poras Balsara, Ashley Barnes, Kurt Beron, Dinesh Bhatia, Denise Boots, Judd Bradbury, Patrick Brandt, Matthew Brown, Monica Brussolo, Adam Chandler, R. Chandrasekaran, Jianqing Chen, Ovidiu Daescu, Greg Dess, Vladimir Dragovic, John Ferraris, Rebecca Files, Andrea Fumagalli, Mary Beth Goodrich, Erin Greer, Gopal Gupta, Maria Hasenhuttl, William Hefley, Karen Huxtable-Jester, Naser Islam, Joe Izen, Michael Kesden, Nanda Kumar, David Lumley, John McCaskill, Angela McNulty, Syam Menon, B. Murthi, Tomoki Ohsawa, Elizabeth Pickett, Ravi Prakash, Shalini Prasad, Suresh Radhakrishna, Viswanath Ramakrishna, Carolyn Reichert, Gayle Schwark, Richard Scotch, Lucien Thompson, Christine Veras de Souza, and Shilyh Warren

Absent: Robert Ackerman, William Anderson, and M. Ali Hooshyar

ACADEMIC SENATE MEETING

1. Call to Order for the Academic Senate Meeting and Announcements – Provost Inga Musselman

Meeting was called to order at 1:00pm. Speaker Prakash opened meeting with announcement that Provost Musselman will preside over meeting until President Richard Benson returns from other meeting in about an hour. Provost reported it is Week 5 of the academic year and we are off to a good start. There are minimal “hiccups”, very few concerns or complaints. Student enrollment for Fall 2020 is 28,670, which is a 3% overall drop in enrollment from Fall 2019 due primarily to a lower enrollment of international students. Freshman total (including 1st time, transfer and continuing) is 3,850. There were not as many freshman due to deferrals, attending community colleges, and making other choices. It is something we’re looking into with regards to Masters students. Masters enrollment total is 5,600, which is down by 16.9% overall, down 25% in terms of just international graduate students, and up 32% in terms of domestic graduate students. The increase in domestic Masters student population was due to the university’s media/advertising campaign in which similar programs were bundled together, waiving of GRE & GMAT due to COVID-19, and using “Quick Admit Process”. Quick Admit focused on our undergraduate students who had graduated in the past 5 semesters. We encouraged them to enroll in Masters programs. Doctoral student enrollment is 1,560 which is 5% increase from last year. This combined transition and enrollment has resulted in overall decrease of 2.5% credit hours, which are primarily in the Masters degree programs.

In terms of preparing for Fall 2020 Semester, Provost Musselman gave credit largely due to work done by the Academic Continuity Working Group (ACWG), which is part of the university’s response to COVID-19. This very large and hard-working group of faculty, staff and student representatives began meeting weekly on March 4th. Provost Musselman remarked that even though they started early, they had only an inkling of possible transition off campus. The group is now meeting bi-monthly. Five sub-groups are affiliated with the Academic Continuity Working Group. They are Admissions subgroup, led by Michael Seeligson & Juan Gonzalez, Faculty Retention and Morale subgroup, led by Paul Diehl & Karen Huxtable-Jester, International Students subgroup, led by Josephine Vitta & Juan Gonzalez, Continuing Online Instruction subgroup, led by Darren Crone & Bill Hefley, and Student Success subgroup, led by Serenity King.

Out of the working groups came many recommendations, including course modalities for Fall 2020, as follows:
1) Traditional Classroom/Laboratory Modality, 2) Hybrid Modality,
3) High Flex Modality (All of which have “in person” content.), 4) Remote/Virtual Modality and 5) Fully Online Modality. The University gave Faculty their choice in how to provide their course instruction and which modality to choose. Students were given their choice of learning modality. Of course, they had to choose from the available options made by Faculty.

Provost Musselman gave a summary of Fall 2020 semester class distribution associated with the aforementioned five modalities. These modalities were based upon a survey that was distributed in mid-June 2020 to Faculty and results indicated that 50% of Faculty would teach “in person” and 50% would teach as “online format”. Between mid-June to mid-July 2020, there was a surge/spike in COVID-19 cases in Dallas/Ft. Worth area. By the time Faculty elected their choice of course modality in mid-July, the distribution changed quite dramatically. So, we currently have 1) 7.5% of our classes are in the Traditional Classroom/Laboratory format, 2) 3.1% in High Flex/Flexible format, 3) 3.7% in the Hybrid format, 4) 14.3% of courses offered “in person” content and 5) 85.7% balance of courses either in Remote/Virtual Modality or Fully Online.
ACADEMIC SENATE MEETING

Provost Musselman described an outline of how classrooms were prepared for teaching. The preparations were undertaken by a collaboration of offices across campus: Facilities, OIT, Educational Technology Services (ETS), Registrar’s Office, and the Office of the Provost. The preparations included classrooms outfitted with Microsoft Teams and Microsoft Streams on computers. Classroom seating was arranged to provide “social distancing” of 6-ft. between students and from their instructor. Tablets were ordered for some of the classrooms for instructors. Additional signage was prepared and deployed across campus. Preparations were made for delivering courses in a “virtual or remote modality” through OIT and ETS. The Center for Teaching & Learning provided online tutorials on how to teach online using technology tools via numerous webinars. A computer and webcam loan program was implemented for students and faculty in collaboration with OIT Services. As of last week, loan distributions are for 93 desktop computers, 187 laptops (with more ordered as backup). 14 webcams are checked out with many more scheduled for pickup.

In addition, we worked to implement an online exam proctoring service called Honorlock, which was carefully vetted by the Continuing Online Instruction subgroup within the Academic Continuity Working Group, Committee on Effective Teaching and Academic Senate. This procurement piggybacked our contract onto a UT System contract that had been fully vetted for compliance with FERPA and other considerations, such as information security. As of last week, 2,600 unique students had taken an assessment using Honorlock, and it seems the service is going okay.

Last Tuesday, the Center for Teaching & Learning presented a webinar entitled, “Honorlock and Alternatives”. This webinar featured Darren Crone, Bill Hefley and Sou Fong Leaney. It was followed by a question & answer period. It was attended by more than 60 faculty. It was posted in e-Learning along with the other Center for Teaching & Learning webinars. It is available online by logging onto e-Learning.

Provost Musselman reported that UT Dallas has helped students financially via the Federal CARES Act funds to UT Dallas in the amount of $9.5 million. It has been disbursed by Financial Aid over Spring 2020, Summer 2020 and Fall 2020 semesters. So, we have been able to help our students financially along with the computer and webcam loan program.

Provost Musselman stated that the Academic Continuity Working Group is now planning for the Spring 2021 Semester regarding what they need to be thinking about going forward. She thanked Speaker Ravi Prakash and ended her report for today.

Provost Musselman addressed several questions, including whether we will be planning to attract a larger freshman class next year to make up for shortfall. A few questions and brief discussion followed with regard to later agenda items, including update by HR Chief Colleen Dutton on the RIF affecting 69 out of 2,700 employees. As of September 14th, 69 staff have been impacted by the RIF decisions. 61 positions were eliminated, 4 staff chose to reduce to half time, 4 others were offered other positions (3 of 4 accepted). End dates for staff leaving range from 8/31 to 12/31. These changes directly impact only about 2% of staff. The Provost indicated that we have taken a budget cut across the university. This is not going to impact tenure decisions. We are just evaluating final enrollment numbers, and will have to make future decisions based on that.

There was a question about making document cameras available for faculty and teaching assistants. Parties should contact OIT.

Provost Musselman and Rafael Martin addressed questions about health and public safety standards on campus and for November Election Day at the two polling places on UTD’s campus at the Visitor’s Center for Dallas County voters and the Callier Center for Collin County voters. These polling places will only be open on Election Day and will not be open for early voting. Non-compliance with COVID requirements
is quite small, as most students are self-regulating. Dr. Martin gives a lot of credit to all for their efforts. Dr. Jamison indicated that the student safe ambassadors report about a 95% compliance rate.

There was a question about the NSM Dean’s search. The search is ongoing, and has completed one round of interviews. The second round will run through mid-October. The second round is still a quiet round NSM and Academic Senate will be involved in the third (or final) round, according to Provost Musselman.

2. Approval of the Agenda
Speaker Prakash asked for a motion to approve the September 2020 Agenda for the Academic Senate meeting. Joe Izen moved to approve the agenda. Bill Hefley seconded the motion. Speaker Prakash called for unanimous consent. Hearing no objections, the motion was carried unanimously.

3. Approval of the Minutes
Speaker Prakash called for an approval of the August 2020, Academic Senate Meeting Minutes. Poras Balsara moved to approve the minutes. Joe Izen seconded the motion. Speaker Prakash called for unanimous consent. Hearing no objections, the motion was carried unanimously.

4. Speaker’s Report – Ravi Prakash
Speaker Prakash announced that Chris McGowan will be moving out of her position supporting Academic Governance in October 2020. He thanked Chris for her years of service, as this is a demanding and stressful task. Dr. Prakash thanked Chris for her efforts. As she is transitioning out of her job, Rebecca Ernst from Office of Provost is transitioning into the job. They are working together. He also thanked Vicki Carlisle from Office of Provost for her assistance to make this a smooth process.

Based on inquiries from faculty, the Speaker had called for faculty volunteers from various schools to be on an ad hoc committee on the online teaching experience. They will work with OIT and ETS and be a liaison for faculty to improve their online teaching experience. They met for the first time earlier this week. They will continue to meet on a weekly basis. This ad hoc committee will work with ETS and OIT to understand the problems and recommend solutions. However, please do not stop submitting tickets to OIT for any issues. And reach out to any member on the ad hoc committee with concerns. The committee members are: Christopher Camacho (ATEC), Lori Gerard (A&H), Mary Beth Goodrich (JSOM), Angela McNulty (IS), Emily Touchstone (BBS), Dann Arce (EPPS), Ted Harpham (Honors College), Jeyakesavan Veerasamy (ECS), Nhut Nguyen (ECS), and Amin Lalani (NSM). This committee is similar to a committee that works with Terry Pankratz to improve some of the procurement-related processes. Speaker Prakash stated that Blackboard Collaborate Ultra can be used if Microsoft Teams does not work, in which case recording of the class should then be uploaded to Microsoft Streams for close captioning and transcription. This provides a “fallback measure”.

Speaker Prakash reported that the new emeritus professor policy is up and in effect, which was crafted with help from Dr. Murray Leaf.

New officers have been elected for Student Government, and will be announced later in this meeting. Also, Terry Pankratz has been meeting every two weeks with the Senate Advisory Committee on the University Budget. He is updating them on the latest financial matters, budget, enrollment numbers, and policies.
Speaker Prakash called for any questions.

Brief questions and discussion followed with process concerning the recent appointment letters for the CEP members, the Daily Health Checks and we have to balance “safety with health”. Rafael Martin stated that the daily health check can be submitted by Text or E-mail. Speaker Prakash concluded his report and moved to the next Agenda Item.

5. SACSCOC/Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) Updates – Serenity King
Dr. Serenity King presented good news received from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). Earlier this year, UT Dallas was among the institutions that had raised concerns to the State of Texas about a state law which required a Texas residency for students in order for institutions to receive formula funding for those students. Obviously, with the COVID-19 pandemic, there were several new students who were unable to establish Texas residency prior to enrollment. The THECB did approve for the Commissioner to do an “Emergency Rule” that would allow for institutions to receive formula funding for new students that had not established Texas residency. Dr. King stated that within the Agenda Packet she included a link to the State’s new Open Educational Resources Digital Repository, which is a statewide initiative to provide access to cost effective resources. Also, there is a link regarding a special Coordinating Board Meeting called last week in which the THECB had their legislative appropriations request approved.

Also, included in the Agenda Packet is information about the Governor’s “Emergency Education Relief Funding” that UT Dallas received; specifically, we received an additional $1.3 million Texas Grant and the Emergency Educational Grant of $1.2 million. The Office of Financial Aid is working with various campus stakeholders to make sure that there is a streamlined process for awarding this money based upon State of Texas restrictions. Yesterday, the Coordinating Board did release the online FAQ about funding.

SACSCOC sent many updates that Dr. King will be discussing next month.

Dr. King reported that one person has reached out to her to attend the SACSCOC Annual Meeting, which will be virtual this December. It’s going to be about ¼ the usual cost of the meeting to attend. So, that information is also in today’s Agenda Packet and please reach out if you are interested in participating. No questions or discussion followed. The Speaker thanked Dr. King.

6. FAC/TXCFS Report – Ravi Prakash, Richard Scotch and Bill Hefley
Speaker Prakash asked Dr. Bill Hefley to present his report. Dr. Hefley stated that Texas Council has had many email discussions regarding modalities, faculty issues in the pandemic classroom, along with issues that other schools are dealing with. Fortunately, most of these issues at other schools we’re not dealing with. This Friday and Saturday, the National Council of Faculty Senates, which is a new body that started organizing about 3 years ago will hold their meeting online, along with their first election of continuing officers to replace the founding officers. Dr. Shilyh Warren and Dr. Bill Hefley will attend this meeting. Dr. Warren did not have anything to report. They will present their report on this meeting next month.

Speaker Ravi Prakash reported that the UT System FAC had a meeting on Thursday evening, Sept. 10. It was a brief meeting to welcome new members of the FAC from other campuses (as their Academic Leadership & Faculty Leadership rotates). There are three working groups: Academic Affairs (Faculty Quality, Contracts & Free Speech Issues), Governance, and Health Affairs (concentrates on specific issues applicable to medical health campuses, i.e. physician burnout, etc.).
In this year, FAC will continue with these three working groups and also add three ad hoc groups. These new ad hoc groups will be University Research, Non-Tenure Track Contracts, and Equity & Diversity Group.

Dr. Richard Scotch and Dr. Prakash represent UTD on FAC. They were asked to select their preference for two out of the six groups. Dr. Scotch signed up for the Equity & Diversity Group and continues on the Governance Group. Dr. Prakash signed up for the Academic Affairs & Faculty Quality Group and continues on the Research Group. Speaker Prakash believes they will be able to represent the interests of Non-Tenure system faculty and other groups, except for Health Affairs.

However, Speaker Prakash reached out to his colleagues on Health Campuses to learn from them what their campuses did to address the issue of physician/faculty burnout in order to prevent burnout among faculty at UT Dallas due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Another issue is the matter of clarity for non-tenure system faculty regarding earlier FAC documents, which confounded and conflated adjuncts and true non-tenure full time faculty that mixed and jumbled both roles. As Karen Huxtable and Speaker Prakash pointed out, non-tenure faculty shoulder a larger teaching responsibility compared to tenured faculty and have greater burnout. It is to be discussed and made sure that things are clear and to especially look at teaching responsibilities compared to tenure system and non-tenure system faculty to prevent faculty burnout on the UT Dallas campus.

7. **Student Government Report – Sara Brennan & Rutendo Chando**
Speaker Prakash announced that the new Student Government President is Sara Brennan and the new Vice-President is Rutendo Chando. Since Sara could not attend the meeting, Rutendo Chando gave the report. She informed the group that they have their new Executive Council and have had their first meeting. The senators are really excited to get started this year. They are working on creating their ad hoc Diversity & Equity Committee, which they hope will become official and present by next Academic Senate meeting. Speaker Prakash welcomed & thanked her. Speaker Prakash stated the UT Dallas Committee on Diversity & Equity does not currently have student representation, but believes it is important. He suggested that the Graduate Student Assembly and Student Government collaborate and make a proposal for revision of the charge for the Diversity & Equity committee to be presented to Academic Council and then Academic Senate. Graduate Student Assembly representatives have met with the Student Government representatives. They sent their proposal to Student Government officers last night. There were no questions. Speaker Prakash thanked her for her report.

8. **Staff Council Report – Naomi Emmett**
Speaker Prakash introduced the returning elected Staff Council President, Naomi Emmett and Staff Council Vice-President, Debra Greszler. Naomi Emmett is attending the meeting today. She reported that Staff Council has put out an all call for each of the members for what they’d like to do, which were returned to her today. There are 42 members this year with four Standing Committees: Benefits, Communications, Fund Raising and Staff Development. Staff Council will begin meeting and elect Chairs and then form an Executive Committee prior to their Staff Council Meeting in October 2020. Debra Greszler announced that 1) Staff Council scholarships are available to Staff this year. They may apply online at their website or send an e-mail directly to Naomi Emmet. 2) Good news is this year’s scholarship increased to $300 (from $200 last year) per individual. 3) Deadline is October 31, 2020 regarding nominations for the “Care Award”. Additional information can be found on their website, send e-mail to Naomi Emmett or Pax Abrams. Speaker Prakash welcomed and thanked Naomi Emmett. There were no questions.
9. **Discussion: The Impact of Budget Cuts on Full-Time Faculty Positions – Inga Musselman**

Provost Musselman shared opening remarks responding to questions that Speaker Ravi Prakash had sent her regarding the impact of budget cuts on full-time faculty.

In response to COVID-19, and other than freezing new hires, have there been any reductions in faculty positions in the form of some full-time faculty not having their contract renewed? Provost Musselman explained that the appointment contracts for full time faculty for this AY 2020-2021 were renewed. So, there were not reductions in full time faculty positions.

The second question asked was “Are there proposals to eliminate some positions in specific schools or programs as faculty members retire?” Provost Musselman indicated that to her knowledge, there are no such proposals. The University is in the process of finalizing the budget for this Fiscal Year based on getting our final enrollment numbers and then making some strategic, operational decisions for the upcoming year. She expects it will include our decision on the hiring plan for full time faculty. We know that the budget this year is very tight and that faculty hiring considerations will need to be very strategic.

Professor R. Chandrasekaran asked if positions that became vacant because people left or retired have not been filled. Provost Musselman answered: “We’ve had retirements this past year as we’ve had in previous years. Some of those (positions) have been filled. And some of those (positions) were filled in this past hiring cycle. What we will have to decide next year or this coming year is: how many positions the University can afford to fill in this coming hiring cycle, and those discussions will still be handled after we understand completely what our budget is for this coming year.”

Professor David Lumley asked, as some offers for tenure track faculty are “on hold” now because of the hiring freeze, whether there is any anticipated time frame for when the freeze might be removed? Or whether some of the exception hires during the freeze can move forward? Provost Musselman answered: “I think I can follow up in kind with the same explanation as before. We’re looking at each request to hire individually. We’re looking at the kind of strategic need. We’re also looking for the available budget. Right now, we’re trying to get a handle on what this coming year’s budget is and with a lot of some data has come in with regard to our enrollment for the Fall. I think that it will help to inform what steps we can take in the short term and the long term.”

Professor Lumley followed up asking about the time frame for acting from those decisions. Provost Musselman indicated that requests will be reviewed and some decisions might be made in January 2021, or it could be sooner.

An open discussion followed with several inquiries related to Budget. The Provost remarked that the other big variable is regarding the Texas Legislative Session for the next biennium following the Election. It will significantly influence what the budget situation is going forward and how many positions the University can afford to fill in for this coming hiring cycle. Those discussions will be made after we understand completely what our budget is for this coming year.

10. **Presentation: Living Our Values Task Force Report – George Fair & Rafael Martin**

An executive overview presentation on the work done to date by this Task Force began with Rafael Martin. In late June 2020, Dr. Richard Benson asked Rafael Martin and Dr. George Fair to form a Living Our Values Task Force in response to the killing of George Floyd and the larger societal protest over systemic racism, biases, and discrimination. This was implemented in order to determine how those issues affected our community and what we might do about it. Specifically, the charge for the Task Force was: “To provide actionable recommendations to the President on how to manifest our values of community, diversity and tolerance. How to identify and address systemic racism. How to improve inclusion access and equity for all at our institution.”
Dr. Rafael Martin, co-chair of this task force, indicated that this is a daunting charge for this Task Force, but it is one that they have really leaned into for the past 12 weeks. They have been meeting weekly since July 2020. Rafael Martin stated: “I believe that the work done by the Task Force has made or will make meaningful impacts on the issues at our campus.” Membership for this Task Force includes students, faculty, staff, representatives of Academic Senate, Staff Council and Student Government. Also noted, students, staff and faculty have written openly to the President and University community about their concerns and demands for changes on this campus.

The task force has spent the past 12-weeks largely focused on those demands, which were brought to their attention by those groups. To date, they have sent six recommendations to Dr. Benson, which he is in the process of reviewing. Topics of those recommendations include:

- the creation of new academic programs focused on African and African Diaspora Studies OR minors related to Ethnic Studies,
- additional diversity training for faculty, staff, and (especially for) supervisors on campus,
- nondiscrimination training for members of our Greek life community, and
- issues concerning funding for our Office of Diversity & Community Engagement and the Student Counseling Center.

The task force also considered and endorsed two recommendations that were not created by the Task Force, but were related to work they were doing, such as: 1) Related to support of employee resource groups on campus, which was a proposal generated by the Committee for the Support of Diversity & Equity, which asked for paid time for staff and faculty members to attend ERG meetings as part of their responsibilities. (Note: It has been approved and recent communication was sent by President Benson detailing his support of that proposal.) 2) The next proposal is from another task force that Rafael Martin chaired and is related to Campus Police Department and the creation of a “Police Oversight Committee”.

Rafael Martin commended all members of the campus community and the task force for their work in the past 12-weeks and the creation of documents that drove the agenda for the work of the task force. They jumped into working with the appropriate administrators to develop recommendations. These recommendations were sent to Dr. Benson. When the task force receives his approval, then the implementation will follow in short order.

Dr. George Fair remarked that he had no major additions to what Rafael Martin had reported and commended what they had done. Dr. Fair stated that they are continuing to work on the proposals put forth by the students as several students wrote to Dr. Benson. A group of Black faculty and staff made recommendations that the task force is processing. The task force still has a lot of work to do. However, they will continue to work throughout the rest of this month and try to initiate a University committee that will look at future issues. Note: a story on the task force is to be posted soon by UTD OC.

Professor Greg Dess asked about whether there had been a hard-nosed, cost-benefit analysis done of the proposed academic offerings. Do we even know if there is demand for such programs? Dr. Fair agreed that not all programs pay their way, and that cost-benefit is only one form of analysis. We do not know if these new minors (around courses that already exist) will pay their way or what the uptake will be, but the task force thought this was a recommended action that we should take. Professor Dess disagreed, and reiterated that this economic analysis should be an important consideration. Speaker Prakash added his view that diversity benefits our students in ways that are not always measurable, but are certainly desirable on the job market. President Benson spoke up to support diversity as well.

Speaker Prakash thanked all involved with the task force and its recommendations.

11. Approval of Police Oversight Committee Charge – Anne Fischer & Andrew Scott
ACADEMIC SENATE MEETING

Speaker Prakash invited Dr. Andrew Scott, Associate Professor (ATEC), and Dr. Anne Fischer, Assistant Professor (A&H), to introduce the proposed policy on the Police Oversight Committee. Dr. Scott announced that their committee is a sub-set of the “Living Our Values Task Force” and specifically looked at the role police play on campus in light of recent external events to make recommendations about how we can ensure trust and support of the police with the campus community. The committee was represented through the University Administration by Rafael Martin, Chair of the Committee. There were representatives from every constituency of the campus including staff, faculty, students and Police Department representatives: Chief Larry Zacharias and Assistant Chief Brent Tourangeau.

In general, Dr. Andrew Scott reported that they have willing participants in this process. And like most things at campuses this size, where you have different interests, they work and try to support their particular interests in these situations. He experienced only a willingness to come together and deal with some of these very tough issues. At the outset, some of issues expressed by students revolved around two big issues in one: 1) the equity ability of funding public safety as it relates to Student Services and Counseling Center and 2) the need to be aware of issues that dealt with the ability to express free speech rights through protests on campus. They recognize the role that “external actors may play in accelerating or turning things into other directions” from what was originally organized as a “peaceful protest”.

With regard to our police, Chief Larry Zacharias stated that they all go through de-escalation training. This training is stressed in every way. It is his goal to make the UT Dallas Police a visible support and presence on campus and deal with faculty, staff and students in a professional way. Dr. Scott noted that we want the police presence to be here and for issues of public safety. Given the open nature of the campus, the police have spent their time building community as their primary goal.

An area of concern was identified as an intersection between the UT Dallas Police Department and the City of Richardson Police Department. More specifically, we should draw our attention to the areas on the Northside that are heavily populated by the UT Dallas community of students, staff and other people. But, it is an area that is policed by the City of Richardson, which leaves some areas of ambiguity. There is a need for better coordination between the two Police Departments in order that our students are treated in a manner that we expect them to be treated. When they call upon the Police or when they interact with them, it should be done in a respectful manner. Therefore, it makes them feel like they are safe and listened to.

Overall, the committee met on a weekly basis and worked through a lot of these issues. The work culminated in the idea of forming a task force that would operate outside of the UT Dallas Police Administration body. It would reflect the concerns of the campus community as represented by staff, students and faculty. To that end, there was a recommendation for a standing committee that would be formed with staggered representation for two years. There would also be a total of 11 members with students and staff representatives that would review some of these events when they happen or make recommendations for how to improve the quality of life on campus with the police force.

The model used was based on a committee formed at the UT Austin campus, but it was modified to reflect our campus. The origins of the UT Austin committee grew from a different emphasis than the one here at UT Dallas. The structure involved a group of people representing diverse constituents from campus to deal with some of the issues to prevent flare-ups. Or, when and if things happen, then we would have a mechanism in place to use to deal with issues and bring recommendations to both the University Administration and the Police Department in order to answer the student groups and faculty on how we can improve the relationship between our Police Department and the wider University community. Dr. Scott gave the floor to Dr. Fischer to speak.

Dr. Fischer said that she did not have many comments as she concurred with Dr. Scott. She thought his
ITEM #3

A report was absolutely perfect. She remarked that since the agenda is quite full today, she would only open the time left for any questions. Speaker Prakash thanked them for their report, but added clarification on membership for the proposed committee for faculty membership of which 2 must be tenured faculty (2-10yrs) and 1 non-tenured faculty for a total of 3 faculty members. They are staggered in 2-year terms.

Speaker Prakash remarked that (as in past) 3 people will be appointed: two of them to hold 2-year terms and one of them to hold a 1-year term until the next cycle and everything is regularized. A faculty member will be chairing the committee. It will give opportunities for the University community to attend these meetings and bring concerns they may have, which gives an “open community aspect” to the committee that allows anyone to bring something forward that is needed for discussion. Dr. Scott reminded the group that this is an idea for a “University committee” which does not report to the Academic Senate, but directly reports to the President.

Speaker Prakash acknowledged and remarked that “as a courtesy, all University committees have also provided an annual report to the Academic Senate. And it’s my expectation is that this committee will also continue such by providing an annual report. Of course, as well, give the community ample opportunities to share their opinions and ideas with the committee as it works.”

Speaker Prakash asked for any questions or discussion on floor. No questions or discussion followed. Therefore, Speaker Prakash called for a motion (for this ad hoc committee) to approve the formation of this committee and its policies. Motion on floor to approve by Nanda Kumar and seconded by Joe Izen. Speaker Prakash asked for unanimous consent. Hearing no objections, the motion was carried unanimously.

12. Presentation: Academic Misconduct – Amanda Smith & Brooke Everett

Amanda Smith, Dean of Students, introduced Brooke Everett, Director of the Office of Community Standards and Conduct, to assist in today’s presentation. She distinguished between the Dean of Students Office and the Office of Community Standards & Conduct. Amanda stated she also oversees the Office of Community Standards and Conduct and stays very involved. Director Brooke Everett is the person responsible for day-to-day operations and takes any conduct referrals.

Power Point presentation by Amanda Smith. She reported on the UT Dallas discipline process. UT Dallas’s Student Code of Conduct does not uniquely vary from what is found at other institutions across the country (U.S.A.). Even more specifically, it does not vary from the UT System. They had administrators from other system institutions which periodically meet and develop/modify what is called a “model code of conduct”. While UT Dallas has “wiggle room” to make our own code, we are expected to mirror the model code for the UT System. Amanda Smith, Brooke Everett and her staff (for the most part) are members of the National Association for Student Conduct. They receive periodic training regularly on legal updates from this organization. This helps keep UT Dallas in compliance and up to date on the newest regulations and technologies.

Dean Smith said that one of the most critical roles that the Office of Community Standards & Conduct is ensuring that our students are afforded their Right to Due Process, which is grounded in the 14th Amendment of the United States Constitution. Among other things, it provides that “no one may be denied or deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of Law”. The students have right under “due process”, and the most significant ones, or the “right to notice” and a “fair hearing prior to any kind of administration of discipline.”
I TEM #3

ACADEMIC SENATE MEETING

The Office of Community Standards & Conduct is charged with ensuring that each student is afforded “due process”. A lengthy description of the processes, terminology and procedures were presented in detail. It was noted that their office retains a conduct record of a student for a maximum of 5-years if they are found responsible, which can impact the student if they go on to attempt to occupy a government job or apply to some graduate schools, medical schools or law schools. These institutions will do a background check and see if a student has any conduct record with their previous institution. Therefore, if a student signs a “release of information, then we would have to inform ‘Yes’ to that institution or government agency.” She noted that even when a student accepts responsibility, then the challenge is to know if the sanction is inappropriate for the violation. If they feel it is inappropriate, then a student can appeal the sanction. (Formerly appeals of sanctions were sent to President of the university, but now they go to the Vice-President for Student Affairs.)

Finally, a student can maintain that they are not responsible for committing the violation and elect to go to a discipline hearing. A hearing is another opportunity for the student to be heard. The Office of Community Standards & Conduct staff will present information and evidence. The student will have the opportunity to do the same. Afterwards, the Discipline Committee Hearing Panel makes the decision on whether or not the student is responsible. If so, then they will issue a sanction. At this point, the student still has one more opportunity to be heard through an appeal process that goes to the Vice President of Student Affairs.

When the Office of Community Standards & Conduct recommends a sanction, they do their best to keep the sanction consistent with the violations that are committed by other students. Consistency is the most important thing we can do when issuing a sanction to a student. We also factor in the number of violations that students have had in the past. Dean Smith defined definitions of sanctions that included expulsions, suspension examples and the academic dishonesty process regarding the role that faculty perform. There is usually a reason that a faculty has a suspicion regarding a student’s conduct in cheating along with the evidence. They prefer that the first step is for faculty to submit information to the Office of Community Standards & Conduct with as much detailed information and evidence as possible. For example, it can be a recorded video of a student looking at another student’s work during an exam, which is solid evidence. This kind of evidence is not always available, of course.

Dean Amanda Smith remarked that there are some innovative cheating methods by students happening in our “virtual world”. She commended her staff for doing a good job. The presentation concluded with more clarification of terms regarding violations, process and time frame for keeping student records.

Brooke Everette took questions with brief discussion. Speaker Prakash thanked Dean Smith and Brooke Everette for their report.

13. Proposal from Academic Calendar Committee for Spring 2021 – Dinesh Bhatia

Dr. Dinesh Bhatia presented the 2021 Spring Calendar proposal. The two major decisions were made for delaying the start date of Spring 2021 semester and whether Spring Break would happen. Spring 2021 start date is Tuesday, Jan.19, 2021, which is the day after the Martin Luther King Day holiday, a one-week delay from the original calendar.

There will be a spring break. There are many advantages of giving a spring break to students with respect to their academic performance as well as relaxation before their final exams. Therefore, the Spring 2021 semester will end one week later than normal. Instead of April 30, the semester will end on May 7, 2021.

The Calendar committee had other discussions: What happens if COVID-19 pandemic is still around? What will happen when students return to campus from spring break? A discussion was had about having a 2-week online education period following spring break. So, when students returned, then everyone goes online.
ITEM #3

ACADEMIC SENATE MEETING

for 2-weeks and then return to normal course of action. Dr. Bhatia stated that the Committee cannot make that decision, because we do not know what the COVID-19 pandemic situation will be in Spring 2021 semester. And they decided to defer those decisions to late January 2021 when decisions regarding the modalities and other issues will have to be made for Spring 2021 in order to minimize risk (relative to COVID-19 pandemic status at that time).

In summary, the proposed start date for the Spring 2021 semester is Tuesday, Jan.19, 2021. Spring Semester is proposed to end 1-week later on May 7, 2021. Registrar Jennifer McDowell confirmed Spring Break as the week of March 15th. Dr. Bhatia stated that remaining decisions will take care of requirements for students.

A few questions with brief discussion followed. Speaker Prakash called for a motion to approve the calendar proposal. Academic Senate endorses this recommendation to the President.

14. Informational Presentation on MS Teams and eLearning – Frank Feagans & Darren Crone

Dr. Darren Crone, Assistant Provost-Educational Technology Services, gave a PowerPoint presentation of the 30,000-ft. overview of educational technologies in the Fall 2020 semester. He introduced Frank Feagans, Vice President and Chief Information Officer, who also presented. They addressed eLearning, tools available for use for online learning and teaching, support staff contacts and current status update on their work and services provided. E-Learning is providing course development, course management, and consultation. They have a team of instructional designers that can assist with moving your face to face class to the online environment. They offer regular training sessions and also work one on one with faculty. They have also been blessed with some amazing faculty mentors who offer regular sessions for faculty. Thanks to Mary Beth Goodrich for heading this up. It has been absolutely invaluable.

He noted that for this semester, to date, the use statistics for Honorlock are 131 Instructors using this system for 9,922 exams for 5,239 students. The Testing Center has pivoted from in-person proctored exams to supporting these online solutions. Frank Feagans stated that there are many teams behind the scene that deal with the support for each of the teaching modalities. All of these teams understand the criticality of our faculty needs.

Dr. Crone gave examples of student concerns over privacy issues (he received over 5,000 signatures on a petition regarding Honorlock). Therefore, it was his fulltime job for over 2-weeks to address student concerns and misconceptions. He reported that everything has gone relatively well and it is widely used now. If anyone has any questions or issues, he reminded the group that the Testing Center staff are happy to walk them through “set-up” to give a practice exam or anything like that. He reminded the group to not hesitate to reach out to him or Sou Fong Leaney, who was also in attendance. To support students in their coursework or taking exams with Honorlock, students can check out a desktop, laptop or webcam from OIT. JSOM offers a paper based, in-person proctoring option. Professors can reserve a seat for students to take an exam in the Founders Building Brazos Computer Lab, but there are only 8-seats available (due to CDC social distancing requirements). The faculty member does have to make that reservation. Students may also come to campus to use Wi-Fi to take their exams.

Darren Crone reported that ETS worked very hard to integrate teams with e-Learning. In a very short time, this has been heavily utilized with a continuous improvement process in place to enhance the experience. E-Learning has over 3,500 sections in active use. For those with technical issues, Darren suggests that they contact the eLearning Help Desk and they also have instructional designers who are ready to address any issues. Regular training and faculty mentor sessions can be found at their website link.

We have been heavily dependent upon technology in the past couple of semesters. However, the reality is that technology will fail at some point. When there are technical issues, it is important to be prepared. Reassure students and let them know that if something happens, they should not stress out about it nor
ITEM #3

If you are using one platform for class and something goes wrong, you can ask your students to meet you on the other platform. Another option is that you can record the rest of your lecture and post it later. You can also post lecture notes or PowerPoint slides. It does not have to be the same exact verbatim material as long as it is equal to the content. Also let students know that we have a 24/7 e-Learning support, and support from OIT’s Help Desk.

Frank Feagans emphasized the importance of enhancing the instructional experience using Teams and Stream for instruction. We want to make it better and better while working with the ad hoc faculty work group. We are also working closely with Microsoft regarding Teams. They are developing enhanced products and understanding use for products. Amanda Pritchard stated that there are many training options and she has created a Teams group, “Campus Communicators” to be self-sustained support system – to help empower others. OIT has talked with Microsoft, the Office of the President, the Office of Research, and HR about participating. Brief questions and discussion followed. Speaker Prakash thanked all and moved to next item.

15. Approval of FY20 Committee Reports – Bill Hefley
There are two editorial changes for the CEP and CQ reports. These reports were approved unanimously.

16. Informational Revisions to Faculty Benefits Coverage – Colleen Dutton
In the interest of time, Colleen posted the information. Benefits for faculty will now provide “bridge coverage” for faculty who are leaving UT Dallas during the summer months.

17. Informational Early Alert in Orion: Graduation Help Desk, BAIT & Conduct Referral – Jessica Murphy
Dean Murphy posted two videos in the Chat. Due to the time, she would like to respectfully request to return in October. Speaker Prakash agreed.

18. Adjournment – Richard Benson
President Benson stated that he was able to attend the second and third hour of this meeting. There being no further business, President Benson declared this meeting of the Academic Senate adjourned on September 16, 2020 at 3:54 PM.

APPROVED: [Signature]
DATE: [Signature]

Ravi Prakash
Speaker of the Faculty