

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, February 25, 2025

Time: 4:05 PM – 5:34 PM

Location: Virtual Meeting via Teams

Executive Committee Members Present:

Daniel A. Montez

Richard Buchli

Mark R. Murray

Nicholas Hinojosa

Jaclyn Miller

Senators Present

Liberal Arts: Robert Miller, Rachael Brown, Silvia E. Herrera, Annie Liss, Micah Bailey, Melissa Terry

Nursing and Allied Health: Sharon Rice, Alexia Trigo, Layman D. Miller, Blanca Herrera

Bachelor's Program: Laura Garcia

Business and Public Safety: Jesus Amaya, Ruby Campuzano, Victor Fonseca, Guadalupe V. Sanchez

Math, Science, IT: Adrian Gonzalez, Courtney Galle, Dr. Mehrzad Mahmoudian Geller, Fidel Rodriguez, Juan Luna

Social and Behavioral Science: Ana Riojas, Tim Weber, Pooja Rishi, Nihan Kayaardi

Lecturer & Adjunct Senators: Celina Jorge, Rebecca Lynch

Senators Absent:

JoAnna Martinez, Jennifer Rosillo

Senators Missing Two Consecutive Meetings:

Jennifer Rosillo

Meeting Agenda

Welcome and Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Faculty Senate President Daniel A. Montez at 4:05 PM.

Daniel apologized for joining slightly late due to connectivity issues and welcomed all attendees.

Approval of January 2025 Minutes

The minutes from the January 2025 meeting were approved.

Presentation from Human Resources

Time: 4:05 PM 4:34 PM (29 minutes)

Presenter: Zachary Suarez, Executive Director of Human Resources & Talent Development

- Zachary Suarez addressed questions surrounding alcohol and drug testing policies for faculty and staff.
- He explained that while testing policies are being refined, random drug testing does not apply to faculty members.
- The policy framework is being developed due to the absence of clear prior procedures, even though there have been no reported violations in the past year or two.
- Faculty will not be financially responsible for tests should they occur and a third-party administrator along with a Medical Review Officer would handle any testing processes.
- Nick Hinojosa asked if there were any documents available outlining the updated procedures. Daniel Montez also requested these documents to be shared with the Senate. Zachary agreed to provide them.
- Tim Weber raised concerns about overload pay and the transition from Banner to Workpay.
- Zachary discussed ongoing efforts to streamline the data transfer process but emphasized that some issues may still require follow-up.
- Dr. Mehrzad Mahmoudian-Geller inquired about travel request procedures for faculty attending conferences. She expressed concern that the current reimbursement structure, which requires upfront payment by faculty, discourages participation.
- Zachary clarified that while the issue is valid, it falls outside the purview of Human Resources. Daniel acknowledged the concern and recommended further discussion with the relevant administrative offices.

Committee Reports and Academic Classification Discussion

Time: 4:34 PM 5:09 PM

- Rachael Brown provided updates on the Academic Classification Committees ongoing work:

- Efforts are underway to develop a Blackboard shell for faculty, which would provide clarity on submission requirements for classification, especially regarding how to organize years of review.
- The committee emphasized that although portfolios may now be submitted digitally, they must still follow the traditional structure. OneNote was highlighted as a useful platform for compiling artifacts and documentation.

Rachael also reviewed the classification levels and criteria:

- Assistant Professor: Requires a minimum of two years of service and documentation of teaching effectiveness plus one additional area (service to college, service to community, professional activity, or scholarly pursuit). Eligible with a Doctorate, Masters, Baccalaureate, or Associate Degree.
- Associate Professor: Requires a Doctorate or Masters degree, a minimum of five years of service, and at least two years since classification as Assistant Professor. Portfolio must demonstrate teaching effectiveness and two of the four criteria areas.
- (Full) Professor: Requires a Doctorate degree, a minimum of ten years of service, and at least two years since classification as Associate Professor. Portfolio must include teaching effectiveness and three of the four areas: service to college, service to community, professional activity, and scholarly pursuit.
- Micah Bailey encouraged faculty with extended tenure at STC to consider applying for Full Professor if eligible.
- Dr. Mehrzad Mahmoudian-Geller expressed concerns about the clarity and transparency of classification criteria.
- Dr. Pooja Rishi suggested that adding formal incentives for pursuing classification might encourage greater faculty engagement.
- Mark Murray clarified that academic classification is not tied to salary placement but serves professional development and institutional recognition purposes.

Discussion on Incompletes and Support for Pregnant & Parenting Students

Time: 5:09 PM 5:30 PM

- Nick Hinojosa raised concerns about the colleges policies and practices regarding students who are pregnant or parenting.
- He referenced the colleges website, which states that students must be provided the opportunity to earn back credit for classes missed due to pregnancy-related conditions. However, he noted inconsistencies between this directive and current faculty practices, particularly when final grades have been issued.
- He questioned how credit can be made up without options like incompletes or extended timelines for assignments, especially if the semester has ended.
- Daniel Montez acknowledged the disconnect between institutional policy (including statements on syllabi and the FAQ on the colleges website) and the practical implementation by faculty. He recommended raising the issue within Academic Council and continuing the conversation within Faculty Senate.

- Fidel Rodriguez (via earlier remarks in the meeting) stressed the importance of faculty being cautious and consistent in granting incompletes. He shared that overly lenient incomplete policies could become unsustainable, especially when managing multiple students with pending coursework after the semester ends.
- He also emphasized that faculty should avoid the Jesus Christ syndrometrying to save every student at the expense of their own workload and well-being.
- Daniel echoed Fidels concerns and advocated for clearer departmental and divisional guidelines to empower faculty while maintaining consistency.

Open Forum

Time: 5:30 PM 5:34 PM

- Faculty members reiterated the need for discretion and departmental alignment when handling incomplete grades and makeup work.
- Daniel Montez thanked the Senate for their thoughtful discussion and invited any additional comments to be shared with him via email. He also mentioned reaching out to Dean Hernandez and Todd Nelson to attend a future meeting.

Adjournment

Time: 5:34 PM

Daniel Montez concluded the meeting, thanking everyone for their time and engagement. He wished attendees a good rest of the day and week.