

DOCUMENTS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

Following are the minutes of the regular Faculty Council meeting of December 7, 2015.



Hillary Hart, Secretary
General Faculty and Faculty Council

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR FACULTY COUNCIL MEETING OF
DECEMBER 7, 2015**

The fourth regular meeting of the Faculty Council for the academic year 2015-16 was held in the Main Building, Room 212 on Monday, December 7, 2015, at 2:15 PM.

ATTENDANCE.

Present: Meagan N. Abel, Gayle J. Acton, Lance Bertelsen, Carolyn M. Brown, James H. Cox, Elizabeth Cullingford, Ann Cvetkovich, David J. Eaton, Catharine H. Echols, Gregory L. Fenves, Alan W. Friedman, Sophia Gilmsen, Andrea C. Gore, Terrance L. Green, Michelle Habeck, Marvin L. Hackert, Louis Harrison, Hillary Hart, Steven D. Hoelscher, Coleman Hutchison, Brent L. Iverson, Jody Jensen, Maria G. Juenger, Jonathan Kaplan, Harrison Keller, Kerry A. Kinney, Susan R. Klein, Judith Langlois, John C. Lassiter, David L. Leal, Naomi E. Lindstrom, Bradford R. Love, Lauren A. Meyers, Julia Mickenberg, Julie A. Minich, Jennifer Moon, Stephanie Mulder, Gordon S. Novak, Rachel A. Osterloh, Dennis S. Passovoy, Na'ama Pat-El, Edward R. Pearsall, Jonathan T. Pierce-Shimomura, Soncia Reagins-Lilly, Stanley J. Roux, Cesar A. Salgado, David M. Schnyer, Christen Smith, Rajashri Srinivasan, Vincent S. (Shelby) Stanfield, Jessica R. Toste, Emanuel Tutuc, Kirk L Von Sternberg, Brian Wilkey, Karin G. Wilkins, Hannah C. Wojciehowski, Edward T. Yu.

Absent: Dean J. Almy, William Beckner (excused), Chad J. Bennett (excused), Jay M. Bernhardt, Patricia L. Clubb (excused), Lydia Maria Contreras, M. Lynn Crismon (excused), Stephanie W. Crouch (excused), Arturo De Lozanne (excused), Douglas J. Dempster (excused), Randy L. Diehl, Andrew P. Dillon, Jonathan B. Dingwell (excused), David R. Engleman, Bradley G. Englert, Amy S. Enrione (excused), Veit F. Erlmann, Ward Farnsworth, Philip M. Gavenda (excused), Lorraine J. Haricombe, Barbara J. Harlow, Susan S. Heinzelman (excused), Linda A. Hicke, Hans Hofmann (excused), S. Claiborne Johnston, Manuel Justiz, Susan L. Kearns (excused), Mary Knight (excused), Daniel F. Knopf (excused), Desiderio Kovar (excused), Timothy J. Loving (excused), Kelly McDonough (excused), Sharon Mosher, Donald P. Newman (excused), Patricia C. Ohlendorf (excused), Sheila M. Olmstead (excused), Gage E. Paine (excused), Jorge A. Prozzi, Vance A. Roper (excused), Nancy L. Roser (excused), James C. Spindler, Laura T. Starks, Frederick R. Steiner, Zachary B. Stone (excused), Alexa Stuijbergen, David A. Vanden Bout (excused), Gregory J. Vincent, Jo Lynn Westbrook (excused), Robert H. Wilson, Sharon L. Wood, Cara Young (excused), Luis H. Zayas.

Voting Members:	50 present,	26 absent,	76 total.
Non-Voting Members:	7 present,	26 absent,	33 total.
Total Members:	57 present,	52 absent,	109 total.

I. REPORT OF THE SECRETARY (D 13696-13706).

As is tradition, Secretary Hillary Hart (distinguished senior lecturer, civil, architectural, and environmental engineering) reported first on the status of memorial resolutions: one committee was formed for Professor Emeritus Lee H. Matlock (civil architectural, and environmental engineering) and a resolution was written for Professor Emeritus Charles T. Clark. The secretary announced that two proposals from the Educational Policy Committee had received final approval: 1) Signatory on Significant Course Record Changes (D 13496-13499), and 2) Revision to Transcript-Recognized Minors Policy (D 13500-13502) along with four proposals to change the McCombs School of Business chapter in the *Undergraduate Catalog for 2016-2018*. Items pending approval included the update to the core curriculum course lists (D 13272 -13277), which was under review at the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and forty *Undergraduate Catalog* proposals pending UT System, and three pending review by the provost. The secretary reminded members of the no-protest items pending their review that included twenty *Undergraduate Catalog* proposals and one Educational Policy Committee proposal that would revise the Designated College Scholars policy (D 13694-13695).

Secretary Hart encouraged faculty members to communicate with their faculties letting them know the business conducted by the Council and to share information posted on the Faculty Council's website that would be of interest to them, particularly the departmental statements on Campus Carry.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

Secretary Hart announced that the minutes of the Faculty Council meeting of November 16, 2015, were postponed until the January meeting.

III. COMMUNICATION WITH THE PRESIDENT.

President Fenves apologized in advance for having to leave the meeting early at 3:00. He said that later in the day he would be announcing his recommendations for a tuition increase based on the Tuition Policy Advisory Committee report, and that it would be followed by a campus-wide message. The president explained that the increase would have to be approved by the Board of Regents at their upcoming meeting in February. He said that if the increase were to be approved, it would take effect in the fall semester.

President Fenves said that he was expecting the Campus Carry Working Group to submit their report to him by Thursday and that he would take the report under advisement along with the departmental statements when he makes his final recommendation on UT Austin's Campus Carry policy. He added that the working group's report would be distributed campus-wide.

On Wednesday, the president said he would be at the US Supreme Court in Washington, DC, to hear oral arguments on the Fisher v. The University of Texas case "where we are defending the use of race and ethnicity in a limited, tailored manner for undergraduate admissions, actually for all admissions." He explained that in 2009, the case prevailed in trial court but was appealed to the Fifth Circuit, which also ruled in the University's favor. In 2012, the case was appealed to the Supreme Court for the first time and was sent back down questioning whether the legal standards on scrutiny had been met. The president said last year in the appeal review, the Fifth Circuit again had a very strong opinion supporting UT Austin's use of race and ethnicity in admissions. As before, Fisher appealed to the Supreme Court, which would hear the case on Wednesday, December 9. President Fenves said the University is "widely recognized for defending the constitutional use of race and ethnicity in admissions." Over seventy friends of the court briefs were filed on UT Austin's behalf from universities across the nation, from CEO's of Fortune 100 companies, and retired military leaders, all talking about the importance of a diverse workforce, a diverse leadership of a diverse nation in a world that is increasingly diverse, and the importance of bringing people from different backgrounds, different perspectives to help solve the challenges facing the country and of course facing the world. And the place that starts is at institutions of higher education, especially the leading institutions of higher education.

President Fenves opined that students benefit from an education in a diverse setting with multiple viewpoints that are respectfully and openly discussed, and where they are exposed to different ideas. He said without diversity, our nation would be less informed and “ultimately it will be at our peril.” He further explained that diversity has been the Constitutional basis for considering race and ethnicity in admissions since the *Bakke* decision (1978), which was reaffirmed by the Supreme Court *Grutter* decision in 2003. The president said that what is happening at universities across the nation, such as at Missouri, Yale, Princeton, Brandeis, and many other campuses, makes it clear that race and ethnicity still matter and that these are important issues. “They are important to our students, they are important to our faculty, and again, we are arguing that they are important for the nation.”

With respect to campus racism, the week of Thanksgiving, President Fenves said he had held several meetings with leaders of student organizations of color, primarily African American students, to talk with them about inclusion and diversity at the University of Texas at Austin. The president said that UT Austin had made progress in a number of areas, but we have a lot more hard work to do. He said “the students were so clear and organized, and we had a tremendous discussion and committed to an action plan to continue to make needed progress on diversity and inclusion at UT Austin.” President Fenves said there were things that needed to be dealt with that are fairly immediate while others would be long term for both the recruitment and retention of students of all backgrounds, but especially students of color.

The president stated that when he started in the provost’s office, an issue that he had been concerned with was how to improve diversity and the excellence of our faculty. As a result, he formed the Council for Racial and Ethnic Equity and Diversity (CREED) to address issues related to faculty recruitment, retention, diversity and inclusion. He said that he would be working on these issues over the break and hoped to be prepared to discuss some of the specifics later in the spring semester.

Circling back to the *Fisher* case, President Fenves closed his remarks saying, “It’s very important that we win this case. The nation is looking at us; every university in the country is looking at us. And I do hope we prevail as we have in all the previous court rulings on the case.” He then welcomed questions from the floor.

Christen Smith (assistant professor, anthropology) thanked President Fenves for sharing and commented that her department had lost three women of color over the past two years. She said one of the challenges they had been facing because of budget constraints—in addition to retention—was filling those seats again. She asked if there were any plans in the works to try to figure out how to navigate that. President Fenves acknowledged that it was a very serious issue and made more difficult because we are on a tight budget. He said that the University does a pretty good job at recruitment, but “retention is often a critical issue.” Referring to his earlier comment on the proposal for tuition increase, the president explained that, “faculty excellence and diversity is the basis for that.” He said it was important to impress upon our students that quality education requires resources in an increasingly competitive world and that “we use those resources smartly for the highest priorities, and I would say that retention is one of the highest priorities.” He said retention was highlighted in the request to the Regents for the tuition increase. “When we look at other revenue sources, not just tuition, faculty excellence is the key to success at the University.”

Michelle Habeck (associate professor, theatre and dance) asked if his comments were private or could they be shared. He responded saying that there would be a campus-wide communication with a link to the report. She then asked if minutes had been taken at the diversity meeting with the students, and if so, could they be shared with individual departments who may also be pondering the topics and points that the students brought up. President Fenves explained that he and the students wanted a private face-to-face meeting and that as far as he was aware, no notes were taken. Professor Habeck remarked that if minutes were to surface, it would be great if they were shared with the departments and faculty members.

President Fenves thanked the Council for their time and then yielded the floor to Chair Gore.

IV. REPORT OF THE CHAIR.

Chair Gore announced that the deadline for receiving requests for departmental posting and/or updating of campus carry statements on the Faculty Council website would be December 21, 2015.

V. REPORT OF THE CHAIR ELECT.

Chair Elect Jensen reported on plans for upcoming Joint Meeting with Texas A&M Faculty Senate at College Station on March 7. She mentioned potential topics that might be of interest to both campuses for the breakout sessions: 1) What are the future goals for these annual meetings of the two flagship universities? 2) Faculty mentoring, particularly as it pertains to the promotion and tenure process. The chair elect encouraged members to send topics of interest to her via email. She noted that there would “undoubtedly” be some discussion on Campus Carry, but whether it would formally be on the agenda would be up to the presidents of both institutions since things are moving relatively quickly in that regard.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS—None.**VII. REPORTS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY, COLLEGES, SCHOOLS, AND COMMITTEES—None.****VIII. NEW BUSINESS.****A. Campus Conversations.**

Chair Gore introduced Jeremi Suri (chair and professor, history, LBJ School) saying that after having attended “an incredibly exciting meeting” last year where there “was an amazing energy and people thinking outside the box,” she decided she had to invite Professor Suri to give a presentation on the Campus Conversation. Professor Suri thanked Chair Gore and the many faculty members who took part in the discussions. He began his presentation with a short poem called *Community Spirit*, by David Harris. Professor Suri thought it captured what UT Austin was trying to do with Campus Conversation.

I can remember a time
when the neighborhood bond was strong.
When you could chat to one another
over the fence about everything going on.
Resolving the problems that others had,
and helping them to get through.
Those days are in the past.
Oh, where have they gone?
The community spirit of long, long ago.

Professor Suri remarked that over the past 100 years, universities had become “very large, impersonal institutions” because, “We are busy doing our work and our own disciplines and we have to specialize in what we do. We don’t spend enough time talking to one another.” He explained that Campus Conversation was an effort to create more conversation, more community, “recognizing that we all become better for that community and more important than that, we all become more integrated as a body for that community.” He opined that the real way to bring about diversity is to have community engagement where members are encouraged to participate. In 2014, then-Provost Fenves asked him to facilitate this process. He said he was deeply grateful that the provost gave such attention to this.

In the words of Julia A. Clarke (associate professor, geological sciences, vertebrate paleontology) Professor Suri said the purpose of Campus Conversation was to make UT Austin “the smallest, big university in the world.” In his own words, he said, “Campus Conversation was to find the answer to the question: what is the special sauce that makes a research university a great teaching place? How can we accentuate that and how can we build community around that?” To begin the

process, Professor Suri said that a faculty-led steering committee was formed whose members included himself, Julia Mickenberg (associate professor, American studies), Anita Vangelisti (professor, communication studies), Hans Hofmann (professor, integrative biology), Carlos Carvalho (associate professor, information, risk, and operations management), Jennifer Maynard (associate professor, chemical engineering), Brent Iverson (professor, chemistry and dean, undergraduate studies), David Laude (senior vice provost for enrollment and graduation management and guru of everything that does happen at the University), Harrison Keller (deputy to the president for strategy and policy and clinical professor, LBJ School), President Gregory Fenves, and Maria Arrellaga (chief communications officer, president's office). The committee put together a series of events designed to "build community by doing community." It included two campus-wide faculty symposia and one campus-wide student symposia. There were numerous focus group discussions, dinners, and lunches all aimed at doing one thing: "Talking to faculty across campus about ways in which we could help them build community around their research and teaching and help them do their work with more inspiration and more collaboration." He said the idea was to make the University a more collaborative community, which is why he read the poem.

As a result of the discussions, Professor Suri said five major projects had been identified and are in progress and involve 300 faculty members from all parts of campus.

1. The first project is to develop a set of principles for degrees of study. To do that, the working group asked and are now looking for answers to the following questions:
 - What it is we are doing when we educate students?
 - What are the criteria that make for a first class major?
 - What are the things that help us develop innovators?
 - What is it that makes our education special?
 - What are the criteria that we would hold onto as faculty, that we would make sure our culture embraces and that we would want to use as an agenda setter when other people talk about our work?

Professor Suri said, "Rather than having us be defined by our critics, the idea here is that we should define what we do. We should be the agenda setters and we should make sure we are living up to our standards. That's how our culture of excellence works."

2. The second working group's focus has been on faculty professional development. Professor Suri said that in late August, under the leadership of Mary Steinhardt and Hans Hofmann, a new faculty symposium was held. It was designed to introduce new faculty to a culture of innovation and a culture of collaboration—to get them connected to innovative, collaborative, exciting people from day one. The goal is to create a community of people who from the very beginning are connected around activities of excellence and creativity. He said they hoped to have monthly follow-up meetings with the new faculty members.
3. The third project focuses on ways to create more avenues for collaborative teaching. Professor Suri said that at each of the symposiums, faculty commented that they didn't have enough opportunities to teach with other faculty, particularly faculty in other colleges. Thanks to the provost's office, he reported that ten new courses would be created. Each course would have at least two instructors from different colleges. Professor Mickenberg and Richard Reddick (associate professor, educational administration) would be teaching one of these courses in the spring.
4. The fourth project was to think about new ways of evaluating and rewarding teaching excellence. Faculty feedback indicates that many are unhappy with the way teaching is evaluated and that teaching is not incentivized enough. Professor Suri opined that part of the problem lay with "stupid evaluation mechanisms." He added, "at best, they measure popularity." The working group has been working on a fairer way to encourage positive teaching by rewarding it and supporting those who teach well. Professor Carvalho has taken the lead and has the McCombs School running a pilot, which uses more peer evaluation. He said they are looking at successive activities in courses; what has been learned upon

completion of a course; how does the student do in the next level course beyond that one; and how do we create more mechanisms for constructive feedback for our instructors?

5. The last, but most definitely not the least, as it is the biggest of the five projects, is the Faculty Innovation Center. The idea is to create a center in the center of campus that is a hub for creative, innovative teaching and research activities. Dr. Suri said it was his dream that it would be “the best place to go for coffee and lunch. Everyone goes there, exciting events are happening there every day, and people are having those informal interactions that don’t normally happen otherwise.” He said they wanted the center to be that space.

Professor Suri stressed that these five projects came from the faculty during the discussions. He said members could go to the Campus Conversation website <https://campusconversation.utexas.edu/> to learn more and to get involved. “This is community organizing within a university. I think we’ve done that incredibly successfully.”

The next question was, where do we go from here? Professor Suri said that because the University had been in transition and had been overwhelmed with crisis, Campus Conversation had stalled. He said six months prior, he could have talked to people about Campus Conversation in the hallways anywhere on campus—there was synergy and excitement—but now, he said everyone is talking about guns, about race, about Confederate statues, and affirmative action. “It’s no one’s fault; it’s what happens when institutions are in transition and it’s simply the reality of the world we’re in now.” He opined that we are allowing the crises to command what we do and that faculty members had lost the momentum for the Campus Conversation. To emphasize his point, Professor Suri referenced an interview that he had had with Henry Kissinger who he quoted as saying, “the problem with Washington is that most people in Washington are doing what’s urgent not what’s important.” He said that he felt that this was the case here at UT Austin. He said he thought there should be a discussion, but he was not sure if now was the right time or even if the faculty members wanted to continue the Campus Conversation. But, he said if, “we do, in some form or another, we need to find the space in our busy lives to come back to building community.” He said that the working groups were continuing to work on their projects and the faculty need to be providing them support. “We need as a faculty to take ownership over this and help our leaders move forward with this. I fear that if we wait much longer we will lose all that energy.”

Chair Elect Jensen suggested that one thing that might help to sustain the energy rather than leaving the burden on the people who have gotten us this far would be to invite the new faculty to become involved—publicize it in some event such as the new faculty symposiums. Also, rather than just soliciting participation via general email, she suggested that Faculty Council members go back to their departments and identify at least two names that could be forwarded to the project leaders. She said that a colleague in development once told her “people don’t give to institutions, they give to people.” She said that personal connection is often more effective. Professor Jensen also encouraged existing members of the working groups to vigorously recruit.

Professor Suri agreed that these were great suggestions and said they had done some of that but needed to do more. He suggested that “it should in part be owned by the Faculty Council” and suggested that that was something that could be discussed further. He said it would be wise to have different people involved, not just the same ten members on the committees. He thought that would also encourage new people to get involved.

Dean Brent Iverson thanked the president for starting the process, he said he thought it was way overdue and exceptional, and he thanked Professor Suri for bringing the discussions this far, “it’s really extraordinary.” He said he wanted to “amplify” the idea that it’s not urgent but it is important. He said the University had already changed something that was thought to be impossible, the core curriculum and the first year experience of our students, “it wasn’t easy, but it worked out in an incredible way.” He agreed that we must not lose the momentum and he pointed out that it’s not a short-term momentum. He said the important thing moving forward would be to come up with those things that will keep the conversation going through this period of transition. Then later, it could be said, “We didn’t lose momentum because there were so many great ideas

that came out of those conversations that we can work on those for quite a while, get it just right and then push that forward.” Dean Iverson applauded Professor Suri and everyone who took part in the discussions “because it’s moving this institution forward in the right way.” He said that one of the things that made him most proud being here at the University are the innovations that take place and scholarship created by our faculty. “We also have some of the most innovative educational initiatives that have ever happened in a major research university... That’s why people care about what we do.” He congratulated Professor Suri on everything he had done adding, “We just need to keep this going as fast and as quickly as possible but as fast and as quickly as prudent.” He said there was a lot of support and that it just needed to be marshaled in an appropriate way. He added that he would like to see more communication and feedback from the faculty in general as they being to reengage.

Professor Mickenberg echoed Brent Iverson’s thanks to Professor Suri and the president. She said that she was very excited about a proposal from the Faculty Innovation Committee and she wanted to share it with the Council. In the spring, she said she would be co-teaching a course with Professor Reddick and Kate Catterall (associate professor, design) on the history and future of higher education and using the class as the space to create a student constituency for thinking through the problems facing us in higher education. She said the class would be looking at the past, present and future of higher education with the students working together in six teams looking at problems in economics, politics, society, culture, technology, and academics. At the end, there would be a symposium similar to the Campus Conversation but with students. The reason she said she was bringing it up at the Council meeting was because she wanted as many people as possible to get in the conversation. She said Campus Conversation had been the most exciting thing she had experienced since coming to the University. In helping to get the conversations going, she had seen people filled with hope and excitement about how the University could change the experience of undergraduate and graduate teaching. She said, “I would really hate to see those conversations not go anywhere.”

Lauren Meyers (professor, integrative biology) reflected on the day that she attended one of the Campus Conversation events saying that in that one day, she got to know some amazing people from all over campus and looked at exciting activities, relationships and projects. She said that if there were a venue where faculty could get together just like they did on those one or two days, it would “fertilize these kinds of relationships and these kinds of projects.” Professor Meyers also mentioned one other great activity that she had participated in—a TED Talk lecture series that Dean Iverson organized for first year students. She suggested that if something similar could be done once or twice a year where faculty members could hear what other people were doing in other areas of campus, and if it could somehow be combined with the open conversation forum, it might be one way to keep these exercises going. Professor Suri thought it to be a brilliant suggestion. He said that he, Ms. Arrellaga and others on the communication team had been talking about how to create our own model of TED Talks—perhaps call it “Longhorn Talks” and have it on our website. He said it could be another way for the community to learn from each other. Professor Mickenberg wanted to clarify that her working group was not necessarily looking to create “some brand new thing.” Instead, she pointed out that there is a lot of “cool stuff” out there that not everyone knows about—like the TED Talks for first years; she said it would be great to bring those things together and make them visible.

Hearing no other ideas or comments from the members, Professor Suri encouraged members to send ideas to him and the working group members. His closing remarks were “I do see this as a great opportunity for the faculty and I do hope we’ll take ownership of this going forward. Thank you for giving your time to me.”

- B. Annual Report of the University Faculty Ombudsperson for 2014-2015 (D 13754).
Ombuds Mary Steinhardt (professor, kinesiology and health education) thanked Chair Gore for the opportunity to speak to the Council members, and she thanked Professor Suri saying “Jeremi you always inspire me.” She stated that she thinks of herself as the person on the other side of the

fence who just wants to talk, but in her position as ombuds, it is important to value listening. And, related to Campus Conversation, the ombuds said her goal is to help create a collaborative community.

Dr. Steinhardt said she had been on campus thirty years and was currently serving her eighth year as the faculty ombuds. She said that it had been very rewarding. She gave a brief history of the Office of the Faculty Ombudsman, which was established in 2004 with Professor Stanley Roux (molecular biosciences) serving four years as the first ombuds. Dr. Steinhardt explained that she sees faculty members by appointment and that in her role, she does her best to provide faculty members with a prompt and professional way to resolve their conflicts and complaints. [Slide three](#) of her PowerPoint presentation summarizes the number of faculty members who had met with the ombuds over the past twelve years, and [slide four](#) gives the breakdown for 2014-15. Dr. Steinhardt said that most cases she heard were resolved without initiating a grievance. She expressed her appreciation to Brett Lohoefer in the Office of Institutional Equity, Susan Harnden with the Employees Assistance Program, the staff members in the Office of the Vice President for Legal Affairs, and especially Carmen Shockley in the provost's office who "gets a prize on knowing the policies, she's amazing." Ombuds Steinhardt also mentioned that she always appreciates opportunities to work with the Faculty Grievance Committee and the Committee of Counsel on Academic Freedom and Responsibilities. The ombuds went on to give examples of common concerns that are brought to her, which are outlined in [slide five](#). Her four operating principles include 1) Confidentiality, Neutrality, Informality, and Independence. Descriptions of the principles can be viewed in [slides six](#) and [seven](#). She explained the ombuds process, which includes six steps: 1) Identify 2) Clarify 3) Strategize 4) Think through 5) Facilitate, and 6) Organizational development, and are summarized in [slide eight](#). Giving an example of the sixth step, the ombuds said the brown bag lunches offered through Senior Vice Provost Dukerich's office to department chairs and assistant and associate professors had been wonderful; she said she hoped there would be more of them in the future as she had received great feedback. Next, the ombuds encouraged members to share information from [slide nine](#) with their colleagues as it listed ways in which the ombuds "can" help, whereas [slide ten](#) listed what the ombuds cannot do. Ombuds Steinhardt's last and favorite slide had words of wisdom given to her by Professor Roux:

- Choose actions that best demonstrate **fairness** and **respect**, and where appropriate, **advocacy** for rewards.
- ...nonetheless, conflicts will arise (well-meaning bright people sometimes disagree), and most can be resolved amicably.

The ombuds thanked Professor Suri for mentioning the proposed new faculty symposium. She said that she had enjoyed working with him and Professor Hans Hofmann (integrative biology) on the committee, which had put forward a proposal that recommended a weeklong symposium for new faculty members who would meet with human resources on Monday, attend campus-wide orientations on Tuesday and Wednesday, and finish off the week in meetings in their departments and colleges on Thursday and Friday. She said if approved, the symposium would set up systems and structures that would help engage faculty members and provide them with resources and training for continued success throughout their career as teachers and scholars. She closed her remarks saying, "If you have colleagues that just wants to chat over the fence, send them to me. I'm one resource." See [Appendix A](#) for the annual full report and [Appendix B](#) PowerPoint presentation.

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMENTS.

After thanking Ombuds Mary Steinhardt for her report, Chair Gore noted the following announcements and also reminded members to plan to attend the Joint Meeting with the Texas A&M's Faculty Senate on March 7. She mentioned that there were plans to charter a bus to the event. She said "We get together; we all drive out and have a field trip and sing songs. But we can also talk about some of Jeremi's ideas and other things, so I hope you all can be there."

- A. College of Liberal Arts *Undergraduate Catalog* proposals' protest deadlines are December 4 and 11.

- B. Proposal to Change the "Designated College Scholars" Policy's protest deadline is December 14.
- C. The annual meeting of the School of Undergraduate Studies will be held on January 25 at 1:30 PM in Main 212.
- D. The annual meeting of the General Faculty will be held on January 25 at 2:15 PM in Main 212 and will be followed immediately by the Faculty Council meeting.

X. QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIR—None.

XI. ADJOURNMENT.

The meeting adjourned at 3:20 PM.

[Appendix A](#)**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE UNIVERSITY FACULTY OMBUDSPERSON FOR 2014-2015**

The Office of the University Faculty Ombudsperson (ombuds) provides faculty with a prompt and professional way to resolve conflicts, disputes, or complaints beyond turning to their supervisors. The office offers a confidential place to voice concerns, clarify desired outcomes, think through difficult situations, develop options, and problem-solve. Administratively, the ombuds reports to the senior vice provost for faculty affairs and the provost.

During the academic year 2014-15, the faculty ombuds visited with 125 faculty from fourteen different colleges or schools representing forty different departments. Reasons for visiting with the ombuds included to seek help or advice related to promotion and tenure, the comprehensive periodic review, professional conflicts, nonrenewal of appointment, salary/gender equity, concerns regarding appropriate procedures being followed, student-related concerns, and help having a difficult conversation. Informal mediation involved assistance from staff in the Office of Institutional Equity, the Employee Assistance Program, the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost, and Legal Affairs.

The majority of cases were resolved through informal mediation, counseling, and coaching. Ombuds-related activities averaged approximately ten to fifteen hours a week, including regular meetings with the staff and student ombuds. Outreach activities included participation in several brown bag lunch sessions for faculty focused on promotion and tenure, effective communication, and having a difficult conversation, hosted by the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve.

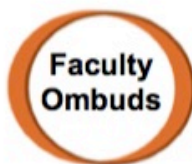
Submitted by Mary Steinhardt, University faculty ombuds for the December 7, 2015, Faculty Council meeting.

Mary A. Steinhardt

Mary A. Steinhardt, EdD, LPC
Distinguished Teaching Professor

[Appendix B](#)

Slide One



Mary Steinhardt
OFFICE OF THE UNIVERSITY FACULTY OMBUDS

Slide Two

OFFICE OF THE UNIVERSITY FACULTY OMBUDS

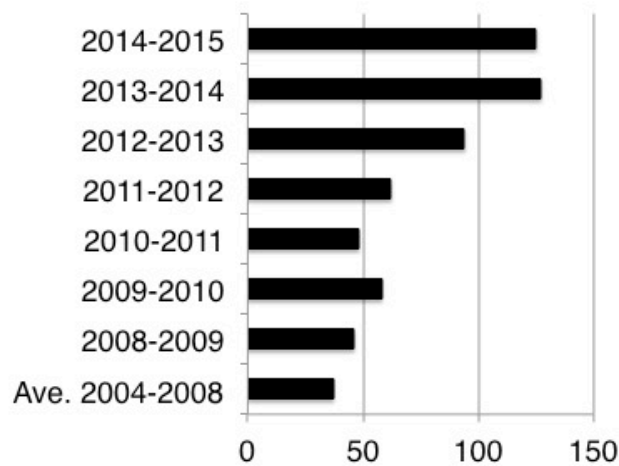
ESTABLISHED SEPT. 2004

Purpose:

The faculty ombuds provides members of the University with faculty appointments a prompt and professional way to resolve concerns, conflicts, and complaints beyond turning to their supervisors.

- **E-mail:** facombud@austin.utexas.edu
- **Phone:** 512-471-5866
- **Office Location:** WMB 2.102
- **Web:** www.utexas.edu/faculty/council/ombuds



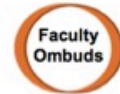
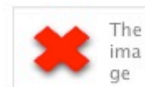
[Slide Three](#)**NUMBER OF FACULTY MEETING WITH OMBUDS**[Slide Four](#)**2014-2015 ACADEMIC YEAR**

- ✓ Total of 125 Visitors
- ✓ From 14 Colleges/Schools including 40 Departments/Divisions
 - 13 Lecturers; 24 Assist Prof; 30 Assoc Prof; 33 Prof
 - 18 Dept Chairs/Directors; 7 Deans/Associate Deans
 - 74 Female; 51 Male
- ✓ Faculty ombuds works approximately 10-15 hrs/wk
- ✓ Most cases resolved without initiating grievance process
- ✓ Extraordinary cooperation from Office of Institutional Equity, Employee Assistance Program, Legal Affairs, and other Administrative Officials



[Slide Five](#)**EXAMPLES OF CONCERNS BROUGHT TO FACULTY OMBUDS**

- Questions or complaints about a University office, service, or decision
- Need for mediation or help facilitating communication
- Perceived inequities in work or pay; unfair treatment
- Belief that a University policy or practice is unfair or confusing
- Perceived unethical or inappropriate behavior; concerns of bullying
- Interpersonal conflicts and problems with workplace climate
- Concerns about career advancement & job satisfaction or security
- Advice on having a difficult conversation
- Problems of institutional non-responsiveness and red-tape
- Need for an impartial and confidential sounding board
- Unsure where else to turn for help or next steps

[Slide Six](#)**CAMPUS OMBUDS
OPERATING PRINCIPLES****CONFIDENTIALITY:**

- In order to create a safe place to voice concerns, evaluate issues, and identify options, Ombuds respect the confidentiality and privacy of all individuals.
- Exceptions are made as required by law or University policy, including imminent harm to self or others.

NEUTRALITY:

- Ombuds operate as neutral third-parties and do not take sides.
- Ombuds consider the interests and concerns of all parties with the aim of developing fair and equitable options toward resolution.

[Slide Seven](#)

CAMPUS OMBUDS OPERATING PRINCIPLES

INFORMALITY:

- Use of Ombuds office is strictly voluntary.
- Conversations with Ombuds are considered informal and off-the-record.
- Ombuds does not participate in formal grievances or complaints.

INDEPENDENCE:

- The faculty ombuds reports directly to the Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and the Provost; this provides the office with an independence to ensure impartiality.

[Slide Eight](#)

CAMPUS OMBUDS PROCESS

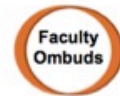
- **Identify** issues and options
- **Clarify** desired outcomes
- **Strategize** – to whom and how best to raise the issue or concern
- **Think through** difficult situations (personally and/or professionally) in a confidential, neutral setting – with someone familiar with UT culture
- **Facilitate** understanding and resolution
- Pursue **organizational development** through systemic feedback

[Slide Nine](#)

HOW CAN THE FACULTY OMBUDS HELP?

The Ombuds CAN...

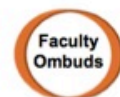
- Listen in a nonjudgmental and objective way
- Answer questions or refer visitors to someone who can
- Explain how University policies or procedures work
- Help identify options in resolving a problem
- Help evaluate options and possible next steps
- Assist in informally resolving a dispute or conflict by facilitating communication, coaching on conflict resolution, or mediating between willing parties
- Refer individuals to the appropriate office should they wish to file a formal complaint
- Look into perceived procedural irregularities in grievance proceedings
- Recommend changes to policies/procedures that appear problematic
- Inform University officials about significant trends, patterns of complaints, or problems that appear to be systemic

[Slide Ten](#)

HOW CAN THE FACULTY OMBUDS HELP?

The Ombuds CANNOT...

- Take sides or serve as an advocate for any party
- Maintain official records
- Unilaterally change rules or policies
- Set aside a decision or supersede the authority of another University official
- Provide legal advice
- Provide psychological counseling or therapy
- Participate in any formal grievance process
- Conduct formal investigations



GENERALIZATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Choose actions that best demonstrate **fairness** and **respect**, and where appropriate, **advocacy** for rewards.
- ...nonetheless, conflicts will arise (well-meaning bright people sometimes disagree), and most can be resolved amicably.

