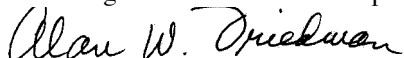


DOCUMENTS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL FACULTY COUNCIL MEETING OF MAY 7, 2018

Following are the minutes of the special Faculty Council meeting of May 7, 2018.



Alan W. Friedman, Secretary of the General Faculty and Faculty Council

The University of Texas at Austin

Arthur J. Thaman and Wilhelmina Doré Thaman Professor of English and Comparative Literature

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL FACULTY COUNCIL MEETING OF MAY 7, 2018

The first special meeting of the Faculty Council for the academic year 2018-19 was held in Main 212 on Wednesday, May 7, 2018, at 2:15 PM.

ATTENDANCE.

Present: Payton R. Anderson, Minou Arjomand, Jamie C Barner, Katherine Alexis Biberdorf, Casey A. Boyle, Charlotte Canning, Carlos M. Carvalho, Ann Cvetkovich, David J. Eaton, Brian L. Evans, Norma L. Fowler, Samantha J. Fuchs, Denise L. Gilman, Antonio Gonzalez, John M. Gonzalez, Michael H. Granof, Courtney Handman, Michael P. Harney, Susan S. Heinzelman, Martha F. Hilley, Steven D. Hoelscher, Teresa Hubbard, Elena Ivanova, Huriya Jabbar, Karen Johnson, David S. Junker, Sarfraz Khurshid, Dawit Kidane-Mulat, Kerry A. Kinney, Cynthia A. Labrake, Kristie J. Loescher, Ayelet H. Lushkov, Martha Menchaca, Gordon S. Novak, Thomas G. Palaima, Deborah Parra-Medina, Ami Pedahzur, Anthony J. Petrosino, Mehrnaz S. Rahman, Lorenzo A. Sadun, Christen Smith, Elissa C. Steglich, Stefano Tiziani, Jeffrey Treem, Maria D. Wade, Alexandra K. Wettlaufer, Karen M. Wickett, John A. Yancey, Yan Zhang.

Absent: C.J. Alvarez (excused), Jossianna Arroyo Martinez (excused), Germine H. Awad (excused), Phillip J. Barrish (excused), Colton R. Becker (excused), Christopher J. Bell (excused), Anthony L. Brown (excused), Ethan R. Burris (excused), Esther Calzada (excused), Shannon E. Cavanagh (excused), Lydia Maria Contreras, James H. Cox (excused), Robert Crosnoe (excused), Joshua D. Eisenman, Alan W. Friedman (excused), Donald S. Fussell, Qin Huang (excused), Thomas M. Hunt (excused), David M. Jenkins, Junfeng Jiao (excused), Jonathan Kaplan (excused), Lynn E. Katz, Bradford R. Love (excused), Natalie S. Poulos (excused), Stephen D. Reese (excused), Stuart A. Reichler (excused), Jonathan L. Sessler (excused).

Voting Members: 49 present, 27 absent, 76 total.

I. REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO NOMINATE FACULTY COUNCIL OFFICERS FOR 2018-2019 (16547-16548).

Charlotte Canning (2018-19 Faculty Council Chair and Professor, Theatre and Dance) welcomed voting members of next year's Faculty Council to the special meeting, which was called to elect the Chair Elect and three Faculty Council members of the Executive Committee.

A. Election of the Chair Elect.

Chair Canning reminded attendees that only members of the 2018-19 faculty council are eligible to vote for Chair Elect and the three FCEC members. She thanked Steve Hoelscher for his leadership as Chair of the Faculty Council in 2017-18. Chair-Elect Canning then announced that the ballot included two candidates for Chair Elect and six nominees for the Executive Committee positions. She announced that all eight candidates would speak briefly and that ballots would be filled out afterwards.

Chair-Elect Canning invited Brian L. Evans (Professor, Electrical and Computer Engineering) to come to the podium to make a few comments. The full text of his self-introduction is in Appendix A. Alexandra K. Wettlaufer (Professor, French and Italian) then gave her statement, which is in Appendix B.

B. Election of Three Members to the Executive Committee.

Moving on to the election of three Faculty Council members of the FCEC, Chair-Elect Canning asked each of the candidates to come forward to make a statement (these are in Appendix C). The candidates are John M. Gonzalez (Professor, English), Martha F. Hilley (Professor, Music), Kerry A. Kinney (Professor, Civil, Architectural, and Environmental Engineering), Cynthia A. Labrake (Senior Lecturer, Chemistry), Christen Smith (Associate Professor, Anthropology), and Lorenzo Sadun (Professor, Mathematics).

Following the statements, Chair-Elect Canning asked for a round of applause and thanked the candidates for being willing to take on this important work. The ballots were then collected and counted.

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS.

A. Presentation of token of appreciation to outgoing Chair Steven D. Hoelscher.

B. Announcement of Election Results.

Chair-Elect Canning announced that the 2018-19 Chair Elect will be Brian L. Evans and the members elected to the 2018-19 FCEC are Martha F. Hilley, Cynthia A. Labrake, and Christen Smith.

III. ADJOURNMENT.

She adjourned the special meeting at 3:11 PM.

Appendix A

Statement of Introduction by Brian L. Evans, Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering

Thank you, Charlotte. I would like to thank Charlotte, Steve, and the other members of the Faculty Council Executive Committee for the nomination.

As you consider voting for the next Chair Elect for Faculty Council, I would like to present what drives my work in University faculty governance and give several examples of issues on which I have worked since joining UT.

I joined UT Austin in 1996 as an Assistant Professor. A major shift in my perspective occurred in 2004-5 when I participated in a study group on social justice. The readings and discussions on social justice caused me to want to find out more about issues facing our faculty, staff, and students and be open to ways I could be of service across campus.

In 2006, I joined University faculty governance, and I've enjoyed the listening, brainstorming, and action-taking ever since. My initial involvement on the Graduate Student Academic Employees Committee, and later Graduate Assembly and Faculty Council, came together in spring 2010 in a living wage motion. For the motion, I worked with Andrea Gore, Harold Zakon, and others to write and pass a non-binding Faculty Council motion to raise the minimum RA, TA, and AI salaries to meet a living wage standard for Austin. I then met with Associate Dean John Ekerdt, who implemented annual increases to the minimum monthly salaries to reach a living wage for RAs, TAs, and AIs in my college.

By 2008, I had developed a deep passion about academic freedom in teaching, scholarship, and expression. Academic freedom enables all of us faculty — non-tenure-track, tenure-track, and tenured— to foster critical thinking, critique accepted truths, and search for new knowledge, even when it disrupts the status quo. The safeguards of academic freedom include tenure, due process, and faculty governance. I have worked on improving holistic evaluation of, and due process for, faculty of all ranks. With Faculty Council colleagues, I successfully fought against intrusive UT System policies concerning annual and post-tenure review (2010-12) as well as financial conflict of interest reporting requirements (2013-14).

For nine of the last ten years, I have been serving on the faculty Committee of Counsel on Academic Freedom and Responsibility, including five years as Chair. Over the last ten years, the Academic Freedom Committee has investigated claims of procedural and/or academic freedom violations from a total of thirty-eight faculty members concerning their tenure, promotion, annual, and post-tenure review cases. Based on the investigations into these claims, the Academic Freedom Committee also made recommendations to improve University procedures and processes for faculty evaluations. The President and Provost have accepted many of our recommendations. The Provost has updated promotion and tenure guidelines concerning faculty members' unfettered access to their promotion cases at any time and added an option for a negative early tenure case to be considered again in the up-or-out year. The Provost added language to the template invitation letters for external reviewers concerning proper consideration for extensions to the tenure probationary period for Assistant Professors and the impact of personal leave while in rank for Associate Professors. As of this year, the Provost now pre-certifies the selection of external reviewers from peer institutions/programs. This year, the Provost gave Assistant Professors the right to appeal to the Academic Freedom Committee concerning claims of procedural and/or academic freedom violations in their Mid-Probationary Review. This due process protection is vital because a low Mid-Probationary Review evaluation has resulted in termination.

Even with these improvements, the University has additional opportunities to improve the academic freedom safeguards of tenure, due process, and faculty governance, to reach, e.g. the standards set by the American Association of University Professors. In January, the Academic Freedom Committee proposed a Resolution on Academic Analytics, which Faculty Council passed. The "one-size-fits-all" approach does not track scholarship in the arts and humanities well and does not evaluate the quality of the incomplete and unverified information it does track. The resolution strongly recommended that Academic Analytics not be used as a faculty management or evaluation tool.

One place to see a University's set of priorities is in its budget. I'm in my third year as Chair of the Faculty Advisory Committee on Budgets. On the revenue side, UT is receiving declining state revenue and "flat" recurring Available University Fund support. On the expenditure side, UT needs to bring faculty and staff compensation to more competitive levels, address inflationary pressures, and make UT more affordable for students. I applaud UT's recent announcement that it will provide financial assistance to Texas students with family incomes of up to \$100,000. This year, however, UT paid out \$129M in debt service, funds that cannot be used to address other needs, such as affordability. Much work still remains to have non-administrative faculty members be part of the decision making in departmental, school, college, and University budgeting processes.

After being on the UT faculty for twenty-two years and in University faculty governance for twelve years, I have seen faculty members pull their energy and creativity together time and time again to benefit the greater good of our faculty, staff, and students. Should you elect me, I will work hard to facilitate ways for the Faculty Council to listen, brainstorm, and take action for the common good, so as to be of transformative service across campus.

Appendix B

Statement of Introduction by Alexandra K. Wettlaufer, Professor of French and Italian

I'd like to thank Charlotte Canning, Steve Hoelscher, and the other members of the Faculty Council Executive Committee for their nominating me for this important position. It's truly an honor to speak to you today.

To begin with, Charlotte asked me to say a few words about myself. I'm a professor of French and Comparative Literature, and after 12 years as the Associate Director of Plan II, I took over as Director, only the second woman-director of Plan II Honors program in 85 years, where I hold the Hayden Head Regents Chair and the Stuart Steadman Director's Chair as well. I'm also a member of the European Studies Core Faculty and Women and Genders Studies Faculty affiliate. I've been on the Executive Committee of the Department of French and Italian for over twenty years, and have served multiple times as Graduate Advisor, Chair of the GFC, Chair of Graduate Missions and Funding, and Chair of Undergraduate Studies, among other elected positions. I'm on the Conflict Steering Committee and Omissions Committee every year and have served as conflict graduate advisor. At the institutional level, I've been elected to the Faculty Council numerous times, where I've served on or chaired committees, including the Student Life and Activities Committee as well as the UT Press Faculty Advisory Board. I've been consistently engaged with student mentoring and advocacy throughout my time at UT and am currently on the Liberal Arts Student Affairs Faculty Committee and the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Committee. Beyond UT, I have been on the Executive Councils of the MLA (Modern Language Association), 19th Century French Studies Association, George Sand Association, and President of the Interdisciplinary 19th Century Studies Association. This Spring I was appointed to the International Advisory Board of American University in Beirut and International Member of the Board of the Center for 19th Century Studies in the UK.

My research focuses on interdisciplinary studies in gender and genre in 19th-century France and Britain, in literature and the visual arts. I've published three books and some 30 articles and I'm currently working on my fourth book titled "Reading George Sand/Eliot and the Transnational Novel 1830-1900," a product for which I received a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship in 2015. My work has also been supported with fellowships from the National Humanity Center, the Clark Art Institute, Bourse Marandon, ACLS and the Whiting Foundation, as well as generous support from COLA and UT.

I offer up this long and probably very boring list of some of my experience in governance and leadership along with my research and scholarship, to give you a sense of my long-term commitment to the University, to students, to faculty, and to higher education. I love what I do, and I feel extremely lucky to get to spend my days teaching, reading, writing and, above all, collaborating with students, faculty, staff, administration, and, indeed, colleagues across the globe, as we work together toward a common goal. That is, the pursuit of knowledge, toward a greater good for the betterment of the self, of society, and of the world.

I've been at UT since 1992 and thus, am completing my twenty-fifth year here at this institution. I think that most of you will agree that the past several years at this University have been some of the hardest in memory, with growing anxiety, uncertainty, and mistrust becoming widespread on the parts of the students, the faculty, the staff, and the administration. Violence on campus, guns in the classroom, concerns about gender, race, and sexual identity, discrimination, and the shrinking of the faculty as we move toward more and more contingent labor, are issues that cannot and should not be ignored. The very essence of this University and our core mission as Faculty is to educate our students to the best of our abilities. This can only happen with an open and collaborative dialogue among all the stakeholders; students, faculty, staff, and administration, on how we can improve the campus climate, and address some of these grave but by no means unfixable concerns. Similarly, the ongoing struggle we face between economic exigencies and best practices as educators -- this struggle -- is not going to go away. We as faculty cannot afford to throw up our hands in dismay, however tempting that may be.

We need to continue to be active advocates for education, access, equity, and diversity at UT. I've the deepest faith in the profound intelligence, commitment, and good will of all the members of our community, and fervently believe we could work together towards rebuilding an atmosphere of trust, transparency, and respect,

through the direct and potentially painful acknowledgment of where we are now and where we should strive to be. If elected, I will work hard to lead us to and through these difficult dialogues as we consider and clarify our goals, our priorities, and our core institutional values as the flagship university of the state of Texas.

Appendix C

Statements of Faculty Council Executive Committee Member Candidates**John Gonzalez, Professor, English**

Good afternoon. I'd like to thank Charlotte and Steve and the Faculty Council for considering my candidacy for this position. I was promoted to Professor of English last year and I have affiliations with the Department of Mexican American and Latino Studies, as well as Comparative Literature and LLILAS Benson. I have, in terms of faculty governance, relevant experience; I have served in my department's executive committee three times, and so I've seen one at each rank -- of assistant, associate, and full professor -- and I've also served on the Faculty Council's Budget Advisory Committee in the past.

My own work focuses upon the trans-Americanity of Latino/Latina literature, and I've also been a participant recently in a public history project called "Refusing to Forget," in which I and some colleagues from around the country put together an exhibit on state violence against Texas Mexicans in South Texas a century ago. I'm happy to report that this effort will be followed up by an NEH-funded conference in January of next year. I currently serve (am at the end of my second year) as Director of the Center for Mexican-American Studies, in which I feel like I've had a chance to peer inside the bowels of the University a bit and have had the task of revisiting the Center's mission in the wake of the reconfiguration of Latino Studies into the Department of Mexican-American and Latino Studies, the Latino Research Initiative, and, of course, the Center.

Now, I'm standing for election for The Faculty Council Executive Committee because I believe in the ideals of Faculty Governance and the efforts to realize them. I advocate for a larger role for the Faculty Council in the decision-making processes of the University concerning working conditions, for faculty of all ranks, and to ensure that faculty are recognized and compensated appropriately for their contributions. I believe in excellence through diversity of all kinds, and the thoughtful initiation of institutional practices to fully implement this goal. The University can and must do better in these two general areas that are vital to faculty today. And, I think, the previous speakers have already alluded to the range of issues that confront us. But I'll leave it at that, and thank you.

Martha F. Hilley, Professor, Butler School of Music

I'm Martha Hilley, I'm at the Butler School of Music, I teach Group Piano and Pedagogy. I also teach Career Goals and Management every spring. I was thinking about my history with this room. I came to UT Austin in 1982 (and you can quickly do the math). In 1984 I was on the University Council for the first time and that was the year we started talking about "maybe we should have a group that didn't consist of all of the deans and vice presidents and of the administration being there every time we met and outvoting us on some things..." and anyway, soon we had a Faculty Council. Not long after we had a Faculty Council I got put on a task force that Alan Friedman chaired, and it was a great task force. It was a task force that studied teaching versus research. It's 2018 and we're still talking about teaching versus research.

Anyway, that task force showed me that I had found a home outside of music. The Council, the University Council and the Faculty Council, proved to be my home away from home. I've been on this council more times than I can imagine. I've chaired it twice, so I've already served on the FCEC and it's a great committee for faculty governance. You really get to know how this place runs. I've been on most of the committees that are listed in the Standing Committees, and have chaired Faculty Rules, Faculty Welfare, Faculty Budget Advisory Committee, Faculty Grievance, numerous times. Anyway, I would be honored to be on the Faculty Council Executive Committee one more time, but vote your conscience, but be sure you vote. Thank you.

Kerry A. Kinney, Professor, Cockrell School of Engineering

My name is Kerry Kinney. First of all, thanks, to everybody for this opportunity to be considered as a candidate for the FCEC. The next comment I was going to make is I've been here around 20 years, but Martha, I worked out where I was in 1984 so I'm a little embarrassed, so we'll let it go with that.

What I would like to talk about a little bit is that when I started here as a new faculty member (in a year I won't mention because it now seems so insignificant), I had a really narrow view of what goes on in the University. I

spent most of those first years trying to get my coursework going, trying to get my research going. And since that time, I've really expanded my horizons. I've been involved with the Faculty Council, several times, one stint on the FCEC, the Campus Safety Committee -- you name it. I've had an opportunity to see what goes on at all different levels within the University. And one of the key things I've discovered and, hopefully, have learned (and I think I have learned this) is how absolutely critical it is that the Faculty's voice is represented in all decisions, with other stakeholders, of course. I think that, in times of trouble, we like to make quick decision, we like to streamline, get it over with and move on. I honestly don't think that's when we make the best decisions. I think we make the best decisions when it's a little bit of a messy process. All the stakeholders, the faculty, the students, must be involved in the decisions as much as possible. So I think the Faculty Council and, by extension, the FCEC, provides an opportunity to for the faculty voice to be heard across campus. I'd also like to mention what I think we always have to maintain as a priority: which is that we represent and, frankly, do right by the students, no matter what we're talking about. We're here for them, I know we do research, I know we do service, but we're also here ultimately for the success of our students. So I think that considering their perspective in all that we do is absolutely essential.

I've been involved in several relevant initiatives over the years, most recently, the Campus-to-Career Working Group, where we trying to figure out what's the best way to prepare our students for whatever comes next, whatever that career is, whether it's graduate school or something else. Most recently, in fact today, we're going to be doing a report on the experiential learning working group: how can we engage our students with the world around them, both inside and outside of the classroom? And one of the things that I like to keep in mind throughout all of this is "how do we make it accessible to all our students?" I don't care what background you come in with. How do we make sure you're given the same opportunity as all students, regardless of whether you come from the highest performing high school or the lowest performing high school?

And within my own college, I think one of the things that I'm most proud of is the work I've done with the Women in Engineering Program. We've run an undergraduate-to-graduate mentoring -- actually, the reverse: a graduate-to-undergraduate research mentoring program -- for the last fifteen years. Some 750 students have been involved, and, you know, while I get a good thrill out of landing that latest research grant, and I'm pretty excited we're going to be working with some colleagues at the University of Puerto Rico on Hurricane Maria recovery, I get an equal kick when that sophomore-level student is getting that break, their first break; whether it's getting hired to work in a research lab, their first professional internship, or, what the heck, studying abroad for the first time.

So, with that, I'd like to, I guess, put my name forward for being on the FCEC. I really think that I can represent the faculty voice, the student voice, and the voice of all the stakeholders at the University. Thank you.

Cynthia Labrake, Senior Lecturer, Chemistry

Thank you all. I'd like to thank the Executive Committee for nominating me. My first response was, "No, please no, not me, no," so I guess I'm starting differently than everybody else. So I'll start with a bio, and then give you a little bit of relevant experience, and then maybe tell you why me, why now.

I am a first-generation graduate from West Virginia. I graduated with Honors from West Virginia University with a BS in Chemistry. I then went on and got my PhD in Biophysical Chemistry from Loyola University, and then did a post-doc in molecular biology. In 1996, I relocated here to Austin, with my young family -- no, actually, I didn't -- I lost three years; in 1993, I relocated here; those were those three years with the young family. In 1996 I came to the University as a non-tenure track faculty member, sort of as a gig. I needed to get out of the house. And so I thought, "Well, I'll do this for a few years and then I'll get back and do another post-doc and get back in it," but instead, after 21 years, I'm a newly promoted Distinguished Senior Lecturer, or possibly, Professor of Instruction, depending on how it comes out. I'm still here.

So after about 10 years in a non-tenure track rank, I decided, "I need to make a career out of this, I can make a career out of this." And so I got involved in things that interested me. And that's the beauty of the non-tenure track faculty; we're invited here to teach primarily, we're also given a canvas to create and do in ways I think a lot of times that the tenured faculty cannot. And so what I did was I got involved with curriculum reform efforts that interested me. They were successful. We created the Hands-on Science Program, a new program for Pre-service Elementary School Teachers to learn their science courses in a more hands-on way. That then took me

into other curriculum work for dual credit courses and then as one of the leaders for the course transformation program in the Chemistry Department. We had a very successful effort. So I found myself as the one who was doing the innovative work. That led me to be invited to serve on many committees at the department level, the college level, and then at the University level. And through that, I learned about faculty governance. The importance of all of our voices: the student voices, the graduate student voices, the non-tenure track faculty, and, of course, tenured-track faculty administration. We all have something to bring to the table with our different experiences.

The most recent governance work I've done is as Chair of the Provost Teaching Fellows Program. It's a fantastic cross-university program where we get together and work on innovative teaching and push forward the mission of teaching at the University. Faculty of all rank are involved with that. I also completed the Texas Leadership Women Class of 2016, representing the University of Texas. That's a group of women from across Texas who get together and learn from each other about leadership from their own domains. And then most recently I was elected to serve on the Search Committee for our new Dean who will join us this fall.

So I've had a lot of experience in governance, so that's bio, relevant experience, why me, why now. And so I was nominated to Faculty Council, and then I asked to run for the Executive Committee. I feel like it's very, very important to have a different voice. I think that it's important that we have a non-tenure track faculty member there, even on that important committee. And even though I thought this was going to be my year to take a breath, I think this is my year -- it's more important than ever -- to maintain diversity on this important committee. So, I humbly ask for your vote and your support today, to serve on this important committee. Thank you.

Lorenzo Sadun, Professor, Mathematics

Hi. I got to Austin in the late Bronze Age. That's 1991 for people keeping track. I mean-Martha got here in the early Bronze age, but...So I've been here a while, and in that time, I've been doing a lot of things largely behind the scenes to keep this world going around.

In terms of faculty governance, I had a turn on the Faculty Grievance Committee including chairing it, spent time on the Financial Aid Committee, chaired the Financial Aid Committee. Within the Math Department I've been Associate Chair, Graduate Advisor, Chair of the Undergraduate Studies Committee, I've been on the Steering Committee for Polymathic Scholars forever. Basically, I do a lot of stuff, and for the most part I like doing things in the background, just talking with people, getting things done. I was very involved in changing the way that we teach Calculus. And when it came time to, "Oh, gee, we need materials for those!", well, I went out and made 300-odd videos. If you've taken calculus at UT, you have heard my voice, you've seen the back of my hand writing on the pad, you probably have not seen my face, and you probably have not seen my name on the learning modules -- that's not the point! The point is just to get stuff done.

Now, in doing all of these kinds of activities, what I've noticed over and over again, is that the people who keep the world turning largely get ignored. That in our pursuit of excellence -- and excellence is a wonderful thing -- we take the routine for granted. And that means faculty who are doing important things, important service missions, important teaching missions, and that includes the non-tenure track faculty.

And I ran for Faculty Council basically because I want the opportunity to listen with a fresh ear to new problems, but also because I want to address these old, longstanding problems. And, you know, there are trade-offs. I'm not saying it's a simple matter of "These guys good, these guys bad" rebalance, you know, it's not that simple. There are difficult trade-offs, there are difficult questions. I do not claim to have all the answers. Heck-I don't claim to have any of the answers! But I claim to have an open mind to think about the problems. And I promise to ask the right questions, and make sure that things don't get left on the side and conveniently forgotten when the big issues are staring us in the face. So, I ask your support and your vote, to have the opportunity to address those kinds of issues and whatever else comes up in a fair-minded way. And, you know, if I can't have your vote, then, I would recommend that Cynthia get your vote because I think that the representation for the non-tenure track faculty is important. Thanks.

Christen Smith, Associate Professor, Department of Anthropology

First let me say thank you to Charlotte Canning and Steve Hoelscher for having us here today and also for leading this election at this time and thank you to all of the Faculty Council members for your attention, and for the students in the back, for your attention as well.

My name is Christen Smith and I'm an associate professor of African and African Diaspora Studies and Anthropology. I'm also appointed with the Center for Women and Gender Studies and with the Lozano Long Institute for Latin-American Studies. As an interdisciplinary scholar, I bridge campus at all times, and I think that that's the primary reason why I decided to accept this nomination to the Executive Committee. I truly believe that at this point in our history, we need to be focused on embracing the diverse aspects of our campus. And diversity is something that I work on every day. In addition to the appointments that I have held, I'm also the Director of Student Programs at LLILAS Benson, and that means that I oversee about 45 students, most of whom are international students, most of whom come from Latin America directly and who represent a diverse background. Many of our students are indigenous, many of our students are of African descent, and many of our students have diverse sexual identities and diverse class identities. And it's that sense of diversity that I would like to bring to the Executive Committee.

I believe that in many ways, this time in our history is one when we are seeing the need to come together. This is a very difficult time in our nation; it's a very difficult time in our world; and those difficulties have been punctuated by some of the tensions that possibly have come out in thinking about the ways that people are dialoguing and coming together. And so, for me, dialogue is absolutely essential. And I think that as one of the younger people who have come up here today I want to admit that I came to UT in 2006 as a post-doc, and joined the faculty in 2007, and I was promoted in 2016. And so I don't have the long list of experience that many of the people who spoke with us, but I do believe that the experience that I have had -- as a faculty person of color who has served on many, many committees in her short time here, and has served on committees from the University level all the way down to the Department level across all four departments that I have an affiliation with -- I believe that I do have the experience to be able to serve you all and bring some of the perspectives that I have to dialoguing across these spaces.

And if there's one thing that I would like to say it's that in many ways, when we bring together diverse voices, what we do is strengthen ourselves as a unit. And so, as a Faculty Council we are tasked many times with making very difficult decisions as several people have said up to this point, and in making those very difficult decisions, we're often speaking for people who are not in the room. And I want us to consider that as we think about this vote. I want us to consider who we represent here. We're a small body, and yet we represent so many. And what I would like to bring to the Executive Committee is that perspective; the perspective of those who may not be in the room, the perspective of those who may not be represented here, but who need our support and who need our inclusion.

And so thank you very much for listening, thank you very much for being here today, and I hope I can count on your vote. But even if I cannot, thank you.