

## Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes – April 5, 2022

**Senators Present:** Travis Braidwood, Lucy Camacho, Mauro Castro, Jieming Chen, Steven Chumbley, Steven Corbett, Zhaoqi Fan, Jeff Glick, Anders Greenspan, Kelly Hall, Michael Houf, Patricia Huskin, Dongwook Kim, Robert Kowalsky, Sarah Lucas, Tanner Machado, Lifford McLauchlan, Richard Miller, Mais Nijim, Larry Peel, William Procasky, Christine Radcliff, Kathleen Rees, Nick Sciallo, Hui Shen, Daniella Varela, Maria Velez-Hernandez, Teresa Young

**Senators Absent:** Hisham Al-Bataineh , Bart Ballard, Ammar Bhandari, Michael Cherry, Manuel Flores, James Glusing, David Hicks, Kendra Huff, Kyle Milsap, Alexander Sanchez-Behar, Velda Soydas

**Newly Elected Senators Present:** Polly Allred, Michelle Garcia, Elizabeth Goode, Norma Guzman, Brent Hedquist, Anne-Marie Lelkes, Brian Menaker, Mais Nijim, Kathleen Rees, Hans Schumann, Amber Shipherd, Benjamin Turner, Thomas Zinninger

**Newly Elected Senators Absent:** Francisco Aguiniga, Jesus De La Rosa, Velda Soydas, Subbarao Yelisetti

This meeting of the Faculty Senate was held through Zoom due to COVID-19 social distancing requirements. This meeting was not recorded.

### I. Call to Order and Quorum Call.

At 3:35 p.m. President Chen asked the secretary, Christine Radcliff, if enough members were present for a quorum. Senator Radcliff replied in the positive.

### II. Presentations

#### a) Interim President James Hallmark

Interim President Hallmark expressed his thanks to all of the Senators who will be rotating off of the Faculty Senate after today's meeting. He hoped everyone had a good experience while serving. He then welcomed the newly elected Senators and encouraged them to keep faculty issues and issues involving the University as a whole in the forefront of their minds as they solicit and bring forward issues to the 2022-2023 Faculty Senate. He also took a moment to express his thanks to Senate President Chen. Hallmark said that Senate President Chen represented the faculty well and that he found him to be a gentleman and a consistent advocate for the senate.

#### Presidential search update

He reported that airport interviews were held for eight candidates. The list was narrowed down to three and those candidates will have a deeper dive started on them. Hallmark said that he will be spending time with each candidate via zoom and on the phone in his System roll. The candidates will be visiting with Chancellor Sharp the week of April 18<sup>th</sup> and then Sharp will give his recommendation to the Board of Regents. The recommended candidate will not be visiting TAMUK before they are appointed. We may find out the name of the candidate on April 28<sup>th</sup> from the Board of Regents meeting. Interim President Hallmark mentioned that in the search committee meetings discussion about candidates would lead to consensus and they hardly had to vote on candidates.

**b) Provost Lou Reinisch**

Provost Reinisch also started his remarks by thanking Senate President Chen and the Senators for all of their work this year, especially the work on the changes to tenure and promotion.

**Lab Safety Training**

Provost Reinisch remarked that it is not right for staff to take students who have not completed their lab safety training out of class. He feels that this should be done by the course instructor. Starting this summer instructors will receive a list of students who have not completed their lab safety training. Instructors are not to allow those students into the lab until the training is complete. Students may be asked to leave the lab and complete their training on their phones in the hallway before returning.

**Federal Funding**

\$500,000 in federal funds will be used for teacher education and the summer bridge program for 200 students.

**Coastal Bend College**

Starting in the Fall our faculty will be teaching Physics and Chemistry at Coastal Bend College. Our students would be able to take the course there too. Provost Reinisch is hopeful our faculty teaching at CBC will endorse TAMUK while they are there.

**End of the semester celebration**

Provost Reinisch is planning to have another end of the semester celebration for faculty and staff similar to the one from the Fall semester. This is still in the planning stages, so keep watch for the official announcement.

**III. Approval of Minutes from February 2022 Faculty Senate Meetings.**

President Chen asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the March 1, 2022 meeting; Senator Chumbley moved and Senator Rees seconded. Minutes were approved.

**IV. Report of Officers****a) Senate President Chen****Presidential Search Update**

President Chen reported about his experience as a member of the search committee. They started with sixty-four applications that were narrowed down to eight and then the final three. He reported that the committee was efficient and, in his role, he stressed shared governance and the recruiting of qualified faculty.

**Task force on reassigned time for research and scholarship**

President Chen reported that the task force has completed its work and the draft report has been submitted to Interim President Hallmark.

**SRI close date** (*see handout*)

President Chen reported that Provost Reinisch accepted the proposal from the Faculty Senate to change the close date for the Student Rating of Instruction to the last class day versus the end of the semester. Provost Reinisch made the change and it is now in effect. SRI's will now close 15 days before the last day of the semester during Spring/Fall and 7 days before the last day during the summer sessions.

**Meeting with Interim President Hallmark and Provost Reinisch – March 2022**

President Chen reported that the following items were discussed in this month meeting; salary adjustments, deferred maintenance, and the need of an additional pay raise to combat inflation. President Chen mentioned that in response to the additional pay raise Provost Reinisch said that another raise has been budgeted as long as no major enrollment issues arise.

**V. Standing Committee Reports****a) Committee on Committees – No Report****b) Resolutions and By-Laws Committee – No Report****c) Election Committee**

Senator Radcliff reported that the remainder of the department elections have been completed, as were the At-Large elections. The following faculty members have been elected to represent their department or college for the 2022-2024 term.

Agriculture, Agribusiness & Environmental Sciences – Benjamin Turner  
Animal Science & Veterinary Technology – Michelle Garcia

College of Arts & Sciences – Polly Allred, Brent Hedquist  
College of Business Administration – Hans Schumann  
College of Education & Human Performance – Amber Shipherd

**VI. Reports from Committees Reporting to the Senate****a) Administrator Evaluation Committee – No Report****b) Annual Faculty Lecture Committee – No Report****c) Faculty Benefits Committee – No Report****d) Faculty Evaluation Committee – No Report****e) Faculty Handbook Committee – (*see handout*)**

Senator Sciuлло reported that the committee has a list of recommended changes for the Faculty Handbook that have been sent to Secretary Radcliff. The majority of the changes center on changing all mentions of “he,” “she,” “he/she,” “his/her,” “his or her,” and “he or she” to “faculty member,” “student,” “employee,” or the grammatically and syntactically correct equivalent. The committee feels that in order to be more inclusive, and recognizing the increasing use of gender inclusive language as suggested by multiple style guides and increasingly popular in a range of disciplines, the change away from binary gender pronouns would promote a more inclusive Faculty Handbook that recognizes binary gender pronouns do not sufficiently account for University community members (administrators, faculty, staff, and students) and may be perceived as exclusionary and unwelcoming.

**f) Piper Award Committee**

Senator Miller reported that the call for nominees was sent out last week and four nominations have been received so far.

**g) Policy Revision Committee – No Report****h) Task force on Reassigned Time for Research and Scholarship (see handout)**

President Chen reported on behalf of Task force chair Dr. Li that a draft of the recommendations was given to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee for review and they provided feedback. The updated draft has now been forwarded to Interim President Hallmark.

**VII. Old Business****a) SRI Motion**

As reported earlier in the meeting Provost Reinisch approved this recommendation and the change has already been implemented.

**b) Faculty reinvestment funds**

President Chen reported that there has been no new information given to him on this topic and that he will ask for an update from Provost Reinisch.

**c) TAMUK faculty definition of “Abstain” in promotion, tenure, continuation votes**

President Chen keep this issue tabled this month in order to allow sufficient time for the transition to the 2022-2023 faculty senate.

**VIII. Senate Transition****a) Pass the gavel****b) Thank you to FS President Chen**

President Machado thanked former President Chen for all of his work as President-Elect and then President of the Faculty Senate. He mentioned that he has a plaque for former President Chen and that he will give it to him at a later date.

**IX. New Business****a) Welcome New Senators**

President Machado took a few minutes to welcome the first time and returning members of the 2022-2023 Faculty Senate. To the first time Senators he encouraged them to reach out if they have any questions. He also expressed that one of his main goals for this senate year is to have efficient meetings.

**b) Election of Executive Committee and Officers**

President Elect – Michael Houf

Secretary – Elizabeth Goode

Parliamentarian – Steven Chumbley

College of Agriculture & Natural Resources – Michelle Garcia

College of Arts & Sciences – Maria Velez-Hernandez

College of Business Administration – Kathleen Rees

College of Education & Human Performance – Brian Menaker

College of Engineering – Lucy Camacho

**c) Elections of Members to the Senate Standing Committees****i) Committee on Committees**

- College of Agriculture & Natural Resources – Benjamin Turner
- College of Arts & Sciences – Jesus De La Rosa
- College of Business Administration – Kathleen Rees
- College of Education & Human Performance – Norma Guzman
- College of Engineering – Lucy Camacho
- Library – Elizabeth Goode
- Additional Senators – Lifford McLauchlan, Daniella Varela

**ii) Election Committee**

- Travis Braidwood
- Elizabeth Goode
- Brent Hedquist
- Mais Nijim
- Brian Menaker
- Hans Schumann
- Teresa Young

**iii) Resolutions & By-Laws Committee**

- College of Agriculture & Natural Resources – Michelle Garcia
- College of Arts & Sciences – Sarah Lucas
- College of Business Administration – Anne-Marie Lelkes
- College of Education & Human Performance – Amber Shipherd
- College of Engineering – Lifford McLauchlan
- Library – Elizabeth Goode

**X. Announcements****a) Library Liaison program feedback request**

Senator Radcliff asked the Senators to please pass along a link to a survey from the library that is attempting to gauge faculty knowledge of the library's liaison program.

- b)** President Machado announced that the May 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting will be held via Zoom, but that he will have Secretary Goode send out a poll to help determine if this Senate would like to remain on Zoom or return to face to face meetings. He also posed the question that if meetings were to return to face to face, what would be the best way to continue with electronic voting.

**XI. Adjournment**

At 4:49pm a motion to adjourn was made by Senator Chumbley, the motion was seconded by Senator Goode, motion was passed.

**Respectfully Submitted,**

Christine Radcliff

Faculty Senate Secretary, 2021-2022

**Student Rating of Instruction schedule effective April 2022**

<b>Semester session</b>	<b>Open window (in Days)</b>	<b>Current Close Date</b>
16-week (Fall/Spring)	28	Last day - 15 days (at midnight)
8-week sessions (Fall/Spring)	15	Last day - 15 days (at midnight)
10-week Summer session	15	Last day - 7 days (at midnight)
5-week Summer session	10	Last day - 7 days (at midnight)

TO: Faculty Senate President Dr. Jieming Chen  
 Faculty Senate President-Elect Dr. Tanner Machado  
 Faculty Senate Secretary Christine Radcliff  
 Faculty Senate Parliamentarian Dr. Patricia Huskin

FROM: Faculty Handbook Committee of the Faculty Senate  
 Dr. Nick J. Sciallo, Chair  
 Dr. Kyle Millsap  
 Dr. Kelly Hall  
 Dr. Larry Peel  
 Dr. Kendra Huff  
 Dr. Mark Hailine

DATE: March 1, 2022

RE: Proposed change to Faculty Handbook

**Proposal:** The Faculty Handbook Committee proposes changing all mentions of “he,” “she,” “he/she,” “his/her,” “his or her,” and “he or she” to “faculty member,” “student,” “employee,” or the grammatically and syntactically correct equivalent.

**Rationale:** In order to be more inclusive, and recognizing the increasing use of gender inclusive language as suggested by multiple style guides and increasingly popular in a range of disciplines, the change away from binary gender pronouns would promote a more inclusive Faculty Handbook that recognizes binary gender pronouns do not sufficiently account for University community members (administrators, faculty, staff, and students) and may be perceived as exclusionary and unwelcoming.

**In practice:** Below are the places in the Handbook (by page number and paragraph) where various the Committee’s proposed changes should be implemented.

Page 7, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under B.2: “he or she” should become “the faculty member”  
 Page 7, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under B.2: “He/she” should be changed to “The faculty member”  
 Page 9, last paragraph: “he/she” [referencing a student] should be changed to “the student”  
 Page 10, 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph under B.2.6: “his or her” should be changed to “the employee’s”  
 Page 11, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph under B.2.7.1: “his or her” should be changed to “the employee’s”  
 Page 11, 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph under B.2.7.1: “his or her” should be changed to “the employee’s” (2 times)  
 Page 11, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under B.3: “his or her” should be changed to “the faculty member’s”  
 Page 12, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under B.4: “he or she” should be “the faculty member”  
 Page 12, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under B.4: “his or her” should be changed to “the faculty member’s”  
 Page 13, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under B.4.3: his or her” should be changed to “the faculty member’s”  
 Page 15, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under 8: “his or her” should be changed to “the faculty member’s”  
 Page 18, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under 11: “his or her” should be changed to “the faculty member’s”

Page 19, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under 14 (begins on Page 19): “his or her” should be changed to “the college dean’s”

Page 19, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under 15: “his or her” should be changed to “the Provost’s”

Page 19, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under B.5.2: “his or her” should be changed to “the faculty member’s”

Page 20, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under B.5.3.1: “he or she” should be changed to “the faculty member”

Page 20, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under B.5.3.1.3: “he or she” should be changed to “the faculty member”

Page 20, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under B.5.3.1.4: “he or she” should be changed to “the department chair”

Page 22, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under B.5.6: “his or her” should be changed to “the faculty member’s”

Page 22, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under B.6.1: “his or her” should be changed to “the faculty member’s”

Page 22, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under B.6.1.6.a: “his or her” should be changed to “the faculty member’s”

Page 22, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under B.6.1.6.c: “his or her” should be changed to “the faculty member’s”

Page 28, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under B.7.2.5.2: “his or her” should be changed to “the faculty member’s”

Page 29, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under B.8.1: “his or her” should be changed to “the faculty member’s”

Page 29, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under B.9.2: “his or her” should be changed to “the faculty member’s” (twice)

Page 31, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under B.10.3.4: “his or her” should be changed to “the Petitioner or Respondent’s”

Page 31, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under B.10.4.3: “he/she” should be changed to “the Petitioner”

Page 31, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under B.10.4.5: “he or she” should be changed to “the President”

Page 33, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under B.10.6.1.2: “he or she” should be changed to “the Provost and VP for Academic Affairs”

Page 35, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under B.10.6.7.e: “his or her” should be changed to “the witness’s”

Page 44, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under C.7: “his or her” should be changed to “the instructor’s”

Page 44, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under C.7: “he or she” should be changed to “the instructor”

Page 44, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under C.7.1: “his or her” should be changed to “the faculty member’s”

Page 44, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph under C.8.1: “his or her” should be changed to “the faculty member’s” (twice)

Page 56, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph under H.10: “his or her” should be changed to “the student’s”

There are similar changes to be made to the Constitution of the General Faculty of Texas A&M University-Kingsville in Article 1, Section 5 and Section 8, Article 2, Section 1(d), Article 3, Section 3(b) and 3(c), Section 14(d), and Section 15, which fall beyond the purview of the Faculty Handbook Committee.

The Committee also notes that on Page 29 of Appendix 4 in the section describing the rank of Research Associate Professor, a change consistent with this proposal is warranted.



## A Working Report by Senate Task Force on Teaching Load Reduction

Task Force Members (alphabetic order of last names): Seth Abugho, Ambrose O Anoruo, Brenda Hannon, Md Monirul Islam, Brent Kinghorn, Hua Li, Kathleen Rees, Nick Sciallo, Ari Sherris, and Daniella Varela

### 1. Executive Summary

Texas A&M University-Kingsville (TAMUK) was first recognized as a Doctoral University with High Research Activity (R2) in the Carnegie Classification System in 2019. However, TAMUK remains one with R2 recognition in Texas where the majority of tenured and tenure-track faculty members teach 12 semester credit hours (SCHs) per long semester (Spring or Fall semester). The high teaching load and excessive reduction of research support over the last five years are hurting the research environment at TAMUK, thus threatening TAMUK's R2 recognition, and even preventing TAMUK from striving to the next level. It is also negatively impacting the time and effort TAMUK faculty spend on research activities as well as the recruitment and retention of high-quality faculty members. In short, it is currently a non-supportive research environment. To create a positive research environment, sustain and support more research activities at TAMUK, and match with other R2 public universities in Texas striving for R1 status, this task force on teaching load reduction suggested THREE major categories of plans:

**Plan 1:** Offer general teaching load reduction as a voluntary option to existing TAMUK tenured and tenure-track faculty, and reduce the regular teaching load for all new TAMUK tenured and tenure-track faculty (Details are provided in section 2 and Appendices A&B).

**Plan 2:** Offer additional teaching load reduction as incentives based on different conditions to promote research activities at TAMUK (Details are provided in section 2 and Appendices C-E).

**Plan 3:** Restore research support activities that were available at TAMUK before May 2016 and synergize the teaching load reduction effort to further enhance the research environment and capability at TAMUK (Details are provided in section 2 and Appendices F-G).

Institution	Location	Control
Prairie View A & M University	Prairie View, Texas	Public
Sam Houston State University	Huntsville, Texas	Public
Southern Methodist University	Dallas, Texas	Private not-for-profit
Tarleton State University	Stephenville, Texas	Public
Texas A & M University-Corpus Christi	Corpus Christi, Texas	Public
Texas A & M University-Kingsville	Kingsville, Texas	Public
Texas Christian University	Fort Worth, Texas	Private not-for-profit
Texas Southern University	Houston, Texas	Public
Texas State University	San Marcos, Texas	Public
The University of Texas at Tyler	Tyler, Texas	Public
The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley	Edinburg, Texas	Public

Figure 1. Data from Carnegie Classifications for Research Universities (as of 12/15/2021)

This task force was formed in February 2022 and worked under time constraints. We as a group would like to continue with accountability and implementation issues. We would like to involve different levels of the administration in this process (e.g., Deans, Provost, President) in order to avoid silos. The recommendations in this report do not redress the inequity of a 12 SCH/semester (or 4/4) teaching load at TAMUK, a doctoral university that the Carnegie Classifications designate as having high research activity. At universities where there is high research activity, the teaching load ranges from 3/3 to 3/2 to 3/1 to 2/1 to 1/1 in some departments. Universities with high research activity in Texas are listed in Table 1. Redressing inequity in teaching load is particularly important given reported discussions at the System level of support for TAMUK's rise to R1 in the next two years.

## **2. Summarized Recommendations for Implementing Suggested Plans**

Under each aforementioned plan, different recommendations have been provided for consideration of implementation through discussion within the task force and inputs from TAMUK faculty outside the task force. Detailed information of each recommendation, such as rationale and detailed implementation strategies, is provided as appendices.

### **2.1 Recommendations for Implementing Plan 1:**

#### *2.1.1 General teaching load reduction as a voluntary option to existing TAMUK faculty*

To promote research activities and increase the faculty retention at TAMUK, the task force recommends the university to provide general teaching load reduction as a voluntary option to existing TAMUK tenured and tenure-track faculty. TAMUK existing tenured and tenure-track faculty members will be able to choose reducing their regular teaching load from 12 SCHs+12 SCHs to 9 SCHs+9 SCHs (for tenure and tenure-track faculty in College of Agriculture and College of Engineering faculty, reducing the regular teaching load from 9 SCHs+9 SCHs to 9 SCHs+6 SCHs) to conduct more scholarly and research activities. As a voluntary option, TAMUK existing tenured and tenure-track faculty members should also be allowed to stay with their current teaching loads. More details and discussion can be found in Appendix A.

#### *2.1.1 Reduced teaching load for new TAMUK faculty*

To attract high-quality faculty members to join TAMUK and promote research activities, the task force recommends the university to offer 9 SCHs+9 SCHs as the regular teaching load of new tenured and tenure-track faculty members (for new tenure and tenure-track faculty in College of Agriculture and College of Engineering faculty, offer 9 SCHs+6 SCHs or 6 SCHs+6 SCHs as the regular teaching load). More details and discussion can be found in Appendix B.

### **2.2 Recommendations for Implementing Plan 2:**

#### *2.2.1 Offering additional teaching load reduction based on the dollar amount of external grants received by TAMUK faculty members*

TAMUK faculty have received external grants from various funding sources, which approves their abilities to conduct fundable research and scholarly activities. It is critical to support these faculty members in sustaining their research efforts and securing more external grants. As existing external grants bring in resources to the university, such as indirect costs, equipment, scholarships, student support, as well as secure, sustain, and improve our status as a research institution on the Carnegie metric, the task force recommends that the university offers additional teaching load reduction to individual faculty members based on the dollar amount of

external grants received, which will encourage more faculty to secure external grants. More details and discussion can be found in Appendix C.

### *2.2.2 Offering additional teaching load reduction based on the proposed research and scholarly activities by TAMUK faculty members*

To support and encourage TAMUK faculty members who are interested in increasing their research and scholarly activities, the task force recommends that the university provides additional teaching load reduction to individual faculty members based on their proposed research and scholarly activities. More details and discussion can be found in Appendix D.

### *2.2.3 Implementing the existing university policies across the entire campus*

The task force recommends that existing university policies should be consistently promoted and implemented in all the departments and colleges across the entire campus. More details and discussion can be found in Appendix E.

## **2.3 Recommendations for Implementing Plan 3:**

### *2.3.1 Restoring New Faculty Investment Program*

When the New Faculty Investment Program (NFIP) was first offered at TAMUK, it provided new faculty with 3 SCH teaching load reduction every semester in their first two years at TAMUK, and provided an orientation to the promotion and tenure process, an introduction to campus services, a swift review of research and sponsored programs regulations and processes, and professional development/instructional aids. NFIP now is a program of only one year in length. The task force recommends to restore the original NFIP as a two-year program to guide and mentor junior level faculty members through the process of developing a research agenda and emphasizing the value of mentorship by established faculty members with considerable research success. More details and discussion can be found in Appendix F.

### *2.3.2 Looking after existing grant holders (additional monies for research assistants, more indirect monies, etc.)*

The task force recommends the return of indirect monies and salary savings monies back to all PIs across all colleges and to give existing grant holders extra money for graduate research assistants. More details and discussion can be found in Appendix G.

### *2.3.3 Encouraging new and bold research ideas*

The task force recommends the university to provide funding to research groups to write new and bold grant ideas across research and all the arts, and to openly elicit these ideas from a one-on-one perspective, group perspective, and college perspective. More details and discussion can be found in Appendix G.

### *2.3.4 Restoring annual university mechanisms for faculty research*

The task force recommends the university to restore summer grant writing competition, university research grants, university undergraduate research grants, college research grants, research area support groups in science, engineering, humanities, education, and the arts. More details and discussion can be found in Appendix G.

### *2.3.5 Other recommendations for providing additional support to research and scholarly activities at TAMUK.*

The task force provides several other recommendations as discussed in Appendix G.

## **Appendix A: Teaching and Research Time Allotments**

The teaching track options and the research course release are two separate items but are tied together to achieve the goals of better teaching and creating more time for research. These two tracks need to be thought of as one option with two parts for each program and or department. The first is a teaching track option for tenured faculty, which differs from a professor of practice who is never required to do research. The second is a research track option for tenured faculty, which allows for the creation and allocation for better research performance across campus. Some faculty excel at teaching while other faculty excel at research and the suggestions below build on the strengths of these differences.

These options below are based on faculty from the social sciences; however, there is no reason to believe that these two options cannot be applied to other disciplines across the university. These tracks are not intended for pre-tenure faculty. Finally, it should be noted that these tracks could be implemented at a full professor or perhaps associate level.

Benefits of Implementing these ideas:

- 1) More Quality Teaching
- 2) More Quality Research without cost of course release time (beauty of this proposal)
- 3) More Grant Generation
- 4) More University Recognition
- 5) A Better University Experience for Students.

### Teaching Track Option:

The teaching track is an option for tenured faculty to teach more and ultimately do less research. Using the social sciences rubric, teaching 4 courses per semester, 8 courses per academic year is 80% of the annual requirement. At that rate, teaching 5 courses a semester, 10 courses per academic year, would be 100% of annual requirement. The faculty would be creating 2-course release time opening for a potential research-oriented professor. Teaching tracks are nothing new. At other universities, some professors are hired into their tenure positions as teaching faculty only. In this case, it could be done voluntarily by contract in order to not violate letters of hire. Years devoted to teaching an increased load could be counted towards promotion. After all, in this track, faculty are teaching at 100% capacity and in some cases more than 100% of the annual requirements by the university rubric. Currently, such faculty receive no credit for any kind of extra teaching and the university has inadvertently benefited from this abuse. This option could help solve the problem and provide a more equitable solution to this workload problem. This option tied directly to the reallocation of research time can also assist those more interested in research than teaching. The research benefits are discussed below.

### Teaching Track Suggestions:

- 1) Create a 100% teaching track at a 5/5 course load or greater by contract.
- 2) Create this option as a research substitution towards promotion.
- 3) Reallocate the time generated by the extra teaching load to course releases for research for other faculty members within the same department.
- 4) Some service requirements can be maintained by contract negotiation.
- 5) All teaching or research contracts would be by voluntary choice by faculty.

### Research Option:

Time is what is lacking for this University to become more research oriented. It has desired to become a more research-focused institution for twenty years at least without the means to do so and the time to do so. This is especially true with the heavy teaching load imposed on

most faculty in most departments. There are few exceptions. Giving a teaching track option to some professors so that course releases could be offered for faculty to pursue research goals is a good option to provide precious time for research, without the loss of classroom teaching. Tenured professors could be offered either option voluntarily by contract. REMINDER: This section is written using social sciences as an example; however, what constitutes as research, on a college-by-college or department-by-department basis should be implemented. If the teaching track contracts loosen up course release time for research the major question becomes how is that time allocated. Below are some recommendations for consideration.

- 1) The time should be allocated to those faculty that have a robust research program that is bringing money/great prestige into their programs, departments, and colleges (NOTE: a track record of multiple publications may not constitute enough if the publications are of low calibre).
- 2) Other exceptional research possibilities that can bring notice, credit, and prestige to the University should be considered for course releases.

The time generated within programs by professors teaching extra courses, should be primarily allotted for those programs for the faculty who prefer research. For example, if a Biology program has a faculty member teaching extra classes then those research hours generated by that teaching faculty, should be granted by contract to the best researchers in that program. This is the ideal format for the social sciences; it is acknowledged that the department can work out other systems. The researcher taking the hours by negotiated contract takes on obligations. The researcher should ideally be doing research that generates grants and provides research opportunities for students and perhaps other faculty. The research production should be increased by contract, and the contract should specify the amount of increased research production over a specific amount of time (e.g., perhaps 3 years). If the researcher fails in this production contract schedule, then the contract and release time falls to another researcher. One suggestion is to add another publication beyond what is required for tenure and promotion as the time should generate extra research. Contracts could be by one-year or three-year contracts, or even tailored to grant requirements. Time is the scarce resource and has to be rationed as carefully as possible according to merit and production. However, it is allocated, these considerations need to be fair and balanced as possible within each department. All changes in teaching and research should be voluntary and by contract in order to avoid violation of letters of hire. This will require researchers and teachers working in concert with department chairs and deans of colleges and overseen by the provost. This needs to be a win/win situation among faculty, departments, and the university. Ideally, it should provide for those doing what they do best, be that research or teaching. It should generate time that is currently non-existent, a real problem for conducting quality research purposes.

In addition, it should provide for less adjunct teaching in several departments. Tenured faculty teaching a course load of five courses per semester or greater, could provide a course release per course taught for each semester for researchers. Researchers could in turn provide for more research production for the University. None of this is going to happen by itself without incentives to faculty in all areas, and, if this has not been done before in exactly this way, then perhaps we should create the precedent. There needs to be given and taken in the process. If research is a real priority to this university, then let us make time for it.

## **Appendix B: Reduced teaching load for new TAMUK faculty**

### Preamble:

Because TAMUK comprises five Colleges and each has many departments whose disciplines of study may or may not relate, a one size fits all recommendation by the Task Force Committee will not benefit all TAMUK Colleges. Second, the administrative setup for faculty position hires of the Colleges are different, and this is one single determinant of how faculty members are hired. Third, faculty teaching load reduction will impact allocation of overhead and state research development funds (RDF) awarded to TAMUK; it is therefore important that a special section of the TASK Force report be devoted to faculty service conditions that do not fit into the load reduction models.

### The problem/case:

Because this is a special faculty employment situation, specific examples will be used to make the case. The College of Agriculture & Natural Resources is a research-intensive college currently constructed with three departments and three research units. Nearly all faculty members in the units, Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute, Citrus Center, and King Ranch Institute for Ranch Management, were hired at 25% teaching and 75% research. These members of the faculty are maxed out in regards to any potential teaching release. All faculty members in the three departments of the College of Agriculture have an established research release as part of their contracts (except one member of the faculty at 100% teaching). Most high teaching level faculty have contracts hired at 75% teaching and 25% research release. Teaching release (additional 25%) is possible to bring the teaching load to 50% and 50% research. The one teaching faculty with 100% teaching load is in a specialized niche discipline, but can only be released 25% from teaching for research time if a qualified adjunct is found.

One of the departments, the Department of Animal Science & Veterinary Technology, in the past 10 years has grown from 200 animal science undergrads to over 400 undergrads without an addition to faculty member numbers or increases in teaching allocations in the animal science program. This growth has overburdened the teaching load of professors, and restricts them to receive further teaching release in order to keep students on a 4-year graduation degree track. The proposed teaching release exercise will not release these members of the faculty teaching load nor permit the additional release for research.

Faculty members in all units and departments of the College are specialists in their niche fields of specialization, making transfer of teaching load to another faculty challenging. All current faculty teach their full teaching load (and often voluntary overload status) just to keep students on a four-year degree track. Excess flexibility does not exist in the College to provide additional release. Because of these niches specific training areas required of faculty in the College of AGNR, adjunct faculty will be hard to come by and expensive to hire if at all found. When some are found, TAMUK complains that they are hired at too high a price because the historically approved price permissible has been about \$1,000 per credit hour. It is nearly impossible to hire professional niche science areas for this, especially for hands-on courses where the instructor must be on campus to teach the course. The amount of \$3,000 is little incentive to drive in from outside of Kingsville to/from campus each class day. Thus, the quality of teaching declines and departments are put into a situation of not teaching to student needs and education standards of the program. Also, adjuncts that are generalists trying to teach in a niche discipline area may not meet TAMUK and/or SACS standards. Most long-term high school teachers around Kingsville that have taught agriculture courses their entire lives do not qualify to

teach at TAMUK. The remaining highly educated agriculture and natural resource scientists do not reside near enough to Kingsville to fill in for our faculty.

Recommendation:

The College of Agriculture & Natural Resources and other TAMUK colleges that are in similar situations can reduce faculty teaching load and thus involve more faculty in research in the following ways:

- 1) Create new faculty line(s) item from the university budget and allocate that to the colleges and department programs that have actually grown. Four ¼ teaching faculty release of two long semesters is equivalent to one new faculty FTE.
- 2) Make the new faculty hires 50% teaching and 50% research (from university budget)
- 3) New faculty will release the teaching load of faculty in the overloaded growing departments and make the teaching load burdened faculty available for research.

### **Appendix C: Additional course reduction based on external grants received**

In the last several years, TAMUK faculty members were working really hard to secure external grants to support different research and scholarly activities across the campus, which helped TAMUK to become a university with Carnegie R2 Research Classifications (Doctoral Universities – High research activity) in the last two years. However, based on the current teaching load at TAMUK, it is not sustainable for TAMUK faculty members to maintain or even increase the current level of research and scholarly activities. To support and encourage those TAMUK faculty who are successful in securing external grants to increase their research and scholarly activities and secure more external grants, teaching load reductions are strongly recommended. One of the options is to use part of the indirect costs to hire adjunct lecturers to teach courses. Currently, TAMUK is paying, for example, \$4500 to an adjunct lecturer in Engineering to teach a 3 credit hours course per semester. Considering 38% indirect cost rate, a \$70,000/year external grant will generate about \$19,000 as indirect cost. Using part of the indirect costs to hire adjunct lecturers will allow TAMUK to provide teaching load reduction to the faculty members who secure external grants, and allow these faculty members to secure more external grants afterwards. It is recommended to offer teaching load reduction based on the amount of external grants secured by faculty members:

- If a faculty member secures at least \$70,000 external grants in one year, three (3) credit hours teaching load reduction should be granted to the faculty member in the following year.
- If a faculty member secures at least \$200,000 external grants in one year, six (6) credit hours teaching load reduction should be granted to the faculty member in the following year.
- If a faculty member secures at least \$300,000 external grants in one year, nine (9) credit hours teaching load reduction should be granted to the faculty member in the following year.
- If a faculty member secures at least \$400,000 external grants in one year, twelve (12) credit hours teaching load reduction should be granted to the faculty member in the following year.
- The maximum teaching load reduction granted to a faculty member in one year is twelve (12) credit hours.

## **Appendix D: Additional course reduction based on proposed research and scholarly activities via Checklist approach**

A member of the general faculty (Art. 1, Sec. 1a, Faculty Handbook, quoted in the introduction to this report) could meet three criteria to receive 3 credit hours release per long semester and could teach the remaining hours in one long semester in order to conduct research, engage in scholarship, creative endeavors, guest research appointments elsewhere, grant writing, addressing demanding performance schedules, etc.:

- 1) Writing a national or international grant (e.g., NSF, NIH, NEA, IES, Fulbright, Spencer, etc.)
- 2) Writing a book, a play, a body of poetry, etc.
- 3) Composing a score or musical composition
- 4) Creating a painting, sculpture, or environmental art
- 5) Performing in a national or international schedule of events

### Samples of Specific Criteria / Checklist

- 1) Letter of interest or justification of impact of project Some examples of letter of interest/justification here include: (i) letter from a university in another country to adopt you as a future Fulbright Scholar, (ii) letter/email from an academic publisher for your book proposal, (iii) letter from a leading orchestra for your original musical score, or (iv) grant announcement + justification of impact of proposed grant project
- 2) Abstract: A preliminary abstract that briefly describes your project (300-500 words)
- 3) Deliverables: A short list of deliverables (e.g., 5 chapters of a 10-chapter book; 3 painting in a series of 6 paintings; a grant submitted on time; a patent registered for an invention; a substantial research article submitted to a peer-reviewed journal)

## **Appendix E: Implementing the existing university policies across the entire campus**

According to university rule 12.03.99.K1-Teaching Load Credits, TAMUK policy, last reviewed in August of 2019, provides a means for “release” time from the current required 4/4 teaching load. This request must be approved by the department chair, and dean, and under specified instances by the Provost also. The release time should be reported on the Load Reduction Approval Request Form. The release time must be requested each semester by the same process. Specific areas for release time, as noted in the document, are “Banked Hours” (compensated from overloads), Outside Employment and Consulting, Teaching Program Development, Supervision of Graduate Students, Administrative and Other Professional Assignments, Research, and Special Assignments. Release time, in many instances, is limited to no more than 3 TLCs (Teaching Load Credits) per category for each long semester. Research is not limited but does require additional approvals and subsequent processes.

This policy is lacking a grievance process for denied approvals of the teaching load reduction. This process should include reviews from a faculty constituency from across campus and different tenure levels. There are more rules and policies under University Rules and Procedures: <https://www.tamuk.edu/policy/rules/>

## **Appendix F: Restoring New Faculty Investment Program**

As it is the intention of Texas A&M University-Kingsville to create a positive research environment, sustain and support more research activities, and match with other R2 public universities in Texas, it is important to create a system that will facilitate achievement of such goals for the long-term. Accordingly, attention must be devoted to how the university serves its newly hired faculty, and what professional development opportunities are made available to



junior faculty members to thrive in their new academic environment and align with the university's research goals. Thus, the recommendation is to restore the New Faculty Investment Program administered by the Center for Teaching Effectiveness.

Previously a two-year investment program offering one-course release to newly hired faculty, NFIP now is a program of only one year in length. As designed, the NFIP provides an orientation to the promotion and tenure process, an introduction to campus services, a swift review of research and sponsored programs regulations and processes, and professional development/instructional aids. With particular respect to the purpose of this initiative, the unanimous recommendation of the task force proposes a focus of the NFIP to additionally guide and mentor junior level faculty members through the process of developing a research agenda, emphasizing the value of mentorship by established faculty members with considerable research success.

Matched with the structured guidance of the NFIP and mentoring available, newly appointed tenure-track faculty should be eligible to receive a one-course reduction in teaching load per academic year in order to provide additional time to establish an active research program. Department leadership may offer a one-course per year reduction for an initial period of two years. Any additional course release time is subject to review by the appropriate committee and based on deliverables/criteria (determined at the discretion of the respective department chair/college dean) of the initial period granted. Faculty not meeting the minimum requirements are not eligible for subsequent teaching load reductions.

The recommendation extends to financial support of newly hired faculty members in the form of a New Faculty Research Development (NFRD) Award, designed to help accelerate individual scholarship and help in building a sustainable research program. It is our hope that our new colleagues will view this program as an excellent opportunity to kick-start their research efforts soon after their arrival on campus. An internal award, funds would be used for supplies, equipment, travel pertinent to the research initiative(s).

## **Appendix G: Resorting research support activities that were available before May 2016**

### Background/History of TAMUK Research Support Activities

#### **Up to May 2016**

- 1) there was a competition for summer money for writing a grant proposal – competition was *not* pre-processed by the college (amount approx. 2500 – 3500). Recipient received money after the proposal was completed/submitted.
- 2) university competition for research monies– up to \$15,000 – not pre-processed/pre-screened by college – multiple awards – served as an excellent mechanism for collecting pilot data for a substantial grant (in fact, I believe this was the primary reason for this competition)
- 3) existing grant holders – received 25% of indirect money back as well as about \$3000 per course release (as salary savings) – this money helped a lot to supplement ongoing grants and to collect pilot data for future grant proposals (indeed, at least one of the task force members secured a 300,000 NIH grant by using these monies).
- 4) opportunity to apply for research sabbaticals – to work more intensely on research
- 5) grants at college levels – call for college grant proposals were end Oct/early Nov, awarded late Nov, and duration lasted Dec 1 to mid-Aug – these were meaningful durations that a researcher can get a serious amount of research done. Also, they were up to \$7000.00 and included the possibility for a course release.

- 6) IRBs were approved by OSR in a timely fashion and guidance was provided with more complicated IRBs.
- 7) People with grants (at least NIH grants) received money from office of sponsored research for graduate research assistants (believe it was 7000 a year?)
- 8) People with existing grants (that had indirect money) were asked if they needed additional money to generate new research ideas. In addition, you could approach the VP of research with a novel idea and you might actually get some seed money. In short, when Dr. Abdelrahman was VP of research he distributed some existing research monies to existing grant PIs, some research money to potential ideas, and some money through university mechanisms (university research grants, college grants, brain research group, social-behavioral research group, etc.). Not sure what his ratio of distribution was but I think it was: 1/3<sup>rd</sup>, 1/3<sup>rd</sup>, 1/3<sup>rd</sup>: (i) 1/3<sup>rd</sup> monies to keep PIs who had a grants happy with potential money for pilot data for another grant proposal, (ii) 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of money for collection of pilot data that would generate indirect grant monies (if funded), and (iii) 1/3<sup>rd</sup> money allotted to university research mechanisms, like college grants.
- 9) Research groups, like bio group, engineering group, and social-behavioral group were created and monies were given to encourage research – with focus on potential grant collaborations and grant submissions. For the three years it existed, the social-behavioral group generated one funded NIH grant, numerous collaborations, and publications. In short, research picked up.
- 10) all major decisions about research money were made by the office of sponsored research, which guaranteed equality across the university for external grant holders, internal grant holders, etc.

#### **After May 2016**

- 1) no summer competition for summer money for grant writing
- 2) initially had university research competition after Abdelrahman – but pre-screened by college – there were problems with evaluations made by some colleges – for example, some colleges only put forward proposals by tenure-track faculty (not tenured); thereby eliminating any chance for tenured faculty, who have more research experience and consequently higher probability to collect data for a substantial grant (indeed, one Arts and Sciences faculty submission for research competition did not make it past the college but was eventually funded by NIH – one has to wonder who is evaluated the research proposals). The university research competition for funds no longer exists – gone for about 4-5 years
- 3) Most PIs only get 10 - 15% of indirect money now instead of the original 25% and receive no monies for salary savings via course releases (used to receive salary savings of about \$3000 per course release). These reductions have greatly impeded the ability to complete new grant proposals in a timely fashion (because of excessive teaching load) and have removed the possibility of collecting pilot data, in a timely fashion, for future grant proposals. For example, if a PI needs \$10,000 to \$15,000 to collect pilot data they have to wait a long time to accumulate that amount of money via indirect money and, by the time it is accumulated, it is too late – because the idea is no longer novel enough to get funding. Say it takes 3-4 years to accumulate the funds, 1 year to collect data, 1 year to write a grant – at that point it is too late as 5 years have passed since the conception of grant idea – it no longer is a novel idea.
- 4) Moreover, after the university took money away from their existing grant holders, they then proceeded, about 1 year later, to give new grant holders a higher percent of indirect funds (so now at 20% - I believe). And some colleges, recognizing the value of giving the indirect to

their proven grant winners, restored the 25% back to the grant holders. So, now there are disparities in the amounts of money going to grant holders - some researchers are getting only 10% (because 15% was taken away from them), some researchers are getting 20% (because of the policy the university implemented one year AFTER taking away the 15%), and some researchers are getting their 25% because their colleges recognized the importance of this act. In short, TAMUK punished existing grants holders (some who had their hands full with existing grants; hence they had no opportunity to submit a new grant proposal to get more money) and rewarded new grant holders with a higher percentage. How fair is this? (answer: NOT). Indeed, it is offensive. Finally, there are disparities in percentages of indirect costs for PIs from college to college (i.e., engineering gets much more than arts and sciences). These disparities did not exist before and they only serve to divide the TAMUK's research community.

- 5) For some colleges, sabbaticals are non-existent and faculty have been disparaged for even asking about them. In short, for some colleges, no notices have been sent out to faculty encouraging to apply.
- 6) Calls for college research support money are often the end of January/early February – and then sometimes monies have been spent by July 1<sup>st</sup>. This seriously impedes *meaningful* research in multiple ways – most notably, there is no time to plan and organize for research project because it starts mid-semester, whereas if you knew you had money on December 1<sup>st</sup>, you could plan how you were going to complete your research project in advance of the semester.
- 7) Approvals of IRBs are taking up to 7 months to complete and consequently students are not completing their thesis and research projects in a timely fashion. Renewal of IRBs are not timely and somewhat non-existent, and in many cases have been left to expire for months. Even when renewals are submitted, renewals can take 5+ months to happen. This includes renewals of active grant IRBs. This problem was brought to Dr. Rasmussen, with approximately 20 examples and nothing was heard back and this problem started 7 months before COVID. To pinpoint it, the problem started when Patricia left.
- 8) Existing grant holders – no longer receive money for graduate research assistants
- 9) Distribution of research monies (as itemized in #8 above) no longer happens (at least not how Dr. Abdelrahman was doing it). It seems that a lot of the indirect monies have been re-routed to colleges (and it doesn't seem to be trickling down into research)? No longer any additional support for grant holders, and in some colleges, grant holders are penalized as money is distributed to everyone else except grant holders. In short, there is little to no re-investment in TAMUK research grant holders/winners (which makes no sense).
- 10) Funding to research groups, like bio, social-behavioral, etc. was removed and groups were disbanded. Office of sponsored research has tried to generate this same type of collaborative effort at the university level but had little to no success. The problem is that this is the type of activity that *needs to be decentralized*.
- 11) Decentralization of most decisions – created a number of inequalities across colleges/research disciplines including allocations of indirect monies going back to PIs, opportunities for research monies, course releases to complete research work, and so on. In short, decentralization has fractionated just about everything there is to do with research support – including the abolishment of faculty talking to other faculty about research.

### Recommendations

- 1) Restore summer competition for summer money for grant writing – competition should not be pre-screened by the college; rather, dept of institutional research should just set up a

diverse committee of grant holders/researchers to evaluate proposals; also – there also needs to be post-submission auditing of successful recipients of this competition as it was never clear if this competition generated grants that were funded (I had a funded one – but not sure about success of program); If success statistics are low than guidelines for evaluating applications for this money should be altered

- 2) Restore competition for university research money – competition should not be pre-screened by the college; rather, dept of institutional research should just set up a diverse committee of researchers to evaluate proposals; also need auditing of recipients of this competition as it was never clear if this competition generated grants that were funded – if it didn't/doesn't than guidelines for evaluating applications for this money should be altered
- 3) Return indirect monies (at 25% of the indirect costs per grant) and salary savings monies (i.e., 3000 per course release) back to *all* PIs across all colleges. The distributions should be equal to all PIs. It only makes sense to re-invest in those who are proven winners. Never made any sense to take the money away from proven winners and cause this inequity of distributions of money.
- 4) Restore sabbatical leaves for faculty who wish to focus intensely on research – at all colleges *not just some of the colleges*.
- 5) make college-level research calls much earlier so that meaningful research can be conducted. There also needs to be more fairness as to how the money is awarded. It should not simply be existing grant holders do not get money or that tenure-track have preference. Where possible, due dates should be up to 3 -4 weeks in length.
- 6) IRB approvals of new proposals and renewals of existing IRBS need to be completed in a meaningful amount of time. Delinquencies of grant proposals should *never* happen. IRB staff need to be held accountable for ensuring the IRB system works.
- 7) consider giving existing grant holders extra money for graduate research assistants
- 8) Overall distribution of research funds should go back to the 1/3<sup>rd</sup>, 1/3<sup>rd</sup>, 1/3<sup>rd</sup> that Abdelrahman had. That is, existing grant holders should receive monies where needed, 1/3<sup>rd</sup> to way-out ideas, and 1/3<sup>rd</sup> through normal university mechanisms.
- 9) Funding to research groups, like bio, social-behavioral, etc. was removed and groups were disbanded. Restore some of the money so research can happen again. It doesn't have to be a lot of money – but some money can make these groups active again – get people excited about research.
- 10) Distributions of research funds, decisions of university-level research monies, should not be decentralized; rather, they should be centralized and directed from the office of sponsored research (and perhaps a committee of active grant holders to assess/advise decisions).