

Academic Senate Annual Report: AY 2020-2021

- Helped to develop and recommend COVID-19 pandemic protocols regarding faculty work during the pandemic:
 - Motion 20/21-2: To recommend that university leaders, including chairs and deans, adjust expectations for faculty service during the COVID-19 pandemic. Failure to limit overall service expectations during this time could have long-term career impacts, particularly for junior faculty, and could result in inequity along gender, race, and socio-economic categories. A slowdown of service must be universally acknowledged and regularly affirmed from all levels of leadership. (9/14/20)
 - Motion 20/21-3: To recommend that university leadership (including chairs, deans, and Academic Senate members) actively support work-life balance at all times, and especially in response to the extenuating circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic. In alignment with the TU Mission and Strategic Plan (section IV) to “Promote appreciation for and advancement of equity, diversity and inclusion at TU,” the Academic Senate encourages flexibility and understanding for any health or family care issue. (9/14/20)
 - UPTRM Committee worked tirelessly—often in conjunction with Senate leadership—to produce temporary PTRM policies that accounted for exigencies of the pandemic.
- Motion 20/21-4: To create a Spanish-language aspect of the TU website.
- Motion 20/21-8: Resolution: Whereas Tuesday, November 3, 2020 is both Election Day and a scheduled class day for the Fall 2020 academic calendar; and, whereas Towson University classes are almost completely online this semester; now, therefore be it Resolved, that instructors and students are encouraged to support members of the university community (students, staff, and faculty) in general as they perform their civic duty through voting or working as election judges and specifically by taking one or more of the following actions as is reasonable for their course(s):
 - Being flexible with students regarding due dates on November 3, 2020;
 - Avoiding major assignments, exams, presentations, etc. on November 3, 2020;
 - Orienting part or all of the class material, discussion, and/or activities on November 3, 2020, toward topics related to voting and democracy.
 - Taking time during class on November 3, 2020, to frame a commitment to honesty, political engagement, and equity informed by: a serious engagement

with classes in pursuit of the education and knowledge that are so important to being responsible citizens; a rigorous exploration of the human values that are key to a successful democracy, by means of critical thinking and close examination of norms, laws, products and practices of our society; and/or an informed class discussion of or reflection upon ideas of community, integrity, and social responsibility. (10/12/20)

- Reviewed and Approved the Front Matter of the revised ART Document (Fall 2020)
- Facilitated and Approved the creation of the Graduate Curriculum Committee.
- Motion 20/21-17: To recommend the inclusion of diacritical marks in all professional communication at TU, including email addresses and PeopleSoft. Allowing the use of diacritical marks demonstrates commitment towards inclusion and diversity on campus. It is a small change that can have a big impact on how students, staff, and faculty feel welcomed at TU, and a sign of respect for culture and language. (11/2/20)
- Collaborated with Human Resources (particular thanks go to Jen Stano!) to create and implement the first iteration of the Leadership Survey, in which all faculty had the opportunity to provide feedback to major TU administrators: President, Executive Vice President and Provost, Vice President for Student Affairs, Vice President of OIIE, the CFO of TU, Vice President for Advancement, and the Associate Vice President of Human Resources. That data will be presented in a report to the Academic Senate and distributed to faculty. Surveys of upper leadership will alternate with surveys of Deans and other Academic Affairs administrators; the first of those surveys will be this year, in AY 2021-2022.
- Facilitated a discussion of challenges and benefits of non-pandemic online learning (12/7/20).
- Endorsed the new TU Strategic Plan (2/1/21).
- Endorsed the creation of a permanent Fair Chance Initiative to be housed in the Office of the Provost (2/1/21).
- Endorsed and signed on to the statement in support of shared governance and tenure protection at Kansas University (2/1/21).
- Motion 20/21-31: Resolution:
The Academic Senate condemns the recent violence against members of the Asian-American community in the United States (or anywhere) and urges faculty and all members of the TU community to practice sensitivity toward each other during these challenging times. As **educators**, we have a unique opportunity to foster encounters with difference and empathy toward our fellow humans with and for our students, who might then help to spread those ideas of equality and humanity as they move through the world. For these reasons, we recommit to our resolution of June 2020: "Recognizing the growing inequality in our nation and TU community—exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic—

we actively commit to anti-racist pedagogy, which includes but is not limited to: presenting issues of diversity in our curriculum; teaching the kinds of critical thinking that prompts us to examine carefully and at all times our actions and words and those of others; and both practicing and communicating the values of equity and inclusion in our classrooms. We stand ready to work along-side and support all TU students, staff, and faculty." (4/5/21)

- Adopted the FACET Advisory Board as a regular Academic Senate Committee (4/5/21).
- Motion 20/21-29: To recommend that Towson University object to the Maryland state requirement that furniture must be purchased from the prison system until such time as this mode of prison employment entails equitable compensation for labor. We respect the intent of prison programs that provide prisoners with a trade, with the satisfaction of working for compensation, and with job experience that may be useful in gaining employment upon release from prison. However, the impacts of the low rate of compensation and the inability of imprisoned laborers to organize for better working conditions or wages, combined with the proven racial inequities of imprisonment in the U.S., stand in contradiction to the democratic values of a state institution of higher learning. (4/5/21)
- Reviewed and Provided Feedback on and Critique of the TU Parking Study and Policies.
- Motion 20/21-37: To recommend that TU revise its parking plan to divert significant attention and resources to sustainable transportation initiatives, such as biking and walking for commuting to and around campus. This would bring the campus into alignment with the TU Strategic Plan, with its status as a signatory of the President's Climate commitment, and with initiatives already recommended by the ACUPCC Committee. (6/7/21)
- Reviewed and accepted the IITC Report and Recommendations on Red Shelf online textbook service. (6/7/21)
- Removed the Institutional Effectiveness (SIE) and Student Affairs Assessment (SSAA) subcommittees from the University Assessment Council (UAC) and from the list of Academic Senate committees, recommending they report directly to the Provost's Office. (3/1/21)
- Supported and Approved the Revision of the University Assessment Council membership and responsibilities, changing the committee's name to Academic Assessment Council (AAC). (5/ /21)
- Received and Approved the Faculty Handbook New Course Creation Syllabus Guidelines. We are encouraging and supporting the development of a document with all of the

“canned” or “official” syllabus language, so that faculty can draw utilize that regular and repeated language on their syllabi, if they so choose. (5/3/21)

- Received and Approved from the AAC (formerly UAC) the new assessment rubric, which will go into effect for AY 2021-2022. (5/3/21)
- Supported the revision of IITC responsibilities, strengthening the role of the committee in light of reorganization of university technology committees. (5/3/21)
- Accepted and approved the FACET plan for online course and program proposals (5/3/21).
- Academic Senate representatives serve on major regular committees and search committees: Naming Committee, FACET Advisory Board, search committees for the Associate Provost for Research and Graduate Studies, VP of OIIE, University Budget Committee, COVID Return Taskforces and Committees, Salary Study Taskforce, Middle States Accreditation Working Groups, Strategic Diversity Taskforce, and the Teaching Evaluation Taskforce.
- Maintained and developed the websites of the TU Academic Senate and all Academic Senate Committee websites.
- Supported and Reviewed the work of all Academic Senate committees: .
 - Academic Assessment Council
 - Academic Standards Committee
 - Faculty Development and Research Committee
 - Faculty Grievance and Mediation Committee
 - Faculty Hearing Committee
 - Faculty Salary Review Committee
 - Graduate Studies Committee
 - Information and Instructional Technology Committee
 - Intercollegiate Athletics Committee
 - Library Advisory Committee
 - Resource Planning and Advisory Committee (RPAC)
 - Retrenchment Committee and Retrenchment Appeals Committee
 - Student Appeals Committee
 - Teacher Education Executive Board (TEEB)
 - University Curriculum Committee
 - University Promotion, Tenure/Reappointment and Merit Committee (UPTRM)