Faculty Advisory Council
WEST TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

WTAMU Faculty Advisory Council Meeting Minutes
September 25, 2026

Attended: Dr. Benton Allen, Dr. Amy Andersen, Dr. Emilie Baker, Dr. Brandon Bang, Dr. Ray Barbosa, Dr. Ryan Brooks, Dr. Li Chen, Dr. Alee Friemel, Dr. Bridget Guerrero, Dr. Audrey Meador, Dr. Rex Pjesky, Dr. Leslie Dr. Ramos-Salazar, Dr. Brandli Stitzel

Absent: Dr. Landon Brown, Dr. Li Chen

Non-member present: Dr. Greg Dietrich, College of Nursing and Health Sciences

The WTAMU Faculty Advisory Council (FAC) meeting started at 12:15 p.m. in OM 317.

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1. Opening remarks

Dr. Bang made introductions.

- Dr. Andersen's remarks

Dr. Andersen is serving in place of Dr. Terry and expressed thanks to FAC members for their service.

- Executive committee updates

Introduction of new FAC members: Dr. Pjesky, Dr. Ramos-Salazar

Dr. Bang provided a roster of FAC members and asked for corrections. Dr. Bang pointed to the membership rules on the back of the roster sheet.

Dr. Bang reminded the FAC members of the new 90-minute format.

Minutes from the last meeting were reviewed. Dr. Guerrero moved to approve, and Dr. Ramos-Salazar seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Bang provided the University Committee's recommendations to the Office of Academic Affairs and stated that all were approved. Dr. Bang provided an example of a letter that was sent to all University committee electors for record-keeping. Dr. Bang drew attention to the website that contains the names of all people on all University committees.

Discussion then turned to the election of an individual to the Traffic Appeals committee. Each college then nominated individuals to serve as the alternate on this committee. Sarah Beckham-Turner was elected to serve, and her name would be forwarded to the OAA/OP for approval.

Dr. Bang provided information regarding the selection of this year's Ombudsman. Dr. Bang shared that he spoke with Dr. Terry about the process and that changes such as term limits are being proposed for the handbook. Dr. Bang provided historical data from the current and prior Ombudsmen on use, and FAC members were encouraged to promote this service to their colleagues.

Dr. Ty Lawrence was announced as the Magister Optimus. Celebrations will be made at a later date.

Dr. Bang has been attending student senate meetings. Dr. Bang shared that prior Faculty Senates had a faculty committee that attended these meetings and asked whether the FAC would like to restart this committee or prefer that Dr. Bang serve in this role. Dr. Guerrero previously served on this committee and provided information about its work. The meetings are open to anyone. The FAC did not have any further comments. Dr. Bang would continue attending the meetings on behalf of the FAC.

Dr. Bang shared that the Faculty Insight Portal received a request about the due dates for final grades. Dr. Bang shared advice from Dr. Terry. He submitted a document to the Dean's Council and provided this to the FAC. However, this was not received favorably. Dr. Andersen shared that the calendar was an issue for the registrar on this matter.

2. President's Search Committee update

Dr. Meador stated that the search is confidential and that little may be shared. However, the process is going well and applications for the position are being received.

3. New Business

- The Executive Committee selection process

The future Executive Committee selection process was discussed. Dr. Bang provided options such as electing at the first meeting or having the VP move up. Dr. Bang provided that there were no clear guidelines for this in the current bylaws. Dr. Bang offered that the challenge with the bylaws would be the two-year term limits and the rolling up of the vice president. If the FAC decided on one way, rules would need to be rewritten.

The discussion turned to the roster and that most members' terms end in 2027, with the exception of the new members. The rules do state that the terms should be staggered, but there is currently no process in place to do so. The discussion turned to having more faculty voices involved in the decision. Dr. Bang provided historical perspective since he was the former Faculty Senate

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president who was moved into the role when the VP retired. The FAC were asked for their thoughts, and a Qualtrics survey was viewed favorably. The two options were proposed as being part of the survey, and Dr. Bang stated he would send this out. Dr. Bang reminded everyone that Dr. Terry, as the interim president, has the ultimate say.

- The Ombuds Officer selection process

The discussion then turned to the Ombuds Officer selection process. Dr. Bang asked the FAC for their thoughts on improving the process for selecting the Ombuds officer position. Dr. Bang shared that this process would need to be proposed to the handbook committee and asked for suggestions about how to proceed with this selection process. What was seen favorably by the FAC was that Dr. Bang would draft the process as a member of the handbook committee and present it to the FAC for approval to move forward with the handbook committee.

The discussion then turned to why there has been a decline in the number of people who have visited with the Ombuds officer. The discussion then moved to faculty retention and how it factors in. It was also noted that many people are unaware that there is an Ombuds officer. Dr. Bang also encouraged FAC members to let their faculty know about this service. The discussion moved to possibly changing the name so more faculty know what they do. Dr. Bang stated he would also talk to Dr. Rausch and get his thoughts. It was also noted that this was not covered at the new faculty orientation and could be incorporated there. Dr. Andersen shared that the new faculty orientation is full and some things got lost in translation, so this can be mentioned at a monthly meeting with the new faculty.

- The Faculty Insight Portal

Dr. Bang pointed to the Dean's Council minutes and their view of the faculty insight portal. The discussion then turned to whether or not to continue offering the faculty insight portal. It was mentioned that faculty were unaware of the faculty insight portal, as were the Deans, and the surprise this created. The discussion provided that this is another opportunity for all faculty to have a voice. Dr. Andersen asked how faculty learned about this, and Dr. Bang said he emailed all faculty the link. Dr. Bang stated that he would work with Dr. Terry and Dr. Andersen to explain the portal's purpose. The discussion then moved to providing a disclaimer on the portal stating that, if this is an issue with their immediate supervisor, they should speak with them. Dr. Bang shared that this language is in the portal.

- List of items provided by Dr. Terry

Dr. Bang moved the discussion to address the list of items Dr. Terry charged the FAC with discussing and how to prioritize this list. The discussion turned to the THEC board not having met and to the possibility that some items would need to be addressed after this time period. Dr.

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Andersen shared information on limiting the number of hours in the core and the possibility of offering a 90-hour bachelor's degree.

The discussion then turned to the online textbook option. Dr. Andersen shared information about the benefits of the initiative but also mentioned that cost has been a challenge. The discussion moved to expansion into non-core-level courses. The expansion was discussed, and it was noted that all courses would need to provide this service if all students were asked to pay for the books. The discussion moved to the initiative working for some colleges but not others, and the need to know how best to proceed. The FAC members asked for a usage report from the publishers to help discussions. The discussion then moved to impact. Dr. Andersen shared that DFW rates have been reduced. The discussion moved to the user experience for faculty and issues with access.

To prioritize the remaining items on the list from Dr. Terry, the FAC requested a Qualtrics survey be sent to select priorities.

- Activities Center membership fee increase

The meeting moved to price increases for the use of the Activities Center, which almost doubled. The discussion mentioned negative comments on social media regarding this. It was suggested that faculty use of the Activities Center be free, especially if health is prioritized. Dr. Bang offered to reach out to the Activities Center for information on how the price increases were decided. Dr. Bang also proposed inviting them to the FAC meeting.

A motion was made by Dr. Meador to end the meeting. Dr. Brooks seconded. The meeting ended at 1:45 pm.

Link to the recording of the meeting:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BCN3e31wqqs

Respectfully,
Audrey Meador
10/27/2026

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