

TAMU Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

May 10, 2021

3:00pm

Via Zoom

<http://facultysenate.tamu.edu>

The full video recording of the meeting can be accessed on the Faculty Senate website:

<https://facultysenate.tamu.edu/Faculty-Senate-Meeting-Recordings>.

CALL TO ORDER

Speaker John N. Stallone called the twelfth meeting of the 38th Session to order at 3:00pm. Due to ongoing social distancing practices resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting was conducted via Zoom. Speaker Stallone reminded Senators of the Zoom features to be used during the meeting.

AWARD PRESENTATIONS

Aggie Spirit Awards – Due to some very generous donations from Senators, the Faculty Senate was able to offer awards to six students with each receiving a framed certificate and a \$350 monetary award. The nominators of each award recipient introduced their student with comments on why he or she was deserving of the award.

Dominique Brazel, Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences, nominated by Dr. Karen Cornell

Tiffany Daniels, School of Law, nominated by Neal Newman, J.D.

Sadyee Herndon, TAMU Galveston, nominated by Mr. Neil E. Golemo, M.S.Ed

Darryl John Mohr, Engineering, nominated by Dr. Eduardo Espina

Nathan Sabin, Medicine, nominated by Darlene McLaughlin, M.D.

Arielle M. Williams, School of Law, nominated by Michael Z. Green, J.D.

Dominique Brazel, Sadyee Herndon, Darryl John Mohr, and Nathan Sabin were present to accept their awards and each gave brief comments.

Walter Daugherty Faculty Senate Service Award – Secretary Alva Ferdinand introduced this award recipient by reading comments from his nominators. Speaker Stallone presented this award to: **Dr. Clint Magill**, College of Agriculture & Life Sciences. Senator Magill gave brief comments of thanks.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. Jocelyn Widmer, Assistant Provost for Academic Innovation, and **Dr. Juan Garza**, Assistant Vice President for Academic Services & Director of Provost Information Technology Office – **Attachment A – FS.38.580 (for information only)**

Dr. Widmer provided her monthly update on the progress of Canvas (LMS) via a video, with the meeting time devoted to questions only. There were no questions from Senators. Speaker Stallone thanked Dr. Widmer and Dr. Garza for their updates over the past year.

GUEST SPEAKER

There was no guest speaker at the May Faculty Senate meeting.

SPEAKER COMMENTS

Speaker Stallone began his comments by introducing next year's Faculty Senate leadership team:

- Speaker Dale Rice, College of Liberal Arts
- Speaker-Elect Patti Smith, College of Agriculture & Life Sciences
- Secretary Tracy Hammond, College of Engineering

He next welcomed the incoming Executive Committee members:

- Rebecca Burns, College of Nursing
- Janice Epstein, College of Science
- Shelley Holliday, College of Architecture
- Andrew Klein, College of Geosciences
- Rob Mackin, College of Liberal Arts
- Angie Hill Price, College of Engineering
- Jay Ramadoss, College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences
- Grace Townsend, Galveston
- Jim Woosley, College of Education & Human Development

Speaker Stallone provided an update on the work of the Senate Select Committee on Faculty Investigations, which he chaired. The committee was completing the first draft of guidelines to ensure that faculty rights are protected when accused of inappropriate or unprofessional behavior. This document will be submitted to the Dean of Faculties with the request that it become standard administrative procedure. He thanked the committee members who worked with dedication and commitment, especially Dr. Rogers whose legal training was invaluable in drafting a quality and technically correct document:

- Adam Kolasinski, Mays Business School
- Beth McNeill, College of Education & Human Development
- Rajesh Miranda, College of Medicine
- Dale Rice, College of Liberal Arts
- James Rogers, College of Liberal Arts

Speaker Stallone next reminded Senators to complete the following forms sent to them: the Request for Summer Inactive Status form and the Returning Senator Survey.

He closed his remarks with the sad news that Senator Tom Sullivan, University Libraries, passed away that morning. The Senate observed a moment of silence in Tom's honor.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The motion passed to approve the April 12, 2021 minutes as distributed. **Attachment B – Passed – FS.38.581**

CONSENT AGENDA

The motion passed to approve the May 10th, 2021 Consent Agenda as presented.

(The full **Consent Agenda** with FS #'s can be found under *Adjournment* below.)

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Core Curriculum Council Course Report – Attachment C – Passed – FS.38.597

The motion passed to approve the Core Curriculum Course Report as presented.

(The full **CCC Report** can be found under *Adjournment* below.)

STANDING COMMITTEES – SPRING 2020 REPORTS – Attachment D – For Informational Review – FS.38.598

The chairs of the following committees provided their final reports of the academic year:

Academic Affairs Committee – Senator Jay Ramadoss

Budget Information Committee – Senator Adam Kolasinski

Legislative Affairs Committee – Senator Angie Hill Price

Personnel & Welfare Committee – Senator Gregg Allen

Planning Committee – Senator David Earnest

Research Committee – Senator Tracy Hammond, on behalf of Senator Tom Sullivan

OTHER COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Recommendation of May 2021 Degree Candidates – Passed – FS.38.599

Secretary Alva Ferdinand made the motion to certify the May 2021 degree candidates.

TOTAL – 11,429

TAMU-Main – 9,455

TAMU-Galveston – 259

TAMU-HSC – 814

TAMU-Law – 226

The motion was approved.

**Motion to Conduct Faculty Senate Meetings via Zoom for Summer 2021 – *Attachment E – Passed*
– *FS.38.600***

Speaker-Elect Dale Rice moved to conduct the summer 2021 Faculty Senate meetings via Zoom. This motion passed with no discussion.

State of the Senate Address

Speaker John Stallone presented his State of the Senate address.

(The full copy of the address may be found below, following the Core Curriculum Council Report.)

Appreciation of Out-going Speaker

Speaker-Elect Dale Rice presented a resolution to out-going Speaker John Stallone.

(The full copy of the resolution may be found below, following the State of the Senate Address.)

Passing of the Gavel

Speaker Stallone virtually passed the gavel to incoming Speaker Rice, and assured the Senate that they will be in great hands; he then turned the meeting over to Speaker Rice for the final time.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Speaker Dale Rice turned the meeting over to new Speaker-Elect Patti Smith, who convened the Committee of the Whole.

Senator Clint Magill, College of Agriculture & Life Sciences, recognized Mike Stephenson, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs & Strategic Initiatives, who would soon be leaving his post at Texas A&M University. He thanked him and congratulated him on his new post. Senator Magill also raised the issue to the Executive Committee (EC) requesting links for university policies instead of everything being only on the syllabus.

Senator Angie Hill Price, College of Engineering, was concerned about the bookstore issues brought to the Senate's attention during the report from the Academic Affairs Committee, especially the bookstore recommending items that could encourage academic misconduct. She suggested that faculty should be able to opt-in rather than having to opt-out, and suggested the EC follow up on this issue.

Secretary Tracy Hammond, College of Engineering, asked the EC to consider posthumously awarding the Stadelmann Award to Senator Tom Sullivan, who was completing his first term on the Faculty Senate. This was seconded by Senator Mark Sicilio, College of Medicine.

Senator Beth McNeill, College of Education & Human Development, raised a concern about the Registrar being in control of designated classrooms for all of the university, and what classes would be offered when in what classroom. While she believed they do the best they can, they are not aware of the dynamics of the course and what needs to happen, and which classroom layouts would be

appropriate for the course. She proposed a more de-centralized system now that the restraints on classrooms caused by COVID have been removed.

Senator Larry Fickel, College of Architecture, who is on the Honor Council along with other senators, was dismayed to see Quizlet advertised with the Battalion. He had taken the issue to the Honor Council but had yet to find who is being paid for the advertising and wanted the Senate to be aware of this situation. Senator Raymundo Arroyave, College of Engineering, was unfamiliar with Quizlet and asked what it was. Senator Fickel explained that test answers and flash cards are made available on the site, with paying members getting access to more content than non-paying members. Senator Arroyave wondered if copyright would protect faculty tests. Senator Leslie Easterwood, College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences, shared that this advertising has been a problem for her college in the past, and they had been unable to resolve this issue. Senator Bruce Neville, University Libraries, shared that the University grants copyright to faculty for their course materials, but it is the faculty member's responsibility to go to court to get the offender to remove their material from the site. This is time and financially prohibitive.

Senator Grace Townsend, TAMU Galveston, wondered if the suicide prevention training, Kognito, would be available to other campuses.

Senator Adam Kolasinski, Mays Business School, asked what will happen to the constitutional revisions tabled at the previous meeting. Speaker Dale Rice responded that items tabled require an active motion to remove them from the table, and without that, the items will die with the end of this (38th) Senate session. The Bylaws Committee will need to bring them back as new items in the next session. He added that a group is currently working on developing a definition of faculty, which will be an important component in the constitutional revisions.

Senator Catharina Laporte, College of Liberal Arts, echoed Senator Magill's earlier farewell to Mike Stephenson, with many thanks. She also wanted to recognize Senator Bruce Neville, University Libraries, who is retiring, and thank him for his service on the EC.

Senator Asha Rao, College of Science, also thanked Mike Stephenson, especially for his efforts on behalf of first-generation college students. Senator Laporte then reconized Mike Stephenson so that he might comment. He said that he had rarely missed a Senate meeting since 2009, that he would miss everyone, and thanked all for their support.

Speaker-Elect Smith returned the meeting to Speaker Rice.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50pm.

APPROVED CONSENT AGENDA for May 10, 2021

GRADUATE COUNCIL

New Courses – *Passed* – FS.38.582

[EDAD 665: Helping Skills for Student Affairs Professionals](#)

[HLTH 606: Research Development and Multivariate Statistics for Health Education](#)
[HLTH 652: Social Network Analysis](#)
[INTA 711: Briefing Tradecraft](#)
[INTA 720: Human Trafficking and Forced Migration](#)
[INTA 721: History, Strategy, and American Statecraft](#)

Change in Courses – *Passed* – FS.38.583

[ATTR 651: Clinical Education I](#)
[ATTR 654: Clinical Education IV](#)
[ATTR 660: Foundations of Athletic Training Practice](#)
[ATTR 662: Clinical Examination and Diagnosis - Lower Extremity and Spine](#)
[ATTR 664: Clinical Examination and Diagnosis - Upper Extremity, Cervical Spine and Head](#)
[ATTR 666: Therapeutic Intervention II - Therapeutic Exercise](#)
[ATTR 668: Therapeutic Intervention I - Therapeutic Modalities](#)
[ATTR 673: Therapeutic Interventions III - Manual Therapy](#)
[EPSY 606: Motivation and Emotion for Optimal Learning and Performance](#)
[EPSY 630: Single-Case Experimental Design](#)
[EPSY 643: Applied Multivariate Methods](#)
[EPSY 685: Directed Studies](#)
[HPCH 684: Practicum](#)
[PHEB 684: Practicum](#)
[PHEO 684: Practicum](#)
[PHPM 684: Practicum](#)

Change in Programs – *Passed* – FS.38.584

School of Public Health

Department of Health Policy & Management
[CERT-CG25: Health Systems Management - Certificate](#)

Change in Programs – Inactivation Proposal – *Passed* – FS.38.585

College of Education & Human Development

Department of Educational Psychology
[CERT-PVSC: Prevention Science - Certificate](#)

Change in Courses – Inactivation Proposal – *Passed* – FS.38.586

College of Geosciences

Department of Geology & Geophysics
[BA/MOS-GEOL/OCST-GOC: Geology - 5-Year Bachelor of Arts/Master of Ocean Science and Technology](#)

Special Consideration Item – *Passed* – FS.38.587

College of Education & Human Development

Department of Educational Psychology
[CERT-IGTC: Individual, Group, and Team Coaching in Specialty Area - Certificate](#)

UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

New Courses – *Passed* – FS.38.588

[CSCE 448: Computational Photography](#)

New Courses – Galveston – *Passed* – FS.38.589

[MARA 360: Maritime Cybersecurity Issues](#)

Change in Courses – *Passed* – FS.38.590

[FINC 371: Real Estate Decision-Making](#)
[FINC 475: Real Estate Investment Analysis](#)
[GENE 302: Principles of Genetics](#)

[GEOL 451: Introduction to Geochemistry](#)

Change in Courses – Inactivation Proposal – *Passed – FS.38.591*

College of Geosciences

Department of Geology & Geophysics

[GEOL 300: Field Geology](#)

[GEOL 302: Introduction to Petrology](#)

[GEOL 305: Paleobiology](#)

[GEOL 307: Dinosaur World](#)

[GEOL 309: Introduction to Geological Field Methods](#)

[GEOL 311: Principles of Geological Writing](#)

Change in Programs – *Passed – FS.38.592*

College of Agriculture & Life Sciences

Department of Biochemistry & Biophysics

[BS-BICH: Biochemistry - BS](#)

Change in Programs – *Passed – FS.38.593*

Mays Business School

Department of Business

[BS-USBU-BUS*: University Studies - BS, Business Concentration](#)

W&C COURSES

Courses Submitted for C Certification – *Passed – FS.38.594*

[AERO 401-C: Aerospace Vehicle Design I](#)

Courses Submitted for W Certification – *Passed – FS.38.595*

[AERO 307-W: Aerospace Engineering Laboratory](#)

Courses Submitted for W Re-Certification – *Passed – FS.38.596*

[AGEC 429-W: Agricultural Policy](#)

[ESSM 481-W: Senior Seminar](#)

End of Consent Agenda

CORE CURRICULUM COUNCIL COURSE REPORT – *Attachment C – Passed – FS.38.597*

Recertification for Foundational Component Area: American History

[HIST 226-GE: History of Texas](#)

Recertification for Foundational Component Area: Communication

[ENGL 210-GE: Technical and Professional Writing](#)

Recertification for Foundational Component Area: Creative Arts

[ARCH 249-GE: Survey of World Architecture History I](#)

[COMM 257-GE: Communication, Religion and the Arts](#)

Recertification for Foundational Component Area: Language, Philosophy & Culture

[ENGL 227-GE: American Literature: The Beginnings to Civil War](#)

[ENGL 333-GE: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Literatures](#)

[ENGL 360-GE: Literature for Children](#)

[HIST 242-GE: United States Maritime History](#)

STATE OF THE SENATE ADDRESS - 2021

HOWDY!!

I. INTRODUCTION

As I reflect back on the last year, leading the Faculty Senate for a second term, in this, its 38th year, has truly been another of the highest honors of my academic career. As I have said several times over this year, I never envisioned that my second term as Speaker of the Faculty Senate would develop as it did enveloped in a global pandemic, that of the COVID virus. Despite the many stresses and strains associated with helping the university deal with this pandemic, it indeed has been a high honor for me, one that has enriched me in many ways, and I hope that in return, I have contributed in some meaningful ways to our faculty and to the process of shared governance of our beloved university. Make no mistake, serving as Speaker requires a lot of time, hard work, and personal sacrifice even in normal times, and at times I have been reminded of the fellow who was observed repeatedly hitting himself in the head with a hammer when asked why he was doing this, his answer was, of course, because it feels so good when I stop! Seriously, as my term has wound down over the last few weeks, my friends and colleagues have asked the obvious question. was it worth serving as Speaker for a second term? My answer has been a clear YES, but in all honesty, it was much more challenging, and in different ways, than I ever envisioned when I accepted the nomination and was elected, largely thanks to the effects of the COVID pandemic.

It is traditional for outgoing Speakers to provide an overview of the accomplishments and activities of the Senate during their term, and I shall follow in that tradition. Speakers also typically reflect back over the year and highlight the major issues and problems facing the faculty and the university. While I will provide some historical perspective to the current State of the Senate, I think it is probably most important at the end of this, the 38th year of the Faculty Senate, to look forward and ask the question where are we headed?

II. ACCOMPLISHMENTS of the 38th SENATE

The 38th session of the Faculty Senate was largely preoccupied in dealing with the COVID pandemic, nevertheless, it included several noteworthy accomplishments, including:

- 1) Approval of New Minimum Syllabus Requirements**, an important part of undergraduate as well as graduate coursework, and a major right and responsibility of the faculty.

- 2) Revision of the rules regarding hiring and retention of the Provost**, which empowers the faculty with a greater voice in these processes. These revisions are still in the process of review by the president, but Speaker Rice and I will see oversee completion of this process in the coming months.

- 3) Developed A Set of Standards for Investigation of Faculty Accused of Wrongdoing**. These standards will ensure that the rights of the faculty are protected and provide for fair and just investigation, hearing, and appeal processes. The Senate Select Committee has nearly completed its work in drafting these standards, and we will then work with the administration to create an acceptable Standard Administrative Procedure based on these standards.

- 4) Organized and Hosted Monthly Q&A Forums with President Young and Provost Fierke, and subsequently with Interim President Junkins and Interim Provost Weichold**. These forums provided

TAMU faculty with an effective, direct means to have concerns and questions regarding management of COVID and other issues affecting faculty directly answered by the administration.

5) Completed a Successful Joint Meeting of our Faculty Senate with the Univ. of Texas Faculty Council. The exchange of current issues faced by both institutions and ideas on their respective solutions, continues to play a valuable role in protecting TAMU faculty interests, and this was successfully completed this year thanks to the work of Speaker-Elect Dale Rice.

6) Outreach to the TAMU Board of Regents and Chancellor to maintain meaningful and effective communications between the faculty and the BOR and Chancellor, and maintain a constructive working relationship. This primarily involved one-on-one efforts on my part, but senior EC members also met informally with the Chancellor and/or BOR members whenever possible.

7) FINALLY, Representation of Faculty Interests by my service on the Presidential Search Committee. By incredible coincidence, some of you may recall that I also served on the last presidential search committee during and after my first term as Speaker, leading the Chancellor to experience a case of “Deja Vu” at the first meeting of the search committee!

In addition to these major accomplishments, there were a number of other issues relevant to faculty interests, which were followed by the senate this year.

III. A BRIEF HISTORICAL LOOK BACKWARDS

Discussions on the Faculty List-Serves over the last few years have frequently complained about the threats to faculty rights and welfare from heavy-handed micromanagement of the university by the Board of Regents, the Governor, and undue influence from external political action groups. But in reality, these concerns are nothing new to TAMU. **Let’s rewind to October, 1876** and the words of the newly founded Agricultural and Mechanical College President, Thomas S. Gathright. On opening day, he said: “To the full success of the college, I can promise the best efforts of my colleagues in the faculty, as I pledge my own. . . . this great work, in which all the people of this good state are interested, must go on and must succeed.” Upon its opening, Texas AMC had 6 faculty and 106 students enrolled. Three years later in 1879, President Gathright and the 6 faculty were fired, likely the result of strong protests from farmers that (despite its name) Texas AMC offered no classes in agriculture. Over the next few years, the enrollment dwindled from 500 to 80 students in 1883, likely the result of the new faculty and the newly mandated curriculum in agriculture and engineering. Does any of this sound familiar to you??

Now, let’s fast forward 100 years to more recent times. . . . the words of Senate Speakers Jaan Laane in 1986 and Patricia Alexander in 1992, both decried the destructive effects that budget cuts could have on the progress made at TAMU over the past decades of work by the faculty. **And finally, my own words spoken to the faculty in recent years:**

“While our quest to achieve the goals of Vision 2020, and now Vision 2030, has been a positive and exciting time for our university, the last few years have also brought difficult challenges to Texas A&M, based in part on the serious economic problems facing our state and nation, but also based on a growing movement to “reform” higher education and the university as we know it. Combined with the medical and social impacts of the COVID pandemic, it has become a time of great change, some positive, some negative, and we the faculty **MUST** play a critical role in managing those changes. The academic well-being of the university is the responsibility of its faculty and we all must acknowledge and contribute to that responsibility if we want our beloved institution to grow and prosper.”

Again, I ask, does any of this sound familiar to you??

IV. NOW LETS LOOK FORWARD -- WHERE ARE WE HEADED?

There are a number of pivotal issues facing the Faculty Senate and the Faculty in general, which **MUST** be addressed if we are to maintain, let alone further develop, TAMU as one of the pre-eminent public universities of our nation and the world. These include the following:

1) Challenges to Higher Education: The growing movement to “reform” higher education and the university as we know it, must be challenged. The notions that our students do not benefit from higher education, that faculty are over-paid and underworked, and that research and teaching are incompatible must all be refuted. But it can’t be done by our administrators alone; the senate and faculty in general **MUST** engage in this debate and bring the truth to the public, which leads us to issue #2.

2) Changes to Tenure and Post-Tenure Review: In recent years, the institution of tenure and the process of post-tenure review has undergone repeated attacks on the national level with an overall trend of reducing tenured faculty and making post-tenure review a more severe process. TAMU has not been exempt from this trend. A large part of this movement reflects a general lack of understanding by state legislatures, Boards of Regents, and even the general public on how higher education works, the integral relationship between teaching and research and their contributions to society. The progressively dwindling support for public universities clearly reflects this lack of understanding. However, university faculties must accept part of the blame for these problems, for their failure to effectively reach out to the public that supports us. How many of our neighbors, friends, and families **REALLY** know what our jobs as faculty at a Tier 1 University entail? It is vital that we as faculty help to educate the public about how higher education works and its successes. Indeed, it has often been said that Texas A&M University and its research enterprise is a well-kept secret on the national level. Fixing this problem will require a joint effort by the administration, perhaps through targeted advertising campaigns, and by the faculty at a more grassroots level to educate and inform the public about how our successes in teaching and research have positively impacted the quality of life in Texas, the United States, and indeed, the world.

3) Issues of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at TAMU: The recent protests and outcries for the removal of the statue of Lawrence Sullivan Ross from the A&M campus reflect a much larger and longer-standing problem our university. that of how to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion. The recent report of the President’s task force points to significant efforts to improve this situation; for example, increasing the number of scholarships for minority students. However, the substance of this report provides little new insight into how to solve these problems. Indeed, two leading African-American Aggies I spoke with said that the report largely parrots the words of previous reports and studies. When black freshman students were recently asked why they did not choose to attend A&M and the answer is still that it is because they do not feel welcome, or were treated badly when visiting our campus, we know there is a systemic cultural problem that we must strive to correct. I do not pretend to have the answers, but I strongly encourage the senate to play a central role in helping to solve this problem. We can start by engendering a greater sense of wokeness among TAMU faculty colleagues, students, and staff. Being more aware of and admitting that a problem exists is central to developing a successful solution. And the sanitizing effects of the light of day cannot be overstated. Again, the words of local black Aggie leaders offer that success is only possible by holding our University leaders accountable if their proposed solutions fail to solve or at least improve the problems. So, I encourage the senate play a central role in developing solutions and in critically reviewing them for success or failure. A Tier 1 university must do better. . . we have the resources and the brain power to succeed, we just need the will and the leadership of the Faculty Senate can play a central role in developing that will and making A&M a better campus for all.

4) Role of The Faculty Senate in Faculty Representation:

The Faculty Senate is the sole representative organization for ALL A&M faculty in matters of university-wide shared governance. Other more specialized organizations such as the CPI and the DPs represent specific focused interests on campus, but it is the senate alone that deals with academic affairs and issues that affect all faculty. And yet, there is an underlying cynicism among faculty, and indeed, even among some senate members, about the effectiveness of the Senate. After my many years on the Senate Exec Committee and serving twice as Speaker, I think that much of this cynicism stems from the ignorance of what the Senate leadership actually does. Speakers and ECs meet frequently with the president, provost, and other high-level administrators, and it is safe to say that many decisions made throughout the year include input from the faculty. Indeed, in dealing with COVID-related issues this year, the senate leadership met many times more than the usual monthly meeting with the Provost, and the EC held many extra or even emergency meetings to deal with COVID issues affecting faculty and/or students. I also believe that engagement of some senate members must improve. When amendments to our constitution and by-laws cannot be voted on because of poor senate attendance (only 80some/120 members in attendance), we know we must do better. To cure this cynicism, three things must happen. Senators must improve their level of engagement, the Senate must communicate more effectively with the faculty, and the faculty at large MUST engage and participate in the process of shared governance. If they are not willing to do that, then they forfeit their right to participation in the decision-making process.

V. THE STATE OF THE SENATE

Finally, let's get to the heart of the matter, WHAT IS the state of the senate? At my first state of the senate address in 2013, I used the title of a song by singer-songwriter, Dwight Yoakum, to answer that question and that answer was, "Fair to Midlin". Meaning that, reflecting back over the last 30 years, the Senate had endured many trials and tribulations and had actually been fairly successful in representing the interests of the faculty in the process of university governance, but still had a ways to go. This year, I am tempted to use the words of a Grateful Dead song, "What a long, strange trip it's been", to summarize this year's experience. I don't think I need to explain that view. In my opinion, we have been blessed in recent years with Presidents and Provosts who strongly supported the process of shared governance, not only in words, but in actions. I want to personally thank President Michael Young and Provost Carol Fierke, and interim President John Junkins and interim Provost Mark Weichold for their strong support of shared governance. While the practice of shared governance at TAMU is not perfect, one thing IS for certain, our university would NOT be where it is today without the efforts of the Faculty Senate to promote the practice of shared governance and protect and defend faculty interests.

VI. CLOSE

Finally, I'd like to close by thanking all the people who have contributed in a positive way, to my second term as Speaker. First, the Senate Officers, Speaker-Elect Dale Rice and Secretary Alva Ferdinand, the members of my EC (Deb Banerjee, Rebecca Burns, Andrew Klein, Catharina LaPorte, Bruce Neville, Angie Hill-Price, Heather Ramsey, Patti Smith, Grace Townsend, and Jim Woosley), who provided invaluable discussion, insights, and guidance for my decisions, our Senate Assistant (Betsy Peterson), who was invaluable in running the senate office and keeping me on track (no easy feat!), and finally, and need I say, most important, my dear wife Tanya, who endured many hours of listening to my concerns, complaints, rants, and supported me when I needed it most this year. Indeed, she kept telling me that I was the person for this job in the year of COVID, and I sincerely hope that was true. I wish all of you the very best as we end this rather unusual year and transition into a new academic year. As a biomedical scientist, I urge all of you to get vaccinated, and continue to practice COVID-safe hygiene, until we can put this damned pandemic behind us.

Again, thank you all, and God bless!

2021 STALLONE RESOLUTION

Whereas Dr. John Stallone is successfully completing his second term as speaker of the Texas A&M University Faculty Senate, and

Whereas both terms resulted in the Regents appointing a new president (we will not speculate on cause and effect), and

Whereas Speaker Stallone was able to help guide the Texas A&M faculty through one of the toughest academic years in history, and

Whereas there were days we are certain Speaker Stallone would rather have been holding the reins of his horse, Patrona, than those of the Faculty Senate, and

Whereas, despite some difficult moments, Speaker Stallone never put his own interests above those of the Faculty Senate and the university community at large, and

Whereas Speaker Stallone has been a strong supporter of efforts to improve the campus climate for all groups, and

Whereas, Speaker Stallone has worked hard to maintain open channels of communication with student leaders, and

Whereas Speaker Stallone has consistently promoted the best interests of faculty and students of Texas A&M University to our Chancellor, President, Provost, Board of Regents, and others, and

Whereas Speaker Stallone has devoted countless hours to selfless service in his years in the Faculty Senate, and

Whereas we are grateful that Speaker Stallone will not be mounting his horse and riding into the sunset, but will instead continue to work on behalf of faculty,

Now, therefore be it resolved that the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate of Texas A&M University expresses its appreciation to Speaker Stallone for his service and leadership and wishes him well in all future endeavors.