

**UNT Staff Senate General Meeting  
December 10, 2024, Minutes  
Union 332 (Senate Chamber)**

**I. Call to Order II.**

**Roll Call**

**III. VOTE to Approve Previous Meeting's Minutes (11/12/24)**

**IV. Guest Speakers**

a. Dr. Mike McPherson, Provost

i. Strategic Planning Initiative

1 Staff will be intimately involved

ii. Big Rocks- big initiatives to make the university work better (3)

1 Research

a We want to up our game. We are doing great, addition of TUF fund last year. We get 16-18 million a year from TUF. 2 levels of TUF, if we can maintain a certain amount of research expenditures for 2 yrs in a row we will qualify for a higher level (more \$). We will hit our first year mark at the end of this year. We want to get that second year as well. Focus on research initiatives important to state of Texas- cancer research, semiconductors, etc. Dr. Padilla will be working with staff and faculty on how we can accomplish this.

2 Strategic Budgeting Initiative

a Old budget process was historical/incremental. With strategic budgeting want departments/colleges to think about future and the strategic investments we need to make now. If things aren't going great, will pull the plug on those things. Budget model will be brought out in early 2025. Will be used in the next budget cycle.

3 Student Success

a We could do better here. ¼ of freshman incoming class projected to wash out. This is unacceptable. We haven't been super great at coordinating efforts where things are going good. Will see what this coordination process looks like as it continues to unfold. President is aware staff and resources will need to be added for all 3 of these Big Rocks.

4 Other Things We Are Watching

a Legislative sessions in Austin

b Leadership searches happening in Provost Dept.

i Interim Dean in College of Education- Dean search is happening

ii Interim Leader in International Affairs- Search is happening

iii UNT Libraries- Search in the spring

iv Like Staff on hiring committees

1 Interested staff can email/message Dr. McPherson to be on committee.

b. James Garrison, Chief Information Officer

i. IT Key Initiatives

- 1 DR testing last weekend; Data Banks in Plano & Arlington. Lack of availability on IT services last snow storm, proximity to each other etc.. A lot of these moves have been a long time coming with that catastrophic event. They simulated an outage and rolled to a different location. One system went into another, System IT & UNT campus worked on this over the weekend. Went very successfully! Took 13 hrs. We feel a lot better where we are now as opposed to before.
  - a Data bank will be our production environment moving forward. Feb 1 move in. Most users won't notice unless in IT area. ARC was first-disaster, roll over, fail over.
  - b Ryan COB will move into Data Bank Aug 21, 2025 as they have a large footprint. Will have an outage then as well.
- 2 Replacement of Mobile Application – big step forward from what we had. Students not able to transact activities on the current mobile app- can't pay bill, register for classes. Prioritized in 2025 for new mobile app, Modo Labs selected, very successful integration with Peoplesoft schools. UT, Texas Tech, ASU uses them. Phased roll out- Phase 1: July 15<sup>th</sup> – Lift & Shift- will replace what we have right now. Will be able to see calendar, bill etc. Will do a lot of promotion for this. Phase 2: Ability to register etc.
  - a Meant to be student facing
- 3 AI Portal- What is our AI Strategy for UNT? Means different things for different people. Varies on audience and what they need. 6hr planning session with Microsoft- talked about deploying an AI Portal that would create a foundation. Would expose LLM to the university, allows us to securitize the entire environment. This results in no comingling of data. Allows university to experiment and discuss ChatGPT experiences & beyond. FY 25', President & Chancellor have been given presentation last week. Once procurement hurdles are cleared, can establish in 10 weeks. Billing aspect on the tail end.
  - a Will have an AI Governance Group
  - b Suggestive applications for AI- anything on prompt engineering, AI Fundamentals Microcredential free to UNT faculty, staff, etc:  
<https://digitalstrategy.unt.edu/microcredentials/ai-fundamentals.html>
  - c This is not co-pilot, that is separate. This is referred to as an assistant. Always good to check/review the data that is being given to you.
  - d This is used as a foundation to build off of so University can decide what we want to spend our time on.
  - e How AI impacts jobs, will it make some obsolete?- staff question. CIO sees it as an assist, still need people to review, it isn't perfect etc. Has potential to make that staff so much more productive
- 4 New Graduate Application went live in July- Unicas- grad students no longer apply through Apply Texas. Various steps of the process. At tail end of

integration steps. One more integration point uploading transcript data and test points.

- c. Blair Wilson, Human Resources
  - i. First Coaching Session of New Performance Eval System
    - 1 Dec 1-31<sup>st</sup> training runs ; also recorded and posted online. Due Dec. 31
  - ii. Annual Acknowledgement program still going.
    - 1 Required of all employees- including students. Due Dec. 31
- d. Megan Wheeler, President's Office Liaison
  - i. 3 Big Rocks- Budget rock had the tightest timeline. Model has been delivered and that is being wrapped up in first phase of things. Research & Student Support Services will be on that same trajectory. All things are moving.
  - ii. Office hours of Clover- anxiety support dog- in the President's Office
    - 1 Jan 13<sup>th</sup> , would love to see staff come in to see Clover and introduce to president
  - iii. Football team plays in Dallas Jan 3<sup>rd</sup> in a bowl game against Texas State

## V. **Constituency Concerns**

- a. Call for New Constituency Concerns
  - i. Holiday Party – from Megan Wheeler- gifted sense of time this year. Usually only 20-25% of faculty & staff come to the event. Also, it is a tight budget year and this is a way to be fiscally responsible. Chancellor approved this and expanded to other UNT System campuses. Staff was very appreciative of knowing in advance.
  - ii. Idea-after so many years of service, get a discounting parting pass, some sort of recognition in terms of parking.
- b. Update on Last Meeting Concerns
  - i. Lighting on Highland Street –Highland street lighting- not lit bright enough. Working on this as well- some things to figure out with tree trimming. This is happening, just a matter of working through it.
  - ii. HSG Maintenance - Highland street garage upkeep- has been cleaned, taken care of right away.
  - iii. Dining Staff Meal Plans- issues with payroll deductions- with swipe plans, cant use immediately, not until the next pay cycle. Plans have to be paid in full prior to loading to be used. Considering moving to plans more similar to students. Can we do a 5 option that would roll over semester to semester-asked.

## VI. **Officer Reports**

- a. Chair Report- Brittany Landau
  - i. President Meeting with Exec Thursday
    - 1 Agenda: Semester in Review- concerns brought up and handled or not. Budget overview. Upcoming for the year. Discrepancies between faculty & staff funding.
    - 2 Cabinet meeting this morning- HR meeting next week- system-wide talking about compensation strategies. Looking at performance based pay etc.
- b. Chair-Elect Report- Alex Ames
  - i. n/a
- c. Secretary Report- Stephanie Myers

- i. n/a
- d. Treasurer Report- Jeffery Kam
  - i. When new budget sent out based on academic areas – colleges & schools. Support units are not on there yet
- e. Communications Report- Alexis Clingan
  - i. Website is fully up & online. Web forms are completed and implemented. Emails now going to staff senate email.
- f. Parliamentarian Report- John Bellon
  - i. By-laws voting on in February
- g. Assessment Coordinator Report- Jack Long
  - i. n/a

**VII. Standing Committee Chair Reports**

- a. Communications and Public Relations- Sarah Romack
  - i. Picture in sweaters today!
- b. Membership and Assessment- Christian Bridge
  - i. N/a
- c. Staff Success- Lucy Mwanzia and Cheyenne Moore
  - i. n/a

**VIII. University Committee Updates**

- a. Call for University Committee Updates
  - i. Deadline for next Fine Arts Series- deadline in Feb. Can submit via website.

**IX. Old Business**

- a. Fine Arts Committee- Open Seat- Rachel Rachel
- b. Postcard with Clark Bakery Plan- In the works for Jan
- c. New Employee Orientation updates – starting Jan will be 15 min presentation that doesn't conflict with Staff Senate meeting

**X. New Business**

- a. Basketball tailgate tbd- working through with athletics, preferring to not do it on a Wed evening.
- b. Rec Center- faculty/staff free week- can get this online. January F/S promotion, if join during month of Jan have a promo code for training with trainer or fitness classes.

**XI. Announcements**

**XII. Adjournment**