

Temple Faculty Senate

October 1, 2026

Called to order 1:46

1. President's Report (Mike Bognanno, Economics/College of Liberal Arts)

The Senate's main goals for this year are improved communication and increased faculty governance.

The record on the latter thus far is mixed: Some good progress have been made on faculty inclusion on the new University Budget Advisory Committee and on committees of the Board of Trustees, for instance; but we also have the announcement of the new majors on the Rome campus, the requirement for first-years to live on campus, and the move of Theater, Film and Media Arts to Boyer and Klein, decision made before consultation with the faculty.

We have also been working on reorganizing the Senate itself to improve communication and transparency. We have put a couple of inactive committees in abeyance so that members are clear on the status of these committees.

In a meeting between the officers and Provost Wentz, we indicated our desire for increased faculty governance and our concerns about the new majors at TU-Rome. We also asked her about her priorities; she identified student success as one of her chief goals, along with realizing other elements of Temple's strategic plan. She also shared with us that she has paused the General Education reforms so that she can review them adequately and add any recommendations she may have. The officers also asked about plans for any upcoming academic program review and the need to include faculty in any such process. We have agreed to meet regularly.

We have also met with the COO, Richard Soberaiy. We have communicated to him our concerns about the lack of transparency in budgeting in the past. His experience with managing academic health system should come in handy, especially as we face Medicaid cuts.

We were asked to nominate someone to serve on the Strategic Planning Committee that Dean Boardman is heading up. Kim Williams from Anthropology will be serving.

The Senate and the administration are co-sponsoring two Budget 101 sessions, one on 11/5 and another 11/7.

The officers of the Senate were called to a meeting on 9/11 with Provost Wentz, Deputy Provost Esten, Dean Boardman, and Dean Stroker. We were informed of the plan to propose moving the Department of Film and Media Arts from the Center of the Performative and Cinematic Arts to the Klein College of Media and Communication, with Theater becoming part of Boyer College of Music and Dance. At the start of the meeting, we were asked to keep this information confidential and we agreed. We voiced our concerns about faculty inclusion and about promotion and tenure standards among other issues.

2. Jason Gallagher (Pharmacy) reports on the Federal Impact Advisory Committee:

Prof. Gallagher highlighted two key issues:

- 1) The Trump administration has imposed new limits on federally subsidized loans for students and parents that will likely either force students toward more expensive private lenders and/or force them out of higher education. This includes yearly and lifetime caps on undergraduate, graduate, and professional schools.
- 2) Limits on international students' stay in the U.S. to 4 years: This has been suspended by a federal court injunction issued on 9/14. Temple projects a 4% decrease in international students this year; this is not as bad as other schools are experiencing.

Pres. Bognanno added that these changes in rules on loans will disadvantage low-income and part-time students, will constrain universities' ability to raise tuition. More expensive private schools and M.A. programs will also likely suffer.

3. Guest: Rich Sobieray, Chief Operating Officer

COO Sobieray told us how he made his way to Temple, including stints at Ohio State University's Medical Center, the University of South Florida (USF), first in the health center and then central administration; and finally at King Abdullah University. In those roles, he brought together physicians, bridged the gap between health centers and the med school and addressed structural deficits. He also built a more transparent and inclusive budgeting model that included faculty. He plans to replicate this approach at Temple; to that end, he just formed the Budget Advisory Committee, which includes 3 faculty out of the 12 members.

He also outlined our current fiscal challenges. We have a structural deficit, largely as a result of the amount we are taking in from tuition revenue and the Commonwealth

(PA). There are other sources (philanthropy, indirect cost recovery from grants), but there are often restrictions on them and they enter our ledger in staggered and unpredictable times.

One way he will be addressing these challenges is to form a council on administrative efficiency and effectiveness; faculty will be included.

He did decide to pause the IT centralization strategy; centralization for its own sake is not necessarily the way to go.

Pres. Bognanno noted that some units have been pushed toward efficiency more than others, such as CLA. Without the voluntary retirement program, he's not sure how we could have satisfied the cut demanded and is worried about what we will be asked to do for FY 28.

COO Sobieray: When we think about the cuts we have to make, we have to make sure it makes a dent in the structural deficit—we also have rising costs from inflation, merit raises, and other factors. We also aren't going to cut our way out of this. Efficiencies are not going to solve this. Revenue has to be grown. The coming announcement about enrollment is good, but retention is not good. And the amount we spend on financial aid is up. We need to engage faculty and deans on where we are going to go. What is a successful Temple student? That doesn't have to counteract our access mission—for instance, we need to keep developing relationships with community colleges.

Prof. Claudia Pine-Simon (Computer and Information Science/College of Science and Technology): What about outreach to local high schools?

COO Sobieray: That has to be part of the strategy; faculty and deans have to be part of that solution. USF gives us a model; downtown economic development can be crucial for a university—downtown Tampa was a pit 15 years ago. People asked: "Why are you doing all this real estate stuff in the midst of structural deficit?" But it's brought about additional revenue for the university. We need other sources than tuition.

Prof. Clifton Fordham (Architecture/Tyler School of Art): Is Temple debt financing itself? Are we going into a hole or are we lessening our cushion?

COO Sobieray: Our debt trajectory is downward. We have to be careful about best practices. We have about 300 days cash on hand. We are going to have use some of that money to cushion the transition.

Prof. Del Doktor (Music Theory/Boyer College of Music and Dance): How does the merit increase compare to the Rite Aid purchase? I think merit increase is a small part of the budget

COO Sobieray: It's actually not a small number; benefit costs are up very sharply.

Prof. Doktor: When we're acquiring a new building, I understand it's not from the operating budget, but what about the cost of upkeep?

COO Sobieray: We try to factor that in.

Prof. Doktor: Trust with the faculty has been broken by recent budget decisions.

COO Sobieray: I hope we can repair that trust.

Prof. Sue VonNessen (Nursing/Public Health): We see opportunities to partner with health system, but because CPH is considered a non-professional school there are barriers to co-operation.

COO Sobieray: I met with Pres. Fry to strategize on getting people from different sectors of Temple to work together and I'm being appointed to the Board of Trustees of the Health System to make that more likely.

Prof. Trish Jones (Communication and Social Influence/Klein College of Media and Communication): College Budget Review Committees have not been used effectively; they were not involved in budgeting process last Spring. I urge that Deans be directed to re-activate them.

COO Sobieray: I'll look into that.

Prof. Tulay Soylu, CPH: What are the top 3 short-term strategies to address our fiscal challenges?

COO Sobieray: 1) Student success, improving the enrollment side; 2) overall efficiency, esp. administrative efficiency, including salary and benefits and financial aid; 3) what are we doing for community and public safety; we have to look at ourselves in the mirror and ask how we can provide our students need.

4. Vice President's Report: Robin Kolodny (Political Science, College of Liberal Arts)

- Steve Newman (English/CLA) will co-chair the Educational Policies and Programs Committee along with Heather Servaty-Seib, the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education
- The administration has assigned Jaison Kurichi, Senior Associate Vice President for Budget and Planning to the Faculty Senate Budget Review Committee, to provide them necessary data. The Budget Review Committee will offer recommendations to the Budget Advisory Committee.

- The Committee on Faculty with Disabilities and the Committee on Administrative and Trustee Appointments has been made inactive
- We need faculty for the Invention and Patents Committee.

5. **New Business:**

The move of Film and Media Arts from the College of Performing and Cinematic Arts to Klein College of Media and Communication

Prof. Trish Jones: I am a past officer of the Senate and am very concerned that the administration is not honoring shared governance. I speak primarily not about the merit of the move, though we haven't been engaged in any conversation about the merits. But there has been no standard process. We learned on Tuesday about this from the Deans, just a couple of weeks before it was going to be proposed to the Board of Trustees. We need to do better on this. The Senate needs to have a conversation about how we provide information to the faculty. Confidentiality can't be used for co-optation.

Prof. Mohammad Kiani (Mechanical Engineering/College of Engineering) : I don't understand why they wanted to keep this information confidential.

Pres. Bognanno: We agreed to keep things confidential to show that we're trustworthy. This wasn't a request for our approval; it was a courtesy notification. Our concerns and objections about this process will be raised in our next meeting with the Provost.

Prof. Jason Norris (Theater, Division of Theater, Film and Media Arts/CPCA): We were not told to keep anything confidential .

Secretary Steve Newman: This process is a serious breach of shared governance. The officers were put in a difficult situation by the administration's demand for confidentiality. I apologize if I let you all, the people we represent, down and will endeavor to do better.

Prof. Jeff Doshna (Community and Regional Planning/Tyler and President of TAUP) TAUP raised concerns about this process also, and the administration replied, "We consulted with the Senate." We have to understand how the administration tries to pit us against each other.

Vice President Kolodny: We raised concerns about process, and this may not even be the worst instance of breaching shared governance. I think about how the Honors College was moved through the Board without a plan even though we raised concerns about that very issue.

Prof. Delaney DeMott (Fibers and Material Studies/Tyler School of Art): Which programs in Tyler are going to be moved to Center City?

Prof. Doshna: Graduate Landscape Architecture is one program I know of that's being moved.

Prof. Finbarr McCarthy (Beasley School of Law): Can other faculty unions join the regular meetings with the administration.

Prof. Doshna: The union of the law faculty can demand a meet and discuss.

Prof. Doktor: I want to inform those who do not know that the administration of the College of Public Health has proposed a 18% cut to salaries of faculty who had been on 12-month contracts. This is the canary in the coal mine as the administration works toward new policies on workload.