



DEPARTMENT OF  
INFORMATION SCIENCE  
College of Information

## Board of Advisors Online Meeting

Zoom link: <https://unt.zoom.us/j/82201274359>

Monday, October 17, 2022

***Present:** Dr. Jiangping Chen, James Spence, LaMoya Burks, HShin liang (Oliver) Chen, Tuan Nguyen, Manya Shorr, Melissa Rethlefsen, Morgan Gieringer, Jennifer Bekker, Mark Hopkins, Diane Bruxvooort. Lynne Simpson, Bridget Barry-Thias, Karthik Yerra, Edward Melton, Rohini Devabhktuni, Rhea Lawson, Donghui Wu, Athena Jackson.*

***Faculty/Staff present:** S. Miksa, B. Lund, A. Cleveland, S. Sharma, A. Roeshley, Y. Du, L. Enock, T. Kuon, O. Zavalina, S. Evans, D. Smith, G. Hossain, S. Ryan, T. Xiao, B. O'Connor, T. Hossain, J. Philbrick. H. Chen, X. Wang, C. Barnhart, J. Boland, M. Reeves, S. Lancaster, J. Pryce-Henry, P. Light*

Meeting began at 08:34

### 1. Welcoming Remarks

Dr. Kinshuk, Dean, College of Information, welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for the growth, support and development of the staff and Faculty of the Department. Please reach out to me if you have anything you want me to know or do as a result of your work here today.

### 2. State of the Department - Dr. Jiangping Chen presented the State of the Department

- We would like to recruit new members earlier and invite the board earlier than we did this year.
- We are the fastest growing Department at UNT.

#### Goals for the Year

- Research Excellence
- Sustain Teaching superiority
- Strengthen Program Management
- Increase visibility of the Department:
  - Increase Income and donations
  - Promote Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

#### Questions:

Q. Is the Department still doing Cohorts?

A. Yes, the Department has cohorts in New England, Dr. Agnes Pearcy, and we are planning to start one in California.

Q. It's good to see student enrollment going up. It's very impressive what you have done in IS. However, all of us are asked to do more with less these days and I can see you are no exception. Can you tell us what are the challenges and what you can and can't do with your current situation?

A. I have met with the Provost and listened to the President address these very issues. We have a salary problem for our staff that is being addressed in a three-year strategic plan to increase wages for our staff. As for our teaching faculty, we have to slow down our growth a little bit so that the quality of teaching does not suffer due to numbers.

Q. Have you expanded where you are recruiting for your new positions? Is UNT Marketing helping balance the shortage?

A. We are trying to reach out more. The staff do not have enough people to do all the conferences. We are trying to increase our diversity by attending things like the Black Caucus and advertise our positions there as well. It's not enough in my opinion, but we just don't have the staff for high recruitment efforts. If you have conferences and associations you are attending we would be glad to help you, help us, get the word out. We know it's not enough to put the paper out there, you need a face to go with it, someone who looks like the people you are trying to recruit.

- I would like to compliment and congratulate you on your growth. I also see that you are starting a new Master's in Health Informatics. I'm very excited by that and would like to help in any way needed- Donghui Wu
- We invite people, like you, to come to our classrooms. Our faculty are so busy teaching that they don't have time for outreach but we would be delighted to have you join a class.
- On Slide number eight, concerning the last two years of growth, I truly believe that you have seen fantastic growth and we can see the distribution of faculty by program and the faculty student ratio are healthy.
- The DS field is very busy. Getting internships is important so that your students are connected to industry and business. I would hire someone who is not as technical as someone with medical knowledge over someone without the knowledge because I can teach the technical side. We need practical learning for the outside world.
  - We teach DS skills, knowledge of the mainline of subjects so that they are able to apply for positions.
  - Learning to tell a story in Library Science and how to use it in an interviewing perspective.

3. **Faculty and Staff Introductions.** Each member identified themselves and gave a statement as to what they do.

4. **Breakout Groups.** Groups were broken out into four groups to discuss various topics as listed in the agenda and a working sheet.

5. **Reports from the Breakout Groups**

- **Breakout Group One: Data Science Programs**
  - Discussion was had on how the University is not providing the skillset needed for the practical world. They are receiving a lot of theory and research, but not necessarily the real world work responsibilities. We work with the public in the real world, homeless, drug dependence and various real people issues. We need people who want to work with people and have those skills. We need good customer service and some social work skills. We need people to work in the gray areas, not just the black and white of rules and regulations, the Public Library is not a black and white area. For example, when a patron is hitting the copier and losing their mind over it not working, they may need special attention and a calming force for the moment. Public Librarians need to be prepared for the world, not just the theory and skills of a librarian.
    - Great Comments, we want our students are all prepared to work.
- **Breakout Group Two: Recruiting Domestic Students and Doctoral Students**
  - We need people who can create a resume and cover letter. This should be built into the curriculum and not an added webinar or seminar they take as extra. There should be field trips to visit different types of libraries. People who are interested in archive and cultural heritage need to visit those places. We had questions about marketing to domestic students and why what is already being done can't be done for domestic students. We need more information out to conferences to promote the programs that you have. We appreciate the full-time online MS programs for full time working people to be able to brush up their skills, receive a certificate and present with updated information in their skill levels. You have great crossover education, UNT has an excellent relationship with Denton Public schools. We can use that relationship to recruit those students into the Librarian and IS programs.
- **Breakout Group Three: Industry and Profession Connections**
  - We noted how every specialty has changed in the last 10 years. Knowledge of the indigenous populations not takes an instructional video of approximately six minutes to deliver, there is not time to deliver longer information, it must be quick, resilient and adaptable. Full-time working people could benefit from Micro-certificates to help with professional development and training. The Strength of the program is to create cohorts where there are deserts of experts. We also, "think we know" what the public wants, but some data-analysis should be done to see what is really needed.

Dr. Chen – Understanding the actual profession is something we need to do. We can direct our students to collect some data.

- **Breakout Group Four: Knowledge and skills for graduates**
  - Discussion centered on Data Science. Preparation for interviews is important. Students are not prepared to handle scenarios and not focused on the details required for a variety of situations. Students also don't seem to know the "Why" of what they are doing. Why they are interested in the field/job. Students are encouraged to participate in competitions that submit them into real world businesses. They should also use their creative and critical thinking skills to showcase their intellectual skills beyond the textbook. They need a CV that is unique to them. One that communicates what the student is known for and what they have built. We need to do more connecting Alum with upcoming grads.
  
- Dr. Chen summarized that these are all wonderful ideas and she will use many of them to ask the Dean for support. Thank you all.

#### **6. New Business, Electing a chair**

Dr. Roosevelt Weeks was absent and asked Athena Jackson to stand in for him. Nominations were opened on the floor and Dr. Edward Melton was nominated by Manya Shorr. Dr. Edward Melton was elected unanimously as the next Chair of the Board of Advisors.

7. **Closing remarks:** Thank you for being new Chair, Dr. Edward Melton, we hope to have another meeting this academic year and will support the BOA with an in-person meeting in the future. Will ask for more advice and caring as part of the department. BOA members are encouraged to have discussion among yourselves or develop committees/groups. Thank you!

Meeting adjourned at 12:02