

## **UHD Faculty Senate Meeting**

**February 1, 2011**

### **Minutes**

**Present:** P. Lyons (President), A. Allen (President-Elect), J. Schmertz (Secretary)

R. Beebe, C. Bedard, R. Chiquillo, D. de la Pena, A. Eliassen, G. Evans, S. Farris, A. Gomez-Rivas, J. Jackson, K. Jegdic, J. Johnson, P. Kintzele, N. LaRose, M. Moosally, W. Morgan, O. Paskelian, A. Pavelich, R. Pepper, N. Rangel, L. Spears, F. Williams, K. Wright, V. Zafiris, Z. Zhou

**Absent:** R. Pepper

The January 18 minutes were passed unanimously.

Schmertz and Farris announced a Faculty Senate-sponsored happy hour to follow Vincent Tinto's Q&A on Friday, February 4.

### **Announcements from Faculty Senate President Phil Lyons**

Let Lyons know if you would like to be included in the mailing list for Grover Campbell on bills pertaining to higher ed that have been filed with the TX legislature.

Lyons reminded senators that Pavelich, chair of General Education committee, has sent an email containing the link to a brief Gen Ed survey

<http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/WEB22AK4VWGHJN>. Lyons urged senators to take it.

The survey will remain open for two weeks.

Pending Board approval on February 16, Brian Chapman will step into the Provost's position as of March 1.

The National Survey on Student Engagement (NSSE) will be given to students in February. Encourage students to take it. Moosally emphasized the importance of this survey: it is one of the few university-wide assessment instruments for which we have developed a record of data. It is important for our 5<sup>th</sup>-year SACS report that we be able to make yearly comparisons. Lyons will ask Chris Birchak, dean of University College, for further details.

A fulltime coordinator has been hired to assist the Assistant Director of Orientation, Nikita Milton-Ross, with scheduling.

**Important dates:** There is a Youth Environmental summit on February 8 from 8:00 -5:00. It is a "nice coup" for UHD to be selected to host this event. The annual Student Research Conference is April 15. Deadline for student proposals is Feb. 16, at [www.uhd.edu/scholars/src.html](http://www.uhd.edu/scholars/src.html). UHD's Destination Downtown Open House for prospective students is April 2. The Faculty Senate Awards ceremony is scheduled for April 5.

### **Report from Senator Moosally**

Moosally went through a list of bills introduced into the TX legislature, sent this week by Grover Campbell, Vice Chancellor/VP for Governmental Relations and System Legislative Liaison.

Perhaps most significant is that the concealed weapons legislation has been reintroduced, with support from both the Senate and the House. The Texas Council of Faculty Senates passed a resolution against this legislation last year that was endorsed by UFEC. Also of interest are the following: a revision to the 6-drop rule to allow universities to determine caps, a two-year freeze on tuition hikes, and a proposal to limit developmental ed to junior/community colleges. A bill has been introduced to approve UHCL for downward expansion so that it can offer first- and second year classes. More information on legislative goings-on may be found at [www.capitol.state.tx.us](http://www.capitol.state.tx.us).

### **Report from Anjoo Sikka, Chair of Faculty Affairs**

The Faculty Affairs committee is one of three shared governance committees at UHD that writes policy. Last semester, Sikka shared with Senate a revision of the Organized Research Policy. It was subsequently approved by the Academic Affairs Council and will be sent to President Flores for his signature.

Subcommittees of the Faculty Affairs committee have been formed to study three policies: appointment of department chairs (Chair: Susan Baker), grievance policies (Chair: Shohreh Hashemi), and sponsored research (Chair: Anjoo Sikka). The revision of the department chair policy is an old charge from Faculty Senate. The subcommittee, chaired by Susan Baker, has researched department chair policies in this and other universities, and as a result is considering such issues as term limits. Sikka believes direct input from the university will be necessary, and solicited through forums such as open-university forums or survey monkey questionnaires.

On behalf of Interim VP Dressman, Interim Assistant VP of Academic Affairs Melinda Kanner brought Faculty Affairs a proposal to revise the Academic Appointments Policy (P.S. 10.A.03) to redefine job titles for faculty, including lecturers and adjunct lecturers. Interim Provost Dressman submitted a formal version of this on January 24 as a charge to Faculty Affairs. The charge includes proposed new titles such as “clinical” and “research” lecturers, and includes ranks within these categories. The policy that would have to be revised is P.S. 10.A.03.

February 18 is the date of the meeting to discuss the charges from Dressman.

### **Report from Interim Provost Mike Dressman**

The provost’s office is in transition as we wait for new provost Brian Chapman to arrive. Dressman’s duties will be gradually moved over to Chapman, but Dressman will be responsible for all duties related to Rank and Tenure, including grievances, for the current crop of applicants for promotion and tenure. Dressman indicated he would send an announcement clarifying that he would carry out this responsibility.

An issue brought up in Deans’ Council recently was how students could access their materials stored on BB Vista in case of grade appeals. Farris pointed out that there might be other reasons students might want access to their materials besides grade appeals. Dressman agreed, but said that keeping old Blackboard courses active presented a memory/storage issue: offloading the data might be a solution. Moosally pointed out that offloading courses could present security or intellectual property risks. Lyons observed that dealing with academic honesty issues is hard for faculty to pursue after the end of the semester if the course has been shut down. Dressman said any changes made would first go through Academic Policies.

The Southwest Chapter of the Anti-Defamation League came before the President’s Executive Council to encourage UHD to apply for status as a non-discriminatory university and make a

statement that we do not discriminate. The executive council is considering doing so. Schmertz asked whether applying for this status involved any steps other than signing onto their statement. Dressman did not believe much more was involved and said the chapter was eager to make a presentation. Evans asked what other universities had signed on; Dressman did not know.

Another issue raised in the President's Executive Committee is that SACS has announced its intention to apply standards not just to academic programs but also university administrative offices, such as financial aid, student support services, and advising. They are looking to ensure best practices across the board at the universities they monitor. Some administrative offices, such as IT, already have standardized assessment measures in place.

A task force on "W" courses (writing-intensive courses) has been convened for the first time on February 1. Aimee Roundtree and Natalya Matveeva are co-chairing. Their charge is to research models of writing-intensive courses that are applicable in different disciplines, provide models to faculty, and find ways to assess such courses.

Dressman will schedule a meeting for all schedulers (chairs, program chairs, etc.) to enlighten them about state criteria for space use and to encourage an audit of their use of space. We need to be able to report on our use of space in ways that do not appear "squanderous."

### **Report from William Waller on the Freshman Retention/Graduation Action Plan**

This plan has been developed by several faculty members and Dean Birchak of University College. Lyons passed around last year's Faculty Senate resolution to institute a Faculty Senate admission standards committee and introduced the chair of the Developmental Curriculum Committee, Bill Waller. The resolution included a charge for developing strategies for supporting student success. Waller provided part of the Action Plan report describing measures for improving student success and retention. Waller distributed a proposal containing a number of student success efforts included in the most current version of a document titled the Freshman Retention and Graduation Plan (FRGP). This document was developed after a number of UHD faculty attended summer institutes across the country on student retention, and the version presented today was scaled back to reflect our current budget situation. The document was produced in response to the call to institute new admissions standards, as well as the end of moneys that went towards retention efforts such as QEP (Quality Enhancement program) and ATD (Achieving the Dream). Although a relatively small proportion of our graduates started as freshman, state performance measures target this group; hence the proposal is aimed at freshmen. The idea is to both begin innovative support structures and institutionalize old ones that were previously supported by the grants that are now running out.

Timelines, activities, outcomes, responsible parties, and assessment measures are a necessary part of any plan that will work. Due to budget cuts, convocation is not funded and did not make it into the current version of the plan but Waller believes it was quite successful.

Lyons clarified that document was not generated by the admissions standards committee. Part of the Faculty Senate resolution on admissions standards recommended campus-wide coordination of retention efforts. He emphasized that faculty, through Faculty Senate, needed to support a unified retention plan through our current transition in academic leadership and send the message that this is something we want.

Lyons asked Waller about the plan's provision of a Coordinator of Student Success. Waller responded that funding agencies usually expect there to be a person tracking and coordinating

retention university-wide. Pavelich suggested that the problem with implementing good plans like these is that money for them cannot be solicited through our traditional department-based planning processes: how do we go about finding baseline funding for university initiatives? Waller replied that thus far, the primary approach has been to ask departments to include funding for student success/retention in their unit plans.

Dressman added that if pilots clearly demonstrate success, grants can be applied for to extend their funding. Also, additional tuition/fees revenues are generated from the students we retain. He also concurred with Waller that right now there is no single place or commitment from the university where student success efforts are coordinated. Alternatives to the proposed student success coordinator would be an assistant to the provost or assistant dean in the University College. But right now the job “isn’t located anywhere.”

Moosally supports the argument that we need to institutionalize and prioritize student success and retention efforts such that they are provided for in baseline funding. We could pass a resolution to support this plan or another. She is concerned we are “thinking too small”—housing these efforts in University College marginalizes the efforts from the rest of the university. The positions of coordinator of student success and “student success specialist” (both to be funded as course releases for existing faculty positions) were compromises in the FRGP due to budget concerns; real funded positions, such as those mentioned by Moosally and Dressman would be preferable.

Johnson concurred with Moosally’s perception that institutionalization of retention success needs to happen and wondered what procedure we need to follow to get base budgeting. Dressman said administration ultimately decides how to allocate funding for university-level initiatives. Lyons said this is why faculty must make clear to administration that they want this initiative to be given priority.

Spears complimented Waller on having presented an organized package but said the problem is the proposal demands additional faculty labor. He recommended specific target objectives. Waller said the longer version of the proposal, which he did not include in the Faculty Senate handout, includes objectives that can be assessed.

Johnson urged that we not wait for institution of admissions standards to begin this work. Birchak will speak on the status of admissions standards at the next Faculty Senate meeting.

Evans said she wants to see the most successful initiatives given priority. She suggested that proven initiatives be funded though additional student fees allocated to student services.

Lyons synthesized the foregoing discussion as follows: we need to institutionalize retention/success efforts, there must be opportunity for faculty and staff discussion and participation, there must be an agreed-upon plan, the plan needs targeted goals, we cannot wait on admissions standards, and we should consider using student fees to fund retention. He will send out a communiqué summarizing Faculty Senate discussion.

Lyons passed out call for nominations for the Faculty Senate online education committee. Monday Feb 7 is the deadline for nominations.

### **Report from Vida Robertson, Chair of Academic Policy Committee**

This committee was charged with reexamining the grading system policy to ensure faculty would receive notification of grade changes done by administrators. In the process of examining this 7-

year old policy, the committee found it needed to change other language as well. The policy language was updated to ensure compliance with recent changes in state law such as the 6-drop rule. Also added were registration dates for minimesters.

The grade of “XF” has been added to both this policy and the academic honesty policy to indicate that a student has failed due to academic dishonesty.

The committee has also developed a new form for grade appeals to conform to the revisions made to the grading system policy. The form also builds in restrictions designed to limit frivolous grade appeals.

The committee needs to consider the state mandate of credit by exam. UHD applies differing and inconsistent standards across the university for awarding credit by examination.

Interim Provost Dressman has requested that the committee write a policy that allows students to access their grades only after they have logged onto the evaluation service. As is currently the case, students do not need to fill out evaluations in order to receive their grades; however, if this policy is implemented, they must at least log on in order to access them. Also, all classes, not just electronic ones, will be required to use electronic evaluations. The intention is to standardize teaching evaluations and save the university money. There will be pilots of both online and face-to-face classes to work out any problems with the process prior to full-scale implementation.

All of these policies will be brought before Senate before they move on to the Academic Affairs Committee.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Johanna Schmertz

Faculty Senate Secretary