

# UHD Faculty Senate

Minutes recorded by: Michael Cavanaugh  
November 19, 2019 2:33 - 4:04 pm  
UHD Travis/Milam room

**Senate:** Michael Duncan, Ronald Beebe, Hsiao-Ming Wang, Michael Cavanaugh, Franklin Allaire, Alexander Bielakowski, Dexter Cahoy, Kristen Capuozzo, Stephanie Coleman, Prakash Deo, Isaac Elking, Krista Gehring, Angela Goins, Felicia Harris, Tahereh Jafari, Timothy Klein, Cynthia Lloyd, Steve London, Jeffery Martz, Laura Mitchell, Mitsue Nakamura, Andrew Pavelich, Joseph Sample, Johanna Schmertz, Jace Valcore, Pat Williams, Ting Zhang.

**Absent:** Maria Benavides, Susan Henney, Pamela Hurley, Nathan Neale, Julie Wilson.

**Guests:** Juan Munoz, President; Eric Link, Provost/VPAA; David Bradley, VPAF; Jerry Johnson, AVP Faculty, Research, and Sponsored Programs; Sandra Dahlberg, Faculty Ombuds; Darlene Hodge, FS Admin; Pat Ensor, Library Director; Anne Zwicky, Interlibrary Loan & Distance Education Librarian; Michelle Moosally, Associate Professor; Akif Uzman, Dean CST; Scott Marzilli, Dean UC; Katherine Jager, Associate Professor and Chair of Gen Ed; Michael Wilson, Lecturer; Chris Stempinski, Library Assistant Director, Public Services; Rachna Sadana, Chair of Natural Sciences; Toni Hoang, Assistant Chair of Arts and Communication; Lea Campbell, Director of Academic Assessment; Claude Rubinson, Associate Professor, Rhonda Scherer, Sports & Fitness/Staff Council; William Waters; Associate Professor; Gene Preuss, Associate Professor.

**Call to order:** The Senate was called to order at 2:33 pm by Senate President Michael Duncan.

## Minutes

Minutes of the November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019 meeting were approved unanimously.

## Reports

Mr. David Bradley came to Senate and gave a presentation on the progress of major construction projects to impact UHD in the next few years (see attached).

Opened the floor to questions

Q - Will they tear down I-10?

A - Mr. Bradley answered in the affirmative and said that the interstate will be relocated. The I-10 section will likely open earlier than the I-45 section.

Q - Have there been any conversations about exchanging properties with TXDOT?

A - Yes. Mr. Bradley explained that this is pretty much what is going on. However, they will need their property first to start the construction, so buying properties from each other will actually occur at different points of time.

Q - What will happen to the student life center?

A - According to Mr. Bradley, the student life center will be repurposed for a true student union.

### **Discussion**

Dr. Duncan read a statement (see attached) on the issue of campus safety/security for faculty when faced with a physical threat. He explained that the process needs to be clear and this is a fundamental shared governance item.

Discussion ensued.

I'm ignorant of what happened and really don't know what is going on in this situation.

We need a much clearer explanation of what happens when a threat occurs on campus.

Who should give us this information? Police? Disciplinary Committee?

I am unsure. Student Affairs and Police can be asked, but procedures are not clear.

I would support it, but we need clarity. If I am threatened by a student, am I allowed to tell anyone about it?

FERPA allows you to report the threat, however, talking about it afterwards gets murky.

Can we ask law enforcement from UHD or another agency (Houston Police Department, Harris County Sheriff's Office, etc.) to talk with us about this issue?

Maybe Chief Benford, Legal Counsel and the Dean of Students.

In the past, we would contact Tommy Thomason about this type of issue.

Is there now a go to person since Tommy left?

Dr. Duncan suggested that we could ask the guests for advice on this situation.

Provost Link indicated that if someone is threatening you - Call the police (911 for emergencies). We have staff to deal with these situations and we have a Dean of Students, Meritza Tamez. If you are having difficulty on figuring out who to contact, please contact my office and we will help you.

The process is important.

So the Dean of Students is a good 1st place to start? Do the police then get notified?

Provost Link said yes the Dean of Students is a good starting place. As for the second question, it depends on the situation. The UHD Police Department and Dean of Students' office will coordinate on certain situations although they will have different processes. The Dean of Students is currently working on a one-page handout for faculty as for what to do when threatened.

Dr. Jerry Johnson said that once this handout is complete it will be included in orientation and given to Senate. The timeline is a bit up in the air as they are prioritizing getting it correct over getting it done quickly.

Provost Link further explained that when the draft is completed it will go to FSEC, the cabinet, posted to the web, etc. We want all faculty to see this and for all of them to feel safe at UHD.

If something were to happen tomorrow, would faculty be penalized for reaching out to Law Enforcement or for potential FERPA violations?

I'm not sure anyone knows at this point.

Right now, it sounds like we should contact the police and the Dean of Students if these type of issues arise.

The follow-up on this issue will be instructive.

### **Initiatives**

Dr. Beebe gave an update on the work of the workload committee. He passed out handouts (see attached). He brought this to the Senate to discuss the Senate's views on priorities, reasons why, and whether these issues should be addressed.

Discussion on the topic occurred.

Maybe we can add that tenured faculty must serve on a major committee. The language right now limits some people and some departments cannot actually meet this requirement.

That language is actually already in the constitution.

Committee on Credentials and Elections (CCE) can and should enforce the rule.

Dr. Michelle Moosally said that CCE should enforce the rule and CCE has the authority to enforce it. There are some suggestions that don't need to go through constitution changes. For example, Senate can advise committees to do things even though it doesn't have the authority to enforce it. For example, just tell some committees to only meet as needed.

Q - Only 1 of the 9 proposals requires a policy change?

A - According to Dr. Beebe, Yes. But the course approval process would involve a little more discussion too.

Q - What are these committees that should be shut down, sunsetted, etc.? What are they?

A - Dr. Beebe explained the information we received came from the Provost's office and the website. Committees should have charges and they should have reasons for why these people are on them. These two should be high on the list.

Q - Dr. Moosally indicated that these were good ideas. Does the subcommittee have the authority to do this? What does implementation look like? Advice?

A - Dr. Beebe said that we know we do not have the authority but we can start the process.

Dr. Pavelich explained that the committee wanted to bring these to Senate in order to determine whether these were good ideas. While the course proposal and search committee reduction would take more work, we can still evaluate the ideas.

Senate has the ability to charge people to do things. Can we charge someone to do something?

I think we could.

Dr. Schmertz made a motion to implement the following committee reduction proposals from the ad hoc workload committee : 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, and 9. The motion passes unanimously.

Dr. Schmertz moved that the ad hoc committee bring proposals 6 and 8 to the Senate floor for further exploration.

Dr. Moosally said that number 6 was something that had been worked on before. We had advocated for a separate policy for an administrative search. A new policy may be a good idea. Also, educating faculty on the basics of these issues prior to asking them for feedback on Qualtrics may be needed.

The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Dr. Pavelich presented a Core Assessment Resolution Draft (see attached). He explained that he may feel differently than members of Senate but thought that this should be discussed in Senate.

Dr. Pavelich made a motion to consider the draft resolution and Dr. Bielakowski seconded the motion.

Discussion on the draft occurred.

We assess the core through Signature Assignments. Maybe we should ask what other universities are doing. Is this just a problem with the signature assignment or something else? Standardized testing may be the alternative for us, which would be terrible.

I do not like the Signature Assignments but I would like to see the options. I am not for standardized testing.

Dr. Katherine Jager explained that all other universities have something similar in place and it is typically required. We are fairly unique in that some of our faculty do not submit. Relatively speaking, we have a less invasive core assessment and more autonomy in the process than many other institutions.

Dr. Moosally indicated that she is sympathetic to the processes. The Gen-Ed process is not refined yet. We should be asking these types of questions. However, I am worried about some of the claims - grades=assessment, 50 artifacts. Leave the questions in, but the questionable claims out.

Dr. Pavelich said that he can take the last "whereas" out. He was seeing a disconnect between grades and assessment results, which is why it was originally included.

Dr. Jager agreed with Dr. Pavelich and said he was not alone in seeing the disconnect. The rubrics are standardized and there were questions about norming the process the last time, but they are led by the

same person each time and it is consistent. We may need to prioritize different things in the artifact (i.e., structure over grammar). Ultimately, grades do not really measure performance.

We need to increase 30% participation.

Dr. Pavelich made a motion to table the draft resolution. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Other Business**

Dr. Felicia Harris brought up an issue related to University College. She explained that University College, through the BAAS and BSIS programs, was duplicating courses in other departments (i.e., digital literacy). This was done on applied courses by using catchy course titles. This could take away SCHs from other departments.

Dean Marzilli explained that University College houses two degrees BS-IS and BAAS-AA. Some of these courses are actually BS-IS special topics courses, which may have been the cause of some issues. However, the digital literacy class proposal was pulled.

Dr. Harris explained that other members of the faculty were invited and wanted to speak.

Dr. William Waters said he is currently on the University College Curriculum Support Committee (UCCSC) and there was no opportunity to meet with the committee. Furthermore, on curriculog there is no opportunity to vote "no."

Dr. Gene Preuss indicated that he was chair of the UCCSC and there were definitely issues. However, we did have an opportunity to meet, but this was declined. There was a previous standard where only full-time faculty could propose courses, which was a problem. This current proposal was a special topics course so it should not have gone through curriculog. Who notifies faculty about a proposal? The responsibility falls to members of the committee.

Disagreement over the committee procedures occurred.

Dean Marzilli said that University College is a unique college. He explained that they are filling the open spots on the committee and he believes the policy (please see attached) probably needs review. Unanimity is not always possible amongst ten people but the committee will work together. I would be happy to work with anyone.

Dr. Toni Hoang said that the major concern is with the APAL courses, not the special topics. We would be happy to work with you to develop courses that would help your students.

Dr. Duncan indicates that we are running low on time but that he wanted to make a couple more announcements. The first is that President Munoz has gifted Faculty Senate with \$5,000. The thought is that we can use the money for refreshments (and snacks). This averages out to about \$300+ per meeting. We will send a Qualtrics survey out about the idea soon. The second issue is canceling the last Senate meeting during a reading day (December 3rd).

Dr. Klein made a motion to move the next meeting until the new semester and adjourn the current meeting. Dr. Bielakowski seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 4:04 pm.

# Faculty Senate

## Upcoming Major Construction / Infrastructure Projects

November 19, 2019

# Topics to Cover

- TXDoT Highway Realignment Project
- Wellness and Success Center
- North Canal
- Parking Implications

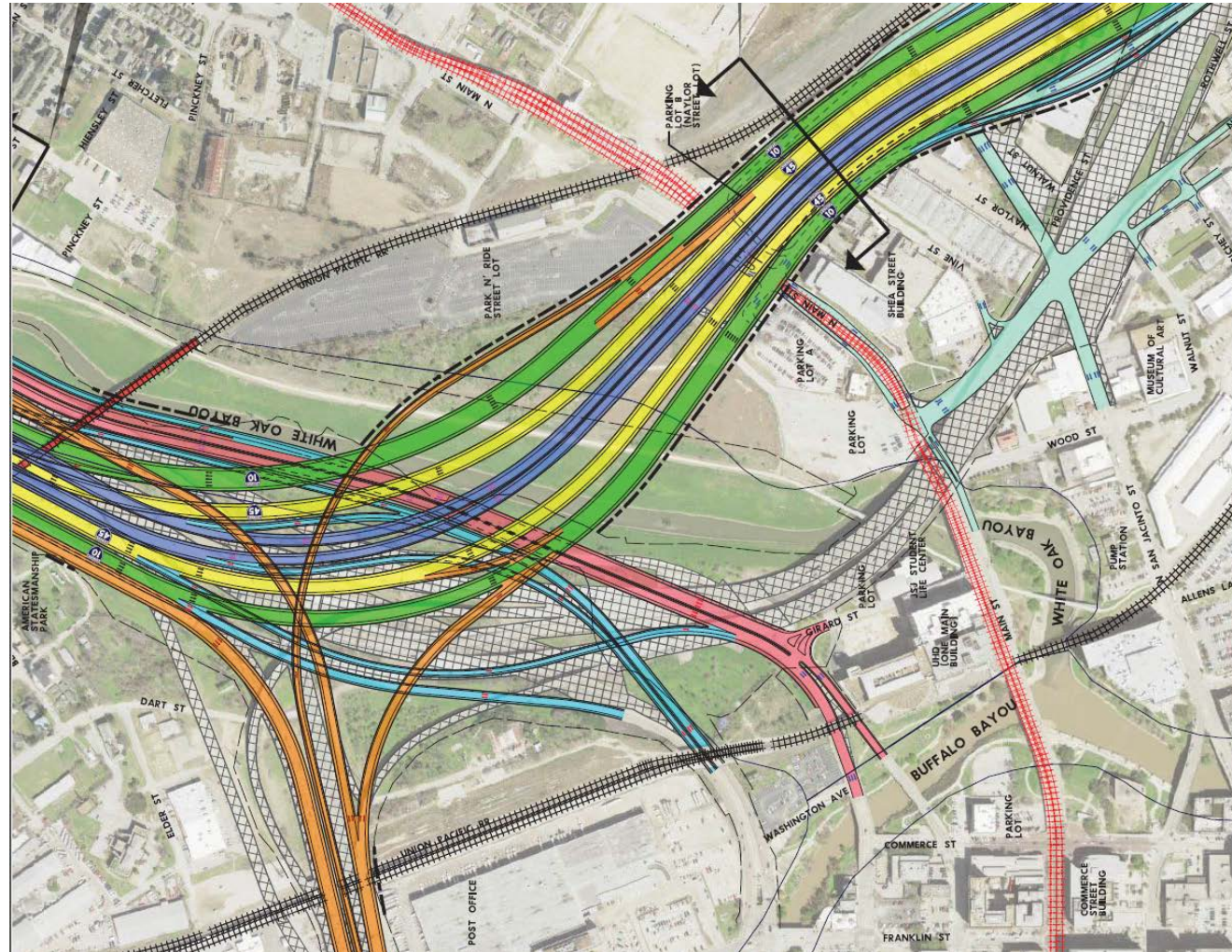


FALL 2019  
CURRENT UHD PROPERTY,  
STREET CONFIGURATIONS



Google Earth

# Current TXDoT Plan



PROPOSED TxDOT  
RIGHT-OF-WAY ACQUISITION



Google Earth

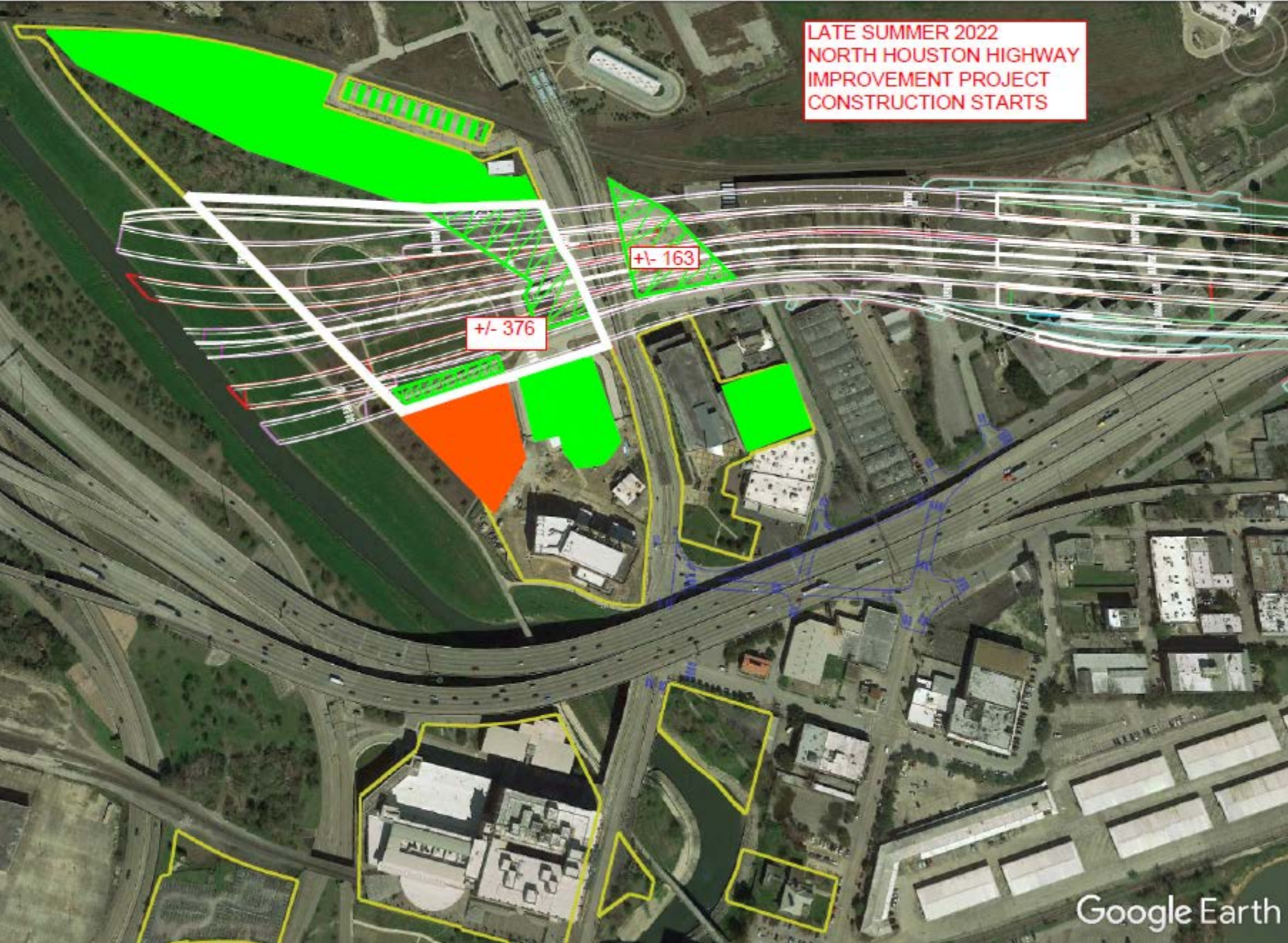
ANTICIPATED FALL 2020  
WELLNESS & SUCCESS CENTER  
CONSTRUCTION STARTS

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Google Earth



LATE SUMMER 2022  
NORTH HOUSTON HIGHWAY  
IMPROVEMENT PROJECT  
CONSTRUCTION STARTS

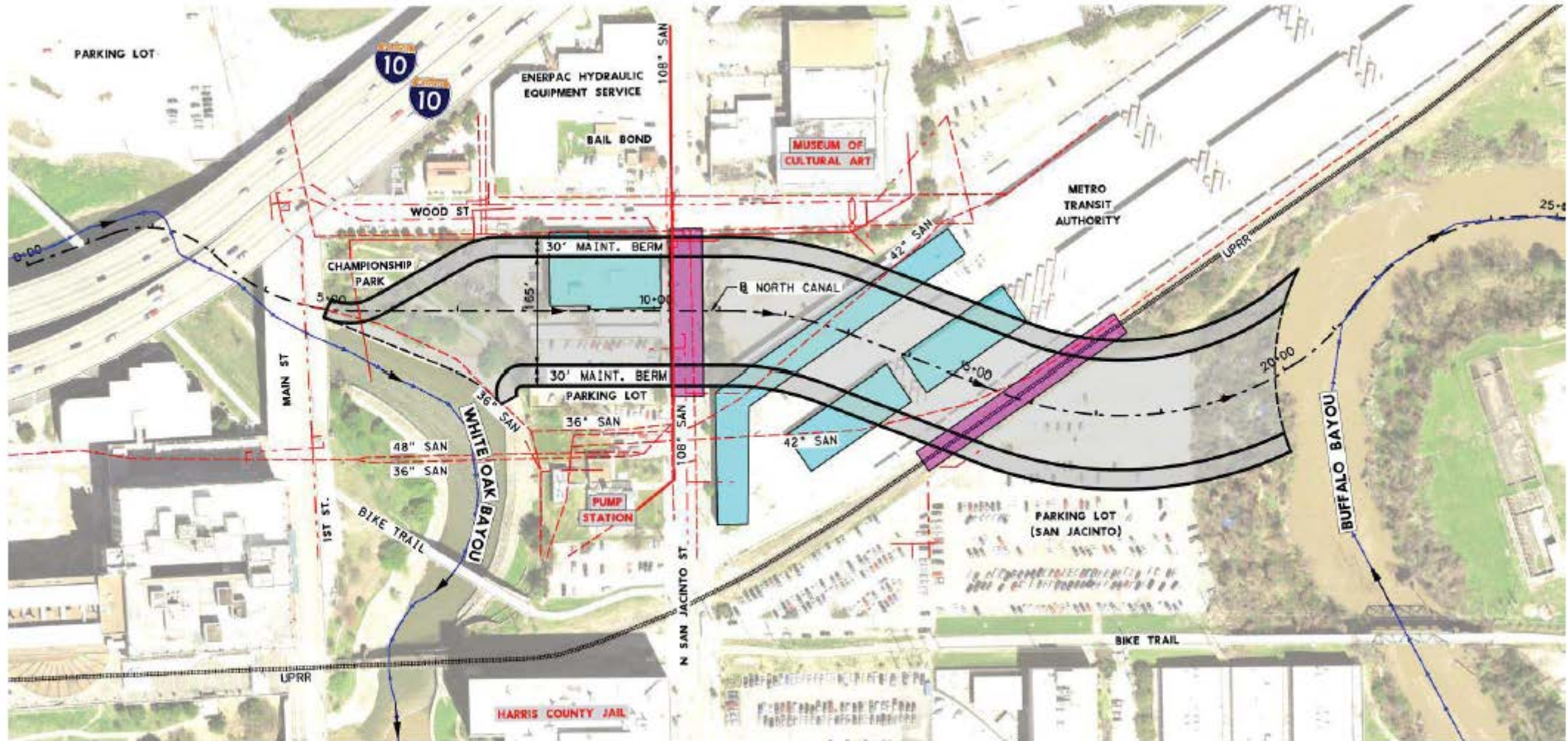


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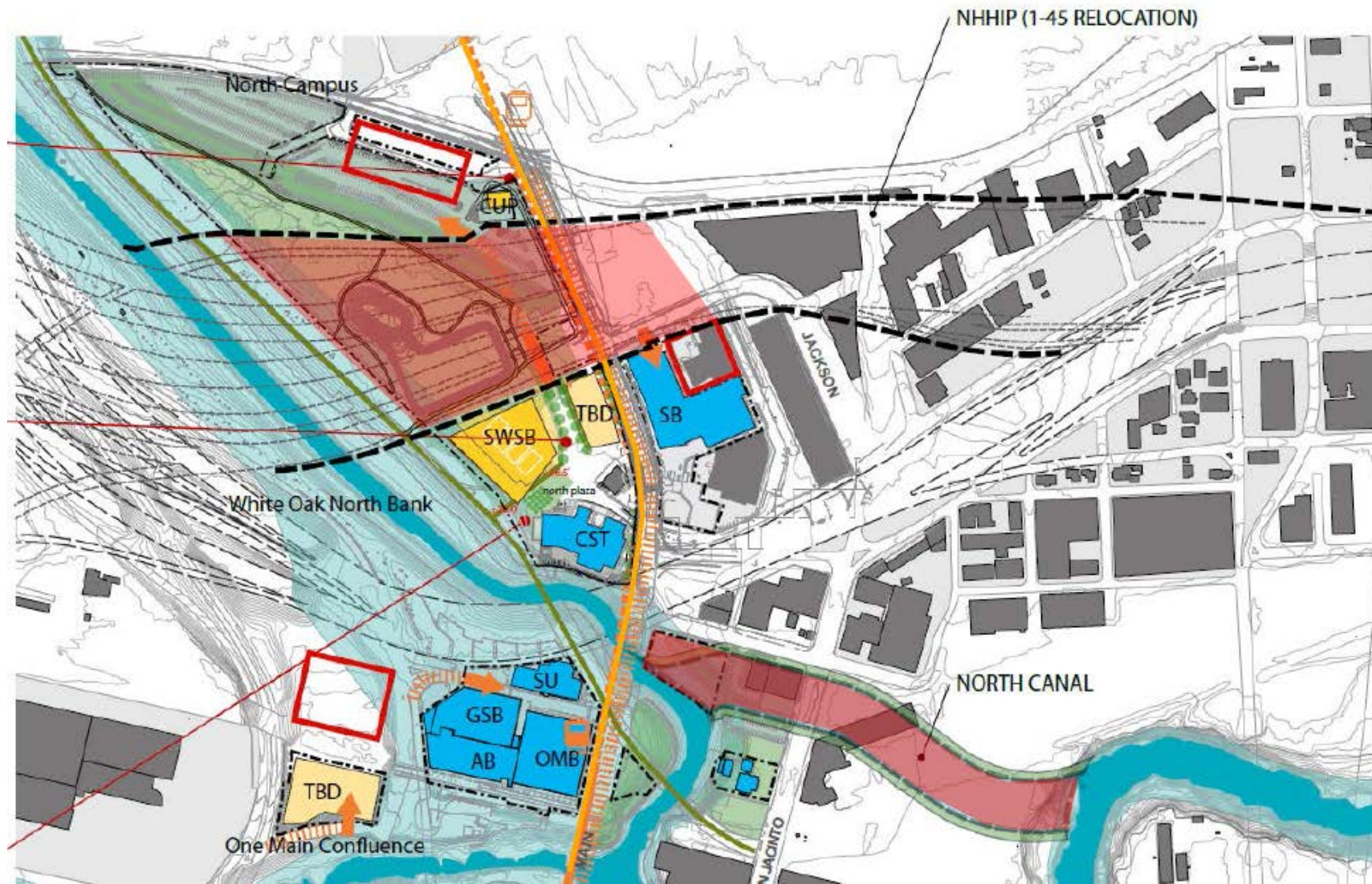
*Northside – North Canal Optimal Plan*

# North Canal – Preliminary Drainage Study



*Northside – North Canal Proposed Plan*

# UHD CMP Overview – *with* TXDoT/North Canal





# Project Schedules

## (Current Best Information Available)

- Wellness & Success Center
  - Commence Construction – Fall 2020
  - Duration – Minimum of 20 months
- North Canal
  - Commence Construction – Spring 2021
  - Duration – Minimum of 24 months
- TXDoT NHHIP Segment 3, Section A
  - Commence Construction – Summer 2022
  - Duration in area of UHD - Uncertain

# Issues of greatest concern to UHD/Challenges

- Managing the construction
  - Safety
  - Access – vehicular/pedestrian
- Parking impact
  - Immediate/construction period
  - Long-term/post-construction
- Impact on at-grade streets
- Loss of property

# Areas of opportunity for UHD

- More consolidated urban campus
  - Freeways to the north, not through the center of campus as is the current condition
- Improved parking
- Impact on at-grade streets
- Possibility of acquiring other property

# UHD Future Campus Without TXDoT Project



# UHD Future Campus With TXDoT Project



FSEC has recently discussed how to improve the processes that UHD follows when a faculty member reports a serious threat made by a student against them and/or others on campus. This was precipitated by a recent incident. Given this matter affects literally everyone on campus, we bring it to the Senate floor. I am not interested in, and I heavily discourage, the mention, however seemingly innocent of a FERPA violation, any specifics about faculty or students that may have been involved in this forum. Little will be gained. The issues here are serious enough that they go beyond any one incident.

There are two processes that are triggered when faculty report a threat. One is disciplinary, and the other is law enforcement. These happen and resolve separately. From my perspective as an advocate for faculty, there are three concerning aspects to these processes.

One, there seems to be a default approach, designed around a legal concern for student confidentiality under FERPA, of keeping the faculty in the dark while those twin disciplinary and law enforcement processes resolve, to the point that the faculty can, and have, been unaware for an extended period of time of basic information like whether it is safe to come to campus and hold classes, or their own rights during those processes. This does not exactly build confidence in those processes.

Two, if one or both of those processes resolve in a way that the faculty still feels unsafe, perhaps involving the requirement to continue to teach such a student online, what recourse, if any, does the faculty member have to ensure their safety and well-being, and what responsibilities does the university have to provide for their safety and the safety of everyone on campus?

Three, I don't think a university is a place where physical intimidation of any kind, whether overt or implicit, should be tolerated. I also don't think that faculty that report a threat in good faith should then in turn be intimidated by an opaque and unimpeachable process. It just intimidates them again.

What might be helpful, though I don't think it goes nearly far enough by itself, is a much clearer explanation in some easily accessed form of what faculty can expect will happen after a threat is reported. Then we as a body could decide if that is enough, or if we want more. I see this as a critical and fundamental shared governance issue.

(retyped from delivered notes on 1/12/20)

## Committee Reduction Proposals

1. For those committees without charges/guidelines for appointment, review the nature of the committee, determine if it is necessary; if so, then develop a charge and provide guidelines for appointment

There are many apparent “ghost” committees that are still staffed and sometimes meet – like the Study Abroad Committee. We don’t know how many committees there are like this, since they are not chartered by policy. In addition, several committees are currently staffed without a clear charge or method of appointment. A review of these committees would enable decisions to be made regarding relevance, need, and faculty workload.

2. Explore the possibility of establishing some committees as “advisory” that meet only as needed

The CTLE has four separate committees for oversight. These are low-workload committees, but they have a tendency to expand to justify their own existence. Merging them into one oversight committee would help ensure that the work done was necessary. Likewise, many committees meet (and meet by policy for 90 minutes every two weeks) when there is no need for them to do so. Establishing in their charter that they meet as needed would reduce workload. A similar situation occurs in the Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning. This task could also be connected to the review in item 1.

3. Developing a training session for committee chairs

Many of us learn how to chair a committee by watching someone else do it for a semester. Some training in how to set an agenda, manage a meeting, and follow Robert’s Rules could significantly streamline meetings. This would also serve to develop leadership across the faculty.

4. Enhance the current website for university committees, use these committees when possible for new “projects”

This should be easy to do – it might not have much effect, but if it prevents the formation of a few repetitive taskforces, then why not?

5. Encourage departments to reexamine the number of committees, for example, Rank and Tenure, Assessment, Curriculum, and ORCA/Faculty Development are the only “required” committees

There is wide range of departmental committee structures across campus. Some departments have multiple meetings per month, others none. It’s possible that some departments are structured the way they are simply out of inertia. Without mandating

## Core Assessment Resolution (draft 11/18/19)

### Whereas

While the core itself is largely dictated by the state of Texas, how we evaluate the core is entirely up to the faculty of UHD.

### Whereas

Our current method of assessing the core is extremely inefficient. Assessment relies on every core class generating Signature Assignments, while only a small number of these (between 50 and 100) are actually evaluated. For example, in the Fall semester 3,543 students in 138 sections of 12 different classes will be tasked with generating assessment artifacts for Written Communication, and since this collection is done every semester, and writing is only assessed once every three years, only a fraction of a percent of total artifacts generated will actually get used for assessment purposes.

### Whereas

The assessment of writing in the core is fairly subjective, and employs faculty readers who are different every year, making any year-by-year conclusions highly suspect.

### Whereas

Evaluating the competencies of students who are taking classes in the core at the time of evaluation (as is currently done) necessarily does not evaluate the success of the core as a whole.

### Whereas

The current core assessment concludes that our core is failing to provide the majority of our students with necessary skills, while the continued success of students beyond the core suggests that we are using an unrealistic standard of evaluation. For example, approximately 66% of students who enroll in upper-level classes in the CHSS earn a grade of an A or B, while the core assessment tells us that less than 20% of our student leave the core with competence in writing.

### Be it resolved:

The Faculty Senate asks the University Curriculum Committee to investigate other possible models of core assessment, including those used by the Community Colleges that generate most of our core complete student body through transfers, and present the results to the UHD faculty for consideration. Further, we ask that the upon review of these alternatives, the UHD faculty be allowed to decide whether to adopt a new core assessment method, or retain our current one.



Memo To: All UH-Downtown/PS Holders

UH-Downtown/ PS 03.A.34

From: William Flores, President

Issue No. 2

Effective date: 06/27/2014

Subject: University College Curriculum Support Committee

Page 1 of 2

## **1. PURPOSE**

This policy establishes a path through the curricular process for degree programs housed in University College, which lack the mechanism of a departmental curriculum committee comprised of tenured and tenure-track faculty members. This policy also establishes a structure within which assessment and continuous improvement activities can be conducted for programs housed in University College.

## **2. DEFINITIONS**

- 2.1 Curriculum Development Process: All the steps involved in creating and modifying courses and academic programs.
- 2.2 Assessment Activities: The establishment and monitoring of learning outcomes, the evaluation of student work and interpretation of findings from that evaluation, and the identification and implementation of strategies designed to improve student learning and success for programs or portions of programs.
- 2.3 University College (UC) Curriculum Support Committee: A committee with members appointed by the Deans in consultation with relevant chairs to act on behalf of a degree program housed in University College.

## **3. POLICY**

- 3.1 The UC Curriculum Support Committee is comprised of two representatives from each college appointed by their respective college deans in consultation with relevant chairs. This committee of 10 will include 8 tenured/tenure-track faculty with knowledge of the relevant subject area(s) and 1 representative from each of the 2 degree programs in University College. The Provost will ensure that there is appropriate representation and expertise on the committee.
- 3.2 Representatives on the UC Curriculum Support Committee will participate in the curriculum development process (see policies listed under References) and engage in assessment activities (PS 03.A.31) for the degree programs housed in University College.
- 3.3 In its curricular and assessment activities, the UC Curriculum Support Committee may invite the program director/program chair and other faculty members involved in teaching for the program to attend committee meetings.

## **4. PROCEDURES**

- 4.1 In all cases of curricular development proposals by programs served by the UC Curriculum Support Committee, academic disciplines, departments, colleges, and other university areas (such as library, information technology, and enrollment services) affected by changes are to be notified and consulted with sufficient opportunity for discussions and feedback.
- 4.2 Course, program, or degree proposals brought forward by the UC Curriculum Support Committee that are to be submitted to the University Curriculum Committee are signed by the UC Curriculum Support Committee chair, program director/program chair, and the UC dean.
- 4.3 Proposals will follow the procedures beginning in section 4.1 of PS 03.A.12: Changes to Curricula, Courses, and Program Inventory.

## **5. EXHIBITS**

There are no exhibits associated with this policy.

## **6. REVIEW PROCESS**

Responsible Party: (Reviewer): Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost

Review: Every 5 years, or as necessary.

Signed original on file in Employment Services and Operations.

## **7. POLICY HISTORY**

Issue #1: 02/13/2012

## **8. REFERENCES**

[PS 03.A.12: Changes to Curricula, Courses, and Program Inventory](#)  
[PS 03.A.31: Assessment of Educational Programs](#)

anything, we could provide examples of departments that get their work done without excessive committees and meetings.

6. Reduce the size of search committees for administrators (e.g., no more than 8), and eliminate the “outside member” from faculty searches (requires policy change PS 10.A.13)

Anecdotally, outside members almost never contribute to faculty searches. We would have to change policy to make this work, but that’s relatively easy to do if there is majority backing. Before changing the policy, the rationale would need to be examined for its current inclusion in policy.

Administrative searches have huge committees because every constituency wants a voice, but this makes for a cumbersome structure in practice. A smaller committee could still ensure that stakeholders have a voice using tools already in place (public meetings, surveys, etc.)

7. Incorporate sunset clauses as part of the charge to task forces, ad hoc committees, working groups, etc. Reexamine the necessity of current non-shared governance committees

For example, the campus carry committee was formed to deal with an important change in Texas law, and remains now because it was established in policy. The question would need to be addressed of whether this is a committee required by Texas statute. If not, this could be defined as an “advisory board” as indicated in policy. This would allow it to meet on an as needed basis.

8. Suggest that course proposal approvals end at the Dean level, with the exception of core courses

The UCC spends an inordinate amount of time reviewing individual course proposals. They are almost never rejected based on substance (often based on formal problems). In order to maintain an overall understanding of the relationship between courses approved and the curriculum, approved courses would still need to be submitted to the UCC. Eliminating this review task would free up the UCC to directly handle many issues of great importance to UHD. This committee – which includes the chair of every department at UHD, could be a powerful voice for change if it were not overburdened with tasks best left to a more local level. However, there would need to be a mechanism to assure limited course duplication and placement in the curriculum.

9. Enforce the rule that faculty may only serve on one “major” committee

This would not change the total number of faculty committee-hours, but it would spread the work around the faculty more. If we chose to do this, we would have to decide which committees counted as major, and also modify how committee nominees worked.