

DRAFT

FACULTY SENATE MINUTES

Meeting: September 2, 2008

PRESENT: M. Moosally, B. Belbot, T. Davis, J. Caro, B. Christmas, J. Creighton, M. Cunningham, J. Dutcher, J. Flosi, B. Gilbert, A. Gomez-Rivas, S. Henney, L. Hignite, A. Kane, N. Leveille, P. Lyons, K. McLellan, C. Nguyen, D. Nino, J. Pavletich, K. Pinkerton, N. Rangel, T. Redl, R. Robbins, D. Ryden, C. Stewart, H. Wang, J. Yoon, Z. Zhou

ABSENT: P. Simeonov, S. Penkar

GUESTS: Provost M. Woods, P. Williams, E. Bradley, G. Evans,

President Michelle Moosally called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m. Minutes for the May 6, 2008 Faculty Senate meeting were distributed and approved.

President's Report

President Moosally announced the need for a faculty member to manage the Faculty Senate website. She asked that anyone interested in this position contact her.

President Moosally announced that progress has been made on electronically-keyed access to classrooms. Electronic key-access systems have been installed in the Academic Building and the Business Building but are not yet complete in Building C.

President Moosally encouraged faculty to attend the investiture of Chancellor Renu Khator. She pointed out that there are a number of academically-focused events which faculty are invited to attend.

President Moosally announced that 105 students had accepted admission to University of Houston Downtown as the result of the UHD Achiever Scholarship program spearheaded by VP Apodaca to recruit students with strong academic credentials. She thanked Mr. Apodaca for leading this initiative.

President Moosally announced that the discussion of the mission statement will occur as a separate session from the Faculty Senate meeting as all faculty should have the opportunity to attend. Provost Woods will schedule a meeting for mission-statement discussion. It was also announced that academic program initiatives as the Table of Programs are due this academic year, contrary to expectations in May.

President Moosally announced that the UHD Convocation would be held on Thursday, September 4. University President Castillo has organized the convocation as a Town Hall meeting. There will also be a meeting of the full faculty assembly scheduled for Tuesday, October 14.

President Moosally announced that there are several new policies that were passed during academic year 2007-2008. The Grievance Policy, the Ombuds Policy, and the Assessment Policy are now posted online. The new Grievance Policy requires that two (tenured) faculty representatives be elected from each department. The Faculty Senate will begin the process for appointing a faculty ombuds; the ombuds must be a tenured (for 10 years at UHD) faculty or emeriti faculty. President Moosally thanked VP Montalbano, Ms. Linda Biddle, and President Castillo for their swift action in addressing the confusion about the accurate version of the Assessment Policy. The Assessment Policy now posted online is the accurate version of the policy as approved by Academic Affairs Council in May 2008.

Vice-President Belbot's Report

Vice-President Belbot announced that Penny Cureton in President Castillo's office is working on getting out committee appointment letters. If you do not receive your letter, please contact Barbara Belbot or Penny Cureton.

Update on Assessment

The candidate interviewed in May declined the Director of Assessment Position. In July, a new structure was announced by UHD President Max Castillo whereby Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs Pat Williams' position was re-classified as Associate Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness with Dr. Williams' being placed in a key leadership role in assessment and institutional effectiveness. Faculty Senate President Moosally communicated with Dr. Castillo concerns about the lack of faculty input in the decision to shift in focus from getting outside expertise to an internal focus or in the creation of a new academic leadership position in the form of an Associate Vice President of Curriculum and Assessment position (and most recently Associate Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness). She noted that it is not officially a new position; rather Dr. Williams' new title is the result of a reclassification. She also shared concerns about the functionality of the new structure Dr. Castillo. In these discussions, Castillo affirmed his commitment to full faculty involvement in assessment, and he indicated that he would like faculty to participate in determining how the new structure will work. To that end, Dr. Castillo has indicated a sense of flexibility with the structure as we move forward, and President Moosally noted that our main task is **to discuss how to maximize our resources to create a strong culture of assessment.**

Senate President Moosally pointed out that the Faculty Senate passed a resolution asking for a plan of action on SACS last January. In early June, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs Fairbanks, who had been charged with writing the assessment report for SACS, submitted a report for review. FSEC sent feedback on the report, suggesting the addition of more resources and that more detailed examples be included in the report. The General Education report had been drafted by the General Education Assessment Committee over the

summer. Dr. Fairbanks' revised report in late August is the draft that was sent to the Senate. Those versions did not reflect comments from FSEC or general education and that draft was subsequently sent to Dr. Cardell, the SACS staff consultant. On Wednesday last week, she called with comments which were passed on to us from Dr. Williams after we queried the status.

Having made the above comments, Senate President Moosally called on Dr. Pat Williams to address assessment structure and issues. Dr. Williams reported that there will be ten course releases for faculty—one in each academic department—to work on assessment. Dr. Williams also addressed the new structure which includes his position as Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness with two Directors of Assessment. He pointed out that the Directors of Assessment do not do assessment; the faculty do assessment. He said that each Director will work with two colleges. The faculty members who have course releases for assessment work will report to the Deans of their colleges and to the Directors of Assessment. Senator Pavletich asked Dr. Williams to share his background and qualifications with the Senate. Dr. Williams pointed out that the Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness is not an assessment expert but that he has a long history in higher education with a clear interest in assessment. He further noted that nationally it is a challenge to find people with academic training in assessment, as there are not many degree programs that prepare people for these kinds of jobs. He observed that the Directors of Assessment are the assessment experts. Dr. Williams' position is to oversee and coordinate the work of the Directors of Assessment. He stated that the Director searches may be external and/or internal searches. Dr. Williams also pointed out that UHD President Castillo has the final decision-making authority. Senator Henney asked if the Director positions are full-time positions. Dr. Williams said that they are full-time positions but external candidates would be part-time assessment and part-time teaching. Senator Henney suggested that faculty should have the opportunity to help develop the job descriptions for the Director positions. Senator Pinkerton asked about the time-line for the searches to fill these positions. Dr. Williams said that Associate Vice President of ESO Montalbano is pushing to get the job descriptions for the Director positions completed. Senator Robbins asked whether there are 10 Dean-selected faculty members who do not know what they are doing. Dr. Williams responded that that is true in some sense. Senator Cunningham pointed out that it appears that the university has gone from "having a world-class (assessment) expert" to having someone with less experience in assessment and questioned whether we shouldn't be seeking leadership from people who have research and publication credentials in assessment. Senator McLellan pointed out that there is a gap in reporting relationships, specifically if the 10 department people are reporting to the Deans and not to the Directors, then it is not clear what the Directors will be able to report to Dr. Williams. Dr. Williams said that there are often working relationships among positions in organizations without direct reporting relationships. Senator President Moosally suggested that faculty have input in regard to the structure and the reporting relationships for the new Director of Assessment positions. She asked that faculty send suggestions/questions/concerns to FSEC and that FSEC will put these together and send them out to all faculty.

Report on Status of SACS Report

Visitor Sikka asked Associate Vice President Fairbanks, who has primary responsibility for responding to the SACS request for a second monitoring report on assessment at UHD, what is

being done to respond to Dr. Cardell's request for specific examples. Dr. Fairbanks said that Dr. Cardell had suggested focusing documentation on results, i.e., what has been done to close the gap, and focusing on specifically what the reviewers ask for in the report. Dr. Williams asked that faculty point out to him and to Dr. Fairbanks where the results of outcome assessments have been used to change a program or courses. Dr. Sikka suggested that the process of asking faculty for feedback on specifics be formalized. Dr. Fairbanks said that faculty could give him feedback in the next 48 hours. Dr. Moosally expressed disappointment that the review process was unable to allow substantive faculty review and comment, but reiterated faculty commitment to participating to the extent that their schedules could allow in the tight time frame.

A motion was made to postpone the discussion of future Senate topics, seconded, and approved. Therefore, the discussion moved on to the next topic, the name change initiative.

Discussion of the Name Change Initiative

Senate President Moosally reported that she has no knowledge or expectation that there will be a system change. It was pointed out that UHD is the only university in the UH System that was targeted for a name change. The BOR expressed the need for community support for a name change. Senate President Moosally indicated that she thinks that a name change, i.e. whether or not a name change is needed, is up for discussion. Senator Cunningham asked if a name change is inevitable. President Moosally indicated that President Castillo seems to think that the name change is inevitable. Senator Robbins said that there are two questions: 1. Should there be a name change? and 2. What should the name be? The issue of costs of a name change was addressed by Vice President of Finance Bradley, who said that there are various cost estimates. Senator Lyons pointed out that the target date (December) for name change is approaching quickly. Provost M. Woods said there is a lot of information regarding universities that have changed their names. Senator Cunningham asked about the benefits. M. Sabino said that often she gets letters from grant-sponsors saying that they "...have already done enough for UH," thus confusing UHD with UH-Central. Senator Gilbert suggested that faculty need to consider this carefully and Senator Ryden seconded Senator Gilbert's point. Senator Hignite pointed out that even our students often do not recognize that we are not UH, thus indicating that we might have an identity crisis.

Senate President Moosally said that the Faculty Senators should encourage their faculty to participate in the discussion of the name change via the website that has been put up to receive comments/suggestions or to feel free to send comments to FSEC.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy J. Davis
Secretary