

UHD

Faculty Senate

Minutes recorded by: Trevor S. Hale

Date and Time: October 6, 2015 2:30 PM

Room Number: A300

Attendance: Ryan Pepper (President), Susan Henney (Past-President), Carolyn Ashe (President-elect), Trevor Hale (Secretary), Susan Baker, Steve Coy, Pamela Hurley, Pat Williams, Anne Kane, Jillian Hill, Jane Creighton, Claude Rubinson, Steven London, Dvijesh Shastri, Bernardo Pohl, Michael Connell, Azar Rejaie, Robin Jose, Maria Benavides, Zhenyu Zhang, Katharine Jager

Guests: Ed Hugetz, Michele Moosally, Sara Farris, Johanna Schmertz, David Ryden, Chief Boyle, Faiza Khoja, Ron Beebe, Gene Preuss, Pat Ensor, Lisa Berry, Catherine Howard, Kristen Anderson, Hsiao-Ming Wang, Karen Kaser, Mark Girrola, Chuck Jackson, Students: S. Sanchez, S. Harvin, and A. Garcia

Regrets: N/A

Absent: Charles Smith, Keith Wright, Kendra Mhoon (3:03 PM)

Call to Order: 2:33 PM

Meeting Proceedings

Announcements:

1. UCC voted on and passed the Faculty Senate recommendation of September 15, 2015.

Presentation by Senator Jager on SB 11:

1. Preamble: Faculty Senate passed resolution in March:

UHD Faculty Senate Resolution on Campus Carry, 3/3/15

WHEREAS, allowing firearms on the UHD campus threatens our ability to create and maintain a safe, open learning environment for students, faculty, and staff,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the members of the UHD Faculty Senate oppose any legislation or initiatives that will overturn the present prohibitions on carrying firearms on the UHD campus.

2. Presentation:

Texas' law, SB 11, goes into effect August 2016 for public universities.

There is considerable resistance to the upcoming law throughout Texas universities.

In late Sept. 2015, a professor at UTEP posted a public “no guns allowed” sign on the door to his classroom

[See <http://www.houstonchronicle.com/local/education/campus-chronicles/article/UT-professor-hangs-no-guns-sign-outside-6526718.php>]

Faculty at UH-Central and at UTSA are also mobilizing against the law, in unity with faculty at UT-Austin

Faculty at UT-Austin have formed “Gun Free UT,” a group in opposition to SB 11. The group of faculty, staff and students has

- ⑩ held rallies on campus (most recently at the base of the tower from which a campus shooter injured or killed almost 40 people, in August 1974)

- ⑩ produced t shirts in UT colors, featuring longhorns and the words “armed with reason” across the chest

- ⑩ circulated among faculty a petition opposing SB 11; over 300 faculty have signed (https://docs.google.com/document/d/17h29_L4zOQueHB9Z5qhI5rhYfvcI55LeGsk8dypNMvY/edit)

- ⑩ created a public Change.org petition which currently has over 2,300 names

Publicity of UT faculty's resistance has been featured in *The Washington Times*, *Time* magazine and the *New York Times*.

- ⑩ <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/sep/30/university-of-texas-professors-ban-guns-in-classro/>

- ⑩ <http://time.com/4061114/gun-control-texas/>

- ⑩ <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/04/opinion/sunday/frank-bruni-guns-campus-and-madness.html?partner=rss&emc=rss>

Note that UT's Chancellor, a former Navy SEAL, has been very forcefully opposed to SB 11.

From Bruni's *NYT* editorial above, Chancellor McRaven states:

“I absolutely understand the Second Amendment,” he added. “I have spent my life fighting for the Second Amendment. You know, you have to ask yourself why did the founding fathers put freedom of speech as the First Amendment? They may have done that because freedom of speech is incredibly important, and if you have guns on campus, I question whether or not that will somehow inhibit our freedom of speech.”

Pressed to elaborate, McRaven continued: “If you’re in a heated debate with somebody in the middle of a classroom and you don’t know whether or not that individual is carrying, how does that inhibit the interaction between students and faculty?”

So, what can be done:

- ⑩ those in opposition to the law may join forces with UT faculty and form a “Gun Free UHD” group, solicit faculty signatures on a petition, hold public protests, make tshirts

- ⑩ break the law and risk fines by refusing to allow guns in their classrooms or offices

And/or look to syllabi riders from faculty at places like Boise State. This comes from Dr. Leslie Madsen-Brooks, tenured history faculty at Boise State University. Note that this syllabus statement was developed in agreement with university counsel and eventually became part of language used more generally by BSU to deal with concealed carry on campus:

Our classroom weapons policy

In spring 2014, the Idaho state legislature voted to allow some people to bring guns onto college campuses, including into classrooms. I encourage all students to read the campus's updated policy on firearms and weapons.

You should also know that I am profoundly uncomfortable with the presence of weapons in the classroom, and I would appreciate it if students would not bring them to our class. Why? Because a gun represents to me the threat of violence, and thus the potential or implied presence of a weapon will change the way I teach and interact with students. Other students have let me know they do not feel as comfortable talking openly in the classroom knowing that guns have been welcomed onto campus.

I have crafted the following classroom policy on firearms in consultation with campus administrators knowledgeable about student safety, campus policy, and state law.

- ⑩ If you are a qualified retired law enforcement officer or someone who holds an enhanced license to carry concealed weapons, you are legally permitted to bring your concealed weapon into the classroom.
 - ⑩ If I see a weapon in the classroom, even if it is exposed unintentionally, that weapon is no longer concealed. I will leave the classroom and call the police, and you will be asked to leave class for the day.
 - ⑩ If you view a weapon in this classroom and it makes you uncomfortable, please report it to me and leave the classroom. I will notify the police.
- If the reasons for this classroom policy are not clear to you, I am happy to explain them, however the policy itself is not up for debate, negotiation, or revision.

If you would like to add Boise State's Campus Security and Police Services to your phone's contact list, the department may be reached at (208) 426-6911.

Questions and discussion:

Senator Pohl: Is anyone opposing this at UHD.

Answer: Not yet.

Senator Henney: Per the law, the Campus Carry Task Force has been assembled by President Flores. Senator Henney is chairing it.

Dr. Farris: Have the Gun Free Zones (GFZs) been defined at UHD?

Answer: Not yet.

Senator Jose: Can the President designate faculty offices as GFZs?

Answer: Technically, he can. However, the legislation does not allow a “preponderance” of the university to be designated as a GFZ.

Senator Coy: Presently, at what point does asking a student to leave become harassment?

Answer (Chief Boyle): That is not for the police to decide. Anyone claiming they see a gun presently must be able to say what they saw...not what they think they saw.

President-elect Ashe: How do we know if a particular gun is licensed or not?

Answer: We don't.

S. Harvin (student): Will the university be upping their security presence when the law takes effect.

Answer: Security “presence” is resource driven.

S. Sanchez (student): So it is a lack of funding?

Answer: We have finite resources.

Senator Benavides: IF a student is licensed to carry a gun, can we get a list?

Answer: No.

Senator Pohl: Are there plans for Segues for the UHD Police force?

Answer: Yes. They have been proposed several times to the UHD Planning and Budget Committee but have not made the “cut line” yet.

Dr. Moosally: Are there plans for an awareness campaign, a mobile phone app, or other communication platform.

Answer: Not yet, but a very good idea.

Senator London: Does campus carry require a license?

Answer: Yes.

Senator Hill: Will the new day care center be considered a GFZ?

Answer (Campus Cary Task Force Chair Henney): That is the first place we are recommending to the President.

Senator Hill: Can GFZs be modified?

Answer: Yes, on an annual basis.

Senator Kane: Will conceal carry “exposures” be reported via the Clery Act.

Answer: Probably not.

Senator Pohl: Will there be training on how to handle?

Answer (Campus Cary Task Force Chair Henney): Yes.

Senator London: Will UHD pay for faculty to become licensed to carry firearms.

Answer: [None]

President Pepper: Do we need more police officers?

Answer: We are shorthanded.

Professor Catherine Howard: Should we consult with OGC as to whose responsibility it is to report unconcealed handguns?

Answer: Yes.

Senator Connell: Can we ask OGC for syllabi boilerplate, akin to the ADA boilerplate, so that we as faculty are not targeted for something on our syllabi?

Answer: Yes.

Senator Benavides: Are there restrictions on what and where the President can designate as GFZs?

Answer: Yes.

A. Garcia student): What are the restrictions?

Answer: GFZs cannot make up a "preponderance" of the university and it must have a valid reason as to why it is designated a GFZ.

Dr. Moosally: Would it be advisable to create a campaign of education on the subject?

Answer: Yes.

S. Harvin (student): Is the university doing anything to make the students feel safer when this law goes into effect?

Answer: No, nothing, per se.

Senator Creighton: This is a huge engagement issue. SGAS needs to be heard on this issue,

Dr. Farris: Is someone saying they have a gun the same as un-concealing a gun?

Answer: Unknown.

President Pepper: What does this body want to do?

Senator Kane: Organize support against SB 11.

Senator Creighton: Need people to organize.

Senator Rejaie: Statement from OGC as to what constitutes concealed and unconcealed and a statement from OGC for syllabi.

New Business:

None.

Next meeting:

The next meeting of the Faculty Senate is October 19th.

Adjourn:

Adjournment at 4:03 PM.