

UHD Faculty Senate Meeting

January 18, 2011

Minutes

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

C. Bedard, R. Beebe, R. Chiquillo, D. De la Pena, G. Evans, S. Farris, J. Jackson, K. Jegdic, P. Kintzele, N. LaRose, J. Johnson, M. Moosally, W. Morgan, A. Pavelich, R. Pepper, N. Rangel, F. Williams, K. Wright, V. Zafiris, Z. Zhou

Absent: A. Eliassen, A. Gomez-Rivas, O. Paskelian, L. Spears

Report from Faculty Senate President Lyons

Enrollment numbers are up. Spring enrollment is up 3.5%, new FTIC's are up 4.4 %, new transfers are up 11%, and returning students are up 2.7%. Graduate student numbers are down 5.6%. December's graduation was a record graduation for fall semester; Lyons' guesstimate is 1300 or more.

Dressman has convened a "W" course task force to ensure that students graduate with strong writing skills. The Strategic Planning committee has met 3 times to carry on the work begun with the BHAG (High Impact Experience Initiative).

UHD's deans and chairs have come up with a list of cuts to be considered as ways to meet the new reduced budget.

UH has been given Tier One status by the Carnegie Foundation. Texas has a process of its own for recommending Tier One institutions.

It is hoped that Dr. Flores will make an announcement regarding the Provost search this week

Faculty Development Leave proposals are due by email to chairs and to committee chair John Linantud on Jan 21. Chairs are to send their reviews to Linantud on Jan 31.

The Gen Ed committee has submitted its Bachelor's Degree Graduate Profile to the University Curriculum Committee.

Save the date of February 4 for Dr. Vincent Tinto, a nationally recognized expert on retention and strategies for reducing student attrition. Your attendance is strongly encouraged.

Schmertz welcomed Sara Farris, who has been elected to replace English Department Senator Nell Sullivan in her final term. Sullivan was awarded a faculty development leave this semester.

Lyons congratulated Senator De La Pena, who has become a father for the third time

Report from Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs Michael Dressman

Dressman reiterated the importance of Dr. Vincent Tinto's visit. Tinto is working seriously to engage us before, during and after his visit.

Over 720 students enrolled in winter semester, which amounts to 2200 credit hours in over 30 sections. This will help us with our Spring semester numbers to report to the Coordinating Board.

Dressman said that the Strategic Planning group mentioned by Lyons began as the "Good to Great" leadership group to develop the vision statement. A further step for this group is to list strategic outcomes to "put flesh on bones" of the general vision statement.

Dressman encouraged scheduling that maximizes all days of the week. Particularly problematic are Mondays, which are loaded up with one day a week or hybrid classes, leaving Wednesday underutilized.

The System Provosts Council has just approved UHD's MBA (Dressman had just come from the meeting where this happened). The degree proposal will be on the BOR's agenda in February. Pending their approval, the degree will start next fall.

Lyons asked what the proposed tuition was. Dressman said \$19,000 without books, under \$25,000 with books. Masters degrees are often cited this way, as a total package rather than price per credit hour, because employers often foot the bill and want to know the total bill up front. UHD's tuition will be in the middle range of competing universities. For comparison, UH Bauer is at the high end, around \$32,000. Projected enrollment is 80 students in the first year, many of whom are likely to be UHD grads.

Dressman is sending a proposal to the Faculty Affairs Committee to increase the number of kinds of faculty positions available to include positions like clinical faculty. This will distinguish between types of lecturers and recognize their differing functions.

As Lyons mentioned, Dressman has talked to FSEC about budget cuts. The amount that needs to be cut is 1,025,000. One cost-saving proposal is making all student evaluations online.

Dressman noted that UH has done away with its faculty development leaves this year as part of its budget cuts.

Dressman and Bradley are talking about what sorts of "business as usual" funding items can be put on hold so that more drastic measures such as furloughs do not have to be enacted.

Stipends for distance and online education will probably be eliminated beginning this summer. They are currently funded departmentally through the adjunct budget.

Moosally asked how the so-called “business-as-usual” cuts will be determined; how will funding priorities be set? Dressman said he would try to apply the principles of “equivalence” and “reciprocity.”

Moosally pressed the question. Dressman said the cuts would come from department chairs and that maintaining enrollment would be the primary consideration in any decision about cuts.

Moosally asked about funds that were not departmentally administered. Dressman said he had cut \$4000 from both ORC and Faculty Development budgets.

Lyons emphasized the importance of notifying faculty what might be on the chopping block and allowing faculty to respond. Dressman said that unlike UH, where moneys are allocated to deans based on enrollment and budget decisions were made at the college level, we will be making these decisions at the department level, allowing faculty input. Lyons pressed about the degree to which budget cuts might be made at the college level. Dressman said the role of deans would be to consolidate monies among departments--for example, sharing staff when possible. He said he had urged department discussion of cuts so that faculty would become more aware of the “vocabulary” involved in such decisions.

Report from VP David Bradley

Bradley updated FS on budget projections and explained some figures announced in the press.

At the state level:

- \$72 billion. This is the anticipated available general revenue for FY2012/2013 announced by State Comptroller Susan Combs.
- \$15 billion. This is the projected “unadjusted” shortfall for the upcoming biennium. It is the difference between what we had last biennium (\$87B) and what we will have in the next one (the \$72B).
- \$27 billion. This is the amount of the shortfall if Texas were to provide the same level of service in the coming biennium as it did in the past one, given increased demands for such services. To provide the same level of service afforded by the \$87B in FY2010/2011, there would need to be \$99B for FY2012/2013. Since there is only \$72B available, the “current services deficit” is \$27B.

What this means to UHD:

- We have roughly \$10 million to cut for the next biennium, which starts in the Fall 2011. Last biennium, our general revenue budget was \$60.5 million. We have been allocated \$50.3 million in general revenue for this upcoming biennium, per the initial House bill (HB1), which posted the day after this Faculty Senate meeting.

- The \$10M is essentially a \$5M reduction that will carry over into the second year, so we essentially need to reduce our base budget by \$5M. The current plan is to spread the \$5M of base cuts over the two years of the biennium. Ex., in developing the FY2012 budget, cut \$3 million from the existing base. The remaining \$2 million needed for FY2012 will be funded through lapsed salaries and reserves. In developing the FY2013 budget we will need to make base reductions totaling another \$2M. Throughout FY2012 we will examine other ideas for reducing costs through efficiencies, and also for ways we might grow revenues, such as through increased enrollment.

Pavelich asked what UHD's total operating budget is. Bradley said around \$140 million.

Evans asked if the state was putting limitations on tuition increases. Bradley said no, but his impression is that our own Board of Regents would be opposed to it on the grounds that it might price students out of the market.

Evans asked about the Texas Grants program. Bradley said this program may be subject to cuts as well, and awards may be made on the basis of student merit rather than student financial need.

Construction: The roof piping project is completed. The roof over North One Main will be replaced beginning in February. The Academic Building parking project has been pushed back to March. During construction the first floor of the faculty/staff parking garage will be designated for visitors. UH system is working with architects to develop a facilities master plan. This plan is tied to enrollment projections, which are currently being researched.

Report from Head Librarian Pat Ensor:

The library is undergoing significant renovations with many signs of progress. As the construction continues, faculty should reassure students that the library is still functioning as usual.

There is now a "chat" function on the library website under "Ask a Librarian." There is also a "Tell Us What You Think" button. This is a place where faculty can help the library expand its offerings. A new resource, LibGuides, allows librarians to make research guides. Contact your subject librarian in a timely fashion if you would like him/her to develop a guide for your students. If you do not know who your subject librarian is, contact Ensor. Check under "Faculty Services" if you want to schedule class appointments/orientations.

Lyons asked if the library typically spent its budget allotment for periodicals and books. Ensor said yes, but UHD has funded the library generously. While there are no hard and fast rules about how much can be spent by any one discipline, the library will work to meet each department's needs. Online versions of a journal are cheaper, so if you request a journal, be aware that you will probably get the online version.

Lecturer and Adjunct Teaching Award

Lyons passed out an email from Dr. Lisa Morano, chair of the Faculty Awards Committee. The email said the committee was willing to consider applications for a new teaching award for adjuncts and lecturers although the Faculty Awards deadline has passed. For the first year, the award would lump adjuncts and lecturers in the same category, with the assumption that next year there would be two separate awards. The letter asked for swift approval from Faculty Senate or swift approval with minor modifications, and attached a proposed call, timeline, and list of supporting materials.

Pavelich approved the idea but thought the issue of where the money would come from should be addressed (\$1000 was proposed). He suggested we consider reducing the amounts of Faculty Awards to indicate our support of this award.

Bradley said that he thought the university could handle the \$1000 award without sacrifice on the part of other faculty.

Moosally agreed, pointing out that UH awarded \$260,000 in teaching awards; perhaps this is a model we might aspire to. She is comfortable assenting to the proposal as is for this year, but would like some sort of followup at the end of the year. She sees a few potential problems that might be addressed after a followup assessment. For example, a proposed requirement that nominees have taught for “two consecutive academic years” is vague. Also, she wonders about a statement requiring nominees to submit grade distributions, and whether candidates for the regular teaching award are bound by this requirement. Some problems with requiring grade distributions are 1.) what message is being conveyed by such a requirement (grade distributions can be interpreted in a range of ways and not all departments value them as evidence), and 2.) whether adjuncts actually have ready access to this information.

Evans said she was willing to approve the proposal on a one-year basis and improve it in ensuing years. She felt the proposal was a “really good start.”

LaRose agreed with Moosally that “two consecutive years” was vague; would the committee want someone who had taught only one course consecutively? Evans said in her college some of the best adjuncts are those who only teach one course.

Farris felt it was unfair for lecturers and adjuncts to compete for the same award. She said she was willing to support the proposal as is for now.

Kintzele expressed concern about the requirement that nominees have materials from 3 consecutive semesters at some point in the last three years. What about adjuncts who only teach in the fall?

It was agreed that “consecutive” would disenfranchise some adjuncts, and that it would be preferable to recommend a formulation of “X number of courses in Y number of years” to demonstrate a legacy of good teaching. Schmertz made a motion to that effect. Changes in wording were then suggested that included the various concerns mentioned above, but as Senate did not agree on what specific changes needed to be made, the motion disintegrated.

Whitney Morgan is on the Faculty Awards committee and said that she would clarify for the committee what was discussed in Faculty Senate.

Moosally said that in addition to the concerns previously mentioned about grade distributions, she thought the two-day timeline between nomination and notification of nomination was too short. **She moved that the Senate send the recommendation back to the committee with a statement of support from Faculty Senate and a list, conveyed by FS president Lyons, of the issues we discussed for the committee to consider. The motion was seconded by Evans and approved unanimously.**

Lyons passed out the survey of agenda items conducted at the beginning of last semester and asked senators to consider it and provide input on future agenda items.

Respectfully submitted,

Johanna Schmertz, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of English

Faculty Senate Secretary