

UHD FACULTY SENATE MEETING

March 04, 2008

CALLED TO ORDER: The twelfth meeting for the 2007-2008 academic year of the UHD Faculty Senate was held in C-100, Commerce Street Building, Houston, Texas on March 4, 2008. The meeting convened at 2:30 pm. President Anjoo Sikka presiding, with Vice-President Michelle Moosally, and Secretary-Treasurer Gene Preuss.

Present: Anjoo Sikka (President), Michelle Moosally (Vice President), Gene Preuss (Secretary/Treasurer), Jeffrey Adams (MMBA), Austin Allen (SOS), David Branham (SOS), Raquel Chiquillo (A&H), Byron Christmas (NS), Merrilee Cunningham (ENG), Ermelinda DeLaViña (CMS), Joyce Dutcher (UE), Susan Henney (SOS), Lance Hignite (CJ), Kathleen McLellan (ENG), Rich McMahon (FACIS), Pat Mosier (A&H), Angela Pedrana (UE), Kimmera Pinkerton (UE), Lucille Pointer (MMBA), Nick Rangel (A&H), Ruth Robbins (FACIS), Jorge Tito-Izquierdo (ET), Zehai Zhou (FACIS)

Absent: John Capeheart (NS), Youn-Sha Chan (CMS), Tony Chiaviello (ENG), Anne Kane (SOS), Steve Maranville (MMBA), Sam Penkar (FACIS), Aimee Roundtree (ENG), Larry Spears (NS), Cindy Stewart (SOS), Jeong-Mi Yoon (CMS), and Shengli Yuan (CMS).

Guests: Chair of Academic Policies Liz Walden, Chair of Faculty Affairs Jon Harned, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost Molly Woods, Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs Pat Williams, Vice President for Administration and Finance David Bradley.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Senate President Sikka and Senator DeLaViña suggested changes to the minutes and The Senate approved the minutes, as amended.

REPORT FROM SENATE OFFICERS: President Sikka reminded senators that the external assessment consultant, Trudy W. Banta, Professor of Higher Education and Senior Advisor to the Chancellor for Academic Planning and Evaluation Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, would visit the campus Wednesday, March 5, 2008. She encouraged everyone who is involved with assessment to attend the meetings with Dr. Banta, and follow up with his or her Dean on the role program coordinators and assessment specialists will play in their college's assessment plans. She reminded the Senate that the emphasis for our upcoming monitoring report should be on program-level and general education assessment. She invited senators to send her questions that might arise over assessment. She asked Penny Cureton, Executive Director Office of the President, to consider ways for Dr. Banta to help on later visits, and suggested that the University should invite her to return to the campus at a later date.

Sikka said that the Academic Assessment Committee has been formed, and stated that the senate charge to the Curriculum Committee to develop a policy on assessment has been sent.

She stated that the University Planning Council will address the Vice President's feedback on funding priorities by mid- to late-March. She said that any Senate funding initiative should be sent to her. She suggested that the Senate could call for more support for evening students and faculty as thirty percent of UHD students are evening students.

Academic Affairs Council met February 20 to review the Grievance Policy. Suggestions relating to committee members' term limits and consideration of how groups are to be represented are being incorporated into the policy revisions.

Election of Senate Officers will be held next week. Once the Committee on Committees reviews the candidate nominations, the Credentials and Elections Committee will hold the election.

Senate elections will be held in April. Sikka announced that due to the loss of faculty members in some colleges, the number of senate members would decrease.

Senator Pointer asked if the faculty members are leaving for more money or because of a loss of student enrollments. Sikka replied that the university has not lost students. Senator Robbins asked if job postings to replace the faculty who left are posted. Sikka stated that the positions are on the web.

Vice President Moosally reported that the University General Education Committee is looking at the Measure of Academic Proficiency and Progress (MAPP) test to assess general education outcomes at UHD. The university is also administering the NSSE (National Survey of Student Engagement) exam again this year as an indirect measure of student engagement and active learning in the classroom.

She also stated that vacancies would be on the Academic Affairs and Curriculum committees, and that deans and chairs would also be looking for nominees. She suggested if senators are looking for committee work that a list of available openings would be publicized.

Moosally also stated that minutes from committee meetings would be posted on the Senate website.

Secretary/Treasurer Preuss stated that the QEP Committee was meeting and considering several promising faculty-development funding requests.

REPORT FROM ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP:

Vice President and Provost Woods noted that the UHD Academic Awards Program will be held on April 29, and information will be delivered to department chairs today to remind faculty about the awards presented last year.

She noted that Achieving the Dream coach Eileen Baccus and Data Facilitator Ted Wright visited last week, and had positive comments about the university's efforts.

Woods noted that at a recent retreat for chief academic officers much of the discussion centered at the recent legislative changes that apply to higher education in Texas, including the six-course drop rule, and aligning with high school curriculum by Fall 2009. She stated that legislation will mandate that students must complete a college-bound curriculum to enroll in the state's universities; those who don't will have to enroll in community colleges, unless the high school they attended did not provide an academic curriculum.

She reported on the progress of assessment in February. She stated that there has been a flurry of activity in some departments, and she would report further in March.

Pointer asked if students' taking the SAT would affect whether they can enroll in colleges or universities.

Woods stated that funding is not provided for classes in curriculum.

Robbins stated that the news reported that Texas Southern University would establish admissions criteria, and asked if UHD would do the same. Woods said the possibility had been discussed, but no decision had been made. Sikka clarified that this was only a matter of discussion, and there were no plans underway to establish enrollment criteria. Robbins asked what methods are used to determine if a student is college ready. Woods replied that the students are required to take Accuplacer exams. Senator Branham asked how long student would attend community colleges. Woods stated that this had not been determined. Senator Dutcher stated that attending community college would not necessarily prepare students for university-level work, and the result could be students who transfer in at a higher level who are underprepared. Woods stated that the number of students coming out of high school with college credit will be coming in as sophomores without being on high education campuses will expand.

Robbins said that students who were supposed to get attachments on GatorMail reported that they did not get the attachments. She wondered if the GatorMail was not accepting attachments. Other Senators stated that they should get the attachments and perhaps the students overlooked the email.

Jon Harned stated that the reason for the state of UHD students is that there is a dedicated faculty who work with developmental students. Preuss stated that reports indicate that students who enroll in more developmental courses tend to be retained at the university longer.

Pointer stated that some four-year community colleges are now granting BA degrees. Woods stated that there is a limit on the type of bachelor's programs that community colleges can develop.

Pat Williams, Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs and interim chair of the Academic Assessment committee, stated that the committee called a meeting the previous Friday and had a successful turnout. He stated that the meeting's purpose was to get people involved in assessment and share ideas and learn from each other, and take what they learn across to other departments. He stated that there are shared folders so that members can share items and a listserv so they can communicate more effectively.

He reported that he administered the MAPP test to several classes with students who were nearing graduation so that he could get at least 200 students with 90 or more hours. As a result of his efforts, he sent off 249 exams today and expects the results in two weeks. The test, he said, will measure achievement in several areas that align to general education learning outcomes, and combined with the NSSE an Writing Proficiency Exam will be able to provide a good insight into our how our students are meeting learning outcomes. He stated, however, that

he did not know if UHD would use the MAPP exam again. Preuss replied that it would be a good idea to at least give the MAPP exam several more tries before considering doing away with the exam. Sikka stated that good assessment practices use more than one qualitative tool for measurement.

DeLaViña asked how the students were selected and how they were motivated to take the exam seriously. Williams stated that this first attempt was a learning experience. Students were encouraged to volunteer to take the exam and told that they were playing a role in UHD's accreditation process.

Preuss suggested that the focus groups planned by the Achieving the Dream initiative at UHD could also be used as a tool to assess student skills and how they meet the general education outcomes. Williams agreed that there are a variety of places we can look for assessment data. Sikka stated that the university should bring its data together to see what is being done.

Vice President for Administration and Finance David Bradley reported that the university has seen an increase in available funds as a result of enrollment growth, increased fees, and reallocation of existing funds. He explained that UHD enrollments in the Fall and Spring exceeded expectations and that meant more money would roll forward as a base of \$1.4 million for new initiatives. He stated that there is a general feeling to hold off on fee increases until 2009. There is a proposal for a 4.2% tuition increase, which is currently at \$135 per credit hour. He expects fees to increase, including a computer use fee and the extended education fee will be applied to all students. He noted that the university also reallocated \$1.2 million. This will help pay for a 3% pay raise increase pool in 2009, which will amount to \$1.2 million. UHD has not seen an increase in M&O funds across the university for three years, and he foresees a 10% increase across the university.

Sikka called for a motion to hold an additional senate session on Tuesday, March 25, 2008, as the second meeting of the month falls on Spring Break. Moosally so moved, and the senate approved the motion.

Robbins asked if the fee for online students would increase. Bradley said that all students will now pay the online fee as more classes are making more use of online delivery systems. This will mean \$350,000 in additional funds.

Senator Cunningham stated that the increase pay raise pool is nice, but noted faculty are leaving UHD because of the 4/4 teaching load, and asked if there were any prospect for a discussion on reducing the course load. Bradley replied that that was not his decision to make. Sikka stated that course reduction is a complex topic, but noted that President Castillo did refer to workload reduction at the last Strategic Planning meeting. She suggested the next faculty senate president could make course load reduction a prime concern for the Senate.

Preuss called for a Point of Order so that the Senate could consider the Ombuds Policy

REVIEW OF DRAFT-- OMBUDS POLICY: Robbins referred to section 3.1.4 and asked how anonymous comments would be evaluated in the performance of the ombudsperson. She

also referred to section 3.1.6 and felt that this subsection made the position more of a mediator rather than facilitating the grievant.

Senator Christmas said that under the current policy, the Focus Committee worked somewhat like a grand jury, and if the grievant passed the first stage, the Focus Committee worked as the advocate for the grievant, and it seems that the ombudsperson is taking that role. Senator Mosier stated that the new policy does not stipulate that the grievant must speak to the ombudsperson. Christmas stated that the new policy does not mandate that, but that if the grievant does use the ombudsperson, the ombudsperson is not an advocate, but is neutral and must consider both sides. Mosier stated that she would like more clarification of the ombudsperson's role. Harned stated that the role of the ombudsperson is to remain impartial, and that the grievance process is only one role the ombudsperson will fill.

Senator Rangel expressed concern that the qualifications for the ombudsperson listed in the bullet points under subsection 4.1 are not all easily measureable; some are concrete and some are more abstract. Sikka agreed that determining the best qualified person will be difficult, but stated that the abstract concepts would help the Senate make a decision. Moosally asked how candidates would demonstrate that they "command the respect of colleagues." Harned replied that there are several factors to evaluate the candidate's integrity.

Robbins called attention to 4.4.2 (the second one) calls for a review of the Ombudsperson in July, but subsection 4.2 calls for recommendations for an ombudsperson to be delivered to the University President by April 1. She wondered if the timeline needed to be adjusted so that the position could be filled if the evaluation was poor.

Mosier stated that some faculty believed that a general faculty election was preferable to nomination by the Faculty Senate.

Robbins wondered who would represent the ombudsperson if there is a complaint or lawsuit against the ombudsperson. Sikka stated that there was a question of whether the university general council would represent the ombudsperson. Cunningham stated that under the old policy the focus and hearing subcommittee had access to legal representation.

Sikka asked the Senate to review the proposed Procedure for Eliminating Programs Policy.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: No announcements.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion for adjournment was made and seconded. The motion carried, and the meeting adjourned at 4:05 pm.

Date of Approval

**Secretary/Treasurer
UHD Faculty Senate**