

UHD FACULTY SENATE MEETING
August 21, 2007

CALLED TO ORDER: The second meeting for the 2007-2008 academic year of the UHD Faculty Senate was held in A-300, One Main Street, Houston, Texas on August 21, 2007. 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), Youn-Sha Chan (CMS), Raquel Chiquillo (A&H), Byron Christmas (NS), Merrilee Cunningham (ENG), Ermelinda DeLaViña (CMS), Joyce Dutcher (UE), Anne Kane (SOS), Kathleen McLellan (ENG), Rich McMahon (FACIS), Pat Mosier (A&H), Angela Pedrana (UE), Sam Penkar (FACIS), Lucille Pointer (MMBA), Nick Rangel (A&H), Ruth Robbins (FACIS), Aimee Roundtree (ENG), Cindy Stewart (SOS), Jorge Tito-Izquierdo (ET), Jeong-Mi Yoon (CMS), Shengli Yuan (CMS), Zehai Zhou (FACIS)

Absent: Tony Chiaviello (ENG), Steve Maranville (MMBA)

Guests: UHD President Max Castillo, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost Molly Woods, VP Ed Apodaca, VP David Bradley

President Sikka declared a quorum and called the meeting to order at 2:35 pm.

Approval of Minutes: The meeting minutes from April 17, 2007, were sent via email, but the previous Senate did not act on them. The new Senate voted to postpone action until the next meeting, when it could decide to ratify the minutes. The Senators also voted to delay action on the minutes from the May 1st meeting, the first meeting of the new Senate, until the next meeting so senators would have an opportunity to review the minutes.

Report from Senate Officers: President Sikka welcomed members of the Senate to the beginning of the academic year.

She announced that the preliminary results of the Faculty Climate Survey were distributed via email. She asked senators to share the information with other faculty and consider what action the Senate should take as a result of the findings.

The University Planning Committee worked through the end of May prioritizing funding based upon short and long-term planning. Increased funds for staff and faculty raises became available because of unexpected formula funding revision and better state coverage of group insurance led to an overall 3% pool for merit pay raises and some salary adjustments based upon College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA) levels.

The Academic Affairs Council did not meet over the Summer.

The University Faculty Advisory Committee did not meet over the summer.

She announced that the membership of the Strategic Planning Initiative committee has been finalized through the UHD President's office. The committee will meet throughout the semester to work on the university's long-range mission and vision. She noted that Friday, August 24, the faculty senate is invited to meet with the planning consultants in 1099N at 11 am.

She noted that President Castillo announced that Susan Davis is the new executive director for public affairs, and she noted that the position should help UHD carve out a niche in the UH System and for students.

Vice-President Moosally reported on committee placements, and told senators that if they are unsure about their place on committees to please contact her or Penny Cureton in the President's office.

Senators voted for run-off candidates for the Curriculum Committee. The result of the election was 6 votes for Trevor Hale; 17 votes for Rahul Verma.

Senator Pointer asked if there was any information available about the candidates. Moosally and Sikka stated that under the present guidelines, the entire senate votes for each college's representative on selected committees. Sikka commented that, with a growing campus and faculty it will be increasingly difficult to know all faculty members, and revising the process for (s)election of faculty on such committees would be worthwhile.

Secretary/Treasurer Preuss began the meeting with discussion about the status of previous minutes from before the summer recess as noted above.

He also updated the Senate on the status of the Achieving the Dream Grant. The final proposal was submitted in mid-May. The grant is for \$400,000 to be distributed over the next four years to track low-income and minority students First Time in College students longitudinally over four years to identify obstacles to success and prepare and evaluate initiatives to help them graduate. In late June, the granting agency asked for addition clarification on five points which are due at the end of August.

Reports from UHD Administration:

President Castillo reported that during the legislative session in May UHD did well despite flat enrollments due to a reconfiguration of the formula funding and Higher Education Assistance Funds (HEAF). This adjustment provided UHD with a good biannual budget, and we received additional revenue on Tuition Revenue Bonds which UHD will use to pay construction debt on the Shay Street building.

He also noted that \$3.5 million for renovations to the UHD Library would be covered by corporate and foundation funding so that HEAF monies could be reallocated.

He reminded Senators that the President's Convocation is at 2pm, Thursday, August 30 beginning at the 3rd floor Auditorium. A grand opening of the Shea Street building will follow. Refreshments will be served at the Shea Street building.

Senator DeLaViña asked if computers will be installed in all classrooms, as there are none on the 3rd floor of the new building.

VP David Bradley said that 25 of the 43 classrooms have a presentation system, and there is some \$250,000 allocated for presentation room updates in all buildings.

DeLaViña also asked if there would be larger whiteboards in classrooms.

President Castillo ended his report by announcing the new officers elected at the University of Houston System Board of Regents meeting on August 16. Welcome W. Wilson, Sr., is the new chair, Calvin W. Stephens is vice-chair, and Jim P. Wise is the new secretary.

Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost Molly Woods announced that the BAAS degree in Criminal Justice and the BSW degree in Social Sciences was approved at the Board of Regents level, and would now proceed to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for final approval, which could take six months.

Woods stated that faculty is concerned with the restructuring at the Sugarland campus which called for a withdrawal of UHD from the campus. She noted that this will not result in an enrollment setback, and UHD will now focus on expanding programs in the Northeast and Northwest and through collaboration with the North Harris Montgomery Community College District, especially in Urban Education, Business, and Criminal Justice.

She noted that during the beginning of this semester, increased efforts are being made to make students feel more comfortable and acclimated to the new buildings and classrooms, and pointed out that staff and faculty members are wearing nametags and lanyards to make themselves more visible to students who have questions.

Woods also announced that she approved a study abroad program for next year. She noted that she felt she signed a “model” program, and encouraged others who were considering developing a study abroad program to review it.

She stated that she recently attended an accountability measurement meeting in Austin that addressed the importance of increasing student retention rates. Attendees also discussed the limits of recognizing only 6-year graduation rates, and discussed the possibility of extending credit to 8 or 10-year graduations.

Moosally asked about faculty participation in decisions to expand programs into the Kingwood and CyFair campuses. Woods responded that some of those decisions are made by the Regents and campus administration.

Senator Robbins asked if the changes on the Board of Regents would affect the MBA degree proposal. Woods responded that the MBA proposal is not dead, and would be revamped. President Castillo stated that there are several factors that contribute to decisions about proposing new programs. First, is the university holding its own on enrollment in existing masters

programs? Second, does a university have enough resources to carry a program through the first several years? Finally, a proposal must be supported by a thorough needs assessment. He believes that UHD's MBA proposal is strong in the third area. He pointed out that other MBA programs in the region are not necessarily affordable to all students. He thinks the College of Business MBA proposal is strong, and offers a unique approach to a MBA program. The UHD proposal addresses the strength of the BA and presents a strong case for a MBA.

Sikka stated that the College of Business should expand into graduate programs as it's the largest college at UHD and students have expressed a need and interest in the MBA at UHD.

She also expressed a concern about the expansion of programs at distance education locations. She noted that courses being offered off-campus affect the daily lives and schedules of faculty members and changes in locations of program offerings (e.g., withdrawal from Sugarland) place considerable stress on them. , She expressed concern that faculty input takes a back seat to discussion about expansion, and stressed that collaborative decision-making in program expansion is important.

Senator Roundtree asked if minutes were available for the accountability meeting Dr. Woods attended, and if transfer students affected offset graduation rates. Dr. Woods said that higher education institutions don't want to count students until they are ready for college-level courses. There are things we can do to retain students, she stated, and graduation rates are good for transfer students. She was not aware, however, if minutes for the meeting were available, but Gail Evans suggested that they might be posted on the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board website.

Sikka said that goals of retention and graduation rates should be part of the long-term strategy planning. Woods stated that students appreciate assistance, and commented that we all have a role in helping with confusion. A helpful attitude aids students.

VP Bradley stated that the Shea Street building is open and running, but not at where it should be. Construction was hampered by the concerns over soil contamination. In addition, he noted that the pedestrian paths are not good, but he hoped that the situation would improve in the coming weeks. He also noted that there are no blinds in the classrooms, and the parking management system needed work. Police Chief Boyle stated that the technical issues are being addressed.

Bradley also announced that the environmental and land issues at the Willow Street Pump Station are resolved and that new arrangements have been made over land transactions between UHD and Metro over exchanging land: land will be purchased by both parties instead of swapped. He stated that he would report on safety issues for the next Senate meeting.

Senator Cunningham asked if there are any plans to include classrooms in the library renovation. Bradley said that the library plans are still fluid. She asked if Metro was extending the U Pass program for students. Bradley stated that Metro continued to extend the program, but the Q Card is in the future for METRO, although they will provide a discount for students.

Senator Pointer stated that Business faculty who teach ITV courses should be allowed to park in the faculty garage at One Main Street, and that faculty who teach at the Shea Street building should be allowed to park there, as well. Bradley and Boyle said that parking considerations were under review.

Preuss commented that patrol officers were overseeing the crosswalks to the Shea Street building, and that was very helpful. Chief Boyle said that officers were assigned to assist during heavy class times, and Bradley pointed out that these officers were working overtime due to the continued shortage of patrol officers.

President Sikka recognized Shohreh Hashemi who asked if it were possible to work out a few parking spaces for transient faculty members. Sikka suggested that the parking issue is considerable, and perhaps should be a special topic for the Senate.

VP for Enrollment and Student Services Ed Apodaca reported that student enrollment was up. Applications increased by 8%, and admissions by 3%. He expected that the overall increase in student headcount would be 2-3% over last Fall. He noted that transfers make up about 2/3 of new students. He stated that the increased enrollment was the result of everyone's efforts. Continuing students make up approximately 75-80% of the student body. Of the students who did not reenroll at UHD, 50% are at other schools, and he noted that 85% of First Time students are lost by the 6th year, 20% within the first year. Still, UHD graduation rates are up.

He noted that students on financial aid with a 0.0 GPA will have holds on their enrollment, and this accounts for a half million dollars in student funds. He also noted that new state legislation prohibits state funding for students who repeat a course three times or more.

Sikka suggested that information that affects students should be passed along at the advisor level. Apodaca stated that they are also changing student orientation to better inform students.

Moosally suggested an information sheet should be prepared for faculty, as well.

Senator McMahon asked how the legislation would affect faculty members.

Preuss suggested that as it was 4 pm, and the topic was considerable, if this might be a special topic for the Senate.

Sikka stated that three topics emerged during this meeting: 1) Parking, 2) Legislation and other forces affecting faculty and students, and 3) Student retention and recruitment.

Moosally moved that the topic of the September 4th meeting should be the remaining two items in the agenda – Responses to Faculty Senate resolutions on program deletion and initial discussion of the Faculty Climate Survey analysis. The motion was seconded and passed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Sikka asked that Senators send her information about topics they would like to discuss. She also stated that the next meeting would also address the topic on today's agenda: the policy of deleting programs that do not require faculty positions.

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**