

DRAFT
FACULTY SENATE MINUTES
Meeting: March 3, 2009

PRESENT: M. Moosally, B. Belbot, T. Davis, , B. Christmas, J. Creighton, J. Dutcher, T. Emeka, J. Flosi, O. Gupta, T. Hale, S. Henney, L. Hignite, A. Kane, N. Leveille, P. Lyons, K. McLellan, D. Nino, C. Nguyen, A. Pavelich, J. Pavletich, N. Rangel, T. Redl, R. Robbins, K. Robertson, D. Ryden, J. Schmertz, P. Simeonov, J. Yoon, Z. Zhou

ABSENT: B. Gilbert, A. Gomez-Rivas, S. Penkar, K. Pinkerton, A. Rejaie

GUESTS: Provost M. Woods, VP D. Bradley, VP I. Montalbano, AVP G. Evans, Library Director P. Ensor, K. Alfaro, J. Alvarez, E. Apodaca, R. Boyle, J. Cantu, P. Cureton, P. Evergreen, G. Getz, J. Jackson, C. Kimberly, C. McCall, M. Sabino, C. Snell, K. Stokes, W. Turner

Senate President Moosally called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

Minutes were not available. February 17 minutes and March 3 minutes will be approved via an email vote.

Senate President Moosally's Report (see attached President's Report)

President Moosally announced the following dates:

April 7—Awards Ceremony at 2:30-4:00 p.m. (in lieu of the Faculty Senate meeting)

April 8—Achieving the Dream

April 16—The Faculty-Student Smack-Down

She also announced that elections for Senators for the 2009-2010 academic year will be underway soon.

Senate Vice-President Belbot's Report

VP Belbot announced that the Faculty Senate website will soon have all committee memberships uploaded.

It was announced that the University Faculty Executive Committee (UFEC) meeting (presidents and vice-presidents of Senates from the 4 UH universities) was attended by VP Belbot with President Moosally participating via skype. VP Belbot said what was interesting was that UHD knew more about the governor's initiative (was communicated to us earlier by the administration) than any of the other UH universities. There was much discussion of the governor's initiative. The information that senators received a week later was composed by UFEC and sent to all faculty with the governor's initiative attached. The remainder of the UFEC meeting focused on the student success conference which is to be held at UHD on March 27. VP

Belbot encouraged all senators and faculty to attend; the conference is free for all faculty and includes a free lunch.

Provost Woods

Provost Woods provided an administrative update. Her office is preparing a template for the information that will be request from faculty for inclusion on the report to the governor (i.e. to meet the requirements of the governor's initiative should it be necessary at the last minute). The Pappas consulting group has been retained by the UH System Chancellor to lead the investigation about programs, etc. for the purpose of helping to distinguish among the four universities in the UH System. The Pappas representative has visited with student affairs people and the deans today. He will ask deans for the number of students in programs, about future programs, and to respond to issues at the off-campus sites. The Pappas group will present to the BOR in June. Provost Woods was asked if the faculty will have the opportunity to participate in this process. She does not know but will ask. So far, she has not met anyone from the other UH System universities who is in favor of some of the things that have been mentioned as possibilities, e.g. centralized admission. The vice-chancellors of the UH System have been involved in the 249 initiative; however, she has no further information right now other than the fact that two universities in the UH system (i.e., UH and UHD) and two other universities (i.e., Prairie View and A&M) are providing program delivery as a part of the 249 initiative.

Provost Woods said that when Dr. Kaplan (Pappas group representative) visited with her, she was still trying to differentiate the four universities in terms of mission.

Senate President Moosally reminded Provost Woods to announce the release time for the Senate Vice President and the Secretary-Treasurer. Provost Woods said that she had noticed that the workload of all senate officers had increased. As a result, all Senate officer positions will have a course release each semester, beginning spring semester 2009, to facilitate their leadership roles with the Senate.

Senate President Moosally then asked VP Bradley to give an update on budget issues. VP Bradley reported that Metro had been interested in building a transit center north of UHD campus; however, Metro has now withdrawn from the transit center idea due to lack of funds. Metro is still planning to extend the metro line north by about 5 miles. At that time, Metro would have to redo some of the streets and cross-ways between One Main and the Shea Street Building. VP Bradley also announced that faculty will be given "fobs" to provide access to classrooms and can then leave their access cards in their vehicles. This will probably occur after spring break. President Moosally said FSEC has met with and encouraged VP Bradley to have a forum on safety on campus. Senator Robbins asked if there would be a metro stop by the parking lot. VP Bradley was not sure where the metro stop would be. Senator Pavletich asked if metro was going to put some sort of safety barrier (handrail) up; VP Bradley was unsure. Senator Leveille asked if access to classrooms would be extended in terms of entry anytime with the fob. VP Bradley said that they had decided that faculty would have access to all classrooms at all times.

Provost Woods said that Admissions Office personnel had attended a conference today on veterans' benefits. She felt that AVP Apodaca would want faculty to know that he is up-to-date and on-top-of new requirements for veterans' benefits related to education.

President Moosally then turned the meeting over to Senator P. Lyons to address the topic of childcare. Senator Lyons provided a handout (see attached). Senator Lyons has met with VP I. Montalbano to get an update on the status of a possible childcare program for UHD faculty, staff, and students. Senator Lyons called for a survey to assess the level of need for childcare among the faculty, staff, and students. The survey would be the first thing to do—perhaps to assess both short-term and long-term needs. Senator Lyons made the point that there are advantages to having childcare; it would be a good recruitment tool for both faculty and students. He asked VP Montalbano to speak about the status of these kinds of programs. VP Montalbano said that there has been discussion of starting a work-life program for employees for the past year or so. To start with, it is likely that UHD would provide a list of childcare programs available, a list of resources for drop-in day care, one for sick children, and one for after-hours (e.g., resources for centers that would be open from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.) ESO is also in the process of trying to negotiate an arrangement for employee discounts—e.g., one childcare center would offer a 20% discount; another would offer a 10% discount for a guarantee of 5 kids; a 20% discount for a guarantee of 10 kids). Senator Pavletich said she recalled years ago being told that UHD was in a flood plain and could not have childcare on campus for that reason. Provost Woods said it was not specifically that UHD is in a flood plain, but that UHD did not have the facilities (e.g., little toilets, etc.) to support a childcare center. Dr. Moosally said that FSEC had discussed doing the “needs” assessment first and then to go from there. UHD now has different circumstances from what the circumstances were years ago. The conversation needs to shift from whether we can have a daycare center to what we can do to help our employees meet the childcare needs they have. Senator Henney said there was a new set of state rules as of 2001—the biggest problem might be that it is required that children have outside time. If we are building “new” buildings, then we could plan for space that could accommodate childcare. Senator Dutcher of the department of urban education said that they do engage their students in working with the very young child on up. Senator McLellan suggested looking at faculty and staff needs first, then adding student needs; she pointed out that there may be funding available. Senator Lyons said he thought we should be as open as possible. Senator Robbins asked if ESO is looking at the 77002 area; VP Montalbano said that “yes,” the 77002 zipcode area was included. Senator Dutcher pointed out that there are changes in childcare facilities management and workers and we may be better off having a list of employees who live in certain areas. VP Montalbano said that there would have to be a disclaimer. Senator Lyons said that we should still make every effort to check out those that childcare facilities that would be on the list. Senator Leveille asked about links to childcare facilities. Senate President Moosally and Senator Lyons said that there are links to the state. Senator Henney said that the state will provide information about adverse actions against any daycares. Senator Lyons said that if anyone would like to input information, they could send their questions or comments to him; such questions or comments could be survey-related or any other kind of information that would be helpful.

Higher Ed in Texas

Senate President Moosally reported that since the last Senate meeting, FSEC and UFEC have been doing some research on the Governor's Initiatives that were passed out to Senate members

by Provost Woods at that meeting. The initiatives are based on proposals that came out at a summit held by the Governor in May 2008 with Boards of Regents members; the proposals are called “the seven breakthrough solutions.” President Moosally read the points and reminded senators that she had emailed links to this information and UH System responses (summarized in a handout—see attached). President Moosally said that based on this information and concerns expressed by faculty, FSEC developed a draft resolution for the Senate to consider but that we could open the floor for discussion first. She also said that the President of AAUP at A&M does not have the governor’s initiative document. UT-Pan American has the document, but President Moosally does not know whether the other UTs have it. President Moosally had spoken with UHD President Castillo; he said that the requirement of putting all of this information on a website does not have official legal standing. UH System administrators have made the point that every student does have the opportunity to evaluate faculty; they are also considering the possibility of finding a way to respond on the posting of syllabi, though not in the exact format of the governor’s request. President Castillo said the UH System is attempting to figure out how to do this. Provost Woods said that the response sent from UHD to the UH System questioned the governor’s authority to demand this information. She had had the opportunity to talk with provosts from other universities, and they knew very little about the governor’s initiative document. Right now, there is a lot of confusion about how to respond to the governor’s initiative.

Senator Redl asked about the A&M participation. Provost Woods said that when the 7-points document came out from the governor’s office in May 2008, the UH system developed a document that indicated how each university in the system had already addressed these items. Senator Kane said it seems that the governor’s group is saying “faculty committees are made up of imbeciles”—essentially, they are not in support of faculty. President Moosally said that there is a perception that we are overpaid, underworked, and inefficient, so she thinks that faculty are going to have to be more involved in the legislature. Senator Lyons said we may have to be trained to deal with/communicate with the legislature. Senator Flosi suggested that we should go back to the strategic plan—there were some suggestions in the strategic plan. Senator Pavletich said that there are strong forces behind this. Senator Hale suggested that we should consider a resolution—either today or at the next time. President Moosally said that it appears that UHD is preparing to abide by this directive from the governor. She thinks that faculty should take some action. Provost Woods said that she did not interpret the actions of UHD in the same way, but she understands Dr. Moosally’s position. Senator Lyons said it is good to have our publications available, but he does not want the governor to think that we are complying with his directive in any way. Senator Schmertz made a motion to consider the resolution draft from FSEC. Senator Pavletich moved to table the resolution until the next meeting. The resolution was tabled.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Davis
Secretary