

UHD Faculty Senate Meeting
February 16, 2010
Minutes

PRESENT: M. Moosally, B. Belbot, T. Davis, C. Bedard, R. Beebe, R. Chiquillo, J. Creighton, D. de la Pena, H. Eliassen, T. Emeka, J. Flosi, B. Gilbert, A. Gomez-Rivas, O. Gupta, S. Henney, A. Hewitt, G. Jackson, K. Jegdic, , P. Lyons, C. Nguyen, , J. Pavletich, D. Pence, N. Rangel, T. Redl, D. Ryden, J. Schmertz, P. Simeonov, , N. Sullivan, F. Williams, T. Workman, Z. Zhou

ABSENT: J. Caro, J. Johnson, O. Paskelian, R. Pepper, S. Singletary

GUESTS: President B. Flores, Provost M. Woods, P. Williams, D. Bradley, P. Ensor, M. Kanner, C. McCall, K. Anderson, S. Dahlberg, A. Sikka, G. Evans, R. Jarrett

President Michelle Moosally called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m. Because UHD President Flores was there for the purpose of addressing the new 4/3 Policy, approval of the minutes for the February 2, 2010 meeting was deferred to the next meeting.

Senator T. Workman requested that the Senate spend a moment of silence in recognition of the tragedy that colleagues at University of Alabama in Huntsville had recently experienced. A moment of silence was devoted to those who were injured and killed at UAH.

Senate President M. Moosally then introduced UHD President V. Flores. President Flores called attention to today's newspaper article. He wanted faculty to know that we are not in a crisis but we have been asked to make reductions—5% out of this year's budget and 5% out of next year's budget. He is taking a cautious and careful approach to these reductions so that we can continue to provide service to our students (our main mission). All faculty should have received an email from him that says how UHD will respond to the recession and reduction. First of all, he said he had planned to give pay raises at mid-year; but since the recession, that money (which was sitting in the bank) will be returned; it amounts to \$800,000. Also, there are some lapsed salary savings. All of this together results in the \$1 million plus, which must be rescinded. For 2011, President Flores said that he considered an approach which included the possibility of furloughs for one day (resulting in a savings of \$161,000); since then, he has learned that funds from health care benefits reduction do not have to be part of the money rescinded by the state. He said that we also have some special items—money that passes through UHD and passes on to nonprofits—that will not have to be part of the recession. UHD appropriations are relatively low, and UHD tuition is the lowest (in the system). However, UHD does have more expenditures on developmental education courses than other institutions in Texas; funding of students at UHD is not at same level as other universities in the state because we do not have as many graduate programs.

President Flores explained that the flexible hiring freeze does not mean that UHD will not hire any new faculty. If a position/search has already been approved, it will move forward. He said that the university is moving forward with faculty hires, hires in the student services/advising area, and in the safety area. He also said that if we are in the process of doing interviews, we will not stop those. However, positions coming forward will be examined closely; for some of

those, we may hold off on the hiring process. Thus, UHD is not laying anyone off but is trying to manage the “hiring freeze.” President Flores pointed out that we will continue to fill positions but that we will do that at a slower pace. He said that he has heard from the head of the Senate Education Committee that there is a likely 2% to 3% more that we might have to cut in the fall of 2010. He said that he very much wants to move forward with some of our goals, e.g. the BHAGS. He said that he does not see this as a desperate situation; he just wants to be methodical and thoughtful in the approach to the situation. President Flores said that we will move forward with the 4/3 teaching load policy. He said that in the College of Business, there are some faculty who will stay with 4/4, but eventually he wants to get them all to 4/3. COB is a special case. President Flores asked that we move forward with the new workload policy in a thoughtful way. He said that we want to build the schedules in such a way that we have our classes at times that get the highest student demand. He said that the university needs to increase student credit hours (SCHs) by 4%. President Flores also pointed out that it is a “teaching” load policy, not a “workload” policy. He said that many legislators, etc., outside of the university think that teaching load and workload are the same—when they are not. He wants all of the faculty to be able to work on all the many projects that they choose to work on—some would mean research, some serve on boards, some do advising. At the same time that he wants to move forward on the new policy, he knows that he is going to be asked by legislators how he (Flores) made cuts and how workload has been adjusted. President Flores said that he will ask that as faculty write their annual reports that they note what they did with that time when they were not teaching that 4th course. He said, “fundamentally, he believes this is a really great institution and we are going to grow.” President Flores said that he had a good discussion with the Regents at the BOR meeting that occurred earlier that day. He said that the program at 249 will add enrollment and that we need to build the curriculum out there to make it successful (there is a faculty-administrative committee working on this). He also said that some faculty want to work in the 249 area.

Senator D. Ryden asked about the issues of the faculty who are left behind at the downtown campus to do the administrative work, given that some UHD faculty are going to 249. President Flores said that we are moving forward with hiring the faculty—he said that we are not talking about a LOT of faculty; right now, just a core of 2 or 3 for the 249 area. He said that there is great potential in the area as Willowchase is expecting enrollment to grow to 10,000. Provost Woods said that faculty who were teaching at Cinco and TUC (where UHD will no longer be offering courses) will be freed up, but it may be different faculty who go to 249. President Flores said the Cy-Fair campus has grown so much (by 20%) that we would like to stay there. The Staff positions from Cinco Ranch will be reallocated to the 249 area.

Senator S. Henney asked whether other Deans at UHD would be able to assign faculty a 4/4 teaching load, given that some COB faculty will be doing 4/4. President Flores said that he wants to have some flexibility and that he would like to have 90% to 100% on 4/3 teaching load during academic year 2010-2011.

Senator N. Sullivan said, “I heard you say that we are not in a crisis. Aren’t you rescinding the policy?” President Flores said that he is NOT suspending the policy, but that we may find in the fall that we have to give back funds to the state. He said that this is a transition year. If he knew that there would be no more cuts, then he would say everyone will be on 4/3. President Flores

said that he is just asking for some flexibility. He said that if we get a 4% increase in SCHs, then we will have a 4% salary increase next year. He just wants us to be creative in getting to the 4/3 policy. Senator D. Ryden asked again whether there are any guidelines being given to the Deans. President Flores said he wants it to be the “exception” that faculty are teaching 4/4. Senator Ryden said that he can see a potential problem where some faculty are already on 4/3 because they do administrative work. President Flores said that he wants to be fully at 4/3 for the following year, unless there is some sort of catastrophe. President Flores also said that down the road that he would like to be able to go to a 3/3 teaching load in order to accommodate other work activities that faculty perform.

Senator J. Flosi pointed out that it is disappointing that legislators on the hill do not understand faculty workload. Senator Flosi asked how we might reconcile the differences when a faculty member has a 4/4 versus the faculty member with the 4/3 teaching load. President Flores said that it does need to be documented. He does not want those who take on more to be at a disadvantage. He also talked about the variations in class sizes—where one faculty member drives out students because he/she is difficult.

Senator J. Pavletich said that President Flores had stated at convocation that we are going forward, going forward. While that is good, it does complicate things for us as a faculty in terms of working together when we have disparate workloads. President Flores said that he hopes that no faculty member ends up with a 4/4 teaching load.

Guest A. Sikka said that she has been one of the ones working on 4/3. She expressed that she is disturbed about the COB approach. Guest G. Evans said that at a COB faculty meeting, Dean Bates has said that all COB faculty will go to 4/3—when a faculty is on a 3/3, then the faculty member writes a report. Guest Sikka said that she is glad to hear that. President Flores said that most of the comprehensive universities in Texas are on the 4/4; Guest Sikka said this is not the case because they researched before the 4/3 policy was written. Guest Sikka recommended that UHD implement the policy in whole. She (Dr. Sikka) suggested that a creative solution might be found—that maybe the provost office or President Flores’ office could come up with some parameters. She said that one of things that they found when researching was that workload needs to be tied to the department—not to individual faculty. President Flores said that he has asked the Deans to look at their departments and to try to tinker with them to adjust the loads. Guest Sikka asked how people can bring forward complaints. President Flores said, “let’s try this—before we assume there will be problems.”

Guest Anderson said that when language like “flexibility” is used, it makes her nervous. The question is whether this will require a revision of the policy. President Flores said he is not trying to stop the policy; he is just saying that this is a transition year and that he wants to make every effort to implement the policy this year. He just does not know what will happen and he is just asking that faculty remain flexible during this transition year.

Guest R. Jarrett said that he thinks it likely that the BOR will approve the 5.1% tuition increases. President Flores said the tuition increase does not get us to the 4% increased SCHs. He also said that the BOR did vote for tuition increase at the meeting that occurred earlier that day.

Senator R. Chiquillo asked if there is a plan for the university for the 4/3 teaching load. President Flores said that it was built into the budget; it was \$2 million. That amount has been reduced because of some decisions about small classes. Senator Chiquillo asked again whether there is a plan/directive to go to the 4/3 teaching load. President Flores said that he does not make the schedule.

Senate President Moosally asked at what point department chairs and deans would have to tell their faculty that they would have to stay on a 4/4. President Flores said that he thinks it would be a very rare case that a department would stay on a 4/4. For example: Let's say that there is a department whose enrollments are declining....that dept. may have to stay on 4/4 to get the enrollment that is needed. President Moosally said that faculty have been trying to talk with department chairs and deans for some time now. President Flores said that 3 months ago, he told the deans that he wanted to go to the 4/3. He has encouraged the deans to give the directions to the department chairs to build their schedules for the 4/3. President Moosally said there is one more issue: when we go to 4/3, faculty are not being asked to do more than they are already doing, but just to document what they are already doing so that President Flores can easily access what the faculty have done when he is asked for this information by the BOR or legislators. President Flores said it will help him to have this information documented. Senator P. Lyons said that the annual reports already do this.

Senator G. Jackson asked if we are starting the 4/3 in the fall. Senator S. Henney asked President Flores if he will re-evaluate the policy in the middle of the year. President Flores said that he wants to have a 4/3, but just wants everyone to know that flexibility is needed this year. President Flores wants to get past this next year, past the budget cuts; he said that he raised the need for more buildings (such as science labs, performing arts, etc.) at UHD with the BOR at the meeting earlier in the day. He wants faculty to know that he is advocating for all of this.

Senate President Moosally thanked President Flores for his attendance and time at the Senate meeting.

President Moosally suggested that we continue the workload conversation. Senator S. Henney expressed some concern as to whether the 4/3 teaching load would be okay; she said that she heard a dean say that some of her faculty wanted to stay on a 4/4 teaching load because the faculty did not want to do scholarship. Senator Henney thinks that the devil is in the details. She said that it could happen that some faculty are on 4/4 and some on 4/3.

President Moosally said that there was a meeting on the past Thursday with the Deans, Provost Woods, President Flores, and FSEC----in the meeting, the point was made that a standard teaching load for every T/TT faculty member is 21 hours under the new teaching load policy. The question is how do we make this happen. Guest D. Rodriguez (Chair of Math Department) said this is even more confusing: for example, suppose you have a faculty member on 3 teaching load and you need a course covered—he wondered whether the faculty member can be paid for a fourth course as an overload. Provost Woods said that President Flores was very much against this. She said that we need to give President Flores the opportunity to try to do the 4/3, but she suggested that it may not be practical to go to 4/3 without having some faculty being paid for doing an overload (of 4).

Senator T. Redl called attention to the issue of classes of 10 students versus classes of 0 students. President Moosally said that she thinks that faculty recognize that different pedagogies result in different ideal sizes, and the 4/3 policy does not address class size. Guest Sikka said that the 4/3 policy is signed. She asks what other policies are being “flexibly” applied. Guest E. Delavina said that she does not think the policy would be suspended in the middle of the year unless the economy takes a HUGE dive. Senator N. Sullivan said she tried to ask the question of whether we are or are not in a crisis; she said we need to be on our guard and that anyone who gets an overload should be paid. However, we do not want to throw away the 4/3 on people who want to get another \$2500. Senator G. Jackson said that the COB said no overloads in the COB. He also said that he thinks President Flores has a lot of guts to ask for this adjustment in this kind of budget environment. Senator Jackson said that he bets that no one in Austin knows what the budget will be right now.

President Moosally said that we are close to the end of our meeting time. She asked if we need to write a statement of understanding. Senator J. Pavletich pointed out that President Flores said that “we are going to continue to grow...” except for how we implement load. Senator J. Schmertz said that we need to do something and that it is a violation of policy for the 4/3 teaching load not to be implemented. Guest S. Dahlberg said faculty are always the ones who take the hit.

President Moosally said that she wanted to point out that there is the potential for the policy to be rescinded. Senator N. Sullivan said that President Flores would have to justify why the policy is rescinded. President Moosally asked what direction the Senate wants to take, i.e. whether Senate wants to put together a statement. Senator J. Flosi said that we do not meet again until March 2. It was decided that FSEC will work with feedback from Senate to put together a statement. Senator T. Workman asked whether this means that we are going to make a statement. President Moosally said that she would try to make clear in anything that is sent to the Senate that we would have to vote on whether to send it out as a final Senate position.

President Moosally announced that the Constitution changes passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Davis
Secretary