

UHD FACULTY SENATE MEETING

March 25, 2008

CALLED TO ORDER: The thirteenth meeting for the 2007-2008 academic year of the UHD Faculty Senate was held in the Cullen Auditorium, One Main Street, Houston, Texas on March 25, 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), John Capeheart (NS), Youn-Sha Chan (CMS), Raquel Chiquillo (A&H), Byron Christmas (NS), Ermelinda DeLaViña (CMS), Joyce Dutcher (UE), Susan Henney (SOS), Lance Hignite (CJ), Anne Kane (SOS), Kathleen McLellan (ENG), Rich McMahan (FACIS), Pat Mosier (A&H), Sam Penkar (FACIS), Kimmera Pinkerton (UE), Lucille Pointer (MMBA), Nick Rangel (A&H), Ruth Robbins (FACIS), Larry Spears (NS), Cindy Stewart (SOS), Jorge Tito-Izquierdo (ET), Jeong-Mi Yoon (CMS), Shengli Yuan (CMS), Zehai Zhou (FACIS)

Absent: Austin Allen (SOS), David Branham (SOS), Tony Chiaviello (ENG), Merrilee Cunningham (ENG), Steve Maranville (MMBA), Angela Pedrana (UE), and Aimee Roundtree (ENG).

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.

President Sikka called the meeting to order at 2:36 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: As the minutes were only distributed on Monday, March 25, some senators did not feel they had time to review the minutes, so a motion was made to table the approval of the March 4, 2008, minutes until the April 1, 2008, meeting.

APPROVAL OF SENATE ELECTION RESULTS: Sikka informed senators that there will be eighteen senator spaces open during the upcoming election. She announced the results from Shohreh Hashemi, chair of the Committee on Credentials and Elections, concerning Senate officer election results. Michelle Moosally received 98 votes for Senate President. Barbara Belbot was elected as Senate Vice President with 47 votes, while Philip Lyons garnered 44 votes, and there was one write-in vote for Jerry Johnson. The election for Senate Secretary-Treasurer went to Tammy Davis with 61 votes, and 23 for Trevor Hale. There was one write-in vote each for Tyra Montgomery and Barbara Belbot, and two for Andrew Pavelich.

Sikka stated that the Senate does not normally approve the results of Senate Officer elections, but with the close results on the vice-presidential vote she asked for approval of the results.

Senator Rangel was concerned that if future elections resulted in a run off that the election rules do not define a procedure. Sikka stated that a provision for run-offs could be included as a constitutional amendment.

Senator Spears moved to accept the results of the Senate Officer elections; Senator Christmas seconded the motion. The Senate voted to accept the results.

DISCUSSION OF DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS DEVELOPED BASED ON FACULTY CLIMATE SURVEY RESPONSES:

Sikka stated that the major goal of the meeting was to finalize the recommendations initiated by the Faculty Climate Survey responses. The recommendations were:

1. The President of UHD appoint a task force/committee to examine workload with the ultimate goals of (a) standardization of workload (across categories of teaching, research, and service) and (b) reduction of course load to ensure effective service and scholarly work. The task force should provide reports to the President and Faculty Senate.
2. The UHD administration, with input from Faculty Senate identify ways in which research and scholarship may be supported (e.g., additional funds for Organized Research and Faculty Development Leave).
3. The VPAA & Provost identify source of salary data and identify a consistent (over years) set of indices for determining faculty salary raises. These standards should be publicized to the UHD faculty directly.
4. The VPAA & Provost solicit input from faculty and/or faculty senate on ways to improve the functioning of her office and create an action plan for changes to current procedures.
5. The VPAA & Provost's office conduct regularly scheduled training on key policies – namely Rank and Tenure, Faculty Performance Evaluation.
6. The VPAA & Provost gather current rank and tenure departmental guidelines and evaluate them for congruence with university Rank and Tenure policy, with input from the University Rank & Tenure Committee.
7. The UHD administration sponsor and set aside funds for a speaker series to enhance faculty roles in teaching, service, and scholarly activity.
8. With input from Faculty Affairs Committee, the Policy on Faculty Employment and related guidelines (PS 10.A.13) be revised to clearly elucidate procedures for the search committee, Department Chair, Dean, VPAA & Provost, and President.
9. The President and VPAA & Provost hold discussions with departments to identify key ways in which the university functioning may be improved.
10. The overall communication within the university be improved by creating websites, generally increasing interactions between the UHD administration and faculty (including Faculty Senate), and communicating decisions made by UHD administration (including Deans and Department Chairs) and justifications for these decisions.
11. In future administrations of the survey,
 - a. define the categories of teaching and service
 - b. include an item soliciting information about the average number of hours a faculty member spends on teaching, service, and scholarly/creative activities
 - c. avoid double-barreled questions (e.g., item 2 – “the UHD administration promotes and supports research and scholarship)
 - d. include an item that explains why they chose to, or did not choose to respond to the survey (to explain the declining response rate)

Senator McMahon asked if the terms identifying lecturer, and tenure/tenure-track, and instructor have been standardized. Sikka stated that they have.

Senator Robbins asked if the results of the Faculty Climate Survey had changed from the last time the Senate reviewed them. Sikka answered that she had made a brief analysis of the Comment section.

Senator McLellan asked who came up with the recommendations. Sikka stated she did. McLellan said that she would like more explanation about how Sikka would like to see recommendation 5 and 7 implemented and developed. Sikka replied that the survey results indicated faculty members were satisfied with the Rank and Tenure policy, but not with how the policy is implemented, and referred to the information on pages 8-9 of the survey report. She also stated that the Senate previously looked at departmental rank and tenure policies and found some discrepancies in some departments. Including something about policy about faculty and administrators for rank and tenure and now annual policy evaluations.

McLellan asked if keeping the policy ambiguous might result in better results. Vice President Moosally stated that department chairs don't get much support and training for evaluating junior faculty.

Sikka stated that UHD has previously not placed much emphasis on faculty development, however the QEP and Achieving the Dream have been emphasizing its importance. She directed attention to page 12 of the climate survey and stated that she believes that increased faculty development efforts could raise overall faculty satisfaction and encourage discussion of professional issues among faculty members. Preuss stated that previous faculty climate surveys and other surveys indicated that faculty members suggested that more faculty development would be helpful.

Robbins suggested that the survey report be reorganized so that the discussion of the results come first, followed by the details. She also stated that she believes Question 1 "UHD maintains high standards for its students," is problematic. She suggested that the university should do more promotion as no one knows what we do unless they read our tenure report or someone asks. Sikka stated that we should think about a recommendation that will address our achievements.

Rangel stated that he did not know how Recommendation 11(d) can be accomplished, or that including a response for why someone doesn't respond will get that person to answer. Sikka suggested that an online survey could be conducted. Robbins suggested that perhaps that question could be included at the beginning of the survey. McMahon stated that if someone won't respond, why make them. Sikka suggested Survey Monkey, but then recognized that Survey Monkey can report computer IP addresses.

Robbins asked if questions about race and ethnicity of respondents were necessary. Preuss stated that a breakdown of race and gender might indicate if certain groups feel differently about some issues or if they feel that they are treated differently. Senator Mosier agreed that it is important to look at demographics.

Senator Kane referred to Recommendation 3 and asked what sets of data are available to determine faculty salary besides CUPA (College and University Professional Association for Human Resources) averages. Sikka answered that there are other data sets available. Kane stated that it seems like the recommendation gives the administration a way out of raises. She suggested a stronger recommendation. Sikka replied that the Faculty Climate Survey was taken just before a pay raise that addressed salary compression was applied and there was much discussion about the matter prior to the survey. She said some of the data can seem confusing and advocated for a more transparent use of the data to determine faculty salaries. She suggested that if someone felt the recommendation should be stronger, a stronger recommendation should be made, but it is important to keep in mind where the money comes from. Kane stated that she understood Sikka's recommendation to ask for everyone to get an idea of where salaries are determined.

Moosally stated that President Castillo said we were in a strong position with the budget. The 3% raise and CUPA salary adjustments were not all funded last year so there will be additional funds this year, and noted that there is a 3%-plus plan for raises. DeLaViña stated that there was also a \$4,000/8,000 adjustment for promotion pay. Moosally suggested an addition to Recommendation 3 to include a benchmark for salary data.

Spears asked what Sikka planned to do with the recommendations. She said that she would present them to President Castillo, Provost Woods, the Senate officers, and post them on the Senate website.

Robbins asked if it was appropriate to compare requirements between departments when one department requires more than another. Dutcher stated that when you consider the diversity of departments and work done, when you try to even it all, it does not allow for uniqueness of the departments.

Christmas stated that even within disciplines policy is clear that the University Rank and Tenure committee must use the department guidelines. Senator Capeheart said the big problem is not with different department standards, but with the question of which policy is paramount.

Spears stated that when we first developed Rank and Tenure, the departments should define what is best for them. The University Rank and Tenure Committee was to oversee those definitions, that the department definition was worthy, and that it was followed. He stated that he would like to see the department criteria compiled into a book. The University Rank and Tenure Committee should not have to clear up department policies. What is needed, he stated, is teeth in the policy to make it available to all faculty. Capeheart stated that the policies are all over the place. Sikka stated that we should be more careful as to how we clarify. Some rank and tenure policies are more detailed than others. The College of Business has different standards for each rank.

Moosally stated that at the Strategic Planning meeting there was discussion about having outside consultants come in and review our rank and tenure criteria with the goal of improvement. Spears said that if there are discrepancies, they should be addressed; the University Rank and Tenure Committee should address these discrepancies. Moosally said the criteria should undergo regular review.

Mosier stated we should focus on criteria. Robinsons asked if the criteria were secret. Moosally stated that the criteria could be posted on a Provost's website. Senator Pointer stated that the College of Business maintained their tenure and promotion guidelines on their internal website.

Pointer commented on Recommendation 7, and stated that other institutions in the Houston area have workshops and information about these workshops would be helpful in encouraging our faculty to work with other area institutions. Sikka stated that the University Senate Faculties Executive Committee could address this issue with other University of Houston System institutions.

Moosally said that regarding Recommendation 11, a reference to library services could be added. Sikka agreed that some stated that they were not sure what significance faculty had on the library, but it was a worthwhile issue as the library is related to academics.

Robbins added that there are other considerations such as computing services and administrative operations are areas that are not under UPAA/Provost that we may be aware of.

McLellan stated that the faculty climate survey should include a question about whether a faculty member is on the job market.

Mosier stated that when the survey asks about the various vice presidents that the name should be included as a way to generate more responses. She felt some faculty did not answer the questions because they were unaware of the name of the vice president. Pointer suggested that we might want to consider other departments we might want to include. She suggested that a committee should conduct the survey. Moosally added that a standing committee of the senate could be formed to conduct the survey. Preuss suggested that focus groups could further shed light on faculty climate survey results.

Sikka stated that in response to the request for funding that the Senate should submit to the University Planning Committee included:

- Although 30% of our students are evening students, there are no major offices open in the evening, and there is a suggestion for funding for student support in the evenings.
- Institutionalize the Student Research Conference
- Funds allocated for Interlibrary Loans
- Establish a Senate Speaker Series
- Establish a testing/resource center to support faculty, online courses, and student conflicts with final exams
- Allocate more funds to make the campus ADA compliant
- Make pedestrian crossings more safe and establish more commuter bus stops
- Increase faculty development leave opportunities
- Increase Faculty Development/ORC funds
- Include a webmaster in the senate budget

Dutcher suggested extended counseling services for students. Robbins suggested that counseling services be extended to all campus locations.

Sikka said that the Senate will follow up on these suggestions at the April 1, 2008, meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: No announcements.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion for adjournment was made and seconded. The motion carried, and the meeting adjourned at 4:01 pm.

Date of Approval

**Secretary/Treasurer
UHD Faculty Senate**