

UHD Faculty Senate

Minutes recorded by: Sandra Dahlberg
September 5, 2017; 2:30-4:00pm
Room A300

Senate: Beverly Alford, Carolyn Ashe, Susan Baker, Ray Cao, Luis Cedeno, Travis Crone, Sandra Dahlberg, Michael Duncan, David Epstein, Shannon Fowler, Trevor Hale, Ruth Johnson, Karen Kaser, Paul Mandell, Creshema Murray, Mitsue Nakamura, Rebecca Quander, Jacqueline Sack, Rachna Sadana, Clete Snell, Benjamin Soibam, Nell Sullivan, Doug TeDuits, Michael Tobin, Hsiao-Ming Wang, Joan Wedes, Pat Williams, and Zehai Zhou

Regrets: Jillian Hill

Absent: Cynthia Lloyd, Kendra Mhoon, Vida Robertson

Guests: Juan Muñoz, President; Ed Hugetz, Interim Provost and Senior VPAA; David Bradley, VP Administration and Finance; Faiza Khoja, AVP AA; Jerry Johnson, AVP Research; Hossein Shahrokhi, AVP IT; Johanna Wolfe, AVP UR; Akif Uzman, Dean of CST; Leigh Van Horn, Dean of CPS; Pat Ensor, Dir. Library; Tyra Hessel, Ombuds; Michelle Malton, AC; Beth Sanders, CJ; Gene Preuss, HHL; Bernardo Pohl, UE; Ron Beebe, UE; Kevin Buckler, CJ; Ashley Archiopoli, AC; Rachel Dickson, AC; Lucy Bowen, AA; Anne Zwicky, Library; Darlene Hodge, FS.

Call to Order: The Senate was called to order at 2:32pm by Senate President Trevor Hale. Hale welcomed everyone to the new Senate.

Minutes

Minutes of the May 2017 Senate meeting were approved via email.

New Business

Nominations were solicited from the floor and the following senators were elected by acclamation to the 2017-2018 Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC): Travis Crone, CHSS; Rachna Sadana, CST; and Mitsue Nakamura, CST.

Post-Harvey Reports

Facilities

VP Bradley reported that the only the One Main Building took on water during the storm, about 2.5 feet on the first floor, and there was some damage to the Student Life Center. The chiller plant and police dispatch were flooded for 48 hours, and the building was without power. Long term discussions need to occur about the functions provided on the first floor, and if the university would be better

served moving some functions like police dispatch. Bradley said that all university spaces were accessed after the storm, and that insurance will cover most of the losses. Deductibles will be covered by the university, and M & O budgets will not have to cover losses such as those suffered by the O’Kane theatre.

IT

VP Shahrokhi reported that IT services were prepared to operate from our secondary data center in the Shea Building, and movement of equipment was underway when power was restored.

President Muñoz

President Muñoz first recognized the “Herculean” efforts of Chris McCall, the UHD Police, and IT during and in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Harvey to get UHD cleaned up and functioning again. Dr. Muñoz said that we still have much work at hand in our efforts to provide help and hope to our students, faculty, and staff who were impacted by Harvey. He encouraged faculty to offer some flexibility for impacted students, and to remember that the university is a beacon of hope, a reminder of normalcy, for those who are trying to attend to storm damage at home and maintain their course enrollments. Dr. Muñoz itemized several ways that UHD is addressing these students’ needs such as the Gator Relief Fund, making some computers available, mental health counselling, and providing the university community with disaster relief information.

President Muñoz also said that regarding today’s repeal of DACA protections, he will work with UH System leadership to provide our students with support and information. This national policy change will impact students across the region, but there should be no changes or disruptions for students this semester. He will work with Mr. Hugetz to hold a workshop with the UH law clinic so that our students have the legal information they need.

Interim Provost Hugetz

Due to the cancellation of classes because of Harvey, Provost Hugetz reported that The Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) recommended that UHD not extend its semester calendar, but to ask faculty to work within the remaining semester schedule. He said he recognized the problems with compressing the schedule, but this was the best compromise in a situation where there were no good options. He asked that full-time faculty reach out to adjunct faculty and assist them with adjustments, and to make sure adjunct faculty were fully informed. He asked faculty again to be flexible, but reiterated that flexibility and empathy were not incompatible with academic excellence, and ensuring that students receive appropriate instruction.

Mr. Hugetz announced that he had secured the Department of Education approvals necessary to adjust federally-mandated enrollment drop dates.

He noted that the disaster, especially conditions at Kingwood, prompted discussions about how to provide instruction if the campus could not have reopened when it did. One option was to move all instruction online, but he recognized that it would be difficult to put all classes online at once.

Sack and Sullivan noted that many students may not have internet access, or Blackboard access, because of the storm. There were also faculty who were damaged by the storm who have no internet access off campus.

Provost Hugetz also announced that deadlines for ORCA applications would be extended because of Hurricane Harvey.

Khoja

Dr. Khoja reported on a gatormail survey sent to students to collect data about their needs as a result of the storm, such as transportation, housing, internet access, computer access, etc. So far, 4059 students had responded to the survey. The purpose of the survey was to use it to prepare a contingency plan that could be implemented university-wide, to identify how technology could be utilized sustain instruction, and to develop a comprehensive communication plan.

Sadana noted that it is not simple to move from face-to-face instruction to online instruction, and that such a move is time-intensive for faculty. Sullivan also noted, again, that students and faculty who are in shelters or whose homes have been impacted may not have access to the internet.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:56pm.

The next Senate meeting is on September 19, 2017.