

UHD Faculty Senate

Minutes recorded by: Sandra Dahlberg

November 15, 2016; 2:30-3:57pm

Room A300

Attendance: Carolyn Ashe, Julio Canedo Soto, Luis Cedeno, Michael Connell, Travis Crone, Sandra Dahlberg, Michael Duncan, Trevor Hale, Jillian Hill, Pamela Hurley, Ruth Johnson, Robin Jose, Anne Kane, Stephanie Karas, Karen Kaser, Abigail Koenig (for Joan Wedes), Cynthia Lloyd, Kendra Mhoon, Creshema Murray, Mitsue Nakamura, JoAnn Pavletich, Anand Pore, Azar Rejaie, Jacqueline Sack, Benjamin Soibam, Clete Snell, Michael Tobin, Hsiao-Ming Wang, Pat Williams, Keith Wright, Zhenyu Zhang.

Regrets: Edwin Tecarro

Guests: Michael Olivas, Interim President; David Ryden, Chair, Academic Policies Committee; Ed Hugetz, Interim Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs; Gail Evans and Georges Detiveaux, CTLE Online Subcommittee

Call to Order: The Senate was called to order at 2:30pm by Senate President Dr. Carolyn Ashe.

Minutes of the Senate meeting on November 1, 2016 were approved.

Comments/Presentation

UHD President Michael Olivas thanked the senators for their service to the institution, and presented them with a token of his appreciation. Olivas announced that Chancellor Khator plans to make an offer in the presidential search before Thanksgiving, and UHD is beginning the long-delayed search for a new provost. Both Olivas and Provost Hugetz will remain at UHD until May. On January 27, 2017, UHD will host an Ed Hugetz film festival and academic retrospective. Rodney Ellis will be the December commencement speaker and Bill Richardson will be the speaker for the May commencement. Olivas said UHD is trying to purchase land parcels adjacent to the recent large land purchase north of OMB, and noted that a referendum will be needed in order to implement the new student fees needed to build a new student center. President Olivas also addressed the impact the presidential election on our most vulnerable and least protected students, reminding senators that all concerns registered by any member of the University community, through My Safe Campus, will be investigated.

Hale reported on the October 28-29 meeting of the Texas Council of Faculty Senates, noting that Texas is the only state with statewide coalition of faculty senates and that the organization is reaching out to Oklahoma faculty senates as a first step toward a national council of faculty senates and the promotion of shared governance.

Hale also reported on the UFEC meeting at which it was reported that faculty at UH-Victoria's School of Business Administration were asked to sign a loyalty oath to a dean against whom faculty were discussing a no-confidence effort. UFEC prepared a resolution in support of the UH-Victoria faculty that was sent to Vice Chancellor Short. Hale asked if the UHD Faculty Senate would be willing to send a similar resolution, and the Senate agreed to such a resolution. Hale will prepare the resolution and present it at the December 6 Senate meeting.

Policies

Grading System for Graduate Students (PS 03.B.04) and Graduate Academic Probation (PS 03.B.07)

Ryden, chair of the Academic Policy Committee (APC), came to the Senate to explain that new policies were created for the graduate programs. The Graduate Council, which consists of the graduate directors of all UHD graduate programs and associate deans, initiated these policies. Previously, academic policies contained provisions for both undergraduate and graduate programs. The graduate policies will be reinforced with programmatic handbooks. The policies were circulated to the faculty for comment. Further questions can be sent to Ryden or the APC.

Academic Endowment Policy

Wright, a member of the Faculty Affairs Committee, told the Senate that the language related to distinguished faculty has been removed from the Academic Appointments Policy, and placed in a new policy for academic endowments (sections 1 through 2.1.9). The remainder of the policy is new.

Hugetz said that Ashe discovered a distinguished professor agreement from 2005 in old Senate records, and learned of the existing endowment funded by the Houston Endowment and the Cullen Foundation in the amount of \$250,000. The final funding occurred in 2007, and the recession of 2008 put the fund balance below \$250,000. According to UH System policy, no endowment monies can be disbursed until the fund yields revenue, which it finally did in 2015. There is now \$40,000 in distributable monies in the endowment fund. Now a policy is needed to expend those funds. FAC voted to approve this policy. A faculty endowment committee will need to be formed.

Rejaie was concerned that funds were not tracked for several years. Ashe and Hugetz said that Senate would receive the original endowment agreement and fund detail data.

Dahlberg asked if Faculty Senate will have an opportunity to comment upon the policy draft. Wright asked senators to provide immediate feedback.

Crone asked about the spirit of the faculty nomination process for the distinguished professor endowment. Did the endowment agreement allow for grassroots nominations? What is the role of administration? Of faculty? Ashe again noted that the original endowment agreement will be distributed to senators and that discussions will be needed after senators have read all the materials.

Dahlberg noted that it is difficult to provide feedback to the policy presented today, but that a cursory look shows that the endowment policy needs more attention as it lacks, among other things, a clear definitions section.

Ashe stated that the endowment policy needs to be distributed to the faculty for comment, after which the Senate will provide additional feedback. Ashe stressed that this policy, and the existence of the endowment, are too important to rush through. The Senate will discuss this further at the December 6 Senate meeting.

Kane asked if Ashe would provide the faculty with background/introductory information about the policy and the endowment so that faculty could better consider them. Ashe said she would do so.

Online Student Readiness Self-Assessment

Gail Evans and Georges Detiveaux presented the student self-assessment instrument to determine a student's readiness for online coursework. The instrument was developed by the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence's Online Subcommittee. The guiding question for constructing the instrument was "Am I ready to take an online class?" The instrument consists of 22 questions, and takes about 5 minutes. Students and faculty can access the instrument at www.tinyurl.com/uhdonlinereadiness or contact Georges Detiveaux at detiveauxg@uhd.edu. The link can be accessed using computers, PDAs, or phones.

Rejaie asked if the instrument provides students with "online is not for you" feedback. Evans noted that this was a tool for advisors and was not intended to dissuade students from trying online instruction. Rejaie asked if that meant there was no evaluative summary. Evans responded that such a summary would be highly controversial, especially since departmental SCHs could be at risk and we have to be careful about advising against online learning. Evans reiterated that this is a self-assessment tool for students.

Old Business

Constitution

Duncan, chair of the Faculty Senate Constitution Committee, reported that the committee is working to ensure consistency throughout the Constitution and that the document reflects the Senate's practices. The draft will be sent to senators and will be discussed at the December 6 Senate meeting.

Faculty Concerns

Ashe distributed a compilation of the faculty concerns collected previously this semester. She asked senators to identify which two the faculty should focus on for the rest of the Senate term. This will be further discussed, and hopefully decided upon, at the December 6 Senate meeting.

Meeting adjourned: 3:57pm.

The next Senate meeting is on December 6, 2016.