

UHD Faculty Senate

Minutes recorded by: Sandra Dahlberg

March 7, 2017; 2:32-3:50pm

Room A300

Attendance: Julio Canedo Soto, Luis Cedeno, Travis Crone, Sandra Dahlberg, Michael Duncan, Trevor Hale, Jillian Hill, Ruth Johnson, Anne Kane, Cynthia Lloyd, Kendra Mhoon, Creshema Murray, JoAnn Pavletich, Azar Rejaie, Jacqueline Sack, Benjamin Soibam, Michael Tobin, Edwin Tecarro, Hsiao-Ming Wang, Joan Wedes, Pat Williams, Keith Wright.

Regrets: Robin Jose, Karen Kaser, Anand Pore

Absent: Michael Connell, Pamela Hurley, Stephanie Karas, Cynthia Lloyd, Mitsue Nakamura, Clete Snell, Zhenyu Zhang

Guests: Michael Olivas, Interim President; Ed Hugetz, Interim Provost and Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs; Tyra Hessel, Ombuds; Pat Ensor, Library Director; Melissa Hovsepian.

Call to Order: The Senate was called to order at 2:32 pm by Senate President Carolyn Ashe.

Comments/Updates

President Olivas

President Olivas announced that he was working with Harris County Commissioner Rodney Ellis on enhancing the infrastructure around UHD to create playing fields or community gardens near the new science building. He also said that the university is trying to buy some smaller adjacent land parcels.

Olivas also said that he convened a committee of advisors to explore awarding honorary degrees. UHD now has permission to award honorary degrees and Olivas was pleased to announce that the first recipient of a UHD honorary degree would be Bill Richardson, the spring commencement speaker, who is a former congressman and governor of New Mexico and who served as Secretary of Energy in the Clinton administration.

Olivas said he appointed a committee to establish criteria for Distinguished Faculty, an award beyond full professor.

Olivas also discussed the recent naming gift by Marilyn Davies for \$10 million to the College of Business, which will now become the Davies College of Business. UHD will be only one of four business schools nationwide to be named for women. Davies' first experience with UHD was as a student when she took summer classes at UHD while attending Texas Tech, and Davies' son graduated from UHD with a degree in political science. Olivas noted that Davies' gift was an endowment through which she

affirms her deep love for UHD as a university that turns “wonderful students into spectacular students.”

Provost Hugetz

Hugetz told the Senate that his office had conducted research into the Voluntary Modification of Employment (VMOE) policy (PS 02.A.06) after requested to do so by FSEC. He also provided some background for VMOE, which by policy allows tenured professors reduced employment after retirement. VMOE began as a legislative statute as a way for faculty to move from full-time to part-time status, but in order to participate in VMOE tenured faculty have fully retire, relinquish tenure their full-time status, and be at least 55 years old. The UHD VMOE policy allows retired tenured faculty to teach and conduct other activities not to exceed 49% of the full-time load. Hugetz noted that each course taught per semester is worth 20%, and two courses are 40% equivalent. The duties for the other 9% are negotiated with department chairs and deans, and can include service and support to academic programs and/or the university. Policy provides for up to 5 years of VMOE, with options for further renewal beyond the five years, done on a year-by-year basis by mutual agreement.

Hugetz began researching the implementation of VMOE because at some point, and for an unknown reason, VMOE contracts were for only two years, with subsequent annual renegotiations. Hugetz stressed that UHD is not changing the policy; rather he is changing the procedure so that it aligns with the existing policy. In keeping with SACSCOC requirements, the university will need to establish and implement evaluation procedures for VMOE faculty, and add VMOE faculty to the non-tenured/non-tenure track faculty appointments policy.

Hugetz also discussed the current funding bills before the Texas House and Senate, and explained how each version would impact UHD. UHD looks to do well through formula funding of weighted semester credit hours. The item of greatest concern is the funding of “special items,” which in the case of UHD and many other universities, is the Institutional Enhancement funds provided by the legislature to redress the disparities created when UT and A & M were given extra funds to hire faculty some years ago. These funds are used like formula funding and pay salaries of faculty and staff. If we lose these funds, we will have to cut positions. This is of particular concern because UHD is severely understaffed. Every university in the state is in the same situation regarding Institutional Enhancement funds (that are one component of Special Items funding).

Funding expectations are the basis for planning and budgeting, and Hugetz reiterated that his first budgeting priority is a faculty and staff salary raise pool of at least 3%. Hugetz noted that in addition to salary compression and merit, inversion also needs to be addressed, a problem of particular concern in the College of Business. He reinforced that all increases must be merit based. He also said that Dr. Muñoz is in complete agreement about the need for salary adjustments. Texas does not allow for Cost-of-Living-Adjustments, so faculty and staff have not kept pace with increases, especially during the years when no raise pool existed at UHD.

Kane noted that compression and inversion were discouraging and demoralizing to faculty. Canedo asked if there was any room to hire more support staff and faculty under the upcoming budget cycle.

Hugetz said that the Planning and Budget Development Committee (PBDC) was open to adding positions as funding is available and gave as an example the hiring of assessment coordinators for the colleges to help faculty with their assessment duties. Since most of our funding now comes from tuition and fees, Hugetz said that the way to improve our fiscal position is to offer more graduate degrees and certificates.

Minutes

Minutes of the Senate meeting on February 21, 2017 were approved as corrected (a date error).

Reminders

In accordance with the new shared governance workflow process, Ashe reminded Senators that Hugetz sent an email to all faculty identifying the faculty representatives on the Academic Affairs Council (AAC), the agenda for the March 10 AAC meeting, and copies of the policies that are being reviewed. Any comments about the policies should be sent to the AAC representatives.

Ashe announced that the RSVP deadline for the UFEC Conference speaker is March 17. Please announce to your students. A sign-in sheet will be provided. The conference is on March 31.

Ashe reminded Senators that the Faculty Awards Ceremony is on April 18.

Old Business

FSEC Survey

Ashe informed the Senate that the Ballot Bin survey that was circulated, and which was used to determine language for the Workload Redistribution Resolution, was not the survey FSEC wrote or agreed upon. The Qualtrics survey FSEC created was displayed to the Senate, and the Senate was asked to decide how to proceed. Hale said that it is a moot point since the resolution is done. Crone countered that it was not moot since the Ballot Bin survey for item #1 conflated disparate concepts so that it was impossible to determine which concepts respondents were voting upon. Johnson said that faculty feedback from constituents was an important part of this conversation about workload redistribution. Wang asked if the survey would go to all faculty or just the Senate. Ashe responded that the choice was the Senate's to make. Crone noted that the FSEC Qualtrics survey clarifies the two-step question about how tenure committees are composed, and how full professors are addressed. **Motion:** Rejaie moved and Canedo seconded to send the FSEC Qualtrics survey to all tenured/tenure-track faculty. The motion unanimously carried.

Faculty Senate Constitution Revision

Duncan, chair of the committee to revise the Senate Constitution, said the committee last met in December and made only minor changes to the Constitution. This draft was sent to senators on January 18. Due to widespread confusion about changes made, especially those regarding a typo (now fixed) about department chairs, Duncan asked for one more round of input before the Constitution is voted upon at the next Senate meeting. Comments should be emailed to Duncan, and Senators should make sure that all faculty are reviewing the draft since any changes must be approved by the Senate and by the Faculty Assembly. Duncan will take us through the changes at the next Senate meeting.

Ashe invited Senate input on the Constitution. Crone said that the Constitution needs to provide a procedure for elections and to clarify which positions are voted upon by the Senate and which positions are voted upon by the Faculty Assembly or the faculty of a specific college. He also asked what the constitution means by a senator's position being vacant if they are elected to office. Pavletich responded to a query (in track changes) in Duncan's draft about increasing penalties for repeated absences. She said she was opposed to any change and that there was already too much surveillance and policing here for punitive purposes. Ashe again asked that Senators conduct a thorough reading of the draft and to email comments to Duncan.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:50pm.

The next Senate meeting is on March 21, 2017.