

UHD Faculty Senate

Minutes recorded by: Nathan Neale
Regular Scheduled Senate Meeting November 2, 2021
2:30 – 4:00 PM
Online via Zoom

Senators Attending: Edmund Cueva, Ronald Beebe, Krista Gehring, Nathan Neale, Godwin Agboka, Ayden Adler, Stephanie Babb, Alexander Bielakowski, Franklin Allaire, Amy Baird, Nina Barbieri, Maria Bhattacharjee, Kasi Bundoc, Scott Davis, Austin DeJan, Prakash Deo, Lucas Fedell, Paul Fulbright, Aaron Gillette, Heather Goltz, Don Holmes, Rachael Hudspeth, Michael Lemke, Cynthia Lloyd, Lucas Logan, Jean Nganou, Angelica Roncacio, M. Nell Sullivan, Candace TenBrink, Adriana Visbal, Julie Wilson

Senators Absent: None

Guests: Akif Uzman, Interim Provost, Michelle Moosally, AVP Programming and Curriculum, Jerry Johnson, AVP, Sandra Dahlberg, Faculty Ombuds, Mike Duncan, Professor, Danya Serrano, Assistant Professor, Hossein Shahrokhi, Associate Vice President, Information Technology, Pat Williams, Professor, Patricia Ensor, Executive Director, W.I.D., Andrew Pavelich, Professor, Tahereh Jafari, Lecturer, Darlene Hodge, FS Admin

Call to order: The Senate was called to order at 2:33 PM by Senate President Edmund Cueva after a quorum was assembled.

A motion to approve the October 5, 2021 minutes was made and seconded.
The minutes were approved.

Reports

Interim Provost Uzman provided a brief report on the State Legislature's approval for tuition revenue bonds for capital improvements. During the legislature's special session many but not all universities received approval for these bonds. UHD had an 85MM request and was approved for 44.9MM. The proposal from two years ago included five projects: 1) 4th floor welcome center, 2) repurposing and remodeling in One Main, 3) a Police and CJ building adjacent to the student parking lot, 4) repurposing and reimagining the student life center, 5) property acquisition to help address parking issues. President Blanchard would like to focus on the first two items. Unfortunately, there is currently about a 20% increase in costs since the proposals were developed.

The president's vision for the welcome center is to provide a "one stop" area for all students. This would involve moving much of the student support roles to this area.

He said that he is unable to attend the next senate meeting due to an enrollment retreat.

Q-When will remodeling begin?

A-We are developing RFPs that will be sent out over the next few weeks. We then enter the design phase and construction will likely begin during the summer.

Q-The local press reported that the TRB funds would be spent for a police academy. Is this correct?

A-That is the third item but we are focusing on the first two.

Q-Is this a continuing education project?

A-Yes, it is. We felt it would be better moved away from central campus.

Q-Is the student center design changing?

A-The projected cost has increased beyond the available funds. There are contingencies in the budget. Therefore, parts of the building are placed on hold or “shelled out” for future completion.

Old Business

A senator shared an update on the proposed 3/3 teaching load initiative. They reached out to 13 faculty senate presidents at similar schools as UHD. They were asked about their current teaching loads and how they arrived to the number. Many consider research, teaching and service responsibilities. Moving forward, we will need an in-depth report as this is more complex than it appears.

The senator then shared an update on the cafeteria. This is contracted with Chartwell. UHS completed a student survey to rate campus food options. UH received an A ranking, UHCL did well too. Therefore, we know that the company is capable. We should look at other campuses and see what Vegan and vegetarian options are available.

Jerry Johnson thanked the senator. He said that the previous provost asked him to begin examining how the 3/3 workload compared to our actual 4/3 with current course releases. Using AY19 numbers, the total number of course sections is 1687. T/TT faculty would teach 1446 of these at a 3/3 load. The actual was 1449. This means that the current process of providing releases has almost the same result as a 3/3. However, the data tells us that this is not equitable across campus.

Q-Have you looked at the COB separately?

A-We have not but can. We do have the total number of T/TT faculty and how many total sections taught in each college.

Q-How much will this cost? It does not look like much.

A-It is important to figure out the actual cost.

Dr. Johnson said that he was preparing to provide these data to Dr. Uzman. He will then set a meeting to discuss.

C-Please include Dr. Gillette and the workgroup in this discussion.

Q-Have you and others thought about the possibility that the TX Legislature may seek to remove or weaken tenure? GA is moving against tenure. Is this something that the provost council discusses?

A-I am not aware of this but will follow up.

Dr. Cueva provided an update on the data request. He sent Interim Provost Uzman a request for information on September 27th. Specifically, the request included: 1) FY2012-13 Administrative Accountability Reports, 2) market studies and CUPA reports, 3) salary supplementation reports from 2011-2014, 4) the years in which faculty and staff (including all administrators) received salary adjustments from FY2010-21, 5) The percentage of adjustments of faculty and staff

(including all administrators) salaries from FY2010-21, and 6) the maximum percentage allowed for salary adjustments for faculty and staff (including all administrators) from FY2010-21. They want to compare the ten year increase of faculty and staff salaries with those of administrators and to learn how the budget percentage has changed between the administrative and academic areas over this time. Dr. Uzman's office already provided items 1-4.

Drs. Cueva and Gehring attended the Texas Council of Faculty Senates and found that one university had an increase from under 600K to over 1.4MM in administrator funding over the course of ten years.

Dr. Cueva asked for senators to volunteer to serve on task forces:

1. This group would look at our policies on course evaluations when there are internal and external disruptions, such as COVID-19. How do faculty and colleges use these? Some allow modifying surveys due to disruptions.
2. The second is to consider a policy to review administrators by faculty.
3. The third is focused on votes of no confidence. UHV has a statement in their handbook. UHD does not have a statement or policy.
4. The fourth focuses on workload and service. We require additional data to look at what we can do to address increased service responsibilities. This group would develop a faculty survey.

Dr. Cueva asked volunteers to send him an email if interested.

Q-Will the survey involve lecturers?

A-Yes

Q-What do we send you if interested?

A-Just an email with your interest.

Q-How detailed do you want this?

A-It does not need much detail.

New Business

A senator said they were contacted by two lecturers about the right to vote for department chair. They currently do not have this right. This is concerning as many lecturers have multi-year contracts and contribute significantly to service. We would like to revise policies to allow lecturers the right to vote.

Dr. Johnson explained that FAC is working on revising this policy.

Q-Will this policy allow instructors the right to vote?

A-Instructor is a position for T/TT faculty that arrive ABD. They then move to assistant professor upon completing their degrees.

Q-Is there an attempt to have conformity in lecturer roles across the colleges?

A-This does vary between colleges. Some lecturers had different interests and expertise. This will also require a policy change.

C-Many of our lecturers teach a 5/5 and then serve the university in many capacities. We need to consider their treatment.

A senator shared concerns about communication with disability services on accommodations. It is difficult to receive answers and faculty are not consulted as they were previously.

C-It seems that we no longer have a voice in the process.

C-There is a new SAM that removes the ability to challenge accommodations. It used to be easier for faculty to address difficulties.

Q-Is there one person handling this for UHD? I have sent emails and only received what appears to be automated responses.

Dr. Johnson said that this is the first time he heard about this. He is not sure if Dr. Uzman knows about these concerns. He can follow up.

C-I asked about an accommodation for a course where the student was no longer enrolled. I inquired if it was still applicable and received what appeared to be an automated message that I needed to comply. We need a way to communicate with them.

Dr. Cueva said that he would invite a representative from this office to our next senate meeting/

Dr. Cueva asked if we should have a December meeting.

C-We did last year.

Dr. Cueva suggested that we meet twice more for the year.

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The senate voted to adjourn at 3:45 PM.

Key:

Answer

Comment

Question