


OFFICE OF THE PROVOST AND SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

November 1, 2023

TO: Dr. Bernardo Pohl, President, UHD Faculty Senate
UHD Faculty Senate

FROM: Dr. Deborah E. Bordelon 
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

RE: Response to Faculty Senate Resolution - SR 23-02 Date: 10/17/2023

I am in receipt of the Faculty Senate Resolution 23-02, which was approved by the Faculty Senate on October 17, 2023. In the resolution, there is a concern expressed that shared governance was violated when an email was sent to revamp the university's assessment system to bring it into alignment with the 2018 SACSCOC assessment standards. It is important to note that President Blanchard and I firmly believe that shared governance is the cornerstone of the University of Houston-Downtown. A collaborative governance process involves joint responsibility and a commitment to dialogue to address questions and concerns regarding a proposed policy or procedure. President Blanchard and I, as well as the other administrators across the university, are strongly committed to being available and active participants in conversations to gain insights and/or address concerns.

In the email that prompted the Faculty Senate to issue Resolution SR-23-02, there was a reference to a possible need for an interim policy since PS 03.A.31 - Assessment of Educational Programs Policy has not been updated since May 28, 2013. It is important to note that no interim policy was presented to the President; however, the information on assessment was shared with the Faculty Senate because PS 03.A.31 is over 10 years old, and revisions are necessary to bring it into compliance. It is strongly recommended that the shared governance committee responsible for reviewing and updating this policy makes it a priority to work with administration to update PS 03.A.31 as we embark on strengthening the assessment system to make it more meaningful, more informative to guide educational and programmatic decisions, and more easily implemented.

Faculty Senate Resolution SR 23-02 also brings to light the need to work collaboratively to update PS-01.A.03 - Academic Shared Governance Policy. It has not been updated since October 16, 1995; however, it is extremely important in clearly identifying and defining the shared governance committees that are essential to working together to strengthen the university. The university has grown and evolved over the past 28 years since this policy was last approved. As SR-23-02 highlights, it is important that the shared governance committees and administration make this a priority in updating since this is a guiding policy for the important work that we are collaboratively conducting daily.

Shared governance is extremely important as we review and update policies and procedures that are needed to guide the work of the University of Houston-Downtown. While there may be instances when emergency or interim policies are needed, as noted in

SR 23-02, the university administration has consistently worked with the shared governance committees to move interim policies forward – and will continue to do so.

The work of the Faculty Senate and the faculty of the University of Houston-Downtown is valued and greatly appreciated. When we work together, we are able to move forward with policies and procedures that support and enhance the work of our faculty, staff, and students.