

DRAFT

FACULTY SENATE MINUTES

Meeting: December 2, 2008

PRESENT: M. Moosally, B. Belbot, T. Davis, J. Caro, B. Christmas, J. Creighton, M. Cunningham, J. Dutcher, J. Flosi, B. Gilbert, T. Hale, S. Henney, L. Hignite, N. Leveille, P. Lyons, K. McLellan, D. Nino, C. Nguyen, , J. Pavletich, K. Pinkerton, N. Rangel, T. Redl, A. Rejaie, R. Robbins, K. Robertson, D. Ryden, H. Wang, J. Yoon, Z. Zhou

ABSENT: A. Gomez-Rivas, O. Gupta, A. Kane, S. Penkar, P. Simeonov, C. Stewart,

GUESTS: Provost M. Woods, AVP P. Williams, VP I. Montalbano, AVP G. Evans, Library Director P. Ensor, Public Relations Director S. Davis, P. Cureton, J. Harned, P. Ingram, J. Schmertz, R. Sheridan, C. Stokes.

Senate President Moosally called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

Minutes for the November 4, 2008 Senate Meeting were approved with the correction of removing the statement saying FSEC committee member P. Lyons attended the TCFS meeting in Austin. Minutes for the November 18 and the December 2 faculty senate meetings will be considered for approval at the January 20 Faculty Senate meeting.

Senate President Moosally's Report

Dr. Moosally has a number of items of information to report. During the November 18 meeting while the Senate was in executive session, a letter from COB faculty member Dr. Madeline Johnson was read to the Senate; it was Dr. Johnson's intent that the letter be an open letter to faculty. Therefore, the letter will be distributed as an attachment to the November 18 minutes.

Dr. Moosally met with President M. Castillo on December 2. Dr. Castillo liked the materials on assessment approved by the Faculty Senate and has approved the position of Director of Academic Assessment. AVP of Institutional Effectiveness P. Williams and VP of ESO I. Montalbano will move forward with the search to fill the Director of Academic Assessment position. Dr. Castillo will also take action on the recommendation of FSEC and Provost Woods for filling the new ombuds position.

Dr. Moosally also discussed with Dr. Castillo the ballot results and related issues. While he communicated a concern about the intent of the ballot, he made a clear commitment to meet with FSEC to discuss ways to resolve some of the items on the senate resolution and ballot.

Questions with the table of programs have been clarified at the system level. The table of programs will move forward to the Board of Regents and to the Coordinating Board.

UFEC, which is the University Faculties Executive Committee, will host a conference on "student success" here at UHD on March 27. A call for proposals will be forthcoming.

Dr. Moosally is the Faculty Senate's representative on the general education committee. From meetings of the general education committee last summer while working on assessment, a new structure for the general education committee was suggested. This would result in department curriculum committees electing a representative to serve on the general education committee. This is a proposal that has come forward. Please share any suggestions you have in regard to the general education committee with President Moosally or Vice President Belbot.

Academic Affairs Council will be meeting on December 3 and the academic workload policy will move forward for consideration there. Several other topics, e.g., academic suspension policy and the dean's list policy, will also be discussed at that meeting.

With respect to the budgeting process, the Senate does not have an official role in the budget planning processes. But President Moosally suggests that senators and faculty explore how they can submit suggestions to their departments or perhaps promote initiatives through the VPAA planning process. Dr. Moosally said that the Senate might also have an opportunity to respond to the VPAA proposal and plan.

No report from Vice-President Belbot

New Business

The Senate is interested in better understanding actions taken by the legislature. Dr. Chris Birchak, Dean of University College, serves as a special advisor on college readiness at the state level and is UHD's liaison on college readiness at the state level. She was invited to address the Faculty Senate on the Texas College Readiness Program.

Dr. Birchak provided handouts on the College Readiness Program and then asked Senator Redl to comment on the November 21 symposium for mathematics in Austin which he attended. Gary Greer from University College, Susan Dean from CMS, and Mike O'Connell from Urban Education also attended the symposium. The symposium gave these UHD representatives an opportunity to discuss the college readiness program/initiative and to talk with each other about the implications of the readiness program and what it means for faculty who teach courses like beginning algebra and intermediate algebra which are not college-level courses but courses taught so students can get up to college level preparation. Dr. Redl reported that this was a good workshop and pointed out that college readiness has broader ramifications than just for those faculty teaching entry level courses. There will be symposiums for other academic areas, i.e., English/Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies in the future.

Dr. Birchak said that although it appears that college readiness has relevance to those teaching entry level college courses, it really does have broad ramifications across all of the college. Dr. Birchak called attention to the url (<http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/collegereadiness/TCRS.cfm>) listed on materials handed out as a source of information on the college readiness standards. The Texas College Readiness Program is to assure that students out of high school programs are ready to enter college. Facets of college readiness include key cognitive strategies (critical thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills), key content (English/Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies), academic behaviors (study skills, etc.), and contextual skills and

awareness. Many students do not have this “privileged information.” Dr. Birchak also pointed out that there are multifaceted approaches that can foster student success (see handout on Texas College Readiness Initiative).

President Moosally asked Dr. Birchak how the program is funded. Dr. Birchak said that each college gets some funding in a college readiness budget. The Coordinating Board covered some expenses for faculty attending the symposiums. Dr. Birchak said there are some concerns about how to get participation in the program, especially from teachers in secondary schools who are preparing students for college. Dr. Birchak asked how to get faculty involved in thinking about college readiness and suggested that the whole teacher education program may focus on college readiness. She wants to look at links and partnerships with and among faculty and various academic areas. Eventually, end of semester “content” exams will be given to students—perhaps to replace the TACS test. All of this has not been determined. It was asked if there is any notion of eliminating the remedial/developmental courses at the university. The Coordinating Board does want to reduce the number of courses that are remedial. Eventually, there would be exams for topics in high school that would demonstrate whether the student is college-ready. Dr. Birchak said that there are opportunities to have input.

Dr. Moosally asked if there are opportunities for comments on standards themselves. Dr. Birchak indicated that there is not a formal procedure but that she (Dr. Birchak) could take forward any questions or suggestions. Dr. Moosally asked Senator Redl if there was a sense that there would be some sort of standardization of courses in certain academic areas such that students who had tested as “college-ready” in high school would then be entering courses at college for which they were prepared. Senator Redl said he did not feel that there was a plan to move in such a direction.

Vice President for Student Services and Enrollment Management E. Apodaca said that college readiness could create some challenges for admissions. It was asked if there is a college readiness faculty and who they are. Dr. Birchak said the faculty and programs are constantly expanding as departments recommend faculty/courses.

Dr. Moosally thanked Dr. Birchak for attending the Faculty Senate meeting and providing information on the college readiness program.

Other Legislative Items:

VP D. Bradley reported that a new HEATH formula is being considered. It is expected that the HEATH allocation will drop from \$9.2 to \$7.6 million in year 2011. To deal with a \$2.4 million HEATH reduction would probably require foregoing some big renovation projects that UHD might want to do. The legislature put \$100 million aside for incentive funding: \$2.518 million is UHD’s share. VP Bradley said this has to be viewed as one-time funding and suggested that a half million dollars might be put into scholarships for fall 2009; what might be done with the remainder has not been determined—it may be used to build reserves to get the university through tough times.

VP E. Apodaca said admissions would like to use \$100,000 for top students and another \$100,000 for transfer students. He said some of the money could be used for continuing students as well as setting aside about \$25,000 for matching funds for scholarships.

Another issue discussed was that the Coordinating Board recommended to the legislature that funding be based on hours completed rather than on hours attempted/enrolled. Chancellor Khator has made it clear that she does not support this approach to funding. VP Apodaca pointed out that even if the student in a class gets a grade of F that counts as completed. Ninety-six percent (96%) of hours at UHD are completed.

Dr. Moosally asked for an update on the 6-course drop rule, which the state passed a couple of years ago. Provost Woods said that there is some flexibility in defining exemptions to this rule. She pointed out that this rule applies to students who started college in fall (2008), therefore there is a very small percentage of students who are currently affected. Provost Woods explained that there is some discussion that universities might count only drops at their own colleges as trying to coordinate any such counting with other colleges makes the implementation of the rule difficult. The way the rule is written now is that it would be 6-course drop TOTAL across all campuses. Dr. Moosally wanted to know if faculty should develop a policy on what would qualify as a waiver. VP Apodaca indicated that information from transcripts would have to be reviewed for students transferring from other colleges. Senator R. Robbins asked what happens when the student has dropped 6 courses; she was told that the student can continue to enroll but cannot drop any more classes. AVP G. Evans said that the discussion demonstrates the difficulty and complexity involved with any implementation of the 6-course drop rule. R. Sheridan suggested doing an exit interview with students who drop. There are many questions yet to be answered about how to coordinate the counting of drops with drops at other colleges and how to implement the 6-course drop rule at UHD. It was suggested that this was a legislative idea intended to save money without having adequately considering or realizing the unintended consequences. It was suggested that the rule may be reviewed and/or revised in some way when the legislature becomes familiar with the resulting difficulties with implementation of the rule.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy J. Davis