

UHD Faculty Senate

Minutes recorded by: Nathan Neale
Regular Scheduled Senate Meeting September 15, 2020 2:30 – 3:59 PM
Online through Zoom

Senate: Ronald Beebe, Edmund Cueva, Michael Duncan, Godwin Agboka, Kasi Bundoc, , Franklin Allaire, Nina Barbieri, Alexander Bielakowski, Dexter Cahoy, Prakash Deo, Krista Gehring, Rachael Hudspeth, Timothy Klein , Lucas Logan, Cynthia Lloyd, Jeffrey Martz , Nathan Neale, Jean Nganou, Anand Pore, Angelica Roncacio, Joseph Sample, Lucas Logan, Nell Sullivan, Pat Williams, Julie Wilson.

Absent: Tahereh Jafari, Kurt Stanberry,

Guests: Eric Link, Provost/VPAA; Jimmy Jung, VP Enrollment Management, Michelle Moosally, AVP Programming and Curriculum; Jerry Johnson, AVP Sponsored Programs, Sandra Dahlberg, Faculty Ombuds, Charlie Finch, Assistant Dean University College, Utpal Bose, Chair FINS, Meritza Tamez, Interim Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students, Andrew Pavelich, Michael Connell, Professor, Marina Grau, Paul Mandell, Candace TenBrink, Assistant Professor, Michael Lemke, Assistant Professor, Lucas Fedell, Lecturer, Nazly Dyer, Executive Director, Data Analytics & Institutional Research, Mik Yegiyany, Director, Institutional Data Analytics, Patricia Ensor, Executive Director, W.I.D., Christal Burnett Sánchez, Chair, Irene Chen, Professor, Melissa Hovsepiyan, Program Chair, Darlene Hodge, FS Admin

Call to order: The Senate was called to order at 2:31 pm by Senate President Ronald Beebe

Minutes

Dr. Beebe shared a message from David Bradley regarding corrections to the September 1, 2020 minutes to further clarify “GEER” scholarships (Governor’s Emergency Education Relief) in contrast to GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs). The September 1st minutes were then passed unanimously.

Dr. Beebe welcomed new senators that were elected during the recent special election.

Dr. Beebe informed all attendees that the Faculty Awards would be held next week and that a link would be sent out soon.

Dr. Beebe reminded all to review and provide any feedback on the proposed amendments as the link sent via email will close on Tuesday, September 22.

Reports

VP Jung provided an update on enrollment. Overall enrollment is currently up about 3% (15,400), when compared to last year. FTIC enrollment is 1525 and was 1527 last year. New graduate enrollment is up but continuing graduate enrollment is down. Transfer student enrollment is down about 5%. Enrollment at UH Main is up about 2%, UHV is up about 5% and UHCL is about the same as they were last year.

VP Jung explained some of the reasons that application for admission is being reviewed. About 25% of UHD students come to us with a GPA of 2.5 or higher. UH Main requires letters from counselors and a personal essay. He is not sure about UHV and UHCL requirements. Most high schools in Texas use a class rank but this is no longer the case in the North East. UHD students that are at the 50th percentile or lower are usually conditionally accepted. Dr. Jung's office reviewed class rank and found that it does not predict success at UHD.

Provost Link joined senate to give a few updates on the university. He acknowledged the work of Dr. Jung and his staff over the summer and the 4% increase in SCH (versus last year). He said there are many across the campus that should be thanked too. We will have student census and may lose some students due to non-payment but is optimistic that enrollment at UHD will be slightly higher than last year.

Provost Link stated that they are looking at concepts and frameworks in order to assist departments as they work with faculty and deans to develop the spring schedule. Dr. Moosally will be communicating guidelines with chairs soon. Much of the current discussion has been focused on what a code response "yellow" looks like. Every group he has spoken with so far believes it is easier to "pull back" from a yellow to an orange or from a red rather than attempt to move classes from online instruction into another modality. The current plan is to build out the spring schedule in yellow.

Dr. Dyer and Mr. Yegiyian provided an update on S/U grading and EAB:

Mr. Yegiyian shared an update on S/U grading. The report does not include any 8 week or "mini" courses. About 13% of the grades were S/U with about 7% being U and 6% being S. These grades varied by departments from 2.3% to 19.9%. The spring GPA was 2.91, which is a little higher than normal and .29% higher than fall. When splitting GPA by 1) those students that did not choose the S/U option, the GPA was 2.964, 2) those opting for the S/U, with at least one U, the GPA was 2.329 and 3) those choosing S but no , the GPA was 2.959. The percentage of "A" grades were higher in the spring, but fewer B,C, D, F and W grades and the overall ABC rate was 75.27% in the spring versus 77.73 in the fall. The conclusion was that those choosing the S/U option had slightly lower GPAs.

Q – How did you calculate the percentage of students that opted for S/U?

A – We looked at the all of the students taking spring and summer courses. We then separated them by those that did not choose any S/U grades in one group and those that did into another.

We then looked at the second group to see if they chose only U or both S and U. Then, we had three total groups with those choosing only letter grades, those that chose only U and those that chose both S and U.

He thought that we would see extremely different grades but grades are much more normal than expected. A few students exercised the policy, but still chose to accept D and F grades.

Dr. Dyer provided an update on EAB from the previous twelve months. There were 196 appointment campaigns, where students were requested to come in for any reason, 1005 faculty responses and 14 units on-boarded. 51,859 appointments were made with 16,387 being Scheduled appointments (vs. drop-ins or other means) and the Census enrollment was 33, 505 (when we moved to online delivery during COVID). 15,957 unique students were served. 252 students were marked for “needing support”.

Mr. Yegiyian thanked faculty for responding and helping follow up with students on early alerts.

Dr. Dyer explained that they have provided progress reports to faculty that had any students from the 2020 FTIC cohort and those from the 2019 cohort that are on probation. They invited students to the Gator Success Center for the first pilot campaign focused on those students that may need additional support. Those that participated (152) had higher GPAs (2.39) and all re-enrolled; for those that did not attend (137), the average GPA was much lower (1.64) with 58% re-enrolling.

She encouraged faculty to visit their website or email them at eabhhelp@uhd.edu with any early alert or related issues.

Provost Link thanked Dr. Dyer and Mr. Yegiyian for their hard work.

Dr. Beebe explained that FSEC met with Provost’s office about the spring schedule. There are issues revolving around Step 3, Level Yellow, specifically about considerations regarding faculty choice. According to the matrix, 30-40% of the classes should be F2F or hybrid, but this is a goal, not a quota. They acknowledge that we need to try to honor faculty choice while following the Governor’s directives.

Dr. Moosally shared a draft of the spring 2020 Schedule Planning Guidelines that is based on FSEC feedback. They are trying to encourage “thinking ahead to the spring” and us operating in a Yellow. We are not setting targets. We are asking faculty to consider their preferences and what is best for their students. If we need to “pull back, we will”. There is no current deadline. They ask for faculty to maintain class meeting days and times even if we have to ever change modalities later. This involves moving from F2F to synchronous online not asynchronous. They want to keep students’ time commitments the same. If students enroll in a synchronous class with specific dates and times, they cannot schedule other classes that meet during those same times, whether F2F or synchronous. Shannon Cunningham is working on building the course schedule and permissions to help students and faculty. We will need to be prepared to go fully

online so all F2F courses will have “COVID caps”. This may mean using some of the funds from the CARES act to hire additional adjunct faculty for courses. The online interactive classes are an option. We currently have 6-8 classrooms set up for this flexibility that allows larger sections. Please reach out to her if you would like to view these rooms.

Q – How can we better publish the difference between synchronous and asynchronous courses in the schedule?

A– We are trying to aggressively market and share videos to students to better educate them while being upfront to students so that they can read the schedule. She asked faculty to review schedules to ensure they are correct.

Q – Will COVID Caps still be in place?

A– Yes, this is our intent.

Q – You mentioned that department chairs will be working with faculty on their delivery preference. An email recently went out from Ms. Montalbano to chairs directing them that faculty need to request an accommodation to teach online in the spring. This seems to “be contrary to message that we have had” about faculty choice and that they do not need to request an accommodation. Can you speak to that?

A– There has been some messages from the UH system and further communication will be shared.

Dr. Johnson stated that Ms. Montalbano states that staff members need to request this more often than faculty. The message originates due to possible pressures from the State of Texas. Faculty can still request online teaching assignments.

Q – If faculty have traditionally taught classes online, I do not believe that they need to request an accommodation, is this correct?

A– Dr. Johnson said that was his understanding as well. The concern is about those faculty that traditionally teach fully F2F and now request teaching online when most faculty are also requesting online courses. There has to be documentation about increased risk to faculty from COVID-19 and this is the same way this was approached in the fall. He does not see any further restrictions on faculty for the spring.

Dr. Duncan stated that he attended a meeting held on August 14 where UHS leadership were invited, including the Chancellor, all Presidents and Faculty Senate Presidents. He said that the Chancellor was clear that all faculty have the right to choose their delivery modality and that they do not need to go through a process to do so. Drs. Duncan and Beebe then met with Provost Link and Interim President Tillis and they believe that is what she meant. The Chancellor also sent out an email that reiterates this messaging.

Dr. Johnson said that he will continue to follow up on this concern.

Dr. Moosally asked if this messaging applied to the fall or if it was indefinite.

Dr. Duncan said that it was his impression that it was until otherwise stated but was clear that it would be up to the Chancellor to clarify.

Dr. Beebe said that it was his impression that this was indefinite.

Dr. Johnson said that he would follow up with Jennifer Bloom.

Dr. Beebe is concerned that faculty may believe they are being forced to teach F2F even if they have reservations about doing so.

Dr. Johnson shares these concerns. He said that he is concerned about the inequality of this due to the power dynamics involved with the academy

Q – Does this mean that faculty members over the age of 60 can be exempt from teaching F2F? Will they have to prove they are over 60?

Dr. Duncan stated that ESO has this information.

Dr. Johnson said that he would ask ESO as this is important to the senate.

A senator stated that this is important to faculty and to students as many are in multi-generational households and hopes the administration recognizes that this is important to students. They do not want their grandparents, parents and children exposed.

Dr. Moosally stated that there are still unknowns and that they want faculty to think about going back into the classroom but recognize that they will not be “stuck there”.

Q – Some faculty did not know that they needed to request to teach online. Why were faculty not notified?

A– Dr. Johnson said that he did not have an answer. We have not had clarity and that we may still have some mixed messaging. It is his understanding that under normal circumstances faculty work with chairs and schedulers. As the pandemic unfolded, the issue of faculty and student accommodations came into the conversation. This is an issue and we do not have full clarity.

Dr. Beebe stated that one may think that some faculty may be more comfortable teaching F2F. Is there a set number of faculty that need to teach F2F?

Dr. Johnson stated that he did not believe so. They are not prescribing what this looks like. Chairs need to consider what a “yellow” would look like and to have internal conversations about what yellow would look like and if faculty want to teach F2F, it is easier to “pull back” from this if needed, rather than being pressured by the BOR or Governor to change our plans and teach more classes F2F.

Dr. Moosally suggests that schedulers follow their normal processes and that some adjustments will need to be made. Please do not wait to begin the process until any accommodations may be requested or if ESO is involved.

Q – What is the preference of students?

A–Dr. Johnson stated that they only have anecdotal evidence. Some are afraid of coming to campus even though they enrolled F2F. Some expressed that they want F2F. There is not a current clear message from students. He hopes that our enrollment may be “telling” and hopes that we will have formal feedback this semester.

Dr. Beebe asked senators to talk to their colleagues and share the top 3 issues that they believe should be addressed by the senate. We have time to gather this information as there is extended time due to the 5th Tuesday in September. He does not want the senate agenda to only be set by him and FSEC. Please bring these concerns for our meeting in three weeks.

Dr. Beebe said that FSEC discussed the resolution on student writing. FSEC does not feel that this resolution has rational directives on the process and the end goal. We may want to compile a working group to help map how to proceed or provide guidance to the resolution. He hopes that some from the General Education committee may be enticed to work with senators on this.

Dr. Moosally acknowledged the good intentions and all of the work in the resolution. She looks forward to having more input from the senate and further clarifications on how to improve the resolution.

Dr. Beebe asked Dr. Dahlberg, the Faculty Ombuds if she felt comfortable sharing her report today instead of the next meeting. Dr. Dahlberg stated that she needed time to prepare and would be ready for the next meeting as that is what she had planned.

Dr. Beebe stated that some faculty were concerned about the DUO Authenticate process. He was not sure how this decision was made. He is concerned about the requirement to use a personal cell phone for this purpose.

Dr. Moosally stated that this was discussed during a chairs meeting. The directive came from the UH system and they wanted it rolled out in August. They were able to secure a slight delay. This initiative applies to Microsoft 365 and will eventually apply to Peoplesoft and BlackBoard. The deadline for faculty is September 23rd and September 30th for students. She asked for much more communication about this process.

Q – Will we need to use the password every time we log into O365?

Dr. Moosally said that she does not know.

Dr. Duncan said that DUO’s website said that a authentication is good for 30 days.

Dr. Beebe reiterated that he is concerned about implementation as this is not clear and mentioned the struggles with ALLY.

Discussion ensued, including the following concerns from senators:

- The communication about DUO has not been through the same channels that we normally use.
- Is this private company able to obtain and use our personal information, passwords, etc.?
- Why must we share our personal mobile number?
- The messaging looks like phishing.
- A senator mentioned that a university where they are completing a graduate degree currently uses this or a similar authentication. It is a “nightmare sometimes” when a tower is out or if students do not have consistent service. This will be difficult for students that do not always have the same phone or if they do not have a phone at all.
- This is a social justice issue for our students.
- Would someone from the UH system or Said please come speak to us?
- What was the rationale behind this? Was there a data breach? Why do we need this extra layer of protection?
- Can we postpone this further until we have more information?
- If someone will perpetrate fraud, this will not prevent them from doing so.
- Will we be locked out of email if we do not do this by the 23rd?
- How does O365 and our exchange work together?
- If we have these issues, imagine how hard this will be for incoming students.
- Can FSEC send out a copy of the original email(s)? Many have deleted it.

Dr. Moosally believes that data breaches may have caused this and suggests that we invite Said Fattouh to our next meeting as he is “running point” on DUO to address senate concerns.

Dr. Beebe said that we should ask IT to forward the email and that it should not come from FSEC.

Dr. Beebe asked if the senate would like to vote on Dr. Dahlberg’s continued appointment as Faculty Ombuds. She is willing to continue. He asked the senate if members would rather wait until she shares the report?

A senator asked for clarification.

Dr. Beebe explained that according to policy, the senate votes to continue or appoint an Ombuds on a yearly basis.

Dr. Duncan stated that FSEC meets with the OMBUDS, reviews the report and makes a recommendation. This was done over the summer with FSEC being in favor with her continuance and Dr. Dahlberg expressed interest.

Dr. Cueva said that it makes sense to wait until after the presentation so that senators know what they are voting for.

A senator stated the recommendation was made by the previous FSEC.

Ms. Hudspeth motioned to adjourn the meeting and Dr. Bielakowski seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 3:59 PM.