

## **UHD Senate Resolution on Reduction of Course Releases**

Passed by a majority vote (19-2) of Faculty Senate 09/20/2011

Whereas:

- Course releases are required in many cases for faculty who serve in positions such as program coordinator, assistant chair, on certain committees, and in various other roles that entail additional duties crucial to student success and to the overall achievement of UHD's mission; the Faculty Senate is concerned that the marked reduction in course releases mandated in late August, especially in the departments of English (52% reduction), Social Sciences (53%) and Computer and Mathematical Sciences (65%) went well beyond the anticipated reductions requested by the Provost in June, and will adversely impact UHD's attainment of the ambitious retention and graduation goals outlined in the forthcoming Strategic Plan due to an inadequate level of effective program leadership, particularly for programs that serve large numbers of general education students; the Faculty Senate is also concerned by the late notice of many of the aforementioned cuts;
- Numerous faculty members in these departments had agreed to take important leadership roles based on verbal and in some cases written agreements granting them compensation for their service, and these individuals had already performed a significant amount of the work when they were notified that these prior agreements would not be honored;
- There are currently no standard criteria for determining whether a request for a course release is granted, nor was any clear basis given to faculty for decisions about which course releases were rescinded in August.

Be it resolved:

- That in the future the administration, in a timely manner, communicate and consult with the faculty regarding actions that impact the instructional function of the university;
- That the Faculty Senate requests a systematic and publicly reported audit of course releases throughout the university during the 2010/2011 academic year, and for Fall 2011, which should include: 1) the number of releases granted to each department during each semester and the positions for which those course releases were given; 2) a description of the duties of those positions and explanation of their relevance to achieving both the goals of the program and the university's goals; 3) determination of whether elements of the work currently done by faculty with course releases could more economically and efficiently be conducted by staff;
- That the Senate also requests that an immediate review be conducted of course releases recently eliminated for the purpose of determining whether they are to be reinstated. Each review would be based upon a written justification for the course release and would require a written response by the administration;

- That course releases given for administrative purposes and work performed for them should take place in the same semester (this includes compensation in summer for work conducted in summer semesters, and does not apply for other types of course releases that are typically applied retroactively, such as releases for independent study or graduate courses);
- The agreements made with faculty for 2011-12 are to be honored, either through immediate reinstatement of their course releases (where this can be done without disrupting work) or through a one-time course overload pay.