

## UHD Faculty Senate

Minutes recorded by: Nathan Neale  
Regular Scheduled Senate Meeting December 7, 2021  
2:30 – 4:00 PM  
Online via Zoom

Members of Senate in Attendance: Edmund Cueva, Krista Gehring, Ronald Beebe, Nathan Neale, Godwin Agboka, Stephanie Babb, Maria Bhattacharjee, Alexander Bielakowski, Franklin Allaire, Amy Baird, Kasi Bundoc, Scott Davis, Austin DeJan, Lucas Fedell, Paul Fulbright, Rachael Hudspeth, Cynthia Lloyd, Lucas Logan, Jean Nganou, Angelica Roncacio, M. Nell Sullivan, Candace TenBrink, Adriana Visbal, Julie Wilson

Senators Absent:, Ayden Adler, Nina Barbieri, Prakash Deo, Aaron Gillette, Heather Goltz, Don Holmes, Michael Lemke, Danya Serrano

**Guests:** Loren Blanchard, UHD President, Jerry Johnson, AVP, Sandra Dahlberg, Faculty Ombuds, Melissa Hovsepien, Gene Preuss, Hossein Shahrokhi, UHD Chief Information Officer, Meritza Tamez, Dean of Students, Crystal Guillory, Wendy Burns-Ardolino, P. Jacob Lipp, Lea Campbell, Executive Director, Assessment & Accreditation, Brian Drake, Liza Alonzo, Pat Williams, Professor, Patricia Ensor, Executive Director, W.I.D., Laolu Davies, Toye Simmons, Johanna Wolfe, Lucy Bowen, Darlene Hodge, FS Admin

**Call to order:** The Senate was called to order at 2:32 PM by Senate President Edmund Cueva after a quorum was assembled.

A motion to approve the November 16, 2021 minutes was made and seconded.  
The minutes were approved.

### **Reports**

UHD President. Loren Blanchard thanked the senate for the opportunity to attend and provide some updates. He shared that he was grateful to see faculty, staff and students back on campus and explained that this creates a synergy that builds excitement for the community. He said that many students shared that they feel more engaged. Though we are back on campus, they are continually watching Omicron and are concerned about safety.

139 faculty members have signed up for commencement and 2500 students are eligible to walk. UHD is planning an Investiture. This is designed to spotlight UHD, it is not the “Loren Blanchard Show”. It will be a display about who we are and the meaning and value that we have to Houston. It will also have a focus on service, fundraising and student success.

During the State of the University, there are four “Big Areas” or points that UHD is focused. These include Building Infrastructure, Student Success, Financial Infrastructure, and philanthropy. These are related to and supported by the strategic plan, which many faculty members are actively contributing.

Though we are one of the most affordable universities in Texas, we are beginning focus groups with students to consider increasing tuition and how these funds would be used. These may include programming, student success, and mental health. We had two mental health counsellors and now have four. This is not enough and we want to provide more. Similarly, we only have two front-facing financial aid counsellors and now have four. We need more as we have 15K students.

Q-When will we increase tuition and how much will it be? Every time we have an increase, we lose students.

A-I regret hearing that a student may have dropped out. This is unfortunate. We have more funds from the Federal Government than before and many students are using these resources. This likely contributes to the fact that we have 2500 students eligible for graduation. There is also an increase in the Pell Grant by the Federal Government. The eventual increase should not create a financial hardship if students are Pell eligible. Also, the increase will require Board Approval. It will likely be about \$250 per student.

Dr. Jerry Johnson shared an update from the Workload Committee. He and his committee are working with committee data and asked deans for college and department data. This is helping inform the taskforce on workload for this spring.

Q-What is the intent of this taskforce?

A-We are trying to evaluate if the 4/3 workload is still appropriate, to focus on an equitable workload, scholarship aspirations, etc.

C-Please look at our lecturer workload. Mr. Fedell has a survey and we would like you to involve him too. Now with the senior lecture position, this workload issue will become more complex.

Dr. Johnson said that the intent was to be as transparent as possible.

C-Even if lecturers are not currently “abused”, there is no protection for their future.

Dr. Johnson suggested that he can share this with the Provost and Chair Council.

Dr. Cueva argued that UHD should consider an increase in salaries as there is an increase in the amount of work completed by lecturers.

C-There are concerns that the Senior Lecturer evaluation criteria are not the same across the university. This will create an issue of fairness.

Dr. Johnson said that two departments sent their evaluation drafts into his office and one is very good.

Dr. Neale asked him to share this as an example.

A senator also said that he could share the one from his department.

Dr. Alonzo provided a brief report on the 2022 Investiture. There are many stakeholders involved. It will encompass 3 days beginning on April 7<sup>th</sup>. There will be a large dinner, where tickets may be \$75-\$100 each. There will be Alumni and Honorees. Though the pricing may seem high to some, they are working on pricing options that will be fair to all.

## **Old Business**

There has not been a response from Chartwell about our concerns with the lack of healthy food options. They have not responded to our meeting requests. This is becoming a concern.

The proposed Policy on Votes of Support, Censure and No Confidence is moving forward. It will be shared with the senate before the end of the calendar year.

Dr. Cueva explained that he and others are building a survey to learn more about the service loads and work-life of Full-Time faculty. This will include prizes, including an Executive PowerBook, tumblers, jackets, blankets, etc. He hopes that this will increase participation.

#### New Business

A senator explained that inflation in the United States is approximately 6.2%. This is something that we need to address. Though we are not allowed cost of living increases, this level of inflation is beginning to affect UHD stakeholders

Dr. Beebe said that this is not the first time that inflation has been an issue. He suggested looking at precedent from previous periods. Ewe may want to reach out to other senates. Also, this level of inflation may make it difficult to recruit and retain faculty and staff.

Q-How should we move forward?

A-We should begin with UFEC and find out what others are doing.

Dr. Cueva asked the senate how they prefer to hold senate meetings during the upcoming semester. He suggested a vote between Zoom, On-Campus and an alternating option.

Q-Why couldn't we have some on campus with an option for remote? A Hyflex option may be better for us.

A-We may not have access to a Hyflex option due to limited facilities.

Q-Will we have funds for food or snacks if meeting in person?

A-Yes, we have this in our budget.

The senate voted and the results were:

In-Person	2
Online	19
Alternating	11
Hyflex	10

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The senate voted to adjourn at 3:54 PM.

Key:

Answer

Comment

Question