

## **UHD Faculty Senate Meeting**

**February 7, 2012**

### **Minutes**

**Present:** A. Allen (President), G. Preuss (President-Elect), J. Schmertz (Secretary), P. Lyons (Past President)

J. Ahmad, C. Bachman, M. Benavides, R. Beebe, C. Burnett, A. Chiaviello, G. Evans, S. Farris, J. Hackett, J. Harned, V. Hryniv, P. Kintzele, P. Li, C. Nguyen, W. Nowak, A. Pavelich, R. Scott, A. Sikka, L. Spears, K. Switzer, V. Tzouanas, W. Waller, I. Wang, V. Zafirris

**Absent:** S. Penkar, K. Wright

Schmertz was unable to get the revised minutes for the previous meeting out in time. They will be voted on at the next Senate meeting. Schmertz will send the revised minutes out via email in the interim.

### **President Allen's Report**

UHD's "Major Opportunity" campaign is underway. Fliers are in the buildings; advertising in the malls is coming.

There has been trouble with policies moving through the shared governance process: APC (Academic Policies) had trouble getting off the ground, but is now moving along with the grading policy. Faculty Affairs Committee says its work is slowed because of differing interpretations of shared governance processes. Allen said the primary concern is passing the ORCA policy: FAC says the policy is ready to go to AAC and the Provost says it is not. FSEC (Faculty Senate Executive Committee) decided not to put the issue on Senate's agenda at this time. Allen's hope is that the issue will get resolved before Senate is compelled to address it.

Common core: Last week Senate provided names of two senators for the Core Curriculum Oversight Committee. Sikka and Waller were elected but Chapman rejected them, using job-related reasons. Allen does not think shared governance was violated in this matter but will leave this to the Senate to decide.

Allen noted concerns had been raised about the component area committees for the new core. Different universities will be taking different approaches to revising their cores; UT for example is probably not making major changes. Allen's own perspective is that UHD's current gen ed core is in need of revision. Allen says he is "basically okay" with the way Chapman has structured the subcommittees and understands that Flores and Chapman are accountable to the state. He likes the fact that people are drawn from across the university into these committees because that makes it a collective opportunity. He said he trusts colleagues outside the area disciplines to make good judgments and "know what they don't know" and consult the disciplines when needed. However he still has questions about how committees will work: How will the

component area committees work with department committees? Who is writing curricula? He is also concerned about mention of cross-disciplinary courses that can become "niche courses" -- how to approve cross-disciplinary courses and still honor department curriculum committees. He also asked how such courses can be carried through the years and scaled up.

### **Report from Dr. Flores**

Flores apologized for not meeting with Senate earlier in the semester. He wants to work with Senate to develop some sort of thank you event.

TX Legislature will continue "meddling" with universities. Examples: Financial aid is being tied to accountability measures. The message from the Board of Regents is "no tuition increases" this year or next. Incentive funding got passed but not budgeted for next biennium. Funding will be tied to graduation rates. Flores is on the state K-16 council. That committee is concerned that students are not graduating with right skill sets--they have asked for common competencies in the core and beyond. Universities are being given a short turnaround time to make changes: for example, a ruling on common cut scores for placement in college courses is to be implemented by September 2012.

Flores says THECB is not saying that a certain course needs to be in the core or must be eliminated from core—it's just a matter of meeting certain stated competencies. Curriculum decisions belong to the faculty. However, faculty must look at D, F, and W courses to make decisions about whether the right teachers are teaching courses in the right ways, to improve the rates. He said he has seen "miraculous changes" in retention at other universities when departments own student success.

Budget: we did not grow sufficient for our budget, which postulated 3.5% growth. Beginning in May (base year of biennium) we must address enrollment. The only way to meet the budget is through significant growth in enrollment. Do we have the right courses, the right sections? Can we push up the course limits?

Sikka said that faculty concerns about the common core are not based on protecting their disciplines. She argues that faculty are used to thinking in broader terms than these. However, "niche" courses will also fail to address students' needs for a general background; e.g. a 4th grade history teacher who needs a course in US history. Flores responded that majors must declare by the 30th hour, according to a new ruling. Majors will have the right to decide what courses outside the common core will be required of their students.

Farris pointed out there is a conflict between "chasing SCH's" and retaining students, particularly with regard to class size. What will UHD do to get FTICs in early, advise them, and build summer programs so students don't have to take developmental courses? Flores said we will be raising admissions standards soon, which should make a difference. We are also working on a Client Relational Management System (CRM) which tracks students. We will buy PSAT scores so we can recruit strong students. We also need to examine courses and whether they can

accommodate a different format with larger class sizes. Although TX is moving away from funding "bodies in chairs" and towards competency based funding, "bodies in chairs" is the focus in a base funding year.

Lyons expressed concern that the emphasis on SCH's is not based on "smart" growth: identifying which courses and programs we will be trying to grow. Flores believes new admissions standards will enable more specific kinds of recruiting.

Ahmad expressed dissatisfaction with TX legislators for deciding the new mission for the university was to succeed where K-12 had failed. The value of a college education is being undermined. She asked where our lobbying efforts were. Flores responded that universities were none too happy with the TX legislature either. Two of the most knowledgeable leaders of the legislature are so frustrated that they are leaving it, which makes things even worse for us.

Kintzele asked if Flores was concerned that at the end of the core revision, academic standards would fall. Flores said he trusted the faculty to design curricula that were sufficiently rigorous and would transfer easily.

### **Discussion with Provost Brian Chapman**

Chapman began by saying President Flores wants a strong provost but the Faculty Senate wants a weak provost. He will make "executive decisions" based on what the president, Board of Regents, and legislature want and what the Coordinating Board requires.

On the Organized Research and Creative activities policy (ORCA): Chapman said that the President rejected the policy sent forward by Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) when Michael Dressman was interim provost because it "eliminated steps" in the approval process. Chapman said FAC (Faculty Affairs Committee) has refused to believe him or the president on this issue, and is not making the changes the president wants. These changes involve adding chairs and deans into the process of approving research awards, so that they can address staffing and workload problems that might arise as a result of an award being given to a faculty member. Chapman said that FAC refused to make the changes on the grounds that the president had not conveyed his reasons for rejecting the policy. (The academic shared governance policy has a sentence that requires the president to respond in writing when he rejects policies forwarded to him by AAC.) Chapman handed Senate President Allen a document signed by the president which he said satisfied this part of the shared governance policy.

Sikka objected that Faculty Affairs had already addressed the changes the president wanted. The problem is with a more recent list of changes sent forward to FAC by the provost. Chapman responded that the changes made by FAC were "incomplete," and that was why he had sent the ORCA policy back to FAC rather than to Academic Affairs Council for approval.

Moosally (chair of the Faculty Affairs Council) objected to Chapman's characterization of the way the policy had been handled. Chapman asked Moosally if FAC had indeed refused to handle

the changes. Moosally said that FAC had addressed the president's changes in October, but when given the provost's more recent set of changes, FAC had requested that Academic Affairs review them before FAC took them on again. Chapman said the FAC's response to the president's request for including deans and chairs in the approval process was a "workaround" of administrative approvals. Moosally said that FAC had not been informed of this objection during the time period when they were working on the policy. Chapman said they had just been informed, via the document he had just handed to Allen.

Lyons objected to the way Chapman had just introduced the issue of the ORCA policy (by saying Faculty Senate did not want a strong provost). He said that Chapman's approach was insulting and his representation of how the policy had been handled was inaccurate. Chapman said he had brought ORCA up because Allen had introduced it earlier. He said when the president conveys information to him and he conveys it to committees and Senate, "that should be good enough." He said his method of delivering that information may be outside of policy, but "you really don't want to go down the road of 'let's enforce all the policies.'"

Lyons emphasized the point that the president had not conveyed his reasons for initially rejecting the policy in writing but that FAC had nevertheless made the changes requested. Now the ORCA policy has been kicked back to FAC several times, even though at one point it had been approved by Academic Affairs Council as ready for the president's signature. Chapman said the president had rejected it a second time because the changes they had made were insufficient. However, FAC would not accept this.

Flores asked how the process could be made smoother so that the Provost and Senate would not be at odds. He took responsibility for not putting in writing his reasons for rejecting the ORCA policy.

Harned said the concerns from faculty that Flores is hearing about come from faculty feeling uninformed. He gave as an example the way the committees for the core curriculum had been selected and charged. Departments were never consulted about the charges or committees, and he has no idea where they even came from, just that he saw them. We are in the dark about administrative intentions. When there is secrecy, it seems like there is something to hide.

Chapman explained how the committees had been designed and the charges written. He came back from the THECB meeting with the Provosts in October and sent a memo to all faculty and staff explaining the changes on the way. He asked the deans for lists of committee members. The deans asked the chairs, and he talked to the chairs, who nominated members themselves. Once the selections were made, he notified committee members, chairs and deans. At that point, chairs should have informed faculty about who was on which committees. When Chapman designed the charges to the committees (which he says were his responsibility as chief academic officer) he sent them to the committees, chairs, and deans, using the normal chain of command that operates in a university. He noted we are on a short timeline. The committees are all "faculty committees," except one where staff already teach CSP (College Success) courses, so faculty have control. The component committees can advertise or design course offerings to fit the core. For the most part, courses can be revised to meet the objectives of the Coordinating Board. In

some cases we already have alternate courses that meet the new objectives. He said he does not understand why faculty are resisting innovation.

Farris said that it should not be assumed that faculty are afraid of innovating just because they don't want to do everything the provost's way. She repeated the Provost's statement that we don't want to go down the road of following all policies. She said she would like to know when a policy is a policy, because she no longer feels she has "a clue." She said she has seen some recent "stunning" policy violations that she is not at liberty to discuss. Since the president had asked what needed to happen so that faculty and administration could work together, her answer is that what is needed is clarification of when policies are/are not in effect.

Chapman said policies provide a path but sometimes can be "a wall" to accomplishing what external mandates necessitate. He discussed extenuating circumstances that challenge adherence to policy. He mentioned the current budget crisis and the role of the 4/3 workload policy. Reassigned time for a 4/3 load hits the budget because it requires paying the faculty plus the adjunct filling the slot. (Flores added that he had distributed a document which outlined the cost of a 4/3.) The provost cut the releases as a way of making up the budget difference. Senate "issued a resolution against him" [Chapman] for his late notice, but not against those who had failed to follow the procedure for requesting releases.

Flores added another instance where administration had not been the ones responsible for violating policy. Last year, R and T files did not get to his desk for approval in the timeframe stated by policy for approval. Faculty did not inform him that they were going to miss the deadline.

Responding to Flores' question about relations between faculty and the provost, Pavelich suggested that one of the things Senate is "good for" is opening a channel between faculty and administration. On the charges and committees for the common core revision, Pavelich expressed concern about the component area option (the institutionally designated option). At least 1/2 of this option has already been constrained, as it has been dedicated to College Success skills. We could be missing an opportunity to do other things with these hours.

Continuing to discuss circumstances that make it necessary to work around policy, the Provost added that THECB makes surprise announcements and we get state requirements all the time and he can't predict what will come next. Universities are now expected to have "measurable" outcomes in all courses by Nov 2011. Regulations involving higher ed have reached such a pitch that UH Provost's council will meet next week with legal to see exactly what needs to be complied with. UHD has outcomes for its courses but not all are measurable. This will keep UCC (University Curriculum Committee) busy.

Sikka said the President has the right to inform faculty in writing that a policy has been changed or suspended. What members of faculty are protesting is the chaos resulting from administrators bypassing aspects of policy without addressing the fact that they are doing so. Clarification of what aspects of policy are/are not in effect keeps everyone on the same page. If expectations are clear, no one person will be targeted for seeming to be in violation of a policy because a policy

interpretation has changed. Everyone needs to be kept informed and respected as people who are all working for the best interests of the university. She does not think that clear communication is happening.

Chapman says he prefers to follow the chain of command where the faculty learn about his actions through their chairs at their faculty meetings. In the past, when he has upset the chain of command by broadcasting his actions more widely, deans and chairs have objected about not learning about things first. It is also the job of Faculty Senate to meet with their departments to inform them about things that have transpired in Senate. President Flores suggested that Chapman include Faculty Senate in his chain of command and send his memos to them as well.

Chapman added that we have not revamped the policies at the rate we should. The Office of General Counsel has been asked to review our policies.

Chiaviello reiterated Senator Lyons' point about the need for better university planning. He gave several examples of poor planning: our new admissions standards will result in fewer students unless there are other variables being manipulated, larger classes will also result in lower enrollment because students come to UHD for small class sizes, course releases were for work that could not be accomplished under 4-4, and renegeing on course releases at the last minutes sends message that administration did not have a plan.

Chapman reminded faculty that he had had to make a quick decision about the budget, without a lot of knowledge about how the university worked, as he had only been at UHD a short time when this occurred. The budget is based on faculty teaching 4 courses a semester with 24 students. Faculty must generate a total of 720 semester credit hours to pay for their salaries plus other costs associated with maintaining a university, such as the library and administration. There should have been an "adjustment" made to the budget to account for the 4/3, but this adjustment had not been made when he stepped into the Provost position in March. This means that the 4/3 has caused UHD to not meet its budget, and he had to make cuts to the course releases in order to meet the budget.

He said administration does have a plan: UHD is attempting to boost enrollment through distance ed and online courses. We are hiring advisors to work within the community colleges and improving advising/transfer plans.

Lyons clarified that the present meeting, although tense, is an instance of communication happening. He said the purpose of a resolution was to address common concerns. Regarding the course release resolution, the process seems to have worked. The resolution asked for an audit and Chapman responded with a memo that addressed the issue. A Senate resolution simply means an issue has been raised to a certain level of importance--they should not be seen as personal attacks.

Sikka stated that the 4/3 issue had originally been framed as a workload "redefinition" rather than a workload reduction. Faculty had agreed to defer implementation of the policy by one year in order to ensure it would be implemented without contingencies so that we could attract and

retain faculty. She is very concerned that a Senate conversation about communication and support for people who work hard is being reduced to discussions of the 4/3 and reassigned time. The 4/3 is a policy issue, not a budgetary one, but it is continually brought up by administration to punish faculty for redefining their workload.

Flores responded that State budget cuts came after implementation of the 4/3, as well as state cuts to insurance benefits which were announced only 3 weeks before fall semester began. The difference had to be made up. Sikka said that faculty had already agreed to absorb hits to the budget by not filling positions and accepting larger class sizes. Chapman said he wanted to move to a 3-3 for faculty who are doing research. Flores said he stood by the 4-3 but that he had also stated that we would need to reexamine class sizes.

Dahlberg asked to return to the subject of the core curriculum on Senate's agenda. She agreed with Pavelich's concern about how the 6 hours designated as an institutional option were being managed. While college success programs (CSP) may be important for our students, this is a curricular issue and therefore requires faculty oversight. Flores asked if Chapman could add some faculty members to this committee. Chapman said he could, but emphasized that these courses are not content-based and have to do with advising, so Advising teaches them. Chapman noted that the College Skills committee was only responsible for 3 of the 6 available hours.

Waller said when CSP was approved by THECB, it was approved as a "learning frameworks" course, and these courses should have actual content. He said that some statements made in the "special considerations" section of the provost's charges to subcommittees were inaccurate, and asked how faculty could intervene and make sure the subcommittees did not act based on misconceptions of their tasks.

Chapman responded that he himself wrote the charges, but the "special considerations" were taken from statements made by the CB or in its meeting with the provosts. Chapman said the committees need to understand that the new core was designed to answer the question of what a citizen who has been to college should know even if they do not complete a college degree.

Waller said the Math curriculum committee meets very frequently and its curriculum has changed in major ways that are not accurately reflected by the charges given to the subcommittee. He also believes Chapman's statement that college Algebra should not be required of most majors is a matter for debate rather than something dictated by THECB. He reiterated the need for a mechanism enabling the subcommittee to become properly informed, especially as there are no gen ed math people on the math subcommittee.

Chapman responded that the subcommittees will "advertise" to whatever faculty they choose for courses that meet the new core. The math faculty can then design their course offerings to meet the new guidelines. Waller reasserted that the subcommittee could not make appropriate decisions if they were working from special considerations that were inaccurate.

President Flores suggested that Waller make a presentation to the math subcommittee so they would be properly informed.

Provost Chapman stated that legislators are constantly coming down on universities because they hear complaints about what students don't know and about how hard it is to transfer courses among universities. Chapman said when he was a student, he had to retake a course at the senior level that he had already taken at the community college level, and that UHD is overly stringent in accepting core courses from transfer students.

The Provost continued that when the state legislature passes a law, THECB interprets it and puts it into rules in the TX education code and the TX administrative code. Most members of THECB know both the law and the universities. Getting the full picture of a new law's impact requires synthesizing several variants of how it has been transmitted. The core began to be developed in 2006. Lea Campbell attended most of these meetings and helped developed the outcomes. To meet the complaints of legislature about higher ed, the coordinating board restructured the core around component areas and attached learning objectives to each area. SACS also requires measurable learning outcomes. UHD is on somewhat shaky ground with these for its 5th year report, although he believes we will be okay.

Allen read a message from Preuss, who had left the meeting. In it, Preuss pointed out that CSP can be integrated into department courses.

Switzer asked if we were going to choose delegates to the Core Curriculum Oversight task force. Schmertz moved to table this agenda item until next meeting. Provost Chapman said he wanted elections to take place today. Farris asked why the senators we had elected (Sikka and Waller) were unacceptable to the provost. Pavelich said Chapman had given reasons related to Sikka's and Waller's workloads and duties. As "the guy who came in third" in the election, Pavelich suggested the Senate put forward numbers 3 and 4. Farris questioned the rationales given by the Provost for rejecting the candidates. Switzer said that she had consulted with her department on the issue and they felt that the provost's rejection of Sikka and Waller was "paternalistic" (because the provost had decided for Sikka and Waller what they could and could not handle) and symptomatic of a top-down approach to governance issues. Chapman said the Senate had a right to nominate members, but that he did not have to accept the Senate's nominations. Switzer said her department had suggested that Chapman should have stated his stipulations and restrictions in advance.

Evans moved that Senate send forward all five of the nominees to the Provost for him to make his choice. (The nominees were Ron Beebe, Andrew Pavelich, Anjoo Sikka, Kelly Switzer, and Bill Waller.) Motion was seconded. Pavelich said we should vote on the motion because the committee meets tomorrow. Farris said doing things fast can mean doing things wrong. Sikka said she would continue serving the university regardless of how the issue was decided. Evans said she appreciated provost's taking into account how faculty members' responsibilities are divided and was confident about the quality of the nominees and the ability of the provost to make good appointments.



Harned said the issue is one of shared governance and faculty ownership of curriculum. Faculty were not consulted about the charges that went to oversight committee or the subcommittee.

Lyons said he agreed with Evans. Farris called the question. The motion to give the provost the list of nominees passed 10-8 with 2 abstentions. After reviewing the list, Provost Chapman accepted Switzer and Pavelich as members to the Core Curriculum Oversight committee.

Respectfully submitted,  
Johanna Schmertz, Ph.D.  
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Faculty Senate Secretary