

Faculty Council Minutes 2025–2026 Meeting 07

0 Meeting Information

0.1 Date

- April 1, 2026
- Meeting 07

0.2 Time

- Started, 1:01 PM
- Ended, 2:15 PM

0.3 Location

- B2311, Bayou Building, University of Houston-Clear Lake

0.4 Presiding

- Dr. Cotten

0.5 Attendees

- College of Business
 - Ken Black
 - Silvana Chambers
 - Stephen Cotten
 - Farzaneh Noghani
 - Jeff Whitworth
 - Faiza Zalila
- College of Education
 - Sheila Baker
 - Michelle Giles
 - Rebecca Huss-Keeler
 - Lisa Jones
 - Omah M. Williams-Duncan
 - Jana Willis
- College of Science and Engineering
 - Krishani Abeysekera
 - Nelson Carter
 - Jeff Mountain
 - Ross Niswanger
 - Yi Su
 - Paul Withey
- College of Human Sciences and Humanities
 - Karen Alexander
 - Neal Dugre
 - Jason Makepeace
 - Steven Sutherland

1 Call to Order and Approval of Minutes

Dr. Cotten called the meeting to order at 1:01 PM. The March 2026 Faculty Council meeting minutes were approved by unanimous consent at 1:02 PM without correction.

2 Information Item – Provost Office Updates

Provost Waller gave the following updates:

- A search is underway for a new Associate Vice President (AVP) for Student Success. Campus forums for candidates are scheduled for April 9, 14, 16, and 20. Provost Waller thanked faculty members serving on the search committee.
- A recent visit from the Texas Space Commission was reported to have gone very well, and the visiting official was pleased.
- A transfer pathways event was recently held at San Jacinto College, with participation from faculty and deans. The event included opening remarks from the UHCL President and the San Jacinto College Provost, followed by afternoon breakout sessions focused on barriers and challenges to student transfer.
 - Dr. Waller invited a guest, Dr. Christine Walther, to provide a summary of the event.
 - Dr. Walther then returned the floor to Dr. Waller, who shared additional observations.
- There was mention of the recent core curriculum course audit/review. For UHCL, this was rather straightforward, as the courses are being aligned with Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's (THECB) document called the Academic Course Guide Manual (ACGM) for lower division courses.
- Student Affairs will host the Hawk Excellence Awards on April 2, with the reception beginning at 4:30 PM.
- Service awards will be held on April 21 in Atrium 2, followed later that afternoon by a retirement reception. Additional communication will be forthcoming.
- A reception will be held on campus for faculty who have achieved the rank of full professor. All professors and emeritus faculty will be invited

3 Information Item – Bookstore – Debra Carpenter

A change was made and Timothy Jackson was unable to attend the April meeting. He will come to the May meeting.

Deborah Carpenter addressed the council regarding the bookstore and the CTAP program.

- Ms. Carpenter answered questions from faculty members.
- Open Educational Resources (OER) were discussed, and it was noted that OER helps keep costs down for students and is encouraged.
- Faculty raised questions about whether the system could be configured so that OER-designated courses provide free options directly to students.

4 Action Item – Program Discontinuance Policy

Dr. Cotten introduced the Program Discontinuance policy, noting that the policy had previously undergone legal review.

- Discussion included questions related to non-tenure-track (NTT) faculty and how grievances would be handled.
- It was clarified that, in cases of program discontinuance, NTT faculty actions would be treated as non-renewals rather than dismissals and therefore covered under existing processes.
- The policy was endorsed by unanimous consent.

5 Action Item – Curriculum Committee Report – Dr. Becky Huss-Keeler

5.1 Grading Policies and Procedures

Discussion of the Grading Policies and Procedures included:

- A question regarding situations in which grades are assigned by individuals who are not the instructor of record.
- It was agreed that the revised policy appropriately addresses these situations.

The Grading Policies and Procedures were moved forward by unanimous consent.

5.2 Textbook Materials

Discussion of the Textbook Materials Policy/Procedure included:

- The curriculum committee reported on proposed revisions to the Textbook Materials policy.
- The revisions update outdated language and reflect current textbook adoption practices, including the use of the CTAP program.
- The council discussed concerns related to Open Educational Resources (OER), student cost transparency, and access to physical versus digital materials.
- The committee noted the importance of distinguishing between policy and procedure, with references to CTAP to be handled as procedural rather than policy language.
- The revised Textbook Materials policy was endorsed by unanimous consent.

5.3 Curricular Items

- The committee presented a revised proposal for the Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences (BAAS) with a concentration in Geographic Information Systems (GIS).
- The revision removes the competency-based education component in order to streamline approval through the state review process, with the intent to revisit the competency-based elements at a later date.
- The proposal was endorsed by unanimous consent.

6 Information Item – Research and Scholarship Committee Report – Dr. Steven Sutherland

Dr. Sutherland reported on items under review by the Research and Scholarship Committee.

6.1 Faculty Engagement Policy (2nd Read)

- Some feedback had been sent to Dr. Sutherland since the 1st read. The committee is still in the process of incorporating that.
- Second read was tabled until next meeting; however, Dr. Sutherland was open to comments and further discussion.
 - None were offered.

6.2 Office of Research Faculty Policy (ORFP) Policy (1st Read)

- The committee reviewed updates to the Office of Research Faculty Policy (ORFP) document, which included minor clarifying edits without substantive changes.
- Faculty were encouraged to review the documents and provide feedback prior to the second reading.

7 Action Item – Faculty Affairs Report –Dr. Lorie Jacobs

7.1 Grievance Policy

- Dr. Jacobs reported on revisions to the faculty grievance policy that had completed legal review.
- The revisions included clarifications related to record-keeping, extension procedures, and expedited timelines in cases associated with program discontinuance.
- The updated grievance policy was endorsed by unanimous consent.

7.2 Faculty Misconduct Policy

- May have been referred to as “Discipline Policy” or “Faculty Disciplinary Policy” before, but it will officially be referred to as the “Faculty Misconduct Policy” moving forward.
- The Faculty Misconduct policy was presented for first read, outlining procedures for addressing informal and formal misconduct, including roles for department chairs, deans, and Human Resources, as well as grievance rights.
- Feedback was encouraged to be sent to Dr. Jacobs.

8 Information Item – Center for Faculty Development – Dr. Conley

Dr. Conley provided updates on Center for Faculty Development initiatives, including ongoing accessibility support through the Canvas workgroup, upcoming Fixathon sessions, Learning Innovators programming, Walk with the Dean events, and faculty development funding opportunities. Faculty were encouraged to participate in upcoming workshops and events and to consult the CFD newsletter and website for additional information.

9 New Business

None.

10 Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 PM.