

Faculty Council Meeting Minutes

Date: September 10, 2025

Time: 1:01 PM – 2:15 PM

Location: B2524, Bayou Building, University of Houston-Clear Lake

Presiding: Dr. Cotten

ATTENDED:

Yvette Bendeck	COB	Nelson Carter	CSE
Ken Black	COB	Jeff Mountain	CSE
Steven Cotten	COB	Ross Niswanger	CSE
Farzaneh Noghani	COB	Yi Su	CSE
Jeff Whitworth	COB	Paul Withey.....	CSE
Faiza Zalila	COB	Karen Alexander.....	HSH
Sheila Baker	COE	Michael Brims	HSH
Michelle Giles	COE	Neal Dugre.....	HSH
Rebecca Huss-Keeler*	COE	Lorie Jacobs*	HSH
Lisa Jones	COE	Jason Makepeace.....	HSH
Omah M. Williams-Duncan....	COE	Steven Sutherland*	HSH
Jana Willis	COE		

1. Opening Remarks – Dr. Cotten

- Welcomed members to the first meeting of the new Faculty Council.
- Emphasized the importance of norms alongside rules in shared governance.
- Proposed informal procedures with fallback to Robert’s Rules when needed.

2. Remarks – President Walker

- Congratulated Provost Maynard on his appointment as President of Texas A&M International.
- Noted that 28 faculty members volunteered for the Provost search committee.
- Acknowledged the work of the summer task force in drafting bylaws for the new Faculty Council.
- Reported that UHCL is a member of few university systems ready to launch its new faculty council this fall.
- Thanked Drs. Cotten, Baker, and Carter for serving as presiding officers.
- Explained the creation of the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) for non-academic policies.
- Academic policies will remain with the Faculty Council.
- Budget approved; goal to balance without reserves by FY27.

3. Academic Affairs Updates – Provost Maynard

- Expressed gratitude to faculty and acknowledged their role in shared governance.

- Renovations are ongoing; faculty should report disruptions to the Provost's Office.
- Provost Office Reorganization:
 - Lexi Herrera remains Director of Communications.
 - DeAngel Bonilla is now Director of Faculty Affairs.
 - Nascha Wanza Booker hired as Director of Operations.
- Staff directory updated on the provost website.
- Three "executive director" hires in progress:
 - Advising (announcement pending)
 - Center for Faculty Development
 - Institutional Research
- Initiatives include:
 - Simple Syllabus implementation led by Pam Shefman.
 - New Textbook Program launched.
- Enrollment is relatively flat, optimistic despite international visa challenges.

4. Committee Assignments – Dr. Cotten

- Faculty preferences for committee assignments were honored; only one faculty member received their second choice.
- Committees formed: Research, Curriculum, and Faculty Affairs.
- Chairs selected during breakout session.
- Members voted for their college's representative to the Policy Advisory Council (PAC).

5. Governance Structure Clarifications

- Ex Officio Members (Dr. Matthew and Dr. Reichert) will serve as liaisons between Faculty Council and Provost Council.
- New Provost Council replaces Dean's Council.
- Academic policy approval process:
 - Committee → Faculty Council → Provost Council → Executive Leadership Team (ELT)
- Emphasis on collaborative workgroups to streamline policy development and avoid inefficiencies.

6. Committee Roles Clarified

- Curriculum Committee retains its core responsibilities.
- Teaching-related issues now split between Curriculum and Faculty Affairs.
- Dr. Matthew is drafting academic policy guidelines to clarify committee scopes.

7. Closing

- Ballots distributed for PAC representative selection.
- Breakout sessions held for committee organization.
- Meeting adjourned at 2:15 PM.