**Faculty Senate**

**December 07, 2016**

**Minutes**

**Present**: Rob Bartsch, Elizabeth Beavers, Steve Bistricky, Sandra Browning, Carol Carman, Caroline Crawford, Lisa Gossett, Rajib Hasan, Rebecca Huss-Keeler, Amanda Johnston, Michele Kahn, Heather Kanenberg, Christine Kovic, Lisa Lacher, Samina Masood, Pat McCormack, Denise McDonald, Mike McMullen, Tim Michael, Michelle Peters, Robert Phalen, Bazlur Rashid, Leroy Robinson, Cengiz Sisman, Brian Stephens, Alix Valenti, Radu Vlas, Troy Voelker, Christine Walther, Chris Ward, Jeff Whitworth, Paul Withey.

**Absent**:

Ishaq Unwala, Lei Wu, Faiza Zalila (excused).

**Others Present**:

Samuel Gladden, Glen Houston, Mark Shermis, Karen Wielhorski.

**Minutes Approval – November 02, 2016**

The minutes were approved as presented.

**Provost’s Report**

Dr. Houston reported Provost Council meeting was held on November 22. The UH institutional common calendar for fall and next spring was approved. Starting fall 2017, UH institutions are not required to have same semester start dates. However, start dates will be same for Spring 2017. Provost Council approved two programs—UHCL’s Master in Teaching and UH’s MS in Statistics and Data Analytics. Both programs will be placed on the next Board of Regents meeting agenda scheduled for February 23, 2017.

HR will include CIP codes for the faculty in CUPA survey currently conducted. The updated list of new faculty to include in the analysis was submitted to HR. Dr. Michael asked if accreditations would be recognized in the analysis. Dr. Houston said he requested it but was unsure if it would be addressed. He would like to compare equity and merit for last year and this year for the same positions. Dr. Withey commented that it would be good if HR would use the list of institutions with common accreditations submitted by the Budget Committee in the analysis to see how we compare with them. Dr. Houston said the expectation is that there will be uncommon accredited programs. Dr. Gossett said that there are at least sixty institutions with common accreditations. Dr. Michael suggested conducting the analysis by college. Dr. Houston responded that he hoped the analysis could be institutionalized in HR. Following discussion, there was a suggestion for the Budget Committee to look into the CUPA analysis and whether the comparisons can be done on a college basis.

Dr. Houston stated Spring 2017 enrollment increased because of undergraduate enrollment. Currently, there are more graduate domestic students at this time than at this time last year. However, international graduate enrollment is down.

The Minor in Social Work was submitted to Deans Council and Faculty Senate leadership. It will proceed through shared governance. The Bachelor in Social Work program received reaccreditation from the Council on Social Work Education. Dr. Houston congratulated the social work program faculty. Approval for the Digital Media Studies graduate program review was received from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Dr. Ward expressed concern regarding the lack of communication about the recent campus power outage. There was uncertainty about whether classes were cancelled. No university wide notification was received. Other concerns were expressed relating to the lack of campus-wide communication about building closing and class cancellation. There were questions about whether there is a campus-wide emergency plan. Dr. Houston said he is aware of emergency plans in various areas. He believes the campus wide plan is coordinated by the Emergency Management Department. Dr. Huss Keller added that the emergency lights in her classroom did not come on during the outage. Dr. Houston said he would convey those concerns to administration.

**UHCL Presidential Search Update**

Dr. Gossett reported Chancellor Khator visited campus and met with various constituents. She laid out her vision for the process. An open search which allows open campus forums with finalists will be conducted. Search committee members have been sworn to secrecy about details of candidates and the search process. The target is to have 3-5 campus interviews by late March 2017. Six faculty members are serving on the committee. Input can be provided to those search committee members. The position announcement will be posted early next year. The meeting with Chancellor Khator was constructive. She offered to return for a faculty assembly.

**Senate Committee Reports**

**Budget Committee:** Dr. Withey shared the Budget Committee met with Ronda Thompson, AVP University Advancement to discuss increasing professorships, assistantships, scholarships and endowments. The goal is to increase endowments to $15 million in endowments by 2020. Currently, there are $7 million in endowments. Ms. Thompson announced that there were naming opportunities for the STEM building and the Wellness and Recreation building. Ms. Thompson stated a project program worksheet is available for faculty to complete to seek funding for projects that may be funded from foundations.

**Research Committee:** Dr. Carman reported the committee continues dialogue with UCT regarding the faculty research database and updates to faculty research website. Beginning in Spring semester, each college will be asked to nominate one outstanding research faculty for the website. The nominee’s picture, bio and research productivity will be highlighted on the website. The committee documented ideas for addressing the lack of information about promotion from associate professor to full professor raised by the COACHE survey. The ideas were passed on to Faculty Life Committee.

**Faculty Life Committee**: Dr. Kanenberg indicated a meeting was held with a representative of the UH System Counsel Office to review the Promotion and Tenure policy edits**.** The representative is reviewing the entire policy not only our proposed changes. Once the review is complete, the policy will return to senate possibly by February 2017. The goal is to have it endorsed by shared governance in time for the next round of candidates for promotion. The committee anticipates presenting the final draft of the revised Grievance Policy in February. Faculty Life will then consider the Appeals Policy and Faculty Workload Policy. Dr. Gossett pointed out that working directly with the General Counsel Office on the policy was a good step for increased transparency. Dr. Kanenberg agreed and stated that dialogue with the Counsel’s Office is going very well.

**Curriculum & Teaching (C&T):** Dr. McDonald stated that the C&T Committee discussed collaborating with Faculty Life Committee on the Faculty Workload Policy. The Quality Assurance (QA) for Online Courses timeline and the Online Syllabus Checklist were also discussed.  Dr. Tim Michael, C&T member, will present these items to the senate.

**Schedule for Online Course Approval**

Dr. Michael said when the 10.6 - Policy on Authoring and Delivery of Online Courses was implemented it included best practices for approval of online courses but not QA standards. QA standards were then left to the Office of Online Programs. The Office of Online Program provided a list based on SACS, THECB and Quality Matters standards. However, since then, it has become unclear what is required or what is recommended. This lack of clarity has contributed to the confusion surrounding this issue. The committee referred to both SACS and THECB requirements to assist with developing recommendations. Consequently, C&T is recommending as per circulated handout, a list of standards related to the syllabus. These standards are the same standards used for approval of face-to-face courses. The committee separated best practices which are not required for QA from what is required. The handout also indicates items specifically not required in order to complete QA. Dr. Michael continued, that currently, responses to courses submitted for QA seem different. For example, the response HSH receives may be different to COB. Responses also seem to differ based on whether the online developer is tenured or non-tenured faculty. Dr. Michael asked that these recommendations be approved and forwarded to the Office of E-Learning Services as the approved QA standards. Dr. Gossett asked for discussion. One member stated that historically, faculty members have expressed concerns about some of the items that are currently required which should be at the discretion of the faculty. There was a question about whether the C&T recommendations should be inserted in the current policy. Another senator remarked that course content and design were faculty responsibilities not the Office of E-Learning. A senator suggested presenting this recommendation as procedural change and a QA checklist not as policy. Additional concerns expressed were that changes to the QA process have been recommended in the past, and meetings were held to discuss issues but nothing changes. A senator asked what makes this new recommendation different that it would endorsed by the Office of E-Learning Services. Several other suggestions were that since 10.6 refers to a QA checklist, a formal request could be made to the Office of E-Learning Services to adopt the recommendation; insert the recommendation into the policy and obtain shared governance approval; request a written response from the Office of E-Learning Services on the recommendation. This confusion regarding online course approval has been ongoing for 8 years. There was a motion and second to close discussion and for the senate to endorse the QA Checklist. The motion passed. The QA Checklist was endorsed by the Faculty Senate.

Dr. Michael presented an additional handout about the QA timeline. He said there are inconsistencies with the current timeline in the colleges and from one semester to the next. He alluded to an example on the handout regarding College of Business course lists for SP17 due on 7/29/16. There is need for a timeline that is reasonable for QA and faculty and consistent from one semester to the next year. C&T is requesting that faculty have a minimum of 4 months (16 weeks) from the schedule due date to prepare a course from QA. Dr. Huss Keeler said issues such as if the class is being developed online for the first time, whether faculty is working with an instructional designer to developed, and whether faculty is familiar with online course development should be considered in the timeline. Dr. Ward commented that on October 21, 2015, the C&T worked with E-Learning Services to prepare the calendar. A few weeks later, E-Learning Services sent out an email with different calendar dates. Following deliberation, a motion was made and seconded to defer consideration of the QA timeline until a future meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

**Shared Governance Committee Reports**

**Facilities & Support Services Committee (FSSC):** Dr. Valenti reported FSSC received reports from Parking Committee and FMC at the November 17 meeting. 10 bike racks have been ordered and will be installed on campus. FSSC will be looking into some issues raised by Student Government Association. Mr. Martaindale, Facilities Department asked members to submit online work requests when they see something in need of repairs. FMC responds has a quicker response time to online work requests than verbal requests.

Pl**anning & Budgeting Committee (PBC):** Dr. Michael said PBC will convene on Dec 15. He asked senators to submit agenda items for the meeting.

**University Life Committee (ULC):**Dr. Bartsch mentioned that two changes to the Smoking Policy were proposed at the last ULC meeting. The first change provided some additional restrictions to smoking areas on campus e.g. campus cafeteria patio. The other eliminates smoking totally making UHCL smoke free campus. This option was not unanimous. ULC agreed to obtain feedback from constituents to determine if there is support for smoke free campus. More discussion to occur at the February senate meeting. There was a suggestion to conduct a campus wide referendum. Dr. Bartsch responded that ULC has not considered a referendum because of various issues to be considered such as students outnumbering faculty and staff on campus. There was a comment that with declining enrollment, consideration should be given to the number of students who smoke before considering a smoke free campus. It might be useful to investigate what other universities are doing regarding smoking on campus.

**Quality Leadership Team (QLT) Update**

Dr. Browning shared that several professional development workshops were held in the fall semester. A reception was held for instructors who completed training and created QEP endorsed syllabi. Additional workshops are scheduled for Spring 2017.

**Ad Hoc Committees**

**Online Proctoring:** Dr. Michael said two sessions are scheduled on December 08, 2016 with Proctor U. The same material will be presented in a webinar on December 14. Proctor U will not have the recording service available in the Spring. However, live proctoring will be available.

**Faculty Senate Constitution**

Dr. Gossett provided the survey results that defined areas of concern to be further addressed in the revision of the senate constitution. FSEC will develop a revised version of the constitution based on the results. The modified version will be presented at the next senate meeting.

**Announcements**

Dr. Gossett shared that information gathered at the last faculty assembly about preferred qualities/skills in the next president was shared with Dr. Khator during her visit. There will be opportunities for the university community to discuss important characteristics of the next UHCL leader in open forums.

FSEC met with Theresa Presswood, Communications Office, executive director to discuss the website changes and the new online platform, OmniUpdate. FSEC found out that there was no faculty representation on the OmniUpdate Implementation Committee. FSEC reiterated that faculty would like to be part of decision making. There was concern about inability to make changes quickly to program webpages as control over webpages will be transferred to the Communications department. UCT will no longer control webpages. It seems that UHCL Online website program pages are different from college academic program webpages. One senator said that at a recent recruiting event, prospective students pulled up a UHCL program webpage with outdated information. Other senators alluded to embarrassing situations due to outdated online information and inaccurate degree plan information. In response, Dr. Gossett said these concerns were communicated to Ms. Presswood. It was noted that faculty input regarding program information and the ability to update webpages swiftly were needed. Dr. Gossett said FSEC asked Ms. Presswood have discussions with faculty and program chairs before writers work on content for the program pages. She asked senators to send additional questions and concerns to FSEC for conveyance to Ms. Presswood.

Dr. Gossett said the Board of Regents had a short meeting last week. There is nothing new to report.

Dr. Christine Kovic shared a letter/a petition to university leadership to declare UHCL a safe haven campus in response to the rise in hate crimes following the recent presidential elections. The petition seeks to obtain a statement that UHCL is an open and welcoming community and supportive of DACA for immigrant students. The petition was written by faculty and students.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:35 p.m.