



**Faculty Senate  
Minutes  
Wednesday, February 20, 2019  
12:15 p.m.**

Faculty Senate President Raúl Ramos called the February 20, 2019 Faculty Senate meeting to order in the Elizabeth D. Rockwell Pavilion of the M.D. Anderson Library at 12:18 p.m. Dr. Ramos, referencing the newly approved reapportionment bylaws, welcomed the “engaged 8%” of the faculty. He explained that, for the new senators, the monthly meeting was an opportunity to gather, receive updates and ask questions. He encouraged the senators to report back to their units/colleagues on what was discussed and bring feedback on questions or issues back to the Senate’s many committees and subcommittees. President Ramos reminded the senators to leave their nameplates on the tables for recording of their attendance and to send a colleague if they were unable to attend.

**MEMBERS PRESENT: (72)**

ARCH: D. Froehlich, M. Kubo, P. Peters, S. Rifaat  
BUS: S. Basu, P. Kumar, N. Johnson, L. Silva  
CLASS: P. Blake, W. Breslin, F. Bunta, P. Butler, J. Cortina, S. Craig, J. Fix, D. Foss, H. Glass, D. Hernandez, M. Ivey, J. Kleinheider, R. Ramos, T. Romero, C. Spitzmueller, C. Sisk  
CON: C. Brohard, S. Lee  
COTA: F. Fernando  
EDU: S. Culpepper, S. Gronseth, M. Lee, A. Thompson  
ENGR: P. Cirino, J. Chen, J. Conrad, Y. Mo, M. Nikolaou, D. Shattuck, G. Song  
HON: S. Long  
HRM: J. Draper, J. Madera, D.C. Taylor  
LIB: K. Creelman, N. Dethloff, W. Gao, C. Gola, A. Malone  
NSM: B. Bodmann, J. Briggs, R. Forrest, B. George, S. Huang, R. Lee, J. May, D. Pattison, C. Ratti, N. Rizk, C. Wayne  
OPT: D. Currie, K. Fern, S. Modi, J. Porter  
PHA: G. Cuny, T. Hussain, D. Thornton  
RES FAC: O. Bannova  
TECH: B. Detillier, M. El Nahas, J. Evans, H. Hutchins, F. Merchant, G. Zouridakis

**MEMBERS ABSENT: (62)**

BUS: D. Currie, J. Hess, T. Kong, O. Miljanic, M. Murray, A. Narayanan, G. Smith, S. Werner  
CLASS: E. Aleman, C. Alfano, J. Babcock, J. Clark, M. Dunkelberger, S. Grigorian, A. Hernandez, D. Papell, G. San Miguel, C. Sharp, A. Vujanovic, J. Wingard  
COTA: C. Boone, R. Bush, J. Mueller, A. Noble, K. Rigdon, S. Wallace  
EDU: C. Arbona, W. Fan, J. Gonzalez, L. Hutchinson  
ENGR: S. Brankovic, L. Grabow, K. Grigoriadis, K. Larin, M. Robertson  
GCSW: R. Gearing, S. Jennings, P. Leung, S. Narendorf  
HON: D. Gish  
HRM: J. Bowen, C. Morosan  
LAW: B. Evans, D. Fagundes, J. Heppard, P. Linzer  
NSM: K. Bassler, R. Capuano, G. Gunaratne, T. Lapen, V. Lubchenko, A. Quaini, E. Papadakis, Z. Ren, S. Xu  
OPT: V. Das, R. Manny  
PHA: R. Ghose, B. McConnell, S. Salim, V. Tam

**VACANT SEATS:** (4) ARCH – 1 seat / LAW – 1 seat / OPT – 1 seat / CLASS – 1 seat

**VISITORS:** Renu Khator (Chancellor/President, UH System); Jason Smith (via Skype – Vice Chancellor/Vice President, Government Relations); Amr Elnashai (Vice President/Vice Chancellor, Research and Technology Transfer); Elwyn Lee (Vice President, Neighborhood & Strategic Initiatives); Karl Hearne (Executive Administrative Assistant, Neighborhood & Strategic Initiatives); Lisa German (Dean, University Libraries)

**Minutes:** The minutes of the January 23, 2019 Faculty Senate meeting were approved.

**Report from and Discussion with the Faculty Senate President:** [Raúl Ramos](#)

President Ramos gave updates as follows:

- The Board of Visitors, a group of community leaders and alumni who advise and support UH in various missions, met a few weeks ago. He explained that their subcommittees are engaged in many areas of interest that UH is pursuing such as student success, College of Medicine, local education and public art on campus.
- The Faculty Senate has representation on the Budget Transparency committee, as well as its subcommittees, who are participating and reporting on the process in the development of their initial reports.
- The Faculty Senate is also involved in the Dean's searches for the C.T. Bauer College of Business and Human Resources.
- The "50-in-5" town hall meeting last Friday was well attended with wide campus interest. Advisors, McAllister & Quinn (M&Q) gave a presentation on ways to prepare proposals for them to customize to the grants that they represented. He recommended faculty go to the DoR web site and view the various internal award opportunities as well as recent updates on the DoR's "50-in-5" web site for resources used for research, seminars, open forums and town hall meetings.
- The Community & Government Relations Committee hosted the January APeX series lecture featuring Dr. Elizabeth Farfán-Santos and it was very well attended. The APeX series would have its final lecture of the 2018-19 series featuring Dr. Kathryn Freeman Anderson in a lecture entitled "Racial residential segregation, the distribution of health-promoting community organizations, and health outcomes" on Wednesday, February 27 from 12:15 – 1:15 p.m. in M.D. Anderson Library's room 306.
- The Community & Government Relations Committee met with Dean Spann of the College of Medicine last week regarding a collaboration for the Faculty Senate's biennial conference on regional health analysis.
- The Texas Council of Faculty Senate's leadership held their meeting on February 15-16. Dr. Ramos expressed how fortunate the UH Faculty Senate was to have great communications and a shared vision with our administration. Some of the issues addressed at the meeting included field of study to streamline two-year to four-year colleges in order to reduce the extra classes students would need to take in transfer. He added that faculty needed to communicate in their own areas to address any misalignments so that UH students' needs could be better addressed. Another topic was the universities request to become more involved in the healthcare benefits evaluation with ERS.
- President Ramos announced the beginning of a new practice for the Faculty Senate meeting where the senator's work outside the Senate would be recognized for their scholarly output and leadership in the UH community. His announcements were as follows:
  - ❖ **Dejun "Tony" Kong**, an Associate Professor in the C.T. Bauer College of Business Department of Management & Leadership, had received a number of recognitions for the impact of his research. Dr. Kong was recently named an Ascendant Scholar 2019 by the Western Academy of Management and promoted to

an Associate Editor of the *Journal of Organizational Behavior*. He also earned the 2018 Editor Commendation Award from the *Journal of Business and Psychology* for his novel research on implicit mindfulness theory published in the journal.

- ❖ **Christiane Spitzmueller**, College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences Professor of Industrial Organizational Psychology, recently collaborated on a paper published in the *Journal of Occupational Psychology* which found that researchers reported that children's health was less likely to be negatively affected when their parents felt a sense of control over their work lives. Dr. Ramos added that this paper supported the areas that the Faculty Senate, the Faculty Affairs Committee and the Provost Office had been collectively working on.
- ❖ **Zhifeng Ren**, Director of the Texas Center for Superconductivity, was a corresponding author on a paper published in *Nature Communications* where they reported the discovery of a new class of half-Heusler thermoelectric compounds, including one with a record high figure of merit – a metric used to determine how efficiently a thermoelectric material could convert heat to electricity.
- ❖ The Center for Mexican American Studies was leading a collaboration between the Smithsonian, the Inter-University Program for Latino Research and the City of Houston in a city-wide celebration of Latino art called *Latino Art Now!* This celebration would showcase Latino and Latin American artists in the community, galleries and educational institutions and take the Latino art scene to national prominence here in Houston. He added that **many faculty senators were involved in this collaboration**.

A senator asked, with the "50-in-5" initiative, if the university was investing a 50% increase of its research resources would that yield a 50% increase in output and would that also yield a 50% increase in graduate students. Dr. Ramos responded that each unit had generated specific scholarly measures of the 50% increase and recommended that the senator attend the next open forum in April and to also check the new "50-in-5" web site where these and other questions were being addressed.

#### **Report from and Discussion with the University of Houston System Chancellor and University of Houston President: [Renu Khator](#)**

President Khator welcomed the new senators and thanked them for their service. She explained that she was a former Senator, Secretary, and President of a Faculty Senate and she respected the role that they play. President Khator expressed her gratitude to former Faculty Senate President Dan O'Connor for his service last year (as she was unable to attend the January meeting).

President Khator gave the following updates.

- There were eighteen months left with the university's \$1B campaign which had raised \$990M, with \$10M remaining. She emphasized that UH needed to continue to raise funds beyond this target for scholarships, endowed professorships/chairships and more activities on the entrances where UH was working to integrate public art, or a signature art piece, for a nice sense of arrival on campus.
- The Board of Regents meeting would be taking place at UH Clear Lake at the end of February and Faculty Senate President Ramos would be giving his update. President Khator added that everyone was welcome to attend.
- The state budget was looking much better than originally anticipated. One of the issues being addressed was academic freedom; specifically, where universities had been unable to uninvited speakers, no matter how controversial, and it had become a financial burden. She added they asked the legislature to help fund those situations.
- In the area of property tax reform and public school finance, there was \$6B of funding needed and UH needed to make their presence known for support of higher education. The other common agenda among higher education institutions was formula funding for students noting that the funding level currently was 25% less now than in 2011.

- There were \$20M in special items cut by the legislature so UH was asking the special items to be replenish in addition to research programs, such as TRIP and Research Core, to help the facilities and recruit faculty. She added that TRIP donors gave for research and the state matched funds had a backlog of \$180M (all universities) and for UH, the backlog of \$51M was important. They were also asking the legislature to fund some of the unfunded mandates such as the Hazelwood and Legacy pieces with costs growing exponentially at \$186 per applicable student.
- For UH, exception items included the start-up costs for the College of Medicine, which were already in the House's base budget and would go to the conference. On the Senate side, the bill had been signed and UH would continue to monitor; the Pharmacy Equity Funding was on both sides of the bills in the base where UH wanted a permanent fix; with the Hurricane Harvey relief funding and the FEMA funds, the buildings and costs not covered had been included in supplemental bills; the Law Building was the top request for tuition revenue bonds (TRBs) whether it received funded from hurricane funds or TRBs - either way. The new Law building would be a \$90M building for which President Khator told Alumni they needed to raise \$10M before going to the legislature for \$60M with the last \$20M expected to come for the naming of the building. She added that they had to defend the budget and argue why UH deserved more and account for what had already been given.
- Of the 12-15 legislative testimonies, President Khator had about 6 more to go until mid-April.
- On the Federal side, UH had a champion lobbyist watching several pieces, specifically regarding the budget. In terms of public policy, the focus was on immigration (part of the national agenda) where UH was addressing international students and their VISA situations. Another issue was science and security regarding the debate about what was happening with Chinese students infiltrating American universities. UH was addressing the role of the students and research and what they contribute, noting simply because a few students have been doing that doesn't mean they all are.
- The reauthorization of the higher education bill was not going to get attention during this legislative session because of the divide Congress. Dr. Khator noted that Amr Elnashai and Ramanan Krishnamoorti were there addressing research and energy issues, respectively.
- President Khator praised the Cougar Basketball team for doing so well and added that she was hopeful for the Baseball team as the season had started.

A senator asked about one of the big issues for Democrats being free universities and how they would threaten the research universities. He asked if there been a discussion as it appeared that the universities have been silent on this debate. President Khator stated that the universities had not been silent and that the both the AC and APLU had spoken about it, and addressed it in a letter with many signatures, that stated there was no such thing as free and the costs had to come from somewhere. She further stated that some of the Democrat members were backtracking and now saying low cost noting that affordability was an issue. Another issue President Khator mentioned was if universities were brainwashing their students and added both issues show how universities needed to get more in line with the outside world. She added that they would be doing more advocacy in these areas.

Dr. Ramos added that every year for the past six years in Austin there had been a "UH Day" and this year was amazing. There were close to 300 UH students, faculty, staff and administration who attended morning sessions. He stated that he saw how energized and excited the students in attendance were and added how it affected real people's lives in our communities. Dr. Ramos commended Jason Smith and his team and offered a suggestion that perhaps there could be a faculty-led presentation on research as part of the "UH Day" in the future.

**Report from and Discussion with the University of Houston System Senior Vice Chancellor and University of Houston Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost: [Paula Myrick Short](#) (Unable to attend)**

**Legislative update with the University of Houston System Vice Chancellor and University of Houston Senior Vice President for Governmental Relations: [Jason Smith](#)**

VP Smith appeared via Skype from his office at the Legislative session in Austin, Texas. He stated that they were about six weeks into the session with a very aggressive legislative agenda. Of particular focus was initial funding for the College

of Medicine and funding for the new Law building. There had been a couple of committee hearings for the appropriating committees. The Senate Finance committee met last week and the House appropriation committee met this week.

Mr. Smith stated that President Khator presented the UH request for the \$20M in start-up funds for the College of Medicine and it was in the base budget of the House appropriations bill. There had been good support on the Senate side for the same \$20M appropriation. There was also separate legislation for the College of Medicine to ensure that UH had future access to the health-related institution formula funding and the bill had been filed by supporting House Representatives and Senators.

VP Smith explained that there would be significant funding available for hurricane recovery as UH was particularly prone to flooding. He added that, generally, the State was good, financially, and he was hopeful for the base formula funding so UH would not have to raise tuition. He added that they hoped to get research funds as well. VP Smith explained that it was very early on in the session so they would continue to monitor.

President Ramos asked how the faculty, as state employees, could participate and what they could and could not do with interactions with the legislators. VP Smith stated that if faculty were advocating as an employee of the State of Texas, they should contact his office. If faculty were asked to testify, his office could also assist with any questions.

### **Update and Presentation with University of Houston Vice President of Neighborhood and Strategic Initiatives: [Elwyn C. Lee](#)**

VP Lee began by stating that he was a member of the Faculty Senate many years ago. He gave an overview of UH's Third Ward Initiative (TWI) mission areas included **education, economic empowerment, health, and arts and culture** which began in 2014 when President Khator initiated a community partnership comprised of about 30 people under the Neighborhood Partnership Forum (UNPF). The partnership brought about the TWI, in 2015, whose mission was, first and foremost, a collaborative partnership with the Third Ward community focused to demonstrably improve the quality of life of our shared neighborhood. He noted that the faculty were key to the success. VP Lee gave a history of the Third Ward geographic boundary area and how it changed over the years and noted that the demographics were 67% African American.

- The TWI **education** goal was to improve the academic performance of Third Ward schools that included Yates High School, Cullen Middle School, Blackshear Elementary, Foster Elementary, Hartsfield Elementary and Thompson Elementary. In the 2018 TEA ratings, all of the schools (with the exception of Yates High School which was Hurricane Harvey exempted) had a "met standard" rating, due, in part, from these efforts of this partnership.

VP Lee stated that, with regard to the education inputs, the College of Education was spearheading the efforts; however, other areas were involved as well. These areas included a STEM after-school program for boys from the College of Engineering, school visits by UH athletic teams, tutoring for the Law Center, student volunteering from all areas on campus, school uniform donations from Administration and Finance. The Board of Visitors task force sponsored the Blackshear 102-Year Anniversary Gala, distributed summer books (with the Barbara Bush Foundation), and assisting with the school community fairs.

- Elwyn Lee stated that the TWI goal for **economic empowerment** was to create pathways for business development and job opportunities. The key project in this area was the "SURE™" (Stimulating Urban Renewal through Entrepreneurship) program which educated individuals recommended by Third Ward stakeholder organizations on how to establish, finance, maintain and/or grow a business. MBA students guided participants in the preparation of formal business plans. Law Students assisted participants with document preparation and legal issues. Mr. Lee gave examples of businesses that were formed or had grown substantially from this program. He also discussed the Houston Anchor Collaborative (HAC) whose participating organizations included the University of Houston, Texas Southern University, Memorial Herman and Houstonfirst. He explained that the HAC had a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and would be meeting to see how they could expand opportunities with various institutions in the Third Ward.

Mr. Lee added that the College of Technology (assisted by Senator Jerry Evans) had partnered with a community organization who set up a computer training program for mothers. The College of Technology also offered free training on construction management to develop a construction company. VP Lee stated that they were investigating UH alumni-owned business assisting with providing internships.

- In the area of **health**, the TWI goal was to improve the quality of life by addressing existing health disparities through partnering with schools and churches to access residents and provide critical health screenings and important health information. The Obesity and Diabetes Program TOUCH (Treating Obesity in Underserved Communities in Houston) was a three-year, \$2M grant from the United Health Foundation that provides obesity and diabetes services. This program was led by Drs. Ezemenari Obasi and Dan O'Connor. Community partners included the YMCA Diabetes Prevention Program and various Third Ward Churches which had resulted in a total of 1,350 patients, 1,159 prevention and screenings and 207 treatments.

Additional initiatives in the health area are listed below.

- ❖ The Honors College Community Health Workers (CHW) Programs where Professor Dan Price trained Honors students and public housing residents in the Cuney Homes to be Community Health Workers, worked with HISD school nurses to assist with vision screening, educated residents about HIV prevention and asthma prevention; and, the Houston Aids Foundation presentation of the prestigious award to CHW program in November 2018.
- ❖ Communication Disorders screenings and treatment at the Third Ward Multiservice Center
- ❖ Hearing tests at area schools
- ❖ Community cleanups
- ❖ Food banks at churches from the UH cafeterias.

Upcoming health initiatives included the following:

- ❖ Third Ward Health Summit February 23, 2019;
- ❖ Dental Fair providing free services to over 600 residents, May 16-19, 2019 led by Third Ward Methodist ministers; and,
- ❖ UH College of Medicine
  - Training Family Doctors to serve Third Ward and similar communities
  - Clinic open to Community Residents.

- The TWI's **arts and culture** goal was to strengthen the connection between the campus community and the surrounding community through a celebration of art and culture. The key project was the Kathrine G. McGovern College of Arts (KGMCA) and Project Row Houses (PRH) Fellowship Program that would bring artists to the campus and Third Ward to learn about socially-engaged art from genius award winner and UH Professor Rick Lowe.

As background, the KGMCA-PRH Fellows program launched in 2017 with two fellows. The fellowship's focus was to educate and empower the next generation of leaders in socially engaged art, disseminate the knowledge gained, and develop the seed for replication. The directors included Ryan Dennis (PRH Curator) and Sixto Wagan (Director, Center for Art & Social Engagement).

The KGMCA-PRH Fellows activities included research; completion of a creative project and or scholarship; public presentations, performances, or lectures; mentoring of college students during the summer: and engagement with residents, educators, planners, and policy makers. Example of projects included:

- ❖ *Psychogeography of Emancipation Park*, multimedia performance lecture that revealed the history of mass congregation and activism in public green spaces;
- ❖ *Black Placemaking and Informality*, a talk and exhibition that explored ideas of informal urbanism and landscape as a metaphor;
- ❖ *Colour of Music* (Black Classical Musicians) at Emancipation Park; and, Wheeler Ave. Baptist Church and Music in the Neighborhood (e.g. Jason Moran at McGregor Park);
- ❖ Public Art: survey of faculty, students and Third Ward residents; development of Third Ward Public Arts Map; proposed Public Art Mile along Holman; proposed Cultural Loop, art activations at 8 sites;
- ❖ Band and Cheer participation in Third Ward events and celebrations.

VP Lee acknowledged the TWI partners and gave special thanks to Susan Rogers, Associate Professor from the Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture, for her work. He also thanked President Khator for remaining very supportive. He closed by giving a list of campus leaders for the Third Ward Initiative.

**Report from and Discussion with the University of Houston System Senior Vice Chancellor and University of Houston Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance: [Jim McShan](#)  
(Unable to attend)**

**Report from and Discussion with the University of Houston System Vice Chancellor and University of Houston Vice President for Research & Transfer Technology: [Amr Elnashai](#)  
(Unable to attend)**

President Ramos reminded the senators of the many opportunities to collaborate across the city, state and region. He added that there were now 10,000 student living on campus and this was their neighborhood/community too. Dr. Ramos also reminded the senators about the APeX speaker series lecture on February 27<sup>th</sup>, the Senate Social co-sponsored by the Cullen College of Engineering and the C.T. Bauer College of Business on March 6 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., and the Frontier Fiesta-sponsored happy hour for faculty on March 22<sup>nd</sup> at 5:00 p.m.

**Adjournment:** 1:35 p.m.