



**Faculty Senate
Minutes
Wednesday, September 16, 2020
12:00 p.m.**

Faculty Senate President Jeronimo Cortina called the September 16, 2020 Faculty Senate meeting to order via Microsoft Teams at 12:02 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: (111)

ARCH: D. Froehlich, M. Kimbrough, M. Kubo, P. Peters, Z. Qureshi
ARTS: T. Chapman, F. Fernando, N. Harren, T. Koozin, S. Matijcio, S. Zalman
BUS: C. Becker, J. Hess, N. Johnson, P. Kumar, M. Murray, J. Porra, L. Silva, G. Smith, S. Werner
EDU: C. Arbona, J. Freiberg, S. Gronseth, K. Hassett, L. Hutchison, M. Lee
ENGR: C. Chang, L. Grabow, K. Grigoriadis, K. Larin, H. Love, B. Metrovich, S. Pei, M. Robertson, D. Shattuck, Y. Yao
HON: D. Gish, S. Long
HRM: J. Draper, Y. Koh, Sujata Sirsat
HSPA: D. Engster
LAW: J. Heppard
CLASS: E. Alemán, W. Breslin, F. Bunta, P. Butler, L. Camaj, J. Cortina, M. Dunkelberger, H. Glass, M. Goldberg, E. Goodin-Mayeda, S. Grigorian, M. Ivey, J. Kleinheider, M. Knoblauch, L. Maher, R. Ramos, S. Scarrow, C. Sharp, E. Simas, C. Sisk, B. Tamber-Rosenau, C. Tamber-Rosenau, A. Vujanovic, X. Zhiwen
LIB: C. Gola, S. Thompson
COM: G. Gomez, K. Rowland
NSM: K. Bassler, J. Briggs, R. Capuano, A. Czader, M. Das, R. Forrest, S. Gilbertson, S. Huang, R. Lee, J. May, A. Medrano, M. Nicol, E. Papadakis, N. Rizk, V. Sisson, A. Vershynina, C. Wayne
CON: C. Brohard, L. McWilliams
OPT: D. Coates, V. Das, K. Fern, L. Frishman, R. Manny, S. Modi, J. Porter
PHA: D. Chow, G. Cuny, R. Ghose, B. McConnell, D. Thornton, M. Trivedi
RES CTRS: S. Chung
RES FAC: O. Bannova

GCSW: S. Narendorf
TECH: B. Detillier, M. El Nahas, J. Evans, H. Hutchins, A. Lendasse, F. Merchant, G. Zouridakis

MEMBERS ABSENT: (28)

ARTS: K. Rigdon
BUS: S. Werner
EDU: W. Fan, A. Thompson
ENGR: J. Conrad, Y. Mo, G. Song
HRM: J. Madera, C. Morosan
LAW: D. Fagundes
CLASS: S. Craig, R. Boul, D. Papell, G. San Miguel, Jr., C. Spitzmueller, C. Tolliver, J. Wingard

LIB: K. Creelman, V. Douglas
NSM: B. Bodmann, V. Lubchenko, A. Quaini, Z. Ren, G. Toti, S. Xu
CON: P. Schrader
GCSW: S. Jennings
TECH: M. Kidd

VACANT SEATS: (12) COTA – 2 seats (GPSC); BUS – 2 seats (UC); HRM – 2 seats (GPSC/UC); LAW – 2 seats (GPSC); COM – 1 seat (GPSC); GCSW – 2 seats (At-large);

VISITORS: Raymond Bartlett (SVC/SVP, Administration & Finance), Kelly Boysen (Asst. VC/Asst. VP, Campus Safety), Mark Clarke (Associate Provost, Faculty Development and Faculty Affairs), Michael Johnson (Chief of Staff, Office of the Chancellor/President), Renu Khator (Chancellor/President), Sarah Larsen (Vice Provost & Dean, Graduate School), Teri Longacre (Vice Provost & Dean, Undergraduate Student Success & Dean), Paula Myrick Short (Senior Vice Chancellor/Vice President, Academic Affairs & Provost)

Minutes: The minutes of the August 12, 2020 Faculty Senate Meeting were approved as amended.

Report from and Discussion with the Faculty Senate President: [Jeronimo Cortina](#)

Pres. Cortina welcomed everyone to the first fall 2020 Senate meeting: He also acknowledged newly-elected senators and re-elected senators and gave a statement on the importance of faculty perspective and participation in shared governance.

Dr. Jeronimo Cortina reported on the following items:

- Child Care Needs Survey: This survey has been launched. This initiative was started by Dr. Ann Christensen (ENGL/CLASS). The Faculty Senate, SGA, and Staff Council collaborated with Dr. Christensen to help gather data and information regarding child care needs across the campus community.
- A Welcome back/Check-in fall survey will be launched in a few weeks. This survey is to gather information from faculty regarding their experiences with instruction, technology, etc. This data will be helpful in providing information for spring semester preparation.
- Resolution to Rename Calhoun Road: The Honors College is working on a broader initiative which will include student involvement. Senator Dustin Gish and Honors College colleagues are working on a detailed document.

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

Pres. Khator extended her welcome to the newest senators at the meeting.

Dr. Khator reported on the following items:

- Enrollment held up well for the fall (2.1% increase); Graduate enrollment was up by 24% (masters enrollment up 33%). She gave kudos to the Faculty Senate, Provost, and the Dean of the Graduate School for their work on the strategic plan.
- Budget:
 - Haven't heard from the state legislature about budget cuts yet.
 - UHS has been putting the agenda together to make a case at the legislature.
 - UH would like the 5% cut returned from the state since UH has continued to fulfill its mission during the pandemic.
- Football Season: UH will have a game on Saturday (Baylor).
- Pres. Khator visited several online classes. She didn't hear any major complaints from faculty.
- U.S. News & World Report Ranking:

- UH has moved up 9 spots to 176. She gave kudos to Provost Paula Short and academic leadership for the work on strategic planning.
- Graduate rate is two points above expected rate.
- UH reputational rank increased from 2.5 to 2.7. (very difficult to do). College of Medicine, Provost academic information, UH Media efforts contributed to the increase.
- UH ranks 64 in faculty salaries. Gave kudos to Provost Paula Short for her work and collaboration with the Faculty Senate.
- Taskforces:
 - All taskforces have been disbanded except for the New Normal Taskforce. The New Normal Taskforce has expanded and reached out for faculty expertise in different areas. The next task is to produce a white paper with six to seven items on how the post-vaccine world would look like and come up with a two to three-pages of scenarios. This paper would then be integrated with UH strategic planning which will help to see how to position UH in a better place.
- Spring 2021 Semester Planning:
 - Provost Short has already started working on the planning.
 - Trends are looking good in Houston currently. Dr. Khator is hoping a few more face-to-face classes could be added next term.

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](#)

Provost Paula Short welcomed the new senators and thanked Senate leadership for their support.

Dr. Short reported on the following items:

- Increased enrollment & SCH:
 - An increase in student diversity helps in the increase in enrollment.
 - Professional enrollment has also increased.
- Allowing the temporary suspension of graduate admission test requirement (i.e., GRE, GMAT). However, the college graduate program has to sign up for this temporary suspension. She asked that college/department programs inform the Graduate School if they plan to take advantage of this interim requirement.
- Beginning to prepare for the spring 2021 semester. Provost Short welcomed senator input into the process.
- Provost Summer Read Program: “Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood” by Trevor Noah
 - The ebook has been made available to freshmen (via an access code). Dr. Short encouraged faculty to integrate the book into their teachings.
 - Email regarding access to the book will be sent to faculty

Q&A Session:

Senator George Zouridakis: He asked about the UH extend initiative and if any information about it could be released? Dr. Short responded that the group is waiting to see if it can be operationalized for spring and more information about this initiative will be released soon.

Senator Ana Medrano: She asked if a copy of the book could be made available even if some faculty cannot integrate it into their course. Dr. Short replied that the book is available if faculty if they want it.

Senator Lindita Camaj: She asked if there are any suggestions about how to answer student inquiries about spring 2021 semester instruction. Dr. Short responded that her team and Pres. Khator are still trying to determine what is in the best interest for the students given that the situation can change any time. Pres. Khator added that UH's goal is to have face-to-face classes as much as possible. However, UH will remain flexible and will not force students and faculty with regard to their instructional preferences. The pandemic has forced everyone to take things week by week when making plans.

Senator Stella Grigorian: She asked Dr. Short if she could briefly tell the Senate what issues have been raised so far that UH had not anticipated in regard to online synchronous or online asynchronous. Is there a difference in the experience of the students? Dr. Short replied that she has not heard of any major issues raised that she is aware of. Any other issues that came up were dealt with immediately.

Report from and Discussion with the University of Houston System Senior Vice Chancellor and University of Houston Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance: [Raymond Bartlett](#)

SVP Raymond Bartlett expressed his appreciation to everyone who had a hand in UH's increased enrollment this fall.

Mr. Raymond Bartlett updated the Faculty Senate on the following items:

- Laptop Loaner Program: This program continues through the fall. 315 computers have been provisioned for students and UIT is prepared for a surge in demand.
- UH Information Technology: Mr. Bartlett checks with UH's CIO routinely. IT infrastructure is robust. In planning for Hyflex courses, 259 classrooms were equipped with computers, cameras, and sound systems.
- Capital Construction Projects:
 - Core academic building renovations are continuing and are on schedule.
 - Lab Renovation Study (Lab renovation & business process):
 - Report issued in phase one with fifteen recommendations;
 - The taskforce has reconvened and SVP Bartlett signed the contract yesterday to re-engage the external firm to engage in phase 2. Phase 2 will involve the firm and taskforce (with the 15 recommendations) developing policies, guidelines, etc. The first meeting will be held in the next three to four weeks. The taskforce will reach out to stakeholders to get a better understanding of the depth of issues identified in phase one.
 - The goal is the to have a well-managed lab renovation process.

Q&A Session:

Senator Vallabh Das: He asked if there have been any issues regarding COVID-19 cleaning supplies? Mr. Bartlett responded that he had not heard any issues regarding COVID-19 cleaning. There is a team that cleans classrooms nightly. Also, there is a rapid response team to respond to any outbreak case in a classroom. So far everything has been going smoothly. SVP Bartlett said that if senators are experiencing any issues, to reach out to him directly or FS President Cortina.

Report 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)

FS Pres. Jeronimo Cortina report the following items on behalf of VP Amer Elnashai:

- VPR Virtual Office Hour: Will take place Friday, September 18 at 3:00 p.m.
- Federal Research Priorities Presentation (McAllister & Quinn) will be held September 18 at 2:00 p.m.
 - DOR has sent out email invitations for this event

Pres. Jeronimo Cortina encouraged senators to attend both events.

Update from and Discussion with the University of Houston System Assistant Vice Chancellor & University of Houston Assistant Vice President for Campus Safety: [Kelly Boysen](#)

AVP Kelly Boysen gave a brief summary of her professional and educational background. She said she was tasked to lead the COVID-19 Coordination group this past summer.

General overview presentation:

- Background/Purpose:
 - CDC released guidance in early summer which included establishing a COVID-19 coordinator; This evolved from a case response to larger coordination efforts.
- Purpose: Coordinate/Organize planning for fall (operational level & bring visibility)
 - Goals:
 - Enhance information sharing
 - Prevent duplication of effort
 - Assess potential gaps and propose solutions
 - Receive tasking/strategy from leadership/cabinet
 - Use an organized process to implement new deliveries via multi-disciplinary work groups (structure that could expand & contract as needs warrant)
- ORG Chart of COVID-19 Coordination Group Structure:
 - Followed the model issued by John Hopkins University to institutions of higher education for reopening efforts.
 - Based on cross-functional teams and work groups (operational level, implementation details, etc.)
- Examples of Deliverable from CCG Work Groups
 - Health & Safety Assessment and Gap Analysis
 - Positive Case Response and Potential Exposure Protocols
 - Face Covering Accommodation & Exemption Process
 - COVID-19 Website Overhaul – (CCG members critical to providing content to update the website in preparation for Fall)
 - Event Guidelines
- Current Status & What's Next?
 - Regular dialogue with leadership in the event changes/refinements are needed
 - Many of the groups are beginning to look to Spring 2021 and assessing adjustments that might be needed
- Final Thoughts
 - Much of the planning took place at all levels throughout the university. The CCG functioned as key contacts to bring visibility to the planning and preparation. All the planning was impressive and was driven by shared governance, principles of flexibility/compassion, and prioritizing health & safety first.
 - The goal is to develop the best plans possible.

AVP Kelly Boysen thanked all the senators for their flexibility and adapting so quickly. In turn, FS Pres. Cortina thanked Kelly Boysen and her team for everything that they've done to help UH during the pandemic.

FS Pres. Jeronimo Cortina announced that the first virtual APeX talk is scheduled for Wednesday, September 23 at 12:15 p.m. Professor Andrew Michaels (The Law Center) will present "Artificial Intelligence, Legal Change, and Separation of Powers". He encouraged senators to attend APeX events to help support UH assistant professor colleagues.

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 12:54 p.m.