



**Faculty Senate
Minutes
Wednesday, November 18, 2020
12:00 p.m.**

Faculty Senate President Jeronimo Cortina called the November 18, 2020 Faculty Senate meeting to order via Microsoft Teams at 12:01 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: (121)

ARCH: D. Froehlich, M. Kubo, P. Peters, Z. Qureshi
ARTS: F. Fernando, N. Harren, T. Koozin, C. Meals, S. Zalman
BUS: C. Becker, N. Celly, J. Hess, P. Kumar, M. Murray, J. Porra, F. Sahin, S. Werner
EDU: C. Arbona, J. Freiberg, S. Gronseth, K. Hassett, L. Hutchison, M. Lee, A. Thompson
ENGR: C. Chang, J. Conrad, K. Larin, H. Love, B. Metrovich, Y. Mo, S. Pei, D. Shattuck, G. Song, Y. Yao
HON: S. Long
HRM: J. Draper, Y. Koh, J. Madera, C. Morosan, Sujata Sirsat, C. Taylor
HSPA: D. Engster
LAW: K. Brem, J. Heppard, J. Nelson
CLASS: E. Alemán, K. Anderson, 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, L. Oliveira, R. Ramos, G. San Miguel, S. Scarrow, C. Sharp, E. Simas, C. Sisk, C. Spitzmueller, B. Tamber-Rosenau, C. Tamber-Rosenau
LIB: K. Creelman, V. Douglas, C. Gola, S. Thompson, A. Wu
COM: G. Gomez, K. Jones, K. Rowland
NSM: K. Bassler, B. Bodmann, J. Briggs, R. Capuano, A. Czader, R. Forrest, S. Gilbertson, R. Lee, J. May, A. Medrano, M. Nicol, E. Papadakis, Z. Ren, N. Rizk, V. Sisson, G. Toti, A. Vershynina, C. Wayne
CON: C. Brohard, L. McWilliams
OPT: D. Coates, V. Das, K. Fern, L. Frishman, R. Manny, J. Porter
PHA: D. Chow, G. Cuny, R. Ghose, B. McConnell, D. Thornton, M. Trivedi
GCSW: S. Jennings, S. Narendorf
TECH: B. Detillier, M. El Nahas, J. Evans, H. Hutchins, M. Kidd, A. Lendasse, F. Merchant, G. Zouridakis

MEMBERS ABSENT: (24)

ARTS: T. Chapman, S. Matijcio, K. Rigdon
BUS: N. Johnson, L. Silva
EDU: W. Fan
ENGR: L. Grabow, K. Grigoriadis, M. Robertson
HON: D. Gish
LAW: D. Fagundes
CLASS: R. Boul, S. Craig, D. Papell, C. Tolliver, A. Vujanovic, Z. Xiao
NSM: M. Das, A. Quaini, S. Xu
CON: P. Schrader
OPT: S. Modi

RES CTRS: S. Chung
RES FAC: O. Bannova

VACANT SEATS: (4) COTA – 1 seat (GPSC); OPT – 1 seat (At-large); GCSW – 2 seats (At-large);

VISITORS: Raymond Bartlett (SVC/SVP, Administration & Finance), (Mark Clarke (Associate Provost, Faculty Development and Faculty Affairs), Amr Elnashai (VC/VP, Research & Transfer Technology), Lisa Holdeman (VC/VP, University Marketing & Communication), Michael Johnson (Chief of Staff, Office of the Chancellor/President), Renu Khator (Chancellor/President), Sarah Larsen (Vice Provost & Dean, Graduate School), Paula Myrick Short (Senior Vice Chancellor/Vice President, Academic Affairs & Provost)

Minutes: The minutes of the October 21, 2020 Fall Faculty Assembly & Faculty Senate Meeting were approved.

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

FS Pres. Jerónimo Cortina welcomed the senators and thanked them for their service.

Dr. Cortina gave a brief overview regarding the findings of the Faculty Survey report. The full report of the Faculty Spring 2021 survey is available on [Faculty Senate website](#).

- A significant increase in data was found when information about students' demand for face-to-face courses was given. Faculty were willing to teach face-to-face classes in the spring if current pandemic conditions allowed for it and with protective measures in place (i.e., social distancing, sanitization, etc.).
- Personal safety of faculty and their families: main reason preventing faculty from teaching face-to-face classes.
- UH administration has put healthy and safety of the campus community as top priority since the beginning of the pandemic. FS Pres. Cortina encouraged faculty who are willing and able to teach face-to-face courses. Having on-campus presence helps invigorate on-campus activity (i.e., auxiliary services, housing, student employment, etc.).
- Faculty Senate leadership continues to work closely with senior administration to help advise them and ensure the health and safety of the campus community.

Q&A Session:

Senator Manos Papadakis commented that more testing should have been done at the start of planning to figure out prevalence. He also mentioned that some campus buildings have poor ventilation. Dr. Papadakis asked how is prevalence in the classroom going to be monitored: are these issues taken into account in the planning (to prevent super spreader outbreaks)? Dr. Cortina responded that there is on-campus testing for student, faculty and staff. He also mentioned that planning is facilitated by UH experts (i.e., COVID-19 coordinator). Dr. Cortina felt that the campus is prepared and that UH administration is taking the right steps to ensure large outbreaks don't occur.

Senator Anna Vershynina asked three questions. 1) What criteria will be used to determine which plan will be used in the spring term? 2) Who will make this decision? 3) When will the decision be made at the latest? Dr. Cortina referred Dr. Vershynina to Pres. Khator who would have more knowledge on this matter.

Senator Jeremy May wanted to confirm if faculty will be able to perform face-to-face proctored testing in addition to face-to-face instruction. Dr. Jerónimo Cortina replied that the Provost's implementation instructional taskforce is looking into this issue and will forward Dr. May's question to the group.

Senator Michelle Ivey commented that providing examples of Hyflex courses, what equipment/classrooms look like, etc. would help faculty and students on what to expect when planning in this new teaching/learning environment. Dr. Cortina responded that UH IT does have a website in which faculty can view COVID-19 prepped classrooms. He said he would pass Dr. Ivey's suggestion to UH IT and the Provost office to promote more detailed information.

Senator Benjamin Tamber-Rosenau asked how non-safe rooms are communicated to faculty who are assigned to teach in the specific room. He gave an example of this issue regarding rooms he uses in the Heyne building in which air ventilation is poor and installing new air filtration system would be a fire hazard (due to the building being older). Senator Zhifeng Ren gave a brief overview of the new air filtration system. FS Pres. Cortina responded that he will forward this concern to administration and the department of Facilities, Planning & Construction.

First reading of proposed Faculty Senate Bylaw Revision by the Faculty Governance Committee

Chair: [Raúl Ramos](#)

FGC Raúl Ramos presented the proposed Senate bylaw revision.

- Summary of amendment
 - Revision to add language to the qualifications for senate leadership.
 - Currently deans and administration cannot serve as senators, though associate/assistant deans can.
 - In order to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest, the FGC proposes to limit associate/assistant deans from holding the president or president-elect office in the senate.
- Current language
 - *Article Two--Officers*
 - *Section One--The Senate shall have a president, a president-elect, and a secretary. The duties of these officers may be provided for in the bylaws. The bylaws may provide for other officers.*
- Proposed revision
 - Article Two--Officers
 - Section One--The Senate shall have a president, a president-elect, and a secretary. The duties of these officers may be provided for in the bylaws. The bylaws may provide for other officers. **The president or president-elect shall not serve while holding the position of associate/assistant dean.**

FGC Chair Raúl Ramos announced that the second reading and vote of this amendment will take place during the December 9, 2020 Faculty Senate meeting.

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

President Khator thanked the senators for their comments and took note of them. In response to Senator Vershynina's questions, Pres. Khator responded that UH is preparing with two plans: Plan B (similar to fall 2020) and Plan A (add more face-to-face classes). With the dynamic situation due to the pandemic, administration can only make decisions week by week as it is difficult to project months in advance. Dr. Khator said that UH has to wait for the governor's plan and also figure out what the county is planning to do. Decisions will come from UH's medical expert and advisory group and they will inform her. She asked that faculty to have both plans ready. As for Senator Tamber-Rosenau's question, Dr. Khator responded that she wasn't sure about the buildings' ventilation and will refer this concern to the Provost's implementation instructional group.

Pres. Renu Khator reported on the following items:

- Board of Regents meeting will take place the first week of December
- Federal legislative scene: President-elect Biden is planning to reverse many policies with regard to education (i.e., Title IX, DACA, etc.).
- State Legislature
 - Session will convene in January 2021
 - Pres. Khator met with the state comptroller Glenn Hegar

- The financial situation is better than anticipated for 2020.
 - The state legislature is not sure about 2021, there may be deficits.
 - Pres. Khator said that she will continue to advocate for UH and help defend its budget.
- Virtual Commencement will be held on December 17, 2020.
 - Athletics
 - Football has been cancelled for next week. Games will resume in December.
 - Basketball is ranked 17th in pre-season poll. The season will begin in seven days.

Q&A Session:

Senator Anna Vershynina asked a follow-up question to the UH budget with regards to Pres. Khator's email.

1) What are the areas of critical needs and growth? 2) Who decided that these areas are critical? 3) Will there be department budget cuts to fund these critical areas of need and growth?

Pres. Khator responded that that:

- 1) Research and instruction are the critical areas of need and growth
- 2) DoR has defined the critical areas in research and the Provost office defined their critical areas.
- 3) Budget cuts don't have to come solely from departments as long as the state legislature doesn't ask for the cuts. Administration is looking at other offices where priorities are different. She gave an example of an administration office that may have an anticipated low-level activity and possibility have a different type of cut in that area. UH will try to absorb cuts without going to the departments. However, if the state legislature asks UH to return money to the permanent fund base, then UH has no other alternative but to do so. Faculty and staff salaries are located in the permanent base funds and much of these funds are in Academic Affairs.

Senator Manos Papadakis commented that he felt that soft units such as Athletics can absorb cuts instead of academics. He asked why not suspend Athletics for one year? Pres. Khator responded that UH has to protect where the productivity is located. Athletics has already sustained large cuts and it isn't possible to temporarily suspend this unit. The soft units don't have the permanent funding to absorb losses. She mentioned that there are also inefficiencies in Academic Affairs (and other areas) and there is data to prove this. Dr. Papadakis suggested that Pres. Khator present this data at a Faculty Senate meeting.

Senator Margaret Kidd asked how can UH create a sense of funding equity in the College of Technology especially when other colleges receive more funding? Pres. Khator responded that she and the Provost are aware of this issue. There may be a way to fund the College of Technology in a different way for the future. Provost Paula Short thanked Dr. Kidd for her comments and welcomed any ideas and thoughts.

UH Strategic Plan Presentation by 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 Myrick Short presented a brief overview of the proposed UH Strategic Plan.

Pres. Khator charged the committee with drafting the strategic plan which was a year-long process. Under Pres. Khator's leadership, UH has achieved many successes (i.e., Phi Beta Kappa chapter establishment, College of Medicine, Carnegie-Tier 1 designation). With the UH's centennial year approaching, it was decided to create a strategic plan to determine and guide UH's future long-term success.

- Charge from President Khator: Create a set of guiding questions to develop the strategic plan
 - Where do we want to take the University of Houston in 10-15 years?
 - Where should we take the University of Houston?
 - What will keep the University of Houston relevant?
 - What will keep the University of Houston on the cutting edge?
 - What will keep the University of Houston true to its public mission?
- Charge: Dream big – for the University of Houston – for the city of Houston – for our future
 - **Dream Big, Bold, and Together**

- Provost Short mentioned that the planning work was gratifying. She thanked everybody who participated in this communal effort move UH to an even better place.
- Process Timeline
 - Fall 2019: Planned for the strategic planning process
 - Jan-Feb 2020: Held 43 listening sessions with 1, 203 participants and collected 1,857 comments from UH community
 - March-Apr: Completed data analysis and created foundational concepts
 - May-Aug: Established key priorities and initiatives
 - Aug-Oct: Refined initiatives around key priorities
 - Nov: Sharing sessions for strategic plan
 - Nov-Dec: Finalize Strategic Plan
 - Jan 2021: Launch of Strategic Plan
- Mission: Connecting potential with opportunity
 - The University of Houston draws strength from its diversity to transform lives and communities through education, research, service and innovation in a real-world setting. UH is an engine for discovery, conversation and change that informs and leads local, state, national and global partnerships.
 - This statement asks why does UH exists.
- Vision statement asks where UH is going
 - The planning committee has analyzed data on what other top universities have done
 - The bold vision is for UH to rank in the top 50 of public universities moving into a centennial year.
- What is in the ranking?
 - Student Success
 - Institutional Investment in Student Success
 - Social Mobility
 - Reputation of the University
 - Alumni Engagement
- Values
 - Diversity, Inclusion and Freedom of Expression
 - Innovation
 - Collaboration
 - Resilience
- Five Goals – Provost Short gave details and tangible milestones for each of these goals.
 - Goal 1 – Student Success: Provide Top Tier, Inclusive Educational Experience to Diverse Learner
 - Goal 2 – National Competitiveness: Build Research Powerhouse to Add to Regional Intellectual Prowess
 - Goal 3 – Social Responsibility: Help Build Capacity in our Community
 - Goal 4 – Nationally Relevant Athletics: Build a Competitive Athletics Program
 - Goal 5 – Competitive Funding: Build a Sustainable Funding Base to Support Vision Goals
- Wrap-Up
 - Draft plan is posted in the Strategic Plan website: <https://uh.edu/strategic-plan/>
 - There's opportunity to provide feedback in the website
 - Town hall meetings will be held next week so that the plan can be presented to multiple stakeholders
 - Mission and Vision Statements, Values and Strategic Plan to be approved at the December University of Houston System Board of Regents meeting.

Q&A Session:

Senator Margaret Kidd asked about goal 3 (Social Responsibility). What type of steps will UH take to rectify a services desert located within the College of Technology: especially with the current funding inequities? Provost Short responded that she's working with the dean on this issue. The Budget Transparency committee has been analyzing data and participating in discussions regarding funding inequities. She mentioned that there is the UH Extend initiative which can be a substantial revenue stream that colleges can

participate in. Dr. Short thanked Dr. Kidd for her comment and said that the Budget Transparency committee will continue to look into the funding issues that were mentioned.

Senator Laveria Hutchison asked if the website link can be shared with faculty and staff. Provost Short replied that the website is definitely meant for everyone to visit.

Senator Ferenc Bunta asked about UH's involvement with TMC³. Provost Short referred his question to Dr. Amr Elnashai. VP Elnashai replied that he didn't know of UH's involvement with TMC³.

Senator Patrick Peters asked if the UH Strategic plan has a specific linkage to the master centennial plan? Provost Short responded that linking the master centennial plan is a component of the UH Strategic plan. Planning for that particular process is in motion and it will require fund-raising efforts.

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 reported on the following items:

- December 3, 2020 Board of Regents Meeting:
 - SVP Bartlett will present the closing out of FY2020
 - He also update the BoR the impacts of COVID-19 on FY2021
- Endowment
 - UHS will change investment consultant: save money on a similar service with new consultant
- Facilities, Planning & Construction Committee
 - Provide an update to BOR – funding deferred maintenance

SVP Bartlett thanked Dr. Elnashai for inviting him to assist in the discussions of DoR's budget.

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

VP Amr Elnashai reported on the following items:

- Research Enterprise is doing well:
 - Three major centers brought in over \$25M or more
 - Research expenditure slightly increased – surpassed \$200M
- Budgets
 - In light of possible state budget cuts, DoR is working closely with the SVP of Administration & Finance ensure financial stability.
 - IP Income will decrease to a small percentage by 2023
 - DoR is planning for the next 10 years when IP income will decrease significantly
- Internal Grant Programs
 - Funding continues for internal seed grants
 - UH President's COVID-19 and Racial justice programs were awarded and funded
- Research Innovation Forum
 - 70 people attended and a second forum will be held in a few days
- 50-in-5 Events
 - Two events were held and well-attended

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:42 p.m.



December 9, 2020

January 20, 2021

February 17, 2021

March 24, 2021

April 14, 2021 (Spring Faculty Assembly & Faculty Senate Meeting)

May 12, 2021

June 16, 2021 (if called)

July 21, 2021 (if called)

12:00 - 2:00 p.m.

Online Meeting via Microsoft Teams



The next [APeX Speaker Series](#) event features **Virmarie Correa-Fernandez, Ph.D.**, College of Education, on “**Addressing tobacco-related health disparities among Latinx adults: Community engagement and intervention research**” on:

Wednesday, January 27, 2021
At 12:15 p.m. via [Microsoft Teams](#)

