



## University Council Minutes

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*April 8, 2021, 2:00 p.m. (Virtual Teams Meeting) | Meeting Called to Order by Ira K. Blake, President*

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### In Attendance

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Elizabeth Beavers, Dwayne Busby, Cindy Cook, Sara Kielt Costello, Mark Denney, LeeBrian Gaskins, Samuel Gladden, Miguel Gonzalez, Aaron Hart, Eric Herrera, Esther Herrera, Romano Hudson, Rebecca Huss-Keeler, Heather Kanenberg, Beth Lewis, Hiba Loya, Brad McGonagle, Kathryn Matthew, Timothy Michael, Evelyn Miralles, Joan Pedro, David Rachita, Roberta Raymond, Bianca Schonberg, Christal Rene Seahorn, Joseph Staley, Brian Stephens, Edward Waller, Christine Walther, Christopher Ward, Paul Withey, Kevin Wooten, Randall Xu, Lee Young, Chloris Yue, Faiza Zalila

ABSENT:

Guests:

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### Approval of Minutes

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The minutes from the March 11, 2021 meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved.

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### Academic Council

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Dr. Kathryn Mathew, Associate VP, Academic Affairs, introduced five proposals on behalf of the Academic Council:

- **Academic Appeal Policy-** Academic appeals include those appeals related to grades and academic programs or degree requirements.  
President Blake inquired about an informal front-end procedure for students to submit concerns and connect to the formal process. After a group discussion, the consensus was that the informal and formal processes were sufficiently aligned, and no further actions were necessary.
- **COE Degree Name Change**  
Dr. Joan Pedro, Dean of the College of Education (COE), provided a name change policy overview to change the name of the degree from the Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies to the Bachelor of Science in Education.
- **Network Minor-** A concentration of courses offered to computing and engineering students in computer and information systems.

Dr. Miguel Gonzalez, Dean, College of Science and Engineering, provided an overview of the minor in Network Security, an opportunity for students in computing-based majors to take advantage of potential tools that allow them to be more marketable. These courses are also available post-baccalaureate for upskilling opportunities.

- **Study Abroad Travel Insurance**

Dr. Bianca Schonberg, Executive Director, Education Abroad, stated that education abroad falls in the realm of legal and risk management oversight. UHCL must offer standard insurance to all students, which is best practice at all major Universities.

- **Travel Registry Catalog Statement**

The Travel Registry Catalog Statement is a requirement for students approved for the education abroad program. The Travel Registry Catalog is a mobile telephone app that monitors students while they are abroad. The app allows communication between the UHCL and students while traveling abroad.

All proposals presented were passed.

### **Facilities and Support Services Committee**

No action items

### **University Life Committee**

Dr. McGonagle presented six policies.

- Employees and Independent Contractor's Policy
- Fair Standards Act Policy
- Leave of Absence Policy
- Nepotism Policy
- Separation from the University Policy
- Staff Attendance and Punctuality Policy

President Blake requested that moving forward, the expectation is that a summary and why the policy is essential for consideration to University Council be presented. All items were approved.

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## **Information Items – University Shared Governance Committee Reports**

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### **Academic Council**

No agenda items

### **University Life Committee (ULC)**

No agenda items

### **Facilities and Support Services Committee**

No agenda items

### **Planning and Budget Committee (PBC)**

Dr. Timothy Michael, PBC Chair, presented the three items below

1. Mr. Mark Denney, Vice President - Administration and Finance, provided the dates when each division would provide their budgets and initiatives to the University.
  - Division of Strategic Enrollment Management: April 19 (no time yet)
  - Division of University Advancement: April 20 (1:00 p.m.)

- Division of the Office of the President: April 21 (1:00 p.m.)
  - Division of Administration and Finance: April 21 (3:30 p.m.)
  - Division of Academic Affairs: April 22 (10:30 a.m.)
  - Division of Student Affairs: April 22 (1:00 p.m.)
2. Two fee increases are moving forward. If SGA has voted on them in time, they will be heard by the Planning and Budget Committee (PBC), possibly as early as the April meeting. The two fees are both Optional fees:
1. Increase in the minimum declining meal balance from \$1,000/Semester to \$1,400/Semester – for residents of Hunter Residence Hall
  2. New fee for Education Abroad – to provide high-quality insurance coverage when students travel outside the U.S. on University-sponsored travel.
    - Both have been presented to SGA for a first hearing and will be voted on at their scheduled meeting on Tuesday, April 13.
    - They will be presented to PBC at the next meeting, scheduled for Tuesday, April 20
  3. There will be a mid-year campus-wide presentation by Mr. Denney on Monday, April 26 at 2:00 p.m., live-streamed via Zoom.

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## President's Report

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President Ira K. Blake provided an update on Covid B117 which is a new Covid variant. There is an anticipation of a spike in the cases in surrounding areas. Harris county is fairing pretty well, although still considered high risk. Mr. Black has been in conversations with several pharmacies and working with the county to become a distribution site for our staff, employees, students, and community members. This initiative will directly impact whether we change our delivery model for instruction and services in the fall.

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## For the Good of the Order

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4. Mr. Joseph Staley, Vice President, University Advancement, reminded everyone that the Presidential Speaker Series was coming up on Friday, April 9, and encouraged everyone to register and attend.
5. Dr. Christopher Ward, Chair, Facilities and Support Services Committee, complimented Dr. Heather Kanenberg, FSEC, Chair, Curriculum Committee, and Dean Pedro for a good job on the Human Sciences and Humanities (HSH) searches.
6. Dr. Samuel Gladden, Human Sciences and Humanities Interim Dean, shared that HSH was rolling out a podcast hosted by two of our students, one in Sociology and one in Communications. He asked that the group be on the lookout for the notifications soon.
7. Mr. David Rachita, Dean of Students, will send a link for all activities occurring on campus Friday, April 9, and Saturday, April 10. He asked that faculty encourage students to complete the National Association of Collegiate Campus Climate (NACCC) survey, a new national quantitative survey on campus racial climate created by the USC Race and Equity Center.
8. Student Affairs' new Associate Vice President, Dr. Umar Hernandez, began in her new role.

9. Dr. Gonzales congratulated Dr. Hakduran Koc for being named regional Educator of the year by IEEE region five. A stem challenge is going on for some of the grants, which will bring lots of students from the surrounding area on the upcoming weekend, April 9-10, 2021. College of Science and Engineering is developing strategies to support faculty and students to identify Hispanic and other minority students to participate in ISS research.
  
10. Dean Pedro announced that the Addictions Counseling bachelor's program was ranked number 14 in the top 35 bachelor's programs in the United States per [addiction-counselor.org/degrees/bachelors](http://addiction-counselor.org/degrees/bachelors). President Blake encouraged everyone to promote the excellence of faculty in work occurring with UHCL.

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## **Next Meeting**

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**May 13, 2021, | 2:00 p.m., Virtual via Teams**

There being no further business, the Meeting adjourned at 3:08 p.m.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

None