

**THE UNIVERSITY COORDINATING COMMISSION:
A PILOT PROJECT REPORT**

2006-2007

Submitted by

Joe Kotarba

Chair, UCC

A BRIEF HISTORY

The University Coordinating Commission (UCC) was born in the Faculty Senate Commission on University Governance (FS-COUG). In its final report on October 19, 2005, the FS-COUG called for establishment of a “broadly representative, non-policy-making group intended to facilitate decision-making in a manner that will

- Reduce “silozation” (the vertical flow of information and decision-making),
- Strengthen connections between university governance groups,
- Facilitate input into the development of policies and procedures, and
- Broaden campus governance.”

The Faculty Senate voted to create a pilot project UCC on March 29th, 2006. The pilot project would operate from May 1, 2006 to September 1, 2007. The faculty Senate also charged the UCC to assemble a report evaluating the success of the pilot project, along with suggestions for the future operation of the UCC.

The original UCC was composed of the following members: Joe Kotarba (Chair, and Faculty Senate President-Elect), Elaine Charlson (representing the Administration); John Antel (representing the Deans); Joel Bloom (Undergraduate Council); Carol Barr (Staff Council); Bruno Breitmeyer (Research Council); Brian Knoll (Graduate and Professional Studies Council); Francisco Zelaya (Student Government Association); Steve Craig (Faculty Senate President) and Al Warner (Chair, Faculty Senate, Committee on Committees).

Marsha Daly has served as Commission Staff Support, and has done an outstanding job.

The Chair visited the following campus groups in December, January and February 2006-2007 to introduce the UCC and to ask for support and design input: Undergraduate Council; Graduate and Professional Studies Council; Staff Council; and the Student Government Association.

The purpose of the University Coordinating Commission (UCC) is to facilitate discussion throughout the University Community on policies that have been formulated but not yet approved. The UCC will try to ensure that proposed policies and procedures will be vetted by those university groups for whom they may be relevant, as quickly as possible.

The UCC arrived at the following operational definition of a policy, in order to separate policies from organizational procedures beyond the intent and scope of the UCC's work:

What is a policy?

- A broadly stated guideline for actions and decisions,
- Any governing Document which describes a principle or plan,
- A general statement supporting university operations, rules regulations and use,
- The basis for procedures, but not a detailed course of action, or
- A statement in accordance with the purpose and legal structure of the university.

UCC PROCEDURES

- A frequent call for proposals is issued to all councils, administrators, and campus organizations (Appendices A and B).
- Receipt notices are sent for submitted proposals. (Appendix C)
- Submitted proposals are reviewed monthly in terms of:
 - Whether they are policies or procedures,
 - What campus groups have already reviewed the proposals,
 - What campus groups should review the proposals, and
 - Whether additional information is needed before the UCC can make a decision to certify.
- A notification message of a proposed policy is sent to all relevant campus groups, with instructions to respond to the proposed policy within thirty days (Appendix D).
- All decisions and communications are logged into a tracking form (Appendix E).
- The Chair may expedite proposed policy reviews, when requested by the originator, if sufficient evidence is provided that all relevant groups have had the opportunity to see the proposal.
- Certification letters are sent to the University President and Provost with a copy to groups submitting proposed policies (Appendix F).
- All UCC communications are logged on its web page www.uh.edu/ucc.
- A status report is issued to members at the monthly meeting (Appendix G).

RESULTS

The UCC met monthly for a total of eleven meetings to review proposed policies and to develop operating procedures for the UCC. The Commission's goal was to create a review system that would be efficient and timely, yet would not interfere in the substance of proposals. The members were impressed to see the extent of review of policy by campus groups before submission to the UCC. Overall, the Commission feels that it has created an efficient review system, but one to be improved for the future.

TALLY OF UCC ACTIONS

Total documents reviewed: 23

Documents determined to be policies: 15
Documents determined not to be policies: 3
Responses to documents from campus group: 2
Revision of original documents: 3

Policy submitted by

Administration: 3
Faculty Senate: 6
Graduate & Professional Studies Council: 1
Undergrad Council: 5

Documents forwarded to

Administration: 2
Faculty Senate: 10
Graduate & Professional Studies Council: 8
Research Council: 10
Staff Council: 6
Student Government: 7
Undergraduate Council: 7
32 Standing Committees: 3
Dean's Council: 5
Intellectual Property: 1
Library: 1
IT Coordinating Committee: 1
Associate Deans: 1
Scholarship Committee: 1
Certified documents: 12
Intellectual Property: 1
Library: 1
IT Coordinating Committee: 1
Associate Deans: 1
Scholarship Committee: 1

Certified documents: 12

ACHIEVEMENT OF GOALS

- The UCC has established an efficient mechanism for reviewing proposed policies.

- The UCC has significantly impacted the university culture by “training” faculty, staff and students to immediately send proposed policies to the UCC for distribution.
- The UCC has been successful in processing proposed policies without interfering in their content.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Administration should be constantly encouraged to seek UCC review before approving any proposed policy, including those emanating from the administration.
- Campus groups should be encouraged to submit proposals to the UCC as early as possible in order to expedite review and to involve as many relevant campus groups as early as possible in the policy-making process.
- Campus groups should submit proposed policies no later than the group itself has approved it.
- Campus groups should be requested to list groups that have already seen the proposed policy, to preclude redundancy.
- Campus groups should provide recommendations for groups that should see their proposed policies.
- The President and Provost should insist that all policies be submitted to the UCC before they approve the policy.
- If the UCC Chair receives information with a proposal that the document has been widely reviewed before submission to UCC, he may decide to expedite the document without the 30 day review. The UCC members would be notified that the document has been expedited.
- The UCC should not meet during the summer in order to reaffirm the strong belief that campus policy should not be enacted during the summer.

APPENDIX A: CALL FOR PROPOSALS

University of Houston

THE UNIVERSITY COORDINATING COMMISSION

Call for Policy and Procedure Proposals

The purpose of the University Coordinating Commission (UCC) is to facilitate discussion throughout the University Community on policies that have been formulated but not yet approved. The UCC will try to ensure that proposed policies and procedures will be available to those university groups for whom they may be relevant, as quickly as possible.

Please send your proposed policy to Marsha Ann Daly, the UCC staff support. Attach a letter that has the following information:

- The name of the policy
- The group proposing the policy.
- The contact person/phone/email for your group.
- The groups on campus who have already vetted your proposal.
- Groups on campus you suggest vet your proposal.

Thanks.

Joe Kotarba, Chair
UCC

Marsha Ann Daly
Academic Program Management
207 E. Cullen Building Room 109
APM 2035
713.743.0919 (voice)
713.743.0717 (fax)
madaly@uh.edu

Joe Kotarba
Chair, UCC
President-elect, Faculty Senate
Professor of Sociology
University of Houston
jkotarba@uh.edu
T: 713-743-3954
F: 713-743-3943

APPENDIX B: PRESIDENT GOGUE'S SUPPORT LETTER

December 8, 2006

Dear Colleagues:

Shared governance is one of the exciting, yet necessary, administrative features of the University of Houston. As we move towards our goal to become a major research university that still values high-quality teaching and service, we must ensure that all members of our university community have the opportunity to contribute to the development of policies and procedures.

The University Coordinating Commission was established by the Administration and the Faculty Senate to facilitate discussion throughout the university community on policies that have been formulated but not yet approved. The Commission will try to ensure input as quickly as possible from all relevant university groups for proposed policies and procedures.

If your group is working on a new policy, or significantly revising an existing one, please contact either Joe Kotarba, the Commission Chair at 713-7433-3954, or Marsha Ann Daly, the Commission Staff Support at 713-743-0919.

I appreciate your work and all that you do for our students and university.

Sincerely,

Jay Gogue

JG/jk

APPENDIX C: RECEIPT LETTER

Dear ORIGINATOR:

The purpose of this message is to acknowledge receipt of your policy proposal, NAME. We have logged your policy proposal as UCC #. You may track the progress of the proposal at our website <http://www.uh.edu/ucc/>.

In order to expedite review of this document, please send us a list of the campus groups (e.g., councils and administrators) who have already reviewed your proposal. You may also include a list of campus groups that you believe should see the document. E-mail this information to ucc@uh.edu *as soon as possible*.

The University Coordinating Commission will discuss your proposal at our next meeting and send it to other campus groups we feel may have an interest in reviewing it. These groups have until DATE to respond to you if they so choose. At that time, we will forward your proposal to the appropriate administrator(s) for action. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

Joe Kotarba, Chair
University Coordinating Commission
jkotarba@uh.edu
713-743-3954
<http://www.uh.edu/ucc/>

APPENDIX D: NOTIFICATION OF A PROPOSED POLICY

Dear CAMPUS GROUP:

The purpose of the University Coordinating Commission (UCC) is to facilitate discussion throughout the University Community on policies that have been formulated but not yet approved. The UCC will try to ensure that proposed policies and procedures will be available to those university groups for whom they may be relevant, as quickly as possible.

The NAME OF GROUP is proposing a policy titled UCC # AND TITLE, and the UCC has decided that this proposed policy may be relevant to your group. Please review the attached policy and, if relevant, relay your comments and suggestions to the group proposing the policy no later than DATE (30 DAYS) (EMAIL OF CONTACTS and ucc@uh.edu). Copies of dissenting opinion should be forwarded, in writing, to the originator of the policy and the UCC by the date noted above.

Finally, please complete the information below and e-mail it to Marsha Daly, madaly@uh.edu.

Sincerely,

Joe Kotarba, Chair
University Coordinating Commission
jkotarba@uh.edu
713-743-3954
<http://www.uh.edu/ucc/>

INFORMATION REQUESTED:

What is your group's decision on the relevance of the policy to you?

Did you contact the group proposing the policy?

If so, when?

APPENDIX E: TRACKING FORM

UCC 0011 07S	Faculty Senate Textbook and Educational Materials Poli	
Date Received	1/29/07	
Received From (group/person)	Faculty Senate	Steven Craig
Responses To (group/person)		
Handling:		
Receipt of Document Letter	1/31/07	
Date of UCC meeting	1/31/07	
Due Date for Comments	3/2/07	
Sent to:		
Faculty Senate	n/a	seen
Undergraduate Council	y	1/31/07
Graduate Council	y	1/31/07
Research Council	n/a	
Administration	y	1/31/07
Staff Council	y	1/31/07
Student Government	y	1/31/07
33 Standing Committees	n/a	
Forward to Others	everyone has seen this via FS	
Final Actions		
Comments Returned to UCC		3/6/07
Forwarded to Contact Person		
Decision on Document		
Certified	C	3/5/07
Certified To:	Gogue, Foss, Kotarba	

APPENDIX F: CERTIFICATION LETTER

Dear Dr. Gouge, Dr. Foss, and ORIGINATOR

The purpose of this message is to forward UCC # TITLE to you for action. The UCC met on DATE to review the proposal and certifies that the proposal has been reviewed by the following campus groups/administrators:

GROUP COMMENTS

Please forward a copy of your decision on the policy to the UCC email contact ucc@uh.edu. If you have made any changes to the proposal we would also appreciate a copy of the revised document.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

Joe Kotarba, Chair
University Coordinating Commission
jkotarba@uh.edu
713-743-3954
<http://www.uh.edu/ucc/>

APPENDIX G: MONTHLY STATUS REPORT

UCC Documents

#	Title of Document	Received	From	Sent To	Date Sent	Comments	
UCC 0001 06F	SACS Reaffirmation of Accreditation	5/31/06	UH SACS Leadership Team	Faculty Senate	n/a	Due Date	n/a
			Brian McKinney	Undergraduate Council	n/a	Comments Returned	n/a
			Reply to	Graduate Council	n/a	Comments Forwarded	na
				Research Council	n/a		
				Administration	n/a		
				Staff Council	n/a		
				Student Government	n/a		
				33 Standing Committees	n/a		
				Others	n/a		
				Certified: n/a n/a			
	Certified To n/a						
UCC 0002 06F	Extention of Probationary Period for Emergencies	6/21/06	Faculty Senate	Faculty Senate	n/a	Due Date	
			Joe Kotarba	Undergraduate Council	n/a	Comments Returned	
			Reply to	Graduate Council	y	9/28/06	Comments Forwarded
				Research Council	n/a		
				Administration	n/a		
				Staff Council	n/a		
				Student Government	n/a		
				33 Standing Committees	n/a		
				Others	n/a		
				Certified: C 10/24/06			
	Certified To Gogue, Foss						