

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST AND SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

June 3, 2025

TO: Dr. Jerry Johnson, President, UHD Faculty Senate  
UHD Faculty Senate

FROM: Dr. Deborah E. Bordelon   
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

RE: Response to Faculty Senate Resolution - SR 25-01 Date: 05/06/2025

I am in receipt of the Faculty Senate Resolution 25-01, which was approved by the Faculty Senate on May 6, 2025. In the resolution, there are concerns expressed about Faculty Salaries and Merit Pay.

We appreciate the Faculty Senate's commitment to recognizing and rewarding the outstanding contributions of our faculty, and we share your dedication to fostering a culture that supports excellence, retention, and morale. At the same time, we must acknowledge the serious financial challenges currently facing the University. On March 4, 2025, the Faculty Compensation Work Group met to discuss the next steps for a compensation study which will involve examining current CUPA data and making recommendations to the Executive Cabinet for consideration. These meetings will continue into the 2025-2026 academic year.

As you are aware, we are operating under a structural budget deficit that requires difficult decisions and disciplined financial stewardship. In this environment, our priority must be to stabilize the University's fiscal position and preserve the core functions of our academic mission. President Blanchard has approved the Planning and Budget Development Committee (PBDC) recommendation for FY2026 2% salary merit plan contingent on a 3% student credit hour enrollment increase to fund the program.

While we are not in a position to commit to a recurring merit-based increase process at this time, we agree that the long-term success of the institution depends on our ability to attract and retain high-performing faculty and staff. We are committed to examining ways to have annual merit increases within the confines of the current budget situation. We are continuing to move forward with these efforts. As such, we propose the following steps:

1. **Exploratory Planning:** We will form a joint working group with representatives from faculty, staff, and the Budget Office to explore what a sustainable, merit-based salary program could look like, including the triggers and conditions necessary for implementation in future years.
2. **Contingency Framework:** We will work toward integrating a merit-based salary increase mechanism into our multi-year financial planning process, contingent upon measurable progress in addressing the structural deficit.
3. **Transparency and Communication:** We are committed to maintaining an open dialogue with faculty senate leadership throughout the budget planning cycle via the

University Budget Advisory Committee (UBAC) formerly known as the Planning and Budget Development Committee (PBDC) as well as through scheduled budget town hall meetings during the fall 2025 and spring 2026 semesters.

We also recognize that the passage of SB 37 will likely warrant the re-evaluation of our shared governance policies and procedures. As we receive more guidance from the state and our system on how to proceed, we will keep you informed. Together, we can position the University for a more stable financial future—one that allows for the consistent recognition of faculty excellence.