

University of Houston – Victoria (UHV) Policy

Regarding Votes of Confidence, Censure, and No-Confidence

Approved at April 7, 2017 Faculty Senate meeting Policy Regarding Votes of Confidence, Censure, and No-Confidence

Within a university truly dedicated to shared governance, in times of flux or distress, there must be a formal pathway for faculty to communicate strong administration support of, a significant concern with, or complete rejection of, the actions and/or behaviors of an executive member or members of the administration. In such times, the faculty may, by a vote of the eligible membership, express their support, concern, or disapproval.

Although faculty recognize that the result of any such vote is non-binding on University administration, it nonetheless is a valuable and important component of shared governance.

At UH-Victoria, faculty may express their support, concern, or disapproval by initiating

- 1) a Vote of Confidence,
- 2) a Vote of Censure, or
- 3) a Vote of No-Confidence.

A **Vote of Confidence** may be appropriate in those times when faculty believe that the administration has acted inappropriately in censuring, demoting, or removing a member of the administration, whether the president, vice-president, associate vice president or dean. The purpose of the Vote of Confidence is to clearly demonstrate support for the affected administrator and to provide the rationale for that support.

A **Vote of Censure** may be appropriate in those times when a faculty is alarmed and/or significantly distressed by the actions of a member of the administration, or of the administration as a whole. The purpose of the Vote of Censure is to alert the administration to the nature and level of discontent, to provide clear identification of the grievous action or path of decisions, and to call for review and correction of the actions or situation within a specified period of time, usually one year. The Vote of Censure, though serious, stops short of demanding the removal of the offending administrator(s), and intends to allow a time of remedy and potential reconciliation.

A **Vote of No-Confidence** may be appropriate when the actions or policies of the administration or one of its members are either so grievous that they require swift or immediate condemnation of the policy or the administrator, or when actions or policies already censured via the Vote of Censure have not been remedied within the time allotted. A vote of No-Confidence must not be taken frivolously or hastily, but must remain an option when grievances properly addressed go without remedy.

Process for University vs. School Administrators:

Though the process is relatively similar for votes concerning executive members of the administration and deans, the Faculty Senate shall take no role in a Vote of Confidence, Censure, or No-Confidence within the Schools.

A) Procedures in Regards to Executive Members of UHV Administration:

Either the body of the Faculty Senate or Faculty Council may call for a Vote of Confidence, a Vote of Censure, or a Vote of No-Confidence in executive members of the Administration at UH-Victoria (associate vice presidents, vice presidents, and President). To ensure a fair and orderly process, and to give the administrator(s) an opportunity to respond to faculty concerns, a two-step procedure will then be followed.

Step 1: At any regular or specially called meeting of the Faculty Senate or Council, any member of the body in session may introduce a motion of Confidence, Censure or No-Confidence regarding an executive member of the administration. Such motion shall state the rationale for the proposed action. Upon seconding, the motion shall be discussed and then members shall vote by secret ballot to either

- a) Continue Proceedings, or
- b) Do Not Proceed.

If a majority of faculty in attendance vote for continuance, the issues or grievances giving rise to the motion will be stated in writing, and provided to the administrator in question, who will have seven days, inclusive of weekend days, to respond, in writing, to faculty. Any such response will be distributed to all faculty members who are eligible to vote. In the case of a Vote of Confidence, the respondent may waive the response period.

Step 2: Upon a **vote to Continue Proceedings**, the Senate President shall, no sooner than ten (10) days, inclusive of weekends, from the date of the original motion but no later than fourteen (14) days, call a weekday meeting of the body that brought the motion. At that meeting, only the original motion (either Confidence, Censure or No-Confidence) shall be considered. Upon completion of discussion, the Senate Secretary shall conduct a secret ballot. The motion in question shall be adopted upon a majority vote of members in attendance. The Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate will validate the results and send them to the appropriate person – the President in the case of a vote concerning an Associate Vice-President or Vice-President, or the Chancellor of the UH system if the vote concerns the President.

B) Procedures in Regards to School Administrators:

The faculty of the affected school alone may call for a Vote of Confidence, Censure, or No-Confidence concerning their dean. To ensure a fair and orderly process, and to give the school administrator an opportunity to respond to faculty concerns, a two-step procedure will be followed.

Step 1: Any tenured or tenure-track faculty member(s) may call a special meeting of those faculty in their School who are members of the Faculty Council, and introduce a motion of Confidence, Censure, or No-Confidence regarding a School administrator. Such motion shall state the rationale for the proposed action. Upon seconding, the motion shall be discussed and then faculty shall vote by secret ballot either Continue Proceedings or Do Not Proceed. If twenty-five percent (25%) of eligible School faculty members (i.e., those with Faculty Council status) in attendance vote continuance, the issues or grievances giving rise to the motion shall be conveyed in writing to the administrator in question, who shall then have seven (7) days, inclusive of weekend days, to respond in writing and distribute such response to all School faculty.

Step 2: Upon a vote to Continue Proceedings, the faculty member who brought the motion shall, no sooner than ten (10) days, inclusive of weekends, from the date of the original motion but no later than fourteen (14) days, call a weekday meeting of eligible School faculty. At that meeting, only the original motion (either Confidence, Censure or No-Confidence) shall be discussed. By the end of the next weekday, the Office of the Provost and the Faculty Senate Executive Committee shall post a vote survey, which will be available for 48 hours, and then shall release the results to School faculty within two business days thereafter.

C) Restriction Regarding Votes of No-Confidence In regards to both University and School administrators:

In order to ensure that votes of No-Confidence are not taken frivolously or hastily, only one vote regarding a particular administrator(s) can proceed to Step 2, and be conducted, each semester.