I was asked by two Faculty Senators if I was going to have a discussion about the letter we received from the Staff Senate (dated March 10, 2017). I have been waiting until both senate executives could meet in person. Here is my update.

Recently I received a formal letter signed by the Staff Senate Executives. I was asked to distribute this letter to Faculty Senators, so I did. Subsequently, I asked the Staff Senate Executives to meet with the Faculty Senate Executives so we could address the points they made in this letter. Most of us were able to get together Wednesday, March 29th. Our one hour scheduled meeting lasted 2.5 hours. Everyone actively participated in the meeting. We all learned more about each other and the other senate's processes, approaches, etc. We all left with an increased appreciation for the other body and desire to continue building these bonds.

I personally left with the need to relay two concerns to faculty. Please share and reflect. I welcome your discourse.

1. We as the Faculty Senate represent our constituents with a dedication to shared governance. Sometimes this means we ask tough questions from many persons and agencies with the intent to gain clarity and sometimes to point out our concerns and inconsistencies. Sometimes these sessions will get tough. But, when possible, we will attempt to meet with those persons/agencies prior to our senate sessions. We will attempt to provide them our questions and concerns ahead of time. We will also attempt to get any information they are sharing ahead of time to our senators so that our senators can be properly prepared.

I also ask that each Faculty Senator reflect on their approach to asking those hard questions. This is not a dissertation defense or a rite of passage. It should be a professional and respectful attempt to improve UCA through gaining clarity of policy/procedures/etc. Never should we attack the individual/presenter personally. Nor should we do so to our fellow senators.

I will be the first to say I have not mastered the art of tact. I also don't mince words. But, I do think twice before asking tough questions of others. I ask myself if ***how***I am asking the question will result in additional clarity of the topic. I implore you to do the same.

2. As faculty, we also participate in shared governance. We can choose to represent ourselves and/or use our academic leadership, our senators, or many avenues to submit complaints to administration. I will continue to encourage communication by whatever means a faculty member chooses to do so. I also support anonymous communication. There is a purpose for it. I also support the practice of going to the appropriate source for communication and clarity—whenever possible, try the direct route.

What I do not support is unprofessional and uncivil communication. I do not condone attacking a person rather than attacking the policy. I am repulsed when we treat others who are trying to make UCA a better place with disrespect.

I will close with an apology to anyone who feels like they are not valued here at UCA. You are. Regardless of your position title, you work here because we need you in that role to make UCA what it is and to make it even better. Thank you for those efforts.