The meeting was called to order at 2:33 p.m. by John de Castro, chair. The first item of business was the approval of July 9 minutes. The minutes were approved with no changes.

The next item of business was a discussion of Senate composition. This discussion focused on the make up of the Senate and whether certain groups should be deleted or added and if existing groups should be increased or decreased in representation. Two groups included in this discussion were visiting faculty and staff. Christine Gallant presented her committee’s position on adding staff to the Senate. She gave an overview of the current status of the Staff Advisory Council and what their participation has been to-date. She suggested a proposal of adding ten staff representatives to the Senate. In addition, Dr. Gallant presented a different proposal for consideration. Dr. Gallant had spoken with Dean Abdelal about staff representation and he suggested, and indicated he would support, a staff senate. Dr. Gallant indicated that she is planning on letting SAC decide which route they would like to take. The floor was opened for discussion. Dr. de Castro cited the University Statutes’ (Article VI, Section 2) definition of the Senate’s duties and functions: "The University Senate shall, in keeping with the bylaws and policies of the Board of Regents, exercise legislative functions dealing with the general educational policy of the University, the discipline of students, and all other student activities and affairs, including all matters where the President determines there is a need for uniform policy throughout the University." He stated that this passage indicates that the general educational policy and student issues fall under the purview of the faculty. He worries that these items would no longer be under the control of the faculty if the Senate is expanded. He continued by saying that the staff has a body for moving issues forward and that, perhaps, it's not functioning properly. The Senate was created to deal with education policies and other issues and the SAC was created to deal with staff issues. He stated that if the SAC feels that staff issues are not being addressed properly, then the problem lies within the Staff Council, not within the Senate.

Tim Crimmins stated that the Senate is currently set up so that the Senate can approve policies and the President can veto and overturn policies. Out of this, compromise happens. Dr. Crimmins stated that there are three bodies within the university: the Senate, the Student Government Association, and the Staff Advisory Council. Each has a domain. They have been efforts to mesh these three bodies but they do have different functions. Dr. Gallant maintains that Article V the Statutes that defines the SAC could be strengthened. Discussion continued focusing on the legislative functions of Senate and the Staff Council. Dr. Crimmins stated that the president of SAC sits on CBSAC, the Budget Committee, and FACP which are very powerful committees. SAC does get to influence policy at the committee level. It was suggested changes should be made in the number of Senators representing faculty. Several scenarios were discussed. It was agreed that the committee needs to examine the issue holistically rather than piecemeal before changes are made.

The discussion turned to the notion of visiting faculty. The definition of faculty in the University Statutes was discussed and most interpret the passage to say that visiting faculty are not included in that definition. By their contracts, visiting faculty are hired for one year and they are only re-hired after a search. Discussion continued centering on visiting faculty as temporary versus regular faculty who have a long term commitment to the institution. Dr. de Castro summarized the discussion by saying that there are two issues. One issue has to do with representation for departments and the other is the definition of faculty. These two issues are being talked about as if it were one issue. One way around it might be to define Senate representation by departments based on something other than the number of faculty, i.e. credit hours. Dr. Rainbolt suggested a separation of non-voting faculty and voting faculty. Dr. Crimmins suggested that Dr. Rainbolt review the University Statutes and Senate Bylaws and submit language to the Statutes and Bylaws Committee in light of the discussion of instructional faculty versus voting faculty. Dr. de Castro summarized the discussion and stated that the majority of members present were against allowing visiting faculty to count towards departmental representation in the Senate. The Statutes and Bylaws need to be clarified in regards to visiting faculty. A straw vote was taken regarding the issue of adding staff to the Senate. Several were in favor, a few were not, and a few abstained.
The next agenda item was the composition of the strategic planning subcommittee of the Planning and Development Committee. Dr. de Castro distributed a list of potential subcommittee members. This draft list was developed while trying to create the appropriate mix of individuals, taking into account college affiliation, race, gender, etc. Committee chairs were asked to review the nominees from their committees and let Dr. Tai know if their nominee has their committee's approval. The committee chairs could submit other names for consideration but would need to submit these names quickly.

Dr. de Castro announced the next three meeting dates: Monday, September 17; Monday, October 22; and Monday, December 3 from noon to 1:30 p.m. Locations for these meetings will be announced later. He announced that the Executive Committee retreat is scheduled for October 11 and he asked that committee members think about broad issues which can be shaped into agenda items for this meeting. There being no further business, the chair adjourned the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Nell Stone,
committee assistant