

**Minutes of the Faculty Senate Faculty Affairs Committee  
January 31, 2011**

**Present:** Feng Chen, Todd Freeberg, Carla Sommardahl, Steve Thomas and Peling Wang

S. Thomas called the meeting to order at 1:15 PM in room 650 of the Hodges Library. C. Sommardahl agreed to serve as secretary for the meeting.

Minutes

Minutes from the meetings on December 8, 2010 were reviewed. Several typographical errors were noted by T. Freeberg. A motion was made to approve the minutes as corrected. The motion received a second and was passed by voice vote.

Action Items

- A. Proposed Changes to the *Faculty Handbook* and *Manual for Faculty Evaluation* Regarding Advising and Mentoring.

S. Thomas reviewed the status of this issue. At the December meeting, revisions to the proposals offered by the Task Force on Advising had been approved, pending the addition of summary statement in the *Manual for Faculty Evaluation* to the effect that each unit has the responsibility to document, in its own bylaws, what advising and mentoring activities are expected and how these activities would be evaluated. S. Thomas then proposed the following text for that statement.

**As noted in the *Faculty Handbook*, the advising and mentoring of students are important aspects of a faculty member's role as an effective teacher. Thus, in each and every process outlined within this manual, any evaluation of the effectiveness of a faculty member's teaching should, when appropriate, include consideration the faculty member's advising and mentoring activities. The faculty of each department should define in their respective bylaws clear expectations for advising and mentoring activities within the unit and the methods by which these activities are to be evaluated.**

A motion was made to accept this wording. The motion received a second and, after a brief discussion, was passed by voice vote. S. Thomas noted that he would send the suggestions, with the committee's revisions, to S. Gardial and the Task Force on Advising for review and comment.

- B. Process for Submitting Resolutions to the Faculty Senate for Change to the *Faculty Handbook* or *Manual for Faculty Evaluation*.

On December 22, 2010, in follow-up to the discussion at the December meeting, S. Thomas had distributed by e-mail draft text of changes to the *Faculty Handbook* (Chapter 8) and *Manual for Faculty Evaluation* (Introduction) to clarify the revision process for each document. Today, S. Thomas shared with comments about these

suggestions from Faculty Senate President J. Heminway. By common consent, these comments were accepted as friendly amendments to the draft text.

Section 8.1 of the *Faculty Handbook* would be replaced in full so it would read as:

**The Faculty Senate Faculty Affairs Committee may initiate a proposed revision to the *Faculty Handbook*, after consultation with the chancellors of UTK and UTIA. Each recommendation of the Faculty Senate Faculty Affairs Committee will be presented to the Faculty Senate Executive Council in the form of a resolution briefly outlining the reason(s) for the proposed revision and specifying the precise change(s) to be made. With the acceptance of the Faculty Senate Executive Council, the resolution will be presented for consideration and action at the next meeting of the Faculty Senate. Adoption of the resolution by the Faculty Senate constitutes a recommendation of the Faculty Senate to the chancellors for revision of the *Faculty Handbook*.**

Similarly, the final paragraph in the Introduction to the *Manual for Faculty Evaluation* would be revised so that it would read in full as:

**Revisions to the *Manual for Faculty Evaluation* are made in consultation with and the approval of the Faculty Senate Faculty Affairs Committee and the Faculty Senate Executive Council for final approval by the full Faculty Senate. Each recommendation of the Faculty Senate Faculty Affairs Committee will be presented to the Faculty Senate Executive Council in the form of a resolution briefly outlining the reason(s) for the proposed revision and specifying the precise change(s) to be made. With the acceptance of the Faculty Senate Executive Council, the resolution will be presented for consideration and action at the next meeting of the Faculty Senate. Adoption of the resolution by the Faculty Senate constitutes a recommendation of the Faculty Senate for revision of the *Manual for Faculty Evaluation*.**

A motion was made to accept these proposed revisions. The motion received a second and passed by voice vote.

### C. Further Defining Academic Freedom

E-mails from S. Thomas on December 17, 2010 and December 20, 2010 outlined current references to academic freedom in the *Faculty Handbook* and *Manual for Faculty Evaluation* and provided references to recent articles describing how faculty in other universities are responding to the decision in the Supreme Court case *Garcetti v. Ceballos* (2006).

After reviewing these articles in light of the Board of Trustees' *Policies Governing Academic Freedom, Responsibilities and Tenure*, S. Thomas suggested that the Faculty Senate might respectfully petition The Board of Trustees to address this issues raised by *Garcetti* by amending this policy statement to include, in the list in the section "Academic Freedom and Responsibility of the Faculty Member," text such a the following.

**A faculty member also has the responsibility to act as a good citizen of the University and to contribute to the on-going communication – with fellow**

**faculty, with academic administrators, and with The Board – that is at the heart of the shared governance of the University. When communicating as a citizen of the University, by whatever means and at whatever level, a faculty member has the freedom to raise and to address any issue related to the shared governance without fear of institutional discipline or restraint.**

After some discussion, S. Thomas suggested that he send to the committee by e-mail a draft of how this revision would look in context with the other items in the “Academic Freedom and Responsibility of the Faculty Member” section. Discussion of the item would resume at a future committee meeting.

#### D. Anti-Discrimination Statements

On December 17, 2010, S. Thomas had distributed by e-mail a memorandum on the topic of sexual orientation nondiscrimination statements that might be added to the existing nondiscrimination statements in Section 1.1 of the *Faculty Handbook*, prepared by J. Heminway in November 2007. T. Freeberg also distributed a list of aspirational-peer institutions with indications of which had some type of domestic partner benefits.

After the committee reviewed the options outlined in the Heminway document, a motion was made to add to the existing statements in Section 1.1 this sentence: “**The university does not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation in provision of educational or employment opportunities.**” The motion received a second. During discussion, it was noted that a stronger statement that included benefits would be desirable, but such is not the case now and such a change is outside the control of the campus administration. The motion passed by voice vote.

#### E. Editorial Revisions to the *Faculty Handbook* and the *Manual for Faculty Evaluation*

On January 13, 2011, S. Thomas had distributed documents listing editorial changes to the *Faculty Handbook* and the *Manual for Faculty Evaluation* to correct two types of out-of-date references: (1) the use of “vice president” where it refers to the, now, Chancellor of UTIA and (2) names of Faculty Senate committees changed during revisions of the Faculty Senate Bylaws. An addendum list with additional changes in committee names was distributed on January 28, 2011.

S. Thomas noted that the process for revising the *Faculty Handbook* calls for coordination between this committee, the secretary of the Faculty Senate, and the chancellor and vice president – with the review process being one of the points needing revision. S. Thomas reported that he had reviewed of these documents with the secretary of the Faculty Senate and had shared them by e-mail with the chancellors.

Over 30 references to the “vice president” in the *Faculty Handbook* were considered. In general, where the reference indicated that both individuals in these positions must take an action, the suggestion is to use “chancellors” or “chancellors of UTK and UTIA.” Where the action is one which either of the individuals in these positions may take separately, then the suggestion is to use “chancellor” without a campus designation. In summary, there were 13 of the first type and 22 of the second type. In the *Manual for Faculty Evaluation* there are only two references to the vice president and both were of the second type. By common consent, the committee accepted the changes outlined.

S. Thomas reported that the secretary of the Faculty Senate had expressed concern that when the reference would be to “chancellor” without a campus designation that it be clear the action was to be taken by the appropriate chancellor. By common consent, the committee agreed to let S. Thomas draft such language and share it with the committee by e-mail.

In summary, the following types of changes were considered concerning the Faculty Senate committee names in the *Faculty Handbook*.

- “Faculty Senate Executive Committee” to be changed to “Faculty Senate Executive Council” three places in Section 8.3 (and capitalized in two of those places)
- The “appeals committee” or the “faculty senate appeals committee” to be capitalized 16 times in Chapter 5
- “Faculty and Staff Benefits Committee” to be changed to “Benefits and Professional Development Committee” once in Section 6.1
- “Budget Committee” to be changed to “Budget and Planning Committee” twice (and capitalized once) in Section 1.8 and once in Appendix 6, section 5.1
- One reference to the “faculty senate affairs committee” and another reference to the “faculty senate faculty affairs committee” (both in Section 8.3) to be changed to “Faculty Senate Faculty Affairs Committee”
- In Section 3.12.1, one reference to “Faculty Senate” should be changed to “Faculty Senate Appeals Committee.”
- References to “Faculty Senate Faculty Affairs Committee” should be changed to “Faculty Senate Appeals Committee” in Section 3.12.1 and 3.12.1.1; in Appendix 6, section 5.1; in Appendix 6, section 9.2 (and in footnote five to this section); and in Appendix 6, section 10.
- One reference to “faculty senate appeals committee” should be changed to “Faculty Senate Faculty Affairs Committee” in Section 5.4.3.
- References to the “Education Policy Committee” (eliminated by Faculty Senate in March 2005) should be deleted from Sections 1.6 and 1.8.

In the *Manual for Faculty Evaluation*, “Faculty Senate Executive Committee” needs to be changed to “Faculty Senate Executive Council” once in the Introduction.

S. Thomas also noted that “Faculty Senate Executive Committee” appears four times in Appendix C, but Appendix C is quoting a Board of Trustees policy, so that policy

should be amended first. There is also one reference to the “Executive Committee” in BEST PRACTICES FOR ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW OF FACULTY TEACHING, but in this case the name is historically correct, since it reflects an action taken in 2006. Similarly, there is one reference to the “Professional Development Committee” (now the “Benefits and Professional Development Committee”) in the statement BEST PRACTICES FOR FACULTY-TO-FACULTY MENTORING (Last Revised by Faculty Affairs on May 1, 2006). Again, this usage is historically correct. Likewise, two references to the “Teaching Council” (now the “Teaching and Learning Council”) in BEST PRACTICES FOR ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW OF FACULTY TEACHING are historically correct.

The committee accepted the changes outlined by common consent. S. Thomas agreed to produce a revised version with all the needed changes in one document.

F. Departmental Budgets: Balancing the Roles of the Dean and the Department

By common consent, this issue was postponed until the next committee meeting.

Adjournment

S. Thomas will poll the committee for the next meeting date and time.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carla Sommardahl