

Faculty Senate Executive Council
MINUTES
November 7, 2011

Present: Vincent Anfara, Jimmy Cheek, Phillip Daves, JoAnne Deeken, Scott Gilpatric, Lee Han, Joan Heminway, Greg Kaplan, Beauvais Lyons, Susan Martin, Carole Myers, Stefanie Ohnesorg, David Patterson, Lloyd Reinhart, Anne Taylor, Steve Thomas

Guests: Sarah Gardial, Kelli McCormack-Brown

I. CALL TO ORDER

V. Anfara called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

II. REVIEW OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the minutes of the October 3, 2011, meeting was made by S. Thomas and seconded by acclamation. Thomas asked the minutes be amended by changing the 5th line of the Provost's report to read "There is money to allow a 10% increase in pay for adjunct professors who are appointed." Minutes approved as amended.

III. REPORTS

President's Report (V. Anfara)

Dave Hart, new Vice Chancellor/Director of Athletics will speak at the November Senate meeting.

Anfara met with the Faculty Ombudsperson, Bill Nugent (Professor of Social Work). He and Elaine Wynn (Staff Ombudsperson) will speak at a Senate meeting in the Spring semester.

ABET, the Engineering Accreditation Group, is currently on campus.

Problems with the SAIS are being worked on by Erik Bledsoe, Elizabeth Pemberton, Greg Kaplan, and others with the Teaching and Learning Center.

Provost Martin and B. Lyons were thanked for the recent Mic/Nite. Lyons acknowledged the support of S. Gardial for the event. Anfara learned a lot about research at UTK. Approximately 200 people attended, 150 of whom actually returned the RSVP. Valarium did not make enough money to cover their expenses. The next Mic/Nite is scheduled for March 7. It cost a relatively small amount (approx. \$2,500) to host the event, but we may have to pay more for the next event. The Senate donated 3 door prizes.

S. Gardial was thanked for arranging the Faculty Pub. It will be held every Thursday evening from 4-7 at the Bridgeview Grille this semester.

Anfara thanked the NAPA group who attended the UT strategic planning sessions held last month.

Anfara introduced Kelli McCormack-Brown. Dr. McCormack-Brown is an American Council of Education Fellow. Both Anfara and Dixie Thompson know her. She is here for a 12 week period to work with the Chancellor on the Graduate School and its tuition.

C. Plaut has resigned from the Senate Executive Council. S. Gilpatric has replaced him as Chair of the Senate Budget and Planning Committee. D. Patterson was welcomed to the Executive Committee as the UTK representative to UT Faculty Senates.

Chancellor's Report (J. Cheek)

The Chancellor had 3 topics to discuss with the Executive Council:

1. Fifteen of the Haslam Scholars met with the Board of Trustees over a lunch. J. Cheek was impressed both with their plans and what they had already achieved. A Haslam Scholar made a presentation to the Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee of the Board of Trustees.
2. *CIRE*. There are currently 19 students in the interdisciplinary program. All are very talented. Approximately 45 students were interviewed, 28 were invited into the program and 19 accepted. In the group, the average GRE score was 1400; there was one who had a perfect score. The students came because the program was interdisciplinary. They are excited to be here. The plan is to target 25 for the next class.

With Board approval, the CIRE program has been named in honor of Gov. Phil Bredesen. Gov. Bredesen plans to come back to campus once or twice a year. He is very impressed with the students.

3. *Priorities for capital improvement* (handout is available on the Senate website). Our most limiting factor is the amount and quality of space on the campus. Using THEC calculations, UTK is almost 1 million square feet short of what we need. We have almost \$200 million in deferred maintenance.

UTK has imposed a new academic building and maintenance and renovation fee of \$200 per student. That fund will bring us approximately \$5 million per year. That fee is relatively small. Rutgers charges \$500 per semester. The State of Tennessee will have no money for new buildings for at least 2-3 years.

The Governor is committed to explore bonding as a way to leverage money for new buildings. Bank rates are extremely low at 4-4.5%. Ohio State is selling 100 year bonds for less than 4%. We should be able to bond up to \$1.5 billion. UTK should be able to contribute 25% of the debt service by increasing the building fee. That money will be used for the identified priorities. (See the handout on the Senate website for details on those priorities.) If the state sold \$1 billion in bonds, the debt service paid by the State would be \$58 million, assuming UTK covers 25%.

The handout lists the current priorities. These may change over time. There may be additions to the list. For this year, there is \$9 million available: \$5 million from students and \$4 million the campus has saved up. All the figures on the chart are in current dollars. They will inflate over time. This is a good time to borrow and build. Current construction was estimated at \$38 million, but is costing \$27 million.

ABET is currently on campus for accrediting Engineering. They looked at Ayres and Min Kao and were impressed. They thought the buildings were great. They also saw Estabrook. The Chancellor hopes to get 1-2 new buildings started this year. The coal fueled steam plant will be replaced with a gas generated one. There was no way to make biofuels an efficient option. There is no space for the large number of trucks or for storage of the biofuels. As it is, there will be problems with the large amount of gasoline needed for the new plant. It will have to come under the river. Work on the steam plant may have to be delayed since all building projects this year will be tied to the Complete College Tennessee Act. If we proceed with the project, it will have to come from existing funds. The campus is already out of compliance with the Clean Air Act. We are one of the worst polluters in the County.

Lyons suggested that one way to grow the number of graduate degrees awarded would be to consider all graduate students to be in-state students. The out-of-state tuition is an obstacle that could be removed. We are losing real money when graduate students attend another school instead of paying out of state tuition. Dr. Cheek replied that there is a mechanism to apply for a waiver. He can't automatically make everyone "in-state." We can't accept more grad students with less money.

The Administration is examining a possible out-of-state tuition hike for undergraduates. They are looking at many options with a \$60 million cut and the need to keep the campus running. The Law School is losing students who go to other schools that offer them in-state tuition. There is a state law that says in-state tuition cannot be offered to people who move to the state solely to attend college.

Provost's Report (S. Martin)

Dr. Martin's office is working on a communication plan for SAIS. They are concerned that the SAIS return rate will remain low if they do nothing. They have talked to many people on the issue. Media Relations is putting together a plan. The process will begin in November with a presentation to SGA and the Provost's Advisory Council. Students will receive information explaining what the campus does with the data and why it is important to complete the evaluations. SAIS is not sufficient, but it is necessary. Completing the forms benefits the students. There will be information in *Tennessee Today*. Students will know we take the process seriously. Information will go out multiple times through different media and with different messages. Resident assistants will promote SAIS. There will be an event in the Library where the students can complete their evaluations. Those who do complete them will be eligible for a drawing for a couple of iPads.

Messages will go out from the Provost and the Faculty Senate President on how important completing the forms is. There will be no extra credit allowed for completing the forms. The Administration is firmly against that option.

The faculty will be asked to try to make time available in class for students to complete their evaluations. They can be done on laptops. They hope to have them available through other devices. They would like the process to be as close as possible to the paper process. Faculty members will be able to see how many evaluations are completed. They could remind their students based on that knowledge. Putting a note in the syllabus would be another idea. They

are working on all kinds of communication to both faculty and students. Everyone should be informed that a better response rate leads to better validity. The SAIS system will be open for a couple of weeks, but will be shut down before grades are announced.

SAIS isn't perfect and shouldn't be the only form of evaluation of teaching. The Deans are looking into peer evaluation of teaching. They are looking for a more fully documented and balanced view of each professor. There may be a task force established to work on the issue. Please contact the Provost if you are interested and willing to work on the idea of peer evaluation.

L. Han said some faculty members have told him that the SAIS system is not recording information correctly. These faculty members have asked students how they rated him/her and the SAIS didn't have the same information. He also said the scores should be looked at in context with the grade distribution. He suggested a system similar to figure skating where the highest and the lowest ratings are discarded in rating. The Provost responded that most DDH understand grades are only one part of the picture. For example, a professor teaching an 8 a.m. biology class will never receive stellar ratings. They look for outliers and areas of concern in the responses.

J. Heminway said most DDH read the SAIS reports for specific things such as outliers, categories. They know enough to ignore comments such as "there is too much work in this class." But junior faculty may not understand which responses are important. Perhaps mentors can help with this. Junior faculty should not overreact to some negative comments and end up making their teaching worse. For P&T, she'd like to see some drilling down and perhaps see what type of class or peer evaluation could help the faculty. It is hurtful at first to be told they are not good. There are ways we can evaluate teaching better than what we currently do.

Anfara thanked the Provost for supporting SAIS and working to get what is needed.

S. Gardial asked for the Senate's support. There is no indication of support for peer evaluation and it appears to violate the *Faculty Manual*. The summer is not a good time for discussing the metrics of evaluation with most professors gone. L. Rinehart of the Teaching and Learning Council said his committee would be looking at peer evaluation data collected on campus during the Spring 2010. They won't be making strong recommendations like a change to the *Faculty Manual*, but they are taking a high level look. They got a wide variation of responses to questions. Lyons said that he wasn't on that task force, but RJ Hinde was. Hinde reported there was a lack of clarity on how the peer review team would be selected. A suggestion was that the person under review chooses one reviewer, the department head chooses another and the third member would be selected by the other two members.

The next DDH meeting will be in August. All are encouraged to send ideas to Gardial and to Anfara between now and August. Heminway got the Peer Review of Teaching document in 2010 and sent it to Lyons. She was told that Thomas had it on hold for the Faculty Affairs committee. The report of the committee is found on the Provost's web site, <http://provost.utk.edu/docs/misc/peer-review-guide.pdf>.

Anfara said he had been contacted by a faculty member saying a department was being asked to implement the best practices outlined in the report. A number of issues were raised. The

Teaching and Learning Center isn't listed on the document. There is no indication of origin on the report. There are two dates on the report: May 2010 and July 25, 2010. He asked that the document be marked as a resource and not appear as a document to be implemented. Gardial said the DH can do what s/he wishes regarding implementation as long as it does not violate the *Faculty Manual*. Lyons said he had 3 problems with the report: 1) Appropriation of control; 2) Grading. He could not remember the third issue. Lyons said the document was very prescriptive. The Art Department is very involved in peer review of teaching. Some junior faculty need improvement, but many times the junior faculty have new ideas to give to the senior faculty. Their peer review is a good exchange of ideas and it creates a culture of discourse on teaching. The current document is like going to the dark side and killing that culture.

Heminway suggested the document be reviewed as a "Best Practices" document rather than placing in the *Manual of Faculty Evaluation*. The document could be looked at in context with the *Handbook* and then brought to the Executive Council and finally to the Senate.

P. Daves said the document should go first to the Teaching and Learning Council to vet and ensure it makes sense. From there it would go to the Senate Executive Council, to Faculty Affairs to consider for placement in the *Manual*, then back to the Executive Council, and finally to the Senate for a vote. Every faculty member is required to have peer review of teaching for promotion and tenures. There should be a process in the *By-Laws*.

He then moved to refer the document to the Teaching and Learning Council. Rinehart wants to vet it as it is. Gardial said that while the document is under review, the Provost's office would add a few sentences to the posted document saying it was under review by the Faculty Senate.

Daves and Thomas attended a meeting in Murfreesboro on a system-wide *Faculty Handbook* resolution on Oct. 13-14. K. High and I. Lane were there as well as representatives for the Faculty Affairs Committees of UTK, UTC, UT Martin, and the Health Sciences Center and the Office of the General Counsel. Lane and High want to be enablers and not nay-sayers in the process of getting resolutions to the President. Lane was surprised to learn why everything has to go to the Office of the General Counsel and not directly to the President. The State of Tennessee has granted directly to the Board of Trustees the responsibility to modify employment terms of all University employees. UTK does NOT have the right to modify contracts with their employees. Anything that we propose that could modify our contracts MUST be approved by the Board. The Office of the General Counsel is very conservative. They are looking at what is good for UT and the State. They are sensitive to the fact they are often perceived as "just saying no." Currently, there is no well-defined way for campuses to propose changes to the Board which would affect the System as a whole. The Board, for instance, doesn't allow as much freedom of speech as other UT universities as they do for UTK. Lane wants to find a way to change this process with UTK. She would like to see if there is a way that proposals passed by UTK can be shared with the System as they are approved. Currently, we don't have the autonomy that Lane expected.

Thomas went to the meeting expecting everything to be the same at every campus. The distinction is in the legal office. If the Board says the *Handbook* or the *Manual* must have policy or situation x must be handled a certain way, that situation or policy goes into effect.

Everything must be approved by the President or the Board. Gardial says that right now the *Manual* is not modified in the same way as the *Handbook*. These include little details that should be aligned and taken to the Board.

Anfara stated that the November Senate meeting has very little business. The various Senate committees need to get their work done and resolutions processed earlier than they have in past years. He is asking each committee to make a report on progress at the next few Executive Council meetings. The Athletics and the Benefits and Professional Development Committees were asked to report at this Executive Council meeting.

J. Koontz from the Athletics Committee was unable to attend.

A. Taylor from the Benefits and Professional Development Committee reported they were working on extending benefits to domestic partners. They are attempting to put their proposal in the context of the Top 25. Anfara said this was not an easy policy to get approved. There have been many conversations on the topic. The Committee wants a formal trial. Anfara says from his many conversations, everyone agrees granting benefits is the right thing to do. He is getting the impression that state law prevents state money going to support domestic partners. Our role is to propose what SHOULD be done. Heminway says the issue is both a legal and a political issue.

Anfara spoke on the Employee Engagement Survey. The survey has only limited options for race and gender. Anfara got the 10 emailed votes from Executive Council members to sign the letter asking for additional choices for these categories. It was supported by many Commissions on campus as well as the Senate Executive Council.

Anfara thanked everyone for their hard work. There are only a few Senate meetings left. After the November meeting, the Senate will not meet until February. The Executive Council needs to decide what we want to accomplish this year and move it forward.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

P. Daves moved to adjourn. There were multiple simultaneous seconds. The Council adjourned at approximately 5 p.m.