

Faculty Senate Executive Council
MINUTES
January 14, 2013

Members Present: Steve Thomas, Fritz Polite, Vincent Anfara, Ralph Brockett, Guoxun Chen, Chris Cimino, Phillip Daves, David Golden, Scott Gilpatric, Tina Shepardson (for Lee Han), John Koontz, Bruce MacLennan, Susan Martin, David Mathews, Steven Milewski, David Patterson, Lloyd Rinehart

I. CALL TO ORDER

S. Thomas called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS

President's Report (S. Thomas)

- Welcomed Tina Shepardson, representing the Research Council in the place of Lee Han.
- Noted with sadness the passing on December 25, 2012, of Robert W. Glenn, a former Faculty Senate president and professor of Speech and Communication who retired from UT in 2010.
- Newly-elected, non-tenure-track senators have now been appointed to Senate committees and councils. In making some of these appointments, the number of appointed members specified with the Senate's *Bylaws* was ignored.
- No further communication had been received concerning the promotion of the revised code of conduct.
- Based on discussion with Academic Affairs and Student Success staff and faculty representatives from all UT campus during an October 2011 "Handbook Retreat," an electronic tracking system for faculty handbook revisions has been developed by system IT staff. P. Daves and S. Thomas will be receiving more information on this system later this week. This new tool will not change the process for handling proposals for revisions within the Senate, but it should improve tracking such proposals after they leave the Senate.
- Shared an assignment, received in connection with the Chancellor's Work Culture Task Force, to solicit suggestions for improving communications within share governance. Any comments on this topic are welcomed.
- At a meeting earlier today, hosted by Chancellor Cheek and attended by a dozen faculty members, discussions had taken place on the relationship of athletics and academics on this campus, with a focus on budgeting concerns.
- Acknowledged receipt of a letter from Chancellors Cheek and Arrington addressing the Senate's resolution in support of benefits equality. This letter will be presented for discussion at the next Faculty Senate meeting.

Chancellor's Report (J. Cheek)

- The Complete College Tennessee Act of 2010 called for a new funding formula for higher education institutions incorporating outcome-based criteria rather than enrollment. This year, UTK should see positive results from these changes in the funding model. Our message to the Governor Haslam is to fund the formula!
- Raises in salaries remain a top priority.
- A task force is exploring ways to better utilize facilities and faculty during the summer term. Increasing enrollment over time during the summer term should allow better rewards for faculty and colleges once fix-costs are met.

- Currently, in-state students represent about 90 percent of our undergraduate enrollment. We would like to retain the current number of in-state students while increasing total undergraduate enrollment to about 21,500 students by increasing the portion of this figure represented by out-of-state and international students.
- Building needs and deferred maintenance are still high priorities, too.
- One means of improving faculty salaries has been to target development funds to support chairs and professorships. Over the past 18 months, 28 such positions have been funded in the amount of approximately six million dollars. We want to make this program the number one priority for donors.
- In response to a question, J. Cheek noted that the Take-15-Get-Out-in-4 program will be effective for students entering the university beginning August 2013. Annual increases in tuition will be limited to three percent for the four-year period.
- In response to a second question, S. Martin replied that the average class load is now 14.6 hours. However, there is general realization that more is involved than simply raising that average load. S. McMillian has been overseeing the Strategic Instruction Fund in an effort to eliminate bottleneck courses that prevent students from completing programs on schedule. A report of the working group should be ready by mid-February.

Provost's Report (S. Martin)

- Consideration was given to a memorandum from Catherine Mizell concerning a draft proposal for a Board of Trustees Policy on Programs for Minors. In its present form, the document is a "confidential and privileged" communication from the Office of General Counsel. It was distributed via e-mail to the Executive Council members for their review prior to this meeting, rather than being posted on the Senate's website. Questions about the purpose and content of the policy as well as suggestions for revisions were received by the Provost and will be returned to the Office of General Counsel for possible inclusion in the next draft.
- The Office of Academic Affairs and Student Success and the Office of General Counsel are proposing a change to board policy regarding the performance evaluation of faculty, to allow an approved alternative to the currently specified four-point evaluation scale. (UTK has been testing a five-point scale for several years.) A resolution in support of this change needs to be presented to the Senate for consideration at its February meeting, if we want this issue to be discussed at the next meeting of the Board of Trustees. Assuming the desire to continue to use a five-point evaluation scale, a resolution will also be needed to (a) specific in the *Faculty Handbook* how this five-point scale articulates with the board-defined four-point scale and (b) change sections in the *Manual for Faculty Evaluation* that refer to the four-point scale to instead refer to the five-point scale. As there seemed to be general consensus supporting both these proposals, S. Thomas agreed to work with P. Daves to draft the necessary resolutions to present to the Senate as having support, in principle, from the Executive Council.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

S. Thomas asked for corrections or additions to the minutes for the Faculty Senate Executive Council meeting of November 5, 2012. Hearing no requests for changes, Thomas stated that the minutes would be accepted as presented by common consent.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Courses Not Taught in Four Years (S. Thomas)

S. Thomas reported receiving a communication from M. Theriot indicating that the Undergraduate Council's Academic Policy Committee had addressed this issue in December and hoped to have a draft proposal ready for that committee's next meeting. Thomas expressed the hope that the Graduate Council and Undergraduate Council might make a joint proposal in near future.

Faculty Salary Resolution (S. Gilpatric)

S. Gilpatric reported that the Budget and Planning Committee had revised its recommendation on faculty salaries, based on the discussion during the Executive Council's November meeting. After brief discussion, approval was given to present this resolution at the next Senate meeting.

V. NEW BUSINESS

Code of Conduct (P. Daves)

As directed by a motion at the November Senate meeting, the Faculty Affairs Committee had reviewed the newly revised Code of Conduct (HR0580). The committee's response (in the form of a document with several questions and comments about the content of HR0580) had been distributed in advance of today's meeting. S. Thomas noted that, since the committee's response had been requested by a motion from the floor of the Senate, the proper course was to now present the document for discussion by the Senate. This suggestion was accepted by common consent.

Peer Review of Teaching (V. Anfara)

Concerns were expressed again about the "Peer Evaluation of Teaching Guide" prepared by the Tennessee Teaching and Learning Center and currently posted on that body's website, as well as on the Provost's website. This document now contains a statement that the guide is "under review by the Faculty Senate" rather than "approved." Even that statement is misleading because the review has been completed, recommendations for revisions have been submitted to the document's authors, and those recommendations have been ignored. At this point, the Faculty Affairs Committee has no plans to recommend approval of the guide. The issue has arisen again because an associate dean has unilaterally implemented use of the guide without consulting that college's faculty. It was noted that the bylaws of the college should specify the evaluation process to be followed. The faculty should have a voice in the revision of those bylaws.

Teaching and Learning Council (L. Rinehart)

As a point of information, L. Rinehart reported that the Teaching and Learning Council had received approximately 100 nominations for a limited number of academic awards. J. Koontz suggested that another way to recognize some of these individuals might be to establish an "educator of the month" position that could be promoted across the campus. V. Anfara agreed that such action might help change the culture on this campus and promote the value of excellent teaching.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment was moved and seconded. The meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.