

Faculty Senate Executive Council
MINUTES
March 18, 2013

Present: Steve Thomas, David Golden, Fritz Polite, Stefanie Ohnesorg, Ralph Brockett, Guoxun Chen, Phillip Daves, Scott Gilpatric, John Koontz, Bruce MacLennan, Susan Martin, David Matthews, David Patterson, Lloyd Rinehart, Matthew Theriot

Guests: John Zomchick

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)

- February 27th through March 1st, attended meetings of the University of Tennessee Faculty Council and the Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee, both held in conjunction with meeting of the Board of Trustees in Chattanooga. At that Board meeting, a resolution supporting an alternative to the Board-prescribed four-point evaluation scale for faculty performance reviews and a related resolution amending the *Faculty Handbook* describing a five-point scale for this review were both passed by the Board.
- March 7th, along with P. Daves and D. Golden, met with the Non-Tenure Track Faculty Advisory Group regarding how some best practice statements in the *Resources Manual* could be made more inclusive by adding clinical and research faculty.
- March 22nd through 24th, will be attending the spring meeting of the Tennessee University Faculty Senates (TUFS) being hosted by Tennessee Tech in Cookeville. It may be our turn to host the next TUFS meeting in August 2013.

Chancellor's Report (J. Cheek)

- The governor's proposed budget may be the best one we have seen in six years.
 - The funding from the new performance-based formula will yield about \$7.4 million of new money.
 - There is also funding for the state's 55-percent share of a proposed 1.5 percent salary increase. However, our goal is to fund additional, merit increases as in the past two years.
 - It also includes \$24 million (one-time money) for conversion of the steam plant from coal to natural gas. This change is being driven by stricter EPA guidelines. [In response to a question from S. Gilpatric, it was noted that we have a three-year timeframe to have work completed to meet these new requirements.]
 - There is \$6 million for deferred maintenance.
 - There is no new building in this budget; however, we hope to see a new science lab in the next round.
- Our plan to hold tuition increase to a maximum of 6 percent this year.
- Results of recent CPA exam indicate we are in the top 5 percent of the nation.
- Recommendations have been received from the Greek Life Task Force and the final report has been received from the Summer Term Task Force.
- There has been some negative publicity concerning the Sex Week programing being promoted by a student group. The coverage by at least one news channel was not very well balanced. At least one state senator is concerned about the use of state money. While we strongly support the students' right to form clubs, to bring speakers to campus without approval of administration, and to apply for funds from student activity fees, the funds contributed by

academic units are considered state dollars. This is a difficult situation that we will have to work our way through. Any advice would be appreciated.

Provost's Report (S. Martin)

- The Student Evaluation of Teaching Task Force has submitted its report, which will be reviewed and discussed by staff within the Provost's Office this week. More information should be available at next meeting.
- Searches are underway for three director positions: the Chancellor's Honors Program; the Thornton Center; and Online Programs.
- Special thanks are due to R. Brockett and the members of the Honorary Degree Nominating Committee for excellent work this year.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

S. Thomas asked for corrections or additions to the minutes of the Executive Council meeting of February 18, 2013. As no changes were suggested, the minutes were approved as distributed by common consent.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Courses Not Taught in Four Years (S. Thomas)

S. Thomas noted that this issue has been pending since at least the February 20, 2012, Executive Council meeting, when it was mentioned in the President's Report by V. Anfara. The Graduate Council and Undergraduate Councils have each adopted new policy statements on this matter (see Graduate Council Minutes for April 12, 2012, page G1949 and Undergraduate Council Minutes for February 26, 2013, pages U2734-2735). By common consent, these statements were deemed to resolve the issue raised in February 2012.

Policy for Programs for Minors (S. Thomas)

An earlier version of this proposal for a Board of Trustee's policy had been considered during the January meeting. The Chancellor's Office had provided a revised version for additional comments. During brief discussion, it was noted that both this "clean" version and an edit-tracked version were available. The latter will be distributed for review as well. Deadline for comments to the Chancellor's Office is April 1, 2013.

Benefits and Professional Development Committee: Response to Chancellors' Letter (S. Thomas)

As requested by the Senate during the meeting on March 8, 2013, the committee has revised the draft response to the January 10, 2013, letter from Chancellors Cheek and Arrington concerning the Senate resolution in support of benefits equality. S. Milewski presented the revised version for comment. By common consent, it will be presented for review at the next Senate meeting.

V. NEW BUSINESS

Resolutions of Faculty Affairs Committee (P. Daves)

(a) Removing Appendices from *Faculty Handbook*

P. Daves noted that the current appendices of the *Faculty Handbook* are (as described in the introductory paragraph to that section) "administrative policies approved by the Chancellor of The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. They are not approved by the Board of Trustees, are not legally binding upon The University of Tennessee, and are superseded by any policies of the Board of Trustees with which they may conflict." It was noted that these policies date back to the 1986 edition of the *Faculty Handbook*. At that time, their presence in the handbook was an easy method to disseminate these policy statements; today, this function is more easily accomplished through the university's website. Since these policies are not approved by either the faculty or the Board of

Trustees, the committee's recommendation is to remove them from the handbook. This recommendation was accepted by common consent for action by the Senate.

(b) Proposed *Faculty Handbook* and *Manual for Faculty Evaluation* Changes to Implement a Performance Incentive Plan for Professors

P. Daves noted that changes being recommended in this resolution were based on a proposal prepared by an ad hoc committee formed during the fall of 2012. That committee's report had been reviewed and revised by the Council of Deans, the Provost and the Chancellor before being presented to the Faculty Affairs Committee by J. Zomchick. The purpose of the proposal is to formalize procedures to reward professors who have maintained outstanding performance over a seven-year period, either since promotion to rank or since last consideration under this plan.

During discussion, it was noted that careful implementation would be needed to insure fairness of treatment, year by year. The raises provided would need to be consistent, predictable, and meaningful. S. Martin noted that the intention is to fund these raises from the promotion pool. J. Koontz suggested that the option of a fixed percentage increase or a minimum, fixed amount might be considered as a way to address different salary levels across disciplines.

The resolution of the Faculty Affairs Committee was accepted by common consent for presentation to the Senate.

Resolution to Amend Senate Bylaws (S. Thomas)

S. Thomas noted that Article II, Section 3 of the Senate's Bylaws indicates that "the third Monday in January shall be reserved for a meeting, to be used if deemed necessary by the Faculty Senate President or Executive Council." As the third Monday in January is a university holiday, it would be difficult to call a meeting for that day. He recommended changing this section to read as "the second Monday of January" This proposal was also accepted by common consent for action by the Senate.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:13 p.m.