

Faculty Senate
MINUTES
February 4, 2013

Absent: Vincent An fara, Itamar Arel, Rob Blitt, Stan Bowie, Marianne Breinig, Jason Brown*, Feng Chen, Guoxun Chen, Chris Cimino, Michael Clark, Jim Conant, Paul Crilly, Ruth Darling*, Lt. Col. Brian Delamater, Seddik Djouadi, Ian Down, David Dupper, Gerd Duscher, Jerzy Dydak, Alberto Garcia, Matthew Gray, Martin Griffin, Howard Grower, John Haas, Joanne Hall, Federico Harte, Noriko Horiguchi, Baoshan Huang, Wonjae Hwang, Becky Jacobs, Ron Kalafsky, Ramki Kalyanaraman, Kurt Lamour, Fritz Polite, Tulio Prado, Susan Ratliff, Jennifer Richards, W. Tim Rogers, Fernando Schwartz, Curtis Stewart, Adam Taylor, Matthew Theriot, Ahmad Vakili, Christian Vossler, Jeanine Williamson*, Kenton Yeager

*Alternates: Anton Reece for Ruth Darling, Anthony Welch for Jason Brown, Margaret Casado for Jeanine Williamson

CALL TO ORDER

S. Thomas called the meeting to order at 3:34 p.m., noting that a quorum was now present.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Senate President's Report (S. Thomas)

- Acknowledged, with appreciation, J. Fowler's service as secretary pro temp.
- Senate members were reminded to use their nameplates (to facilitate proper recording of attendance) and to avoid sitting in the "visitors' gallery" (to facilitate debating and voting).
- Announcement was made that Robert Glenn, former Senate President (2000-2001) had passed away.
- New Senators elected by non-tenure-track faculty have been assigned to Senate committees or councils. In some cases, these committees or councils may have more members than specified within the Senate's *Bylaws*.
- No news has been received concerning the promotion of the Code of Conduct, but a report from the Faculty Affairs Committee will be received later during this meeting.
- An electronic tracking system for *Faculty Handbook* revisions has been developed by system IT staff. 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.
- Acknowledged receipt of a second letter from Chancellors Cheek and Arrington addressing the resolution in support of benefits equality. This letter will be a topic of discussion later during this meeting.

Chancellor's Report (J. Cheek)

- The budget outlined in the Governor's State of the State address is the best budget for the university in several years. It is the first budget in recent years without any cuts to UTK; this year's \$154 million budget will increase to approximately \$175 million, mostly due to the new funding formula (in the Complete College Tennessee Act) that awards state colleges and schools based on performance.
- A 1.5% salary increase is planned; if approved, 55 percent will be funded by the state, as in the last two years.
- Local businessman Randy Boyd, CEO of Radio Systems, had been named by Governor Haslam as a "special advisor to the governor for higher education." Mr. Boyd is a Knoxville entrepreneur, UT graduate and donor to UT. He will be on campus for the next year with an office in the Library.

- As of this year, the UT Steam Plant has three years to comply with EPA standards. The steam plant will be retrofitted to convert from coal-powered to natural gas, and will generate both steam and electricity. The state budget will provide for \$24 million for the conversion.
- The governor's budget also contains \$6 million for deferred maintenance on campus buildings.

The Chancellor then offered to take questions.

- Concerning the benefits equality resolution, will the university continue to lobby for change, or try to offer benefits other than healthcare, or find another way (other than state funding) to provide healthcare benefits? Answer: The Board of Trustees and /or the General Assembly must approve any proposal for such benefit changes. There is no way seen to be able to move forward with any such proposal at this time.
- The University of Florida did pass some similar benefits in 2006. Could Dr. Cheek elaborate on that process? Answer: I am very familiar with the changes that were made there and would be happy to meet with individual faculty to discuss this matter on a one-on-one basis, but not in this venue.
- In light of our VolVision/Top 25 aspirations, it seems that UT is behind in offering these types of benefits to our employees. How do you respond? Answer: Virginia, Virginia Tech, Texas A&M, and Georgia are all examples of top 25 universities that do not offer such benefits. There has been much time and discussion given to this issue, but in the end there was just no way to move forward with this issue at this time.
- What does "no way to move forward" mean? Answer: The low probability of support by the Board of Trustees and the General Assembly combined with the likely impact on other goals that the university is trying to pursue block further actions.
- Why did we have to wait four months for a more specific answer regarding the reasons for not pursuing benefits? Answer: Discussions continued between the two letters and those discussions took time.
- The second letter refers to Tennessee Codes and the Tennessee Constitution that refer to definitions of marriage. What about partnerships that are not defined as legal marriage? Answer: The Office of General Counsel composed the legal response in the letter, so faculty are referred to them for further information.

Provost's Report (S. Martin)

- Update on pending searches:
 - Director of Chancellor's Honors Program: four candidates are being interviewed; the committee requests faculty feedback on these candidates.
 - Director of Thornton Center: candidate visits are scheduled for late February and March. Faculty input is requested.
- Academic planning meetings are in process. An update will be given at the next meeting. Senate Budget and Planning committee will be included in future meetings.
- The Strategic Institutional Fund is being used to meet critical needs in instruction, through the hiring of both lecturers and tenure-track faculty. Sally McMillan is leading the planning for the new 15 credit hours per semester/4 year requirement for all freshman for next year, to make sure that there are enough courses available to meet the requirements.

There were no questions.

MINUTES

Faculty Senate Minutes

S. Thomas asked for corrections or additions to the minutes of the Faculty Senate meeting on November 19, 2012. When no changes were suggested, S. Gilpatric moved that the minutes be approved as presented; J. Koontz offered a second to the motion, which passed by voice vote.

Faculty Senate Executive Council

S. Thomas noted that the minutes from the Faculty Senate Executive Council meetings of November 5, 2012, and January 14, 2013, were available for review on the Senate's website.

MINUTES POSTED ELECTRONICALLY

Graduate Council (R. Brockett)

R. Brockett provided a summary of the minutes of the Graduate Council meeting of November 1, 2012. A "credit hour" definition is under review by the Academic Policy Committees of the Graduate Council and Undergraduate Council. A version approved by the Undergraduate Council APC will be considered by the Graduate Council APC. A policy on English Language Proficiency Conditional Admission for graduate international students who need intensive English language instruction was approved by the Graduate Council, effective Fall 2012. There was also the announcement of support of the Graduate Student Senate of the annual "Love your Library" fun run to be held on March 2 at 9 am.

S. Thomas noted that, as the motion to approve these minutes comes from a committee, no second was needed. The minutes were approved by voice vote.

PREVIOUS BUSINESS

Letter from Chancellors Cheek and Arrington Concerning Resolution on Support for Benefit Equality

S. Thomas noted that a second letter from Chancellors Cheek and Arrington, in response to the Senate's resolution in support for benefit equality, had been posted on the Senate's website and some questions on this issue had already been addressed by Chancellor Cheek. He asked if there was further discussion on the issue. C. Shepardson asked whether the Benefits and Professional Development Committee had plans to respond to this letter. The committee chair, S. Milewski, responded that the committee was scheduled to meet on the following day and could discuss the issue at that time. N. Mertz moved that the Benefits and Professional Development Committee frame a response to the Chancellors' letter regarding benefit equality and Chancellor Cheek's comments received today. S. Hudson provided a seconded. The motion passed on voice vote, with one abstention noted.

Employee Code of Conduct: Response of Faculty Affairs Committee

S. Thomas noted that, in response to a motion made during the November meeting, the Faculty Affairs Committee had reviewed the Code of Conduct and had provided comments via an annotated copy of that document. N. Mertz moved that discussion of this matter be postponed until the March meeting, to allow more time to review the committee's work. P. Carter-Zagorski provided a second to the motion. The motion passed by voice vote.

NEW BUSINESS

Campus Disability Advocates (L. Lee)

President-elect D. Golden introduced our guest speaker, Lindsay Lee, who is the president of Campus Disability Advocates. Ms. Lee then introduced the other three CDA officers: Allison Gose (vice-president), Kathleen Connelly (secretary), and Hunter McKnight (treasurer). These individuals reviewed a PowerPoint presentation entitled "How to Include Students with Disabilities in your Classroom." Typical accommodations for students with disabilities were outlined. Questions were then taken.

- How can we disseminate this information to our colleagues? Are the student advocates available to present for pre-semester faculty meetings? Does the advocacy group help students who have not yet completed the Office of Disability Services approval process? Can faculty refer students to the group? Answers: Referrals are welcome. The presentation will be posted on the Senate

website. Contact lee26@utk.edu (Lindsay Lee) for more information, referrals, or to schedule a presentation.

- Is a disability statement required on all syllabi? Answer: Yes.
- Are students having any difficulties with regard to access during all the construction going on? Answer: No more than others. Facilities Services are very helpful and plans for an accessibility audit should occur in the near future.
- What term should be used instead of "hearing impaired"? Answer: "Hard of hearing".
- Is there any way that students can be encouraged to initiate the process of obtaining accommodations — make them aware that this will not be done for them? Answer: The Office of Disability Services presents this information during Freshman Orientation.

Budget and Planning Committee: Resolution Concerning Faculty Salaries (S. Gilpatric)

S. Gilpatric provided background on the resolution. While acknowledging the efforts of Governor Haslam, the UT Board of Trustees, President DiPietro, and Chancellor Cheek to fund significant salary increases during the last two years and noting that these increases had begun to reduce the salary gap between UTK and those institutions with which we compete for the talented faculty, the committee observed that these gains must be seen as only the first steps of a sustained effort to achieve annual growth that exceeds that of these other top institutions if we are to be successful in attracting and retaining such faculty. There are also some cases where, even with these increases, UTK salaries have not improved in relationship to peer institutions. He then offered to take questions.

- Will the committee study Non-Tenure-Track salaries in the future? Answer: Will bring it up at the next committee meeting.
- Will the committee study salary compression? Answer: Not sure how to go about this or if there is comparable data for peer institutions are available.
- Has the committee studied gender inequalities? Answer: Not yet.
- Can median salaries be used instead of averages? Answer: Comparable data for peer institutions are not available.

S. Thomas noted that, as the motion comes from a committee, no second is needed. The resolution was approved by voice vote.

Support for Board of Trustees Policy Revision (S. Thomas)

S. Thomas reported that the Office of Academic Affairs and Student Success and the Office of General Counsel have been preparing a proposal to change the Board of Trustee policy concerning the performance evaluation of faculty. This policy currently specifies a four-point evaluation, although UTK has been conducting a pilot test of a five-point scale for the past three years. The revised policy would allow the use of the five-point scale to continue indefinitely. When informed on February 4th that each Faculty Senate was being requested whether or not to support this change, the Faculty Senate Executive Council indicated its support and on the council's behalf S. Thomas had drafted the resolution that was being presented at this meeting.

During brief discussion, it was noted that the vote needed to be taken today, because the proposal to change the board policy is to be presented at the board meeting at the end of this month. We have no hard data, but, anecdotally, the five-point scale has been preferred because it allows an evaluator to distinguish performance that is *moderately* above expectations from performance that is *significantly* above expectations.

S. Thomas noted that the resolution, coming from the Executive Council, did not require a second. The resolution passed by voice vote.

Proposed Changes to *Faculty Handbook* and *Manual for Faculty Evaluation* (S. Thomas & P. Daves)
S. Thomas and P. Daves then introduced a resolution from the Faculty Affairs Committee that would make changes to the *Faculty Handbook* and the *Manual for Faculty Evaluation* to implement the use of the five-point evaluation scale for faculty performance, in the event that the board policy is changed as had been just discussed. Brief discussion followed.

S. Thomas noted that the resolution, coming from a committee, did not require a second. The resolution passed by voice vote.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment was moved and seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Fowler, Secretary Pro Temp