

Steve R. Thomas
Associate Professor, University Libraries
Candidate's Statement for Position as
Representative to the University of Tennessee System Faculty Council

Faculty Senate Meeting
May 5, 2013

As I recounted in a similar statement that I supplied three years ago, when standing as a candidate for the Faculty Senate's President-Elect, I have been a faculty member within the University Libraries for more than 30 years. Rather than repeat many of the details from that statement, let me focus on my service to the University at the campus level over just the past seven years.

- For two years (2007/08 and 2008/09), I was a member of the Faculty Senate Faculty Affairs Committee
- For two years (2009/10 and 2010/11), I served as Chair of the Faculty Affairs Committee and by virtue of that office as a member of the Faculty Senate Executive Council
- During the most recent three years (2011/12 through the present day), I have had the privilege of serving as the Faculty Senate's President-Elect, President, and now, Immediate Past President, also making me a member of the Faculty Senate Executive Council

My four years with the Faculty Affairs Committee provided me with new insights to and appreciation for our core documents the *Faculty Handbook* and the *Manual for Faculty Evaluation*. It is through the work of the Faculty Affairs Committee that we have the opportunity to revise (or, more accurately, to recommend the revision) of these documents to meet changing needs and circumstances.

My five years with the Faculty Senate Executive Council have given me a renewed appreciation and respect for the need for open and honest communication as a part of shared governance at all levels – within a single department, a college, the campus, or at the system level. As the Faculty Senate is our channel for communicating with campus administrators, so the University of Tennessee System Faculty Council is our primary means we have for sharing and discussing concerns that we have as faculty at the system level. Should I be elected to represent the faculty members of UTK, UTIA and UTSI within the Council, I promise to be open to hearing your concerns and to sharing those concerns to the best of my abilities.

I feel particularly fortunate that Candace White appears on this ballot with me. I know that whatever decision the senate makes, our faculty members will be well represented.