

FACULTY SENATE
Minutes
November 17, 2014

Absent: Benjamin Auerbach, Micah Beck, Marianne Breinig, Jason Brown, Barry Bruce, Margaret Casado, Christopher Cherry, Courtney Childers, Chris Cimino, Mark Collins*, Matthew Cooper, Mark Dean, Joanne Deeken, Ray Degennaro, Mary Derrington, Ian Down, Neal Eash, Jeff Fairbrother, Dan Flint, Jennifer Fowler, Alex Freire, Michael Fry, Iris Goodwin, John Haas, Denita Hadziabdic-Guerry, David Harper, Christy Hickman, Melissa Hines, Derek Hopko, Jacqueline Johnson, Mike Jones, Ramki Kalyanaraman, Dean Kopsell, Dayton Lambert, Lt. Col. Brian Lancaster, Bob Legg, Fran Li, Crystal McAlvin, Polly McArthur*, Angela McClure, Shelley Newman, Stephanie Noble, Agricola Odoi, Bonnie Ownley, Yonne Pelletier, Jessica Poore, Suzy Prentiss, Rebecca Prosser, Cindy Raines, Catherine Remus, Amadou Sall, Ragan Schriver, John Schwartz, Vandana Singh, Olya Smrkovski, Marlys Staudt, Dawnie Steadman, Paul Terry, Pedro Tomas, Micheline Van Riemsdijk, Forbes Walker, Micheline Westfall, Philip Ye, Kenton Yeager, Songning Zhang, Xiaopeng Zhao

*Alternates: Leigh Mutchler for Mark Collins, Lynn Blackburn for Polly McArthur

I. ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM (J. Poore)

It was established that we did not have a quorum.

II. CALL TO ORDER

J. Hall called the meeting to order at 3:33 pm.

III. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chancellor's Report (J. Cheek)

- Chancellor Cheek updated us on the journey to the top 25. We have made considerable progress since June 2010, seeing improvements in the 4- and 6-year graduation rates, 1st to 2nd year retention, research funding, and construction (most of which is not supported by state funds). We have made progress in faculty salaries. The Bredesen Center, offering an interdisciplinary Ph.D., has 103 students. Three have graduated and they anticipate adding 20-25 more students next year. Overall, the Chancellor feels we have good momentum.
- The Chancellor called our attention to an article in the Chronicle of Higher Education that links caring professors with thriving students. He re-iterated the importance of instruction.
- The Chancellor also screened a video related to the Trailblazer Award that UT has received from the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU) for our improvements in retention and graduation rates.

Provost's Report (S. Martin)

- Provost Martin updated us on the re-visiting of the Top 25 Vol Vision Plan that will start in January 2015. They will review metrics, assess the current situation, and engage campus constituencies on the topic. The committee will be charged by the end of this year—it will be similar to the one that operated when the plan was initially put together. It will feature strong faculty representation, as well as

student and staff input. Focus groups will play a role in securing input as well. They don't anticipate a complete revision, but instead a recalibration. They will examine the goals and progress toward them, perhaps changing a metric or two if they do not seem to be serving the goals. It should be finalized next fall. She assured us that the Senate will be involved every step of the way.

- There is a task force charged by the Provost to look into how we schedule our space around campus. It has looked at campus scheduling policies and procedures. Having met over the summer, they have issued a report with several recommendations.
 - Implement a single scheduling tool for all spaces on campus. This will be done by a task force chaired by Jennifer Hardy in the office of the Registrar, and will feature Ad Astra.
 - Move to a more holistic and centralized system. The task force will ask if we have appropriate resources in place to keep campus space updated and maintained, etc. So far, local/departmental control has meant that individual units were often responsible for this. We need to be sure we can guarantee the kind of service that all units need to ensure consistency.
- By keeping Ad Astra, the scheduling tool will be the same and thus familiar. This change would not nationalize all spaces, but would look at working with units differently to ensure consistent scheduling policies, facilities, and maintenance.

President's Report (J. Hall)

- J. Hall reported that the Open Mic night was a great success and wished it could happen more often.
- She encouraged the faculty to take the university's Employee Engagement Survey, as it represented a good avenue for feedback. She noted that one could decline to answer certain questions if one was concerned about being identified. She also stated that it should be our expectation that we get full disclosure of results.
- Faculty Senators have been connected to the system news roundup—different from TN Today. Also connected to the UT Advocacy Office and will receive occasional alerts on issues. Senators can opt out, but she does not recommend doing so, as these are channels to greater transparency and information about the university and the system. Also, if we are to effectively advocate for the faculty and the university as a whole, we will need information and details on how we might take action.
- Plans are being made for the spring conference of TN University Faculty Senates (TUFS), an event which promotes unity and shared information and goals across state.
- We need to have conversations about the Undergraduate and Graduate Councils. They are subcommittees of the Senate, but are treated as separate entities. The Senate is charged with creating and managing the curriculum, and the Councils are the mechanism for this. We will be changing the way the Council minutes are handled to highlight any issues that need more careful attention.
- We do need 2 tenured professors (preferably not from engineering) to serve on faculty related committees for performance review.
- Questions from senators followed: G. Kalas asked about the faculty survey coming from an outside contractor. The email we received goes against

everything we've been taught about email safety, and would have been better received if it had come from a UT email address. S. Hutson pointed out that if one had lost or deleted the initial email, one had to request that the email be re-sent, which might have been a challenge in the response rate. D. Gardner noted that the survey is commonly from an outside agency, and there were numerous emails saying who it was coming from, so the information was out there.

- We now have non-tenure-track faculty in the Senate—but there are some requirements on certain committees for tenure-track faculty. The question has come up: what might happen if there would be a majority of NTT faculty? The Senate needs to consider that seriously, and whether quotas or other ways of making decisions would make sense. J. Hall was open to committees taking this on as an item: it is something that needs to be on our radar before the elections in spring.
- C. Parigger asked what the current number of NTT faculty was. S. Murphy wanted clarification if this was to be an existing committee or a new committee. J. Hall responded that it could fall under Faculty Affairs or NTT Faculty committees, and that perhaps a joint effort might be useful. Murphy suggested that we would want both TT and NTT on whichever committee considered the issue.

IV. MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Approval of Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes of October 20, 2014, was deferred because of lack of quorum.

The Executive Council Minutes of November 3, 2014, were presented as an information item.

G. Kalas noted that it would be helpful to provide more of an introduction to the ways of the Faculty Senate for new senators. D. Fox said that on a committee she serves on, only one person was retained on committee from last year—it would be good to have greater continuity to preserve institutional memory.

V. MINUTES OF THE UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL

Undergraduate Council Minutes from October 21, 2014, were presented. M. Palenchar covered the highlights, including a move to a consent agenda to make meetings more efficient. He also noted that December 1st was the deadline for curriculum changes. New guidelines and a clearer example have been posted on the website.

VI. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Research Council (T. Shepardson)

T. Shepardson provided an update: Research council IRB approval biosafety, policies. Some growing pains with new updates of policy and enforcement with the IRB. This is an ongoing conversation, and the Research Council has gotten involved in mediating between concerned faculty and the IRB. She requested that if faculty present or back in senators' home departments have concerns, they should get in touch with her.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

Gender Neutral Family Style Restrooms (A. Clay)

A. Clay from the Student Senate spoke to us about the passage of the Gender Neutral/Family Style Restrooms bill and asked us to share any input we might have. In general, they want the process to be productive and positive. It shares wide support, with 20 organizations or departments offering support and suggestions for it. L. Martin asked about the origin of the bill. It came initially from an LGBT Commission proposal, but it also has disability access implications, as well as being welcoming for families. UT is listed as the 14th least friendly campus for LGBT people, and 21 out of the top 25 universities have them. We also have 1200 students with identified disabilities. The proposal does not anticipate adding much to costs, focusing as it does on already planned renovations and new construction.

Quality Enhancement Program (QEP) and Experiential Learning (M. Theriot)

The QEP is a part of SACS accreditation. The last initiative in this category was Ready for the World. They are looking for campus wide involvement.

Experiential Learning: process of getting feedback started in April 2013: email survey, open forums, different committees on campus. From this, experiential learning rose to the top of things that were appealing to students and faculty. Broader than just service learning and internships. Three key features:

- Support for wide ranging initiatives.
- Fully supported and resourced—supported by Provost's office.
- Central coordination and leadership.

Smart Communities initiative (SCI) Run through the Office of Service Learning—connects faculty and students with local community addressing needs that the plan has identified. This year, Cleveland TN—with needs for greenspace and revitalizing downtown—was matched up with a class on campus working on these projects.

Faculty development. Many faculty think such learning sounds great but don't have the time and skill/resources to implement it. Program would provide resources to faculty—course releases, consultations, mentoring, help. It would feature workshops and presentations and a faculty fellows program. These would be aimed at helping faculty redesign courses. There would also be a Faculty Leaders program: ambassadors for experiential learning and peer mentors.

Faculty/Staff/Student support initiatives. We currently don't have a good way of identifying experiential learning going on at UT. They are developing a structure to identify opportunities for students. Develop an "S" designation for courses with service learning. (Like "WC" or "OC" designations.) It could be extended to Research or Volunteerism. They want to recognize different levels—not all big projects. This would provide recognition for student participation in these activities, and something concrete that validates their participation, such as a co-curricular transcript or medallions/pins for certain activities as done in the Ag school.

Assessments: they are generating a plan for an assessment team with designed rubrics, based on well validated instruments. These will form a basis for evaluation success of service/experiential classes, and will be available to anyone who wants to use them. There will

also be indirect assessments to get feedback on these classes from faculty and students. They are planning on other rounds of focus groups in 2016 and 2019 to assess how we're doing.

Timeline: SACS onsite March 31-April 2. They want to raise awareness ahead of the visit, so that we're ready for implementation phase.

D. Fox asked if faculty development also included NTT faculty. It does, for anyone instructing. J. Koonz led the Senate in applause for Mr. Theriot for spearheading such a major project.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Spirko,
Communication Officer