

University System Relations Committee Year-end Report
2017-2018

The following charge and goals were taken from the document provided at the beginning of the 2107-18 academic year and found at: <http://senate.utk.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/16/2011/07/2017-2018-Faculty-Senate-Committee-Goals-8-31-17.pdf>

By-laws charge: The University/System Relations Committee will provide for faculty input (1) into activities of The University of Tennessee system, including Research, ORNL, Information Technology, and the Cherokee Campus and (2) with the Board of Trustees and the Tennessee legislature. The University/System Relations Committee shall work with the Budget and Planning Committee to monitor The University of Tennessee system budget.

Added key goals: Provide campus input to all System-level Vice-Presidents; provide a faculty perspective regarding BOT policies related to faculty promotion, tenure and evaluations.

This year, the USRC focused primarily on establishing dialogue with system offices and, where appropriate, corresponding campus level offices. The committee met nine times during the academic year. Minutes of all meetings are available at: <https://senate.utk.edu/archives/senate-reports-minutes-publications-2017-2018/>. Following is a list of the system and campus representatives who met with the committee and the date of the meeting. More detail on each meeting can be found in the minutes.

October 30, 2017	Tonja Johnson, UT Executive Vice President/Chief Operating Officer
November 13, 2017	Dennis Hengstler, Assistant Vice President and Director of Institutional Research India Lane, Interim Vice President Academic Affairs and Student Success Denise Gardner, Assistant Provost and Director of Institutional Research
December 11, 2017	Anthony Haynes, Vice President for Government Relations and Advocacy
January 10, 2018	Ricky McCurry, UT Vice President for Development and Alumni Affairs and Programs and UT Foundation President and CEO Chip Bryant, UT Knoxville Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs
February 14, 2018	Noma Anderson, Special Advisor to the President on Diversity and Inclusion
March 21, 2018	Linda Martin, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Success
April 11, 2018	Tiffany Carpenter, Associate Vice President Communication and Marketing
May 9, 2018	Stacey Patterson, University of Tennessee Vice President for Research Victor McCrary, UT Knoxville Vice Chancellor for Research

Key takeaways from these meetings include:

1. System and campus leaders are willing to share their priorities with faculty. They are often interested in learning more about the faculty perspective.
2. These meetings often surfaced initiatives and or issues (e.g. the EAB Academic Performance product) that had been discussed at administrative levels, that will impact faculty, but that had not yet filtered down to faculty.
3. When we had both campus and system representatives meet with us at the same time, the general sense was one of collegial cooperation between their offices.

For next year, the committee may wish to choose to focus in more specifically on topics that emerged in the current academic year and/or other issue areas. Among those that seem to be ongoing concerns:

1. Board education about faculty roles and responsibilities
2. Partnering to understand how faculty can best support the work of the Government Relations and Advocacy office.
3. Identifying ways that faculty research and teaching expertise can be brought to bear on addressing broad issues of concern to system administrators (e.g., diversity)

Given events that occurred at the end of the 2017-18 academic year it is also possible that the USRC should take a very activist stance on trying to promote structural change in the system/campus relationship. This could include:

1. Lobbying for moving the system office to Nashville
2. Lobbying to give the new campus-level advisory boards policy making authority and a great deal of autonomy from the system