

FACULTY SENATE  
MINUTES  
March 4, 2019

Absent: Douglas Aaron, Gladys Alexandre\*, Stefanie Benjamin\*, Tami Bland, Ham Bozdogan\*, Jason Brown, Rachel Caldwell, Vincent Carilli, Chris Cimino, Mark Collins, Harry Dahms, Yuri Efremenko, Kelly Ellenburg, Eliza Fink, Nick Geidner, Julia Jaekel, Jackie Johnson, Karen Jones, Juan Jurat-Fuentes, Michelle Kwon, Anne Langendorfer, Theresa Lee\*, Andrea Ludwig, David Manderscheid, Tomás Martín-Jiménez, Stephen Marz\*, Crystal McAlvin\*, Lisa Mullikin, John Orme, Stephen Paddison, Alex Rodrigues, Sean Schaeffer, Reza Seddighi, Rossy Toledo, Brian Whitlock, Andrew Yu, Zhili Zhang, Xiaopeng Zhao\*

Present by Zoom: Eva Cowell, Ramon DeGennaro, Rebecca Koszalinski, Christian Parigger, Phyllis Thompson, Stewart Waters

\*Alternates: Sylvia Trendafilova for Stefanie Benjamin, Anne Ho for Gladys Alexandre, Yanfei Gao for Xiaopeng Zhao, Chuck Collins for Theresa Lee, Matt Harris for Ham Bozdogan, Jeremy Chandler for Crystal McAlvin, Richard Wood for Stephen Marz

**I. ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM** (E. Bernard)

E. Bernard established a quorum.

**II. CALL TO ORDER** (M. Anderson)

M. Anderson called the meeting to order at 3:37 p.m.

**III. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

President's Report (M. Anderson)

M. Anderson began her address by underscoring that the last two weeks have been incredibly trying. Students cheered Interim Vice Chancellor Tyvi Small at United at the Rock, reviewed the Comptroller's report and the leadership's response to it and protested both the ending of SPAC as well as the incidents involving students dressed in blackface. On 3/1/19, the new Board, responding to public hysteria about the portrayal of Sex Week, struck all references to the process by which Registered Student Organizations' request or contribute to decisions about student programming fees while promising future student input. M. Anderson noted that this plan may be hard to deliver, since the policy now sidesteps the constitutional requirement for viewpoint-neutral programming decisions when there is a forum, a space or fund to which people can have access for the purposes of free speech; now, there is no forum. The situation was complicated further when the U.S. President vowed to cut off federal funds to any university that suppresses free speech. M. Anderson asked the senators to understand, name, and work to change three things. First, she noted that all of these events were a missed opportunity for shared governance, which the Association of Governing Boards defines as a system for aligning priorities. M. Anderson emphasized that shared governance mandates before-the-fact consultation with the faculty's elected leaders, not after-the-fact explanation. She suggested that there are many ways to accomplish this, even with an embargo on documents. M. Anderson noted that at UT Martin, the FS president is on the Chancellor's cabinet. She further emphasized that meaningful shared governance must become a priority for UT Administrators. M. Anderson also stated that shared governance is not faculty decision-making or even an equal vote. The state legislature creates the Board that sets policy to which campuses are held. M. Anderson asked the System to help the Board avail itself of faculty input

from all campuses to ensure that the one faculty member who serves for one year on the Education committee does not need “special permission to speak” on education-related policy changes during the Board meeting. Second, M. Anderson noted that we need a robust defense of what it means to be a public university as economic impact is not enough. She underscored that we have a broader vision of what a meaningful life might be and that this vision is supported through higher education. M. Anderson called on Provost Mandersheid to sponsor conversations that go beyond marketing buzzwords to discuss the University’s purpose in American society as this will help us reclaim the mission of the public University and defend it. Third, M. Anderson stated that while we are voting on the outline of a new curriculum today, there is a need to animate it with transformational courses and teaching, broadly conceived to meet the current climate crisis. M. Anderson challenged the faculty and administrators to do the following:

- develop short, faculty-authored, topical curricular resources for use in ANY classroom when we have a crisis incident;
- create co-curricular, faculty-driven educational programming, such as Joe Miles’ Intergroup Dialogue Project or the dialogue on Free and Hate speech March 6, 4-5 p.m.; and
- bring a sense of urgency to the creation and adaptation of Engaged Inquiries and Contemporary Issues and Solutions courses that can transform the curriculum.

M. Anderson stressed that as an intellectually diverse faculty, we have a moral obligation to research and teach about everything from the effects of systemic racism, to poisonous plastics in our ecosystem, constitutional protections, the range and history of human sexuality, or the opioid crisis. She stated that education is a remedy for ignorance and hopes that this portion of our destiny will lead to a better UT.

Provost’s Report (D. Manderscheid)  
None.

Athletics and Academics (J. Scogin, K. Weekly, R. Weekly, B. Ownley)  
Report deferred until May 6, 2019.

#### **IV. MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE, EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, AND BOARD MATERIALS**

The Faculty Senate meeting minutes of February 4, 2019, were presented for approval. B. Lyons moved approval, S. McCallum seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved.

The Faculty Senate Executive Council meeting minutes of February 18, 2019, were included as an information item.

Board of Trustees March 1 Materials were included as an information item.

#### **V. OLD BUSINESS**

General Education Catalogue Copy (R. Mindrup)

M. Anderson reminded the senators that this item was presented before the Senate as a first reading on February 4, 2019. J. Shefner stated that in the past year, there have been incidents of racism, homophobia, anti-Semitism and acts of violence against women. He moved to approve a 2-course sequence on inequalities and oppression. J. Shefner stated that an

alternative would be to create categories of inequality courses akin to the other categories. There was no second of this motion. R. Mindrup underscored that there is an opportunity for course development whereby the courses that J. Shefner mentioned could be fit into the existing categories. J. Shefner stated that when you consider that these issues have been resurfacing for years, this is our opportunity to make the recognition of inequality and the ways to combat it more explicit in our curriculum. M. Black noted concern about whether or not enough is being done in the curriculum to be able to adequately respond to real world issues. She relayed that per R.J. Hinde, this curriculum is going to present challenges in responding to real-time issues/events with curricular solutions. M. Black noted that we should refrain from voting until there is a clear avenue to circumvent the lengthy process of getting courses approved. She stated that it is critical that we can we make our curriculum responsive to the issues we are facing, when urgent things that need to be discussed. R. Mindrup responded by noting that there are plans to create infrastructure where the GenEd curriculum committee would meet monthly rather than every 6-7 weeks to expedite course approvals. There will also be a point person who will help organize all of the influx of the materials for approval. G. Skolits asked whether one possibility was to teach a course that's already approved using the route of special topics. B. Murphy responded that there are already courses on the GenEd list that are special topics. Special topics courses would need approval one semester prior to the semester in which it is planned to be taught. A. Roessner expressed that there is a need for a required course. She referenced a recent *New York Times* article by Eric Alterman regarding the decline of historical thinking: <https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/the-decline-of-historical-thinking>. A. Lapins asked whether these courses could fall into the global citizenship category. B. Murphy noted that one possibility is to have one course fall under the GCUS category and another one as part of the Expanded Perspectives elective. She also stated that a similar approach can be taken under Contemporary Issues and Solutions; while this is not technically part of GenEd, it is required for every student to take. B. Murphy emphasized that it is extremely difficult to implement a requirement for one course that everyone in the undergraduate program must take. L. Knox stated that is important to have a requirement for students to learn historical reasoning and gain a historical perspective. She emphasized that while the curriculum speaks to diversity in the U.S. and the world, there is no requirement for learning historical reasoning. S. Eldridge noted that she is concerned about this issue as well; while there have been many co-curricular events addressing these issues and helping marginalized populations know they are not alone, those types of opportunities are not reaching the individuals who most need the information. A question was raised regarding first year studies. J. Mastrogiovanni stated that first year studies is not required, although it does reach about 36-37% of the freshman population. He noted that instructors have always taught the topic of diversity, which has not been required, but has come up every year. A formalized requirement is forthcoming for Fall 2019 on diversity. J. Mastrogiovanni pointed out that this discussion is really about who the content is not reaching in addition to making GenEd real; there is doubt that adding another course requirement will make it real for students. He further stated that there will be two new interdisciplinary communities next year. J. Shefner noted support for the global citizenship category but suggested that we need something different. He stated that it is our responsibility as educators to think carefully about how inequalities have been created and how they are re-created every day. He noted that the curriculum is a masterful piece of really hard work, but in light of recent events, the campus requires something additional. M. Black asked about how many of the FYS courses are taught by faculty in disciplines. J. Mastrogiovanni responded that 22% are taught by faculty. K. Gehrman noted that in her Philosophy 101 course, students were asked to brainstorm on the current issues on

campus; their level of discomfort with their lack of knowledge is overwhelming and created anxiety. B. Lyons stated that the questions raised are very important, but it is unwise for the senate to amend the curriculum on the floor. He also asked about whether another course designation could be added for diversity and inclusion. B. Murphy responded that this is what is being done with the engaged inquiries courses. There is a possibility of making an overlap of other courses. R.J. Hinde read the description of the global citizenship category and emphasized that it does encompass the questions that are being raised about curricular offerings on inequalities and oppression. He reminded the senators that it is up to departments to create the courses and for the Global Citizenship subcommittee to uphold the intent of the category with the proposals that come forward. J. Williams expressed that we need to understand why our students do what they do; there is not going to be a singular solution to stop this. He stated that as long as we are working together on how to continuously progress and move this campus forward, progress will be made provided it is done from a loving perspective. B. Murphy noted that the GCI and GCUS categories can cover this as can contemporary issues and solutions. She further pointed out that individual departments could have specific requirements as well. R. Mindrup noted that there has been discussion about adding more working groups in the fall. S. McCallum noted that the global citizenship category description is very inclusive and asked whether the credit hour allotment could be changed. B. Murphy responded that one thing the GenEd committee wanted to do was to keep the hours the same as the old GenEd curriculum. She noted that for some majors on campus, an increase in hours would be almost impossible to accommodate. M. Anderson stated that there is a charge to the committees that will be reviewing the content; how these courses are created will be up to individual faculty and departments. Dean T. Lee pointed out that to have the kinds of conversations to address this content effectively, you need to have small class sizes. She further stated that this is a bigger problem than whether or not the words "oppression" and "inequality" are in the title. B. Murphy noted that GCUS, GCI and six hours of electives are open to any course. As faculty we need to make our courses exciting and have them be appealing and engaging for students. M. Anderson called the question to vote on the proposed GenEd Catalogue Copy as written. Eighty-five (85) senators voted yes, 5 senators voted against, and 5 abstained. The item passed with a majority in favor.

#### Report on Legislative Outreach (D. Keffer)

D. Keffer reported that 14 faculty liaisons conducted interviews with legislators while over 60 initially volunteered; this may reflect the reality of multiple demands on faculty time. D. Keffer noted that part of the task force was motivated by the actions of our past System president. He further stated that at the beginning of his tenure, the interim System president made calming statements that perhaps caused us to relax a little. Yet, the recent reaction of the interim System president to the comptroller's report on Sex Week reminds us that if we don't tell our own story, someone else will. D. Keffer emphasized that there are a number of perceptions about UTK that we do not want to exist. Upon analyzing the results of the surveys with legislators, it is clear there are a number of misperceptions that exist among them; communication with them is key to helping change perceptions and misinformation. The next programmatic activity is to invite legislators to campus on a football Friday next fall. D. Keffer asked that if individuals have not contacted legislators to express your opinion, to please do so. M. Black asked about how many individuals tried calling legislators who didn't get a response. A. Roessner stated that this is why it's important to have administrators who will speak back and point out these areas of concern. D. Keffer responded that there was a diversity of responses and that contacting legislators was an activity that required some persistence.

## **VI. NEW BUSINESS**

### Proposed Bylaws Change regarding Presidential Elections (B. Lyons)

B. Lyons noted that this item is being presented to the Senate for first reading. The broad rationale for the changes presented is to recruit from a larger number of eligible individuals and that the person should hold the protections of tenure. The changes ensure greater flexibility in the timeline for election; they also reflect our current election practices of electronic voting.

### Resolution Endorsing the SGA Statement on the Comptroller's Report (A. Roessner)

This resolution is being presented as an item from the Executive Council to demonstrate support for student leadership and student voice in co-curricular programming. M. Anderson thanked A. Roessner for her leadership on Diversity and Inclusion. The resolution unanimously passed.

### SGA Statement on Comptroller's Report

The SGA Statement on the Comptroller's Report was included with the agenda as an information item.

### Preliminary Report on Faculty Senate Poll (G. Skolits)

Brief survey of full-time faculty. There were 331 respondents, a response rate of 20%. Selected topics on the survey included perspectives of the Senate, faculty workload, and selected job satisfaction variables. G. Skolits provided an overview of results beginning with demographics of the respondents. The largest group to respond by rank was full professors with the majority being from the College of Arts & Sciences, College of Education, Health & Human Services, and UTIA. G. Skolits shared that regarding the Senate-focused questions- faculty either strongly agreed or agreed that they were aware of the function of the Senate; 78% strongly agreed or agreed with the statement that they trust the communications they received from the Faculty Senate; 47% agreed or strongly agreed with the sentiment that they have a voice in UTK policies via the Senate. With regard to the Senate having a voice in UT System policies, 30% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed. Pertaining to the statement, "I follow the UT senate on social media" 63% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed. Further, 65% of respondents noted that they would not serve on the Faculty Senate; 58% of faculty noted that they worked 51-60 hours per week; 47% disagreed or strongly disagreed that they had a favorable work-life balance. Most faculty spend about 20 hours putting in Elements data, but few understand Elements as a whole. G. Skolits underscored that 70% of respondents reported they were either very satisfied or satisfied with their employment at UT Knoxville. They hope to continue to refine this survey and administer it annually.

## **VII. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

None.

## **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

M. Anderson adjourned the meeting at 5:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sadie Hutson, Secretary