

Faculty Senate Executive Council
September 9, 2019
MINUTES

Present: Misty Anderson, Ernest Bernard, Mark Collins, Sadie Hutson, David Keffer, Michael Kilbey, Alexander Lapins, Beauvais Lyons, Bruce MacLennan, Bonnie Ownley, David Patterson, Rebecca Prosser, Amber Roessner, Amadou Sall, Beth Schussler, Gary Skolits, Rob Spirko, Shawn Spurgeon, Anthony Welch, James Williams

Guests: David Manderscheid, Donde Plowman

I. CALL TO ORDER

G. Skolits called the meeting to order at 3:31 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of the Executive Council meeting of April 22, 2019, were presented for approval. B. Lyons moved approval; R. Spirko seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved.

III. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS

President's Report (G. Skolits)

G. Skolits began the meeting reinforcing principles that will guide his leadership throughout the academic year, including a team leadership approach. He recognized M. Anderson as past-president and S. Spurgeon as president-elect. G. Skolits noted that this year will be spent reaffirming and advancing faculty practice (teaching scholarship, and service), values (commitment to academic excellence, working towards a culture of civility, and upholding the dignity of work), and engagement towards student success and institutional excellence within the framework of meaningful shared governance. He underscored that we need to reaffirm/expand these values, acknowledging that they flourish in the context of academic freedom. G. Skolits also shared some aims/tactical considerations including: 1) capacity building; 2) collaboration; and 3) culture building. He concluded by providing a few guiding questions for the Senate.

UTK Chancellor's Report (D. Plowman)

D. Plowman opened by asking the committee to dialogue about what shared governance means to the committee. She noted that her view of shared governance is working on things together through avenues of open communication and trusting relationships. The Provost, Chancellor, and Senate leadership will meet monthly. D. Plowman noted that one item accomplished this summer was a change to the space rental policy; an announcement about this is forthcoming. This is one example of how shared governance can be successful. D. Plowman also encouraged faculty to think about student success by inviting them into a curriculum that is reconceptualized and exciting. She emphasized that faculty challenge the Carnegie definitions of what a major is and rethinking ways in which we can attract students into degree programs. D. Plowman has been holding listening sessions with Faculty Senate, student leaders, and campus administrators. She has moved office hours to the Student Union on Tuesday afternoons when she is in town. D. Plowman has posed the question about what individuals want in a Chancellor. Common themes have included: accessibility, visibility, and stability. She noted that there are some wounds from the last few years that need to be healed. D. Plowman met with LGBTQ Commission today and discussed what it means to have trust rebuilt. She has additionally met

with 35 legislators, donors, and the alumni advisory board. During the alumni meeting D. Plowman noted a willingness to provide both advice and support. She underscored that there is a team of important people who strongly support UTK. D. Plowman also highlighted that a consultant was hired in crisis communications to talk through various scenarios. A resounding message was to, "say what you know and say what you are going to do about it." D. Plowman noted that the campus community must trust the leadership as not all details can be communicated. D. Plowman also heard from students who are looking for changes so that not everything is organized or implemented for the "traditional undergraduate student."

B. Lyons commented that he appreciated the message on diversity and inclusion and commitment to land grant mission. He also stated that faculty are seeing D. Plowman's dreams about what can happen on campus. He noted a recent University Studies seminar with a reading by Steven Bahls, *Shared Governance in Times of Change* wherein he advocates for systems of aligning priorities. D. Plowman responded that transparency is critical and that much work is being done jointly developing strategic direction around key issues. She noted that development occurs on the front end, rather than as a response and that the campus is striving to make better decisions for the institution as well as commit to shared responsibility for the challenges. D. Plowman discussed that the Cabinet met to dialogue about how they wanted to function as a team. G. Skolits mentioned that we often have issues with regard to the UT System and asked how we might address this. D. Plowman stated that we are not impervious to the outside world and that we will be approached by the UT System Office, legislators and others; it is important to keep everyone in the loop and respond. M. Anderson noted that S. Bahls recommends preparing and distributing a 1-page chart describing who makes key decisions, but that this is very challenging to do at UTK as the organizational chart is incredibly complicated. M. Anderson further described that material examples have emerged highlighting a lack of clarity about who makes decisions. D. Plowman responded that if shared governance is going to be defined, then there needs to be a demonstration of how that works. G. Skolits indicated that time will be dedicated to discuss defining shared governance at the next EC meeting. A. Roessner noted a need for some shared definitions regarding shared governance and transparency as transparency is needed at multiple points along the continuum.

Provost's Report (D. Manderscheid)

D. Manderscheid highlighted three separate things: 1) Investments in the academic mission via the budget; 2) Data that has been gathered; and 3) *US News and World Report* rankings. D. Manderscheid noted that a half million dollars has been dedicated to increase the minimum GA salaries; this was targeted toward specific disciplines. Further, the minimum salary for full-time lecturers was raised to 40K, and 24 faculty lines have been added with an additional 21 net new faculty lines being added this year (five of those lines will be set aside for diversity hires). D. Manderscheid noted that he is seeking proposals from the colleges for the diversity hires; specific criteria are outlined in the call for proposals. Criteria include: 1) the candidate must fill an existing instructional need; 2) the candidate must show promise of making a substantial contribution to research excellence and productivity; and 3) the candidate must have either demonstrated experience working with students of diverse backgrounds OR a well-developed program of scholarship related to the study of underserved populations, social, economic, educational, or other disparities. D. Manderscheid noted that there have been many investments in enrollment and student success. The 4-year graduation rate is at its best and the 6-year graduation rate is holding steady. UTK enrolled its largest first year class in history which represents an enrollment increase of 2%. UTK also moved from 115 to 104th nationally in the

US News and World Report Rankings. UTK also moved from 52nd to 44th in the nation among public universities. D. Manderscheid noted that *US News and World Report* is placing more emphasis on how to enhance social mobility; UTK is 2nd in the SEC with regard to students who are Pell-eligible. J. Williams asked what percentage of incoming freshman are first-generation college students. D. Manderscheid responded that the rate is about 23%. A. Sall asked about scholarship opportunities for travel outside of the US? D. Manderscheid noted that graduation rates are higher for students who study abroad; we must focus on high-impact practices. Study abroad is usually framed for those who have the means; this is something that UTK wants to change. A. Roessner asked whether the faculty hired for the diversity opportunity can be of any rank. D. Manderscheid responded that any rank is possible and that the Provost's office will provide up to \$100,000.

UTIA Report (T. Cross)

T. Cross was unable to attend.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

Bylaws Change on Election of Faculty Representative to Campus Advisory Board (B. Lyons)

B. Lyons noted that at the May meeting a proposal was presented as a first reading regarding a bylaws change on the election of the UTK faculty representative to the campus advisory board. The intention of this change is to ensure that the faculty representative is in place before the student representative is elected in order to avoid any potential conflicts of interest. This item will be voted upon at the first Faculty Senate meeting.

V. NEW BUSINESS

Update on Revising Part VI of the *Manual for Faculty Evaluation (MFE)* (B. Lyons)

B. Lyons noted that the Faculty Affairs Committee brought forward a number of *Faculty Handbook* changes. Part VI of the old *Manual for Faculty Evaluation (MFE)* includes the procedures of promotion of NTTF; this was worked on by Faculty Affairs and NTTI Committees. The document is in the Provost's office. B. Lyons noted that the next step would be to bring this forward to Deans and Department Heads. He also emphasized that Chapter IV is new and that Section VI of the MFE is outdated; the goal is to get this through the process to have it ready for March meeting by the BOT. D. Manderscheid noted that there should not be the lag going forward. S. Hutson asked whether there are major areas of dissonance between Chapter IV and Section VI of the MFE for the purposes of annual faculty evaluation. B. Lyons responded that the Provost's office will need to help with addressing this for Deans and Department Heads.

Oak Ridge Institute (M. Kilbey and M. Anderson)

M. Anderson noted that there is lots of excitement about the possibility of enriched partnerships between UTK and ORNL. She stated that there has been a set of questions that have emerged from faculty leaders, the Research Council, and UT System Relations Committee who want to better understand the possible details of the new proposed Oak Ridge Institute and pointes where faculty can be involved to create this entity. There is a Faculty Senate session on 9/16/19 on the Oak Ridge Institute with David Manderscheid and Stacey Patterson. M. Anderson stated that the questions will be given in advance to administrators so that they can be answered. Some questions are about process and other questions about where graduate students will be. M. Anderson asked the EC to review the questions and provide suggestions. D. Patterson noted that while the ORI is about research, it is also about graduate education. He emphasized that it is imperative to increase quality graduate programs but a need to do it

correctly. There is a Graduate School policy that the committees of the students need to include 2 TT committee members. B. Lyons noted that hiring TT faculty requires stable funding, but that the hiring research faculty on grants is more uncertain, particularly as it pertains to students. B. Lyons asked about the business model for the growth of this program. M. Anderson noted that questions 13 and 14 on the list relate to money/budgeting. M. Anderson discussed that if UTK doesn't own/create it and if ORNL scientists don't buy in, this will be a difficult initiative to start. D. Keffer asked about Question 10 regarding student success. He stated that for those who have been involved in the process there are a lot of rumors circulating about student success in the Bredesen center. D. Manderscheid stated that there was a listening session at ORNL last week and a question was raised about student mentorship; Thomas Zacharia made it very clear that this has to be about the graduate students and that they are getting the education they deserve. He believes that this is about educating the next generation of scientists. The steering committee is a new construct; first meeting is upcoming.

Discussion on UTIA – UTK (B. Ownley)

B. Ownley provided a report regarding the UTIA-UTK reunification. A Board of Trustee (BOT) resolution of June 21, 2019, enabled UTK to rise in rankings (NSF HERD Survey) by combining the research expenditures of UTK and UTIA. Prior to 2010, expenditures had been reported together. In order to reinstate joint reporting of research expenditures, the title of Dr. Tim Cross was changed from Chancellor of UTIA to Senior Vice-Chancellor of UTIA (reporting to the UTK Chancellor) and Senior Vice-President of UTIA (reporting to the UT President). The BOT resolved that Interim President Boyd would solicit input from faculty, staff, and stakeholders so that both UTIA and UTK benefitted. A detailed plan was requested for the November 8, 2019, BOT meeting. B. Ownley noted that the Unification Team was charged to develop structured opportunities for stakeholders to identify needs and opportunities; to synthesize and summarize stakeholder input and identify common themes; and provide a summary of priorities. Their findings will be submitted in a report that is due on October 1, 2019. The Unification Team divided into sub-groups: internal institutional, external institutional, extension and outreach, stakeholder groups (producers, growers, commodity groups, etc.), and politicians and legislators. Structured opportunities with stakeholders were planned that ranged from one-on-one interviews (in-person or via phone), to small and large groups (in-person or via Zoom), and surveys. Initially, the committee was told to collect "big transformational ideas" that could be accomplished with unification of UTIA and UTK. B. Ownley stated that team members pointed out culture differences in the two units causing barriers to collaboration. In addition, shared governance had not been practiced for this change; UTIA faculty were very aware of this. Given the lack of information for six weeks, rumors emerged including that extension faculty and staff felt that their jobs were being threatened. Stakeholders throughout the State felt that they would receive reduced services from Extension. Their relationship with UTIA, especially Extension personnel, was very important to them. As one stakeholder said, "The success of growers and producers in Tennessee depends on you, you are our angel investors." B. Ownley noted that a turning point was reached when Interim President Randy Boyd met with UTIA faculty on August 28. Chancellor Plowman and Vice-Chancellor/Vice-President Cross also attended and addressed the group. UTIA faculty openly expressed their anger and frustration. On September 5, a second faculty session was held on the UTIA campus. The unification team acknowledged that trust had been broken. In addition, Dr. Elizabeth Strand (Unification Team member) instituted the use of 'poll everywhere' in the listening session. These changes had a positive effect.

Academic Class Schedule Revisions (M. Anderson)

M. Anderson noted that in some of the feedback in the listening sessions there will be a need to address the time it takes to get from one point to another on UTIA and UTK campuses. She described that the possibility of a 20-minute break may need to be considered. A discussion with Deans and Department Heads will need to occur. D. Manderscheid stated that there is a need to be thoughtful about having classes from both campuses held on either campus as well as consideration of class times. A new registrar will soon be hired; this will present an opportunity to talk about updates to the class schedule.

General Education Update (A. Welch)

A. Welch described that the learning outcomes were developed as well as templates for the new Vol Core categories. Five boot camp sessions were held, including a session at the Faculty Senate retreat. More sessions will be scheduled for the end of the month. The first wave of course proposals has been submitted (85 in all Vol Core categories). Engaged Inquiries represents the largest category. A. Welch noted that Gen Ed is meeting every month for the rest of the year to expedite the course proposal process.

Budget Model Process (G. Skolits)

G. Skolits noted that he gets many questions regarding the new budget model. B. Schussler had the opportunity to meet with Kathy from Huron. L. Gross also met with someone from Huron, which was very open and responsive to questions. G. Skolits noted that this is an example of where shared governance helps move initiatives forward. He stated that a faculty forum is planned for the spring, and that he has asked for one in the fall as well. Steering committee does not have faculty representation. Phil Daves is the only faculty member on the steering committee. D. Manderscheid asked for the recommendations of a few names of individuals who have budgetary responsibility.

Establishing Annual Goals for Standing Committees and Task Forces

A. Lapins moved approval of the annual goals for standing committees. M. Anderson seconded. The goals were unanimously approved.

VI. STANDING COMMITTEE AND TASK FORCE YEAR-END REPORTS

- a. Appeals Committee (R. Prosser)
- b. Athletics Committee (J. Williams, B. Ownley). J. Williams noted that he wants to find a way to identify transition assistance for student athletes. Many leave the university but don't become professional athletes and subsequently struggle with identity crisis. There is a serious issue of mental wellbeing of student athletes and graduates.
- c. Benefits and Professional Development Committee (A. Lapins)
- d. Budget and Planning Committee (B. Schussler, K. Baker)
- e. Diversity and Inclusion Committee (A. Roessner, J. Anderson)
- f. Faculty Affairs Committee (B. Lyons)
- g. Graduate Council (D. Patterson)
- h. Library and Information Technology Committee (M. Collins, T. Bland)
- i. Nominations and Appointments Committee (S. Spurgeon)
- j. Non-Tenure Track Issues Committee (L. Knox, C. McAlvin)
- k. Research Council (M. Kilbey). M. Kilbey noted that many decisions are made over the summer and it is a bit problematic that there are not individuals on the senate committees who can be engaged in the summer as they are on 9-month contracts.

He asked about the possibility of administration having a calendar of when key decisions are made. G. Skolits responded that perhaps there is a need for dialogue about what decisions can be moved to the academic year so that there is the opportunity for shared governance/discussion. B. Lyons responded that the EC can represent the committees over the summer. M. Anderson noted that the UFC has raised the issue about schedule of summer decision-making in the past as well. Items with heavy policy consequences puts undue pressure on 9-month faculty in the summer for answers by the November meeting.

- l. Teaching and Learning Council (A. Sall, K. Rearden) G. Skolits highlighted that this year, Teaching and Learning will also address teaching and learning issues as well as awards.
- m. Undergraduate Council (A. Welch)
- n. University Faculty Council (B. MacLennan)
- o. System Relations Committee (M. Anderson)

VII. ADJOURNMENT

G. Skolits adjourned the meeting at 5:11 p.m.