

Faculty Senate Executive Council  
October 7, 2019  
MINUTES

Present: Misty Anderson, Ernest Bernard, Tami Bland, Sadie Hutson, David Keffer, Michael Kilbey, Laurie Knox, 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: Lou Gross, David Manderscheid, Donde Plowman, Dixie Thompson

### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

G. Skolits called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m.

### **II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes of the Executive Council meeting of September 9, 2019, were presented for approval. B. Lyons asked for a minor edit to the minutes to revise section V. New Business and replace the word "Chapter" VI of the MFE to "Section" in two places in that paragraph. The minutes were unanimously approved as amended.

### **III. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS**

#### President's Report (G. Skolits)

G. Skolits began his remarks with the good news that T. Small has been appointed as the Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Engagement. He also noted that since the response regarding the incidents of hate speech at the rock, the campus community has responded with gratitude for how it has been addressed. D. Plowman noted that she received an email from a former undergraduate student who is now in graduate school at John Hopkins. In her email she remarked that UTK was recognized during a lecture at Hopkins as an exemplar for how institutions can respond effectively to messages of hate. G. Skolits also noted that the PEN America meeting was very beneficial; there is more that needs to be done. D. Manderscheid commented that the University will possibly host a visit again this spring including a panel of high-profile individuals to speak about social media and free speech. M. Anderson emphasized that there is also high interest in continuing the OpEd project. G. Skolits expressed gratitude for the addition of two faculty members who have been added to the ORI task force. Further, the UTIA task force is nearing completion of their report. G. Skolits noted that the annual senate faculty survey is being updated for administration this month. Finally, there was an informative session with TUFs representatives during the October 5-6 weekend meeting. G. Skolits stated that they learned a large majority of public locally governed institutes (LGIs) reported healthy shared governance on their campus, citing access to a faculty trustee, specific shared governance policies, designated senate membership on campus leadership team/structures, designated campus space for weekly opportunities for faculty engagement, and overall favorable faculty, administrative, and board relationships. G. Skolits also prefaced today's discussion regarding shared governance by noting that this conversation comes as at a critical juncture for the Senate as concerns with governance continue to be voiced, particularly with regard to UTIA reunification and ORI initiatives. He continues to hear from a number of concerned faculty about instances of failed shared governance and the message it sends. G. Skolits noted that the discussion with the FSEC will help in defining and operationalizing shared

governance; this discussion will continue to be ongoing and hopefully help toward building trust.

#### UTK Chancellor's Report (D. Plowman)

D. Plowman stated that she received positive feedback from four major Jewish federations in the state; it was deemed very powerful to condemn hatred toward members of the Jewish community and express it using those words. She emphasized that in the midst of turmoil on college campuses, Jewish students and faculty can get lost in the conversation; it is important not to overlook this population. D. Plowman would like to explore some additional opportunities about this in a small group setting. Interim President R. Boyd has organized a trip of faculty, students, and administrators to travel to Israel. D. Plowman also expressed her thanks to everyone who has been involved in Student Life activities on mattering and belonging and "Vol is a Verb." She reiterated that we can't change anything meaningful about the culture unless we are all working together. The first meeting of the campus advisory board occurs this Friday. D. Plowman noted that she will work toward getting this group more engaged so that it is a conversation rather than an information exchange.

#### Provost's Report (D. Manderscheid)

D. Manderscheid remarked that the position for the Vice Provost for Student Success has been posted; approximately 20 applications have been received. The hope is that the individual hired will begin on Jan 1. D. Manderscheid noted that Governor's Chair B. Wirth and faculty member S. Sorenson are the new members on the ORI Steering Committee; meetings are occurring weekly. Two faculty members have been added to the budget committee (E. Freeberg and Sally McMillan).

#### UTIA Report (T. Cross)

T. Cross was unable to attend.

### **IV. OLD BUSINESS**

#### PPPR Process and Cost Update (D. Manderscheid)

D. Manderscheid provided a brief update on the PPPR process, noting that he has asked J. Zomchick to keep an accounting of faculty time regarding this process. Presently, he is aware of 98 faculty members who are being reviewed.

#### General Education Update (A. Welch)

A. Welch provided a summary regarding the General Education efforts for course proposal procedures. A number of information sessions have been held. A. Welch noted that at the last FSEC meeting, 85 proposals had been submitted; this number has now reached 175 proposals from roughly 30 programs. The next committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 9. A. Welch stated that subcommittees have also posted course proposal evaluation rubrics on the UG Council VolCore website; exemplar proposals are forthcoming. He noted that the deadline for WC course proposals is 10/15/2019 and for all other VolCore requirements, the deadline is 10/15/20 for the Fall 2021 catalog. The committee continues to encourage departments to submit proposals as early as possible. The VolCore implementation subcommittee met last week and discussed issues related to transfer students, particularly those who are enrolled in community college this year and how they will potentially matriculate in. G. Skolits asked about the quality of the submitted proposals. A. Welch stated that most are being approved quickly. He recognized that some subcommittees are working toward

clarification of the expectations; most of the confusion has been regarding the Engaged Inquiries (EI) proposals. A. Welch noted that overall, the committee is pleased with the proposal submissions. Additional members are also needed for the EI subcommittee for proposals that are coming in. D. Keffer stated that there is some disagreement on the EI subcommittee about what course assessment means. Some members have a clear idea on the committee about what constitutes assessment of the SLOs, while others do not. Most courses need to include a more structured method of assessment. A. Welch has included a summary of the UG Council activities in the Consent Agenda.

#### ORI Update (M. Anderson)

M. Anderson expressed gratitude regarding the addition of two new members of the ORI Steering Committee. She noted that the group continues to receive questions about procedure and continue to urge that there be a timetable for touchpoints and interaction. D. Manderscheid stated that he and Stacey Patterson have offered to visit departments who wish to have a more detailed discussion or opportunity to ask questions. G. Skolits requested updates on what has transpired in departmental meetings; he stated it is critical to have information/periodic updates about what is being done. D. Plowman encouraged that listening sessions be held when a decision point has been made so that feedback can be ascertained. D. Patterson remarked that the Graduate Council is trying to determine what the impact will be on graduate students and faculty. It has been noted that 120 new faculty (60 primarily UTK and 60 primarily ORNL faculty). The mix has not been decided regarding whether these will be tenure lines or research scientists. D. Manderscheid stated that the initial thought is that the mix of faculty will be half of each. D. Patterson noted that knowing the number of students will be critical particularly given that two tenure-track or tenured faculty must serve on each student's dissertation committee. D. Patterson noted that existing faculty may already be working at capacity and may not be able to take on new students. D. Thompson stated that Graduate Council is most concerned about the proper mentoring of the new students. D. Manderscheid said that the Bredesen Center can be helpful in this effort as well. L. Gross examined the ORI website and discovered that nothing has been added since the Faculty Senate meeting a month ago. If the committee would like regular transparency and input, there should be something on that site, that invites feedback. The Bredesen Center has had 75 PhD graduates at a cost of 6 million dollars in funding from the state; L. Gross emphasized that this is not a good return on investment. D. Manderscheid discussed that this is one reason why a review of the Bredesen Center is being conducted. M. Kilbey stated that some of these same subjects also came up in a report of the Research Council. The Research Council made recommendations in an effort to be helpful around issues of student success and engagement across the university. G. Skolits will post these in time for the Senate meeting. M. Anderson noted that graduate education tops the list of faculty concerns. She emphasized that an open forum on touchpoints across the academic year to examine plans as they develop will be very helpful.

#### UTIA-UTK Update (B. Ownley)

B. Ownley reported that all listening sessions and interviews have been completed by the committee; the deadline was extended to 10/21/19. She noted that there is an abundance of information to review, particularly from the surveys that were distributed. There were a great deal of qualitative comments provided; these demonstrate a great deal of passion about UTK and UTIA. The committee wishes to ensure that the report accurately reflects the sentiments expressed in the survey. The report will be delivered directly to R. Boyd, D. Plowman and T. Cross. B. Ownley discussed that individuals in the state still want to have some discussion about

this. M. Anderson reported that themes center on trust and knowing how decisions are made. Misconceptions repeatedly arose in the survey data, suggesting a continued need to address these provide engagement. More than 600 people answered the survey.

#### NTT Evaluation – Faculty Handbook (B. Lyons; L. Knox)

L. Knox noted that there is now a special note at the top of the *Faculty Handbook* page on the Provost's website that reads, "The 2019 handbook incorporates most of the Manual for Faculty Evaluation (MFE, Parts I-V). Some of the material from those parts of the manual have been integrated into Chapter 3. Other MFE materials related to evaluation or promotion and tenure are now found in appendices to the handbook. Chapter 4, 'Non-tenure-track Faculty' has undergone extensive revisions. It is strongly recommended that all administrators who supervise or play a role in evaluating NTT faculty review the chapter carefully. The changes involve hiring, assignments, renewal, and evaluation of the NTT faculty. Please address all questions about the handbook to John Zomchick, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs." L. Knox noted that there are NTT faculty going up for promotion and there are contradictions about what the colleges and departments are saying is required vs. what the handbook says. A meeting is scheduled on 10/9 with J. Zomchick to discuss. B. Lyons stated that Deans and Department Heads need to have an opportunity to review the changes. D. Patterson noted that in the most recent version of the handbook there exists the inclusion of outreach and engagement for TT faculty and asked whether there is there anything like this for non-TT faculty in service and teaching. B. Lyons responded that this has to do with the specific assignment of the faculty member. He stated that engaged activities are not separate, but rather woven within the tripartite mission.

## **V. NEW BUSINESS**

#### Shared Governance Discussion (D. Plowman)

D. Plowman distributed a document with talking points about what shared governance is and how the FSEC feels this should be defined. D. Plowman noted that on one end of the continuum there should be high engagement with all stakeholders and then there are other matters whereby the faculty would have the primary responsibility (e.g. curriculum, tenure and promotion), while administration has primary responsibility around fiduciary responsibilities and high-level personnel issues. Shared governance occurs on a continuum. The starting draft document noted the definition as a dynamic system of engagement that promotes: 1) collaboration and meaningful engagement in important matters of the campus, 2) shared ownership of the campus's mission and goals, and 3) collective accountability for our campus's success. This requires a culture that has certain characteristics: 1) transparency and open communication, 2) collaboration on difficult and strategic decisions, 3) collectively own campus priorities and metrics for success, 4) systems of checks and balance to remain focused on the mission, and 5) the value of clarity for processes and procedures. G. Skolits noted that transparency and open communication are foundational and lead to trust; breaking the barrier to focus on open communication and increasing trust will help moving forward. L. Knox noted that a key question is "shared among whom?" Underlying clarity regarding process and procedure is knowing who the stakeholders are. J. Williams liked the brevity of the definition. R. Prosser noted that the word trust isn't on the page, but perhaps adding it would be helpful. Discussion ensued. M. Anderson suggested three items that would help to increase trust: 1) Help us get a faculty trustee back on the board; 2) enable the faculty senate president to be a member of the Chancellor's cabinet; and 3) adding a 1-page chart on who makes decisions. D. Patterson suggested looking at the language about shared governance in the *Faculty Handbook*

as a starting point for consistency. L. Gross noted that access to information is not the same thing as transparency. R. Spirko expressed that it is important to recognize that there are material conditions that may facilitate or hinder all types of faculty from participating in shared governance. The leadership team and D. Plowman will work together on the document and make suggestions.

- [Shared Governance 1](#)
- [Shared Governance 2](#)
- [Shared Governance 3](#)
- [Shared Governance 4](#)

## **VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Committee reports were approved unanimously.

## **VI. ADJOURNMENT**

G. Skolits adjourned the meeting at 5:02 p.m.