

## FACULTY SENATE

### MINUTES

April 6, 2020, Zoom Meeting

Absent: Brad Areheart, Chris Boyer, Graciela Cabana, James Chyz, Chris Cimino, Neal Eash, Sarah Eldridge, Michael Gilchrist, Kyung Han, Matt Harris, Jon Hathaway, Qiang He, Tim Hulse, David Icove, Karen Jones, Michael Kilbey, Luiz Lima, Madhu Madhukar, Katherine Newnam, Stephen Paddison, Andrew Pulte, Amadou Sall, Sean Schaeffer, Lisi Schoenbach, Liz Teston, Rossy Toledo, Scott Wall, James Williams, Zhili Zhang, Xiaopeng Zhao

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

E. Bernard established a quorum.

#### **II. CALL TO ORDER** (G. Skolits)

G. Skolits called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. He started the meeting with a few announcements pertaining to meeting logistics given the number of individuals on Zoom.

#### **III. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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

None today.

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

D. Plowman provided thanks to all senators for all of the work they are doing. This Spring we are now offering 350,000 credit hours online with about 10 days notice. There has also been a commitment to calling every student; in 1 week we made 6,000 calls. The Chancellor made calls to 6 students. The students have been very transparent, but all were grateful for the call. A short poll was sent to undergraduate students; of those who responded, 1 in 6 students said they needed help. Calls were prioritized to those students needing help first. A similar poll is being undertaken with graduate students. D. Plowman noted that there was a good article in *The Compass* regarding the inner workings of the Emergency Operations Center. The article described how we moved to essential business operations a week before the Governor's safer at home order. As it pertains to on-campus housing, the University went from over 7,000 to 116 students. About 1/2 of all students have had their belongings moved out of the dorm. In June, we can invite students to get their belongings so dorms can be cleaned for Fall. D. Plowman reminded senators that the decision was made for summer session to be offered online. She noted that decisions are being made with very little data and that the University is trying to err on the side of public health and student well-being. Orientation has been moved to the days before school starts in place of what typically has been done in the summer. An online initiative will be added. She emphasized that the recruiting office has done a great job. Calls to graduating high school seniors are underway as they may reconsider and attend school close by. D. Plowman stated that we are in a much better position than some other schools and will be a better university after all of this. The costs of lost revenue to the University this Spring is approximately \$27 million dollars. Over \$14K refunds to students' accounts; she commended the staff in finance and administration for making this happen. D. Plowman stated that some major initiatives are on hold including strategic visioning and the move to the new budget model. The UTK/UTIA reunification is slowed but continuing to move forward. A. Langendorfer would like to hear about how we are planning for Fall being completely online. D. Plowman responded that we are considering Fall term now. One thing to explore is whether we could

offer courses in block format? There are no definitive plans as yet. A. Langendorfer asked that when the plans are being made that faculty, especially NTT faculty, be involved. J. Shefner asked whether a date has been set by which the University must make a decision regarding Fall. D. Plowman stated that they do not have a date; it would be feasible to know for sure by the end of first summer session. J. Shefner underscored that it was very helpful in the Town Hall that you said, "nobody will lose their job over this." D. Plowman responded that she started talking about this as it pertained to student workers. She has been very impressed at how individuals are loaning out student workers, etc. to keep them busy. She underscored that nobody has said anything to us about a budget cut. It is possible that we may need to slow on hiring.

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

D. Manderscheid extended his gratitude for all the work of the faculty to now offer 360,000 credits being taught online rather than 24,000. He reported that one of the policies we have worked on is the option to extend the tenure clock; faculty will have until the end of the year to make this decision. The Provost has asked the deans to modify expectations for faculty to account for tremendous disruption, some who are differentially impacted more than others. He reported that for TNVoice a few questions will be added, and it will be the choice of the faculty whether or not to include the evaluations after reviewing the answers. D. Manderscheid extended great thanks to the faculty for the quick work in modifying the grading options for the students. He stated that we are presently making lots of plans for summer as remote teaching is not the same as online teaching. He noted that we want to provide you with the tools you need to do a good job; more is forthcoming. In consultation with the Deans, we will be sending out a Pulse survey to all faculty members to inquire about how faculty are doing and how the Provost's office can be of help. L. Knox noted that NTTF with 100% teaching loads have no slack in workloads to make up for the heavy load required to switch to remote teaching. She asked what ideas are in the works to ensure NTT faculty are compensated and supported. D. Manderscheid acknowledged the statement and question. He stated that we are looking at ways around how we can recognize this effort of how we can compensate folks. C. Wright asked if an explanation could be extended regarding the decision as to why faculty weren't given an extra week to prepare, which contributed to anxiety for faculty and students. D. Plowman noted that in the EOC, the question about that decision was discussed with the Deans several times; in addition, that decision was made not knowing that the Knox County schools would be out. We used the best info we had at the time including information from all of the academic units.

#### UTIA Report (T. Cross)

T. Cross reported that in UTIA, they are on track with what was described by the Chancellor and the Provost. Since UTIA is slightly different with regard to research and field work, some of the work is on hold and may not be able to get back on track for a year. He noted that efforts are being undertaken to try to keep that work moving while being mindful of social distancing practices. Food production and farming were declared essential services by the Governor, so UTIA continues in supporting farmers. UT extension is doing a lot to support farmers as well in addition to getting information out to all communities regarding COVID-19. Vet Med has stopped service with the exception of emergency or critical care; still offering emergency care for animals. T. Cross provided his appreciation for all the hard work of faculty and staff and all of the value that Tennesseans are gaining from the university during this time.

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

The Faculty Senate meeting minutes of March 2, 2020, were approved via e-vote.

The Faculty Senate Executive Council meeting minutes of March 23, 2020, were included as an information item.

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

Faculty Senate Elections (S. Spurgeon)

S. Spurgeon noted that the ballot for senate went out last week. As of this morning, 46-67% of the votes have been obtained across units. He stated that they may need to extend the ballot to improve participation, but there should be numbers in place for senators by the next meeting.

#### **VI. NEW BUSINESS**

Election of Faculty Senate Secretary (G. Skolits)

M. Gimmel noted she attached a statement and it is posted [online](#). A vote was taken and M. Gimmel was elected as new Senate Secretary.

TNVoice (J. Zomchick)

J. Zomchick noted that B. Lyons prepared a [summary](#) of how we have gotten to where we are today regarding TNVoice. The draft is the consequence of the work of an ad hoc committee. The committee focused on examining how we can collect information about the first 2/3 of the term and how we will evaluate instruction since spring break. He reported that we are recommending that two questions be added. The committee felt very strongly that students be allowed to chime in to do another optional survey regarding their experiences with the transition as it pertains to particular courses as well as in general. B. Lyons noted that there was a great deal of bilateral trust and a sense of shared purpose to ensure faculty voice was present in these decisions.

Gen Ed Policy Change (A. Welch)

RJ Hinde noted that the one-page summary was excellent. A. Welch provided an overview of the attached [summary](#) of APC proposals including policies that build on those voted into place on 3/25 to help students with the changes they have been coping with. Most of the 6 policies are related to the creating of a new grading mode for spring 2020 only. The policy is to create a new grade mode of S/CR/NC grading for most undergraduate courses. The UG Council has slightly revised the minutes to incorporate a change to describe CR as "credit." S corresponds to a grade of C or above. CR is equal to C-, D+, D, or D-. NC is equal to an F. This grade mode will replace the S/NC grade mode in Spring 2020 only. Courses currently using the A-F grade mode that allow students to select S/NC grading will instead allow S/CR/NC grading. The new grade mode does not apply to ABC/N courses; departments may allow students in those courses to elect S/NC grading. If a student is repeating a course in Spring 2020 to replace an earlier grade, and a student chooses S/CR/NC, the grade earned in the student's prior attempt will NOT appear on the transcript and will not count in the student's cumulative GPA. A. Welch noted that they have had to incorporate other changes to the catalog for CR to ensure that this grading option exists in the future. In addition, students may have the option to extend the deadline for incompletes; grades will not roll to an F until end of Fall 2020 term. Students must remove all incompletes before graduation. A. Welch noted that it was recommended that the UG Council work with Faculty Senate to set up a procedure to extend these policies beyond the

Spring term, if circumstances warrant. RJ Hinde added that the instructor has the right to specify the terms for reconciling the incomplete regardless of when grades will roll. M. Anderson asked to clarify that the substantive modification of the previous vote is to modify the CR, which covers THEC requirements. RJ Hinde noted that it is not related to THEC requirements, but rather the addition of the CR is the only change of substance. The downside of selecting this grade mode is that for a student who has a C- under S/NC would earn a NC grade. Therefore, they won't earn credit and can't count the course toward general education requirements, so the creation of the CR grade allows students to receive credit hours for the course, students can use the CR grade to satisfy the requirements for general education when ordinarily, they would have been satisfied for a grade of D- or better previously. D. Manderscheid noted that it is THEC related in the sense that THEC provided guidance that allowed new grade scales to be developed in order to give the students greater flexibility and more options. This also helps with student's ability to be able to retain Hope Scholarships. D. Manderscheid noted that we wanted to give students the most flexibility that wouldn't disadvantage them; THEC provided us with a way to enhance flexibility. L. Gross asked whether VolCore was slowing down. A. Welch noted two points: 1) at September at the latest an evaluation will be made about whether enough has been done to make the presently proposed timeline to move forward; 2) anyone who wanted to have proposals considered for a vote by the end of the Spring semester for inclusion in VolCore should have done this by March 11, 2020. Anyone who wants to get proposals forward should get them in. There is a General Education meeting Wednesday morning at which the VolCore timetable will be discussed. UG Council Minutes were passed by a majority vote; 6% abstained.

#### Graduate Academic Policy Changes (D. Patterson)

D. Patterson described the procedures for implementation are being worked on now for graduate grade scale changes. Today, the proposals being discussed are coming forward from [Veterinary Medicine](#) and [Law](#). D. Patterson noted that these changes are for Spring 2020 only and for Veterinary Medicine, this change applies to approximately 100 vet med students who are in the last six weeks of their program. The motion passed by a majority vote; 6% abstained. D. Patterson noted that the Law School policy change comes forward with the approval of the Graduate Council; the relevant section is Section A. The motion passed by a majority; 11% abstained. M. Anderson asked whether the information about the graduate school changes is being communicated with department heads and graduate students thereafter. D. Thompson noted that there was a meeting last week with all Directors of Graduate Studies; this was sent to all dept heads and associate deans. The units are to determine which of the graduate courses they wanted to opt in to the S/NC grading options. This is still being setup in Banner. D. Thompson stated that they are presently working on communication to graduate students so that they can learn how to avail themselves of this option.

#### Faculty Senate Bylaws Changes (G. Skolits)

G. Skolits noted that all committee chairs were asked to review bylaws for their committees and bring any changes forward. When reviewed by FSEC, there were very few questions. G. Skolits noted that there was one question about the Research Council, as well as one about the Undergraduate Council. G. Skolits noted that the change to the Research Council bylaws is as follows: "Following a vote by members of the Research Council, the Research Council Chair will report to the President- elect the name of the person elected to Chair the Research Council for the coming year." The concern raised was whether this is a choice made by the Research Council and then shared with the Faculty Senate President-Elect. B. Ownley noted that she

wanted to ensure who has the final decision-making authority. B. Lyons noted that it is helpful for the Research Council to have a process to recommend a Chair, yet it would be ideal to have a solution that gives the incoming president an approval right. This will be taken back to the Executive Council. E. Bernard noted that the bylaws need to be checked carefully for the wording. He noted that if the President-Elect is making the appointments, then the RC should not be doing anything more than making a recommendation. B. Lyons mentioned on the Undergraduate Council section, RJ Hinde has expressed concerns about the way in which the Senate votes on the minutes of the Undergraduate Council: "Any curricular change may be reopened for review and its implementation delayed upon vote of the Executive Council or the full Faculty Senate." In relation to Dr. Hinde's concerns, B. Lyons proposed the following revision to the text: "The minutes of the Undergraduate Council may be approved in whole or in part, allowing for any curricular change may be reopened for review and its implementation delayed upon vote of the Executive Council or the full Faculty Senate. In such cases, the Faculty Senate President will communicate specific concerns to be addressed, and the Undergraduate Council may then elect to prepare a revised curricular proposal as reflected in the minutes of a subsequent meeting." RJ Hinde had a concern about the word, "delay" as there is no clarity about the meaning of how long the delay could stand. The other concern is about whether the sentence talks about curricular changes—does this mean courses and curricular requirements, but also academic policies? L. Gross noted that he is not sure he understands the purpose of that sentence. At any Senate meeting, the Senate can act to modify a proposed change by the Undergraduate Council, or do with it as it pleases. B. Lyons responded that the sentence was there to help the Undergraduate Council have a path of recourse. Further discussion ensued. B. Lyons proposed that this be turned back to the Undergraduate Council and Executive Council to address all concerns.

#### COIA (B. Ownley)

B. Ownley shared that the annual COIA meeting was held in Baton Rouge in mid-February. There were a number of members of the staff and administrators of LSU, who talked about the things that they had implemented that were best practices around academic success, graduation, retention, personal and professional development opportunities for student athletes. B. Ownley noted that one thing that came out; transparency is very important. COIA and other groups have criticized the NCAA for not being transparent around the value of these services to student athletes. A lot of money of the development and success for athletes that the NCAA didn't want to talk about. B. Ownley offered to talk with anyone who is interested in discussing the recent federal legislation. B. Lyons was interested to see LSU has decided to suspend recruiting visits on the weekends to ensure the recruits are able to cultivate connections with their academic major. J. Scoggins noted that students do come during the week, but that typically happens when the schools are on break. There is some legislation that dictates that these visits cannot occur when students are expected to be in high school classes. J. Scoggins noted that they are trying to protect the students' academic work.

#### White Paper for Systems Relations (M. Anderson)

M. Anderson noted that this white paper comes to you for consideration from the System Relations Committee which has been focused on arguments for restoring a faculty trustee, as well as the membership of what used to be academic affairs and is now the Education Research Service (ERS) committee. The System Relations Committee continues to argue for the restoration of the faculty trustee on the BOT. Secondly, they want to advocate for the restoration of representation for all of the four UT campuses on the ERS committee. The white

paper is before you for consideration. L. Gross asked whether the former TBR institutions have a faculty member on their similar research/teaching committees? M. Anderson noted she is not positive about the committee structure for each one of the boards, but they do each have a faculty trustee. M. Anderson noted that this does not need a vote, but she would be happy to consider further questions or proposed changes.

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

### Undergraduate Council (A. Welch)

A. Welch briefly reviewed the two reports linked below.

Minutes of [February 25, 2020](#)

Summary Report for February 25, 2020 meeting ([link](#))

Minutes of Evote: [March 9, 2020](#)

Summary Report for March 9, 2020 meeting ([link](#))

Minutes of Evote: [March 24, 2020](#) (information item)

Motion passed by majority; 8% abstained.

### Graduate Council

Grad Council Minutes [February 20, 2020](#)

Grad Council Minutes (Draft) [March 26, 2020](#)

Motion passed by majority; 8% abstained.

## **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

G. Skolits adjourned the meeting at 5:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sadie Hutson, Faculty Senate Secretary