

April 26, 2020

To: Gary Skolits
From: Misty G. Anderson

RE: University System Relations Committee Year-end Report

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.

During this active year, which began with the announcement of the ORI and the reunification of the UTK and UTIA campuses, we spent much of the fall tracking with the developing content of these major changes and initiatives. Additional key goals for this year included matters related to these developments

- With the Research Council, invite VP Stacey Patterson and VC Robert Nobles to present emerging plans for the ORI to the Senate on Sept. 16 and provide them with a list of faculty questions before hand. *We met this goal.*
- Work with the Research Council to draft a “design principles” document detailing what we would like the new ORI to include and observe. *We met this goal.* (*Note: the Committee has still not seen the university’s ORI report produced this fall)
- Help the Provost and the Chancellor establish Campus priorities and authority in the coming year that will exemplify the value of shared governance. *We met this goal through a proposal on shared governance practices that now place the Senate President on the Chancellor’s University Leadership Council, the President Elect on the Steering Committee for Campus Strategic Planning, and the past President to meet with the Council of Deans once a semester. We hope that the System’s move off campus will further clarify the organizational structure of Campus and System relations.*
- Attend at least one of the UTIA/UTK “brainstorming/listening” sessions for faculty. *We met this goal.*
- Review the feedback document prepared by the UTIA/UTK Land Grant Team and provide additional commentary to the Team. *We met this goal, though it is an ongoing process.*
- Ask lead organizers for both new Institute /Reunification initiatives to outline the points at which we will engage in consultative conversation during the remaining process so that we can model shared governance going forward. *We attempted to meet this goal but were not able to get clarity on the ORI process.*
- Help clarify the System and Campus roles and lines of authority in the new Institute arrangements. *We will continue to monitor this goal.*
- Review best practices and models for System/Campus organization. *We continue to monitor this goal.*

In addition to these goals, we produced working papers recommending the restoration of a faculty trustee, a proposal for a Faculty Communications page, and represented faculty by collecting questions and attending the town hall prior to the Board naming Randy Boyd System President.

Because of a number of significant changes in the 2019-20 AY, including a new Chancellor, the proposed move of the System to a site off campus, the status of Interim President, now President Randy Boyd, the proposed ORI, the UTIA/UTK merger, the first full year without any faculty representation from UTK or UTIA on the Board, and the retirement of Board secretary Catherine Mizell, this was a year to consider the function and role of this committee. We have delayed the formal amendment of our charge in the bylaws, though we are working with the following draft:

University/System Relations Committee. Membership shall consist of at least eight faculty members, including the elected campus representative to the University Faculty Council. During years when the campus has a faculty representative on The University of Tennessee Board of Trustees or any of its committees, that person will also serve on the University/System Relations Committee. The chairperson shall be a faculty member. The University/System Relations Committee will provide for faculty input (1) into policies of The University of Tennessee System, including but not limited to those related to tenure, research, ORI, 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.

We have agreed to complete the amendment of our section of the bylaws in the fall and focus our attention next year on the following:

- Involvement and advocacy through the University Faculty Council, where President Shawn Spurgeon and rep. David Patterson will be our voting representatives. The UFC is the faculty advisory body to System President Randy Boyd
- Continue to develop relationships with the Board of Trustees.
- Field at least one faculty speaker from UTK at every Board of Trustees meeting.
- Continue to advocate for the restoration of a faculty trustee on the Board of Trustees.