

UTK Faculty Senate Executive Council

Committee Reports for October 5, 2020

Appeals

- No report

Athletics

- No report

Benefits and Professional Development Committee

Update provided by Benefits and Professional Development Chair, Stephanie Madison

Summary:

Our committee was interested in creating an online database/resource to help connect faculty/staff with students. With the current pandemic, a lot of faculty are looking for in-home childcare or in-home/online tutors to assist their children with virtual learning. There are probably UTK students that would be seeking extra income. Faculty do not want to ask undergraduate students that they work with because it would be a conflict of interest, but then they do not know how to contact other interested students. In conversations with the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences and the Departments of Child & Family Studies and Theory & Practice in Teacher Education, we became aware of Handshake. We contacted the Center for Career Development & Academic Exploration, and they have created an informational letter and an online form for Faculty/Staff wanting to post job positions for childcare or tutoring on Handshake to complete.

Budget and Planning

- No report

Diversity and Inclusion Committee

Faculty Senate Diversity and Inclusion Committee

Meeting Summary

September 16, 2020

During the September meeting of the Faculty Senate Diversity and Inclusion Committee, members discussed better defining what we do as a committee and how we might collaborate with other diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) groups across campus, as well as serving to hold administration accountable regarding DE&I issues. Particular issues discussed included the need to support international faculty going through arduous visa and immigration processes, updating the information submitted to the Campus Pride Index, continuing our work regarding invisible differences and overlapping identities (e.g., religion, sexual orientation, ability, etc.), and do what we can to ensure DE&I initiatives will not fall by the wayside in response to COVID (e.g., anti-bullying initiative stalled). Follow up actions included contacting the Faculty Senate President regarding representatives to our committee from Faculty Affairs, TLI, and System

Relations and extending invitations to the Chancellor, Provost, and VC Small to meet with our committee. The committee is will be reviewing and following up on progress related to previous communications from administration (i.e., response in July to letters from CRC and UCW regarding racial equity and social justice) and reports submitted to administration (i.e., Diversity Champions report).

Faculty Affairs

MINUTES

Faculty Affairs Committee

Monday September 28, 2020, 4:00-5:00pm

Zoom Address: <https://tennessee.zoom.us/j/4604281435>.

Members Present: Beauvais Lyons, Julie Andsager, Thomas Berg, Cheryl Greenacre, Justin Jia Brian Krumm, Mary McAlpin, Kai Sun, and Jessica Westerhold.

Member Absent: Elizabeth MacTavish (recurring conflict)

Guest: Diane Kelly, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs

Approval of the Minutes: [August 31, 2020](#) approved by consensus

Business:

1. **Update:** Beauvais noted that Mary McAlpin has agreed to serve as a liaison from our committee to the Diversity and Inclusion Committee.
2. **Update from Diane Kelly:** regarding her faculty affairs goals including:
 - (a) review of systems, process and work-flow related to faculty affairs is ongoing.
 - (b) establish a task force to examine non-tenure track faculty titles and types of duties (with consideration of replacing the “lecturer” title with “teaching professor.”), etc. Diane said that she is hearing compelling reasons why such a task force is needed, and has concerns regarding faculty titles, equity and pay, workload, consistency of conducting annual reviews, family leave, and promotion processes for non-tenure track faculty. Beauvais said that the Faculty Senate is prepared to assist in any way, and that Mary McAlpin and Jessica Westerhold from this committee are prepared to serve on the task force along with Anne Langendorfer from the NTTF Issues Committee. Diane said she envisioned the task for being mostly if not all NTTF. There was discussion of the broad range of NTTF, including clinical faculty, some who have a 100% research commitment.
 - (c) create a working group focuses on the review and promotion of tenure-line faculty. Diane indicated that this task force will be comprised of three sub-groups, each of which includes an associate dean, a department head and faculty members:
 - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in promotion and tenure and annual review processes,
 - PPPR
 - The impact of COVID-19 on faculty teaching, research/scholarship, and service.

(d) strive to address the hiring and retention of under-represented faculty was not discussed due to limited time, but will be discussed at our October 26th meeting.

3. **Second review consideration of *Faculty Handbook* changes:** following the first reading to the Faculty Senate on September 21:

3.11.4.2 Extension of Probationary Period

For good cause [that is either related to procedural error or results from a significant disruption of University operations that has impeded the faculty member's opportunity to conduct required research or other scholarly activity, teaching, and/or service](#), the university and a tenure-track faculty member may agree in writing to extend a six-year probationary period for a maximum of two additional years. The proposed extension must be approved in advance by the chief academic officer, the chancellor, [and the vice president for academic affairs](#), the president (or designee), and the General Counsel (or designee).

Reason for change: This change updates our policy in order to bring it into agreement with Board policy (BT0006), which was revised at the Board meeting on March 27, 2020.

Comments in FS meeting Zoom chat questioned the 2-year maximum, especially in contexts where factors may force delay of research agenda. This something that Diane Kelly has discussed with Vice President Linda Martin, but does not expect change in the near term, and not before it is an action item at the Faculty Senate in October. Beauvais suggested that they consider text that states "Requests for further extensions of the tenure-clock require approved of the UT system president."

4. **Update on the new PPPR policy:** UT System Vice-president Linda Martin has reported that the cost estimate report from last spring will be presented as part of UT Board of Trustees Education, Research and Service Committee agenda on October 22-23.
5. **College and Department Bylaws:** Steps needed to bring the bylaws of all colleges and departments into compliance with the *Faculty Handbook* since the [October 25, 2019 audit](#). Beauvais reviewed some of the progress that had been made in bylaws compliance, and that the audit is a working document that can be updated. He said he would work on updating the audit categories to include expurgating references to the *Manual for Faculty Evaluation*, which was discontinued last year as a result of handbook changes. Cheryl and Jessica had conducted initial audits of their department bylaws looking for references to the manual and handbook and noted some challenges. While references to the manual could be redirected to the appropriate chapter of the handbook, Cheryl observed that when bylaws reference a specific section number of the handbook, it is not always correct since the handbook numeration is often revised. After some discussion, it was agreed that such listings in department or college bylaws should not be hyperlinked and should only cite a given chapter of the handbook. Jessica suggested that it would be helpful to create a cross-referenced list to assist in the audits.

Beauvais asked members of the committee to examine their own unit bylaws, and he will compile a first draft of the new audit template for the October meeting.

6. **Review “Other Policy Documents”** from Section 1.11 and [Appendix I](#) of the *Faculty Handbook*.

Beauvais noted that there was an initial discussion of these sections of the handbook at the February 2020 meeting. From that meeting, John Zomchick indicated that, based on his conversations with the Office of General Counsel, that these reference sections could be revised without board approval.

From Section 1.11, the following sections were considered worthy of retaining:

- [Charter and By-laws of the University](#) (contains statement of legal establishment of the university, including charter provisions and by-laws).
- [Policies on Research and Intellectual Property](#)
- [UT Search Procedures: Guidelines for Conducting Upper-Level Faculty and Staff-Exempt Searches](#) (describes procedures for conducting upper-level faculty and staff-exempt searches), and
- [Faculty Central](#) covering all other related topics.

With Appendix I, only the most important UT Board Policies should be included such as:

- [Charter and By-laws of the University](#) (contains statement of legal establishment of the university, including charter provisions and by-laws)
- [UT Policies](#) (all current official Board, Fiscal, HR, IT, and Safety policies, including the *University Code of Conduct* and the *Conflict of Interest Policy*)
- [Financial Exigency Plan](#)

However, there are links to policies that do not appear to be current, as the [Equal Employment Opportunity Policy](#) does not include protections for sexual orientation, and other sections should be dated and or indicate the source of the documents.

Justin Jai and Beauvais Lyons will review both sections and propose a preliminary set of recommendation for the committee at the October 26th meeting.

7. **Handbook 5.6:** Work with the NTTF Issues committee on issues related to handbook policies (5.6) regarding the termination of non-tenure-track faculty members. The NTTF Issues committee is working on potential handbook language, and Diane Kelly indicated that this is something that will be part of the charge of the Non-Tenure Track faculty Task Force.
8. **Early Retirement:** Explore options for early retirement incentives to avoid furloughing faculty if this became necessary. Cheryl noted that UGA had developed a policy to incentivize faculty retirements, but they did not have to furlough anyone. Given the strong enrollment of the university and the unlikelihood of any furloughs, the committee agreed that pursuing such options is not needed.
9. **Adjournment:** after briefly sharing ideas of what members of the committee were planning to make for dinner, the meeting ended at 5:03pm.

Future Meetings:

Monday October 26, 3:30pm

Monday November 23, 3:30pm

Graduate Council

- September 3, 2020 Minutes: https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_gcminutes/113/

Library and Technology

- No report

Nominations and Appointments

- No report

Non-Tenure Track Issues Committee

- No report

Research Council

The University of Tennessee
Faculty Senate Research Council
Minutes of the Meeting
September 9, 2020

Elected Members present:

Dallas Donohoe, Yuri Efremenko, Yanfei Gao, David Icove, Julia Jaekel (Chair), Michael Kilbey, Xueping Li, Brian Long, Vasileios Maroulas, Tore Olsson, Stephen Paddison, Sean Schaeffer, Alisa Schoenbach, and Soren Sorensen

Ex-Officio Members present:

Suzie Allard, David Anderson, Ernest Brothers, Doug Coatsworth, Deborah Crawford, Bill Dunne, Michael Higdon, Larry McKay, Jamie McGowan, Holly Mercer, Charlie Noble, Josh Price, Victor Hazelwood, Hollie Raynor, Jon Wall, David White, and Tami Wyatt

ORE Members present:

Erin Chapin, Marc Gibson, Jean Mercer, Jon Phipps, Sarah Pruett, and Renee Thomas

Call to order:

A regular meeting of the Research Council was held via Zoom and Julia Jaekel called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm.

Announcements and Reports**Introduction of Council Members****Goals**

The Council's goals were developed from the Faculty Senate retreat and circulated for comment. These will be posted on the Research Council's website once finalized. The Chair's goal is coordinate speakers and facilitate open discussions between stakeholders.

ACTION: Council members should send any comments to the Chair.

The goals listed under Overarching Aims continue year after year. Goals for RC Sessions and Activities are topics that will be meeting foci for this year's Council.

Committee Assignments

Committee assignments were circulated and are based on the member's request when possible.

ACTION: Council members to notify Chair if they want to change committees. (none requested by 9/22/20)

New Business

Introduction and conversation with our new VCR – Deborah Crawford

The first month has been getting to know the University, faculty and other stakeholders, understand strengths, identify areas where more investments are needed, and better ways to support the faculty to realize the research aspirations. The next few months will be understanding the bigger picture. This broader understanding will help to combine strengths that represent the unique intellectual personality of the University as well how the University community connects to partners in the external community; near and far. This includes strengthening partnerships in the community, with individuals, and private sector organizations to understand their expectations and how the University can make a difference. There is a strategic importance of the integration of research in the education system and will be working with the Graduate School and college deans about how research and scholarship are reflected in the curriculum and learning outcomes of students. Ultimately, the most important product of the University are the students we help prepare for productive lives.

The Research council plays a critical role to understand how the RC members experience the university, experience the support ORE provides, and how ORE can be better together. Candid feedback is encouraged from everyone about how ORE can be better.

This is the third VCR position and one lesson learned is that communication breaks down between what happens in the senior leadership ranks and the faculty who are the life's blood of the University. The goal is to bridge the gap between how she sees the University versus how the faculty experience the University. If the job is done well, no one should be surprised by information that flows through email about a new initiative because the RC is aware and has part ownership in that initiative because the RC will have had opportunity to be informed and comment.

She is open to discussing what the RC feels that needs to be discussed and does not mind difficult conversations about difficult issues. That is how we get stronger together. Looks forward to working with everyone, all disciplines. Even though background is in Engineering, will be wholeheartedly commit to every faculty member in every discipline. She wants to make sure that the support ORE provides is felt by each and every RC member and colleagues. She expects the RC to hold her accountable for that.

She plans to be at every meeting and looks forward to learning more through RC members' experiences. Very delighted to be at the University and sees lots of talent among faculty and opportunity at the University. One of the topics Julia discussed was team approach of research scholarship creating the 'whole is greater than the sum of its parts'. Collaboration that takes root and flourishes is something that she truly enjoys.

Q: F&A Rates, budget model

A: Current F&A rate is typical for a public intuition. No idea how the integration of UTIA will affect the rate. The Feds determine the rate working with the University. Oak Ridge has a higher F&A rate because they live off what they bring in. Very excited about UTIA integration and the research opportunities it will create. OneHealth is a good example of that collaboration. Recognizes the turnover in the VCR position at the University and sensitive to the fact that the turnover has affected the research enterprise. Plans to be a long time VCR to provide continuity of leadership and rely on the VCR and ORE team.

Q: Recruiting foreign students which are a lifeline in research. COVID long-term impact on research?

A: Near term (1 to 2 years), Federal government will use Research as a recovery mechanism as it did in 2008. Rs & Ds – how can universities play a part in economic recovery and how research be a part of that recovery process? Need to prepare to respond to the opportunities. Longer term, 3 to 5 years out is where some of the trauma of 2020 will play out. Most institutions are on a hiring freeze, some have medical facilities with tremendous losses and those losses impact the academic programs. How that shakes out on how the federal administration will support Universities is unclear. It may be quite different based on who is elected in November. Looking at shovel ready projects – What can we do immediately that would have immediate impact? Wants to hear RC ideas on translational research; research that shows up in society. Where are the best areas to make investments and be competitive for Federal projects? International relationships will be a challenge since universities relied on other countries for graduate students. Every university is worried. Because of the international travel ban, international students could find opportunities closer to home with intuitions that are just as competitive as US institutions. One current effect of COVID is that enrollment increased at UT with in-state students but decreased in out-of-state and international students.

Q: AI and Quantum, and 5G

A: Data Science and Engineering, Machine-Learning very excited and opportunity for new research across many disciplines. Faculty that have that expertise and to apply in so many different areas of application is very much in demand. ORI allows investment in AI Machine Learning expertise. Last 4 to 5 years, those with that expertise are showing up in departments that are not Statistics, Business Analytics, or Computer Science Departments but they are showing up in departments of other disciplines too bringing tools that allow researchers and scholars to use those tools in interesting ways to further their own disciplinary or multi-disciplinary interests. A goal is to foster a sense of community, a community of scholars interested in AI and Machine Learning as an area of study itself. NSF AI call was released and ORE Research Development, under the leadership of Jennifer Webster is working on the development which includes limited submission competition, identifying the faculty interested in putting together this large projects with multi institutional teams. The University needs to be more deliberate about preparing for those opportunities before the release of the solicitation or funding opportunity announcement. Coupling the University and ORNL expertise provides real strategic advantage if we can find a way to leverage the expertise.

Initial planning - How can we assess the impact of the COVID-19 on research procedures and productivity?

This is not a short-term look at the data currently available but brainstorm what can be implemented now to track institutional and external data throughout the year and moving forward in the next few years. Implement procedures that will help answer the questions about long term impact of COVID. Brainstorm on how we can go in the right directions to collect data available. There has been increase in submissions since COVID but this is a short term impact, what we are expecting to see long-term is different. Discussion of potential software to track data. Impact on certain groups of faculty: people of color, women, care-givers, etc. and how that can impact productivity. Guest: Anna Banks, Director of Research Informatics.

Discussion included:

- Should data currently tracked not also be considered in what is tracked in the future?
- International research will be impacted even though funding will be available
- Productivity is an important indicator but measured differently in different disciplines.
 - Grant submission should not be the only indicator of productivity.
- Drs. Babu, Dunne, and McKay were asked by Dr. Crawford to investigate how COVID access restrictions on the Oak Ridge reservation has impacted research especially the graduate students.
- Potentially track IRB submissions, contract submissions
- Speed of contract submissions and billing to funding agencies may be impacted
- Working with the Graduate School - Progress to graduation: short-term (May or August) and long-term (later)
- Ability for graduates to be employed after graduation
- Do all departments have indicators for past years? It varies by college: PhD placement in Engineering May want to track longer – 5 to 6 years
- Caution on using publications as an indicator because time to publish varies from discipline to discipline
- Publications of students
- Data Central – data.utk.edu/graduateblueprint

- Research Council's role is to initiate conversation and activities that could have synergetic effects across campus

It was suggested to create these broad categories:

- 1) Access to Facilities, Labs, International Travel to do field work
- 2) Staffing & Billing / Human Resources
- 3) Personal Impact (caregiver responsibilities, illness, etc.)
- 4) Students' Graduation and Employment Success

Adjournment: The Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:57 pm.

Minutes submitted by: Paula Brown

Next Meeting: October 14, 2020

Teaching and Learning Council

- No report; next meeting 10/12/20

Undergraduate Council

- No report; next UGC meeting: October 20, 2020

University System Relations Committee

- No report