

UTK Faculty Senate Executive Council

Committee Reports for February 15, 2021

*Updated for March 1, 2021 FS Meeting

Appeals

- No report

Athletics

- No report

Benefits and Professional Development Committee

***February 12, 2021 Meeting:**

Present: Jeremy Chandler, Kyung Joon Han, Stephanie Madison, Elena Shpak, Liz Teston

Absent: Brad Case, Tony Estep, Forbes Walker, Edward Yu

Discussed progress on our current goals:

- Provide professional development for faculty related to handling students with a mental illness or students experiencing a mental health crisis
 - We could not find any optional training related to this topic on KATE.
 - We will contact the director of the Student Counseling Center to see if we can assist in developing an optional training on KATE or an informational card for faculty that would summarize information and resources.
- Address faculty concerns related to COVID-19
 - Some departments do not want to create a backup list of instructors.
 - Since each department has their own reasons for not creating a list and department chairs are used to having to deal with these types of situations outside of COVID-19, we have decided not to pursue trying to message all of the department heads.
 - In January, we emailed a list of specific suggestions that addressed faculty concerns related to COVID-19 to the Chancellor and Provost.
 - We received a response summarizing UTK's plans and policies related to COVID-19.

Discussed other questions:

- Question from a faculty member about how the Government Stimulus Bill passed in December will affect any leftover 2020 FSA funds
 - The bill allows employers to amend their FSA plans for 2020 and 2021.
 - Optional amendments they could make include unlimited carryover, 12-month grace period, election changes, post-termination reimbursements, and dependent care FSA age limit adjustment.
 - Any funds that are allowed to rollover will be transferred from PayFlex to OptumBank.

- The state is still discussing the law changes with PayFlex and OptumBank. Any changes would have to be approved by the State Insurance Committee. This might be discussed at their February meeting.
- We will wait to hear which amendments the state decides to make.
- Question from students about where to eat on campus
 - Students cannot eat in many buildings because of COVID-19 precautions.
 - The tents set up around campus are great for eating and studying when the weather is nice.
 - It is unclear where students can safely eat when it is very cold or raining.
 - This topic is outside of our committee's area, but we will see if we can find out an answer.

Budget and Planning

- No report

Diversity and Inclusion Committee

Meeting Summary - January 20, 2021

During the January meeting of the Faculty Senate Diversity and Inclusion Committee, members continued to discuss progress made toward the action items outlined in the Chancellor's statement in July 2020 regarding racial equity and social justice. Kari Alldredge, Vice Provost in the Division of Enrollment Management, presented information related to strengthening efforts to recruit and retain students of color. The committee also discussed upcoming events and listening sessions planned by the Office of Diversity and Engagement related to invisible and emotional labor. These events are being led by faculty fellows Amber Roessner and Mitsunori Misawa.

***Meeting Summary – February 17, 2021**

During our February meeting, the FS Diversity & Inclusion Committee discussed an email received from a senior lecturer in the Department of English regarding the lack of involvement of OED and inclusive hiring practices of non-tenure track faculty, as well as the overall diversity among and support for these faculty. The original email included the chairs of the Non-Tenure Track Issues and Faculty Affairs Committees, who have been contacted regarding development of a joint resolution to address the issues raised in the meeting. The committee also discussed issues related to LGBTQ+ people on campus, including UTK's ranking on the Campus Pride Index, the difficulties faced by transgender and non-binary students in making name changes in the system, and coordination of DE&I efforts among the various committees and groups on campus engaged in the work of supporting and advocating for LGBTQ+ people at UTK. The co-chairs extended an invitation to Vice Chancellor Small and the Director of the Pride Center to attend one of our committee meetings to discuss the work being done and how our committee can be supportive in those efforts. Finally, we briefly discussed an issue regarding

supports/programming/services for the return to campus and re-entry to campus life in the fall given the aspirations of getting back to a more residential campus experience. We discussed whether the university is thinking about how staff and faculty might navigate this re-entry and what supports might be in place for that navigation and readjustment to new norms, particularly given the varying experiences had during the pandemic, many of which lay along lines of aspects of identity. The co-chairs emailed Mary Lucal to query her about this topic.

Faculty Affairs

Summary from the Monday February 8, 2021 meeting.

1. The handbook changes approved by the Faculty Senate on February 1, 2021 to the *UTK-UTIA Faculty Handbook*, 1.11 Other Useful University Policy Documents, and Appendixes I, are now under final review from the Office of General Counsel before implementation.
2. In December 2020 the UT Board of Trustees approved changes to board policy on the extension of the tenure clock. Vice Provost Diane Kelly will present a summary of these changes for the February 15th Executive Council meeting as well as the March 1, full senate meeting.
3. The committee discussed an effort last fall to have faculty establish diversity goals as part of their APPR planning statements, and what percentage of faculty did so. Vice-Provost Kelly indicated that it be hard to track this. One proposal was to ask department heads to compile a summary report indicating the percentage of faculty who included diversity goals in their planning statements, and some examples of these efforts to showcase and recognize such initiatives.
4. The Office of the Provost now has a subscription with [National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity](#) to support assistant and associate professors through summer programs.
5. Working with Rachel Caldwell and Michelle Brannen from the Faculty Senate Library and Technologies Committee, we discussed their white paper “Crediting Faculty for Open, Public Access to Research and Scholarship as Outreach Service in APPR” from the Faculty Senate Library & Information Technology Committee. The draft document is posted [here](#). We have proposed that Rachel give a presentation to the faculty senate on March 1 to promote faculty submission of their author’s accepted manuscripts to [TRACE](#) as a mechanism to share scholarship with the general public consistent with our land-grant mission as well as the open access policies of their publishers. The committee is also seeking to incentivize faculty submission to TRACE through ELEMENTS as part of APPR.

Graduate Council

- No report – Next meeting scheduled for February 18th

Library and Technology

- No report

Nominations and Appointments

- No report

Non-Tenure Track Issues Committee

- No report

Research Council

- All minutes from Research Council meetings can be found here:
<https://researchcouncil.utk.edu/minutes/>

Teaching and Learning Council

- Meeting scheduled February 15th
- Report will be available at next FSEC meeting

Undergraduate Council

- February 2, 2021 minutes: https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_undergradcouncil/118/

University System Relations Committee

- No report