



**FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES**  
**Monday, May 2, 2022**  
**3:30 pm Strong Hall Room 101 and Zoom**

Louis Gross, President  
Beth Schussler, President-Elect  
Shawn Spurgeon, Past-President

Millie Gimmel, Secretary  
Ernest Bernard, Parliamentarian  
Robert Spirko, Communications Officer

I. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE QUORUM

The establishment of the quorum was confirmed by the parliamentarian.

II. CALL TO ORDER

L Gross called the meeting to order at 3:33 pm.

III. ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

- A. Approval of Faculty Senate minutes from [April 4, 2022](#)  
M. Violanti moved to approve, seconded by B. Lyons  
There was no discussion.

The minutes were approved:

In Person: 35 in favor, 0 against, 0 abstaining

On Zoom: 30 in favor, 0 against, 3 abstaining

- B. Undergraduate Council [Minutes April 12, 2022](#)

J. Devlin reviewed the minutes. She reported on Academic Policy Committee meetings and the work they had done, including a change in the withdrawal date for students to the last day of classes. Jamie Cobel, who has been the Undergraduate Academic Policy Chair for the past two years, was elected to serve as the Vice-Chair for the Undergraduate Council for the 2022-2023 academic year. There were a number of VolCore courses which were approved by the Undergraduate Council.

L. Gross reminded the Senate that when these minutes are approved by the Senate they will be included in the catalog.

Beauvais Lyons asked why the withdrawal date was changed to the last day of classes. J. Devlin deferred to Brent Lamons, chair of the academic appeals committee. He stated that revising the course withdrawal deadline policy such that students are allowed to withdraw from a course up to the last day of the class instead of the 84th day is more student-friendly. The wording is more to the point, easily understood by students, and reads more clearly. The old date of the 84<sup>th</sup> day was based on the needs of the Registrar's Office in processing withdrawals. There is evidence that later withdrawals help student success and is in line with what our peer institutions do. B. Lyons then asked about the impact on HOPE scholarship eligibility. Drops impact scholarship money, no matter when students drop courses. Students should always consult with One Stop before dropping a class.

M. Violanti asked how this impacts students who remain in the class and the impact on group projects and the impact on faculty. B. Lamons stated that this gives faculty more time for grading and providing feedback to students on their progress before the student has to make a decision about whether they will or will not drop the course.

The Undergraduate Council minutes were approved.  
In Person: 26 in favor, 4 against, 2 abstaining  
On zoom: 24 in favor, 1 against, 9 abstaining

#### IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

##### A. President's Report

L. Gross received a request to vote on a COIA resolution that supports a report by the Knight Commission on revenues in intercollegiate athletics. He asked for comments from the Faculty Senate Athletics Committee and the Executive Council and informed the Chancellor and Provost about this issue. He cast a vote in favor of the statement to support the Knight Commission plan.

L. Gross expressed concern about the lack of transparency in the budget process this year noting that the actions did not align with the BAM procedures in place. The Senate Budget and Planning Committee did receive a report from Vice Chancellor Cimino last week and will report on that today. He encouraged the Faculty Senate to insist that next year's process follow the guidelines set for BAM.

During the University Leadership Council meeting on April 6, 2022 L. Gross expressed concern that the bill that creates the Civics Institute is contradictory in that it indicates that all UTK processes will be followed, yet states explicitly that the Director of the Institute will make decisions to hire faculty, while that is the purview of the Provost in our processes at UTK.

The Faculty Senate has collected comments and suggestions as to how UTK might assist those in higher education in Ukraine. Vice Provost Neisler has provided an outline for processes in place if a unit wishes to provide support for an individual

Ukrainian faculty member or student. Loretta Link has this information and can pass it on to you if your unit wishes to pursue support for an affected individual.

L. Gross attended the University Faculty Council meeting in Nashville. He encouraged Senators to thank the System administration and, particularly Vice President Carey Whitworth, for their efforts to work with legislators to both provide the extensive support for UT that arose this legislative session, and for their efforts to ameliorate the potential harm that could have arisen from certain proposed legislative actions. President Boyd and the System administration have actively participated in UFC meetings this year, and regularly responded to questions from the various Senate's leadership. The UFC has consistently asked for faculty representation on the Board but the Board has firmly denied this.

L. Gross attended the Tennessee University Faculty Senates (TUFS) meeting this past weekend and the UTK administrator responses in providing guidance for the impacts of the Divisive Concepts bill was applauded by several representatives from other Tennessee campuses. There are consistent concerns across the campuses with regard to administrative bloat and the professionalization of higher education, that has led to the reduction of faculty involvement in various aspects of university activities.

L. Gross was informed by the Chancellor of the decision to hold another football game at a time that interferes with classes. He expressed concern about the decision and its impact on teaching, particularly for courses that only meet once a week. In subsequent meetings with the Provost and Chief of Staff, the Senate leadership brought up several issues associated with this decision that we hope will foster more effective planning for this next year.

In conclusion, L. Gross thanked the Senate for the opportunity to again serve as President and for the wonderful support he has received from the leadership team of the Senate. He encouraged all to support Beth Schussler next year. He particularly thanked Brooke Killion and Loretta Link for all their efforts this year. He could never have dealt with the variety of issues that arose without their assistance and their guidance.

There was no discussion.

**B. Chancellor's report**

The Chancellor expressed her appreciation for Dr. Gross and his work and congratulated him on being selected as the Mace Bearer. The Chancellor reviewed the change in administration at UTIA and feels that the year has been productive even with the changes. The new Vice President/Vice Chancellor of UTIA is Dr. Carrie Castille. The Law School also has a new Dean, Mr. Lonnie Brown, who is very impressive and well respected across the nation. A lot of effort went into working with the General Assembly, weekly calls with all concerned parties. There has been a lot of activity, including the biggest infusion ever of money into the campus. The Civics Institute had broad

bipartisan support and is an exciting opportunity. The Baker Center hosted an initial event on constitutional conversations. There will be more of these in the future on free speech, equality, and other issues. There was a meeting between the Chancellor and Oak Ridge National Laboratory. She feels that raising the minimum wage twice this year has been very significant and, generally speaking, it has been a good year. In closing she added that the former Ambassador of Ukraine was speaking tonight after the Senate meeting; and she encouraged all to attend.

C. Provost's Report

The Provost stated that this has been a productive year working with the Senate and President Gross. J. Zomchick announced that next academic year (2022-2023) mandatory fees for graduate students on fee waivers will no longer be covered by the graduate students themselves. They will be covered centrally and after that they will be covered by colleges and by the principal investigators for GRAs. This is essentially a \$2,000 raise for graduate students.

The facilitators for academic structures have met with faculty from the College of Arts and Sciences. Feedback about this meeting will be shared with faculty shortly.

In regard to the September 1, 2022 football game, the campus will close at 12:35 pm and later classes will be held remotely for the rest of the day. Supervisors and administrators will decide on staffing for their areas on this day.

May 2 was national confirmation day for freshmen choosing a university. There are 6,950 confirmed students so far, and this might increase to 7,000 or more students. The university received 36,000 admission applications this year. It is likely that not all of the students who accepted will actually attend in the fall. There has been a record number of out-of-state students and they are more likely to change their minds. The target is 6,450-6,600 new students.

The university hired a new Registrar. Mr. Brian Coldren, who has been well received. The Graduate School awarded a large number of fellowships and EuReca had 997 students showing 654 projects. It was an impressive display of student research. The Provost thanked the faculty mentors for the support they offer students. We have 70 student fellowship recipients at the national level. These awards bring excellent publicity to the university.

UT is one of two recipients of the 2022 Don Clifton Strengths for Students award which recognizes universities that "enable students to learn what they naturally do best and apply their strengths to thrive in school and in all areas of their lives".

There were 475 attendees at the Teaching and Learning Institute conference from around the world. UT increased its rankings in sustainability. Faculty Appreciation Week was a success.

The Faculty Space Task Force is seeking feedback from faculty about an initiative to provide a new collaborative/gathering place to support faculty success, engagement, and community building. Please complete the five question survey ([https://utk.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_7Om8S3olwsmsA0m](https://utk.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_7Om8S3olwsmsA0m)).

Research Development Academy is designed to support tenure-track faculty from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds to help them advance their own scholarly agenda in research, scholarship, and/or creative activities. Applications are due May 11, 2022 (<https://provost.utk.edu/rda/>).

The Provost is grateful to the faculty for all their efforts over the last few years in less-than-ideal situations. Our greatest strength is the faculty and it shows in the number of students who want to attend UT.

B. Lyons asked about the state of PPPR and how the Senate and Faculty Affairs Committee can work through needed Handbook changes.

The Chancellor will be hiring another lawyer in the General Counsel's office who will be assigned to UTK. This person will work on Handbook issues and should be in place by the fall semester. D. Kelly has worked hard on these issues and now has almost sufficient staff who will be able to focus their attention on the Faculty Handbook changes.

The board has postponed the report on PPPR from June to October. The Provost would like to wait until all the data is available from this year including the amount of time needed to complete the reviews.

Another senator asked about the hiring process for the Civics Institute; when it will start; and how it will operate. The Provost stated that this is not set yet. The Chancellor is looking to find a bipartisan group of well-known academics to be advisors on the search committee. The Baker Center needs to become a College or Center to be able to house faculty positions.

A. Roessner asked about the retirement of an excellent teacher in her department who retired but would have kept teaching if she had access to a sabbatical in addition to faculty development leave. Are these options possible? The Provost will convene the Deans and possibly the Faculty Affairs Committee to discuss the feasibility of these options. R. Spirko interjected that Non-Tenure Track Faculty would also profit from having faculty development leave as well.

L. Gross asked the Chancellor about the policy on bullying which has not been finalized. There should be a system wide anti-bullying policy in place by June 1.

T. Fridman commented that the issue of students not being prepared for math courses is at an emergency level. She also asked the Chancellor about campus beautification and including artwork that related to science be considered.

D. UTIA Report

L. Martin was not in attendance.

V. New Business

A. Resolution for the late Jerry Riehl, former staff member of OIT (D. Patterson).

David Patterson read the following resolution:

“WHEREAS, Jerry Riehl provided twenty-two years of exemplary leadership and tireless service that had an immeasurable impact at The University of Tennessee-Knoxville and

WHEREAS, in his role of Manager of Course Design and Delivery in the Office of Information Technology he provided expertise, guidance, consultation, and team leadership supporting the identification, evaluation, and deployment of multiple instructional technology tools for the campus and

WHEREAS, his leadership, in collaboration with faculty and student representatives, was instrumental in bringing to campus the learning management system Canvas, which has been transformational in faculty’s ability to deliver multimedia educational materials to students and

WHEREAS, Jerry Riehl provided well-informed guidance and direction in researching synchronous delivery platforms to satisfy the requirements and demands of emergent online degree programs across the campus, resulting in the adoption of Zoom in 2014 and

WHEREAS, with the COVID pandemic in 2020 and the increased need for a virtual teaching and meeting platform, Jerry Riehl expanded UTK Zoom agreements and implemented a statewide enterprise Zoom contract for the UT System in 2021 and

WHEREAS, beginning in 2016, Jerry Riehl served with the UTK Emergency Operations Center as part of the academic continuity team, subsequently providing expertise enabling the broad shift across the UTK campus to online course delivery during the COVID pandemic and

WHEREAS, Jerry Riehl was a beloved leader, colleague, and mentor to numerous full-time staff, multiple faculty members, and generations of graduate student assistants

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT The University of Tennessee-Knoxville Faculty Senate celebrates Jerry Riehl for his demonstrated and unwavering dedication to the mission of our institution to “Empower learners of all ages and backgrounds to achieve their dreams through accessible and affordable education and state-of-the-art research training opportunities” and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT THE FACULTY SENATE of The University of Tennessee-Knoxville offers its most sincere condolences to the family of Jerry Riehl and our deep appreciation for his twenty-two years of selfless service to this institution, its students, faculty, and staff.”

The resolution passed by acclamation.

David Patterson presented the resolution to Jyl Riehl (Jerry’s wife) and Kay Dodson (Jyl’s sister). They were both touched by and appreciative of this presentation.

B. Resolutions for Faculty Senate Service

Gary Skolits read the following resolution.

“WHEREAS, Brooke Killion, Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Educational Psychology and Counseling, has served as the Graduate Research Assistant of the UTK Faculty Senate for five years, and

WHEREAS, she assured the smooth functioning of the Faculty Senate meetings, and

WHEREAS, she has guided the election process for new Faculty Senators to assure continued faculty participation in shared governance, and

WHEREAS, she helped guide Faculty Senate committee function and communication, and

WHEREAS, she assisted the Faculty Affairs Committee in auditing of department and college bylaws, and

WHEREAS, she provided ongoing research and data consultations for the ad hoc informational needs of multiple Senate committees, and

WHEREAS, she expanded the data and research capacity of the Senate, including an emergency survey of faculty instructional needs during the transition to online teaching caused by the COVID pandemic, and

WHEREAS, she has been a constant source of knowledge about the functioning of the UTK Faculty Senate for multiple Faculty Senate presidents and our new Administrative Assistant, who each relied on her skills, expertise, initiative, and knowledge to help them do their jobs, and

WHEREAS, he has built and maintained positive working relationships with Senators, and

WHEREAS, she will be greatly missed by all who have served on UTK Faculty Senate over the last five years,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the University of Tennessee Faculty Senate expresses its sincere appreciation to Brooke Killion for her exemplary and long-time leadership and service to the Senate and the University of Tennessee, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT a copy of this Resolution be presented to Brooke Killion and that the Resolution become part of the minutes of the Senate meeting held on May 2, 2022.”

The resolution passed by acclamation.

G. Skolits presented the resolution to Brooke Killion who will be leaving UTK to complete her one-year internship in Nebraska. She was touched by and appreciative of this recognition and the gifts she received from the past presidents whom she worked for.

C. E. Schussler read the following resolution for Louis Gross

“WHEREAS, Dr. Louis Gross, Chancellor’s Professor and Alvin and Sally Beaman Distinguished Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology and Mathematics; Director Emeritus, National Institute for Mathematical and Biological Synthesis; and Director, The Institute for Environmental Modeling, is a highly-respected colleague who is internationally known for his research and promotion of mathematical and biological synthesis, and

WHEREAS, he has served with distinction as President of the Faculty Senate for two terms, providing strong leadership to ensure the effectiveness of the Faculty Senate in shared governance, and persistently voicing the concerns and questions brought forward by the faculty to be addressed by the Administration, and

WHEREAS, he continued to advocate for the safety of faculty throughout this year’s COVID-19 surge, bringing science and evidence-based reasoning to bear in all his conversations with the Administration, Board members, and the Press, and



WHEREAS, he tirelessly worked to advance the Senate relationships with Chancellor Plowman and Provost Zomchick, providing the bridge for Senate understanding of Administrative actions and the Chancellor and Provost's understandings of faculty concerns, and

WHEREAS, he brought to bear his immense institutional knowledge to ask the right and good questions about the Anming Hu case, University Re-structuring discussions, and the Budget Allocation Model, including his untiring question of funding for UT Athletics, and

WHEREAS, he has been a positive force for improvement at UT through his interactions with faculty, staff, students, alumni, board of trustees' members, and administrators,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the University of Tennessee Knoxville Faculty Senate expresses its sincere appreciation to Dr. Louis Gross for his exemplary and long-time leadership and service to the Senate and the University of Tennessee, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT a copy of this Resolution be presented to Dr. Louis Gross and that the Resolution become part of the minutes of the Senate meeting held on May 2, 2022.”

The resolution passed by acclamation.

Beth Schussler presented the resolution to President Gross who was appreciative of this recognition.

- D. Proposed Revisions to [Faculty Senate Bylaws](#) (E. Schussler).  
The proposed revisions to the Faculty Senate Bylaws were accepted as presented.

In person: 30 in favor, 1 abstaining, 0 opposed

On zoom: 29 in favor, 1 abstaining, 0 opposed

- E. Proposed Faculty Handbook Revision regarding Tenure-Track Faculty Reappointment and Probationary Clock ([Section 3.11.4.1](#)) Final Reading

This proposed change seeks to address an issue that some of our tenure-track faculty, who are not residents of the United States, have experienced in the past few years regarding their appointments and changes instituted by the prior federal administration. The proposed change comes from the Office of the Provost. It was presented for first reading on March 7, but was left off of the April 4 agenda. It is on the agenda for action on May 2, 2022.

There was no discussion.

The revisions were accepted

In person: 32 in favor, 0 abstaining, 0 opposed

On zoom: 27 in favor, 1 abstaining, 0 opposed

F. Budget and Planning Committee Update on BAM (P. Daves).

P. Daves shared preliminary budget information. The process this year was supposed to include input from faculty on the support unit allocation committee and then the Faculty Senate budget and planning committee was supposed to see the budget, share it with faculty, and seek feedback to share with the administration. This did not happen this year. There have been assurances that this will go more smoothly next year and there will be appropriate faculty involvement.

He reviewed the various budget units and shared the basic information on the budget including revenues, direct costs, support unit costs, participation fees, etc. Revenue is less than expenses and is subsidized by university funding. Most colleges have a negative margin; however, this is not necessarily problematic. These colleges do not bring in enough revenue; and, therefore will be subsidized by the university. There is no specific information at this point regarding this situation. Any questions should be sent to P. Daves.

L. Gross pointed out that Vice Chancellor Cimino was asked if there was money coming from Athletics into the budget and C. Cimino stated that there is not.

B. Lyons shared that the allocation group of the UT Advisory Board is meeting May 13. The numbers presented today are based on certain enrollment plans that are not certain.

G. UTK Campus Salaries Analysis Report ([link](#)) (P. Daves).

P. Daves reviewed the report and stated that, in general, our salaries are low at the Assistant Professor level and about equivalent in other areas. Salaries vary widely by college. Over three years, salaries have gone up 3.7% with variation among colleges. NTTF salaries vary widely by college as well. The average salary is about \$69,000. Female salaries tend to be lower than male salaries at all levels of Tenure Track and Non-Tenure Track faculty.

D. Patterson asked if these were 9- or 12-month appointments and P. Daves replied 9-month salaries.

It was requested that these data be shared at the beginning rather than the end of the meeting. The same can be said for budget information. These data are very important for NTTF. A. Langendorfer asked if the portion of the budget

spent on non-faculty costs could be discussed in the fall. There should be a complete budget in the fall and this would be an ideal time for C. Cimino to discuss the budget. L. Gross suggested that during the upcoming Faculty Senate retreat, time should be dedicated to explaining the budget.

Dean Lee shared that there was not enough time for reviewing the budget and has asked that the support unit budgets be reviewed. No one really knows where this money comes from or where it goes. There is a support unit review committee but the committee has never examined the data. B. Lyons stated we should applaud the university for raising the minimum wage but we need to look at living wage studies as well. He reminded the Senate that our stance against outsourcing custodial work kept this budget from being more problematic.

## VI. INFORMATION ITEMS

- A. Committee Summary Reports ([link](#))
- B. Graduate Council [Minutes March 24, 2022](#) (S. Ohnesorg)
- C. Supplemental Information to the Budget and Planning Committee's Salary Analysis ([link](#)).
- D. Faculty Senate Elections: Voting ends today (May 2) at 5:00 pm. Thank you for your participation in shared governance. Later in the month, Faculty Senators will receive email questionnaires to indicate their top three preferences to serve on Faculty Senate committees as well as available opportunities to serve on selected university administrative committees. Please respond by the deadline.
- E. Recognition of outgoing Senators and President Gross

UTIA:	N. Eash; A. Taylor; S. A. Smith; and F. Walker
Arch. and Design:	Dependent on Election Results
A&S (Humanities):	M. Black; B. Lyons; and R. Spirko
A&S (Natural Sciences):	Dependent on Election Results
A&S (Social Sciences):	K. Han; W. Jennings
COB:	Dependent on Election Results except for P. Daves
C&I:	S. Lamb; M. Violanti
CEHHS:	M. McCurdy; S. Trendafilova; J. Williams
Engineering:	Dependent on Election Results except for O. He
Libraries:	Dependent on Election Results
Nursing:	Dependent on Election Results
Social Work:	D. Patterson
Vet Med:	S. Cox; C. Greenacre; D. Millis

Congratulations to Dr. Louis Gross on his upcoming retirement (43 years of exemplary service to UTK).

- F. Faculty Senate Retreat Dates: **Friday, August 19, 2022** UT Conference Center from 9:30 am – 3:00 pm (lunch included) and Monday, **August 29, 2022** Strong

Hall Room 101 from 3:30 pm – 6:00 pm Panel Discussion and Senate Goals,  
followed by a Reception in Strong Hall Atrium.

## **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

Reception to follow adjournment of last Faculty Senate meeting for 2021 - 2022.