



UTK Faculty Senate Executive Council Meeting
Monday, January 30, 2023, 3:30 pm
Student Union Room 377A
OR zoom link: <https://tennessee.zoom.us/j/91564777675>

Minutes

- I. Call to Order

A quorum was established at 15:33
Attending: Schussler, Gimmel, Roessner, Ownley, Spirko, Ader, Brannen, Chyz, Fridman, Langendorfer, Laughter, Lukosi, Madison, Schoenbach, Stanley, Heminway, Lyons, Puckett, Baker, Bolton, Meschke, Zomchick, Clark, Kelly, and Scoggins.
- II. Approval of Minutes
 - a. Faculty Senate Executive Council Meeting Minutes [November 7, 2022](#)
Motion to accept: Spirko Second: Schoenbach
Discussion: There was no discussion

The minutes were approved. 12 in favor, 0 against
- III. Announcements (E. Schussler)
 - a. The president welcomed interim VC for Finance and Administration Allen Bolton to the meeting. The president is interested in dialogue on the most effective ways to get things done this semester. We will be checking in on some of the resolutions passed in the fall. Roessner provided an update on the LGBTQ resolution and spoke to Tyvi Small about mental health resources and housing. She also met with Small and Tisha Benton about DEI communication and is waiting on an update. It is important that we all understand the nature of resolutions; they are the only way Senate can raise a red flag on issues. But we also need to find ways to follow up on them. Schussler commented that resolutions are a way to push an issue and let faculty know we are working on something, but when nothing happens it causes despair and sometime embarrassment. Is it possible to solve problems without resolutions and without having the Senate's work be invisible? This meeting will focus on discussion around this issue.
- IV. New Business
 - a. Faculty Senate and Executive Council Meetings [2023-2024](#)
The proposed calendar does not strictly adhere to the bylaws but are a response to the realities of the academic calendar for next year. The leadership team is proposing that meetings begin at 3:05 instead

of 3:30 and end at 4:35 since this follows the academic timetable and gives us more flexibility with time. Caregivers must leave by 5:00 and often miss important discussions when we go over time. This calendar respects the priorities of caretakers and the demands of the calendar. A member asked about religious holidays and these have been taken into account. The real changes are in the Spring calendar. Stanley noted that in the College of Architecture and Design the design studios happen on M/W/F and this makes it difficult for anyone in that college to participate in Senate. Other universities hold certain times for service on the university calendar and this might be a good way to hold space for meetings. This approach might be a hurdle that is insurmountable given the needs of individual departments. Since school pick-ups are at 3:30, the 3:05 start time will still impact parents. We can discuss changing from Mondays in the future. We will need to change the wording of the bylaws to give future leadership more flexibility.

The body voted 13 in favor and none opposed to sending this proposal to the entire Senate.

- b. Update on Chapter 4 changes to the handbook (M. Stanley; A. Langendorfer)
Stanley reported that they visited the council of deans and conveyed the importance of these revisions. VP Kelly is following up on these. Kelly shared that she is following up with individual deans to make sure all voices are heard and administration is working with the General Counsel and other involved parties on these revisions. Many deans do not know what other colleges do and they are still working on implementing past changes. The prior deadline of early March is probably too ambitious but these revisions should be ready to submit to the BOT meeting in June. Some items need to go before the board and others just to the president. Realistically this material should be brought to the April senate meeting. Having buy in from the deans will help smooth over implementation.
- c. J term / 9-month workload questions (J. Laughter)
Currently there is a draft resolution in faculty affairs on this matter. This is a chance to discuss this before a resolution comes before the senate. 9-month faculty have now had their calendar changed and this has impacted them in different ways. The messaging from administrators has been different in different units. Some units have no obligations during the January term but others require committee work and other service. There are still issues around grant funding during this period. NTTF have lost three weeks of potential employment and summer sessions are now shorter which impacts academic rigor. The resolution calls for a change.

Ownley presented the resolution that defines what a nine-month calendar is. Contracts are for 39 weeks and if we start on August 1, faculty now have a 42-week requirement. The resolution asks for a salary increase to compensate for the extended calendar. Faculty with grants are having issues using January term for their contracts. Ideally we could avoid a resolution and solve the problem. ORIED and Budget and Finance are mentioned in the resolution and Faculty Affairs is asking them for clarity. It is not clear what deans have been told about this nor is it clear what Department Heads have understood. There seems to be a disparity in interpretation across campus.

The Provost stated that the winter mini term is here to stay. There has been a marked increase in enrollment in this term and more are taking January mini term courses than May mini term courses. He stated that nothing was added to faculty workload and faculty are compensated for teaching in J-term. He felt that the grant issues had been worked out and he will check into this. A dean indicated that the volume of Tenure and Promotion and other faculty issues cannot be done any other time than the beginning of January. Can service work be delayed or anticipated in December? If faculty are required to return January 15, they still have three weeks off. Faculty should have flexibility in determining

their work time and we might not want that determined by administration. The president agreed that being too prescriptive may be a problem.

Graduate application reviews have to happen in January in the current system. The handbook states that faculty must be available one week before the term starts and if this was adhered to it would alleviate this problem. The messaging needs to be clear. As long as NTTF are underpaid they will be impacted by loss of summer work time. The real problem is increasing NTTF pay to market rate. Faculty searches also impinge upon this term and this is a hard reality for staying competitive. Faculty already have more service than they can do in 39 weeks anyway and end up doing service over summer. This service creep needs to be addressed. The shortening of the summer terms has had a real impact. Has anyone looked at the impact of the change on summer instruction? We need clear guidance to unit level leaders. Can the Faculty Affairs committee work with the provost in light of this discussion? Yes, they can and they will report back to the senate later.

d. Faculty Senate [Spring 2023 priorities](#) (E. Schussler)

These come from the mini-retreat held before the beginning of classes. We will invite VC Bolton to talk about BAM, ask VP Alldredge to discuss enrollment management and invite Bruce Behn for an update on ASU partnership.

We also need to discuss infrastructure and staffing. Fair salaries for academic staff, NTTF and grad students is also an important issue. Mental health is impacting all aspects of campus.

Senate alone cannot resolve these issues and we will need to work across campus on these and recognize we cannot fix all of these at once.

Discussion items: class sizes have grown in some departments and NTTF are not being compensated for additional work. Everyone feels squeezed and faculty are being left behind in the enthusiasm over the growth of the university.

The new budget model puts salary and mental health in the deans' purview. Deans need additional guidance on these issues. It would be nice for faculty to be happy and buy in to the great changes in the universities. There are so many changes at once and faculty are stretched in too many directions.

Scheduling still makes it impossible to get across campus in the 20 minutes allotted.

The president asked the Provost how the senate can help address these issues. The provost shared that ten colleges have different problems and solutions on all of these issues. Are there central solutions or distributive solutions? Mental health needs to have a central solution.

Staffing varies by college. Perhaps the senate can work with the provost by setting priorities and recognizing if these priorities are isolated or distributed across campus and address them as appropriate. A task force that is too broad cannot effect real change. The Provost is happy to hear suggestions and information. Senate will need to prioritize within the bigger issues (ie infrastructure) and take action on the specifics.

The provost agreed that we need to work together. There will be enrollment growth again next year but it will come mostly from retention more than admissions. Faculty are largely responsible for the retention rates. He also wants happy faculty who are not burnt out. Schussler commented that faculty should get more credit for retention.

It was pointed out that we need more hiring (staff and faculty) to manage the increased enrollment. The staffing shortage impacts students and faculty in over-enrolled classes. A major hiring initiative would be a significant gesture of support for faculty.

Roessner reiterated that faculty senate no longer has a seat on the council of deans and that would help improve shared governance. Caucus chairs or other representatives could help set budget priorities with the deans. Since the deans have so much more power in the BAM, the senate should have a voice there. We need a more nimble process to deal with issues and concerns. We need a more proactive process rather always being reactive to problems.

These conversations about working together keep happening but changes don't happen. How can we make things happen?

Faculty is growing but support staff has shrunk over the last ten years. Was this an intentional decrease? Was it a university wide decision or a college or departmental decision? The provost indicated that this was not intentional and they don't know why it has happened. Student: faculty ratio is still 17:1 even with the increase in student population.

Where can effective shared governance happen? The college level may be appropriate to increase shared governance perhaps through the caucuses. Some colleges are hiring more staff. Staff is being lost because they are being paid better elsewhere and can work on-line.

The president will work on parsing out smaller pieces of these bigger issues and focus on working on those this year.

V. Old Business

None to be discussed at this meeting. Other issues will be discussed at later meetings.

VI. Information Items

- a. Ten Year Trends [PowerPoint](#) and [Excel](#)
- b. Faculty Senate Minutes from [November 21, 2022](#)
- c. Graduate Council minutes [November 3, 2022](#) and [December 1, 2022](#).
Graduate Council [Items of Interest](#) December 1, 2022

VII. Adjournment at 17:04

Respectfully submitted by Millie Gimmel