



FACULTY SENATE

**UTK Faculty Senate Meeting
Monday, February 6, 2023, 3:30 pm
Strong Hall Room B001
NEW LOCATION
Or Zoom**

Minutes

I. Call to Order at 15:31

Not in Attendance: S. Abdoli, R. Acharya, R. Blakeman, M. Bryson, S. Collins-Elliott, N. Eggers, C. Ferrigno, K. Franck, S. Groenke, M. Harris, J. Hathaway, D. Icove, Z. Jia, X. Li, B. Long, M. Madhukar, S. Mangum, K. Martin, S. Martin-West, S. Mobley, K. Morgan, G. Neisler, M. Pittman, S. Rampold, A. Rodrigues, M. Sharma, E. Teston, and A. Williams.

II. Approval of Minutes

a. Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes [November 21, 2022](#)

Motion to accept by Cooper; Second by Issa

Discussion: There was no discussion

The minutes were approved. 52 in favor; 0 Against

b. Graduate Council Minutes [December 1, 2022](#); and Graduate Council [Items](#) of Interest December 1, 2022 (L. Meschke)

Discussion: There was no discussion

The minutes were approved. 61 in favor; 0 Against

c. Undergraduate Council Minutes [November 29, 2022](#) and [Summary](#) (K. Baker)

Discussion: there was no discussion

The minutes were approved. 64 in favor; 1 Against

III. Reports

a. UTK [Reports](#) (D. Plowman, J. Zomchick, C. Clark)

Discussion: The Provost shared that the PPT attached was intended to give faculty timely updates on enrollment and other initiatives and to celebrate some accomplishments. He spoke to the spirit of collaboration in identifying issues the faculty want to address and hopes to work closely with the senate to address these issues. Stanley asked about the timeline for the BAM proposals. The allocation review committee meets this week to look at the budget proposals from support units. Once they look over these, the Provost will look at college proposals for increased budget and then it will go to senior Vice Chancellor Bolton. They are committed to following the established budget procedure for the BAM which has not been followed yet.

Shefner asked about the state Budget and what it will look like for salaries. The budget will be announced tonight and the Provost does not have information. Latham asked if the January mini term is here to stay. The January term is open to review but there is great interest from students and the term is likely here to stay. The provost will work with senate on calendar and workload issues that have arisen because of the addition of the January term.

i. Q&A EdPlus / Arizona State partnership / Online education (B. Behn)

Discussion: Professor Behn introduced himself and gave background on the online education initiative. There are 977,000 residents of TN who have some credit but no degree. There are 35,000 who are taking on line courses outside the state. Right now we have 18-19,000 students online, mostly at the graduate level. We could buy a firm that does this but the financial analysis indicates that this is problematic. We could hire an OPM (Online Program Manager), this is ok but expensive. UT uses Noodle as an OPM for some programs in the College of Business. We could also do this on our own which is what UT has done so far, but online education at UT has never taken off because we don't have the expertise to do this well. If we team up with a world class university like ASU that has already done a good job with online education, it should be better for UT. Discussions began with ASU with Dr. Behn leading the initiative. They are working toward an MOU and until that is worked out there is no agreement to discuss. We can use ASU as consultants to help us figure out how to do this.

Discussion: How will this affect NTTF since teaching will be outsourced? Behn clarified that nothing will be outsourced, all faculty will still be on campus but they will be supported by EdPlus.

Mathematics is already offering asynchronous online courses for currently enrolled students. Is this program for another population? Enrolled on campus students pay for tuition for classes regardless of modality. Other online classes will be for students who are not on campus and will pay a different rate.

What does it mean to get a degree from UT? Are all these degrees the same? These will still be faculty designed and led courses. Most students in online courses are less than 400 miles away. We will be serving Tennesseans and the brand will bring students to the degree.

Can you describe the proves of developing the MOU? Who will be participating in this? Teaching/learning council? TLI? The MOU is a strategic document that won't have a lot of specific details. Those details will be worked out later in consultation with interested parties.

Schussler clarified that we will be talking about this more and the leadership will compile all remaining questions, send them to Dr. Behn and share the responses. We will be addressing this again in March/April.

b. [Faculty Senate Report](#) (E. Schussler)

Discussion: Schussler highlighted the effort of the Teaching and Learning Council and TLI to establish institutional teaching values. A survey will be sent to faculty to assess how faculty feel about teaching and to establish values.

NTTF titles are still being discussed. If something does not come to senate by the end of the year, they will be presented in the fall. The handbook changes to Chapter 4 are in process.

Roessner updated the senate on the LGBTQ+ resolution on housing and mental health care: a taskforce reviewed and made recommendations on housing options and new proposals will be offered later. There is a gender inclusive floor in on campus housing. The counseling center offers support groups and therapy that targets LGBTQ issues as does the Pride Center and other entities on campus.

There was a request for conversation with Vice Chancellors and other members of the senate Diversity and Inclusion committee and this conversation has happened. This was a good example of productive shared governance.

Election season is opening. Caucus chairs will meet this week. Please encourage colleagues to become involved as senators or as president-elect or recording secretary.

There was no additional discussion.

IV. New Business

- a. Faculty Senate and Executive Council Meetings [2023-2024 Calendar](#) and [List of Dates](#) (A. Roessner)

Roessner discussed the proposed calendar. These dates don't adhere exactly to the bylaws but those can be changed. The new proposed start time is 3:05 pm and some dates have been shifted to account for caregiver responsibilities.

There was no discussion. 64 in favor, 5 against

- b. ChatGPT / AI task force (O. Kilic)

VP Kilic reported on the impact of Chat GPT on campus. There is a taskforce on this issue and it will be important to engage with these changes in technology and future ones. Many people are volunteering to be on the taskforce. On the Provost's website there is a link to information and a place to sign up for discussions. (<https://provost.utk.edu/emergence-of-ai-tools-in-higher-education/>). Kilic hopes all faculty will be informed on the positive and negative impacts of this technology. February 9 there will be a meeting to discuss these issues. February 21 is the next meeting and there will be monthly events going forward.

Discussion: How does this taskforce align with the AI Tennessee initiative? They will be working closely together.

There is concern that this is being framed as an AI issue rather than a teaching issue. There are no linguists on the committee and minimal participation by humanists. The idea is to approach this from a place other than of fear. This is just the beginning of these discussions and the taskforce will expand.

VP Lavan stated that the TLI has been gathering information on this issue across the SEC. There is a website: tli.utk.edu/artificialintelligence that is available to faculty. Anyone who wishes to be involved in these discussions should contact VP Kilic. President Schussler asked the senate to email additional questions to her and she will forward those on and share the answers she receives.

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

The executive council met before classes began this semester to discuss priorities. The Provost indicated during the EC meeting that we prioritize the smaller pieces of the bigger priorities. She shared the initial results of the Faculty Climate Survey and then asked the senate to work in small groups to prioritize these issues.

There were 450 responses to the Climate survey. Responses are similar to the responses to the same survey in 2019. Final results should be shared in March.

V. Old Business
None (We are generating new salary analyses to come back to this issue)

VI. Information Items

- a. Faculty Senate Committees and Councils [Summary Reports](#)
- b. Campus Master Plan [information](#)

VII. Adjournment at 17:00

Respectfully submitted by Millie Gimmel