

UTK Faculty Senate Meeting  
Monday, March 04, 2024  
3:05 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
Strong Hall, Room 101

**I. Call to Order** at 3:05pm, President Roessner presiding.

Not in attendance: R. Acharya, D. Bilal, J. Chyz, E. Doxastakis, C. Ferrigno, N. Fomin, K. Franck, Y. Gao, E. Gould, M. Griffin, S. Groenke, H. Guo, H. Goeritz, J. Han, M. Harris, J. Hathaway, M. Held, D. Horton, A. Hu, L. Jewel, M. Jones, B. Long, M. Madurga, S. Mobley, T. Moir-McClean, T. Mueller, K. Newkirk, C. Noble, J. Norrell, S. Rampold, S. Schaeffer, C. Sneed, A. Steiner, T. Truster, K. Waugh, S. West

**II. Approval of Minutes**

1. Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes, [February 12, 2024](#)

Motion to approve by Senator Cooper, Second by Senator Collins, Discussion: none, Vote: motion passed.

2. Approval of Undergraduate Council Minutes, [February 20, 2024](#); [Summary Document](#); [Proposal Links](#) (J. Coble, Chair)

**Discussion:** Reminder that once approved, all items contained within the minutes are approved.

**Question:** Is it possible for us to get undergraduate council to explain the high impact proposals? **Response** (J. Coble): Provided an overview of the high impact proposals that include: 6 add program, 2 revise program, 1 change program name, 1 end program, 6 approved add courses (2 withdrawn), 1 revise course, and 1 drop/archive course.

**Question:** This is too much to process and think carefully through. We are being asked to vote on something we couldn't possibly read in time. I don't know if this is a request to council or whom but if it says high impact we need more details about what the impact is because we can't read the volume of material. How are we supposed to vote responsibly? **Response** (A. Roessner): First acknowledging the work of the Curriculum Committee. This is not a new problem but also not a problem we can likely solve today. When VolCore began, we saw this deluge. We have raised concerns about Curriculog, and we don't have good solutions yet. For me, the question is how to proceed.

**Discussion:** I appreciate the suggestion of having an executive summary for the high impact proposals. I think this is something the chair and all Undergraduate Council needs to keep an eye on what does constitute low, mid, and high impact. Creating an executive summary for high impact will aid in discussion more than the excel sheet.

**Prompt:** Do people have any questions about things in the high impact category?

**Question:** Were all the courses and programs in these minutes unanimously voted for in the committee? **Response:** Yes.

**Question:** I'm looking at the materials in the agenda. Where is this document? Does it allow us to actually look at those high impact courses? I'm curious about an AI major? **Response:** Links are in the agenda.

**Question:** To undergraduate council, what struggles are you having given the

sheer volume of work and working in Curriculog? **Response:** It probably depends on who you talk to on Undergraduate Council and how familiar they are to working in Curriculog.

**Question:** What were the greatest causes for concern to the Curriculum Committee and Undergraduate Council? **Response:** Some of the proposals from the Baker School of Public Policy seemed to have some course overlap with Political Science. There were also questions with College of Architecture and Design proposals and Herbert College of Agriculture and overlap of content. In both situations, the academic programs worked to resolve these issues before coming back to committee to be voted on.

**Question:** So all concerns of the Curriculum Committee were addressed before the vote? **Response:** Yes

**Comment:** Perhaps we could add a bit more narrative description in the executive summary including the points of conflict and how they were resolved. This way people could see how the conflicts were worked out.

**Question:** Any protections in place to ensure protection for Anthropology 423 cross listed with WGS 423 as this seems like an easy target for naysayers?

**Response:** That is not something that came up as a concern in Undergraduate Council. Is there anyone in the room who can speak to that? What do you mean by naysayer? Can you clarify the question? **Restatement of question:** State legislators who focus on gender and sexuality issues and how they are taught at UT are the naysayers. **Response:** I don't have anything to say about that but not sure why this would impact cross-listing.

**Discussion:** In going through Curriculog, I focused on the ones in my area or with crossover in my area to find out what the impact would be. One thing I'm not finding in Curriculog is an extensive impact statement. The impact statement just says it impacts this other academic program but doesn't include information about space concerns, resources needed to support the program, etc. but we have space issues. **Response:** The Impact is primarily filled out by the Office of the Registrar and concerns the budget impact. Issues of space and resources are not in the purview of the Undergraduate Council.

**Discussion:** We are getting at some good things like creating a better executive summary but also, we are thinking about what is due diligence for Senators. What is our due diligence vs. what is Undergraduate Council's due diligence. What we have heard today is that the Undergraduate Council and Undergraduate Curriculum Committee had some concerns. They were raised and addressed before ultimately voting to pass.

**Question:** Regarding the University Honors program that is not listed as high impact. When we had visitors at the last meeting, we did not have all the time to ask our questions regarding this curriculum. This seems like something we may want more discussion about in this body and might not want it to get lost in a document with so many proposals. **Response:** After our last discussion, there was movement to provide more opportunities for discussion and input with faculty. There are a couple of upcoming round tables scheduled.

Vote: minutes passed.

3. Approval of Graduate Council Minutes, [February 22, 2024](#); [Summary Document](#) (P. Thompson, Chair)  
Discussion: none.  
Vote: minutes passed.

### III. Announcements and Reports

1. President's Update (A. Roessner)

President-Elect Derek Alderman and I just returned to Knoxville a little over a week ago from the SEC ADLP in Mizzou, and I wanted to take a moment to share out some promising trends that we've seen across the SEC this academic year, in particular in the areas of athletic investment in academic initiatives and university investment in faculty success, equity and wellbeing initiatives. We've attempted to translate the importance of these best practices within our conference at our peer and aspirational universities in our regular conversations with the Chancellor, the Provost, and the Chief of Staff here on Rocky Top and to partner around existing system and university initiatives. Most recently, your faculty senate leadership team guided the Council of Deans in a conversation around strategies for implementation of our existing system level Educational Leave of Absence program and successfully lobbied the Chancellor to advocate for and encourage the implementation of our academic investment initiative by the athletics department. We look forward to continuing these dialogues and to partnering with the Provost's Office on Faculty Success strategies and initiatives.

As we move into Faculty Senate Nominations and Elections season, I would like for our Senators to encourage the nomination of diverse voices willing to continue to advocate for the equity and wellbeing of everyone on Rocky Top and, though we've officially reached the end of this year's Faculty Appreciation Week, I wanted to express my gratitude to you for the ways in which you give of your whole selves in these labor intensive roles that sometimes go under recognized and rewarded. On this campus, in this moment, we often talk about building the proverbial plane while we fly it, but I feel certain that this plane would head into a tailspin without the extraordinary efforts that you undertake day in and day out.

On our agenda today, we have updates on the *Faculty Handbook* and proposed bylaw changes, including several items that focus on the non-tenure track experience and create pathways to leadership for all faculty. Before we move into the new business of the day, I also wanted to take a moment to express my gratitude for your recent completion of our faculty senate survey. We have shared those results with committee chairs and institutional leaders and are working together to address the concerns that you raised, including those around communication, the impact of institutional growth and concerning legislation. For instance, we continue to monitor legislation and work with the system's government relations and advocacy team. With this in mind, we will move into new business for the day.

2. UTK Chancellor's Report (D. Plowman)

The Chancellor is teaching and not in attendance today.

3. Provost's Report (J. Zomchick)

We take one week out of the year to formally and programmatically acknowledge faculty contributions but it's never far from our mind. The Board of Trustees (BOT) met last week at UT Southern. 4 new BA programs were approved in data science, applied AI, transdisciplinary studies, and environmental engineering. They also approved 2 new academic programs in biomedical engineering and the department of applied engineering and technology. Trustees also approved the 3<sup>rd</sup> new residence hall. Two are under construction now. This third hall will go to market (Public Private Partnership) and will be located where the parking lot next to Circle Park is (opposite Art & Architecture). This is scheduled to be completed by Fall 2026. We also have approval to work on a proposal to investigate the possibility of a non-profit foundation for athletics.

This week a [summary of the master collaborative agreement between UT and ASU](#) was provided to Senate leadership. This Summary is accessible in our materials.

Last Thursday, we had our 2<sup>nd</sup> release of admissions to UTK. This was smaller than our first release. The first was about 17,000 applicants. This release was about 2,000. The goal for the class is 6,850-6,950. This year we had 6,694 in Fall 2023. We had 6,846 in Fall 2022. We cut back this year primarily due to residency capacity issues.

**Question:** We had several people bring concerns to Undergraduate Council regarding the winter mini term schedule. We contacted 40 or so faculty who had taught in the winter mini term. Most faculty said they could not offer quality instruction in 2-weeks. **Response:** We are aware of this. We worked for weeks to try to find a solution to the issue. The problem is, extending winter mini-term pushed spring semester past an end-date that was acceptable. Given that we wanted to have a standard that people could rely on, we could not come up with a good solution other than to reduce that winter mini term to 10 days. Many of the winter mini term offerings are study abroad or online, asynchronous classes. To meet the catalog description of credit hours, students would have to work 52 hours each week for a 3-credit hour course.

**Question:** Why are we starting on January 6 when the past years we started on January 2? **Response:** Part of the discussion was creating a uniform amount of time moving forward because some years 10 days is all you can really fit between the start of January and MLK day.

**Question:** Last time we asked a question from A. Bolton about faculty and 10-year trends of hiring. 10 years ago, NTT faculty were about 1/3 the number of tenured faculty. 10 years later, NTTF are over half of instructional faculty. What will be the faculty focus in response to the growth of the student body? I understand in the BAM model the decisions are made in the colleges but is the administration giving any guidance to colleges regarding faculty hiring.

**Response:** When you look at the fact book graph you'll see tenured and non-tenured. The non-tenured include people working toward tenure (so tenure track

but not yet achieved tenure). But, to the point of how we advise Deans and Colleges with respect to their hiring needs. Each Dean has been asked to provide a 3-year hiring plan so we can look at increasing student enrollment and new disciplines to make sure we have faculty needed to meet our teaching and research missions. We have more tenure track searches this year than last. We will still hire NTT to meet our teaching mission, but that decision really varies department to department.

**Updated information from Allen Bolton regarding faculty**

**Question:** We had faculty who taught winter term and some even had students who got overload permission to take 2 courses. What kinds of courses did the committee imagine would be taught in this term? **Response:** I don't know that I can characterize what they imagined. There was discussion of 1 and 2 credit hour courses. There wasn't specific discussion about individual courses. **J. Zomchick:** We made this decision reluctantly but we knew that there would likely be fewer offerings in the winter mini term. Attendance during this winter mini term was up from last year. One idea of the term was to give a student who might be struggling academically an opportunity to catch up with a winter mini term course.

**Question:** If most of the 40 people who were asked don't teach and there is a drop off in courses would you reconsider the viability of winter mini term?

**Response:** Yes, we will continue to look at the calendar and courses and monitor winter mini term. There is currently a group in the system looking at an aligned undergraduate calendar and we are the only campus in the system with a winter mini term, so a system unified schedule may impact this.

**Question:** Is this set or is there possibility of revisions? **Response:** As the academic calendars are released they are set.

#### IV. New Business

1. **Anti-Hazing** (H. Flavin)

This presentation is about hazing prevention on campus and how it relates to our role as faculty. Please share this information with your departments. We did a 2018 assessment that included UT students but was also done as a cohort with other schools. This assessment includes information regarding the organizational affiliation of students who experience hazing such as being in a club, athletic team, fraternity, etc. On the question regarding the most frequently experienced hazing behaviors, UTK scored higher than the cohort in 2 areas "Associate with specific people" and "Act as a personal servant" but scored lower than the cohort in other common areas. A gap exists between students' experiences with hazing and their ability to label it as such (they don't recognize hazing). 26.1% experience hazing; 1.7% call it hazing.

Hazing endangers the mental or physical health/safety or coerces someone to endanger their mental or physical health/safety, REGARDLESS of one's willingness to participate.

Signs of hazing include: a sudden change in behavior, wanting to leave the organization, decrease in communication, increase in secrecy, expressed feelings of sadness, unexplained weight loss or injuries, change in sleeping or eating

habits, and physical or psychological exhaustion.

Be direct and ask if you are not sure if what you are observing is hazing. Clarifying questions to ask include “How have you been recently?” or “I’ve noticed \_\_\_\_\_. Can you tell me more about that?”

Report hazing when you see it. You can remain anonymous in reporting, but it is helpful to include a name for follow up questions. You can report through the student conduct office ([studentconduct.utk.edu](http://studentconduct.utk.edu)) or the hazing prevention website ([hazingprevention.utk.edu](http://hazingprevention.utk.edu)).

This is a system level initiative.

2. [Update on Faculty Handbook](#) (D. Kelly)

This represents work we’ve done together for 3-4 years.

List of items completed and approved by the Board of Trustees meetings last June and February. We hope to be able to issue a new updated faculty handbook and these approved items will be included.

This includes a fully reformed Chapter 4 that is a lot more inclusive to all ranks of faculty.

All of these changes have been approved by the faculty senate over the past 3-4 years.

There is a list of items in-process that are at various stages of review.

One important thing to note is that UTK Administrative is the Provost Office and Chancellor approval.

A. Roessner: Thanks to Vice Provost Kelly and the work of Faculty Senators

**Question:** From my understanding we’ll be discussing 4.1.1. Will it be discussed through faculty affairs? Yes, this should have said Faculty Senate instead of UTK Administrative as the current reviewing body

**Question:** What are the lengths of probation periods and time and rank to full professor (Faculty Handbook 3.10). **Response:** There was some ambiguity about how long people had to wait until they could go for review to full professor. This has been through the senate and approved. Additionally, 3.11.4 dealt with an issue regarding probationary period for international faculty being reappointed each year.

3. [Revisions to FHB 4.1.1](#) (A. Langendorfer, J. Laughter)

[Vice Provost Kelly’s slides of where updates are in review process.](#)

We are adding a new faculty title series called “Teaching Professor.” This brings us in line with other areas of the handbook and with peer institutions. Instructor is a person who has not completed a dissertation. Lecturers have a degree. Teaching Faculty have the terminal degree.

**Question:** We started out having just instructors. We then added Lecturer series, Clinical, etc... and this is a 5<sup>th</sup> series. Should we be adding a 5<sup>th</sup> classification for NTT faculty? Should we not just indicate that a faculty member who is a Lecturer with a terminal degree can teach graduate courses. Should we change the graduate catalog rather than adding another professor series. **Response:** The specificity of NTT is important because of the way they are evaluated on an annual basis. A

teaching assistant may be doing research but is not evaluated on that work. **D.**

**Kelly:** We have made a lot of changes to NTT faculty in the past couple of years. There was a question of equity about people doing full-time teaching not having “Professor” in the title but faculty doing full-time research do. It is a title series that exists at many other universities and will help with recruiting faculty to these positions.

**Discussion:** I am a Professor of Practice and for promotion, when you look in the *Faculty Handbook* it is confusing. I would rather take the confusion of trying to explain my position over the confusion of figuring out what documents I need for evaluation.

**Question:** We do have faculty with Lecturer titles who teach graduate students. There’s nothing in the faculty handbook that would preclude this. There may be something in college bylaws that limit the work of NTT faculty. Note the structure as the line about the terminal degree does not need to be repeated for each level of permission.

**Response:** The graduate catalog states that you must have the title “professor” to teach 500 and 600 level courses. **D. Kelly:** We have an exemption process to approve people without the terminal degree to teach.

**Suggestion:** Can this policy from the graduate catalog be referenced in the *Faculty Handbook*?

**Question:** Was this graduate teaching the primary driver of this or was it prestige? **Response:** The original motivation came from multiple requests from the previous Dean of Arts & Sciences and faculty who wanted similar titles to other universities.

**Discussion:** As a faculty who would remain in the Lecturer series, does adding this series put me further down the scale than where I was before. What does this mean for issues like service on faculty Senate or access to professional leave or research release time? This might mean people at these ranks feel less seen or less prestigious.

**Question:** I want to make sure that this change will not affect the Clinical Professor or Professor of Practice Series **Response:** This is an addition and does not change the other title series

**Question:** What percentage of lecturers hold terminal degrees?

**Question:** In the math department, there are a large number of lecturers with different backgrounds. For example, someone may have a PhD in Engineering but are teaching math. Will they be eligible for the new series title? **Response:** This is already handled through the alternative credentialing process.

**Question:** Will this automatically be applied to people already here working or would it be applied to new hires? **Response:** Nobody will be forced to change but we will be working with Associate Deans to define an implementation plan. We need to define a window for when switching will happen and guidelines for that. Anyone switching will not lose time in terms of time for consideration to promotion to the next rank.

**Question:** I have concerns that it is not ideal to hire research faculty without the protection of tenure. Does this create confusion among students and others on campus? Will it continue the trend of not hiring tenure track faculty? **Response:** There’s already lots of confusion about lecturer titles. Students already call you

professor so if we were teaching professor, it might be less confusing.

Vote: passed.

4. Suggested Bylaw Revision Article 2, Section 10, lines 269-70 (A. Roessner):
  - i. Change - *(1) the holding of full-time faculty appointment with tenure TO (1) a tenured faculty member at Associate or above or a non-tenure track faculty member at Senior Lecturer or above*

Proposed change to be more equitable among faculty by allowing NTT faculty to be in Faculty Senate leadership.

**Discussion:** If you have the protection of tenure and you go against University Leadership, you have that protection, so, while I would love to broaden and acknowledge the work all our faculty are doing, this is a concern.

**Discussion:** Does the proposed wording include all the ranks of faculty?

**Response:** Yes as Senior Lecturer and above would capture other NTT title series.

**Discussion:** If a growing number of our faculty are not on tenure track we need to keep academic freedom separate from tenure. I think there is a way to protect academic freedom and separate it from tenure.

This opens a 30-day period for review and is not a voting item currently. The leadership team will consider this feedback and potentially make some changes.

5. Nominations & Elections (UTK Advisory, D. Alderman)

We are taking nominations for open senate positions. If you currently serve as senator and are rotating off, consider running and serving again. We are also taking nominations for a UTK Advisory Board.
6. Proposed Meeting Dates for 2024-2025 AY (A. Roessner):
  - i. **Executive Council:** 09/09/24, 10/14, 11/04, 01/27/2025, 02/24, 03/24, 04/28
  - ii. **Faculty Senate:** 09/16/2024, 10/21, 11/18, 01/13/2025 (if needed), 02/03, 03/03, 04/07, 05/05 + Reception

## V. Information Items and Committee Reports

1. Executive Council Minutes (unapproved), [February 26, 2024](#)
2. [Senate Committees and Councils Summary Reports and Minutes](#)
3. [Executive Summary of Survey Results](#)
4. Faculty Hire Follow Up ([A. Bolton](#) & [B. Schussler](#))

## VI. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Senator Langandorfer. Meeting adjourned at 5:00pm.