



Empowering Voices, Fostering Success, Shaping Futures

FACULTY SENATE: INFORMATION AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

WHAT IS FACULTY SENATE?

In these times, shared governance and academic freedom are more important than ever for all faculty members. The Faculty Senate (FS) is a service organization made up of faculty leaders who faculty in collective pursuit of these rights. Members are elected by tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty members in their caucuses.

WHAT ARE THE DUTIES OF A FACULTY SENATOR?

(Excerpted from the *Faculty Senate [Bylaws](#) Article II.D.*)

Each voting member of the Faculty Senate shall:

1. Represent the constituency and the broader interests of the faculty;
2. Attend and participate in Faculty Senate monthly meetings (Mondays 3:05-5:00 pm) on a regular basis;
3. Participate actively in the appropriate caucus;
4. Communicate and interact regularly with constituents;
5. Maintain active membership on at least one Faculty Senate standing committee;
6. Serve on other committees and task forces as needed; and
7. Participate in Faculty Senate retreats, training, and information sessions

WHAT HAVE FACULTY SENATE COMMITTEES ACCOMPLISHED?

Senators serve on a Faculty Senate committee and have the opportunity to enact change on behalf of their fellow faculty members. Full descriptions of committees can be found [here](#).

- The **Appeals Committee** has continued to adjudicate complaints filed by faculty with regards to violations of due process and fairness in tenure and promotion decisions, performance reviews, and violations of the University's policies and procedures.
- In the **Athletics Committee**, FS members meet with Athletics Department leadership and our Faculty Athletics Representative to discuss university and national issues that affect student athletes and athletics programs: Student Athlete well-being; Name, Image and Likeness (NIL); and intercollegiate sports gambling. Through interactions with the national Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics, we interact with the NCAA, and various national organizations to provide the faculty view on these issues and influence policy changes.
- Along with the FS as a whole, the **Access and Engagement Committee** supported the university's efforts to support the university's efforts to develop an unparalleled experience for all students, staff, and faculty, including the restoration of the Office of Access and Engagement, with Tyvi Small as its first leader.
- The **Teaching and Learning Council** receives nominations for faculty and counselors related to the Chancellor's Award program. Annually, they assess, conduct interviews with nominees, and select finalists.
- The **Faculty Affairs Committee** works with campus administration to make sure faculty have a voice in changes to the [Faculty Handbook](#). They facilitated significant revisions to chapter 4 to better support and protect Non-Tenure Track Faculty. In defense of due process and freedom of speech, they produced this [memo](#) and [resolution](#).

WHAT HAS THE FACULTY SENATE ACHIEVED?

Below are some of the *many* achievements Faculty Senate has accomplished; as a Senator, you could be part of making changes like these in the future:

- **Issues That Affect Our Work:** The FS has been actively engaged on a variety of issues that affect our work at the university, from guns on campus to academic freedom and post-tenure review.
- **Support Basic Needs:** In partnership with the Student Government Association and Graduate Student Senate, the [FS partnered with local charities](#) to support resident of Tennessee who lost SNAP benefits. The FS has also launched an [Emergency Needs Fund](#) to support faculty facing unexpected hardship.
- **Celebrate Faculty Achievement:** The FS [celebrates faculty achievement](#), particularly the unsung heroes who make UT a successful university. Recognition programs include Rocky Top Originals, Heart and Soul Awards, and Athletic Professors of Excellence.
- **Heighten Communication with Faculty:** The FS has established a digital [Suggestion Box](#) where faculty can communicate, anonymously if necessary, about issues on campus.
- **Provide High-Quality Professional Development:** The FS partners with [Teaching & Learning Innovation](#) to provide an array of professional development opportunities.
- **Academic Restructuring:** The FS took an active primary role in negotiating a compromise with University administration on the issue of restructuring the College of Arts and Sciences, preserving academic freedom while also enabling the College to act with more flexibility and responsiveness by implementing the divisional dean structure.
- **Living Wage:** The FS has conducted a Living Wage Survey every five years, which has shown the extent to which full time campus workers are eligible for various forms of public assistance. The studies have had a direct impact on helping to increase wages for the lowest paid workers on campus.
- **Outsourcing:** The FS conducted studies on the effort to outsource facilities workers and took a stand with the United Campus Workers and others against outsourcing.
- **Competitive Pay for Non-Tenure Track Faculty:** The Budget and Planning committee conducted salary analyses that provided important information on the need for base Salary raises for full time Non-Tenure Track faculty.
- **Advocating with the Tennessee Legislature:** Supported through the Shared Governance Fund, the FS has lobbied for a voting faculty representation on the UT Board of Trustees.
- **Enhanced Representation of FS in University Faculty Council (UFC):** FS interacts with the UFC to provide UTK faculty voice on issues that affect faculty across the system. Issues have often included policies and procedures related to tenure and promotion, as well as faculty benefits.
- **Updating the Curriculum:** FS played an essential role in the creation of the VolCore curriculum and continues to be actively engaged in curricular approvals.

To learn more about UT Faculty Senate, [please visit our website](#) or join us on the [UTK Employee Hub!](#)

For additional questions, please contact us at facultysenate@utk.edu.