

Faculty Senate Executive Council
MINUTES
April 22, 2013

Present: Steve Thomas, David Golden, Fritz Polite, Stefanie Ohnesorg, Ralph Brockett, Chris Cimino, Phillip Daves, Scott Gilpatric, John Koontz, Bruce MacLennan, Susan Martin, Steven Milewski, David Patterson, Lloyd Rinehart, Matthew Theriot

Guests: Nick Anderson, Sally Harris, David Hayes, Vicki Mayfield, Mary McAlpin, John Zomchick

I. CALL TO ORDER

S. Thomas called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS

President's Report (S. Thomas)

- *Benefit Equality*: The letter prepared by the Benefits and Professional Development Committee concerning benefit equality had been sent to Chancellor Cheek and Chancellor Arrington. A member of the Benefit Equality Campaign, a self-described "coalition of staff, faculty, students, and alumni who are working to win domestic partner benefits," had requested time during a Senate meeting to announce the group's video campaign. For various reasons, including the expected full agenda at the May meeting, S. Thomas has decided, instead, to include the group's announcement and contact information as part of his written report for the meeting.
- *Sex Week*: On April 10th, S. Thomas had been contacted by a Senator who stated she had been informed "that units on campus had been told by administration and General Counsel that they cannot discuss sex week on the PERSONAL blogs and Facebook accounts." Fortunately, investigation by Chancellor Cheek's staff determined that this rumor was groundless. Since several other questions related to funding for the Sex Week activities had been sent to him over the past month, Thomas planned to present a compilation of these questions as an item of information at the May Senate meeting.
- *Cumulative Peer Review*: S. Thomas outlined two concerns regarding the Cumulative Peer Review (CPR) process:
 - Because of an unspecified "mix-up" in a dean's office, the copy of a letter dated January 4, 2013, requesting his recommendations for members of a CPR committee had not been distributed until sometime the week of February 4, 2013. The letter was further delayed because it was sent to the office of the Senate's administrative assistant. In effect, S. Thomas had less than two days to respond to this issue. He recommended that all communications with the Faculty Senate president should be made with the president directly, preferable by e-mail or by paper with e-mail backup.
 - Approximately two weeks later, S. Thomas was contacted by the faculty member who was the subject of this review. This faculty member was appealing one of the performance evaluations that had triggered the CPR process and did not understand why the CPR process was proceeding before the Faculty Senate Appeals Committee made its report, since a finding in his favor would be (he felt) a strong indication that the CPR was not needed. While acknowledging that the Board of Trustees' policy concerning the CPR process is clear that, once triggered, a CPR committee must be convened by the dean within thirty days, Thomas said he found nothing within that policy or our local process (Part V of the *Manual for Faculty Evaluation*) that considers what the relationship – if any – there should be between the activities the CPR committee and the Faculty Senate Appeals Committee. In other words, while there is nothing to suggest that a CPR committee must await the results of a related Appeals Committee's evaluation, there is also nothing that indicates the CPR committee cannot do so. Thus, his second recommendation was that the Faculty Affairs

Committee be asked to explore what should be the relationship between the work of a CPR committee and the work of the Faculty Senate Appeals Committee when an event that has triggered the CPR is being appealed.

- *Elections:* For the fourth, consecutive year, we have had difficulty obtaining candidates (plural) to stand for the office of President-Elect and for the second year in a row we have failed to meet the deadline within our bylaws concerning that election. For these reasons, S. Thomas said that he will be making two reminders at the next Senate meeting:
 - The membership of the Committee on Nominations and Appointments “shall consist of the chairs of each college, unit or division caucus and the Faculty Senate President-Elect.” It is the responsibility of this committee as a whole (and not just the current President-Elect) “to recruit two nominees for Faculty Senate President-Elect every year.” (Article III. Section 2. F.)
 - The members of each caucus are to “elect a convening caucus chair by August 1 of each year.” (Article II. Section 8)Each caucus will be encouraged to elect the new caucus chair before the end of the current academic year, to be assured of meeting the August 1st deadline. Next year’s Committee on Nominations and Appointments will be encouraged to begin early to recruit potential nominees.

Chancellor’s Report (J. Cheek)

J. Cheek said that he would be making a budget presentation during the May Senate meeting.

Provost’s Report (S. Martin)

S. Martin said that Tim Hulseby has been selected as Director of the Honors Program and will assume this position on July 1st. A decision is expected soon in the search for a new Director of Admissions. The Report from the Task Force on Teaching Evaluation will be considered later in this meeting.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

S. Thomas asked for corrections or additions to the minutes of the Executive Council meeting of March 18, 2013. As no changes were suggested, the minutes were approved as distributed by common consent.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Assignment and Use of Self-Authored Texts

S. Thomas observed that Danielle South, the Faculty Senate’s Graduate Assistant, had submitted her report reviewing how our peer institutions address the issue of using self-authored texts. By common consent, this report will be referred to the Teaching and Learning Council to review and to recommend possible action.

V. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Graduate Council (R. Brockett)

R. Brockett said that the review of the minutes for the Graduate Council meetings on February 28, 2013, and April 4, 2013, would be deferred until the September 2013 Senate meeting.

Undergraduate Council (M. Theriot)

M. Theriot reviewed the minutes from the Undergraduate Council meeting on April 2, 2013. One policy change concerning grades from study abroad, was approved.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Request for New Ranks for Extension Faculty (D. Golden)

D. Golden shared a request from Robert N. Trigiano, a professor in Entomology and Plant Pathology, for the Senate to consider adding new ranks for Extension faculty, along the same lines as we have

for Research Faculty and, more recently, Faculty of Practice. These ranks would be needed only within the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. By common consent, this issue will be referred to the Faculty Affairs Committee for review.

Faculty Affairs Committee: Resolution on Romantic Relationships (P. Daves)

P. Daves reviewed the resolution proposed by the Faculty Affairs Committee to add a new section 2.2.6 within the *Faculty Handbook* addressing romantic relations between faculty and students. After brief discussion, approval was given to present the resolution at the May Senate meeting.

Request from Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Advisory Group for a New Standing Committee within Faculty Senate (S. Harris and V. Mayfield)

S. Harris and V. Mayfield presented draft language for a revision to the Senate's *Bylaws* defining a "Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Committee" as a new standing committee of the Senate. In light of changes earlier this year to allow non-tenure-track teaching faculty to serve on the Senate, this new committee could assume the work conducted since spring 2010 by an ad hoc working group advising the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs on issues related to non-tenure-track faculty. During discussion, the suggestion was made that the focus should be on *issues* and that a better name might be the "Non-Tenure-Track Issues Committee." This suggestion was agreeable to Harris and Mayfield. S. Thomas offered to re-work the draft language discussed today into a resolution for presentation at the May Senate meeting, with the understanding that a vote on the resolution would not take place until the September 2013 Senate meeting. This offer was accepted by common consent.

Analysis of Student Retention at UTK (S. Gilpatric)

S. Gilpatric reviewed a report from the Faculty Senate Budget and Planning Committee analyzing data provided by OIRA for retention and graduation rates. These key findings for the 2008-2011 cohorts were discussed.

- A higher, uncapped high school GPA has a strong positive effect on the probability of retention, but the effect of a higher ACT score is relatively small.
- Higher family income has a strong positive effect on the probability of retention. Retention of students from families with income above \$200,000 is significantly higher than for students from families in the \$150,000-199,999 range.
- Controlling for other factors, Asian and Black students at UT have a higher retention probability than White students; Hispanic students have lower probability.
- For in-state students, distance of permanent address from Knoxville is not significantly associated with reduced retention, but controlling for other factors, students from urban counties have higher retention probability than students from rural counties.

By common consent, S. Gilpatric will present this report at the May Senate meeting.

Report from the Task Force on Teaching Evaluation (S. Martin)

S. Martin noted that the report suggests that our current SAIS forms should to be reviewed, either to streamline the process or to find alternative ways for students to supply meaningful input. Other forms of evaluation in addition to SAIS should be used. Ideally, multiple types of measurements will be available for evaluations. A more uniform practice of peer evaluations could be helpful. By common consent, this report will be presented as an item of information at the May Senate meeting.

Request from UT Coalition for Responsible Investment (D. Hayes and N. Anderson)

Students David Hayes and Nick Anderson presented details from a resolution, recently passed by the Student Government Association, recommending that the University move away from investment in companies that cause harm to the environment. They wished now to work with the Faculty Senate to consider the possibility of passing a similar resolution. Following a brief period for questions, S.

Thomas noted that was not sufficient time for the Executive Council to refer this matter to committee to prepare and distribute such a resolution for consideration during the Senate's May 2013 meeting. While commending the students on their efforts, he suggested that this request be referred to the Budget and Planning Committee to consider for action during the next academic year. This suggestion was accepted by common consent.

Question about Eligibility of Non-Tenure-Track Faculty to Serve as Faculty Senate President

D. Golden asked a question about the changes made to the Senate's *Bylaws* in September 2012, allowing lecturers and clinical instructors to serve within the Senate, to be included in the census for apportionment of seats with the Senate, and to vote for representation within the Senate. Was it by intention or oversight that there was no change to the *Bylaws* to allow these faculty members to be nominated for the office of President-Elect? P. Daves stated that decision not to suggest such change was intentional. It was felt that, since these faculty members are appointed largely on a year-by-year basis and serve at the will of deans and department heads, it would be unfair to ask them to undertake the multi-year obligations of this potentially controversial position.

Off-Campus Faculty Service on Faculty Senate

D. Golden asked about service on the Faculty Senate by "off-campus faculty." The question is whether faculty who are stationed off campus (e.g., in Nashville or Memphis) would be permitted to serve on the Faculty Senate, particularly given that they are not be able to attend Senate meetings or Senate committee meetings regularly. While distance itself should not be a consideration in standing for election as a Senator, being able to fulfill the duties of the office (including active committee membership and attendance and participation in Senate meetings) should be.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.