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Faculty Senate - November 4, 2013 Meeting Minutes

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Faculty Senate Executive Council
MINUTES
November 4, 2013

Present: Donna Braquet, Guoxun Chen, Jennifer Fowler, David Golden, Sally Harris, Don Hodges, Jon Levin, Bruce MacLennan, Susan Martin, Bharat Mehra, Bonnie Ownley, Stefanie Ohnesorg, Lloyd Rinehart, Tina Shepardson, Steve Thomas

Guests: Jimmy Cheek

I. CALL TO ORDER

D. Golden called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m., after establishing that a quorum was present.

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS

Provost's Report (S. Martin)

- A new task force has been assembled to seek alternatives to SAIS. Taimi Olsen will chair the task force.
- Dr. Vincent Carilli has been hired as the new Vice Chancellor for Student Life. He will begin duties in January 2014.

Chancellor's Report (J. Cheek)

- Chancellor Cheek reported that he had just returned from a trip to China with several others from UT. They visited six universities and two government agencies. They met with the China Scholarship Council, whose objective is to provide financial assistance to Chinese students who wish to attend universities outside China. The trip was designed to put them in contact with the appropriate institutions to discuss potential academic degree programs and training of Chinese graduate and undergraduate students at UT.
- UTIA has an initiative to train 100 Chinese Ph.D. students. The program will be joint with specific Chinese universities. China will pay the student a stipend for living expenses and faculty/departments will pay in-state tuition for the students.
- J. Cheek indicated that he is very interested in increasing diversity at UT by increasing the number of international students in both undergraduate and graduate programs.
- L. Rinehart asked whether we are tracking international students to learn if they are immersing in our culture. S. Martin stated that we have resources through the International House to gather some of that information, in order to find out how successful they are. She offered to follow up on that. J. Cheek stated that he intends to visit the International House more frequently.

President's Report (D. Golden)

- UT police now offer an iPhone app (UTPDtips) that you can use to report criminal activity on campus.
- Danielle South will be leaving us at the end of the semester. D. Golden thanked her for doing a great job in providing assistance with Faculty Senate activities.
- An announcement for Danielle's position has been posted and he has received several applications. He intends to make a hiring decision soon in order to connect the new student with Danielle so that s/he can learn the duties of the position.

- D. Golden appointed five tenured faculty members to serve on the Nominations Committee for Honorary Degrees. Appointments were Martin Griffin (Assoc. Prof. of English), Lee Han (Prof. of Engineering), Joan Heminway (Prof. of Law), Catherine Luther (Professor and Assoc. Dean, Communication and Information), and Agricola Odoi (Assoc. Prof., Biomedical & Diagnostic Sciences, Vet School). Prior to appointments, D. Golden requested and received support for these nominations by voting members of the Faculty Senate Executive Council. The Nominations Committee has completed their task and nominated Dr. E.O. Wilson (biologist, ecologist, and entomologist) to receive an honorary doctorate for humane letters. Dr. Wilson began Ph.D. studies at the University of Tennessee, but was encouraged to transfer to Harvard University, where he earned his Ph.D. and subsequently spent his career. He has won numerous prizes for his writings, including two Pulitzer Prizes, and is a member of the National Academy of Sciences.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

D. Golden asked for corrections or additions to the minutes of the Executive Council meeting of October 7, 2013. S. Thomas suggested the following change on the section on Romantic Relationships:

The new section on "Romantic and/or Sexual Relations between Faculty and Students" will be proposed for addition added to Chapter 2 of the UT *Faculty Handbook*.

S. Thomas moved to approve the meeting minutes as corrected. L. Rinehart seconded the motion and the motion passed.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Academic Freedom Statement (J. Fowler)

J. Fowler indicated that an Academic Freedom Statement had originally been sent to the UT Board of Trustees in 2012, but there had been no response. The Faculty Affairs (FA) Committee has decided to revisit this issue. J. Zomchick has provided the FA Committee with suggested language to consider, and the Tennessee Board of Regents schools have recently established a new academic freedom statement. The FA Committee will be working on this and intends to bring a statement forward to the Faculty Senate in spring 2014.

V. REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES

There were no reports from special committees.

VI. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Appeals Committee (B. MacLennan)

The committee has handled two appeals, with one in progress.

Athletics Committee (J. Koontz)

No report was available.

Benefits and Professional Development Committee (D. Braquet)

The committee met with Ricky Hall, the Vice Chancellor for Diversity and will post minutes of their meeting when approved.

Budget and Planning Committee (R. Pierce)

No report was available.

Faculty Affairs Committee (J. Fowler)

The committee discussed the situation regarding Dr. Sousa, Director of Bands and decided that they did not have jurisdiction to consider this issue. If this becomes an issue about tenure, then it will be handled by the Faculty Appeals Committee. At this time, the FA committee is declining to become involved. D. Golden mentioned that he had not received any more comments from faculty, and that there is an ongoing investigation by administration.

Graduate Council (D. Hodges)

The second meeting of the Council will be held on November 7. Action items include proposed changes on curriculum and approvals requested for faculty to direct Ph.D. students. The Council is also working on a leave of absence policy for graduate students.

Library and Information Technology Committee (B. Mehra)

Minutes of the first meeting are available for posting. It has been difficult to find a suitable time for enough members to attend in order to have a quorum. D. Golden asked if other committees were having this problem. There was an affirmative response and it was noted that establishing quorum is clearly a problem. Golden stated that he would contact Senators and remind them to attend committee meetings. He also suggested that committees consider establishing a specific number for quorum. For example, quorum for the Executive Council is established at 7 voting members. B. Mehra stated that if Senators could not attend their committee meetings, they should recuse themselves from being involved. He also suggested that a specific time slot be established for all committees at the beginning of the academic year. T. Shepardson indicated that this is done for Research Council. It was also noted that the Graduate Student Senate has not appointed representatives to serve on Faculty Senate Committees. Mehra indicated that he had also discovered that not all Colleges/Units have their own listserv, making it difficult to communicate. Golden said that he had sent out information to develop these.

D. Golden stated that he will be asking people to run for Faculty Senate president and other offices, and encouraged us to please consider it. He said that it has been a very beneficial experience for him in regards to how much he has learned about the university. S. Thomas reiterated this sentiment.

Non-Tenure Track Issues (S. Harris)

S. Harris said that she did not have a report, but wanted to know if a proxy had been found for W. Costner (who is on sabbatical). D. Golden indicated that her department is conducting an election for a proxy to serve on Faculty Senate, but not to serve on committees. For committees, the proxy cannot technically serve as a proxy, but can attend for information only. Golden indicated that a Senator can resume their appointment when they return. Harris asked if Costner's absence should be counted in terms of quorum. Golden indicated that it is considered a vacancy and should not be counted for quorum. He indicated that the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources is in the same situation with a senator on sabbatical.

Research Council (T. Shepardson)

Minutes from the April and September meetings have been approved and minutes are posted on the website. Two subcommittees have completed their work due to deadlines for the Office of Research and Engagement.

Teaching and Learning Council (L. Rinehart)

Announcements for the Chancellor's teaching and advising awards will be sent via email soon.

Undergraduate Council (J. Levin)

Minutes of Council meetings have been posted. The committee is reviewing curriculum changes for approval. There are additional committee reports to review and the Council has scheduled an extra meeting to cover those.

University Systems Relations (G. Chen)

The committee has met once, and decided to invite Beauvais Lyons to the next meeting to discuss issues for the coming year.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

Responsible Investment Referendum (D. Golden)

D. Golden received a resolution from Daniel Lawhon, a student in Electrical Engineering, requesting that UT divest itself from investments focused on fossil fuels. Lawhon was not able to attend the meeting. The resolution originated from the Student Government Association (SGA). Golden also distributed a letter from Chancellor Cheek to C.M. Peccolo (Chief Investment Officer and Chief Financial Officer for UT), in which he forwarded the Resolution for Responsible Investment from SGA for his consideration. C. Cimino had indicated that some investments are held by a trustee or someone other than UT, therefore UT does not have the authority to change those. Lawhon had expressed to Golden that he is hopeful that the Faculty Senate will choose to write a supportive resolution on this issue. The SGAs of UT-Chattanooga and UT-Martin are developing similar resolutions. Discussion followed on the impact of this resolution. Golden mentioned a need for more information from Lawhon. S. Thomas recommended that the Budget and Planning Committee review this information and provide a report. The issue will be revisited at a later meeting.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:23 p.m.