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Faculty Senate - November 6, 2009 Budget and Planning

Faculty Senate

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MINUTES

**University of Tennessee Faculty Senate
Budget and Planning Committee
November 6, 2009, 8:30 a.m. – SMC 720 (CBER Conference Room)**

Present: Don Bruce (Chair), Stephen Blackwell, Chris Cimino, Jerzy Dydak, Nathalie Hristov, Lane Morris, Jay Pfaffman, Conrad Plaut, Harold Roth, and Klaus van den Berg

Absent: Michael Essington, Karen Sowers, and Marlys Staudt

Minutes from October 2, 2009 were approved.

Gender Equity Study Update: Bruce has received the updated report from OIRA and has received commitments from everyone approached about the discussion group. He will have a meeting with Sarah Gardial soon after Thanksgiving and will convene the group at some point thereafter.

Faculty Salary Study Update: Bruce reported that OIRA was nearly finished with the report, and that the Provost had mentioned in the recent Executive Council meeting that she would contact them to speed things up.

Campus Budget Update: Cimino reported that the Provost was currently having planning meetings with the individual Deans, and that he was doing similar things with non-academic areas. The Chancellor's public budget hearings will take place in March 2010. He noted that we are well beyond the era of across-the-board cuts, with some offices operating without much of a budget at all. Blackwell asked about the status of the bookstore, and Cimino reported that it was doing very well, perhaps one of the top in the nation. Blackwell asked about the possibility of online textbook ordering for faculty, and Cimino concurred that the bookstore's general online presence is not good. Bruce noted that it was good to hear about the status of planning for the end of the stimulus funding rather than focusing exclusively on how to spend (and comply with reporting regulations for) the stimulus funds. Blackwell asked if anyone had a dollar value for the expected shortfall in the instructional budget, and Cimino noted that he did not have an exact amount. Plaut asked whether non-academic jobs or functions were being eliminated, and Cimino replied that reductions in force were already taking place and some other employees were being funded by stimulus funds on a short-term basis. Van den Berg asked if we had enough to handle the current situation. Cimino responded that we had enough to handle what we know about today, and that a future tuition increase would help. Plaut asked about our intention to continue to preserve students in need when tuition goes up, and Cimino clarified that the numbers cited as gains from tuition increases are net of necessary increases in need-based aid. Blackwell returned to the issue of instructional spending and asked if Cimino knew whether it would be necessary to lay off large numbers of instructors. Cimino replied that this might not be necessary. Bruce clarified that Deans and the Provost make many of those decisions below the Vice Chancellor level. Cimino reminded the committee that student groups who had been consulted expressed a tolerance for tuition increases as long as they could see results.

Report on the UT Board of Trustees October 9 Meeting: Blackwell reported that he had watched the webcast of the meeting and did not see anything that required attention from the committee. Van den Berg asked about recent statements by President Simek and the Board regarding a shrinking importance of state funding, and wondered whether this was a problem for UTK. Blackwell noted that Simek mentioned the lack of recent raises and the possible recruitment of UT faculty away to other institutions as growing concerns; Simek is looking at ways to protect and keep faculty. Cimino concurred that the Provost and Chancellor want to try to head off some of the departures of UT faculty if possible.

Non-Academic Spending and Review Process: Pfaffman circulated some notes gathered from a recent conversation with Terrell Strayhorn. Bruce asked Pfaffman, Plaut, and Van den Berg to serve on a special subcommittee on this issue. They will report back to the full committee at a future meeting.

Fall Meeting Schedule:

December 4