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Faculty Senate - Executive Council October 5, 2009 Meeting Minutes

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Faculty Senate Executive Council
MINUTES
October 5, 2009

Present: Marianne Breinig, Doug Birdwell, Toby Boulet, Donald Bruce, Chris Cimino, Jimmy Cheek, Becky Fields, Rob Heller, Becky Jacobs, Suzanne Kurth, Beauvais Lyons, Susan Martin, John Nolt, Stefanie Ohnesorg, Ken Stephenson, Steve Thomas, and Dixie Thompson

Guest: Scott Simmons (Graduate Assistant)

I. CALL TO ORDER

T. Boulet called the meeting to order at 3:33 p.m.

II. REVIEW OF MINUTES

B. Lyons requested that the words "with Board policy" be added to the material on the *Faculty Handbook* after "ensures not in conflict." J. Nolt said that on page 4, second full paragraph, the second sentence should indicate the wording came from the TUFs "discussion." The corrected minutes were moved by D. Bruce, seconded by D. Birdwell, and approved.

III. REPORTS

President's Report (T. Boulet)

T. Boulet added to the report he distributed that not only did he attend the Southeastern Conference Associated Faculty Leaders (SEC AFL) annual meeting, but also the assembly approved a set of bylaws, so UTK is now a member of two more organizations.

Provost's Report (S. Martin)

S. Martin noted that she had previously reported on the Deans, Directors and Department Heads (DDDH) Retreat. At the end of the week the Board of Trustees (BOT) would be meeting. The BOT will discuss closing the Memphis branch of the UTK Master's in Social Work Program. Reports will be given to the BOT's Student Success Committee on various metrics. UTK is working with consultants on strategic planning, specifically on what is good and will help UTK establish its own metrics.

The Academic Efficiency and Effectiveness Committee that Martin chairs is looking at possible problems, e.g., course scheduling and bottleneck courses. The Provost's Student Advisory Committee met. The students expressed the desire to have the library stacks open 24/7 and to have quiet study areas. The students also requested more substance in the summer orientation program.

Lyons asked how the reframing of the strategic plan fit with the SACS review and common goals. Martin said it fit with the SACS mid-cycle review as updating of all compliance material is necessary for the review visit. M. Albrecht is working on updating the materials and refocusing, e.g., developing and implementing an assessment plan. There is an executive committee and a steering committee. The goal is integration of materials into the curriculum. Ready for the World is related to the Quality Enhancement Plan. The original Strategic Plan was oriented to the system "scorecard" that had global awareness as one element. D. Birdwell commented on the importance of having library resources available at a research institution. Martin said library access had been limited due to a security issue that had since been addressed. Birdwell said

the Ready for the World Program appeared to address cultural issues, while huge issues such as sustainability perhaps were not addressed by the program. He noted that the faculty of Engineering was not involved.

Chancellor's Report (J. Cheek)

Chancellor Cheek noted that differential tuition had been proposed by several colleges. He had visited with members of the Board of Trustees (BOT) about the topic. He had also met with students in one of the colleges to talk about the need for more money, if a long-term solution to current problems is to be developed. Some colleges are faced with unattractive alternatives, such as large numbers of students taught by few professors. He indicated he would discuss the possibility of differential tuition with a BOT Committee this fall and the full Board next spring.

An additional budget cut in the 8% range in 2011 is anticipated. Cheek said he had indicated that it would have to be covered by a tuition increase. He said he was working to get a reduction in the size of the cut. He said among his priorities is obtaining raises for faculty and staff and money for a few new positions to address bottleneck courses. This year was the third without raises, leaving our faculty salaries low in the Southeastern Conference. When tuition increases are discussed a major question from the BOT is what happens to students who cannot afford to pay the increase. Schemes are being considered that would assist such students. He noted that the campus Human Relations Director position had been eliminated. The Chancellor said his budget had been reduced twice as much as those of the colleges. L. Hendricks would be assuming a larger human relations role on campus. He had encouraged units to look at course fees to see if they were adequate.

Cheek said the 1st Annual All-Campus Faculty Meeting was a good event. It would probably be held in the McClung Museum in the future. The System reorganization was going well. While looking at locations to reduce costs, he is working to make both the system and the campus what they should be. On October 6 President Simek will officially visit the campus providing an opportunity to express concerns and talk about good things. Lyons asked whether consideration was being given to shifting full time enrollment from 12 to 15 hours looking at the "revenue side." Cheek said that change had been under consideration since he arrived on campus. He thought summer school should be incentivized to increase the four year graduation rates. Students should be encouraged to attend 4 years plus summer rather 5 years. Such a change probably requires change in the Hope scholarship program. Ultimately students would save money if they graduated in four years, but it was not the right time yet to change full time status to 15 hours. Lyons asked about other possibilities. Cheek said possibilities included enrollment reduction and differential tuition. Breinig asked what differential tuition meant. Cheek explained that some students, e.g., upper division students in a college would pay an addition per hour fee. The majority of the fee would go to the college, but a small percentage would go to the campus for what it provides. Birdwell said another suggestion for cost saving involved Human Relations classification guidelines. He said he had to keep writing letters seeking exceptions to the salary limits. Birdwell said there had been problems with raises written into contracts. Cheek said he was committed to addressing such problems and a meeting was scheduled for the next week. Boulet said some SEC schools charge students additional fees for extra hours. Cheek said he was deciding which battles to fight first.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

V. NEW BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Faculty Senate Calendar 2010-2011 (J. Heminway)

Lyons said after examination of the religious holiday conflicts it looked like movement of the November dates would permit avoidance of religious holidays. He proposed moving the dates forward (Executive Council on November 8 and the full Senate on November 22). Birdwell agreed. As there was no dissent, it was agreed that the proposed calendar with those changes would be taken to the Senate for a vote.

TUFS' Announcement (J. Nolt)

The materials J. Nolt sent to Governor Bredesen were attached to the meeting agenda (a letter explaining the documents, the position paper, and dissenting statements). He noted the Governor's current position.

Budget and Planning Committee (D. Bruce)

D. Bruce reported the Budget and Planning Committee met briefly. C. Plaut is very interested in higher education reorganization. That committee would perhaps like to conduct an opinion survey in conjunction with another committee. Boulet distributed a statement from the Library and Information Technology Committee (Library and IT) addressing the proposed reorganization. Any committees with responses were encouraged to distribute them. Birdwell said survey results strongly depend on the questions being asked, so they need to be carefully worded. Lyons suggested to D. Bruce that C. White (member of the University System Relations Committee) had a lot of experience with surveys. He said one of the reasons for such a survey would be to help faculty know the issues. He said, for example, how many people know there are two systems. Nolt agreed with the concerns about the utility of such a survey. He preferred the approach of the Library and IT Committee, that is, the provision of information. Bruce said the desire was to not be reactive, but rather proactive. Senate votes simply provide opinions. Boulet said he would meet with Nolt to get the objections fleshed. He thought a survey could be useful. Nolt said the best source would be the University System Relations Committee. Birdwell argued for the need to clarify objections and goals.

BANNER Implementation

Boulet said it was time for the Senate to know about BANNER. L. Painter talked at the Deans, Directors and Department Heads Retreat. She agreed to give a 10-minute presentation at the October Senate meeting.

ESPN Funds Allocation

Lyons had asked about the process involved in allocating the funds from the ESPN contact that Athletics had donated. Boulet said he thought the Provost might address the question. Lyons said he knew there was a short turn around time, but he particularly wanted to know how the decision about graduate student funding was made. The Student Success Center received \$100,000, as did the Center for Teaching and Learning. The Chancellor wanted to augment graduate student stipends and talked with Deans about top offs versus money for new students. For the next year interest is focused on using the money to attract new students. Lyons suggested that the money for graduate student travel could be increased. S. Martin said there was \$40,000 for graduate student travel. K. Stephenson asked what "top off" meant. It was depicted as "added on" money. Martin said she thought the top off money would be for four years for students pursuing terminal degrees. Stephenson said the Mathematics

Department ends up forgoing some of its best applicants because they do not know which students will be returning. If a slush fund could be created, it would be possible to balance out over commitments made in one year in later years. It was suggested that R. Heller and A. Wentzel, Co-Chairs of the Senate Athletics Committee might play a facilitative role with suggestions. Birdwell questioned the one year commitment. He thought the policy was that stipends could go up, but not down. Martin said they were just in the process of collecting data. Birdwell said there was a huge difference in Engineering between the stipends of research and teaching assistants.

Research Council (K. Stephenson)

Stephenson said the Council was trying to figure out the effects of the budget cuts on research. The Council was considering a survey. B. Fenwick told him the campus had joined a consortium that would do surveys. It may be easier to sell instruction externally, but internally decisions are made on the basis of research. Boulet clarified that the services were paid for. Martin said the Provost's Office was drawing on the service. She also noted that there was something on the BOT agenda about the reorganization. C. Cimino encouraged interested people to check the website.

University Systems Relations (B. Lyons)

Lyons said the committee had a meeting with D. Millhorn and others about research. There does not appear to be a clear business plan beyond the first phase and that much of the discussion emphasized how to connect the Cherokee Farm Campus to the academic missions of the University. At the next committee meeting they will talk with H. Dye and A. Haynes. He suggested inviting D. Millhorn to an Executive Council meeting. Questions were raised about whether the public piece would come from in the future. Birdwell said one concern was the faculty would be on campus and research would be over there. Nolt said it was "doable" at Ohio State University. Birdwell said he would prefer a written report to a conversation.

Announcements

Boulet said the brown bag lunch he and S. Martin had was sparsely attended.

He said at the SEC AFL meeting he learned that academic freedom emerged in the courts in 1952 and died in the 1990s. If we are to have academic freedom, we need to have a written definition. Courts are apparently pushing for institutions to have definitions. He said he would take the issue up with L. Howes, AAUP Chapter President.

Adjournment was moved, second and approved. Meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.