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Faculty Senate - Executive Council January 11, 2010 Meeting Minutes

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Faculty Senate Executive Council
MINUTES
January 11, 2010

Present: Marianne Breinig, Doug Birdwell, Toby Boulet, Donald Bruce (via phone), Chris Cimino, Jimmy Cheek, Rob Heller, Suzanne Kurth, Beauvais Lyons, John Nolt, Stefanie Ohnesorg, Lloyd Rinehart, Ken Stephenson, Steve Thomas, and Dixie Thompson

Guest: Scott Simmons (Graduate Assistant)

I. CALL TO ORDER

T. Boulet called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m.

II. REVIEW OF MINUTES

Minutes of the November 2, 2009, meeting was to be distributed by email.

III. REPORTS

President's Report (T. Boulet)

T. Boulet added to his written report that information about how to register for Safe Zone training at the Conference Center would be forthcoming. He also had brought a better copy of the Strategic Planning Model diagram. He indicated Chancellor Cheek had hired a consultant for the project.

Chancellor's Report (J. Cheek)

Chancellor Cheek drew attention to the Governor's announcement about the joint UT/ORNL Center. The interdisciplinary doctoral program in energy science would involve \$6 million in non-recurring start up funds. He also noted Governor Bredesen also announced he wanted UT to be a top 25 university. A gap analysis needed to be conducted, so that plans could be made about how to close gaps. Cheek said the Governor's declaration was a major step forward. The Governor also indicated that criteria for students transferring to UTK would be more stringent than to other institutions in the state. In addition, Bredesen addressed performance funding, particularly the need to focus more on the number of students graduating rather than the number enrolling. Although UTK's current graduation rate is the highest of all the state schools, it could do better.

Athletics. With regard to the Athletic Department's reporting structure, Cheek said B. Lyons had written a good epistle about athletics. He indicated he was aware that Boulet was working on the issue. In February, Cheek planned to speak to the Task Force.

Efficiency. Cheek said he had reduced his budget about 15%, partly by eliminating positions, e.g., Human Resources Director. During the same time period the University of Tennessee system was working on making some changes, notably changing the organization of Human Resources under Linda Hendricks. Cheek talked with President Simek about the lack of a human resources person in his cabinet. The result is he planned to appoint her to be Vice Chancellor for Human Resources for UTK, a no-cost appointment.

Ombudsperson. J. Nolt has pushed for resolution and a solution has been reached for at least one year with the appointment of Bill Nugent as faculty Ombudsperson. The Ombudsperson

Search Committee was informed that the search was on hold for a year and Cheek hoped that the temporary arrangement would work in the long run because of the tight budget.

Budget. Tuition has to be increased (e.g., by 9%) because that is the only available source of money, as the colleges' budgets cannot be raided further. Cheek said his major issue was faculty salaries. For three years there had been no raises. He did not know what could be done to change that but he was trying. If there were salary raises, there probably would be both a minimum amount and a cap set. He noted it was unlikely that raises would be forthcoming. There had been forward movement on setting differential tuition rates for three colleges. Another issue was full time enrollment. If UTK wants students to graduate in a timely manner, students need to pay for 15 hours. (Georgia made that move beginning with the current academic year.)

Questions. B. Lyons had a question about the appointment of Hendricks. He noted that last fall the Executive Council had discussed with the Chancellor the need for searches when filling Vice Chancellor positions. He expressed concern about what precedent her appointment might be setting. Cheek said there was no way to do a search. He needed someone at the cabinet level. She was the only person who could fill the position.

Lyons asked another question about the distribution of funds received from charging differential tuition rates, specifically whether the other colleges teaching 40% of the credit hours taken by the students in the three colleges would get any of the additional funds. Cheek said when he arrived on campus the plan was to reduce Nursing's enrolment by 50%. Students came to see him in the fall about the importance of maintaining enrollments in that College. Differential tuition appears to be the solution. He explained to Lyons that not enough money would come from differential tuition to solve the problems of the three colleges and to support the college providing 40% of their students' instruction, so it would only go to the three colleges.

Lyons also raised a question about the University's non-discrimination statement. He said the statement used for employees and the statements appearing in other locations, such as the commencement program were not the same. J. Heminway said the General Counsel was reluctant to change the non-discrimination statement because the University could not offer benefits to partners.

D. Birdwell said he was supportive of the Governor's goal of increasing the University's ranking and that it might be a good time to do so because outstanding people might be recruited from universities in states with severe economic problems, e.g., California. Birdwell asked about the categories used by Human Resources for approximately the past 8 years. The categories do not differentiate adequately among professionals. Birdwell said he had to go through special procedures and endless paperwork to appropriately pay people in research positions. Cheek said he would have Hendricks get in touch with K. Stephenson (Research Council) to work on the problem. He noted the categories also had been an issue with the Baker Center.

Birdwell said he was glad there would be a new program with ORNL, but he thought quality could be an issue. He asked whether there would be 200 people at the laboratory qualified to be on UTK's faculty. Cheek said there was a need to have a process similar to the one that involves [UC] Berkeley in the hiring of personnel. Birdwell suggested that after a time some deterioration in the lab personnel could occur due to the structure of the lab, i.e., the focus on

short term funding and the high cost of infrastructure there. He further argued that ORNL does not attract as high quality personnel as the University does and as a result caution has to be exercised to not starve campus programs. Cheek indicated there was a need to attract high quality students and see that they have high quality experiences, using Berkeley as a model. M. Breinig noted that her department, Physics, had experience working with ORNL. She said such arrangements are not free in that they require a lot of supervision from UTK faculty. It takes resources and time to supervise such programs and to prevent students in them from becoming alienated. Birdwell noted that one problem in the past with creating joint appointments had been that after a year or two the lab indicates it is going in another direction and the campus had to pick up 100% of the people's salaries.

L. Rinehart said achieving a top 25 ranking involves more than just money; it also involves cultural change. Cheek said the campus has to continue to emphasize its traditional strengths, but to make it clear that research and graduate training are critical. Birdwell said business processes were another critical area leading to the squandering of time.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

V. NEW BUSINESS

Senate's Position on Reporting of Athletics (T. Boulet & D. Bruce)

[D. Bruce participated via phone.] Bruce said he thought timing was the big issue for the Senate report and March 1 would be better than February 1. Bruce said he, through the work of the task force chaired by T. Diacon, had plenty of information and deliberations were going well. On February 5 Boulet will make a presentation to the task force. He noted there appear to be overwhelming sentiment for moving to the campus. J. Nolt said he was not clear about what advantage there would be in delaying the report until March, as the report could be an impetus to change in February. Bruce said it would be a bit awkward to recommend that the Faculty Senate "get ahead" of the task force in taking a position. He thought it would be more powerful for the Senate to pass a resolution supporting the recommendation of the task force. Nolt pointed out that changing the reporting structure was a long standing position of the Faculty Senate. Bruce said he thought that Boulet would make that point in his February 5 presentation. J. Heminway tried to create a compromise approach. Nolt moved that a resolution be discussed in February and that a vote be taken in March. Motion seconded. Lyons asked about the need for a specific resolution. Heminway explained that there would not be a specific resolution; instead Boulet would present the proposed position in anticipation of a vote on a specific resolution in March. Motion approved.

Boulet asked Bruce about an additional issue. According to C. Cimino, the Athletic Department budget is already part of the UTK budget. So, the issue is that the Athletic Department currently gets directives from both the campus and the system. Boulet planned to make that clear. Lyons noted that the Women's Athletic Department was on the E & G side of the budget, although state money was not spent on it. Birdwell said he was concerned about why gifts to academic units could not be considered. The answer was it was an IRS [Internal Revenue Service] issue.

Budget and Planning Committee: Salary Study (D. Bruce)

Heminway said she was concerned about the OIRA (Office of Institutional Research and Assessment) study of salaries. She thought there should be a better method for examining gender differences in salaries and noted S. Gardial had offered to pursue better methodological techniques with L. Gross. Heminway asked whether it was reasonable to ask the committee to pursue that issue.

Lyons asked Bruce about the living wage study. The Senate had resolved to have an annual snapshot. Bruce said he did not realize that there has been a resolution binding the Committee to obtaining such data. He said the committee already had a full agenda and because of the lack of salary raises nothing had changed. Lyons emphasized the need to look at the situation in terms of the Senate Bylaws.

Faculty Affairs Committee (S. Thomas)

S. Thomas brought two resolutions from the Committee. One involved changing check boxes to signature lines. Some unofficial guidelines were incorporated into the formal text and some text was replaced. Heminway indicated she endorsed the resolutions. With regard to external letters of assessment, she thought there were already enough challenges finding appropriate reviewers in esoteric areas. Lyons said he thought part of the material sent to potential reviewers should be the written criteria for progression to the rank in question. As an outside reviewer he found such criteria very important. So, he suggested adding that the criteria being sent become a requirement. Rinehart said he preferred using his own standards. D. Thompson noted the document already stated that the criteria should be sent to reviewers. She noted departments need flexibility in selecting the institutions reviewers might come from. Thomas said he would like to proceed with the resolutions as submitted by the Faculty Affairs Committee: a change in the signature format and a change in the requirements for external assessors. Both resolutions were approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Boulet noted that a gender neutral restroom resolution would be appearing before the SGA [Student Government Association]. Lyons proposed having a report. Boulet clarified that the goal was to have them included in new construction. Hodges Library would be the one existing building that would be at issue. Birdwell asked whether it should not just say new construction, as such restrooms should be in the plans.

Adjournment was moved by Birdwell, seconded by Heminway and approved. Meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.