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## **Faculty Senate - Executive Council January 21, 2014 Meeting Minutes**

Faculty Senate

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Faculty Senate Executive Council  
MINUTES  
January 21, 2014

Present: Donna Braquet, Guoxun Chen, Jennifer Fowler, David Golden, Joanne Hall, Sally Harris, Don Hodges, John Koontz, Susan Martin, Bonnie Ownley, Stefanie Ohnesorg, David Patterson, Randall Pierce, Lloyd Rinehart

Guests: Jimmy Cheek

## **I. CALL TO ORDER**

D. Golden called the meeting to order at 3:31 p.m., after establishing that a quorum was present.

## **II. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS**

### Chancellor's Report (J. Cheek)

- J. Cheek participated in a summit on targeting low income students with high academic abilities at the White House. John Morgan (TN Board of Regents) also attended. The President and First Lady spoke with participants. Cheek made three commitments from UTK's Strategic Plan: 1) develop a coaching program (pilot program this year), 2) offer a summer math camp for students who have selected math intensive majors but need math remediation, and 3) expand agreement plans with community colleges. Cheek indicated that the President and First Lady will spend time talking with young people about making higher education part of their life plan.
- In December, J. Cheek visited with those in Nashville who would be involved in decisions concerning partner benefits. Based on his discussions, he concluded that the climate is not favorable for UT to pursue this matter at this time. He stated that legislators are watching lawsuits brought against the State on this issue. He indicated that he thought the outcome of the lawsuits will have significant implications for the State. J. Koontz asked whether our lack of partner benefits affects hiring. S. Martin responded that the answer was anecdotally yes. She indicated that other states have a competitive advantage in this regard. Koontz suggested that large companies that want to relocate to TN may be an ally on this issue.
- Governor Haslam has suggested that UTK receive an additional \$10M. There is a high probability that a 1% raise will be suggested by the governor and it will be taken from the \$10M increase. Increases in the governor's budget appear to be going to a few departments, like Higher Education, while other departments will be cut.
- Student fee legislation has been filed that is focused on the use of student activity fees at Tennessee colleges and universities. The proposed bill requires that the allocation of student fees used to pay speakers for student organizations be based on a head count of the membership of that student organization. J. Hall asked for more clarification on the meaning of the bill. J. Cheek said that it was likely an attempt to control how these funds are allocated. Cheek opposes the bill.
- Another bill under consideration will freeze tuition once a student enters the university. J. Cheek opposes this bill and indicated that the cost to UTK could be as much as \$30M.
- D. Patterson raised the question of whether the 'guns-in-trunks' law would be revisited. J. Cheek responded that it likely will.

#### Provost's Report (S. Martin)

- S. Martin indicated that she would like to receive feedback on the new ADMIT policy by the Graduate School.
- S. Martin stated that many applications from undergraduates had been received, and they began admitting students earlier than last year. They are aiming to increase the undergraduate class to 21,500. They are also taking a more aggressive stance on bringing in transfer students. The Provost Office is planning for math camp this summer, for students who need math remediation.
- SAIS Task Force Report – S. Martin said that she would present this report at the next Faculty Senate meeting. The report revealed that many universities still use 'home-grown' evaluation programs. Based on the report, the Provost's Office will determine whether to keep, change or boot SAIS.
- S. Martin will be meeting with others to determine QEP data, a relatively new component of SACS accreditation.
- The Student Tracking program seems to be working. For example, students who were on track, in good standing, but had not registered for spring semester were quickly identified and contacted.
- A new system is in place to answer students' questions, and it seems to be working well.
- D. Golden indicated that [advocacy.tennessee.edu](http://advocacy.tennessee.edu), which is located in Nashville, can help keep faculty informed about state legislation issues. D. Patterson indicated that the new ADMIT system was a big improvement. J. Koontz pointed out that we do not have a mechanism for recognizing 'teacher of the week' in the same way that we have for recognizing 'researcher of the week' through Quest.

#### President's Report (D. Golden)

- Liz Anne Bowden was introduced as the new Graduate Assistant for the Faculty Senate. She is a second-year Law student. She received her undergraduate degree from UTK, with a degree in English, and a minor in Linguistics.
- The Faculty Senate is required to be notified if there is a Cumulative Performance Review (CPR) for a faculty member. Two members of the Faculty Senate must serve on the CPR Committee. D. Golden was notified of a CPR, and he has appointed two persons to serve on the committee.

### **III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

D. Golden asked for corrections or additions to the minutes of the Executive Council Meeting of November 4, 2013. L. Rinehart made a motion to approve the minutes as written. J. Koontz seconded the motion and the motion passed. Minutes approved.

### **IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

#### Academic Freedom Statement (J. Fowler)

J. Fowler stated that the impetus behind development of a revised "Academic Freedom Statement" goes back to a 2006 Supreme Court decision (*Garcetti v. Ceballos*) involving protection of free speech by the First Amendment for government workers. The employee claimed that he was treated unfairly because he had criticized actions of his employer. The Court ruled that because the plaintiff's statements were made in his position as a public employee, rather than as a private citizen, his speech was not protected by the First Amendment. In the last few years universities have been adding more restrictions on the speech of their faculty. In 2011, the UT Board of Trustees was asked for a proposed policy on

academic freedom, which they did not provide. The Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) was asked to follow up on this issue by the Provost Office. Recently, the TN Board of Regents approved a new policy on academic freedom. The FAC has revised their resolution, with additional input from J. Zomchick and J. Heminway. There are two recent changes on page 2, paragraphs 2 and 3 (see posted document – Resolution on Academic Freedom and Shared Governance). J. Fowler suggested that the FAC hold one to two open forums where anyone from the university will be allowed to give their opinion on the proposed resolution. Additional edits were suggested. J. Hall suggested that ‘or’ be deleted in paragraph 2, sentence 3, ‘other adverse employment or action’. Fowler said that she would check with J. Heminway to clarify the sentence meaning. S. Harris identified a colon and a semi-colon in paragraph 2 that should be removed. D. Patterson asked for clarification about the phrase “not claiming to represent the University” in the third paragraph. D. Golden said that if you give a reporter your employer’s name, they will assume that you are speaking to represent the university. Fowler shared that P. Daves said that some persons always qualify that they do not represent the University when they speak. Hall suggested adding the phrase, “not claiming to represent the opinions or views of the University.” Patterson asked for clarification about the phrase, “not using institutional resources.” Does this mean not using your UT provided email or laptop to express your opinion on a non-UT issue? S. Ohnesorg suggested that the last sentence of paragraph 3 be deleted. Consensus opinion was that deleting this sentence would jeopardize approval of the resolution. J. Fowler stated that she will work with S. Winston to set dates for two forums for open discussion on the proposed resolution.

## **V. REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

There were no reports from special committees.

## **VI. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

Appeals Committee (B. MacLennan)

No report was available.

Athletics Committee (J. Koontz)

No report was available.

Benefits and Professional Development Committee (D. Braquet)

D. Braquet brought forward a resolution to expand coverage of family members for bereavement leave. See attachments 2 (Resolution on Universal Sick and Bereavement Leave Policies) and 3 (Addendum for Resolution on Universal Sick and Bereavement Leave Policies) posted on the Faculty Senate website. B. Ownley noted that two classes of family members existed and suggested that the same number of bereavement days be allowed for each group. Ownley asked if this leave is an internal or a state benefit. Braquet said that it would go to a system review. She added that the TN Board of Regents already had this policy, but it is worded to include other members of the employees’ household. D. Patterson suggested that we adopt language that is equivalent to that of the TN Board of Regents, and see that as a step forward. S. Ohnesorg suggested that the qualifiers “husband and wife” be dropped, to leave it open-ended. D. Patterson and D. Golden will present this to the University Faculty Council on Feb 26<sup>th</sup>. Braquet wants to bring this forward to the Faculty Senate in the near future.

Budget and Planning Committee (R. Pierce)

No report was available.

Faculty Affairs Committee (J. Fowler)

There was no additional information to report.

Graduate Council (D. Hodges)

No report was available.

Library and Information Technology Committee (B. Mehra)

No report was available.

Nominations and Appointments Committee (for information only) (D. Golden)

No report was available.

Non-Tenure Track Issues Committee (S. Harris)

No report was available.

Research Council (T. Shepardson)

No report was available.

Teaching and Learning Council (L. Rhinehart)

L. Rhinehart described email communications from a faculty member on the subject of "Faculty Assignment of Self-Authored Texts to Students." The emails were compiled and forwarded to the Teaching and Learning Council, which will review the matter.

Undergraduate Council (J. Levin)

No report was available.

University System Relations Committee (G. Chen)

No report was available.

## **VII. NEW BUSINESS**

New requirements in the Package for Reappointment of Lecturers (S. Ohnesorg)

S. Ohnesorg stated that lecturers would like to receive any documents that listed new requirements for their package for reappointment by a specific date each year. She suggested the date be in May or June. Discussion followed and the consensus was that no changes will be needed before the next evaluation of packages for reappointment. D. Golden said that a document with new requirements is moving through the work flow for approval by administration.

## **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:46 p.m.