



THE UNIVERSITY of TENNESSEE

KNOXVILLE, CHATTANOOGA, MARTIN, TULLAHOMA, MEMPHIS

FACULTY COUNCIL

MEETING 43 - Minutes

March 19, 2014, Videoconference, 4:00 p.m. (EDT)

UT Faculty Council Voting Members (Quorum, 5 voting members)

UTHSC George Cook (Faculty Senate President) - present
Phyllis Richey (Campus Representative) - present
UTK David Golden (Faculty Senate President) - absent
David Patterson (Campus Representative) – present
UTM Jeff Rogers (Faculty Senate President) - present
Jenna Wright (Campus Representative) – present
UTC Deborah McAllister (Faculty Senate President) - present
Kay Cowan (Campus Representative) - absent

Trustees (Ex-Officio voting)

Vickie Steinberg (Board of Trustees Faculty member - voting) -present
Thad Wilson (Board of Trustees Faculty member – non-voting) - absent

UT Faculty Council Ex-Officio Non-voting Members

UT Dr. Joe DiPietro (System President) – absent
UT Dr. Katie High (System Office of Academic Affairs and Student Success) – absent

Faculty Council Guests

UT Dr. India Lane (System Office of Academic Affairs and Student Success) – absent
UTHSC Martin Donaldson – present

Call to Order

Roll Call – as above

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Approval of the February 25-26, 2014 minutes.

Old Business

None.

New Business

1. Update regarding dispersal of Student Activity Fees/TN Senate Bill 2493.

Jeff Rogers mentioned items on the UT Advocacy Web site. Voting on the “Sex Week” (activity fee) bills had been postponed. Regarding Tennessee Promise, Bill 2491 had been amended, the previous day, by the House Education Subcommittee. Amounts for the Hope Scholarship will change. For freshmen and sophomores, the amount will be increased from \$3,000 to \$3,500. For juniors and seniors, the amount will be decreased from \$5,000 to \$4,500. This will, also, include the for-profit South College. According to UT Advocacy, the UT administration supports this. Jeff indicated that UTM Chancellor Rakes said this would be worse for that campus. Vicki Steinberg asked why. Jeff said that the original amount of \$6,000 would be reduced by \$1,500. Jeff said that, for 2015, we need to learn more from the System, regarding how it is lobbying the legislature, and statistical projections of the impact of Tennessee Promise.

At the previous day’s UTM Faculty Senate meeting, there had been a 1.5-hour discussion on Tennessee Promise. There was a recommendation to the Chancellor to form a task force regarding strategies and impacts. The task force would be campus-wide, and would include five Faculty Senate members (about half of the task force). The task force should start as soon as possible, and work over the summer, to address decreasing enrollment. It should move forward, without addressing politics.

Jeff noted that this would be a time for action from TUFs.

2. Update regarding Faculty Handbooks.

At the UFC meeting in February, George Cook brought up questions regarding “assignments” and “goals.” Some UTHSC faculty members feel that they are targeted, and cannot do their assignments, i.e., they are teaching courses for which they have no expertise. Other handbooks state that department heads will work with faculty to distribute the work load. Jeff asked the following: Is there questioning about the ways assignments and goals are defined? Does language make that impossible? Have they set themselves up for failure?

George said that, when goals are set for the year, the dean can overrule the faculty member and say that the goals are not appropriate. They have worked on the handbook for 8-9 years. About one-third is deficient, but it was passed by the Board of Trustees. UTHSC faculty members have been working on a handbook revision, since 2010. Phyllis Richey said that they have been functioning with an out-of-date handbook. George suggested going back to the 2010 version, and adding items. Phyllis asked for a source where help could be provided. George said that they had met with Katie High. Everyone needs to agree on the handbook, but seem to waiting for the other person.

Phyllis asked about the possibility of an ombudsman. There is one in Knoxville (implemented with former President Peterson). David Patterson confirmed that there are two: one for faculty and one for staff. He did not think that an ombudsman could help, with this, but could help with individual problems, e.g., tenure, promotion, and appeal. Vicki stated that, at UTC, we have the Faculty Administrative Relations Committee, which tries to broker for disagreements, and can step in during the appeal process. George stated that this had been a successful process, at the University of Washington. No records were kept, and the ombudsman had helped settle a dispute between the President and the Chancellor. Vicki asked Jenna Wright what UTM has in place. Jenna responded that there is a University Relations Committee, for tenure and promotion issues. Members are elected, and serve for 3 years.

Regarding the UTHSC handbook, David Patterson asked that, if the handbook does not have a long and arbitrary evaluation by deans, will the language guide disputes or guide upper level evaluation. Phyllis responded that both occur. Upper administration does not agree with the process of revising the handbook. It was asked whether Faculty Senate could pass a resolution of censure, or, respectfully, request that this is addressed. George stated that Faculty Senate had passed a resolution, but it was ignored and laughed at (passive-aggressive), and that they do not have shared governance, in the way that he believes President DiPietro supports faculty governance. David P. asked if the handbook mentions shared governance. George said that it contains, only, Board of Trustees language. David P. suggested raising the stakes by forwarding the resolution of censure to President DiPietro, if the handbook issue cannot be resolved.

Vicki wondered if UTC and UTM could set up combined, virtual enrollments in courses to take care of staffing shortages, since Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures is a small department. Phyllis said this had been tried with the Epidemiology program, with UTK. There was an issue with money, with who gets the credit, money, and fees. She suggested that we check with President DiPietro. Jenna added that this is another step in making online education work, within the state. Her concern was that an appropriate number of additional faculty members might not be hired. Combining courses would be fine, on a spot basis, e.g., during a sabbatical. If it becomes a pattern, then new faculty would be needed. Vicki suggested setting rules, e.g., for a limit of one to two students, and this be done rationally.

David P. mentioned that the Faculty Affairs Committee was working with the Provost to get clear language into the handbook, regarding academic freedom and disagreement with administrative decisions. They are working with India Lane and Katie High. There is some concern for the academic outreach and engagement criteria for rank. UTK is submitting an application for a Carnegie designation with outreach and engagement. It was not clear how to access the impact of work, if it is not disseminated.

3. Update regarding "Tennessee Promise" initiative.

As above.

Other Business

Tentative next meeting.

A chair and a secretary, for 2014-2015, are needed.

Adjournment