



FACULTY

SENATE

NEWSLETTER

May 2000

Closing Remarks

by Dr. Mary Papke, President, Faculty Senate
Presented to the Senate at its final meeting, May 1.

Bob Glenn asked me to write on the Lessons I've Learned about Shared Governance for the final edition of this year's *Newsletter* and since being given that assignment, I've experienced numerous flashbacks of the nightmares peculiar to my colleagues—those of the final exam in advanced calculus standing between you and your Ph.D. degree in English or the final oral examination during which you are struck nearly dumb and can answer to the question “Discuss the work of Ezra Pound and that of two other Idaho poets” only a despairing silence since you made the mistake of studying only the poets of Minnesota. I am being somewhat disingenuous, of course, for I do have a few ideas about shared governance, and I have certainly seen it in action this year. So, since this is finals time and my last hurrah, I would like to celebrate the very important work done this year by this Senate.

We have worked assiduously to elaborate faculty responsibility for and participation in such crucial ventures as streamlining, oversight of academic practices and transmission of curriculum, assessment and the determination of accountability. The Senate has worked to insure faculty representation on all major university committees and directed attention to those committees born in the Senate. We have acted to make this Senate by, of, and for the faculty, and, so, by, of, and for The University of Tennessee. To reiterate and elaborate a metaphor I have often used in charges to Senate committees, we have demanded repeatedly a seat at the front table, we are staying through all the courses, we are not leaving the table until we get our just desserts. We will continue to voice our pressing needs for better funding, adequate compensation, integrity in academic practices. I take heart, on good days, from the numerous times I have heard or read the remark “How is the Senate going to respond?” The challenge implicit in this remark suggests that the Senate is the place to look for action, that the Senate's is not a disempowered voice in the wilderness but is in constant and crucial dialogue with and not just a body at that front table.

I inherited a strong Senate led more than capably by Mark Miller; no doubt my successors, Bob Glenn and Kathy Greenberg, will further the cause of shared governance in significant ways, even as we can do so today in our discussion of the very central issues on the agenda. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as President of this Senate, and I applaud the very hard work of all the committees, all the Senators, Secretary Sam Jordan, Parliamentarian Norma Cook, and support staff Sharonne Winston. I opened the Senate in September with the statement “The future is now.” I would like to close my last report noting that the future remains ours to help shape. Let us resume, then, the dialogue.

Committee Reports

For committee members and chairs, please see web.utk.edu/~senate/Committees99-00.html

Athletics Committee

The Athletics Committee has completed two investigations this term. One concerns tutoring, grade changes, and learning disability programs in the University of Tennessee Men's and Women's Athletics Departments; it is available at web.utk.edu/~senate/AthRpt5-00.html. The other investigation, concerning funding of the Thompson-Boling Arena, is available at web.utk.edu/~senate/ArenaRpt4-00.html.

Budget Committee

During the 1999–2000 academic year, the Faculty Senate Budget Committee (FSBC) has focused its attention on the issue of faculty salaries. From the office of the Executive Director for Budget and Finance, we obtained detailed salary information for both UTK and the Southern University Group (SUG) in the 1998–99 year. We presented a report to the Senate with several tables that illustrated such

issues as the level of UTK salaries relative to SUG salaries, variation of salaries across ranks and academic disciplines, and compression of salaries from rank to rank. We made several recommendations to the Senate regarding the establishment of guidelines for salary policy at UTK. At its April meeting, the Senate passed a resolution endorsing our recommendations. The Committee's report is available at web.utk.edu/~senate/BudgetRpt4-00.html. Related issues concerning salary policy are questions of an appropriate reference group of institutions with which to compare UTK, of an appropriate level of resources used to support part-time instructors, of appropriate reference data for library faculty, of appropriate statistical measures for comparison of salaries across institutions and disciplines, and of appropriate allocation of resources to programs deemed excellent and closely associated with areas in which UTK expects to excel.

Bylaws Committee

On the recommendation of the Bylaws Committee, the Senate approved several changes to the Bylaws. These include greater flexibility in scheduling meetings, mechanisms for planning an agenda for the Senate, and change in the composition of the Executive Committee, as well as a number of housekeeping changes. The Senate also charged the Bylaws Committee with the task of thoroughly revising the Senate's procedures and committee structure. The Committee's reports are available at web.utk.edu/~senate/BylawsRpt10-99.html, web.utk.edu/~senate/BylawsMandate3-00.html, and web.utk.edu/~senate/BylawsRpt3-00.html.

Educational Policy Committee

The Educational Policy Committee approved and forwarded to the Senate the minutes from this year's work of the Undergraduate and Graduate Councils. The only material not approved by our Committee included curricular changes that sought to include distance-learning courses in the undergraduate catalog without a clear indication that all work would be completed online. Because this raised issues of how online courses would be monitored at the university, and whether they were equivalent to regular courses offered onsite, we also brought the matter to the attention of the Faculty Senate's ad hoc Technology Committee. At present, the Undergraduate Council has set up a committee to review these particular courses sent back from the EPC and to work with the other committees addressing these issues on campus.

Faculty Affairs Committee

The Faculty Affairs Committee has studied the Faculty Evaluation Manual and campus policies concerning use of faculty titles. In addition, the Committee has considered two grievances filed by faculty concerning due process.

Faculty and Staff Benefits Committee

Issues considered by the Faculty/Staff Benefits Committee include the salary compression/inversion problem at the full professor level, a 100% "cashability" option for retirement funds, long-term health care options, formation of a State Faculty Association, and a number of insurance issues: pharmaceutical and home health care coverage, elimination of the 30-day limit on prescription drug purchases, having a campus advocate who will help us settle faculty and staff problems with Blue Cross/Blue Shield, and developing closer contact with the SIC. The Committee's full report is available at web.utk.edu/~senate/BenRpt5-00.html.

International Education Committee

The International Education Committee recently requested and received support to revise the Faculty Senate Bylaws description of the work of this Committee. The changes were based upon a year-long study of activities related to international education opportunities for students, faculty, visiting scholars, and other members of our institution. In 1998-99, the Committee served as a task force for Chancellor Snyder and was charged with developing goals for the university related to international education. Goals were developed after an in-depth look at needs of incoming and outgoing participants in international education and research opportunities. The revisions in the Bylaws specifically address the ways in which the International Education Committee can better serve as a liaison between faculty and campus offices that coordinate services designed to reach these goals. Now that these Bylaws have been approved, the Committee plans to further its liaison work during the next academic year.

Legislative Committee

The primary efforts of the Legislative Committee have been to arrange meetings with legislators and others whose influence could have a positive effect on the conditions at UT. Our focus was concentrated on informing and influencing those invited guests about UT as well as gleaned information from them.

Our opening meetings were with former state Senator Bud Gilbert and UT Trustee James Haslam. Most recently, we met with Trustee Susan Williams, Senator Ben Atchley, Representative Joe Armstrong, and U.S. Congressman John J. Duncan.

The Committee succeeding in establishing ties with student leaders and campus political organizations and in adding student representatives to the Committee membership.

Library Committee

At the first meeting of the Library Committee in the Fall of 1999, the Acting Dean of the Library, Aubrey Mitchell, indicated that there was likely to be no major action taken while the search for a new Dean was under way, and the Committee was briefed on the search process. There being no other agenda items raised by the Library or members of the Committee, the Committee did not meet again in the fall. In the absence of any other agenda items raised by the Committee or the Library, no other regular meeting occurred in the Spring term. While the Faculty Senate Library Committee has been of limited value this last year, this is due to the caretaker situation during the current search for a new Dean. The usefulness and viability of the Faculty Senate Library Committee depends greatly on the actions of the Dean of the Library—on the Dean's interest in using the Committee for information or outreach, or on the Faculty Senate's need to have a channel to the Dean and Administration through which issues can be raised and discussed. This year, there has been little interest in or need for that channel. Next year, with a new Dean in place, there should be more opportunity for the Committee to contribute.

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee solicited nominees for the office of President-Elect by sending e-mail messages to all UT faculty members in late November. In response, several people submitted the names of prospective candidates. In some cases, the nominating person had not obtained the permission of the nominee in advance. When asked to do this, several faculty discovered that their nominees were unwilling to have their names placed in nomination. A few faculty members suggested the names of prospective nominees rather than contact the individuals themselves. Each person whose name was submitted was subsequently contacted by a member of the Committee. This year's nominees were Michael Combs, Professor of Music, and Katherine Greenberg, Professor of Education. Both individuals presented brief statements at the March meeting of the Faculty Senate. Sharonne Winston also prepared

copies of the nominees' statements and the official ballots for senators to take with them. Senators were instructed to return their marked ballots to the Nominating Committee chair by March 31. The results revealed that Katherine Greenberg is the President-Elect for the 2000–01 academic year.

Professional Development Committee

We compiled information on the faculty development (sabbatical) programs at the "top 25" research institutions, coordinating our efforts and pooling our findings with the Research Council. We generated a list of desirable and feasible elements for such a program at UT. We plan to issue, with the Research Council, a joint recommendation to the Senate during the next academic year.

Research Council

Issues considered by the Research Council this year have included relaxing the policy limiting admission of international students, a desktop computing refresh program, the University's Acceptable Use Policy for computing resources, the impact of the Tennessee Open Records Law on the University's ability to obtain contracts and grants from private industry, the use of citation data to measure research productivity, DII Emerging Technologies projects, faculty development/sabbatical programs, and the activities of various interdisciplinary thematic areas. The Research Council also reviewed and made recommendations for Chancellor's Awards, research centers, SARIF grants, and EPPE funds. More information about Research Council activities is available at www.ra.utk.edu/rc/.

Student Affairs Committee

The Committee met twice this year (October 20, 1999, and March 1, 2000). Issues discussed included SGA activities, funding issues, mental health services on campus, privacy of student records, availability of classes, and current issues in Student Affairs. At the request of the Committee, Tim Rogers met with Phil Scheurer and Dr. John Peters to discuss the possible need for closer coordination of mental health services on campus. The perception of the administration is that the key parties in providing such services already meet on a regular basis and coordinate their services closely. The Committee concluded that, at the least, faculty are poorly informed about the various facilities (Counseling Center, Student Health, Psych Clinic) and the differences in services provided. Tim Rogers was asked by the Committee to work with Faye Julian to assure that an updated listing of campus resources is distributed to faculty.

Teaching Council

The Teaching Council completed work in three areas during the Spring 2000 Semester. First, a written report on "Student Review of Teaching" was presented to the Faculty Senate at its meeting on April 3, 2000. While the Teaching Council's Committee for Student Evaluation of Teaching led the effort to review our current system and consider possible changes or modifications, the full Teaching Council ultimately engaged in a series of discussions on the issue. The outcome was a consensus support from the membership of the Teaching Council for the report referred to above. The report includes recommendations for substantial changes and modifications designed to address concerns that have been raised and improve our system of obtaining and using student assessments of instruction. Second, the Awards Committee completed its review of nominations and made selections for the teaching and advising awards that were presented at the Honors Convocation April 12, 2000. Third, the Professional Development Committee worked in cooperation with the Center for Undergraduate Excellence (CUE) to sponsor two sessions in late March in which current CUE Fellows made presentations on their projects. Information was also made available during these sessions regarding the application process for CUE Fellowships for the coming year.

E01-0130-007-00

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Ad Hoc Committee on Evaluation of Administrators Process

On April 3 the Ad Hoc Committee presented its report on the Evaluation of Administrators Process to the Faculty Senate (web.utk.edu/~senate/EvalAdmsReport3-13-00.html). Recommendations focus on three areas: (1) simplifying procedures for conducting reviews through a standardized survey process, with additional review procedures only when warranted by survey results; (2) streamlining the positions to be reviewed by focusing on academic administrators, those whose decisions affect the professional lives of faculty and who administer academic programs; and (3) improving communication of review results to the faculty. The Senate adopted the Committee's recommendations at the May 1 meeting.

Ad Hoc Committee on Technologically-Enhanced Delivery of Instruction

Throughout this academic year, the Committee has been examining how technology can be used appropriately for delivering quality instruction. At the April meeting of the Faculty Senate, the Committee presented a report which summarized our work to date. The Executive Committee of the Senate felt strongly that those portions of the report which dealt with academic integrity and faculty representation on University-wide technology and instruction committees (see web.utk.edu/~senate/TechInstr4-00.html#CCC) should be brought to the full Senate in the form of a resolution. At its May 1 meeting, the Senate adopted the recommendations.