

Steve R. Thomas  
Associate Professor  
University Libraries

Candidate Statement  
President-Elect

I was appointed to a faculty position at the University Libraries in October 1982, having spent the preceding 17 months in a staff-exempt position supported by a grant from the Tennessee State Library and Archives to convert our local bibliographic records into machine-readable form. That work was the foundation upon which the Libraries' first on-line catalog was built. Throughout all of the years since, my work within the University Libraries has focused, in one way or another, on maximizing the usefulness of the Libraries' electronic access tools to provide access to the wealth of resources purchased by the Libraries for the campus to further the teaching and research needs of our faculty and students. During the nearly three decades I have been on this campus, the changes in information retrieval and access have been monumental, and I am grateful for the small roles I have played in that transformation, helping the Libraries balance needs and desires within our limited financial resources and making logical decisions to guide our progress.

While I have been active in committee work within the Libraries during my entire career at UTK, my service at the campus level began much more recently. I had the opportunity to serve as alternative to the Faculty Senate from the Libraries in 2006/07 and was elected to a three-year term as a senator the following year. During 2007/08 and 2008/09, I served as a member of the Faculty Affairs Committee. During that time, I came to see our *Faculty Handbook* and *Manual for Faculty Evaluation* in a new light, as growing and adapting documents. I realized our collective opportunity and responsibility to revise these documents to meet the changing needs on our campus. I was asked, for 2009/10 and 2010/11, to serve as chair of the Faculty Affairs Committee. Through interactions with other committee chairs, senate leaders, and campus administrators, this service has given me a fresh perspective on the concept of shared governance and on the need for communication between faculty and administrators at all levels within the university. I would appreciate the opportunity to help the Faculty Senate serve as the voice of the faculty-at-large during this conversation.