

The University of Tennessee Faculty Senate
MINUTES
April 3, 2006

Those absent were: Bill Adams, Vasilios Alexiades, John Ammons, Gary Bates, Dave Bemis, Kathy Bohstedt, Bruce Bomar, Jan W. Brown, Deborah Carroll, Hui-Shyong Chang, Loren Crabtree, Paul Crilly, Brian Edwards, Les Essif, James Fitzgerald, Mike Fitzgerald, Rajan Ganguly, Leslie Gay, Diane Hendrix, Karen Hughes, Ed Jepson, Barbara Kaye, Suzanne Kurth, Beauvais Lyons*, Sibyl Marshall, Charles Norman, Ronald Pevey, John Preston, Stefan Richter, W. Tim Rogers, Bart Rohrbach, Dileep Sachan, Gerald Schroedl, Karen Sowers, Ken Stephenson, Deborah Thomas*, Mark Windham

*Alternate Senators: Kenton Yeager for Beauvais Lyons, Molly Royse for Deborah Thomas

D. Kennedy called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INTRODUCTIONS

Establishment of Quorum (S. Jordan)

Jordan confirmed that a quorum was present.

Senate President's Report (D. Kennedy)

Kennedy said that she attended the Board of Trustees meeting in March. The revision to the tenure policy was approved. The possibility of part-time faculty more broadly being eligible for tenure was discussed. Kennedy also reported that the provost search continues. Initial interviews with candidates were held in Atlanta over the weekend and on-campus interviews will be held the last week of April.

Kennedy next encouraged senators to seek candidates to run for the Faculty Senate. The faculty need to show their interest in shared governance. Kennedy also reported that a new ombudsperson will be announced soon. She then asked for nominations for the UT System Council and reminded everyone that the next Chancellor's Lunch will occur April 19 in dining rooms C and D of Thompson Boling Arena.

Chancellor's Report (A. Mayhew for L. Crabtree)

Mayhew said the Chancellor's Office is busy with the budget process, dean searches in two colleges, searches for heads in several departments, a search for a leader for the honors program and evaluations of deans. She then reported that 8,542 freshman applicants have been admitted; they have an average GPA of 3.59, an average ACT score of 26.12 and an average SAT score of 1178. It is hoped that roughly half of those admitted will actually enroll. Applications for graduate school are up about 150 over last year, but admissions are somewhat behind last year's admissions at this time.

In response to a question from B. Dumas, Mayhew said that U.T.K.'s enrolling just below 50% of its admissions compares very favorably with yield rates for similar universities.

MINUTES

Minutes of the Faculty Senate meeting of March 6, 2006, were approved without change.

MINUTES POSTED ELECTRONICALLY

Minutes of the Undergraduate Council meeting of March 7, 2006, and of the Graduate Council meeting of March 9, 2006, were approved.

Kennedy then noted that the report by the Geier Committee will be delayed until the May meeting.

PREVIOUS BUSINESS

Nominating Committee (C. White)

White noted that D. Patterson and R. Strange are the nominees for President Elect. She said that other potential candidates could not run for various reasons and that their names will be provided to next year's Nominating Committee. She then gave each candidate an opportunity to make a statement. Patterson spoke first and said that he sees the Faculty Senate's greatest role as being active participants in shared governance and communicating the faculty's needs and interests. In response to a question, Patterson said that protecting the faculty's rights and responsibilities is a primary duty of the Faculty Senate and its president.

Strange spoke next and noted that his father had served as Faculty Senate President at another institution. He said he believes the Faculty Senate has a role as the conscience of the institution. Although the Faculty Senate may not be able to implement many of the decisions on campus, it can influence decisions for the better. In response to a question, Strange said working to help contingent faculty is an issue of conscience that would be of prime importance to him.

Budget and Planning Committee (S. McMillan)

McMillan described the budget-hearing process and the committee's role. In particular, the committee prepared a report which it presented to the chancellor and his staff. Faculty salaries, including competitive starting salaries, compression and inversion, were a major point. The appropriate balance of support for undergraduate students and for graduate students was another primary topic, as were the appropriate mix of different groups of teachers, partner accommodations, and student information systems.

In response to a question, D. Barlow said that approximately a 50% increase in the state appropriations for faculty salaries would be required to raise faculty salary averages to the averages of UTK's peer institutions. In response to a question from C. Craig, McMillan said she would turn to her second topic, the 2005-2006 Faculty Salary Data Report.

McMillan then briefly described how the report on salaries is prepared. As Craig pointed out for the Department of Classics, the reported numbers may not accurately reflect actual faculty salaries. Kennedy then encouraged faculty to provide McMillan suggestions on what data they'd like reported. J. Nolt observed that even if the salaries for professors are inflated, they still fall further behind professors at other institutions than do salaries for assistant and associate professors compared to their colleagues elsewhere.

McMillan responded to a request from C. A. Debelius by saying that the data would be made available as an Excel file.

McMillan then reported that the Athletics Department expects to announce soon that it is renaming its Volunteer Athletics & Scholarship Fund (VASF) and the new name will not include the term "scholarship."

Student Concerns Committee (C. Luther)

Luther reported that the committee began the year by meeting with student representatives to learn their concerns. The need for a central location for learning about scholarship and fellowship support for graduate students was a major concern. The committee has prepared a proposal for a Graduate Student Resource Center. Kennedy then asked that suggestions to improve the proposal be provided to Luther.

The meeting adjourned at 4:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Sam Jordan, Secretary