

University Faculty Council – Notes from the first meeting

Presented to the UTK Faculty Senate by Candace White

The University Faculty Council charter was ratified by Faculty Senates on all campuses in the UT System, approved by President Petersen, and became effective on Jan. 1, 2007. The first meeting was held on Jan. 8, 2007. Travel support to attend Council meetings will be covered by the chancellors of each campus.

(<http://web.utk.edu/~senate/docs/2005-06/UTSysFacCounCharter2005.pdf>)

Present:

George Cook, senate president, UT Memphis

Lou Gross, senate president, UT Knoxville

Peg Hartig, elected representative, UT Memphis

Bob Levy, UT System V. P. Academic Affairs & Student Success

Lyn Miles, elected representative, UT Chattanooga

John Petersen, UT System President

John Schommer, senate president, UT Martin

Gavin Townsend, senate president, UT Chattanooga

Nancy Warren, elected representative, UT Martin

Candace White, elected representative, UT Knoxville

Start-up snafu - The two faculty appointees to the Board of Trustees were not notified of the meeting and did not attend. Bob Levy was very sorry, and gave assurance that the oversight is corrected.

The organizational meeting began with a very open discussion with President Petersen about his scorecard, system organization, and campus relationships. He said IT in Knoxville began reporting to the UTK campus on Jan. 1. He said, "We need to refigure how we function as a system." Other system/campus entities that he is working to untangle include Institutional Research and Human Resources.

The president presented an organizational chart (orally). The system vice presidents are organized around four areas: Programmatic, Support, Fiscal, and Operational. Operational includes the Institute of Agriculture, the Institute for Public Service, and the campuses. The people who report directly to the president are the vice president and the chancellors. A unique part of the organizational chart is the fact that the Athletic Director on the UTK campus reports directly to the president, while the Athletic Directors on the other campuses report to chancellors. The rationale is, "Having Knoxville athletics report to the president is both practical and a good metaphor for its statewide role."

We talked about the president's interest in growing this campus to 38,000 students. He said the size of many state flagship campuses is about .6% of the state population, so based on the population of Tennessee, around 36,000 is a target size for the UTK campus. Responding to concerns about our physical space as well as overuse of contingent faculty, the president said he is asking the governor for \$50-60 million over the next 8-10 years, and said, "We won't grow at that rate unless the dollars follow."

We talked about faculty salaries and performance reviews. The president is committed to merit pay, but chancellors on each campus have latitude in deciding how merit pay will be awarded. He is asking the legislator for a 5% faculty raise pool this year.

One of the main agenda items, placed on the agenda by Bob Levy, was a discussion of the board policy for the 4-part faculty evaluation ranking system. We discussed adding a fifth level to the ranking system. Levy said That Board policy specifies a general frame for annual reviews. Faculty Handbooks specify more details and describe criteria. We agreed that leaving the board policy in its most general form was probably best, but will seek input from faculty on our campuses.

Other items

(Chattanooga) brought the original charter from their merger with UT which among other things, stated they would receive the same pay as Knoxville faculty. It appears to have gone the way of the Indian treaties.

We talked about the fact that UTK Gen Ed requirements are different from Martin and Chattanooga as well as from the Board of Regents schools, and discussed the advantages to students of having ours more in line with others in the state.

Faculty on other campuses would like electronic access to our library, but it is a question of who pays (which campus).

We talked about whether faculty senates and individual faculty members should talk directly to legislators, and while the answer is of course they can, it is important not to send mixed signals. President Petersen will ask Hank Dye to pull together some talking points for both the system and separate campuses so faculty can be informed advocates.

The president said that UTSI seems to have turned a corner, and under new directorship making progress in research productivity and enrollment.

(Martin) faculty would like 100% cashable retirement – This may be controlled by state law.

We talked about the need for some adjustments to the Tennessee Lottery Scholarship, such as allowing it to pay for summer school and allowing students to go to school part-time.

We made an editorial change to the charter – adding an “s” to Board of Trustees faculty appointees (since there are two of them).

Lou Gross agreed to work on a first draft of bylaws for the Council. We hope to meet again this semester, and will seek input from faculty on all campuses before the next meeting.

