



Toby Boulet

CANDIDATE FOR FACULTY SENATE PRESIDENT

Background

Toby Boulet has been on the faculty at UTK since 1985, currently in the Mechanical, Aerospace and Biomedical Engineering (MABE) department. He holds the Ph. D. in Mechanical Engineering from Stanford University. Since 1996, he has served three terms on the Faculty Senate. He has served on the Budget Committee, the Faculty Affairs Committee, the Executive committee and the Faculty Appeals Committee, which he now chairs.

Position Statement

I have two main concerns regarding the role of the Faculty Senate, both of which have to do with the evolUTION of this campus. My first concern has to do with strategic planning. The advent of computers and the internet has brought, and will continue to bring, rapid change to all aspects of our work - teaching, artistic creation, research and service. Ten or twenty years from now, some characteristics of today's university will be relics. Will face-to-face education still be the norm? Will we still need a bookstore? Will we still need a physical campus? I am convinced that one component of strategic planning should be looking into the future to imagine changes that are currently somewhat "beyond the horizon." If we approach the strategic planning process thinking only of how to improve the university as it exists now, our plans will soon diverge from reality. My second, though more important, concern is about the recent talk of making the Knoxville campus a "great university," an idea that has garnered much support from the faculty. To have the faculty excited about a common aspiration is a precious thing that should not be squandered. Although the faculty alone cannot move the university toward this goal, neither can progress occur without the support and energy of the faculty.

We must not let our desire to better this institution be quashed by the recent difficulties in our relationship with the UT System administration. We must work harder than ever for better relationships with the UT System, the Board of Trustees, our state legislators, our Governor and the public at large. The "our" in the phrase "our university" must include all of these people. We must work with all of them to articulate a shared vision for "our great university."



Stefanie Ohnesorg

CANDIDATE FOR FACULTY SENATE PRESIDENT

Background

Stephanie Ohnesorg joined the UT faculty in 1994, and is an associate professor of German in the Department of Modern Foreign Languages and Literatures. She is the director of graduate studies for the Department of MFL and is chair of the German Studies Program. She was a member of the Faculty Senate from 2004-2007, served as a member of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee from 2004-2006 as chair of the Graduate Council, and has been serving on the Faculty Senate Research Council since 2006. She chaired the Academic Policy Committee from 2003-2004 (prior to becoming Chair of Graduate Council), and served on several ad-hoc committees and task-forces that were put in place by the Graduate Council and the Graduate School to focus on specific aspects of graduate education at UT (including the Task Force on the Structure of the UT Graduate School, the ad-hoc committee that drafted bylaws for Graduate Council Bylaw, and the Sub-Committee of the Strategic Planning Initiative on Graduate Education). She was a member of the Steering Committee for Africa Semester, main negotiator for 4 new graduate exchange programs with German universities, and is the founding member and director of the German Saturday School of Knoxville.

Position Statement

In his response to Chancellor Crabtree's resignation, Faculty Senate President David Patterson quoted from an e-mail in which the former chancellor referred to "shared governance" not only as a "fragile creature" but also reminded us that "we all have to work on it in order to ensure its survival." While we can consider ourselves fortunate to have a Faculty Handbook in which it is stated in unequivocal terms that "[this] university practices shared governance" and that it "acts on principles derived from in-depth conversation among faculty representatives and academic administrators" it is – in my view – one of the central tasks of the Faculty Senate to monitor that the guiding principles and processes listed in Section 1.5 of the Faculty Handbook are being followed in order to ensure faculty involvement and consideration of faculty input by administrators at all levels. The developments of the last couple of months are ample proof for how important it is for the Faculty Senate to react immediately to possible infringements on these guiding principles of shared governance in order to ensure the "survival" of this "fragile creature" on our campus. The Faculty Senate should and can of course not limit itself to merely ensuring the "survival" of shared governance. Shared governance in my view implies far more than the right of faculty to provide input and/or to 'react.' It bears the responsibility to insist that "in-depth conversation among faculty representatives and academic administrators" need to precede any major decisions, and that one of the guiding principles for faculty representatives in these "conversations" and negotiations should be to advocate the importance of those humanistic and educational values that all too often seem to get sacrificed when corporate models are applied.