

**UTK FACULTY SENATE
FACULTY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
FINAL REPORT
2007-2008**

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Membership shall consist of nine faculty members with three-year staggered terms. The Chairperson shall be appointed by the Committee on Nominations and Appointments.

This committee shall concern itself with the development of criteria and procedures for faculty appointment, promotion, evaluation, the granting of tenure, and discharge for cause. It will check college, school, and department bylaws for compliance with the *Faculty Handbook*. The committee is responsible for reviewing proposed revisions and recommending changes to the *Faculty Handbook* following review provisions as set forth in the *Faculty Handbook*, and for reviewing the *Manual for Faculty Evaluation*.

[UTK Faculty Senate Bylaws (Section 3.E.)]

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Members: Joan Heminway (Chair), Norma Cook, Virginia Kupritz (fall semester), Norman Magden, Julia Malia, Neal Shover, Steve Thomas, Gary Ubben, Mike Wirth (*ex officio*). Although originally named to the Committee, Roxanne Hovalnd, Scott Kinzy, and Molly Royse were unable to serve this year. Virginia Kupritz served on the Committee for the fall semester as a substitute for Roxanne Hovland; Steve Thomas served on the Committee as a substitute for Molly Royse.

Minutes for the Committee's meetings are posted on the Faculty Senate Web site. The Committee met monthly, on Monday afternoons. Participation on the Committee among those who attended was excellent.

Current members interested in serving on the Committee again next year are N. Magden, J. Malia, S. Thomas, and G. Ubben.

J. Heminway has one more year left in her term as a Faculty Senator and is willing to serve as Chair of the Committee for 2008-09.

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

This Committee's mandate, as set forth at the outset in this report, continues to be too large. In addition to rule making, the Committee is charged with checking "college, school, and department bylaws for compliance with the *Faculty Handbook*." The rule making function of the Committee is so time-consuming that it is not likely to have time to check unit bylaws—an important task—until fall 2009 at the earliest. The Committee recommends that the *Faculty Senate Bylaws* be amended to strike the second sentence of the second paragraph of Section 3E of those *Bylaws* to remove this responsibility from its mandate. If this function is a Faculty Senate (rather than administrative) responsibility, consideration should be given to how bylaws can be checked on a regular, periodic basis, perhaps by another Faculty Senate body.

In fact, there is sentiment on the Committee for the creation of a new Faculty Senate *ad hoc* or standing committee (a “Governance & Bylaws Committee”) that takes a serious look at the state of, and possible revisions to, the overall governance structure of the UTK faculty—from the *UTK Faculty Handbook*, through the *Manual for Faculty Evaluation*, the UTK Faculty Senate Bylaws, UTK unit bylaws, and all of the less formal guidance that forms a part of the way we work together and with the campus administration at UTK. We recognize that the *UTK Faculty Handbook* was just overhauled a few years ago, but the persistence of multiple governance documents, variously denominated, adds undue and unnecessary complexity to our governance. The Committee has informally discussed a number of ways of handling these issues, including through a renaming and recodification of the *UTK Faculty Handbook* as “UTK Faculty Bylaws,” a document that might include, in a single writing, the structures and procedures applicable to faculty governance at UTK. The Committee urges the incoming Faculty Senate President and Executive Committee to give this idea serious consideration as an agenda item for 2008-09.

THE COMMITTEE ACCOMPLISHED THE FOLLOWING IN 2007-08:

- The Committee discussed, negotiated, drafted, and presented to the Faculty Senate a new *UTK Faculty Handbook* provision relating to informal dispute resolution through a single ombudsperson. This matter came to the Committee as a result of a conflict that arose during the 2006-07 academic year between the Provost and the then existing Faculty Ombudspersons. The conflict led to the resignation of all three Faculty Ombudspersons, a resulting failure to remain in compliance with the *UTK Faculty Handbook* and a related proposal for change that might be acceptable to the Provost and the UTK faculty. The Committee’s resolution was approved (as amended from the floor) at the Senate’s March meeting and has been forwarded to the Chancellor and the Vice President of Agriculture as the next step in the approval process.
- The Committee approved for posting on the UTK Faculty Senate Web the following new language relating to the initial approval (and subsequent amendment) of college and department bylaws in response to a question and request from a faculty member:

Each academic unit is governed in accordance with its own bylaws, the unit’s core procedures and policies that, normally, have been ratified by a majority vote of the tenured and tenure-track faculty of the unit. Each unit’s bylaws should provide for amending these individual procedures and policies (e.g., specifying how much notice must be given in advance of a meeting to amend the bylaws and what a quorum for such a meeting must be). The bylaws may also denote situations where something other than a simple majority of the tenured and tenure-track faculty of the unit may be required to take an action. For example, amending a given procedure may require a supermajority vote of the tenured and tenure-track faculty of the unit. If a policy involves a specified sub-group of the unit’s faculty (e.g., only the tenured faculty or only professors), amending that policy may require a vote (either majority or supermajority) by that specified sub-group.

This language is available at <http://web.utk.edu/~senate/collegebylawsguide.shtml>.

- S. Thomas, on behalf of the Committee, actively promoted and monitored the process of

uploading current links to current college and department bylaws to the UTK Faculty Senate Web site. This project is now in excellent shape (thanks to Steve). The Committee recommends that continued monitoring be undertaken by a Graduate Assistant or staff under the supervision of the Faculty Senate President. (Perhaps this project can be linked with the task of reviewing unit bylaws, noted in the introductory comment to this report.)

- The Committee, with the consent of the UTK Faculty Senate President, delegated to the Senate's Graduate Assistant, Scott Simmons, the task of monitoring the reappointment of Department Heads in compliance with Section 1.4.6 of the *UTK Faculty Handbook* (a task undertaken by the Committee during the 2006-07 academic year).
- The Committee began discussions on amending Section 1.1 of the *UTK Faculty Handbook* to conform to the Knoxville campus anti-discrimination statement and the sentiments in the Provost's statement on "Principles and Prejudice." The Committee's Chair owes revised language to the Committee on this matter, which was deferred to permit the Committee to come to closure on the resolution regarding the changes to the ombudsperson program.
- The Committee also began discussions on amending Section 3.12 of the *UTK Faculty Handbook* and related provisions in the *Manual for Faculty Evaluation* to more completely integrate (a) the existing Cumulative Performance Review process with termination procedures and (b) the role of the Cumulative Performance Review Committee with the role of the Provost in making recommendations after a Cumulative Performance Review.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS FOR 2007-2008/POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS FOR 2008-09:

- Complete and (as necessary or desirable) take action on the possible amendments to Section 3.12 of the *UTK Faculty Handbook* and related provisions in the *Manual for Faculty Evaluation* to more completely integrate (a) the existing Cumulative Performance Review process with termination procedures and (b) the role of the Cumulative Performance Review Committee with the role of the Provost in making recommendations after a Cumulative Performance Review.
- Continue discussions on amending Section 1.1 of the *UTK Faculty Handbook* to conform to the Knoxville campus anti-discrimination statement and the sentiments in the Provost's statement on "Principles and Prejudice," as described above. The Chair understands that the Committee also may be directed to take up another proposed amendment to Section 1.1 relating to the "Policy and Qualification Statements on Diversity and Interculturalism" that comes before the Senate for action at its April 2008 meeting.
- As necessary or desirable, discuss and take action on the following additional matters brought to our attention by Senior Vice Provost Susan Martin in a message dated February 14, 2008:
 - "Chapter 3.8.1-2; 3.11.3.4. Proposed revisions to the *Faculty Handbook* will streamline evaluation process by requiring only one evaluation process per year for tenure-track faculty. . . . The *Manual for Faculty Evaluation* will require revision if proposed revisions are accepted. The calendar for evaluation will be revised to change the

evaluation schedule for all faculty to the fall and to base annual evaluations on the accomplishments during the previous academic year. . . .”

- “Two memoranda dealing with the tenure and promotion process have been discussed widely on campus. These memoranda should be incorporated into the *Manual for Faculty Evaluation*. . . .”
- “Chapter 1.4.6. Reappointment of Department Heads. There are other elements of Chapter 1 that very much need revision, but this section has presented the largest number of hurdles for administrators. . . .”

S. Martin has done significant work toward thinking about these items from the point of view of the Provost’s office.

- Members of the Policy Committee of the Chancellor’s Academic Outreach and Engagement Council (Nan Gaylord and Sally McMillan) met with the Provost this year. They report the following as a recommendation from that meeting for a change to the *Manual for Faculty Evaluation*: “Provost Holub thought that the committee’s recommendation to include on p. 33, a new 2.b. which would state “any statements from administrators, community collaborators or peer reviews regarding engagement in outreach teaching” would be appropriate.
- Discuss ways to address equity, cost, and other issues relating to the lack of a “phased retirement” policy at UTK.¹
- Ensure that the Faculty Senate continues to (a) monitor the process of reappointing Department Heads (including by listing department heads and their appointment dates on the Web and ensuring that the Department Head reappointment process outlined in the *Faculty Handbook* (1.4.6) is upheld, and (b) collect and post url’s of department and college bylaws on the resources section of the Faculty Senate Web site (<http://web.utk.edu/~senate/collegebylaws.shtml>). (The committee should be mindful that departments on the “Ag” campus do not report to the Provost on these items.)
- As necessary or desirable, take up the following items that represent possible future projects based on the Committee’s 2006-07 report (and these are in no particular order):
 - Ph.D. Policy – Address concerns about policy preventing UT employees from pursuing a Ph.D. in the field in which they are teaching.
 - Honoring Written Agreements between Administration and Faculty – The Provost desires that these agreements have 5-year reviews/sunsets with the possibility of renewal.

¹ Outgoing Committee member N. Cook has suggested that the Committee review AAUP information relevant to this area and available at: <http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/issues/retirement>. Committee member J. Malia, who has reviewed the information available at the site, refers us to the “Survey of Changes in Faculty Retirement Policies 2007” and specifically to pp. 9-11 in the PDF version as the most important part for our purposes.

- Appropriate Valuation of Interdisciplinary Work – Consideration should be given to including a section for Interdisciplinary Research/Scholarship and Creative Activity in *Manual for Faculty Evaluation* Appendix D.
- Personnel Committees – Review the *Faculty Handbook* to determine if more specific limits should be prescribed regarding the rank of faculty on personnel committees.
- Workload Parity – Consider was of addressing disparities in the workload parity between/among disciplines.
- Faculty Scholarship – Review the *Manual for Faculty Evaluation* in light of the “Scholarly Publishing” resolution from the Library Committee passed by the Faculty Senate on May 1, 2006 as posted at: <http://web.utk.edu/~senate/minutes/2005-06/SenateMinutes-20060501.pdf>.
- Best Practices for T & P – Consider adding a reference in the *MFE* to the ACE, AAUP, UEIRRG document: *Good Practice in Tenure Evaluation: Advice for Tenured Faculty, Department Chairs, and Academic Administrators* (see <http://www.acenet.edu/bookstore/pdf/tenure-evaluation.pdf>) or maybe add the document itself as an appendix.
- Distribution of Merit Pay – There is a need to better ensure regularity in merit procedures within departments. This may result in changes to the *Faculty Handbook*.

Respectfully submitted:
Joan M. Heminway
April 22, 2008