

The University of Tennessee Faculty Senate
MINUTES
March 24, 2008

Those absent were: Vasiliios Alexiades, Brian Ambroziak, Janice Appier, Gary Bates, Lora Beebe*, Roberto Benson, Doug Birdwell, Thomas Boehm, Max Cheng, Paul Crilly, Steven Dandaneau, C. A. DeBelius, Joanne Deeken, Joel Diambra, Rod Ellis, Bruce Fisher, Patricia Freeland, Randall Gentry, Glenn Graber, Lee Han, Thomas Handler, Robert Heller, Diane Hendrix*, Roxanne Hovland, Scott Kinzy, Bill Klingeman III, Ramon Leon, Catherine Luther, Sam MacMaster, Murray Marks, John McRae, Norma Mertz, Wesley Morgan, Thandi Onami, Jay Pfaffman, Col. Owen Ragland, Bob Rider, Gary Rogers, Molly Royse, Gregory Sedrick, Jon Shefner*, Neal Shover, Montgomery Smith, Karen Sowers, Jeannine Studer, Patricia Tithof, Gary Ubben, Klaus Van den Berg, Mark Windham, John Wodarski, Tim Young

*Alternate Senators: Lois Presser for Jon Shefner, Melissa Kennedy for Dianne Hendrix, Carole Myers for Lora Beebe

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INTRODUCTIONS

Establishment of Quorum (S. Kurth)

S. Kurth confirmed that a quorum was present.

Senate President's Report (D. Patterson)

D. Patterson provided an update on issues addressed at the winter Board of Trustees meetings March 11 and 12 and the concomitant meeting of the University Faculty Council on March 11. J. Poore, the newly appointed Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information Office provided an overview of some of the IT challenges. They then met with President Petersen, interim Vice President for Academic Affairs Katie High and the President's Chief of Staff Margie Nichols.

During the University Faculty Council meeting, a series of system wide initiatives were discussed. The Library Task Force is looking at how to provide better system wide access to library resources. The Vice President for Academic Affairs is working with faculty leaders on the various campuses to examine variations in General Education and degree requirements across the system. Also, the rights of appeal in the faculty handbooks for the campuses are being examined for the appropriateness of policies and the timeliness of procedures. Budget priorities for 2008-2009 were discussed with President Petersen. A Faculty Council web site is under development. The role of the University Faculty Council in the shared governance of the University was discussed. President Petersen's position is that the Council's function is one of communication, not of shared governance. Petersen reported that the campus Chancellors had not supported its creation and seemed to suggest that the shared governance constraint was due to concerns expressed by the Chancellors. The University Faculty Council will continue to address its role with the President.

The President reported the budgetary picture for the state is bleak this year, but there would be a flat across the board increase for the least compensated workers. Compensation for faculty would address equity, merit, and market considerations. Chancellors were given discretion with regard to allocations. There is legislative pressure to limit tuition increases to less than 10 percent. The Governor is pushing for wider use of articulation agreements among state higher education institutions.

The Board of Trustees approved a motion affirming a structure with the campus Chancellors, the Vice President for the Institute of Agriculture, and Athletics on the Knoxville reporting to the President. And, the President has oversight of the Cherokee Farm Research Park, the Knoxville-ORNL partnership, and the bio-fuels initiative.

In his remarks to the Board of Trustees, President Petersen emphasized a number of items. He suggested there was a need to “grow” the UT Knoxville graduate programs. Articulation agreements are a priority for the system, as well as the Governor. He recognized compression and low wages are problems across the system. He depicted ORNL as the best national laboratory and that efforts to locate a partner for it were being sought across the state. UT has a half billion dollars in capital needs. Improvements in the funding and infrastructure of the health sciences center are a priority. The Board had no questions for the President. A. Loughry, Vice Chair of the Board declared that the President had re-established public trust in UT leadership. Board members did ask about the flat leadership structure of the organization.

During the Research, Outreach, and Economic Development Subcommittee meeting, the President and his staff were challenged about there being no member of the Board other than the President on the UT Research Foundation Board. Vice President Millhorn reported that private partners were being sought for the Cherokee Farm.

At the March 11 Faculty Senate Executive Committee meeting, a number of people reported they had heard from faculty members regarding the lack of action regarding a vote of no confidence in the President, given the results of the faculty survey. The discussion is reported in the meeting minutes and Patterson was drafting an e-mail message to the faculty regarding the status of the issue.

Patterson indicated that from his perspective a number of positive developments had occurred since the survey was conducted in January: the appointment of a CIO, progress on the JIAM and the engineering buildings, increased communication with the President, initiation of a search for a new chancellor, appointment of a Vice President for Human Resources, and clarification of the distribution of UT/ORNL F&A. Concerns that remain include the President's understanding of and support for shared governance, the lack of a role for the faculty in the planning and development of Cherokee Farm, and the nature of the President's views on diversity and hiring. The UT Knoxville Commission for LGBT People has made three attempts to obtain clarification on non-discrimination from the President and his staff with regard to the President's views expressed during the January 22 open Senate meeting. No response had been received.

Patterson concluded from his perspective there appeared to be little to gain by a vote of no confidence at the present time. He said faculty should recognize the gains achieved by the Senate's public expression of discontent. The option of a resolution of no confidence remains, but the Board of Trustees has expressed strong public support for the President and the sense of the Executive Committee is that there is not the necessary level of support for such a resolution in the Senate. A carefully constructed survey of faculty opinion on a variety of issues (including the President's and the Senate's performance) has been proposed for next year and a resolution to that effect may be brought to the April meeting.

He also noted that the search for a Senior Vice Provost was underway and J. Heminway was serving on the search committee. The search for a new Chancellor will continue into next year.

Patterson announced that the Nominations Committee had selected two candidates for President-elect: S. Ohnesorg and T. Boulet.

Chancellor's Report (J. Simek)

Chancellor Simek reported that the campus was engaged in the budget process. During the next phase Provost Holub would be presenting his budget to the Chancellor and his staff (April 2-4). On April 16 the campus budget would be presented to the system. He reported a flat budget picture, but noted that a single digit tuition increase would provide some leeway for general money. They would be constructing scenarios about what could be accomplished with different percentage tuition increases. Faculty salaries and operating budgets were two concerns.

With regard to the Office of Academic Affairs and Vice Chancellor for Research, a number of procedures that had not been regularized were being regularized. He gave an example of the need for an organization within the Office of Research that would help with grant proposal preparation. He also noted that some units under the Chancellor belonged under Academic Affairs (e.g., Ready for the World and University Studies).

He noted that at the Board of Trustees meeting a clear statement of support for the President's position relative to campuses, particularly the Knoxville campus, was made. Academic Affairs are under campus control. Moving projects like JIAM forward clearly involve the Knoxville campus. He noted a Vice President position for IT had been created. J. Poore is serving as the system and campus IT person, in keeping with an earlier proposal of former Chancellor Crabtree. He expressed some optimism associated with the appointment of a Vice President for Human Resources. There had been movement toward increased financial transparency. Simek hoped to meet with Faculty Senate leaders to discuss it further. He pointed out that President Petersen had argued at the Board of Trustees meeting that the Knoxville campus, far from being the campus that was best funded, had the lowest percentage under the formula. The implication of this might be an argument for differential tuition.

J. Malia asked Simek his view of the Board meeting. She specifically asked about soliciting faculty status for ORNL personnel without faculty input. Simek said any appointments would require a departmental home on the campus. He noted that the campus could accommodate some personnel with a status other than faculty member for grants. Malia clarified that her question was about appointments made against faculty wishes. Simek said there was a dialogue underway. He noted the faculty title was reserved for those who taught and were invited to join. J. Nolt asked whether the Office of Sustainability would be funded in his budget. Simek said his goal was to locate it in Facilities Services. The person who had worked on it was offered an opportunity at Virginia Tech. While that was bad news, he still intended to do it. L. Gross asked about campus/system relations. He pointed out that Simek had only mentioned two Vice Presidential appointments, but there were actually four new Vice Presidents. Gross said the Board indicated the only relation between the Institute of Agriculture and the Knoxville campus was that Knoxville granted the degrees. He asked about the implications of this position for maintaining agriculture buildings. Simek replied that they were moving on an audit of the economic costs of the academic components of the agriculture campus, i.e., services Knoxville provides and tuition they provide. He said there was a need to regularize the relationship, but he did not anticipate a loss of money. With regard to the Vice Presidents for Public Service and Science and Technology, he noted meetings were always in conjunction with the Executive Vice President and focused on Cherokee Farm and the computer. No reporting line exists between the Vice President for Science and Technology and the campus. Gross asked about how the relationship with NSF worked. Simek said the Vice President is an advisor. He noted that the Vice President for Public Service position replaced that of Director of the Institute for Public Service. B. Lyons asked about the roles of the Vice Chancellor for Research and the Provost with regard to start up funds. Simek replied that the bulk of start up money should be coordinated through the Office of Research. He noted there were a number of structural entities with autonomy creating some challenges. Lyons asked what the role of college deans would be. Simek said given the large amounts of money involved in many cases there would need to be multiple funding sources, but in his view there should be central coordination. Malia asked whether there was any way the next Knoxville Chancellor would be anything other than a "yes" person. Simek said he thought there was and that academic issues were crucial.

Provost's Report (R. Holub)

The enrollment target again is 4200. They hope for a yield rate around 48%. Indicators point to having an entering class with the best ACT scores ever. The high school GPAs of those admitted were virtually the same for in-state and out-of-state students. A slightly smaller percentage of African-Americans were admitted. There was a slight increase in Hispanic admits. He said the picture for the Chancellor's Honors Program was really rosy with 1700 applicants. The first class of 15 Haslam Scholars was selected.

He said he had discussed with B. Fenwick a higher level of budgetary accountability with college having benchmarks for improvement. Promotion and tenure decisions are in process.

L. Gross commented that not much had been heard about the Governor's School, but he assumed it had been budgeted. Simek said with increased enrollment it would be about as big as it could be at the Tennessee School for the Deaf location. A search for a permanent director is underway.

Chief Information Officer (J. Poore)

J. Poore reported he held two positions: Vice President for Information Technology for the system and Chief Information Officer for the Knoxville campus. Theoretically the Vice President position focuses on policy and the Chief Information Officer on practice. He was still gathering information but a few things were emerging, particularly the need for better control of the environment. He addressed various issues.

- The networks need more monitoring which requires better communication with all those people involved.
- Another important need is compliance with laws regulating information access. Also, a back up disaster recovery plan is needed.
- He anticipated beginning with the organized IT units and then moving across the campus. He noted unanticipated consequences of change are always a concern.
- He wants to complete a high capacity network system wide.
- He was looking into the e-mail situation, but needed a better sense of what the institution is trying to accomplish to work on it.

He noted that Patterson had promised to give him a list of Faculty Senate concerns. He stated that he was pro open source. He thinks the institution is missing opportunities with free software.

T. Wang asked whether he would be involved with Banner. Poore said he had not heard that issue. Last fall there was some plan to put Banner and the Student Information System together. Wang urged him to look into that because it would aid curricular change. Malia asked whether he would recommend that faculty migrate from web mail to T-mail at this time. Poore suggested going with whatever works. He stated the e-mail project started as one thing and grew and grew, so that the original plan was inadequate.

MINUTES

Faculty Senate

Minutes of the Faculty Senate meeting of February 25, 2008, were approved.

Faculty Senate Executive Committee

The minutes of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee meeting of March 11, 2008, were available as an information item.

MINUTES POSTED ELECTRONICALLY

Graduate Council (M. Murray)

M. Murray summarized various actions taken by the Council. The usage of the word "typically" with regard to the Internet TOEFEL score components was addressed. Bylaws were approved.

K. Stephenson asked about how policies regarding the right to direct dissertations applied to joint faculty. K. Reed clarified that they need to be appointed at the Assistant Professor level or above. M. Breinig said adjuncts went through the same process as other faculty. The minutes of March 6, 2008, were approved.

Undergraduate Council (J. Romeiser)

J. Romeiser noted two policy changes. The Council codified limiting the acceptable reasons for grade changes (mathematical or clerical errors). And, the Graduating Senior Privilege that allowed graduating seniors to seek another final exam if they failed a course was removed. The Council has no mechanism to replace the Chair if ill, so it is pursuing the model adopted by the Graduate Council (Chair, Chair-elect, Immediate Past Chair).

Malia requested clarification that the grade change policy did not apply to I grades. It did not. The minutes of March 4, 2008, were approved.

PREVIOUS BUSINESS

Faculty Affairs Committee-Ombudsperson Resolution (J. Heminway)

J. Heminway noted she had presented the material at the last Senate meeting. Various requests for comments only yielded one from a person concerned about the reduction in diversity with only one Ombudsperson. The Faculty Affairs Committee had considered that and planned to monitor the issue. This constituted the second reading. (She noted the brackets should be removed from the various items in the document before the Senate.)

N. Cook noted that at its last meeting the Faculty Affairs Committee had some items to discuss further, e.g., compensation. As there is a search committee in place, she thought it appropriate to put that information before the body. Patterson noted A. Chesney was not present to provide information about the search committee. Malia reported that the search committee members were having difficulty meshing their schedules. Wang asked about the compensation for the position. Patterson said it would be negotiated. Heminway said a compensation range was in a draft she did not have and she did not think the job description had been approved by OED, yet.

Cook expressed concern about the composition of the search committee, i.e., having only one faculty member. The Faculty Affairs Committee asked that it be raised to two. She noted that nothing in the resolution wording guaranteed there be even one faculty member on the committee as the Faculty Senate has members that are not faculty members. She proposed as a friendly amendment inserting the word "faculty," so line 1 5.2 would read "include faculty representation." Heminway accepted the friendly amendment (as no committee members objected to her doing so). Cook then proposed amending the resolution to have 50% faculty. Magden seconded the motion. The amendment was approved without dissent. The resolution was then approved.

Faculty Senate Election (J. Nolt)

Nolt indicated the election process was almost complete. The College of Arts and Sciences election were not completed. The Natural Sciences area did not have enough candidates. He requested that Senators in that area meet with him after the meeting was adjourned.

Budget and Planning Committee (J. Nolt)

Nolt indicated that the proposed Senate Bylaws revision was brought up in January, but not addressed in February. Some changes are housekeeping in nature, i.e., deleting references to positions using specific titles and substituting references to chief financial officer for the campus. Proposed changes in the wording about facilities is intended to cover properties such as Knoxville Place and to charge the committee with responsibility. The Bylaws amendment was approved.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Information Technology Committee (M. Breinig)

M. Breinig said the Committee's report was available. The Committee wants to be seen as a gateway. If it serves that function, then problems would be better known (and their solutions). The web site

provides those who visit it with information on already solved problems. Patterson said he could also send out information to the listserv.

NEW BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Graduate Council Bylaws (M. Murray)

The Council had not had bylaws. Current practices are documented in the proposed Bylaws. There is a shift in the term of the Chair with a year as Chair-elect, a year as Chair, and a year as Past Chair. The Council and the Faculty Senate Executive Committee both approved the Bylaws. This constituted a first reading.

Research Council-Forum (J. Hall)

J. Hall encouraged Senators to attend the next forum scheduled for Wednesday, March 26, from 4-5:30.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 5:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne B. Kurth, Secretary