

The University of Tennessee Faculty Senate
MINUTES
September 10, 2007

Those absent were: Vasilios Alexiades, Gary Bates, Doug Birdwell, Cary Collins, Steven Dandaneua, Joanne Deeken*, Rod Ellis, Bruce Fisher, Patricia Freeland, Glenn Graber, Robert Holub, Roxanne Hovland*, Scott Kinzy, Bill Klingeman III, John Koontz, Ramon Leon, John Lounsbury, Catherine Luther*, John McRae, Wesley Morgan, Thandi Onami, Joe Rentz, Molly Royse, Gregory Sedrick, Anne Smith, Karen Sowers, Johanna Stiebert, Patria Tithof, Klaus Van den berg, Tse-Wei Wang, John Wodarski, Tim Young, Svetlana Zivanovic

*Alternate Senators: Barbara Kaye for Catherine Luther, Virginia Kupritz for Roxanne Hovland, Melanie Feltner-Reichert for Joanne Deeken

D. Patterson called the meeting to order at 3:33 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INTRODUCTIONS

Establishment of a Quorum (S. Kurth)

S. Kurth confirmed that a quorum was present.

Resolution (D. Patterson)

A resolution thanking Past President Lou Gross for his service to the Faculty Senate received unanimous approval. D. Patterson presented a plaque to Gross in recognition of his distinguished service.

The University of Tennessee Faculty Senate

WHEREAS, Professor Louis J. Gross is a highly respected colleague, teacher, and scholar; and

WHEREAS, he has served with distinction as President of the Faculty Senate during the 2006-2007 academic year, enhancing relationships between the Senate and the greater University community with a perfect balance of assertive leadership, tact, collegiality and good will; and

WHEREAS, he has acted as an unflinching statesman, speaking truth to power regarding UT System/UTK organizational issues; and

WHEREAS, he has helped advance the welfare of faculty, staff, and students as a founding member of the UT Faculty Council and through policies to enhance diversity, promote equity, and include sexual orientation in UT's non-discrimination policy; and

WHEREAS, he has worked tirelessly to communicate the activities of the Senate to faculty and to improve the overall organization of the University for the benefit of faculty, staff, and students;

THEFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the University of Tennessee Faculty Senate expresses its sincere appreciation to

Professor Louis J. Gross

for his exemplary leadership and service to the Senate and the University of Tennessee; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT a copy of this Resolution be presented to Professor Louis J. Gross and that the Resolution become part of the minutes of the Senate meeting held on September 10, 2007.

Suzanne Kurth
Secretary

David A. Patterson
President

Senate President's Report (D. Patterson)

Patterson welcomed everyone to the meeting and recognized the sacrifice parents of young children make to attend late afternoon meetings. He also expressed appreciation for the unseen work of Scott Simmons, Senate Graduate Assistant and Sharonne Winston, Administrative Assistant. He indicated that the Faculty Senate Retreat included committee meetings, breakout groups, and a question and answer session with some members of the Board of Trustees and President Petersen. The President was asked about the Cherokee Farms situation. Patterson's perception is that President Petersen has a fluid sense of the boundaries between the UT System and the UTK campus.

Patterson reported on a meeting he attended the previous week that included President Petersen, Vice President Levy and others, in which time limits for appeals were encouraged. Also, Petersen explained that the mission statement was directed to an external audience. Patterson asked about the perception that the President is emphasizing "big science" and the social sciences and health sciences being neglected in his system initiatives. Petersen responded that he has primary responsibility for the ORNL and requests for initiatives in the social and health sciences should be directed to campus officers.

Patterson pointed out two positive developments, for which the Provost deserved appreciation. As a result of several years of Faculty Senate advocacy, a statement addressing sexual orientation is being included in position announcements. And, the Provost will be funding a spousal and domestic partner hiring policy, another Faculty Senate initiative.

He made several other announcements. The three Ombudspersons resigned this past summer and then retracted their resignations until completion of open cases. A call has been issued for an interim Ombudsperson to handle new cases, while a study of best practices of officers across the country is being conducted. He pointed out that in the materials distributed for the meeting was a letter from the Executive Committee to Chancellor Crabtree addressing concerns about the mission statement. Vice Chancellor T. Rogers' office provided materials on dealing with distressed students. Rogers provided these documents at the request of Past President L. Gross. Dean M. Thompson Davis is the primary contact person when problems arise. The Student Affairs Committee does not have a chair and a volunteer for that position is being sought. Finally, the initial agenda for the meeting indicated President Petersen would be at the meeting, but due to a meeting with the Board of Trustees his visit was postponed and the agenda revised accordingly.

Chancellor's Report (L. Crabtree)

L. Crabtree greeted the assembly. He explained that Provost Holub could not attend the Senate meeting because he has a class scheduled at the time of the meeting. He encouraged attendance at Faculty Senate meetings. He noted that he understood the pressures on faculty with young children that Patterson had addressed. He then alluded to the newspaper coverage of the relationship between President Petersen and him. He offered assurance that matters would be worked out very quickly and that he and the President are not at loggerheads. Vice President D. Millhorn is in the process of finalizing the membership of the Cherokee Farms Task Force, which will have faculty and Faculty Senate representation.

Crabtree pointed out that enrollment on our campus had grown since he had been here and had reached over 27,000. The campus has successfully absorbed that growth, but the limits of our physical plant and capacity of our faculty have now been reached. He believed we are understaffed, that we need more tenure track faculty. The campus needs to move forward and to do so, solid planning is essential (e.g., to achieve AAU membership in a decade). In his assessment the campus has never before been so well positioned to take the actions needed to get better (e.g., facilities planning). Compared to other states our enrollment is too small. Growth poses challenges, as we need to simultaneously grow and improve quality. Crabtree will form task forces to be involved in the planning process, addressing how to grow and what to grow. The UT system has 6 goals that provide guidelines for the campus: a) access (Promise and Pledge); b) success (Student Success, Governor's School); c) research (interdisciplinary grants) and graduate education (more students, larger stipends, more state support); d) economic development (intellectual property); e) outreach (examine continuing education, summer school and evening programs and work harder on Ready for the World); and f) sustainability ("green" the campus more). He concluded that this is an exciting time and there is a need for people to serve on task forces.

K. Stephenson noted that the trend in the Mathematics Department to have "adjuncts" teach increasing numbers of students reflects poorly on the University. He asked if part of the growth plan involved consideration of converting salary lines for non-tenure track instructors into lines for full time tenure track faculty. Crabtree responded that the campus should at least sprinkle tenured and tenure track faculty in those courses.

Gross had two questions. What happened to the 2% merit pay increase? And, what are the consequences of the President's statement at the retreat that there should be at least 200 more faculty positions for ORNL. Crabtree indicated that the state partially funded the salary increases. UTK identified 2% (1½% given on the basis of merit ratings and ½% for equity increases for some targets staff). He noted equity funds were used for junior admissions officers, in the College of Nursing and more generally to move toward gender equity. The addition of 200 more faculty

positions presumes those individuals would have something to teach. Crabtree believes people who are appointed to our faculty should have a teaching contribution they can make.

MINUTES

Faculty Senate

The minutes of the April 30, 2007, Faculty Senate meeting were approved.

Faculty Senate Executive Committee

The August 27, 2007, Faculty Senate Executive Committee minutes were available as an information item.

PREVIOUS BUSINESS

Status of UTK IT Management (L. Gross)

Gross delineated three main issues: the transition to T-Mail (scheduled for completion one year ago and still experiencing failures), data security and privacy (e.g., any unsecured computer and usage of social security numbers), and lack of clear lines of responsibility, since B. Bible left in January. Numerous letters have been sent about the problems. Campus administrators have responded, but they lack the authority to resolve the situation. F. Muly, interim campus CIO, has a new site that shows what is up and what is down. Last February, the Senate passed a resolution on the use of social security numbers that was sent to the appropriate Vice Presidents with a copy to the President. No response has been received thus far. Gross read from a March 7, 2007, report from the President for the Board of Trustees that indicated IT security would remain with the system and day-to-day operation would be a campus function. The report indicated the transfer had already occurred. Gross pointed out the problem at the Board of Trustees meeting in June and was told it would be taken care of in two weeks. As of the Faculty Retreat, the lines of responsibility still were not clear.

S. Blackwell indicated at the beginning of the process those presumably in charge were asked whether everyone would have to use T-Mail. Their answer was "no." The question remains about whether other applications will be available and whether they will be orphaned.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Budget and Planning Committee (S. Blackwell)

The 2006 Faculty Salary Study differs from the yearly reports that used to appear in the spring. As in the past the reports compared the most recent UTK data with data from the previous year from other institutions. This report compares like data. The Committee recognized a problem with the "Instructor" category, as only 35 people were included in it. A shift in nomenclature from "Instructor" to "Lecturer" appears to be the reason. They are getting the numbers of full-time lecturers from D. Cunningham. One category not in the document distributed is the increase from the previous year for each department. He thought that information would appear in the Committee report published on the web site. Blackwell directed Senators attention to the substantial differences in UTK salary comparability with the various indices by department.

G. Rogers asked whether the salaries of those with 12-month appointments in Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources Departments were adjusted. Patterson drew attention to the last 4 lines of the report on which UTK salaries are compared to the Southern University Group, THEC, the top 25 public institutions, and AAU.

NEW BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ombudsperson Report (K. Greenberg and J. Malia)

At the Senate Retreat the three Ombudspersons presented their annual report and recommendations. At this meeting issues of concern are their focus. The Provost met with the Ombudsperson and two Faculty Senators to propose changes beyond the previously proposed reduction in the number of Ombudspersons from three to two or more. He proposed that the compensation for being an Ombudsperson would be reduced to that given a faculty member teaching a first-year seminar. Each of the Ombudsperson decided to resign upon completion of their cases. During April 2006, the three of them worked together on a best practices document. In August 2007, the Provost and the Faculty Senate also decided to explore best practices.

In their view they serve as informal mediators or facilitators, that is neutral parties. They perceived that at times administrative dynamics undermined their effectiveness. (J. Malia noted the handout provided greater detail.) One concern was the perceived reduced willingness of administrators to engage in open consideration of options. They saw this push toward one position in their own conflict with the Provost this past spring. Also, they expressed concern about a decline in shared governance and an atmosphere of increased suspicion. Their recommendations are: a) ensure policies; b) maintain strict confidentiality; c) ensure those appointed as Ombudspersons have skills in conflict resolution; d) widely disseminate the annual report (including on the web); e) establish regular (e.g., annual), formal opportunities for the Ombudspersons to engage in discussion with faculty and administrators; f) charge the Faculty Affairs Committee with pursuit of the recommendations in their report; and g) establish an Ombudsperson Office, i.e., office and meeting space with resources.

P. Crilly asked why the Ombudspersons should be neutral. K. Greenberg responded that serving as neutral facilitators they can gather information without people thinking they are advocates of a particular position.

A question was raised about their reference to "administrators." Malia indicated that the Ombudspersons had not been included in meetings with the Deans, so the reference was to the Provost's Office.

Teaching Council (I. Lane)

The Teaching Council's predominant focus is on the identification and recognition of teaching excellence through the various Chancellor's Awards. Nominations are encouraged from a variety of sources. The deadline for nominations for those awards is early (October). The Teaching Council is charged with more generally promoting teaching excellence. In recent years, there have not been clear channels for doing so. The Council is trying to promote teaching excellence through seminars. On October 18 at 3:30, there will be a panel discussion entitled "What the Best College Teachers Do." Suggestions are being sought for a spring seminar.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Kurth, Secretary