

The Faculty Voice
Faculty Senate Newsletter
FEBRUARY 2011

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This newsletter is provided to as a means of keeping you connected to the activities of the UT Knoxville Faculty Senate, your representative body for the Knoxville campuses. The intent of this newsletter is keep all faculty members informed about current issues before the Faculty Senate and to motivate all faculty to get involved. Questions regarding and suggestions for this newsletter may be directed to the Information Officer of the Faculty Senate, Stefanie Ohnesorg, at ohnesorg@utk.edu.

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1. VOL Vision Update

The final version of the VOL Vision strategic plan, together with implementation plans for each strategic objective of the plan, will soon be posted on the Provost’s web site at <http://www.utk.edu/strategic-planning/>. This semester, implementation task forces will develop plans for the various areas addressed in this plan (undergraduate initiatives, faculty recruitment and retention graduate initiatives, research, resources, and staff issues), and updates on these plans should be expected on a monthly basis.

2. CIRE Update

The Energy Science and Engineering Ph.D. Program has been approved by THEC and, and the revised proposal for the Ph.D. program is available at http://web.utk.edu/~senate/docs/2010-11/2_-_THEC_ESE_PhD_proposal_V41.pdf

3. Forum on the NRC Rankings

Carolyn Hodges (Dean of the Graduate School) and Ken Stephenson (Chair of the Research Council) will hold a forum on the NRC rankings data on March 9 at the Lindsay Young Auditorium in Hodges Library from 3:45 to 5:15 pm. The Research Council and the Graduate School will co-sponsor this forum. At the March 9, 2011 forum, there will be presentations from the Dean of the Graduate School and faculty members who analyzed the NRC data. Time will be reserved for questions from the audience, and all interested faculty are encouraged to attend.

4. Faculty Senate Elections

Vince Anfara (President-Elect of the Faculty Senate) urges representatives from all colleges to suggest nominees for senator positions and President-Elect of the Faculty Senate. Caucus chairs are being charged to solicit two volunteers for each Senate vacancy in their caucus, nominee names and statements are due to Vince Anfara by February 13, and on-line elections will be held later this semester once the information on nominees is final. Many colleges have reported great difficulty in soliciting enough faculty members for the upcoming Faculty Senate Elections, and all faculty members interested in serving on the Faculty Senate should get in touch with their Caucus Chair or Vince Anfara (vanfara@utk.edu) as soon as possible.

5. UT Faculty Council ("UTFC")

The UT Faculty Council (<http://web.utk.edu/~utfc/>) has been focusing on the following:

- a. Faculty compensation policies, including those involving raises associated with promotions in rank,
- b. A review of guidelines (NOT policies) for special salary considerations for faculty and staff at all campuses,
- c. The possibility of moving some UTHSC classes to the Knoxville campus,
- d. University policies for benefits for domestic partners.

6. HOPE Scholarships

A task force is currently looking at allocation of the funding provided by the HOPE scholarships. One of the issues being considered is the flexibility to use the HOPE scholarship in the summer (which is currently not permitted), because allowing the use of these scholarships over the summer could help both retention and graduation rates. Currently, the scholarship covers 10 regular semesters or about \$20,000 of funding per student in the aggregate. Chancellor Cheek would like to see up to two semesters of HOPE scholarship funding be usable for summer sessions, and he has had some discussion about this with legislators and others. It is currently not clear how much political support there will be for changing the existing plan, and updates on this will follow as they become available.

7. Compensation for Faculty and Staff

As of June 30 of this year, it will be four years since raises have been given to faculty and staff, and the Chancellor has emphasized repeatedly that getting raises for faculty and staff is one of his top priorities. He has spoken with the Board of Trustees, the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, and the state legislature about compensation for faculty and staff, and in these conversations, he has suggested that tuition increases would be a possibility to generate the funding necessary to address this issue.

8. Legislative Initiatives

- a) UTK produces more undergraduates than any other college or university (private or public) in Tennessee, and therefore has fared well and likely will fare even better in the future under the new state funding formula. The Chancellor does not anticipate changes to the higher education funding formula passed by the previous legislature, based on his conversations with legislators and others in Nashville.
- b) Senator Campfield is sponsoring legislation to allow faculty and staff to carry firearms on campus. The Chancellor thinks that there is a great likelihood that this proposal will soon be followed by a proposal to allow students also to carry firearms on campus. The UT administration does not support these initiatives and will actively work against their passage.

9. Program Discontinuances

In fall 2010, the proposed discontinuances of the majors in Russian and Italian reached part I.C of the Procedural Framework for Discontinuance (<http://provost.utk.edu/discontinuance/>). At the Jan. 24, 2011 Faculty Senate Executive Council meeting, Provost Martin noted that it is unlikely that UTK's majors in Italian or Russian will ever be anything other than low-producing if measured by THEC standards. The latter would not be considered a problem if retaining the majors is an academically sound decision. The Provost has therefore charged the Dean to work with the Department on some broader questions regarding language offerings on campus by focusing on issues like that include: a) What array of languages should be taught? b) By whom should these languages be taught (adjuncts, tenure-line faculty, etc.)? c) Should the balance of language instruction shift as global emphases change?

10. Summer School

At the Jan. 24, 2011 Faculty Senate Executive Council meeting, Provost Martin stressed that changing the role of summer school is critical to student success in terms of both retention and graduation rates. Currently about 6,000-7,000 students enroll in Summer School, and the Chancellor would like to increase this by at least 1,000 students. This increase would need to include a large number of rising sophomores and juniors in order to have a major impact on retention and graduation rates. She further noted that a realignment of HOPE scholarship funding would be key to increase summer school enrollment.

Current compensation for faculty teaching in summer is 1/27th of salary per student hour taught, and the Provost is currently working with C. Cimino on changing compensation for faculty teaching in the summer. Department Heads are being asked to tie funding requests to the campus's strategic initiatives, and departments will receive an incentive if they break even. This summer's program is being used to introduce some of these changes, but changes to the summer school revenue model and funding formula will not be finalized this year.

11. Student Assessment of Instruction (SAIS)

Some student assessment of instruction was done online in fall 2010 on a test basis. The response rate was lower than that for the in-class paper assessments of the past. Although a drop-off in response rate was expected, the response rate for electronic evaluations was unacceptably low. Various methods and possible incentives that could encourage responses and stress the importance of this assessment to the students are currently being explored and considered. There is, for example, an application ("app") for assessment available for mobile devices. A group is looking into implementation of this app and the development of best

practices for online instructional assessment. Mobile device assessment will work in the same way that we offer classes on mobile devices.

Tenure-line professors and adjuncts can make note of missing teaching assessments in their tenure and promotion portfolios until this issue, namely low numbers of students completing assessments, has been resolved. Peer evaluation should continue to be included in faculty evaluation processes and is a very good assessment mechanism.

12. Civility and Community Report

The Final Report of the Chancellor's Task Force on Civility and Community is posted at <http://web.utk.edu/~senate/docs/2010-11/FSECAAttachment3-CivilityTaskForceReport0%288-23-10%29.pdf>. This document, along with a memorandum and report of the Budget and Planning Committee's work on the above noted Final Report of the Chancellor's Task Force on Civility and Community will be considered at next Faculty Senate meeting on February 7, 2011. The Budget and Planning Committee's memorandum and report is posted at <http://web.utk.edu/~senate/docs/2010-11/3 - FSBudgetPlanningCommMemo%281-11%29.pdf>

13. Proposed Changes to the Faculty Senate Bylaws

A marked version indicating proposed changes and questions about further revisions is available at http://web.utk.edu/~senate/docs/2010-11/FSEC-Bylaws-Attachment_5%2811-10%29.pdf. Vince Anfara will introduce the ministerial conforming changes indicated in this document to the Faculty Senate at its February 7, 2011 meeting. In order to allow more time to discuss and reflect upon proposed changes involving substantive matters, those changes will be discussed at the February meeting of the Faculty Senate Executive Council before being presented for consideration to the full Faculty Senate.

14. Campus Work-Life Climate Survey

At its January 24, 2011 meeting, the Faculty Senate Executive Council approved in principle the Results of the 2010 Campus Work-Life Climate Survey, available at http://web.utk.edu/~senate/docs/2010-11/Work-Life_Survey_Report-August_2010.pdf and forwarded it to the full Faculty Senate for consideration at its February 7, 2011 meeting.

15. Faculty Senate Updates // **MAKE YOUR VOICE BE HEARD!**

The UT Knoxville Faculty Senate is the representative body through which the faculty participates in University affairs and shared governance. Through committees and a democratically elected legislative body, it promulgates policies and regulations regarding the general educational objectives of UT Knoxville. **It is, therefore, important that all faculty members stay 'connected' with the Faculty Senate by staying informed and by providing input and comments via the Senators who represent them in the Faculty Senate.**

i. Links to Minutes, Agendas, Reports etc. for 2010-11

Main Page: <http://web.utk.edu/~senate/reports/index.html>

Please make sure to scroll down to the bottom of this page in order to see the updates for all areas.

Please check frequently for updates regarding the work of Faculty Senate because new items will be added as they become available!

ii. **Items on the Agenda for the next Faculty Senate Meeting (February 7, 2011) and items addressed in the Faculty Senate President's Report for February 2011 (<http://web.utk.edu/~senate/docs/2010-11/FSPresReport%282-7-2011%29.pdf>) will include the following:**

- Energy Science and Engineering Ph.D. Program Update
- Report on the Annual Meeting of the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics
- NRC Forum
- UT Background Check Release and Policy for New Hires
- Faculty Affairs Committee Resolution on Faculty Handbook Amendment (available at http://web.utk.edu/~senate/docs/2010-11/FAC_Resolution_promotion_to_professor.pdf)
- Final Report of the Chancellor's Task Force on Civility and Community (available at <http://web.utk.edu/~senate/docs/2010-11/4-CivilityTaskForceReport0%288-23-10%29.pdf>)
- Memorandum and "Budget and Planning Committee Report: Civility and Community Task Force Recommendations" (available at http://web.utk.edu/~senate/docs/2010-11/3_-_FSBudgetPlanningCommMemo%281-11%29.pdf)
- Memorandum and Amended and Restated Faculty Senate Bylaws (available at http://web.utk.edu/~senate/docs/2010-11/FSEC-Bylaws-Attachment_5%2811-10%29.pdf)
- Results of the 2010 Campus Work-Life Climate Survey (available at http://web.utk.edu/~senate/docs/2010-11/Work-Life_Survey_Report-August_2010.pdf)

- **IMPORTANT: Make Your Voice Be Heard !!**
Provide Input & Feedback via the Senators from YOUR Unit!
 - a. The List of all 2010-11 Senators (incl. contact info) is posted here: http://web.utk.edu/~senate/docs/Membership_2011-2013_updated.pdf.
 - b. All 2010-11 Senate Committee Assignments are posted here: http://web.utk.edu/~senate/docs/Committees_2010-2011_updated.pdf.