

The Faculty Voice

Faculty Senate Newsletter

April 2011

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This newsletter is provided to you 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 to 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.

Items Covered in this Newsletter:

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1. Complete College Tennessee Act (CCTA) / New Funding Formula

The Complete College Tennessee Act (CCTA) is an improvement on prior laws allocating money to institutions of higher education in Tennessee by focusing on successful student outcomes instead of enrollment. (The prior law distributed funds based on student head counts on a set day.) Key metrics under the CCTA are: student retention, number of degrees awarded, number of transfers, number of BA/BS degrees awarded per 100 FTE, the six-year graduation rate, and the amount of research and service by faculty member. With these criteria, UT should do well under the CCTA. Currently only 21% of young adults in Tennessee have a college degree, and one of the intended outcomes of the CCTA is to improve this rate. There is a three-year "hold harmless" clause in the CCTA. After that point, the new funding formula will be in place. The Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) will make adjustments if it recognizes any unfairness in allocations. For more information on the CCTA, see www.tn.gov/thecc .

2. Important Changes in Undergraduate Studies at UTK

At its March 7, 2011 meeting, the Faculty Senate unanimously approved several changes that were proposed by the Undergraduate Council. There will be a new academic drop policy for undergraduate studies at UTK. Under this new policy, UTK will accept a maximum of four drops during an undergraduate academic career, and there will be no additional drops allowed for

double majors. In addition, a fee for late drops will be implemented. There are exceptions built into the policy for a complete withdrawal from the university and for special circumstances related to family or medical issues.

Also, transfer policies have been changed to align with state requirements, and math requirements for freshmen have been aligned with state requirements in K-12.

For more details, see the summary report for the Undergraduate Council meeting of February 1, 2011 posted at http://web.utk.edu/~senate/docs/2010-11/Summary_highlights_of_020111_meeting.pdf.

3. Resolution on Guns on Campus

Two legislators have filed bills allowing guns to be held on campus by faculty or staff with a legal carry permit. In order to address this, T. Boulet and C. Myers drafted a resolution in which they asked the Faculty Senate (during its March 7, 2011 meeting) to endorse current legislative and campus policies that prohibit guns on our campus. It is posted at

<http://web.utk.edu/~senate/docs/2010-11/FSResolutionGunsonCampus11March06FINAL.pdf> .

During the discussion of this proposed resolution at the Faculty Senate meeting of March 7, 2011, several friendly amendments were introduced. These amendments were accepted by Boulet and Myers, and the resolution passed as amended.

4. State Budget Proposal and Proposed 1.6% Salary Raise for State Employees

At his recent State of the State address, Gov. Haslam proposed a 1.6% raise for all state employees, including those at UTK. In his report to the Faculty Senate Executive Council on March 21, 2011, Chancellor Cheek indicated that he thinks that Gov. Haslam's plan might give UTK more flexibility in raising money through tuition and fees (in the absence of sufficient state money), and the Chancellor is hoping to eventually have an additional pool of money from fees and tuition out of which he can offer larger raises.

Gov. Haslam's budget proposal also calls for a \$3.4 million reduction in funding to UTK, but according to Chancellor Cheek, that reduction will be covered by tuition and fee increases. If, however, there will be a further reduction, it may be passed to the colleges. It is Chancellor's Cheek's view that the campus central administration will not be able to absorb more of the cuts than it already has absorbed, especially in light of the fact that deferred maintenance on the UTK campus could wait no longer.

Faculty senator M. Handelsman has indicated that he will move a Faculty Senate resolution during the meeting on April 4, 2011

5. Tennessee Pledge and Tennessee Promise Scholarship Programs, and a Possible New Funding Model

At the Faculty Senate Executive Council meeting of March 21, 2011, Chancellor Cheek stated that the Tennessee Pledge and Tennessee Promise scholarship programs will continue. Students whose family income is in the lowest quartile, on average, receive funds sufficient to cover full tuition and fees plus \$7,000. Students whose family income is in the highest quartile pay, on average, \$24,000. Cheek is most worried about the effect that tuition increases might have on students whose families' income falls in the middle quartiles.

The Chancellor is currently also looking into a new funding model where we would charge by the actual number of credit-hours taken. Currently, undergraduate students' tuition is capped at 12 hours, and many are taking 15+ hours per semester.

6. Campus Climate Survey

Based on their work with *The Chronicle of Higher Education's* "Great Colleges to Work For" program, *ModernThink* has been hired to conduct a Campus Climate Survey for faculty and exempt staff on the UTK campus. *The Chronicle* has committed to this survey as an annual program since 2008, and S. Gardial and others have been working *ModernThink* to customize this survey for use at UTK. The UTK Campus Climate Survey was released to faculty and exempt staff on March 29, 2011. The Chronicle of Higher Education's "Great Colleges to Work For" program began in 2008 with a survey of 89 colleges and universities; by 2010, the number had grown to 275 and currently it is surveying 290. Because of the length of time over which the core data has been collected and the number of schools using this survey instrument, a large amount of comparative data is available, including data from 13 of UTK's aspirational peers. *ModernThink* is constantly updating and refining this survey, and the UTK survey includes some specific questions not included in the general survey that allow for comparisons among various campus populations at UTK. The survey has 60 core, 15 demographic, and two or three open-ended questions, and *ModernThink* will ensure that any information that might identify individuals will not be included in its report to UTK. For example, if fewer than five replies are received, only aggregated data will be shared; in addition, actual comments will not be shared with the community as a whole.

Faculty and exempt staff will be invited (and reminded) in several e-mails to participate in this important survey. The data gathered from this survey will be reported to UTK as a total and broken down by college. It will not be broken down by department in order to ensure anonymity. With this survey, UTK is creating a baseline, and later follow-up surveys could be done differently.

7. Campus Master Plan

The Campus Master Plan is a vision and a road map for facilities and infrastructure now and for the future (defined as the next 50 years). The last full Master Plan was done in 1999, there was an expectation of a new plan in 2004 that was not completed, and the campus tried again in based on a THEC request for benchmarking (2007-2009). The result shows deficiencies in classroom space, classroom lab space, and research space. A 20-member committee composed of faculty, staff, and students was formed in 2009, and the architectural firm of Bullock and Smith is working with the committee as consultants as they go through the process of building the new Master Plan. The plan is broken down into 20 categories (sectors), and the committee is currently putting the category plans together to create a draft Master Plan which will be released to faculty, staff, and students at UTK and the public in April or May.

8. 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 on April 4, 2011 (<http://web.utk.edu/~senate/docs/2010-11/FSAgenda%284-4-2011%29.pdf>)**, and items addressed in the Faculty Senate President's Report for April 2011 (<http://web.utk.edu/~senate/docs/2010-11/FSPresReport%284-4-2011%29.pdf>) will include the following:

- ➔ Update on UT Background Check Release and Policy for New Hires
- ➔ Update on Service Learning Insurance Fee
- ➔ Update on Plaut Civility Memorandum (see:
<http://www.knoxnews.com/news/2011/mar/26/civility-measures-wont-limit-free-speech-on/>)
- ➔ Report on TUFS Spring Meeting
- ➔ General Education Task Force
- ➔ 2011 Great Colleges To Work For Survey
- ➔ Campus Master Plan
- ➔ Strategic Planning for Division of Student Affairs
- ➔ Report on Men's Athletics
- ➔ Memorandum re, Proposed Faculty Senate Bylaw Changes
http://web.utk.edu/~senate/docs/2010-11/FS_Bylaws_Revisions_April_2011.pdf
- ➔ Related Proposed Amended and Restated Bylaws (Marked)
http://web.utk.edu/~senate/docs/2010-11/FSBylaws_REVISIONS_ANFARA_April_Faculty_Senate_Mtg.pdf
- ➔ Proposed Resolution Regarding Salary Increases
http://web.utk.edu/~senate/docs/2010-11/faculty_motion.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.