

UTK Faculty Senate  
President's Report<sup>1</sup>  
(March 2011)

In light of the amount of business on the agenda at our meeting this month, I am again writing out most of my report here. Please review this report and come to the meeting with questions, if you have any.

I. NRC Forum Reminder

Just a reminder that the Research Council and the Graduate School are sponsoring a campus forum on the National Research Council ("NRC") Data-Based Assessment of Research-Doctorate Programs (a/k/a the NRC Rankings) on March 9 in the Hodges Library Auditorium from 3:45 pm to 5:15 pm. The program will feature presentations by faculty who have analyzed the NRC data and by Dr. Carolyn Hodges, Dean of the Graduate School. Time will be reserved for questions from the audience. All interested faculty are encouraged to attend.

II. Update on UT Background Check Release and Policy for New Hires

I continue to work with the Provost's office and UT Human Resources on the revisions to the release authorization form and process for the background checks for new employees. A revised version of the release form is still forthcoming. Additional information about the workflow for the background check process can be found at <http://hr.utk.edu/recruitment/>.

III. Service Learning Insurance Fee

I am continuing to pursue analysis of the decision-making that led to the imposition of a separate \$32 insurance fee for service learning opportunities on campus. The imposition of additional costs seems counterproductive to our goal to introduce more service learning opportunities, but we also need to protect our students adequately against the unique risks of certain projects and do so at the lowest possible costs to the university. But a blanket fee does not seem appropriate given that the risks of service learning can vary widely from project to project.

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<sup>1</sup> Please read this Outline together with the minutes of the February 21, 2011 Faculty Senate Executive Council meeting and *The Faculty Voice* Faculty Senate newsletter, both of which are available at <http://web.utk.edu/~senate/reports/index.html>.

#### IV. TUFs Education Committee Visits

TUFs, the Tennessee University Faculty Senates (<https://umdrive.memphis.edu/g-tufs/pub/>), is the statewide organization to which all of the UT and TBR four-year universities belong. On February 9 and February 28, respectively, the TUFs Executive Committee—which includes UTK faculty members John Nolt (TUFs Past President) and Toby Boulet (TUFs President-Elect)—appeared before the Tennessee Senate and House Education Committees to inform them about the TUFs organization, highlight key issues affecting higher education institutions in Tennessee, and answer questions from the legislators. A video of the presentation to the Senate Committee is available at [http://tnga.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view\\_id=181&clip\\_id=3516](http://tnga.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=181&clip_id=3516) and a video of the presentation to the House Senate Committee is available at [http://tnga.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view\\_id=130&clip\\_id=3648](http://tnga.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=130&clip_id=3648).

#### V. UT Faculty Council Meeting

The UT Faculty Council, the system-wide organization of faculties from the various UT campuses (<http://web.utk.edu/~utfc/>), met on February 24 and 25 in Chattanooga coincident with the UT Board of Trustee meetings. I was unable to attend these meetings because of a conflicting academic presentation in Dayton, Ohio. Toby Boulet and India Lane attended on behalf of the Knoxville and Tullahoma campuses. I may have more on this at or after the meeting.

#### VI. NCAA Allegations

As you know, the NCAA recently released allegations involving UTK and our basketball and football programs. The NCAA's investigation of these matters is ongoing. A response is due in May. John Koontz, Chair of the Faculty Senate Athletics Committee, and I will continue to follow this matter and interact with the Chancellor and the Athletics Department about UTK's response. Uncut/unedited video footage of a recent interview that I gave for WBIR TV is available at <http://www.wbir.com/video/default.aspx?bctid=801165393001#/Local+News/UT+Faculty+Senate+President+Reacts+to+NCAA+notice/44024439001/39627146001/801165393001>. Feel free to communicate with me about this (as some of you already have). But please note that we are at a sensitive stage of the proceedings at the moment (responding to serious allegations). Accordingly, it is best for us to leave the response to the Chancellor and his legal and other advisors.

#### VII. Pharmacy and Medical Insurance Programs

Thanks to all of you and to our colleagues outside the Faculty Senate who responded to my call for comments on our new healthcare benefit plans. I have received many comments—favorable and unfavorable. Anne Smith, Chair of the Faculty Senate’s Benefits and Professional Development Committee, is categorizing the responses so that we can more easily identify overlaps and patterns. The comments range from customer service complaints to costs and coverage issues. So many of the comments represent heartfelt, thoughtful reflections and critiques. We are sharing this information with the UTK Human Resources and Treasury/Payroll representatives who have the closest involvement with the plans. Our objective is to enable these folks to argue for better treatment of our employees and better cost and coverage options under our plans.

#### VIII. LGBT Commission/Alumni Affairs

The Alumni Development Committee of the Chancellor’s LGBT Commission is developing a list of LGBT Alumni so that the Development and Alumni Affairs folks can engage in more targeted communication with LGBT alumni about issues and projects of mutual interest. If you are, or someone you know is an alumnus of UTK or UTIA or the UTSI who would like to self-identify for inclusion in this specialized communication list, please contact Phyllis Moore at [phyllismoore@tennessee.edu](mailto:phyllismoore@tennessee.edu) or 865-974-3011.

#### IX. Faculty “Story”

This month, I want to focus on faculty in and working with our Reserve Officer Training Corps (“ROTC”) program—specifically, our Air Force ROTC (“AFROTC”). The collaboration of faculty across the campuses in Knoxville helps make our ROTC units work for our students who choose that option. This collaboration leads to fine service to our country and our community. And those efforts recently were recognized . . . .

This past fall, General Norton Schwartz presented AFROTC Detachment 800 here at UTK the 2010 Right of Line Trophy (<http://web.utk.edu/~rotc800/>). This means that UTK has the #1 AFROTC Detachment in the nation in our size category. The 144 AFROTC Detachments are broken into 3 different categories—small, medium (UTK and 55 others), and large. Lieutenant Colonel Mike Angle, Commander of the Detachment, accepted the award on behalf of UTK. Mike has been a senator and a senate caucus chair for the ROTC faculty in the Faculty Senate. I asked him to get me some details on the engagement of the campus in the Detachment’s activities. What I have captured below comes largely from his report. (Thanks, Mike.)

Of course, our cadets and staff were very active and (in Mike’s words) “simply worked extremely hard to win this award.” He also noted, however, that “there are instances where the faculty contributed directly.” According to Mike, Mr. Jim Cody,

Mr. Andy White, Ms. DeDe Heitman, and Ms. Rhonda Barton from UT's Center for Executive Leadership helped bring in high-level visiting military and Department of Defense members to mentor our cadets. Among the visitors was the Secretary of the U.S. Air Force, the honorable Michael B. Donley (the first time he had even visited an AFROTC Detachment). Ms. Erin Conaton, Under Secretary of the Air Force, spent an evening with a handful of our cadets, and the campus also welcomes former Commander of the U.S. Air Forces in Europe, General Tom Hobbins. Mike desires to give thanks to the efforts of Mr. Cody and his team for attracting these important officials to UTK.

Dr. Lisa Fall from the UTK Communications Department took the Detachment's cadet Public Affairs Officer under her wing and helped her develop a very professional article and media plan when Secretary Donley visited. The results: our cadet Public Affairs Officer successfully interviewed the Secretary of the Air Force and ultimately had her article published in the Air Force Times. This cadet went on to be UTK's Cadet Wing Commander and was chosen to be one of the very, very few active duty Public Affairs officers in the Air Force.

Dr. Masood Parang and the Engineering Department also support the Air Force ROTC cadets very well. The opportunities they have provided the cadets have led to some high-level recognition. Three of our cadets have been chosen for the Society of American Military Engineers Award in the past two years. (Only 20 of these awards are given nationally in two different categories each year.) Our cadets captured three of the 40 available awards over a two-year period, competing against cadets from MIT, Colorado School of Mines, and other nationally recognized educational institutions with ROTC programs.

Dr. Cheek and Dr. Martin, as well as Dr. Howard Hall at the Baker Center, fully support the ROTC program as well, and often provide venues for UTKs cadets to excel.

#### X. Other?

I will briefly cover any other reports orally at the meeting.