

The University of Tennessee Faculty Senate
MINUTES
February 6, 2006

Those absent were: Vasilios Alexiades, John Ammons, James Bailey, Gary Bates, Bill Blass, Kathy Bohstedt, Toby Boulet, Ernest Brewer, Jan W. Brown, Deborah Carroll, Hui-Shyong Chang, C. A. Debelius, Joel Diambra, Bethany Dumas*, Brian Edwards, James Fitzgerald*, Mike Fitzgerald, Jean Gauger, Leslie Gay, Diane Hendrix, Don Hodges, Ed Jepson, Barbara Kaye, Bill Klingeman III*, David Lockwood, Vena Long, Charles Norman, John Preston, Dileep Sachan, Carl Sams, Neal Schrick, Karen Sowers, Fred Weber

*Alternate Senators: Kenton Yeager for James Fitzgerald, Kimberly Gwinn for Bill Klingeman, Roy Liuzza for Bethany Dumas

D. Kennedy called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INTRODUCTIONS

Establishment of Quorum (S. Jordan)

Jordan confirmed that a quorum was present.

Senate President's Report (D. Kennedy)

Kennedy noted that C. White was sitting for O. Stephens as parliamentarian. Stephens arrived later. She next reported on the chancellor's state-of-the-campus address. She briefly listed some of his topics and encouraged senators to ask him questions during his report.

Kennedy then turned to the Manual for Faculty Evaluation and observed that the Executive Committee has asked that the document be revised to show clearly that the Faculty Senate is to be consulted about changes and has approval authority.

A call for nominations for two ombudspersons came next. Kennedy also reported that she is on the search committee seeking a new provost and encouraged nominations for that position. She then noted some other committees on which she serves and called attention to the chancellor's brown-bag lunches, the next of which is this Wednesday.

Chancellor's Report (L. Crabtree)

Crabtree began by noting how many administrative changes have occurred since he came. He then noted that there have been many advances in that time period and that UT is fairly highly ranked by several organizations. He next said that academic integrity and quality are always kept in mind and listed several goals for the university, including AAU membership.

One tactic for achieving eminence and excellence is enhancing faculty quality and numbers; 46 faculty lines have been added since 2001 and 11 more are being added for next year. Inequities in salaries are to be addressed. Other tactics are to improve the administration and to enhance the quality, the diversity and the number of undergraduates and to improve the quality of the graduate students. Another tactic is to improve the overall quality of the undergraduate program. Crabtree noted that 13 grants for improving the curriculum have been made. Having more first-rate facilities and celebrating campus culture are other tactics; the institution has many important and successful programs and needs to let the campus and the general public know about them.

A successful capital campaign is a key to achieving the institutions goods. Reducing administrative complexity is another key ingredient and it is being worked on already.

Crabtree next talked about five concerns raised in an article, which appeared in the Chronicle of Higher Education last fall and with which he concurs. Changing life cycles, problems in teaching science and technology and attracting students to these areas, a lack of understanding of the world, social mobility and equality of opportunity, and multiple ways of knowing are challenges for higher education. Crabtree believes the institution can meet these challenges.

In response to a question from L. Gross, Crabtree explained that faculty searches for "Governor's Chairs" will be rooted in our departments and must go through the regular search processes on this campus.

MINUTES

Minutes of the Faculty Senate meeting of November 21, 2005, were approved without change.

MINUTES POSTED ELECTRONICALLY

Minutes of the Graduate Council meeting of November 17, 2005, were approved.

PREVIOUS BUSINESS

Environmental Stewardship Fund (J. Nolt)

Nolt briefly reviewed the history of the fund. Students pay an environmental fee and they challenged the faculty to do something, too. The idea of the ESF was the result and it is now established. Contributions may be made directly or through payroll deductions. An effort to publicize the fund is being planned.

REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Living Wage Task Force (F. Ansley)

Ansley briefly reviewed some of the history of the task force and called attention to copies of some relevant national and local newspaper articles available at the meeting.

P. Crilly asked who would pay to provide a living wage and said he believes faculty should contribute if students do. Ansley then read the resolution from the task force; it calls, in part, for the Faculty Senate Budget and Planning Committee to work with the administration to develop a multi-year plan to achieve a living wage. White then pointed out that the Faculty Senate is being asked to approve proceeding with an effort to achieve a living wage.

In response to another question, Ansley said that the problem of salary compression was recognized by the task force and it realizes that salaries of those higher up the salary scale would need to be adjusted. In response to a question from R. Pevey, B. Lyons and A. Chesney explained that the 28% figure for benefits is an average, so that for lower-earning employees the benefits percentage is much higher. To answer a question of G. Schroedl, Ansley said that the "over 40%" making less than a living wage refers to university employees only, not employees of contractors. Ansley accepted as a friendly amendment changing the word "workers" in the second "whereas" statement of the resolution to "university employees."

Gross then read part of the resolution from March 5, 2001, concerning allocation of salary funds and suggested the Faculty Senate might want to consider whether to reaffirm that part. Lyons then proposed changing the wording of the first resolved statement by replacing "resolution supporting" with "support for." In response to another question, Ansley said that it is the hope of the task force that the university would try to extend a living wage policy to its contractors.

D. Patterson asked why market forces are not allowed to operate in this matter. Ansley and A. Mayhew noted that human labor is a different kind of commodity and that some states set a minimum wage higher than the federal minimum wage. Lyons added that lower wages can shift costs to another state agency such as TennCare or to hospital emergency rooms. White suggested that higher wages would attract higher quality workers.

C. Reynolds called the question. There was a second. Calling the question was approved and then the amended resolution was approved.

NEW BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Budget and Planning Committee (S. McMillan)

McMillan invited senators to attend the budget hearing and then described a resolution (distributed with the agenda) on the distribution of state money for salary increases. C. Luther reported that the resolution raised concerns with her colleagues because it is not specific. McMillan responded that the resolution is one of principle, not specifics. The resolution was then approved.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Sam Jordan, Secretary