

The University of Tennessee Faculty Senate
MINUTES
March 6, 2006

Those absent were: Mary Albrecht, Vasilios Alexiades, John Ammons, James Bailey, Gary Bates, Jennifer Beals, Micah Beck, Grady Bogue, Kathy Bohstedt*, Bruce Bomar, Toby Boulet, Tom Burman, Hui-Shyong Chang, Joanne Deeken, Joel Diambra, James Fitzgerald, Mike Fitzgerald, Rajan Ganguly, Jean Gauger, Randall Gentry, Ron Gilmour, Mark Hedrick, Karen Hughes, Syed Islam, Ed Jepson, Barbara Kaye, David Lockwood, Catherine Luther, Sibyl Marshall, Charles Norman, Ronald Pevey, John Preston, Charles Reynolds, Bob Rider, Bart Rohrbach, Dileep Sachan, Carl Sams, Neal Schrick, Ken Stephenson, Fred Weber, Candace White, John Wilkerson, Mark Windham

*Alternate Senators: Kenton Yeager for Kathy Bohstedt

D. Kennedy called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INTRODUCTIONS

Establishment of Quorum (S. Jordan)

Jordan confirmed that a quorum was present.

Senate President's Report (D. Kennedy)

Kennedy reported she was informed that system level administrators were proposing changes to the tenure policies. She worked with the chancellor and his staff, B. Levy and others to edit the revisions to narrow the policies and to continue to require faculty involvement in tenure and appointment. She also attended some of the budget hearings. Several deans posed thoughtful questions about the Faculty Senate. They questioned faculty commitment to shared governance. Kennedy urged faculty to run for the open Faculty Senate positions and to participate in the governance of the institution.

Kennedy next urged faculty to nominate individuals for the position of provost. Campus visits of finalists are expected to occur April 17-28. She also reminded everyone that there will be a Chancellor's Brown Bag Lunch tomorrow in Dining Room A of the Thompson Boling Arena.

Chancellor's Report (L. Crabtree)

Crabtree reported that UT Day on the Hill in Nashville was last week. He, other administrators and students spoke to legislators and others about higher education. He believes it was time well spent. Searches for two deans are moving ahead, as are budget hearings. He noted that planning for a flu pandemic is proceeding. He concluded by noting that the search for an honors program director is moving ahead and that he spends Sunday evenings discussing readings with honors students.

MINUTES

Minutes of the Faculty Senate meeting of February 6, 2006, were approved without change.

MINUTES POSTED ELECTRONICALLY

Minutes of the Undergraduate Council meeting of January 31, 2006, and of the Graduate Council meeting of February 2, 2006, were approved.

PREVIOUS BUSINESS

University of Tennessee Faculty Council Charter (revised) (D. Kennedy)

Kennedy noted that the revised charter was available at the meeting. She briefly described the few revisions. Due to a lack of consensus the section on how to amend the charter was deleted. There was no objection to considering the revised charter and it was approved.

REPORTS

Nominating Committee (D. Kennedy for C. White)

Kennedy announced that D. Patterson and R. Strange are the candidates for president-elect and noted that statements by the candidates were distributed with the agenda.

NEW BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Proposed Exceptions to Tenure Policy (draft) (D. Kennedy)

Kennedy briefly described the history of the proposed changes. She noted that the Executive Committee had passed a resolution asking for a delay, but system administrators decided not to delay. However, further opportunities for the Executive Committee to comment were provided. Appendices D and E (distributed with the agenda) are titled "Expedited Procedures for Considering and Granting Tenure by the UT Board of Trustees" and "Exception to Policy Requiring Full-Time Status for Eligibility for Tenure."

Levy then described the changes to be presented to the Board of Trustees at its March 15-16, 2006, meeting.

In response to a question from W. Morgan, Kennedy said that she believes faculty who had a chance to suggest changes were listened to. She noted that there still is concern among some that the policies introduce a new notion of tenure. Levy noted that faculty in Memphis would like to restrict Paragraph 2 of Appendix D to those who hold tenured positions elsewhere. Levy said he told them they are wrong; the document is intended to add flexibility and their proposal would decrease flexibility. B. Lyons suggested that a better response is that the usual procedures still will be followed. He also noted that the process this time shows clearly that faculty should be involved in developing such policies.

L. Gross asked what it means for someone not funded by UT to have tenure at UT. Levy responded that it means nothing to him, but might mean something to the person involved. It was suggested that having tenure might make it easier to obtain grants or even make it possible to apply for some grants. Gross also asked about the expression "Exceptional circumstances" in appendix D and noted that different campuses might develop different policies concerning them. Levy responded that different campuses should have different policies. In response to a question from Patterson about what prevents exceptions from becoming the rule, Levy said that expected faculty resistance to frequent requests to consider tenure would limit such requests. He also said that if an expedited tenure consideration yielded a negative answer, but the individual still came to UT, then tenure could be considered again. Kennedy noted that an offer probably would not be made unless the candidate were considered tenurable.

L. Essif said he does not see how the regular tenure process can be speeded up to meet the demands of an expedited process. Levy responded that the steps would be identical, but

departmental and college bylaws might have to be changed to agree with the new policy. Crabtree then said that it is the Board of Trustees' process that is expedited, not the usual tenure process.

In response to concerns expressed by B. Blass over Paragraph 4 of Appendix E, Kennedy said that the phrase "may terminate" rather than "will terminate" was used to preserve flexibility for UT. She then noted that faculty at UT Martin seem to have no objections and that faculty at UT Chattanooga are concerned about the expedited process of passing the policies. In response to a question from T. Handler, Levy said that most of U.T.s peer institutions already have such policies.

QEP (information item) (J. Simek and M. Papke)

Simek briefly described the QEP and said that now it has to be in the hands of the faculty. Four faculty committees have been established to oversee the whole program and particular parts of it. The week of April 17-27 will have several events to "roll out" the QEP under a new name. Papke then briefly described the activities of several working groups. D. Thomas asked whether the thirteen successful grant proposals might be posted on the Web. Papke said that summaries, but not full proposals, will be posted; more detailed information is available from Simek. Papke noted that there are agencies on campus that can provide matching funds for proposals. In response to a question from M. Cetingok, Simek said that QEP is an undergraduate program, although it is hoped that its goals and activities will spread to graduate education.

Diversity Council (M. Rudolph and A. Chesney)

Chesney noted that a handout on the diversity plan is available at the meeting. He said that 71 plans are being reviewed. Rudolph reported that recently chairs of several departments were invited to meet with the Diversity Council to describe what they are doing in connection with their diversity plans. It became clear that much is being done, but much of the work is in isolation.

The meeting adjourned at 5:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Sam Jordan, Secretary