

The University of Tennessee Faculty Senate  
MINUTES  
October 23, 2006

Those absent were: John Ammons, Gary Bates, Richard Bennett, Jan W. Brown, Cary Collins, Daniela Corbetta, C. A. Debelius, Joanne Deeken\*, Bethany Dumas, Rod Ellis, Bruce Fisher, Mike Fitzgerald, Lee Han, Stephen Kania\*, Deseriee Kennedy, Don Leatherman, David Lockwood, Catherine Luther, Murray Marks, Kula Misra, John Mount, Blanche O'Bannon, Lynne Parker, Bill Parr, Ronald Pevey, Col. Owen Ragland, Joe Rentz, Charles Reynolds, Bill Robinson, W. Tim Rogers, Neal Shover, Chris Skinner, Karen Sowers, Fred Weber

\*Alternate Senators: Margo Holland for Stephen Kania, Steve R. Thomas for Joanne Deeken

L. Gross called the meeting to order at 3:35

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Gross thanked everyone involved in arranging for the meeting to be held on the West Campus.

#### Establishment of Quorum (S. Kurth)

Kurth confirmed that a quorum was present.

#### Senate President's Report (L. Gross)

Gross will be giving a brief welcome speech at the November Board of Trustees meeting. He invited suggestions on items that should be emphasized. He plans to provide facts related to two topics: contributions of the faculty and diversity. 1) Faculty members are working very hard. Using 2005 data, the average amount of external research funds generated per faculty member across campus was \$135,000. If the tuition and fees generated by the full-time regular faculty members are included in the analysis in accord with standard measures in business, then \$176,000 was generated per faculty member. While the number of students has increased, the size of the faculty has been stable. 2) On the hand, efforts to achieve diversity have been less successful on campus and system-wide. In a recent newspaper article reporting the highest salaried employees, of 69 UT employees listed, four were female. (Of the seven from the athletics program, two were female). System-wide the statistics for distinguished faculty appointments supported with major state-funds (Chairs of Excellence, Distinguished Scientists, Governor's Chairs) have very low gender diversity. The lack of diversity is not a product of field of study. Possible resolutions, such as spousal hires, need to be considered.

Gross is serving on the Board's Academic Affairs and Student Life Committee. The scorecard developed for this area was created by the President's staff with no evident faculty involvement.

*Other announcements.* B. Bible will report later on IT management. Gross noted additional large expenditures are planned for the student information system. Gross sent a letter to the Office of Research regarding federal compliance issues. He pointed out that the Provost has posted guidelines for opportunity hires.

#### Chancellor's Report (L. Crabtree)

Crabtree responded to Gross' remarks about diversity by noting that everyone shares responsibility for the level of faculty diversity, as faculty do the hiring. He pointed out that a flagship university in the South, particularly in Appalachia, faces challenges in attracting a diverse faculty and in increasing gender diversity. The campus needs to go about its business with strategic planning (see

the Chancellor's website for the UTK Plan for the New Century), rather than focusing on a scorecard. Efforts to increase student diversity include Tennessee Promise and Tennessee Pledge. The campus has not done as well on increasing the ethnic diversity of the faculty. In recent years a higher percentage of the new faculty hired have been female.

Crabtree reported on the progress made on the Ready for the World initiative: public programming (e.g., museum exhibit, Appalachian semester/year), cultural programming (e.g., Ecuadorian photography exhibit), and curriculum infusion (e.g., thematic basic world geography course). He emphasized the need to re-conceptualize our courses, e.g., teaching from a global rather than a Eurocentric perspective. Exploration of opportunities for infusion has revealed that some basic courses are not even coordinated by tenured or tenure-track faculty. Faculty should realize there are funds available to support changes associated with the initiative. Crabtree argued faculty should become involved because of the need for successful communities. The University has strength in the *technology* area (UT and Oak Ridge). Another area of strength is the *talent* in the campus community. Crabtree asserted that capping of enrollment had been a mistake. The student body and the faculty need to be larger. *Tolerance* (e.g., openness to change, new ideas, different sexual orientations) is an area of concern as the University receives its lowest ranking from students on this. Crabtree believes the campus has been becoming more diverse. Discourse about the Ready for the World initiative needs to be increased.

B. Lyons asked the Chancellor to elaborate on his January merit increase proposal to the Board. Crabtree indicated that he was recommending additional increases for all faculty members with satisfactory evaluations (meets or exceeds expectations), equity increases for those identified as most needy, and \$350 one time bonuses for those that did not receive them earlier, i.e., those with less than three years of service. The cost of these recommendations would be approximately \$1.5 million. To fund them the campus would reallocate money designated for faculty lines and operating.

Lyons asked the Chancellor about the allocation of "Geier funds." Crabtree indicated the campus did not receive any of the money this year, as the state was using it on facilities (e.g., at Tennessee State University). Governor Bredesen retained Geier and desegregation money in the budget. What happens for the next budget year depends on legislative action. Crabtree is optimistic that we will be successful in obtaining funds. He noted that the President has made salary his highest single priority for this legislative session.

S. Ohnesorg pointed out that the SACS accreditation planning emphasizes undergraduate programs and that graduate education is important. Crabtree responded that SACS will revisit and the campus will be evaluated on its success. In his view there is a symbiotic relationship between undergraduate and graduate education.

#### Provost's Report (R. Holub)

Holub addressed the importance of dealing with undergraduate student retention. The retention rate for first to second year students (78%) is lower than at peer institutions (tied with Kentucky at the bottom of our peer group). While retention is related to high school performance, the campus is not as effective as it should be in retaining the best students that enter the University. The retention rate could be improved by increasing faculty contact with students and better advising. Holub identified two immediate concerns: faculty participation in the early alert reporting system and progression to the major requirements. He learned that only a small percentage of the faculty responded to early alert requests, so he sent a memo requesting faculty cooperation. Progression requirements may prevent students in good standing from being allowed to pursue desired majors. He believes the goal should be having students major in whatever they want.

Holub recognizes there may be good reasons for having progression requirements: capacity and accreditation requirements (e.g., student-faculty ratio constraints). Holub questions using GPA requirements to address capacity issues. He noted that Psychology has many majors. As majors in related programs have progression requirements, he questions whether there has in effect been a workload shift. In his view the quality of a program is linked to faculty productivity, not to the quality of the students that are taught. A 2001 UT report stated removing progression requirements would be costly to faculty and staff morale. Holub argues faculty members are responsible for teaching all students not just easier to teach (high GPA) students. Faculty should work to inspire weaker students. Holub has instructed the academic Deans to talk with their Department Heads about progression requirements. Departments will be asked to "roll back" progression requirements, if there are no capacity or accreditation issues.

J. Malia stated that in her department some majors have accreditation requirements and others do not. She asked whether a situation would be created in which some of their students would have progression requirements and others would not. Holub responded that he could not deal with particular cases. He brought up the example of Business Administration. Dean Williams has some programs with capacity issues and others that do not. Holub will address capacity issues in making funding decisions.

Another question addressed the base for measuring retention percentages and more specifically whether changes in the student population due to lottery scholarships have affected retention. Holub responded that focus is on retention from the first to the second year. If students leave after one year, ultimately the graduation rate suffers. The campus has a four-year graduation rate below 40% and a six-year graduation rate in the 50% range. The retention rate has been stable for a number of years. No real impact has been observed from the lottery scholarship program.

Lyons asked if data were available on whether progression requirements or other reasons lead to attrition. Holub stated that 5% were dismissed after their first year (which he considered too high a percentage). A survey will be conducted again this year. Previous surveys suggested it was important for students to feel they were part of a community.

## **MINUTES**

Minutes of the Faculty Senate Meeting of September 18, 2006, were approved as corrected:

Those absent: delete Senator Fields

Chancellor's Report: merit increases effective February 1 and equity increases effective January 1.

Alternates were asked to provide the name of the Senator for whom they are substituting on the sign-in sheet.

The Executive Committee minutes are an information item. Any comments should be sent to L. Gross.

Minutes of the September 19, 2006, Undergraduate Council meeting were approved as posted.

Minutes of the April 27, 2006, and August 31, 2006, Graduate Council meetings were approved as posted. (Gross asked about the status of one item, the Graduate Resource Center. M. Murray indicated that it would be discussed at the next Graduate Deans' meeting.)

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### University Faculty Council

Gross noted the charter for the University Faculty Council has been revised and that Vice President Levy indicated that there were plans to have it meet in November. Based on that meeting schedule, the Executive Committee passed a resolution at its October 9, 2006, meeting (see minutes) to put the names of those who had agreed to be candidates last year for the position on a mailed ballot. Senators would receive the candidate statements along with the ballot and have one week to return the ballots. The representative from our campus would serve a one-year term, during which time the Senate would amend its Bylaws to accommodate election of a Council member for a three-year term. The motion from the Executive Committee was approved.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### Information Technology (M. Breinig and B. Bible)

Two issues are the e-mail transition and system security. Bible prepared a handout with dates for the transition process. A resolution pertaining to social security numbers will be brought to the next meeting. Bible announced that as of the previous week 8643 accounts had been transitioned. The migration was halted because a problem was identified with a component of the hardware involved in the new mail system. Units have input about when migration occurs. For some accounts there will be self-migration. About 50% of faculty has migrated. Beginning November 1, students will get to select a day to self migrate. (There will be a maximum number that can migrate on a given day.) As configured, faculty will have 250-megabyte inboxes. They are working on methods for archiving for those that need more space.

The hardware outage last summer made his office aware of some communication problems. Faculty can join a listserv or go to the main OIT web page where information about problems is posted. There is a phone tree for LAN managers with auto voice mail about problems. And, the help desk can be called. Bible discussed backup for e-mail and associated liability issues with Gross and Breinig. One option is complete replication, while another less expensive (but less transparent) one is an emergency e-mail system.

Malia asked whether the introduction of archiving would mean that users would no longer receive 14 day exceeded capacity warnings. Bible said that faculty would need to sign up for archiving. If an archive would fill up, then the user would receive an over capacity notice.

D. Patterson commented that he had heard from LAN managers that the choice of exchange was the most expensive of the three options. He asked Bible about the actual cost of the system. Bible responded that Lotus Notes was the most expensive option. The estimated cost of the system is still close to the originally estimated cost, even with the unanticipated purchase of hardware.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 4:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by  
Suzanne Kurth, Secretary