

Faculty Senate Executive Committee  
MINUTES  
February 9, 2009

Present: Vince Anfara, Doug Birdwell, Toby Boulet, Marianne Breinig, Donald Bruce, Paul Crilly, Becky Fields, Joan Heminway, Becky Jacobs, Suzanne Kurth, India Lane, Catherine Luther, Beauvais Lyons, Susan Martin, John Nolt, David Patterson, Carl Pierce, Anne Smith

Guests: Scott Simmons (Graduate Assistant), Candace White (Task Force Chair)

## **I. CALL TO ORDER**

J. Nolt called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m.

## **II. REVIEW OF MINUTES**

J. Heminway asked for several corrections to the minutes: on the last line of page 3 "Appeals" Committee should be substituted for "Faculty Affairs" Committee, the underscore should be continued to include the last 6 letters of Activities on the last page, and after "only a plan" insert "and compliance with certain documentation requirement." Minutes approved as corrected.

## **III. REPORTS**

### Senate President's Report (J. Nolt)

J. Nolt indicated he was more optimistic, as on Friday the Governor indicated that he expected money from the proposed stimulus package, although it would only be for the next two years. Some stimulus money would go to higher education. It was unclear whether the Governor's goal of avoiding layoffs included the University of Tennessee. D. Bruce said the *Knoxville News Sentinel* story did not pick up on his [the Governor's] direct call for higher education to change the way it does business. Nolt reported the Legislative Task Force had been busy planning events to contact legislators directly or indirectly, e.g., J. Woodson. Nolt met with J. Woodson and D. Gresham. Legislators are being told about the need for tuition flexibility and the importance of keeping teachers in the classroom. TUFS has set Tuesday, February 24 as a legislative action day. Nolt asked for people to participate. An action was planned on March 17 by the UCW. TUFS is sponsoring a statewide faculty senates' retreat the weekend of April 4 to plan a statewide strategy for lobbying.

The CPR case discussed at the January meeting has been withdrawn from Faculty Senate review, as it will go through the entire procedure. If it continues, the case would return to the Appeals Committee.

B. Lyons asked given the departure of D. Barlow what Nolt knew about construction management, specifically breaking ground for a new music building, the safety of Stokely Athletic Center, and the new student health facility. Nolt reported that the campus Master Planning Committee had not met for almost two years. The Committee is waiting for standards from THEC. Nolt indicated he did not think any planning activities were underway. Lyons said he wanted his concern about construction management to be on the record.

### Provost's Report (S. Martin)

S. Martin reported the Senate had excised much support for higher education from the proposed stimulus legislation. She noted that she was concerned by the Governor's caveat about it only being effective for two years suggesting the need for a tuition increase. She said she was impressed by Chancellor Cheek's transition, including his meeting with local political figures. She commented on the visit of D. Gresham, the new chair of the Tennessee Senate's Education Committee. With reference to Academic Affairs, she noted excellent prospective students were being interviewed for the Honors Program and the admissions process for international students was being reviewed. S. Gardial is conducting focus groups with advanced probationary faculty. For first year faculty members, facilities are an issue.

B. Lyons commented that the Center for International Education did excellent work procuring "green cards" for faculty. Lyons said he had talked with colleagues concerned with the impact of budget woes on the evaluation process, namely that retaining a poor colleague would be better than losing a position. He asked how to deal with the question of possibly losing a position if there were a vote against retaining a faculty member. Martin commented that the campus overwhelmingly votes to retain faculty. She said she could raise Lyons' question with the academic deans. Heminway referred to the international student issue. Brazilian students had contacted her and she had to go to several different places on UTK's web site for help. She suggested at a minimum links could be set up. D. Patterson asked about maintaining the current enrollment goal. Martin said it was important to maintain the target as otherwise there could be a double whammy in terms of revenue. Martin noted that the less qualified were not showing up in the applicant pool. The application figures were difficult to interpret given the change of the deadline to December. Housing applications were down, as were applications from out-of-state.

C. Pierce noted his personal interest in nursing and the proposed cuts in enrollment. Martin replied that the College of Nursing started the year with a deficit because key grants had been lost. The requested 8% budget reduction in combination with the deficit amounted to a substantial sum of money. Nursing depends heavily on clinical faculty for the BSN program (8-12:1) and the job market is good for clinical faculty because there are not many of them. A quick way to achieve cuts would be to cut clinical faculty. Stimulus or one-time money would help. Nursing has been encouraged to return to its priorities--its doctoral program and 100 BSN students. Admission to about half of the 8 or 9 specialty Master's programs was being suspended. Pierce recommended that Gardial talk to some faculty in focus groups about retirement, for the faculty has aged. Martin pointed out the need to be careful about age discrimination. Pierce wondered if Haslam believed that the University received money from lottery scholarships, as he saw articles that suggested that UT did receive money. V. Anfara asked about the proposed DNP. Martin said it had been stopped for the present. One question was whether it would lead to the elimination of some of the Master's level programs.

### Chancellor's Report (J. Cheek)

The Chancellor regretted being unable to attend the meeting.

#### IV. OLD BUSINESS

Faculty Affairs Committee: *Handbook Revisions Update* (J. Heminway)

Annual performance and retention reviews were the focus of the revisions Heminway reviewed. She drew particular attention to those noted below (with references below keyed to the outline format in the summary memorandum distributed in advance of the meeting):

A. For tenure track faculty, she referred to how the document incorporated the change to one coordinated evaluation and retention review in the fall.

4. The Committee noticed there was no process for Department Heads to respond when they

disagreed with their Deans' decisions. There apparently have been some means, but they have not been explicit.

B. Changes. The nomenclature was changed.

2. A three-year evaluation time frame was set up.

3. Sometimes there was informal communication with Deans and others before the formal review.

The goal was to have everything done through the formal process.

4. The external compensation form would be submitted with a separate form required by the University.

Lyons said, for example, if Chapter 7 requires conversation about outside activities that these changes would formalize the requirement. Heminway said yes they were trying to avoid duplication. Crilly asked whether consulting work would require prior approval as some is reported after the fact. Lyons said that he did not think once in a while activities would. Heminway said look at the *Faculty Handbook*, but noted that there were numerous additional guidelines (e.g., college bylaws). Crilly asked whether a department head's approval was necessary. Heminway recommended checking all rules.

5 and 6. Faculty members in "good standing" could submit less information and department heads would not have to write full narratives for them. Discussion was underway about "piloting" a 5 category evaluation scale.

C. 1 & 2. The provisions are intended to give better feedback to probationary faculty via a super review process. During the early probationary years there is more emphasis on meeting departmental needs and in the later years more emphasis on progress toward tenure.

She indicated the document was an information item for which she was soliciting comments. Lyons said in a conversation he had with former Provost Holub last year that Holub said the evaluations were not as complete as they should be. He said Martin should return them, if they were not complete, as the Provost's Office has a critical role in setting expectations. Martin replied that the Deans also play an important role. Heminway said they have asked that the evaluation processes for academic administrators include the provision of appropriate evaluations.

Research Council: *Policy Statement Updates* (J. Hall)

As J. Hall was not present, the item was deferred to the next meeting.

### Program Review, Reallocation and Reduction Task Force: Update (J. Nolt)

Nolt reported that the proposed procedure distributed before the meeting was approved by both the Undergraduate and Graduate Councils. He also noted that Bill Dunne suggested clarification of the term "program" and placing the procedure in the "Guidelines for Submission" document. Nolt said the Program Review, Reallocation and Redirection Task Force (PRRR) was proceeding to work on criteria in consultation with B. Yegidis.

Nolt sought not a judgment on the procedure (already approved by Councils), but rather a way to establish a record of recommendations. Nolt brought up a proposed definition of programs as majors, minors or concentrations. Pierce asked whether "program" included a *degree*, that is, whether the definition would be under inclusive. T. Boulet and Anfara agreed it was confusing. Nolt pointed out the proposed procedure did not consider administrative reorganization like that proposed between his department (Philosophy) and Religious Studies. Anfara said the Graduate Deans' group was concerned that RRTF guidelines were employed even though they had never been adopted. There was concern about materials being linked to guidelines for submitting curricular materials, as the focus was on cases outside the usual process. The Deans' group was unclear about where it should be located. It would not be a Curriculum Committee task. He reported the fear was that it would be approved and then would be effectively lost in some minutes no one could locate. Nolt agreed. Pierce said it represented another example of the problem of minutes of the Undergraduate and Graduate Councils. He suggested another process should be followed. If the Senate approves the minutes of those two Councils' meetings, a definitional change would be being approved and, if that were the case, people needed to see what was being amended. Heminway said it affects faculty, administrators and others. The Senate approves curricular changes through the two Councils and they have considerable impact on faculty and administrators. She pointed out there was no place for rules that affect multiple bodies. I. Lane asked whether the Bylaws helped. D. Birdwell said THEC defines a program as something that people obtain a degree in (raising questions about minors and concentrations). Nolt said no decisions should be made about where it belongs before the next Senate meeting, as approval for procedures adopted by the Councils was what was under consideration. Anfara found the process confusing. Nolt had wanted the two Councils to review proposals to terminate programs. The confusion in part revolves around why the Councils should be involved. Two big issues for them were defining what a "program" is and whether the document represented a procedure or a policy. He did not think the document should be returned to the Graduate Council. Boulet said that according to the Faculty Handbook the Councils had to be involved; perhaps it should go back to PRRR. Pierce asked if a motion were being made. Nolt said "no." The recommendation was that it be returned to PRRR. Heminway suggested PRRR should develop a definition of "program" and determine where it should be lodged in the document.

### **V. NEW BUSINESS**

#### THEC Data: Accuracy of Information of Low-Performing Programs (D. Birdwell)

Birdwell said he noticed discrepancies in the data (e.g., on numbers of program graduates) on low-performing programs obtained from different sources (e.g., departmental and THEC). He depicted the discrepancies in some cases as grossly wrong and argued that decisions about programs should not be made using such poor data. Martin said responses are required. THEC should be informed about incorrect data. Some discrepancy might be due to double majors that are only counted once. She continued by saying if such errors represented a trend, then

there was a big problem. Birdwell said high error levels in enrollment data necessitate a process driven by the Faculty Senate to identify the source(s) of data error. Decisions should not be made on the basis of bad data. Birdwell proposed having a Senate resolution. Nolt pointed out that there was not time at the meeting to craft a resolution and suggested Birdwell develop one. Pierce suggested asking administrators to look into the problem, that is, make a request rather than pass a resolution. S. Martin agreed to report on data problems at the next Executive Committee meeting.

#### Efficiency and Effectiveness Task Force: Proposed Senate Bylaws Changes (C. White)

C. White stated that the Senate is not usually at the table when policy decisions are made. Some Senate committees rarely deal with policy supporting the perception that serving on the Senate is a waste of time. One change that can be made is the Senate committee structure. The Athletics Committee exists in a "bubble" that rarely addresses policy. She said the chart she distributed was a result of examination of how policy making interfaced with committees. She said the Athletics Committee has policy interests, but it is not functioning well in terms of policy development. The Task Force recommended abolishing it and moving important issues to other committees, for example student athlete issues would go to the Teaching [and Learning] Council. Nolt said all the information would be on the web for people to make comments before the first reading at the next Senate meeting. White directed attention to the proposed changes and the chart depicting the underlying rationale for changes. Heminway noted that people had comments related to their committees. Lyons said the Blackboard site allowed for "word smithing." He wanted the first reading to focus on the overall plan. He encouraged committees to discuss the changes. White explained that the Task Force was not saying that the current committees were not engaged in work, but that they were not focused on policy. Lyons gave the example of the Teaching Council being burdened with selection of the Chancellor's Teaching Awards. Lane said she had noticed policy questions appeared to go elsewhere. Birdwell commented that based on his experience with the award decision-making process on the Research Council that it was important to use faculty expertise. Lyons pointed to the lack of clerical support for the Teaching Council necessitated faculty scheduling classroom visits. He also applauded merging the Library and Information Technology Committees. White said the Task Force looked at minutes for 6 years, as well annual reports. Birdwell noted the Research Council had administrative support in making awards. The ensuing discussion indicated that providing support was the goal for the Teaching Council [part of the proposed Teaching and Learning Council]. White pointed to the elimination of the Nominating Committee. She said virtually all committee chairs would be appointed. The Executive Committee would become a smaller body called the Executive Council. Heminway noted some drafting was still underway. Boulet asked about the schedule for document availability, as he would post the next version for Senators to read before the next Senate meeting. White noted that a new entity was created, University System Relations Committee.

Lane said D. Schumann (Teaching and Learning Center) would like to visit with the Senate. Nolt said the next couple of Senate meetings were tightly scheduled, but he would try to work in time for Schumann to come.

The proposed Bylaws changes from the Efficiency and Effectiveness Task Force were moved and seconded. Motion approved.

Meeting adjourned 5:14 p.m.