

MINUTES OF THE ACADEMIC COUNCIL  
TENNESSEE TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY  
January 26, 2005

The Academic Council met at 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 26, 2005, in the Deans' Conference Room of Derryberry Hall with Dr. Jeff Roberts, Chairperson, presiding.

The following members of the Council were present:

Dr. Don Elkins	Dr. Christine Miller
Dr. Jack Armistead	Dr. Jann Cupp
Dr. Darrell Garber	Dr. David Larimore
Dr. Robert Niebuhr	Dr. P.K. Rajan
Dr. Winston Walden	Prof. Darlene Franklin
Prof. Rebecca Tolbert	Prof. Delane Stewart
Dr. Roy Loutzenheiser	Dr. Chris Brown
Mr. Matt Levi	Dr. Tony Baker
Dr. David Narrie	Dr. Linda Null
Dr. Cathy Cunningham	Dr. Jeff Roberts
Dr. Sharon Whitney	Dr. Brian O'Connor
Dr. Mark Stephens	Dr. Corinne Darvennes

Ms. Yvonne Gribble, Dr. Francis Otuonye, and Mr. Charles Wilkerson attended as resource persons.

The following members of the Council were absent:

Dr. Susan Elkins	Dr. John Harris
Mr. Nathan Wilds	Dr. Joseph Biernacki
Mr. Corbin Halverson	Dr. Gretta Stanger
Ms. Katie Skelton	Prof. Ray Jordan

#### SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

1. Approved the agenda.
2. Approved the minutes of the November 10 meeting.
3. Denied approval of the recommendation from the committee studying disruptive classroom behavior.
4. Approved an option for alternate MW, MF, and WF class schedules.
5. Approved clarification of the 30-day limit in the Grade Appeals Policy.
6. Approved a new admissions policy for international students.

## PROCEEDINGS

### Approval of the Agenda

Dr. Narrie MOVED approval of the agenda, Dr. Miller SECONDED the motion, and the agenda was APPROVED as distributed.

### Approval of the Minutes of the November 10 Meeting

Dr. Narrie MOVED approval of the minutes of the November 10 meeting, and Dr. Larimore SECONDED the motion. The minutes were APPROVED as posted on the web.

### Report from Committee on Disruptive Classroom Behavior

Dr. Whitney presented the report from the committee charged with defining disruptive classroom behavior. The committee proposed and Dr. Whitney MOVED to approve the following:

That a policy statement be placed in the *Faculty Handbook* and *Student Handbook* to the effect that the teacher has the responsibility for maintaining a suitable classroom learning environment. Whereas academic freedom is a public policy of the university as a whole, the Academic Council hereby authorizes the teacher to include in his/her course syllabus rules of demeanor and measures for enforcing those rules.

Dr. O'Connor SECONDED the motion. The report was discussed at length, and it was pointed out that the Academic Council states the minimum standards to be included in the syllabus, but the faculty member may add additional statements. The consensus of the group was that this statement does not change anything and is really not needed. Also, the Council agreed that the faculty member is the one best able to define what is considered disruptive behavior in the classroom, and the definition can be included in the syllabus if the instructor chooses. TBR does not have an official definition, but the Dean of Students Office has a definition that faculty may find helpful. With only 8 affirmative votes, the proposed statement FAILED to pass. Dr. Roberts said that this issue should have more study and perhaps the Faculty Senate should look at it. He thanked the committee for their work in researching this issue.

### Report from Committee Studying an Option for Alternate Monday/Wednesday/Friday Class Scheduling

Dr. Roberts distributed copies of the committee report and explained that the reason for allowing for optional 80-minute MW, MF, or WF classes is to relieve the heavy demand for Tuesday-Thursday classes and shift some of the classes to underutilized times on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Such experimentation has been used for some time, and the guidelines would provide some direction to an existing and expanding trend. The alternate time slots of

9:30, 11:30, and 1:30 would not be used for General Education courses but would be primarily for courses comprised of department majors. The Council discussed ramifications of using this schedule and the benefits that might accrue to both students and faculty.

Dr. Stephens **MOVED** to accept the committee report to allow for departments to experiment with alternate 80-minute MW, MF, or WF classes at their discretion. Dr. Whitney **SECONDED** the motion, and the motion **PASSED** by a unanimous vote. No further approvals are required to implement this change.

#### Revision/Clarification of 30-Day Limit in the Grade Appeals Policy

Dr. Barker distributed copies of the proposed revision to clarify the 30-day time limit for students to begin a grade appeal. Dr. Barker explained that the change is requested because a problem occurred this past fall semester when a student wanted to appeal a grade and the university was open but classes were not in session for a month following the end of the semester. Dr. Larimore **MOVED** approval of the revision, and Dr. Narrie **SECONDED** the motion. The second and third sentences in Step One of the Grade Appeals Policy would be replaced with the following:

For fall semester grades, this consultation must occur by the end of the fifteenth class day of the succeeding spring semester. For spring and summer semester grades, the consultation must occur by the end of the fifteenth class day of the succeeding fall semester.

There was no discussion, and the motion **CARRIED** by a unanimous vote.

#### New Admissions Policy for International Students

Professor Tolbert said that one of the reasons for a decrease in international students at Tech is because of our testing requirements and the difficulty that internationals have getting to a test site. Professor Tolbert stated that the proposed policy has been approved by both the International Student Affairs Committee and the Admissions and Credits Committee. She introduced Charles Wilkerson, Director of International Student Affairs, who distributed a handout which showed a 38.74 percent decline in international students in the U.S. since 2003 coupled with an increase in application fees from \$45 to \$270 during the same period. In addition to the high application fees in the U.S., Tech requires ACT/SAT scores and other institutions do not. This proposal would change the tests acceptable for admission of international students.

Professor Tolbert **MOVED** approval of the revised admissions policy for international students as distributed with the agenda, and Professor Franklin **SECONDED** the motion. There was no discussion, and the motion **CARRIED** by a unanimous vote.

Such Other Matters

Dr. O'Connor asked about Summer School 2005, and Dr. Barker responded that Academic Affairs has a \$675,000 reduction to make in this year's budget. We are trying to meet that reduction without taking faculty lines or reducing travel or operating by making summer school cost-effective. He noted that the first summer will be trial and error.

Dr. Baker inquired about adjunct and overload rates and specifically about the criteria for assigning part-time faculty to one of the four tiers. Dr. Barker responded that we do not have written guidelines, but he said the Deans Council has discussed it, the Faculty Senate will look at it, and the President will take the issue to the committee chairs at TBR. Dr. Barker said we will come back later with guidelines for this policy.

Dr. O'Connor brought up the problem of students having to drop a Monday class on the first day the class meets. This situation was caused by the timing of the Martin Luther King Holiday this year, but it will occur every year except for 2007-08. Dr. Roberts said that he would add this issue to the agenda for the next Council meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting was ADJOURNED at 4:40 p.m.

---

Pat Gilbreath, Recorder