

MINUTES OF THE ACADEMIC COUNCIL
TENNESSEE TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY
October 6, 2004

The Academic Council met at 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday, October 6, 2004, 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. David Larimore
Dr. Darrell Garber	Dr. Joseph Biernacki
Dr. Susan Elkins	Dr. P. K. Rajan
Dr. Robert Niebuhr	Prof. Darlene Franklin
Dr. Winston Walden	Prof. Delane Stewart
Prof. Rebecca Tolbert	Dr. Gretta Stanger
Dr. Roy Loutzenheiser	Dr. Chris Brown
Mr. Nathan Wilds	Dr. Tony Baker
Mr. Matt Levi	Dr. Linda Null
Mr. Corbin Halverson	Prof. Ray Jordan
Dr. John Harris	Dr. Jeff Roberts
Dr. Sharon Whitney	Dr. Brian O'Connor
Dr. Christine Miller	Dr. Corinne Darvennes

Dr. Scott Northrup attended for Dr. Jack Armistead. Ms. Denise Hensley attended as a resource person.

The following members of the Council were absent:

Dr. Jack Armistead	Dr. Cathy Cunningham
Ms. Katie Skelton	Dr. Mark Stephens
Dr. David Narrie	Dr. Jann Cupp

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

1. Approved the agenda.
2. Approved the minutes of the April 7 meeting.
3. Received and discussed information about a review of AP testing.
4. Approved the appointment of a committee to make recommendations on what constitutes disruptive behavior in the classroom.
5. Approved guidelines for appropriate classroom interruptions.
6. Received a proposal to replace the current class schedule.

Credit for Advanced Placement Courses

Dr. Barker reported that we had received a complaint from one of the principals in the Putnam County school system about what higher education in Tennessee would accept as advanced placement. Actually, most of the TBR institutions, including Tennessee Tech, accept 3 on humanities and social sciences and 4's and 5's in science and mathematics. At the same time we received new information from the College Entrance Examination Board describing how the test is occurring now and a new set of recommendations. Dean Armistead has shared the recommendations with departments, so there may be a recommendation for a change at a later date. Dr. Barker said that periodically we look at Advanced Placement, and it is probably time to rethink AP.

Professor Tolbert said that CEEB is trying to have all the tests re-reviewed by 2005-06. Initially, we intended to have the International Baccalaureate Program as part of today=s discussion, but it will be presented at the November Council meeting.

Appointment of a Committee to Make Recommendations on Disruptive Classroom Behavior

Dr. Roberts said that the request to appoint a committee to make recommendations on disruptive classroom behavior was forwarded to him from Dr. Barker via the Women=s Center. Those faculty members who have agreed to serve on the committee are Corinne Darvennes, Sharon Whitney, and Brian O=Connor. Matt Levi was nominated and agreed to serve as a student representative on the committee.

Dr. Barker said that disruptive behavior means different things to different faculty members; consequently, it is hard to write one policy for all faculty members. However, the instructor should have his or her own definition of disruptive behavior spelled out in the syllabus for each class. Dr. Barker said that faculty are allowed to put things in their syllabi if it is in the *Faculty Handbook*, but currently disruptive behavior is not covered in the *Handbook*. Only the Academic Council has the authority to decide what should be in the syllabus, so Dr. Barker said what we need is some statement to allow faculty to clearly state on their syllabus what they consider to be disruptive behavior in the classroom, and this statement would be given to the students before the class starts. In response to a freedom of speech question, Dr. Barker said that TBR General Counsel has said that freedom of speech does not supersede the faculty member=s responsibility to create a reasonable learning environment. It was pointed out that the *Faculty Handbook* defines what must be included on the syllabus, but it does not exclude other things.

Dr. Roberts said he would be in touch with the committee members about a time for the first meeting.

Appropriate Classroom Interruptions

A recommendation for appropriate classroom interruptions was distributed to the Council with today=s agenda. Dr. Roberts said that this issue has already come before the Faculty Senate,

and now we are looking for a motion. Dr. Barker said there should be some very valid reasons for interrupting a class, and the deans did not want to add to the two reasons in the recommendation. The deans also wanted to have the person who interrupts the class to be someone the instructor knows. Dr. Barker clarified that the interruption is not for both a parent and a grandparent; it is for the death or illness of a parent OR a grandparent who is raising the child. After considerable discussion, the Council approved the following policy for appropriate classroom interruptions:

1. Notice of death and major or life-threatening illness or accident of a close family member only.
2. Legitimate request from law enforcement at the discretion of the Campus Chief of Police.

An officer or administrator needing to call someone out of class should contact a departmental secretary, if available, and let the secretary do the intervention. If the secretary is not available, the officer should knock on the door and await the instructor=s response.

Professor Franklin MOVED acceptance of the above policy, and Mr. Levi SECONDED the motion. The Council APPROVED the policy by a unanimous vote.

Such Other Matters

Dr. Roberts said that most of the proposals that come before the Council come from TBR, the administration, or the students, and he encouraged the faculty to be pro-active and present proposals.

Dr. Roberts distributed copies of his own proposal to replace our current class schedule, a proposal which he plans to bring to the Council for a vote at the November meeting. He will send it to Council members electronically so they can share it with others and get their input.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Recorder