

Administrative Council
January 27, 2021 - 3:35 p.m.
TEAMS Meeting
Minutes

Voting Members Present		
Dan Allcott	Michael Allen	Debra Bryant
Wei Tsun Chang	Daniel Brent Drexler	Dennis Duncan
Joshua Edmonds	David Hajdik	Kim Hanna
Madison Harris	Alexis Harvey	Elizabeth Honeycutt
Janet Isbell	Nancy Kolodziej	Aaron Lay
Chad Luke	Holly Mills	Tony Nelson
Lachelle Norris	Joseph Ojo	Sally Pardue
Richard Rand	Chuck Roberts	Jeffery Roberts
(Bedelia Russell) Proxy – Jason Beach	Sandra Smith-Andrews	Claire Stinson
Dan Swartling	Suzan Swartzentrover	Jennifer Taylor
Angie Wells	Mark Wilson	Jeannette Luna
Lisa Zagumny	Tammy Howard	Joseph Slater
Lenly Weathers		
Voting Members Absent		
Jeremy Blair	Sandra Bohannon	Mary Lou Fornehed
Steven Frye	Brian Jones	Steven Norris
Anthony Paradis	Mike Rogers	Daniel Warren
Resource Persons / Others Present		
Phillip Oldham	Nathan Anderson	Lori Bruce
Emily Buckner	Sherrie Cannon	Yvette Clark
Greg Holt	Sharon Huo	Jerry Keeton
Amber Varney	Rob Owens	Troy Perdue
Donna Schrock	Gittle Sciolis	Diane Smith
Elizabeth Sofia	Mark Stephens	Amber McNeeley
Charles Wilkerson	Katie Williams	Jerri Winningham
Lee Wray	Cole Hodges	Jimmy Stewart

Summary:

Approved agenda

Approved November 4, 2020 minutes

Approved Constitution for Gymnastics Club of Tennessee Tech

Approved Constitution for the National Society of Leadership and Success of Tennessee Tech

Approved Constitution for Root Position of Tennessee Tech

Approved Constitution for Turning Point USA of Tennessee Tech

Received rescinded Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) Policy No. 616. Out-of-cycle approval. Information only.

Approved revised International Affairs Committee Procedures

Proceedings:

Chair Sandra Smith-Andrews called the TEAMS meeting to order at 3:35 p.m. Michael Allen made a motion to approve the agenda for January 27, 2021. Richard Rand seconded. Motion unanimously APPROVED.

Lisa Zagumny made a motion to approve the November 4, 2020 minutes. Rand seconded. Motion unanimously APPROVED.

Zagumny motioned to approve the Constitution for Gymnastics Club of Tennessee Tech. Holly Mills seconded. Amber Varney presented and stated that the club would allow students to be involved in gymnastics without the time and financial commitment that other teams required while being able to exercise and form friendships. Varney indicated that Mr. Richard Pirkle was the faculty advisor. Smith-Andrews commented there was a typo on Section 1; it says 'offices' instead of 'officers'. Smith-Andrews suggested to the group to consider making a quorum $\frac{1}{2}$ plus 1 versus the stated $\frac{2}{3}$ of members. Varney accepted the friendly amendments. Motion unanimously APPROVED.

Mills motioned to approve the Constitution for the National Society of Leadership and Success of Tennessee Tech. Zagumny seconded. Emily Buckner presented and stated that Sherrie Cannon was the faculty advisor and was in attendance. Smith-Andrews asked if Buckner would like to leave the quorum at 50% or 50% plus 1. Buckner decided to revise to 50% plus 1. Smith-Andrews also noted there was a typo in Article VII; it should say 'one-time', not 'on time' dues. Buckner accepted both as friendly amendments. Motion unanimously APPROVED.

Zagumny motioned to approve the Constitution for Root Position of Tennessee Tech. Michael Allen seconded. Nathan Anderson presented and stated that Root Position was formerly known as Mentonation, which was Tennessee Tech's all-male A Cappella group on campus. Anderson stated that while that constitution never forbid having women as members, it did specify that the membership would always be tenor and base voices. Root Position will no

longer have that requirement to allow for a more diverse student base to join. Dr. Craig Zamer was the faculty advisor. Smith-Andrews suggested that the quorum be revised from $\frac{3}{4}$ of voting membership to $\frac{2}{3}$. Anderson stated their reasoning for $\frac{3}{4}$ was that since it was a performing group, if members could not regularly meet, they were not likely to stay members; their attendance was usually near 100%. Anderson, therefore, indicated they would like to keep the quorum at $\frac{3}{4}$. Motion unanimously APPROVED.

Zagumny motioned to approve the Constitution for Turning Point USA of Tennessee Tech. Rand seconded. Gittle Sciolis presented and stated that she would be the President of Turning Point USA and two other officers were also in attendance; Campus Coordinator Cole Hodges and Vice President Jimmy Stewart. Sciolis said the mission of the organization was to identify, educate, train and organize students to promote the principles of freedom, free markets and limited government. Sciolis indicated that the group intended to be a conversation starter to help educate other students and open civil dialogue between everyone on campus to see where votes were going and to truly educate others going in to an election. Dr. Andrew Donadio was the faculty advisor.

Mark Wilson asked about the national organization and where the Tech Chapters' funding would go if the group disbanded. Sciolis replied that Turning Point USA was a 501C3 non-profit organization, adding that fundraising on campus would be for the campus chapter and be used to promote events or to host speakers on campus. Wilson asked if the non-profit would benefit any prospective aged students and asked where the funding from the 501C3 money went, stating that NCAA rules prohibit any organization of the university from funding any prospective aged students. Hodges indicated that the national level helped grass root campaigns and media to spread the ideology of Turning Point, adding that the campus funding would not go to the national level. Wilson indicated that his only concern was where the funding went if the group dissolved. Sciolis indicated that the constitution could be amended to direct those funds to a local charity. Hodges added that verbiage would be added into the constitution to specify that. Wilson agreed that he would like a friendly amendment that stated that and suggested that the group select a Tennessee Tech charity like the Food Pantry. Sciolis agreed to the friendly amendment.

Zagumny asked for more information on the professor watchlist that is on the Turning Point webpage. Sciolis replied that it was not a list that a professor would go on if there were a disagreement but the professor would be added if there was a political idea pushed in a class where the subject was not relevant or a student were approached in a very aggressive way to push a political agenda. Hodges added that it was not to do anything negative to the professor and compared it as being similar to Rate my Professor; it was a way to let students share their experiences adding that the experiences are provided to Turning Point and if there were repeated experiences, then the professor would be added to the list.

Jeanette Luna commented that she taught in Earth Sciences, where science topics such as evolution are discussed and have had issues in the South. Luna expressed concern that the

group would be potentially identifying faculty that students weren't happy with and asked if the campus chapter would be meeting to discuss who should be added to the watchlist. Hodges said that just because there was a local chapter didn't mean the group would automatically be adding faculty to the watchlist and that he personally didn't think there were issues on Tech's campus. Sciolis said it would need to be slander or liable to a student or of physical harm to a student and she was unaware this had ever occurred on this campus and thought that it was unlikely to happen. Hodges suggested that the group review the items on the Professor Watchlist website and see how few were listed and what the subject matter pertained to.

Lori Bruce asked how the presenters could guarantee that those won't result in a professor being on a watchlist and what they based their opinion on. Hodges said that a professor being on the watchlist did not correlate to a Turning Point chapter being on a campus; that there did not have to be a local chapter for someone to be added to the watchlist. Hodges added that he could never guarantee it but sufficient evidence, more than one report and a history of egregious opinion was the standard used. Bruce asked the definition of sufficient evidence and egregious opinion. Katie Williams added that the list was not maintained by this local chapter; the chapter did not have any say on the "blacklist" and that Tech professors could be on this watchlist without a local chapter. Hodges agreed this was the case. Dan Allcott asked what happened if one of our professors was added to the list and our chapter did not support it. Hodges responded that the chapter did not curate the watchlist and the watchlist was independent of the Tech Chapter and was like Rate My Professor, except a little more political. Sciolis noted that it is very hard to get on the watchlist stating that a professor would be antisemitic or racist against a student to be added. Jimmy Steward added that the professor would have to be very radical or extreme on multiple occasions.

Smith-Andrews noted that several had their hands raised and called on Troy Perdue, General Counsel. Perdue said the institution had to be pretty cautious of a student group's right to speak. If the group wanted to make a list and put the Council on it or the General Counsel on it, it did not matter, that could not go into the Council's evaluation of whether to approve this group or not. Perdue stated he was a little anxious about questions that go down to what kind of speech the group could have. Perdue requested that the Council be mindful. Smith-Andrews stated that she did not think the Council was going there, that these were sincere question about what the group stood for.

Smith-Andrews called on Luna who further explained to the students why they were getting questions that the other student groups did not. Luna noted faculty had to be careful as to how they talk about things, such as science, and referenced Flint, Michigan and those faculty concerns regarding speaking out in fear of losing their jobs. Luna further explained that the Council was doing their due diligence. Luna thanked the group for listening to the comments and thanked Perdue for his comments.

Smith-Andrews called on Dan Allcott, followed by Bruce. Allcott mentioned that a couple years ago there was an event that the College Republicans held that was cosponsored by Turning

Point USA and there was a racially insensitive image and language used in an ad for that event. Allcott didn't know if the current students were involved at that time and stated at some point the students would graduate and there would be another group of people affiliated with the organization; when talking about history and control, there was a little bit of bad history for some of the Council members in viewing what Turning Point had cosponsored with the College Republicans on Tech's campus. Sciolis said she was not here at that time but she had been told that it was not a decision that Turning Point made but a decision the College Republicans made and at that point Turning Point disassociated themselves from the College Republicans. Sciolis noted that going forward she knew that the group did not have a goal to do anything like that again, they planned to use memes and planned to poke fun at others and felt what happened before was very atrocious. Stewart added that they wanted to make clear that the group was not as extreme as the College Republicans, the group was bipartisan. Stewart stated the group did not support a political candidate and liked to promote free speech and hear all points of view and act as a conversation starter. Smith-Andrews reminded the Council that the group previously stated that it was a conversation-starter.

Smith-Andrews called on Bruce, who's hand had been lowered and who no longer asked to speak.

Smith-Andrews called on Richard Rand as the last person with his last hand raised. Rand added that he read through the profiles on the list and there was a theme that the professors were promoting personal political values or positions in classes or disciplines that would not appear to be related to those classes such as a professor stating that the holocaust never happened. Rand noted that those on the list did not appear to be frivolous. Rand pointed out that the list stated what was reported to have been said or done. adding that in no case did Turning Point advocate any action.

Smith-Andrews called on Dan Allcott who said there was some pretty strong language against teachers' unions and education on Turning Points' Facebook and that we had teacher unions on our campus. Allcott stated he didn't know if this had any bearing but wanted to make sure the group was aware as we are asking people to vote on this issue, you can't deny that that's part of the language of Turning Point. Smith-Andrews stated that the Council was not voting on an issue and stated she felt that there had been a good point raised about free speech earlier so we want to be very careful. Allcott stated that free speech was great, also misrepresentation of an idea was not good.

Sciolis said they want to cater to topics of discussion that are more specific to Tech's campus and the region. Sciolis stated they wanted to focus on free speech, free market and taxation and having those discussions with other students. They don't want to be activists and promote anti-this or pro-this, it's just a conversation thing. Hodges said they are big on civil discourse so they would be able to discuss in an open platform various opinion.

Smith-Andrews called on Sally Pardue who pointed out that the mission statement of the parent organization was troubling and had a definite bias and asked the students to read the local chapter's mission statement. Pardue thanked the students for locally advocating for this organization and asked to make sure that the local chapter's mission statement reflected that they were unbiased.

Sciolis read the local chapter's purpose: The purpose of Turning Point USA of Tennessee Technological University is to educate students about the importance of fiscal responsibility, free markets, and capitalism through innovative campus activism and nonpartisan thought-provoking discussion. Sciolis added that Turning Point was a conservative organization but felt there should not be an issue with free speech especially since there was College Democrats and College Republicans. Pardue stated she just wanted the language of the national and local mission statements.

Alexis Harvey asked if there was anything that could be done even if the mission statement was extremely biased given freedom of speech and student organizations; would there be anything that could be voted on? Williams replied that the Institution had to remain content and viewpoint neutral as to the purpose of an organization. Smith-Andrews asked if they would like to change their quorum to 50% + 1 instead of the 3/4 of the members because that was high. Sciolis agreed to the friendly amendment. Smith-Andrews also asked if there were national dues. Sciolis replied there was no national dues.

Smith-Andrews called for a vote to approve the Constitution for Turning Point USA of Tennessee Technological University. A voice vote was taken and it was decided to reflect those voting NAY in the TEAMS chat for the record and if it appeared the vote were close, the AYE votes would be obtained. Williams requested to make a comment and was granted permission by the Chair. Williams commented that as members cast their votes to please remember that decisions need to be made on content viewpoint and neutral factors. The organization had followed all of our regulations and rules pertaining to student organizations and they had been vetted by the Student Activities professional staff. Williams also stated that at this point, to our knowledge, they had passed every requirement to be a student organization. The members votes were: 26 YES, 10 NAY, 1 ABSTINION. Motion APPROVED.

Claire Stinson presented the rescinded Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) Policy No. 616 and noted an out-of-cycle approval was obtained and this was an information only item. Stinson pointed out that the policy was rescinded effective January 5th, 2021 because the policy was based on a public law that expired on December 31, 2020.

Zagumny motioned to approve the revised International Affairs Committee Procedures. Michael Allen seconded. Charles Wilkerson presented as the executive officer of the committee. The International Affairs Procedures had not been updated since 2001 and there were only five minor changes. Motion unanimously APPROVED.

Administrative Council Minutes

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No other such matters.

Rand motioned to adjourn. Michael Allen seconded. Adjourned at 4:24 p.m.

Diane Smith, recorder

Documents on file with minutes:

Agenda of January 27, 2021

Minutes of November 4, 2020

Constitution for Gymnastics Club of Tennessee Tech

Constitution for the National Society of Leadership and Success of Tennessee Tech

Constitution for Root Position of Tennessee Tech

Constitution for Turning Point USA of Tennessee Tech

Rescinded Policy:

Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRS) Policy No. 616

Revised Procedures:

International Affairs Committee