

Faculty Senate Business Meeting

April 23, 2018

Members present: Douglas Airhart, Deborah Ballou, Jason Beach, Tammy Boles, Troy Brachey, Chris Brown, Debra Bryant, Andrew Callender, Corinne Darvennes, Ahmed ElSawy, Billye Foster, Steven Frye, Stuart Gaetjens, Mark Groundland, David Hajdik, Paula Hinton, Steve Idem, Christy Killman, David Larimore, Regina Lee, Jane Liu, Lori Maxwell, Tony Michael, Holly Mills, Linda Null, Brian O'Connor, Jeff Roberts, LeeAnn Shipley, Troy Smith, Sandi Smith-Andrews, Holly Stretz and Jeremy Wendt

Members absent: Ismet Anitsal, S.K. Ballal, Ward Doubet, Melissa Geist, Jeremy Hansen, Ann Hellman, Shelia Hurley, Barbara Jared, Christine Miller, Joseph Ojo, Richard Rand, and Cara Sisk

Guest present: Associate VP Chief Human Resources Officer Leslie Crickenberger; Sherry Howard, HR; Linda Eller, HR; Scott Christen, Communication Department; Julia Gruber

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:35 PM by Senate President Killman.

Approval of Agenda

Senator Larimore made a MOTION to approve the revised agenda for today's meeting. Senator Smith seconded. The agenda was APPROVED.

Approval of Minutes & Notes

Senator Smith-Andrews made a MOTION to approve the minutes of April 2, 2018 and the notes of April 16, 2018. Senator Larimore seconded. The motion was APPROVED.

New Business

a. Revamping the Hiring Process

Associate VP Crickenberger distributed two handouts showing the time it takes for the hiring process from beginning to end over the past two years. There have been many internal discussions about the hiring process and several opportunities for faculty and staff to participate in focus groups, as advertised in the *Tech Times*. Human Resources Department hopes to have the hiring process more efficient and streamlined by fall.

On the handout titled "Faculty Classification Average Time (Days) in Workflow State", one layer of approval has been removed in FY18, thus shortening the process by a few days. The first time period, "01 Under Review by Dept/Comm.", is so long due to the advertisements being posted for 10 days up to several months.

The next handout, "Faculty Workflow Analytics by College Average Time (Days) in Workflow State" combined both FY17 and FY18.

The matrix produced by the search committee got some mixed feedback, but helps keep people accountable. An alternative is to provide this level of detail at the end of the

hiring process by providing a detailed letter recommending a particular candidate. It is up to the search committee to decide which they would rather do.

The two top concerns heard so far from the survey were the timeliness of getting pool approval and the perception of notifying candidates when the job is filled. There are also some problems of the length of time it takes with working on immigration status. Vetting (background checks) is done by HR on the back end, since Tech has to pay for this.

VP Crickenberger said there was room for improvement (shortening the time) in the last area, "Recommend for Hire". This involves receiving official transcripts and negotiating salary packages. She also had suggestions of putting some training on a website, and maybe best practices. See TTU Policies 601 and 643 for more.

b. *Election of Secretary for 2018-19*

Senator ElSawy presented Senator Mark Groundland as next year's Faculty Senate nominee for secretary. After hearing no other nominees from the floor, Senator Darvennes made a MOTION nominations cease and we approve by acclamation. The motion was APPROVED.

c. *TUFS Report*

The most recent TUFS (Tennessee University Faculty Senates) met here April 6-8. Senate President Killman thanked Senators Hinton and Smith-Andrews for taking charge that Saturday. The swag we provided TUFS representatives was a nice portfolio with the TUFS logo on it. Tech Senators Roberts (TUFS Past President), Smith-Andrews (TUFS Secretary), and Killman were in attendance.

Senator Smith-Andrews reported on the meeting. There were many issues discussed throughout the weekend with the following reported because of their potential to impact all member institutions:

1. Tech's relationship with the Board of Trustees is good compared to other institutions—some slightly better, many worse
2. All 10 institutions are revising or have recently revised their faculty handbooks and many university policies
3. Legislative topics of interest:
 - a. Outsourcing
 - b. UT Board restructuring
 - c. Optional Retirement Program Changes will include potentially more options and the removal of the mandatory 50% annuitization.
 - d. Quality Assurance Funding tied solely to Teacher Education Programs success (now sent to summer study)
4. Future of tenure and post-tenure review (During the lunch meet and greet session: President Oldham said he is committed to keeping tenure)
5. Evaluation of university presidents and their contracts (or potential contracts)

There will be a new TUFS website soon, at TNFacultySenates.org, hosted by UT-K. Senator Smith-Andrews will send out an announcement when this is made available.

d. Communication Department Repositioning

Dr. Scott Christen was present to briefly explain the desire to reposition the Communication Department under the College of Interdisciplinary Studies, and rename it the School of Communication. This was a faculty-led decision. Dean Gotcher is willing to help this department grow and move forward. Dr. Christen said the entire department voted on this in February. Both Dean Semmes and Dean Gotcher are on board with this proposal.

A question was raised as to why they are emphasizing their classes as social sciences in an effort for students to count them as a gen ed social science course. Also, we haven't heard the new Provost's vision about this yet, and what role it may play in this plan.

Old Business

a. University Faculty Meeting

There is a University Faculty meeting scheduled for this Wednesday, April 25 at 3:35 PM in the Derryberry Auditorium. Senate President Killman urged all Senators to encourage their colleagues to attend, as there will be voting for at-large members on both councils. Provost Bruce will be running the meeting.

b. Gender Discrimination

Senator Larimore asked what we are going to do with the information presented last December by Senator Smith and Dr. Haynes. It's appropriate to move forward on this, and initiate a process. Senator Stretz said she remembers seeing a report based on CUPA data, and wants this compared to Senator Smith's report.

Other Such Matters

- a. Senator Stretz said that Sarah DiFurio came to a meeting and talked about safety certification through RLS (Rogers Learning System), computer-based training for OSHA, not satisfying all legal requirements presently. Required safety certification applies to all paid employees. IT is working with Sarah to roll out a new employee certification program by Fall 2018 and it will not be RLS. The university can not afford to make the new certification process available to classes. With regards to professors requiring their students to use the RLS system before entering labs, IT will maintain RLS on some site somewhere. Sarah is also exploring partnering either with IT or iLearn to make safety instructional content and quizzes available to professors/instructors of labs for access to their students. Students, not only employees, need to be trained on how to be safe around chemicals and equipment.
- b. Senator ElSawy asked if there was any recent news on the Fitzgerald investigation. Senate President Killman said it's moving forward. The inquiry report was due to Dr. Huo last Friday. Trudy Harper is serving in place of President Oldham on this matter. If appropriate, another committee will be formed for the investigation. When this is all over, Policy 780 needs to be reviewed again. It is written for confidentiality, but is difficult to navigate.
- c. Budget cuts and revenues are in the news.
- d. Senator Wendt said after last week's discussion with President Oldham, some of his money was taken back. This will probably continue.

Final Comments by Senate President

Senate President Killman said it's been her pleasure to serve as President these past two years. She's learned way more than she wanted to know, and is much wiser. She's now looking forward to doing her paying job. She concluded by saying she thinks we (the Senate) stayed the course, and did our job as a watchdog for the faculty.

It is Senate President Killman's hope that Provost Bruce will be a champion for faculty and academics. Provost Bruce is already talking with many others around campus. The new Senate leadership structure is viable and helpful. She also recognized and thanked Senators rolling off at the end of this year for their service, and not to be strangers.

Senate President Killman presented Senator Lee with a crystal plaque for her 13 years of service as Senate secretary.

The meeting adjourned at 5:12 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Regina Lee,
Faculty Senate Secretary

Approved by electronic vote: May 1, 2018

Supporting Documents:

1. Faculty Classification Average Time (Days) in Workflow State [HR]
2. Faculty Workflow Analytics by College Average Time (Days) in Workflow State [HR]
3. Department of Communication Memo on Repositioning, March 23, 2018