

Faculty Senate Business Meeting February 26, 2018

Members present: Douglas Airhart, Ismet Anitsal, S.K. Ballal, 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, Jeremy Hansen, Steve Idem, Christy Killman, David Larimore, Regina Lee, Ada Haynes for Lori Maxwell, Tony Michael, Christine Miller, Holly Mills, Linda Null, Brian O'Connor, Joseph Ojo, Richard Rand, Jeff Roberts, LeeAnn Shipley, Cara Sisk, Troy Smith, and Sandi Smith-Andrews

Members absent: Ward Doubet, Melissa Geist, Ann Hellman, Paula Hinton, Shelia Hurley, Barbara Jared, Jane Liu, Holly Stretz, and Jeremy Wendt

Guests: Lisa Zagumny, Co-Chair of Strategic Planning Committee; Jeff Boles, Chair of Academic Affairs ad hoc Committee on Tenure & Promotion; Lucas Patterson, SGA Senator; Jon Shefner and guest, UTK; and Julia Gruber

Call to Order

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

Approval of Agenda

Senator Darvennes made a MOTION to approve today's agenda. It was seconded by Senator Ballal, and APPROVED.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the February 12, 2018 meeting were not ready, so a friendly amendment was made by Senator Darvennes to change the agenda. This was seconded by Senator Ballal, and APPROVED.

New Business

Strategic Plan

Dr. Lisa Zagumny and Dr. Tom Payne are co-chairs of Strategic Planning Committee, with committee members from all over campus. Dr. Zagumny showed Powerpoint slides with an outline of the proposed Strategic Plan. She said committee members have met with about 600 people to date since August. This outline is still a draft with priority actions, but not the tactics nor metrics yet. If you want to share some thoughts, please contact Dr. Zagumny. More information may be found at <https://www.tntech.edu/strategic>.

The new mission statement now includes the phrase "comprehensive institution". A suggestion was made to prominently state that TTU is the State's technological university. The vision statement was also shortened. Senators discussed both statements, including the phrases "intellectual curiosity", and "creates, advances, and applies knowledge". The mission and vision statements don't tell us how we are going to get there, so details don't need to be in them. Another suggestion was to change the word "national" in the vision statement to

“international” or “global”. Also, add “quality” to the “impactful research” phrase. International merit, and broader impact are also commonly asked by future employers. “Integrity” could also be added.

In the Core Principles section, some suggestions were made to include words and phrases such as “integrity”, “empower” instead of “enable” under student success, “supporting community” as well as “engaging community”. These core principles are also aspirational and encourage higher achievement.

In Goal 1, Senators asked if this also addresses graduate programs. Dr. Zagumny said specifying undergraduate was very intentional in this goal. Some suggestions included changing “employer” to “stakeholder” to be more inclusive, and make general education classes more flexible.

There were no comments made about Goal 2.

In Goal 3, Senators suggested deleting the word “mission”. Under point B, Senators asked about merit-based scholarships, and why only need-based scholarships were mentioned. The word “unparalleled” may be too high of a bar, and maybe a different adjective should be selected. The goal of the Strategic Plan is to make us grow, and feel uncomfortable. It should be challenging, but achievable. Some Senators felt that point B. didn’t seem to fit with stewardship, and wondered if this a tactic instead of a goal. The ROI for students was briefly discussed.

In Goal 4, Senators suggested removing the word “the” before the word “community” in the first sentence. Also, consider the word “societal” in place of “cultural”. In point B, include “region”, as well as “state”, and/or end the sentence after the word “needs”. Emphasize that faculty adapt and create academic programs. Consider using “external” instead of “economic” needs. Senators also suggested including “cultural impact” either in points A-D, or as a new point E.

Dr. Zagumny thanked everyone for their comments and suggestions, and welcomed more feedback. She said the committee is in the process of developing some tactics and metrics. This will be pushed back out to everyone after that.

Picture of Senate

Senate President Killman mentioned having an annual picture taken of the Senate.

Tenure & Promotion

Dr. Jeff Boles, Chair of Academic Affairs ad hoc Committee on Tenure & Promotion, showed Senators a Powerpoint presentation of the proposed revisions to the tenure and promotion policies and procedures. This project started 4 years ago, but changes such as leaving the TBR system slowed the process down. The cover letter dated February 19, 2018 to the Faculty Senate summarizes the history of this project. The expected policy numbers are 205 and 206 assigned to the tenure and promotion policies, respectively. Procedures don’t go through an approval process, only policies, which will go to the Board, after going through both the Academic and Administrative Councils.

Dr. Boles took all comments and suggestions from over the years, and tried to incorporate them in this new draft. In summary, he said the bulk of the changes involved adding the choice of coming up for tenure in the 5th year, and only allowing up to 2 years credit toward tenure

when hired. Those two years are tacked on at the end of their tenure-track years. Once someone enters the process of applying for tenure, they can't pull out. There are comprehensive guidelines for lecturers and additional ranks of instructors. It now treats a lecturer more like a tenure-track instructor. The policies for tenure and promotion now match, so someone can come up for either tenure and/or promotion in the 5th year.

There will be no reminders sent out every year once someone has been made aware they are eligible for promotion once. Also, there is only one review for 2nd year faculty. The President in the past also mentioned external review for tenure, but capital costs may not be able to cover this expense. Senators questioned form P2 about why "instructor" is still in there, since we no longer hire instructors. Jeff will look into this. Maybe add "tenure-track" before the word "instructor".

Hopefully will go into effect this fall. Faculty hired two years ago may have flexibility in the student development area, but this should be broad enough to meet everybody's needs. Legacy lecturers who have tenure should be moved to instructor status, but the administration should be dealing with this, not this committee. Senator Lee gave Dr. Boles some suggested changes in writing. This committee recommended the Faculty Compensation Committee consider those percentages be valid for lecturers, as they are for instructors and tenure-track faculty.

Additional suggestions should be conveyed to Dr. Boles ASAP, as Council meetings come up in early to mid-April.

Outsourcing

Mr. Lucas Patterson, SGA representative from the College of Agriculture and Human Ecology, said the SGA had a resolution regarding the outsourcing of custodial services and to bring it back in-house. SSC's contract coming up soon for re-negotiation by April 30th. Dr. Jon Shefner, from UT-Knoxville, addressed the Senate with a proposed outsourcing resolution from the Budget and Planning Committee of the UTK Faculty Senate. He encouraged taking a position that outsourcing hurts families and community. He said a discussion of outsourcing began in the Governor's office in 2015, with an executive-level push. In May 2017, a contract was signed with JLL. There is an option to opt out by the President with a clear written statement justifying this. He questions the quality of JLL's work. Local suppliers are also in jeopardy. Contracts are in place for 5 years, and we don't know what's coming after that. Dr. Shefner realized our image had been tarnished and thought this was a way to stand up for our community, who make our work possible, and help cleanse our public image. Contracts are in place for 5 years, and we don't know what's coming after that. Bids may have already been sent out on custodial services. It's never too late to recommend changes.

Senators expressed interest in putting this item on agenda for the next meeting with the President. Senate President Killman encouraged everyone to read this and think about the proposed resolution.

Digital & Distance Education

Senate President Killman gave a recap of the search for an Associate VP of Digital & Distance Education. It went through a long process with two candidates being rejected. More applicants were reviewed, but committee members felt pressured to make a rushed decision. As a committee, they did not make a recommendation for Dr. Patrick Wilson. This topic came up

because of feedback received regarding the work level by Dr. Wilson. He is supposed to be helping faculty with digital and distance education online.

The floor was opened for comments and questions.

Senator Null said Dr. Wilson is coming to the English Department meeting on February 28th. The last meeting of the Digital & Distance Education Task Force was last October. They had a vision and suggestions, but have heard nothing since. Some Senators said they have seen no evidence of vision by Dr. Wilson. Tech's new Provost should decide what direction this position should go. The iCUBE is finding and supplying some of the capabilities that should be coming from Digital & Distance Education. Some say it doesn't appear Dr. Wilson knows how to work with academic units. He should be out asking what he can do for colleges, not waiting for colleges to come to him. The right people may not be hearing us. Senate President Killman said she has talked to Dr. Wilson twice, and Interim Provost Stephens once about this. There must be something we don't understand, or aren't aware of. No cohesive strategy is seen from Dr. Wilson. It's not our decision to make, but it's our question to ask. What is the role of online programs?

Senators expressed interest in bringing this up at the meeting with the President.

Committee Reports

- Communication Committee – report postponed
- Faculty Feedback (QCC) Committee – nothing new since the last Senate business meeting
- Leadership Structure Committee – A document outlining the duties of a Past President, President, President-Elect, and Secretary was sent via email. Senator Foster MOVED to accept the revised officer duties for Tennessee Tech Faculty Senate. It was seconded by Senator Smith-Andrews. The premise of this is to have a 3-year commitment by serving one year in each role of President-Elect, President, and Past President. Hopefully this will make leadership more appealing. The motion was APPROVED.
- Policy & Procedures (Operating) Committee – Now that the duties of each officer was approved, this committee can start working on the Senate's policy and procedures.

Nominating Committee Appointment

The Nominating Committee is charged with finding candidates for the offices of President, President-Elect, and Secretary. Senator Ojo wants officers to automatically be on for 3 years, and not have to be elected, but the Policy & Procedures Committee can address that issue. Volunteers for the Nominating Committee include Senators ElSawy, Michael, and Larimore.

Old Business

Senator O'Connor said at the last business meeting, he made a motion to endorse letter that was tabled, but it has to be brought up today. Senator Smith seconded the motion to bring it off the table. Senator O'Connor said some language was taken out of the recently approved Senate resolution by the time it came out to faculty for an electronic vote. He feels the letter sent by engineering faculty complements the resolution. Now, there is no concern for it being made public, as it already is. On February 12th, Senate President Killman asked Senators to respect the

inquiry process, nor compromise the inquiry by talking about this issue. Some Senators don't think this will advance anything at all. Some feel this is mainly a show of support to our engineering faculty. The inquiry committee meets tomorrow morning. They will decide if there needs to be an investigation. An external group is being formed, but details are not known. Dr. Hoy gave a list of names to consider. The motion was APPROVED to remove this item from the table.

Many Senators felt this was no longer a critical issue. Tom Timmerman, George Chityo, and Dan Combs are on the inquiry committee. They will have the option of staying on for the investigation, plus adding others to form the investigation committee. The motion to endorse the memo of February 5, 2018 from engineering Senators was APPROVED, with one abstention.

Other Such Matters

Senate President Killman said we need to talk about the President's contract prior to our meeting with him, so there will be a business meeting on March 12th at 3:35 PM.

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Regina Lee,
Faculty Senate Secretary

Approved: March 12, 2018

Supporting Document:

1. Tennessee Tech Strategic Plan Outline DRAFT 2-16-18
2. Tenure & Promotion Proposed Revisions DRAFT 2-19-2018
3. Proposed Outsourcing Resolution by Budget and Planning Committee of the UTK Faculty Senate 11-5-2015
4. Outsourcing and JLL Business Case Resolution from the UTK Faculty Senate 10-16-2017
5. Faculty Senate Officer Duties