

Faculty Senate Business Meeting March 12, 2018

Members present: Douglas Airhart, S.K. Ballal, Deborah Ballou, Jason Beach, Tammy Boles, Chris Brown, Debra Bryant, Andrew Callender, Corinne Darvennes, Ahmed ElSawy, Billye Foster, Steven Frye, Stuart Gaetjens, Mark Groundland, David Hajdik, Ann Hellman, Paula Hinton, Shelia Hurley, Steve Idem, Christy Killman, David Larimore, Regina Lee, Jane Liu, Lori Maxwell, Christine Miller, Holly Mills, Linda Null, Brian O'Connor, Joseph Ojo, LeeAnn Shipley, Cara Sisk, Troy Smith, Sandi Smith-Andrews, Holly Stretz, and Jeremy Wendt

Members absent: Ismet Anitsal, Troy Brachey, Ward Doubet, Melissa Geist, Jeremy Hansen, Barbara Jared, Tony Michael, Richard Rand, and Jeff Roberts

Call to Order

Senate President Killman called the meeting to order at 3:35 PM.

Approval of Agenda

A revised agenda was handed out by Senate President Killman. Senator Ballal made a MOTION to approve the revised agenda. Senator Airhart seconded the motion. The motion was APPROVED.

Approval of Minutes

Senator Hinton made a MOTION to approve the minutes of February 12, 2018 and February 26, 2018, as well as the notes from February 19, 2018. Senate Foster seconded the motion. The motion was APPROVED with one minor edit.

New Business

Comments by Faculty Senate President

Senate President Killman made a few comments about what has happened since the last Senate meeting. An anonymous handwritten letter with a trial lawyers pamphlet was sent from Charleston, WV to several on campus at the generic address of 1 William L. Jones Drive. Ms. Kae Carpenter wants all copies of these letters.

A letter was emailed to Senators from Ms. Carpenter on February 28, 2018 about a pre-litigation hold on all documents and correspondence related to Fitzgerald Glider Kits. No one should delete anything. Keep all files as is related to Fitzgerald Glider Kits. Most everything distributed to Senators came through Senate President Killman, but we are all expected to comply with this pre-litigation hold. You can put everything electronic related to Fitzgerald in a folder, and Deb Zsigalov will capture it later. Paper documents will also be collected. Keep all emails, even ones from colleagues across the country. If you access your personal email from work, it's also fair game since you are using a State computer. You have the option to ask Deb Zsigalov to have a block put on your email.

Senator Hinton reached out about plans for the upcoming TUFSS meeting the first weekend in April. Senator Roberts has also done some planning for this. The TUFSS meeting will begin Friday evening, and last through Sunday morning. They will discuss some State-wide issues, and invite speakers. Everyone is invited to come listen. Senate President Killman will send the agenda to everyone.

Nominating Committee Report – No one from the Nominating Committee was prepped to give a report.

President's Contract

Senator Geist emailed a template of a 5-year contract for a university president. The floor was open for discussion. The Board's Executive Committee voted to take the proposed contract to the full Board for a vote of approval. Senators questioned how the Executive Committee selected, and why the faculty representative isn't on the Executive Committee, but this may be because she's on the Academic and Student Affairs subcommittee.

Previously, most past presidents at Tech have retired. Senators asked why a contract is needed when you have a president who is also tenured in an academic department. There is no removal policy. The policy states some reasons for termination with cause that would also result in losing his tenured faculty appointment. Termination without cause would give him a lump sum of money. This contract doesn't mean much, since the President serves at the pleasure of the Board. Some are worried about the timing of this in light of our recent national attention. The recent AAUP resolution has asked the Board to take this off the table. President Oldham should have some kind of letter of employment agreement, since he's not under contract right now. This contract also includes performance salary increases. State-mandated raises are not included in his salary. The Board initiated the desire to have a contract for the President.

Senators would like Senate President Killman to talk to Board Chair Tom Jones to see what their thoughts are behind having this contract. Let's also ask the President how he feels about it. Is there a conflict of interest with Ms. Carpenter being secretary of the Board, as well as University Counsel? Who asked Ms. Carpenter to draw up this contract? A request was made to table this until after investigation is completed on other matter. Tom Jones once said the faculty voice would come from the Faculty Senate. Jeremy made a MOTION to ask the Board to postpone their vote on the President's contract until after the research misconduct investigation has concluded. It was seconded by Senator Maxwell. The motion was APPROVED with two abstentions.

Administrator Evaluations

Senate President Killman told President Oldham we were talking about administrator evaluations in the Senate, and this discussion comes up every year. Why are we doing these if no one knows the outcomes of these? Response rates are low, usually about 20% or less. No one has ever lost their job based on these evaluations, nor for the IDEA evaluations. In research, a 30% response rate is acceptable if it's random. Qualtrics now administers this survey. Who sees President Oldham's evaluations? Maybe we can ask the Board for an overall summary. A bigger issue is why the response rate is so low. What positive effect do we expect to accomplish by seeing these evaluations? Some senators think the entire Board should see the President's

evaluations, not just the Executive Committee. Senator Ballou made a MOTION that we ask the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees to take into consideration the administrator evaluations for the President when they evaluate his performance. It was decided to postpone this until the Senate meets with the President next week.

Questions for the President

1. What is going on with the Graduation Office? It is considered a privilege for a student to walk in spring commencement if they are graduating in the summer. This year, someone randomly decided that too many are doing this, so they cut off students if they have more than 6 credits left to complete. Substitution forms were filed, but not processed yet by the Graduation Office. All exceptions are being denied, because they all go through the same person, not a committee.
2. At UTK, there is talk about post-tenure review. Senators want to know where the President stands on this.
3. Senators are interested in the response rate on administrator evaluations.
4. Outsourcing updates and cost savings

Old Business

Tenure & Promotion

Senators asked if there will be salary increases for instructors and lecturers when promoted. We might suggest to the President a certain percent or a fixed amount. Senators Roberts and O'Connor are now reviewing tenure and promotion documents, as proof-readers. Should there be a layer of evaluation between people of the same rank?

Outsourcing

Senator Smith drafted a resolution regarding outsourcing at Tech. This was distributed earlier today on the back of the revised agenda. Originally, outsourcing custodial services was to save Tech money. The University of Memphis did a study on Tech showing that there has not been much in cost savings. It would be good to get some actual numbers. What are we really after with this resolution? Some outsourcing has worked well, such as food services and the bookstore. The benefits custodians receive are worth more than their pay. We need to ask who is benefitting now. Senator Smith will send the link to the UM study to Senators. The SSC contract is up April 30th. It is timely to have this conversation with President Oldham next week about this. Senate President Killman recommended we listen to President Oldham, and then April 3rd put a resolution together if we decide to go that route. Think about questions to ask President Oldham, and think about a resolution.

Other Such Matters

Senator Stretz spoke about workload, as discussed at a recent University ad hoc committee meeting. Other universities are working to update their workload policies, but Tech doesn't have one yet. The committee's faculty members are setting up a rubric for credit hours and work hours, and tie it to the Agreement on Responsibilities. There are differences between

departments, but no overarching guidelines for everyone. This should be sent to Department Chairs to see what they think.

Senator Ballou gave a brief report of the Senate's Communications Subcommittee. Many Senators liked the idea of a Senate listserv and incorporating a brief Faculty Senate report at their Department meetings. Senator Ballou was asked to draft a motion regarding the subcommittee's recommendations to present at the next Faculty Senate business meeting.

Next Monday, March 19, 2018 is a Senate meeting with President Oldham. There will not be a meeting on March 26th.

The meeting adjourned at 5:47 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Regina Lee,
Faculty Senate Secretary

Approved: April 2, 2018