

Faculty Senate Business Meeting
April 1, 2019

Members Present:

Douglas Airhart, Debra Bryant, Andrew Callender, Corinne Darvennes, Ahmed ElSawy, Stuart Gaetjens, Mark Groundland, David Hajdik, Ann Hellman, Paula Hinton, Barbara Jared, Christy Killman, David Larimore, Regina Lee, Lori Maxwell, Christine Miller, Holly Mills, Lachelle Norris, Linda Null, Brian O'Connor, Joseph Ojo, Sally Pardue, Richard Rand, Mohan Rao, Jeff Roberts, Troy Smith, Sandi Smith-Andrews, Barry Stein, Holly Stretz, Zac Wilcox, Kim Winkle, Jeannette Wolak

Members Absent:

Ismet Anitsal, Deborah Ballou, Michael Best, Jeremy Blair, Tammy Boles, Troy Brachey, Chris Brown, Wei Tsun Chang, Steven Frye, Melissa Geist, Shelia Hurley, Seth King, Ben Mohr, Leeann Shipley, Cara Sisk

Guests:

Jeff Boles, Lori Bruce, Yvette Clark, Theresa Ennis, Bedelia Russell

Call to Order

Senate President Smith called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m.

Approval of Agenda

Senator Darvennes made a motion to approve the agenda for today's meeting and Senator Smith-Andrews seconded it. The agenda was APPROVED.

Approval of Minutes and Notes

Senator Darvennes made a motion to approve the minutes from the Senate business meeting on February 25th and the notes from the Senate meeting with President Oldham on March 18th. Senator Stein seconded it. These minutes and notes were APPROVED with some minor corrections by Senator Roberts.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Opening comments and announcements

TUFS update

The Tennessee University Faculty Senates (TUFS) met last weekend at MTSU. A lobbying firm gave the group a presentation on how to interact effectively with the Legislature. The TUFS group discussed and passed a resolution in support of encouraging local governments to have early voting poll sites on university campuses. After listening to different campus reports, it became apparent that not everyone has the enrollment issues that we do. Transfer enrollment has helped other sister institutions, such as UT, Martin, Austin Peay State University and UT, Chattanooga. Budget issues varied amongst universities. The fall TUFS meeting will take place at UT, Martin and the spring meeting will be at Tennessee Tech.

Policy 207 (Tenured Faculty)

This policy will go before the Administrative Council on Wednesday. Senator Roberts asked for feedback as soon as possible. The main concern stemmed from section VIII. B. 6. regarding removing a tenured faculty member for adequate cause and, more specifically, with the wording “Incompetence or dishonesty in teaching, or research misconduct.” “Incompetence,” Faculty Senators felt, is far too abstract a term and should be clearly defined. IDEA evaluations should not be the only measure of incompetence in teaching. Furthermore, Faculty Senators expressed concern at the sole role of HR and the Provost’s office to investigate and decide the outcomes of these cases. Faculty input should occur in this process. Senator Roberts indicated that the wording of “incompetence” is State law and is therefore necessary in the policy. Faculty Senators found a State Statute, Title 49, chapter 5, but it refers to teachers and local School Boards. Subsequently, Senator Hajdik found the State policy here:

<https://law.justia.com/codes/tennessee/2017/title-49/chapter-8/part-3/> The committee working on Policy 207 would like an “incompetence” judgment to go through a FIA / FDP process as described in the policy. Faculty Senators also noted that the mention of research misconduct and the process outlined in policy 207 does not match the research misconduct policy at Tennessee Tech. Finally, a Faculty Senator noted that there are two sections in the policy that deal with teaching: in the faculty improvement area (section VII) and in the incompetency statement (section VIII). These processes dealing with concerns with teaching are different. A suggestion was made to include a statement in section VII like “If a faculty member fails to follow through on a Faculty Development Plan, then this person will be deemed incompetent.”

B. E-mail Communication

A discussion ensued on the appropriateness of conducting faculty senate business by e-mail. Sensitive matters may become public. Furthermore, not every Senator reads the sheer volume of e-mails immediately or just skims them. Ultimately, most Faculty Senators did not see an issue with an occasional e-mail that held pressing faculty senate business.

C. Promotion Pay

Once again, the Faculty Senate discussed the 2.5% State mandated pay raises and how Tennessee Tech took out promotion pay from these monies. This did not happen at other TN universities. Senator O’Connor asked the faculty senate to recommend that the promotion money should come not from the general fund, but rather from the funds for rewarding faculty merit. He moved as follows: “The Faculty Senate requests that in the future money for promotion pay increases come from the funds earmarked for rewarding faculty merit.” Senator XXXX seconded the motion. Senator Larimore reminded Faculty Senators that the general funds pool and the merit pay pool are not intended to pay for faculty promotions. Both of these pools have different purposes. The merit pay pool is for one-time bonuses and will be emptied if recurring promotion pay is taken from it. Provost Bruce noted the lack of a budget specifically for promotions and the dependence on the State budget to fund them. She conducted an analysis that projected the money necessary to fund promotions for the next five years and encouraged Dr. Stinson to build this new line into the budget. Faculty Senators appreciated her work in this area. After further

discussion, Faculty Senators expressed their support of the Provost's idea to work faculty promotion pay into the university budget. Senator O'Connor re-worded his previous motion as follows: "The Faculty Senate requests that, starting in fiscal year 2019-2020, the money for faculty promotion pay increases come from funds specifically earmarked for that purpose and not from the general faculty raise pool." This resolution was APPROVED.

D. Various Initiatives by the Provost

1. CITL, Comprehensive Professional Development

Provost Bruce shared her vision to elevate and broaden the current CITL; something like a Center for Professional Development for Faculty. Several key components to it include teaching and learning, scholarship (including research and creative works), career milestones (promotion and tenure workshops, awards programs, external award nominations), and leadership (workshops for Department Chairs, Associate Deans, and for faculty who are considering leadership roles). The Provost has shared this idea of a revised Center to different faculty groups, including the current CITL people and the Chairs from the Strategic Planning Working Groups.

Bedelia Russell, Interim Director of CITL and Chair of Group 4 of the Strategic Plan, "Engagement for Impact," gave a PowerPoint presentation on the CAFÉ (Center for Achievement of Faculty Excellence). The CAFÉ originated with the Provost's conceptualization of a revised CITL. The CAFÉ represents a centralized Web interface where faculty (especially new faculty) can go to access resources.

Faculty Senators gave the following feedback:

- Can the CAFÉ be combined with Banner to help collect safety certificates (any type of professional development certificate) and place them in one place?
- We need a Commission on the Status of Hispanics.
- Will a new VP lead the CAFÉ? Who will manage this Center? How will it be funded? They have not yet looked at how to fund it yet. They conceive the CAFÉ as being for faculty and faculty-driven.
- Diversity and Inclusion are not just faculty concerns. They are systemic. Why house them in the CAFÉ?
- Could you define "rurally diverse student populations?" A specific definition is to be determined. It was added when the President rolled out the grand challenge. The CAFÉ initiative asks how faculty members can effectively teach students coming from a rural background.
- Would you consider developing an extended mentoring program for tenure-track faculty?
- When will the faculty know which initiatives of the strategic plan will be adopted? The working groups will have one more meeting to gather proposals to present this semester. Leadership will consider what resources are available and what are the highest impact initiatives to be done with the money available in the summer. An implementation phase will begin in the fall.

The Provost summed up her vision of the CAFÉ. It will provide opportunities for faculty in the shape of professional workshops. In this process, she was looking for gaps or areas not routinely provided for the faculty's benefit. The Provost is considering whether we are doing something as an institution that helps build diversity in our faculty. What can the university do to help faculty with diversity in the student population?

2. Faculty Surveys

The Provost asked for the Faculty Senators' feedback on mechanisms for gaining faculty input on issues, especially specific topics. At her previous institution, short surveys were used for this purpose. She would vet short, constructive surveys through Chairs and faculty. Faculty Senators offered the following feedback:

- Try it.
- Indicate how long the survey will take to complete.
- Disseminate the results of the survey and how the Provost tends to use the feedback.
- Involve the Faculty Senate President to help report the results.
- Create conditions that will optimize faculty participation in surveys.
- Bring back listening groups (10-15 faculty members from different areas) to discuss different matters and have the President or Provost also attend.
- Possible survey topics included:
 - a. Is Tennessee Tech a business or a university?
 - b. What is your current state of morale? What things currently effect your state of morale?
 - c. The Provost's first survey might be to ask for ideas on things that can be done on an interface (Banner) that will make the faculty's lives easier. Faculty Senators offered the following input:
 - Submitting student attendance should be simplified and done in one place.
 - Manage the certificates more efficiently, possibly with an e-portfolio system
 - Banner defaults to semesters other than the current one. It should default to the current term.

E. ITS Update

Yvette Clark acknowledged faculty's frustration with the software digital services request form. This form is necessary to deal with uploading of free software, more specifically, with the signing of the end user licensure agreement. Then, ITS started looking at software as a service, depending on what data is being held in a cloud by that service. If this data has personal identification information, then Tennessee Tech must know how they are securing this sensitive, personal information. If the service is not housing sensitive data, then CITL can approve the program quickly. If it is, then CITL asks the company for its standard operating controls (or SOC report). If they do not have them, then the company has to indicate how they are securing our data. Companies can complete the Higher Education Cloud Access Vendor tool to assess what they are doing. Ms. Clark asked Faculty Senators for feedback on how to improve the process of

accessing outside software, knowing that security is of prime concern. Faculty Senators shared the following feedback:

- Faculty would like to access outside software more easily and not have to complete the software digital services request form for everything. Software can enhance the education and learning of our students.

Ms. Clark responded that students can upload software to their personal computers, but faculty members will need permission to upload it to their Tech computers. The security office determines the level of risk of uploading software, not the ITS. ITS is the custodian of the process in question. Ms. Clark will mention to Dr. Stinson about possibly adjusting the levels of risk associated with new software. Ultimately, Tennessee Tech needs to be consistent with the levels of risks applied to software.

- When a Faculty Senator completed the software digital services request form, she was told at the end of the process that she could not upload the software to the computers in the computer lab during the semester, that she had to wait until the summer. She had given 6 weeks' notice before implementation. Is there a way to designate a pre-determined risk level?

Ms. Clark noted that the risk was due to the configuration of computers in the lab. They did not want to jeopardize the computers. ITS also needs to see if the new software is compatible and will not affect existing software.

- Why do we need to submit a software digital services request form if we pay to use the software yearly and use it multiple years?

Ms. Clark replied that if the data is the same (or if there is no major change) or the software has only a minor revision, then you should not have to complete the request form every year. Through Purchasing, ITS tries to go with a blanket license for 5 years to avoid repeating the request form process.

- There seems to be a risk aversion culture at Tennessee Tech; that is, there is a fear of being sued. There is also a risk to the teaching not being done due to this process.

Ms. Clark also commented that TBR implemented Banner in 2007 for all of its institutions. She will conduct gap analyses on how we are using Banner, what it can do, and what we are not implementing. Her first gap analysis on HR will begin on June 10th. The second gap analysis will look at the student section of Banner. There exists grade input in Banner not in current use.

Finally, a Faculty Senator shared her frustrations with Degree Works during advisement. One challenge includes the difficulty of leaving the site and having to sign back in to return to it. Ms. Clark encouraged faculty to e-mail her with functionality concerns that need improvement.

F. Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE)

Dr. Theresa Ennis reported that Tennessee Tech conducted the first FSSE survey in 2017 and we lost 6 funding points due to the combined FSSE and NSE surveys. They are conducting FSSE again, but not for quality assurance funding. This time the results will be used for QEP assessment and to show that faculty score highly in all areas (academic advising, engagement, etc.). Dr. Ennis asked that Senators encourage faculty to participate in the FSSE instrument. It gives voice to faculty. It is anonymous. They identified first-year experience courses and senior-level courses and will survey faculty members teaching these courses. See the Assessment website for some FSSE data.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Policy 219, Emeriti

Senate President Smith reported that ITS, the Provost's Office, and the Faculty Senate have been collaborating to work through the recommendations from the Board of Trustees.

OTHER SUCH MATTERS

A. Academic and Administrative Ballots

A Faculty Senator indicated that the same candidates were on both ballots, the Academic Council ballot and the Administrative Council ballot. Furthermore, the ballot only allowed for one representative in each council when, in actuality, two representatives need to be selected for the Academic Council and two representatives need to be selected for the Administrative Council. The Academic and Administrative Councils approved the electronic process, but not the details under discussion. Senate President Smith and others were told that the Provost's office administers the ballot procedure. He recommended that Senators raise their concerns at both of the upcoming council meetings. Another Faculty Senator noted that the Provost's office did not contact all of the nominated faculty members.

B. Summer School

A Faculty Senator reported hearing news about changes in summer school policies and procedures. She asked for clarification. Much discussion ensued. Some Faculty Senators heard that summer courses will be reduced to only those that make money or those deemed as essential. Others understood that no decisions had yet been made. A Faculty Senator indicated that this question returns to the efficacy of the current budget model. During the discussion, Faculty Senator Killman received an e-mail from Carol Holley indicating that the summer pay spreadsheets would not be distributed until they can work out some logistical matters. Faculty Senators expressed concerns about perceived changes to summer school AFTER advising had taken place. These changes would affect students needing summer school classes to graduate, to meet requirements, etc. Can the university wait to initiate changes until next summer? A Faculty Senator recommended that the Senate ask President Oldham to consider reevaluating the budget model from the Huron group. No other LGIs follow this budget model. Senators expressed concern with spending more money than the university has and the academic units are being stretched. Faculty Senators would like to bring up the summer school issue with President Oldham and have Claire Stinson available to answer questions. A Faculty Senator noted that the

Provost is asking pertinent questions to the Finance VP about summer school. This may be one reason why there is confusion surrounding this issue. The matter is not yet settled. Historically, the budget for summer school always came from the overall, yearly budget. Ultimately, how do we move forward with the continual decrease in enrollment?

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Groundland, Faculty Senate