

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE AT CHATTANOOGA
FACULTY SENATE MINUTES
 October 7, 2004

<u>Division</u>	<u>Present:</u>	<u>Absent:</u>
President	Richard Rice	
Past-President		Marvin Ernst
At-Large	Neal Coulter, Jim Henry, Stephen Kuhn, Jonathan McNair, Greg O’Dea, Claire McCullough	
Adjunct	Tim Parker	
Behavioral	Fritz Efaw, David Brodsky, Rich Metzger	
Business	Rich Allen, Chris Brockman, P. Dileepan, Obasi Haki-Akan	
Engineering	Joe Dumas, Jim Hiestand, Rick Keyser, Roger Briley	
Fine Arts	Matt Greenwell, Stacy Ray	Gavin Townsend
HEPS	Nicholas Boer, Ted Miller, Robin Lee Burch Oglesby, Randy Walker,	Ann Johnson
Humanities	Vicki Steinberg, Joseph Wilferth, Elizabeth Gailey, Chuck Lippy	Talia Welsh
Library	Priscilla Seaman	
Math & Science	Bob Marlowe, Henry Spratt, David Ashe, Gretchen Potts	Linda Collins
Ex-Officio	Fred Obear, John Friedl, Richard Brown, David Pittenger, Theresa Liedtka	Jocelyn Sanders Mary Lynn Williamson

Among the Guests Present: Deborah Arfken, Linda Orth, Sandy Zitkus, Ron Bailey, Herb Burhenn, Holly Cowart, Chuck Cantrell, Deborah Parker, Shela Van Ness

SUMMARY

Week-Long Fall Break?

The Senate pondered the possibility of a week-long fall break, diligently opening every can of worms it could think of in relation to this subject, including summer school and graduations. An ad hoc committee may be created to study this subject in depth.

EDO Guidelines

Faculties of all departments are urged to update their guidelines for the four EDO ratings.

Possible Problems with Salary Increases?

The Senate was presented with a motion about “illegal” and “inappropriate” actions related to the rescinding of salary increases, and engaged in a long discussion about this matter. The legal status of not applying across-the-board increases across the board was unknown. Differing opinions were expressed about the appropriateness of evaluating faculty members negatively.

Other business:

- * There is a movement afoot to use the Fresh Life program as our SACS Quality Enhancement Program.
- * The odd status of the Faculty Senate Secretary was discussed at some length, with the matter sent back to the Handbook Committee.
- * The Provost, not having been around during the last half of the ‘90’s, suggested that the faculty ponder once again the quality of our general education program.
- * The Executive Committee will look into concerns about closed meetings of the Chancellor Search Committee.
- * There was an odd discussion about the Football Study Committee.
- * Rubber bumpers are controversial.
- * Nobody approves of false fire alarms and something is being done about it.

Passed Motions:

1. The following changes to the Handbook were approved:
 - a. The Grade Appeals Committee is now under the purview of the Committee on Committees.
 - b. Titles of ex officio officers have been updated.
 - c. The Committee on Committees can now fill vacant spots on committees with just the permission of the Executive Committee.
2. Sociology 350 was approved as a new course.
3. Sociology 307 and Anthropology 307 are now separate courses.
4. The Executive Committee is to appoint an ad hoc committee to consider the calendars of 2006-2007 and 2007-2008, especially with regard to the possibility of inserting a week-long fall break.
5. The calendar for 2005-2006 was approved.
6. A motion was approved to refer the motion related to the rescinding of salary increases to the Executive Committee for investigation. The Executive Committee is to report back to the Senate no later than November 10.

Prevailing Theme of the Meeting : Pull threads, unravel sweaters, open cans of worms, and “...put carts before horses, or is it horses before carts?”

MINUTES

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 3:03 p.m.

2. Approval of the Minutes

Gretchen Potts moved and Charles Lippy seconded the approval of the Faculty Senate minutes of September 23, 2004. The minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Report from the Executive Committee

a. Ad Hoc Review of Service Committee

As Marvin Ernst was not present, the report on this committee was referred until the next Senate meeting. [It turns out that Professor Ernst was busy delivering seven puppies. Along with his many other abilities, he is also a midwife!]

b. SACS Quality Enhancement Plan

President Rice commented that while our next SACS accreditation is many years from now, the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) will take years to develop and implement. He then remarked that the Executive Committee suggests that since the Fresh Life program was so well received at the last Senate meeting and is concerned with retention, an area that can always be enhanced, it may be a good candidate for the QEP. He expects that the Executive Committee will soon recommend an ad hoc QEP committee that may wish to be in discussion with the Fresh Life folks. He even mentioned that he is eyeing Karen Adsit, who has already volunteered to serve on the committee, to chair it [a premature showing of his cards, in the secretary's opinion, as Karen Adsit now has plenty of time to devise a good excuse]. No one responded when President Rice asked for discussion.

c. Departmental Guidelines for EDO Ratings

President Rice reported that the Executive Committee recommends that all departments review their guidelines for EDO ratings, especially since the number of EDO levels has just been increased from three to four. Departments probably have guidelines written years ago that should be updated.

Randy Walker asked who should be making the next step in developing such guidelines. Provost Friedl commented that he has requested the deans to ask department heads to update their guidelines. Thus the faculty and the administration should be in sync on this process.

d. Academic Calendars

Calendars for the next three academic years were presented to the Senate for approval. Debora Arfken, the Registrar, was asked to make opening remarks and she established the theme for the subsequent discussion by declaring that "You can't please all the people all the time." President Rice commented that some faculty members were wondering about including a weeklong Fall break. Dr. Arfken said that the summer school schedule made the calendar too tight. Jim Hiestand said that was not true, that time could be found by

moving finals week back into December. Another senator commented that he had conducted an informal poll of students and there was strong sentiment in favor of a weeklong Fall break. President Rice pondered whether it is necessary to have a graduation in December. Registrar Arfken reminded the Senate that a committee had recently looked into the issue of graduations and recommended retaining three graduations, a position supported by then-Chancellor Stacy. She added that UT-Knoxville has only two graduations. Linda Orth, Director of Records and Registration, remarked that the Records Office had recently eliminated the special pink grade sheets previously used for graduation candidates in order to extend grading time for faculty; this has had the effect of cutting processing time to a minimum. Claire McCullough, speaking from her personal experience as part of a herd at a UTK graduation, begged that UTC not use Knoxville as a model for graduations. President Rice regretted that he had introduced the issue of graduations when we should be focusing on the calendar issue. Gretchen Potts wondered whether grades could be submitted on line to expedite the processing of grades. Registrar Arfken said they were working on it, but that was not really the problem.... President Rice expressed shock and dismay that the processing time problems might possibly stem from esteemed colleagues who were not turning in grade sheets on time.

Making a diplomatic shift in topic, Dr. Arfken remarked that several years ago, “we actually had students graduating who were not eligible to graduate.” She declared that this situation has been rectified and that the people now crossing the platform were certified to be there. Professor Rice summarized that it seemed that the main objection to a week off during the fall was the time needed for grade processing and for a graduation. Perhaps an evening graduation would solve the problem? Sandy Zitkus, Associate Director of Records of Registration, remarked that in the past commencements have been scheduled at various times, including a Wednesday morning, but that Chancellor Stacy preferred Sunday graduations. Joe Dumas put in a plug for Saturday commencements but rapidly segued into an attack on short summer terms. Why are there three summer terms?! “Five!” corrected many loudly from the assembly. Why not have only one or two summer terms, Dumas queried. Claire McCullough commented that teaching engineering courses during short summer terms was not working well for the students. Another senator remarked that longer summer terms would be better, then asked why finals week had to be five days long. Matt Greenwell queried the Records Office representatives as to why things were the way they were. Sandy Zitkus and Linda Orth diplomatically reminded the Senate that calendars are built according to instructions from the Senate. The five day exam schedule, for instance, was developed by a faculty committee. Richard Rice mulled that the move toward year-round schooling by the Hamilton County schools might have a bearing on this discussion.

Perhaps spurred by odor of many opened cans of worms, Randy Walker moved and several others eagerly seconded a motion to send the calendar issue back to the Executive Committee so that they could appoint an ad hoc committee to look into all the ramifications of calendarizing. In response to a question, Professor Walker commented that it seemed to be the will of the body that knowledgeable administrators be included on this committee. The motion passed unanimously. Sandy Zitkus politely pointed out that many were already asking for the 2005-2006 calendar. Claire McCullough moved and Greg O’Dea seconded approval of the 2005-2006 calendar presented to the Senate by the Records Office. The

motion passed unanimously. [Note: during the tail end of this discussion, a conversation occurred about parliamentary procedures for dealing with several motions on the floor at more or less the same time. The Secretary did not follow this conversation nor is she sure as to which motion was officially voted on first, but she can assure her readers that there were two unanimous votes.]

4. Handbook Committee

a. Four Modifications to the Handbook

Handbook Committee Chair Matt Greenwell presented four proposals to the Senate. Randy Walker moved to divide the question (i.e., vote on each proposal separately). Stephen Kuhn seconded the motion. The motion to divide was defeated, 12-16.

Professor described the first item, to change the Grade Appeals Committee from a Senate committee to a faculty committee, so that it would fall under the purview of the Committee on Committees. The second item is an update of the titles of the ex officio members of the Senate. The third item involves clarifying—but not substantively changing—Handbook language about the selection and duties of the members of the Executive Committee (President, First Vice-President, Second Vice-President, and Secretary). The fourth item gives the Committee on Committees power to make substitutions on committees. After Professor Greenwell made a comment about horses and carts and possible arrangements thereof, a discussion ensued about language and grammar in the Handbook. We were all informed that “there is real language and there is Handbook language.” [The connection to horses and carts was not clarified.] Matt Greenwell conceded that perhaps the Handbook could be made grammatical, despite longstanding precedent.

Fritz Efav pointed out that the President and two vice-presidents were elected and that in previous years the Secretary had also been elected, but that for the past two years the Secretary had been appointed by the President. Why not let the president appoint the vice-presidents too, since the Executive Committee is essentially the president’s cabinet? A discussion ensued about the history and significance of the Secretary’s selection, with Jim Henry recalling that when he had been Secretary [back in the dark ages], he had not been elected. Matt Greenwell remarked that the Handbook failed to describe how the Secretary was to be selected. Questions were raised as to whether the Secretary should be a voting member of the Senate and/or a voting member of the Executive Committee. Can the Secretary take notes, speak, and vote all at the same time? Jim Hiestand doubted it. President Rice commented that anyone can address the Senate. Greg O’Dea asked about the duties of the Secretary. Matt Greenwell and Betsy Darken responded that a list of duties is forthcoming. Jim Hiestand moved to separate item #3 (regarding the Executive Committee and its Secretary) from the other three items. The motion to separate was seconded and passed. [Is this reversal a sign of a tendency on the part of the Senate to flip-flop? Does this throw doubt on the ability of the Senate to conduct its business?? Should the windsurfing members of the Senate be removed from office in order to re-establish stability???]

Jim Hiestand circled back to item #1 and offered an amendment that the quorum for the Grade Appeals Committee be changed to “three voting members and *non-voting* chair.” He argued that the chair should act as an impartial presider. The amendment was seconded and passed unanimously. A question was raised about committees missing from the current Handbook list and Professor Greenwell said they are aware of this problem and will bring that matter to the Senate at a later date. Stephen Kuhn asked whether an updated list of committee members would be available soon. [The updated committee list is now available on the Senate webpage.] Items 1 as amended, 2, and 4 were approved unanimously. Matt Greenwell moved to table Item 3. Jim Hiestand seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

b. EDO Process

Matt Greenwell reported that, as charged by the Senate, the Handbook Committee is assiduously reviewing the EDO process, especially the EDO appeals process. In the committee’s opinion, one of the problems is that a formal appeals process is triggered almost immediately after receipt of a bad EDO. The committee is looking into ways to allow time for differences to be worked out in more informal settings first. One possible change is for a faculty member to check “agree” or “disagree” when signing their EDOs. The committee also recognizes the need for a balance of faculty and administrators in the process. Professor Greenwell likened the process of revision to pulling on a thread and finding the whole sweater unraveling. President Rice thanked Professor Greenwell and his committee for their hard work.

5. Curriculum Committee

Burch Oglesby, chair of the Curriculum Committee, presented a proposal for a new course, Sociology 350 (Social Change and Globalization), and a proposal to split Sociology/Anthropology 307 into two separate courses. Greg O’Dea moved acceptance of these proposals and the motion passed by a vote of 28-0. Stephen Kuhn expressed his concern that there was no grading scale given for 307.

6. Administrative Reports

a. The Provost and General Education

Provost John Friedl remarked that three developments in the past year have a connection to the General Education program. First, there have been various developments from beyond the borders of UTC. The state’s requirement reducing the number of hours required for graduation generated discussions last year about general education requirements. UTC has also accepted an articulation agreement in which students transferring from Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) schools with completed TBR general education requirements will not have to complete UTC general education requirements (and vice versa).

Second, this year UTC is engaged in a mission review. Our general education program is certainly related to our mission, so perhaps it should be reviewed as well. Third, the development of the Fresh Life program is sparking interest in re-examining the general education courses that are typically a major part of the freshman curriculum.

Given these developments and the fact that the general education curriculum has not been discussed in five or more years, the Provost suggested that it has become a timely topic. He has already circulated an article about general education from the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and has asked President Rice to refer to the General Education Committee the question of reviewing and evaluating the program. He suggested that the committee hold a series of campus-wide open forums this fall and possibly spring to discuss both broader and more detailed aspects of general education.

President Rice said that he will discuss this at the next Executive Committee meeting. He also remarked that last year an issue that was not resolved by the General Education Committee had to be dealt with by the Senate. There needs to be clarification about the scope and responsibilities of this committee.

Jim Hiestand asked the Provost if there was any point in reconsidering our general education program given the statewide movement toward a common curriculum. The Provost responded that even if the UT system adopts system requirements, there should be room for differences on each campus. Professor Hiestand also remarked that, unlike many other majors, engineering majors do not take many general education courses in their freshman year. The Provost acknowledged the point. President Rice likened the discussion of general education to opening cans of worms and pulling threads on sweaters.

b. Chancellor's Report

Chancellor Obear announced that the annual Town/Gown ball was to be held on Saturday, October 9. It has been a great success in the past and he expected that the ballroom would once again be filled to capacity. He offered free tickets, paid for by a generous sponsor, to interested Senators. [The Secretary takes it upon herself to add that the food was excellent and that there is something to be said for faculty members showing up at such events to thank those who give money to UTC.] He also reminded the Senate of Homecoming during the week of October 11, asked for suggestions for agenda items for the President's Staff meeting on October 19, and apologized ahead of time for missing the Faculty Meeting on November 10. He has to attend the Board of Trustees meeting on that date. Chancellor Obear also announced with regret the upcoming retirement of Linda Harris from the Office of the Chancellor and from UTC. Ms. Harris has been at UTC for 15 years and will be sorely missed (especially by the new Chancellor).

7. Other Business

Salaries, Increases, and Evaluation

Fritz Efav presented two motions. The first motion was as follows:

“Whereas, the Senate recently adopted the recommendation from the Budget and Economic Status Committee that UTC allocate \$900,000 annually to the salary compression adjustment pool over a five year period in order to alleviate salary compression, with an absolute unbreakable minimum of \$400,000, which is necessary to avoid further deterioration in salary compression,

And whereas, the current year budget allocated only \$250,000 to the salary compression pool,

The Senate therefore now reiterates its concern about salary compression by recommending an allocation of \$1,050,000 to the faculty salary adjustment pool for the coming budget year, followed by \$900,000 in each of the four succeeding years in order to alleviate salary compression, with an absolutely unbreakable minimum of \$550,000 in the coming budget year, followed by \$400,000 thereafter, which is necessary to avoid further deterioration in salary compression.”

This motion did not receive a second and thus was not discussed. Fritz Efaw expressed strong disappointment in the Senate’s failure to act on this issue.

Professor Efaw’s second motion, seconded by Jim Hiestand, read as follows:

- (1) The Senate wishes to express its concern that across-the-board salary increases have been rescinded by supervisors, including department heads and deans.
- (2) The Senate notes that these actions are both illegal and an inappropriate use of the EDO process.
- (3) The Senate furthermore requests that any such actions taken in connection with recent salary increases be restored and that the administration provide assurances that this has been done.
- (4) If such assurances are not forthcoming at the next Senate meeting, the Faculty President is requested to write to the Governor and local members of the state legislature to notify them of the current local policy and to ask for redress.

This motion precipitated many questions and comments. Gretchen Potts: So not everyone got the increases? Joe Wilferth: What does the law say? Randy Walker: Is there flexibility on across-the-board raises? John Friedl: I do not know the text of the law. I can only tell you about the memo we received from Sylvia Davis, Acting UT Vice President for Business and Finance, which stated that “employees with unsatisfactory performance” are not eligible for increases. If this is in violation of the law, then we will need to correct it. Debbie Parker (Associate Vice Chancellor for Business and Financial Affairs): If a deficiency is taken care of, the raise becomes effective at that point. Matt Greenwell: The Handbook states that those receiving the “Needs Improvement” rating are not eligible for merit pay while those receiving “Unsatisfactory” are not eligible for any increases. David Brodsky: We need to go back to the legislative record, not the UT interpretation. Fritz Efaw: Does an increase remain in place during an appeals process? John Friedl: That’s a hypothetical situation. David Pittenger (Assoc. Provost for Academic Administration): The matter of being denied a raise for poor performance is not a new issue. Jonathan McNair: It seems to me that from a legal point of view, those receiving “Needs

Improvement” ratings should get across the board raises, since the Handbook specifically says they are not eligible for merit raises. Richard Rice: Yes, the implication is that getting a “Needs Improvement” rating means you’re still eligible for across the board raises.

President Rice said that he will get the original legislative language about eligibility for salary increases. Richard Brown, Vice Chancellor for Finance and Operations, volunteered to obtain this information for the President. He also remarked that such language usually states conditions; in particular, there may be a clause linking unsatisfactory evaluations with ineligibility for raises.

Randy Walker moved that the motion on the floor be referred to the Executive Committee; that the Executive Committee obtain more information about the state law and other pertinent matters; and that the Executive Committee report its findings to the Senate no later than its second meeting in November. Joe Dumas seconded the motion.

Fritz Efav argued that the EDO process has been advertised as a means of rewarding merit but in reality is a means of pushing people out the door. He warned that currently it’s being used for “picking off the weakest people in the herd,” but that others could be next. Matt Greenwell commented that aside from the Darwinian analogy, he agreed that the EDO system did not provide rewards, only punishments.

Betsy Darken addressed the Senate at length about the issue of evaluation. She remarked that while it is unfortunate that the EDO system is not currently providing rewards, the faculty nonetheless should be subject to evaluation for performance. She believes that incompetence is a legitimate reason for losing tenure. She stated that it is of course extremely important that the evaluation process be fair. There is certainly room for improvement in the EDO process outlined in the Handbook—and our Handbook Committee is working on ways to improve it. Nonetheless, having studied it, she believes that the current process is not unreasonable. She argued that for a faculty to place itself above evaluation, given that the rest of the working world is subject to evaluation, is a sign of arrogance. It is especially ironic that a faculty should argue this point since faculty members regularly evaluate others for a living. She also expressed concern that arguing against performance evaluation puts UTC faculty in the same boat with public school teachers. She said that based on second-hand information, her impression is that it is extremely difficult if not impossible to fire a tenured public school teacher for incompetence. The upshot is that principals get rid of these teachers by passing them on to other schools, often inner city schools, which certainly explains part of the problem with public schools.

Fritz Efav responded that it is the administration, not the faculty, who should be charged with arrogance for giving themselves raises when the rest of us did not get raises. He said that responses can be made to the remarks made by Professor Darken, who has a misunderstanding of the economics of the situation.

Richard Rice remarked on the lateness of the hour and reminded the Senate that there was a motion on the floor to refer the motion about salary increases to the attention of the Executive Committee. Professor Efav asked that time be allowed at the next Senate meeting for responses to Professor Darken's remarks. The question was called, no objection was made to the calling of the question, and the motion passed unanimously.

8. Faculty Concerns

a. Chancellor Search Committee Procedures

David Brodsky brought up concerns expressed by a number of faculty members as to why the UTC Chancellor Search Committee was having closed meetings. Why aren't open meetings a good idea for UTC, given that the search for the UT president was conducted with open meetings? President Rice said that the Executive Committee would look into the matter.

b. To Love or Not to Love...Football?

Claire McCullough said that some people are wondering, after the appearance of the Echo article about the Senate's ad hoc Football Committee, if anyone on the committee is positive about football. President Rice, Matt Greenwell, and others commented that there are people from Athletics on the committee, as well as the band director. In addition the committee is commissioned to look objectively at the costs and benefits of the football program. The Echo article was unfortunate and committee members have since been advised not to talk to reporters. Claire McCullough responded while objectivity is a worthy goal, attitudes are nonetheless important, and reiterated her question. She said that if the committee does not include any lovers of football, then its report will appear to be biased. David Brodsky asked, "Do you mean loving football in the abstract, or loving UTC football"? He was answered by a lot of muttering. Vicki Steinberg said that, in her perception, the committee was packed with sports fans. President Rice commented that the committee is merely a fact-finding committee and that any decision about the future of football at UTC rests with the administration. Chancellor Obear clarified this point, saying that the Athletics Board is the final authority on this issue.

c. Rubber Bumpers on Fifth Street

Joe Dumas asked if the rubber bumpers on Fifth Street are going to be replaced soon with permanent (and less elevated) speed bumps. Motorists, he said, go to great lengths to avoid the jarring bumpers, even driving up onto sidewalks. Richard Brown responded that the City seems to think the rubber bumpers are permanent, but that the Campus Landscape Committee is still in favor of obtaining the other speed bumps. He also commented that this committee has ambitious beautification plans for Fifth Street, which may become the primary entrance into UTC. There may be mid-street islands that should have a "traffic calming" effect.

d. False Alarms

President Rice expressed concern about false fire alarms on campus. He understands that students are no longer leaving the building when the alarms go off. This is a bad safety problem. Richard Brown responded that he shares this concern, that part of the problem has been corrected, and that it is still being addressed.

Adjournment

The Senate adjourned at 4:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Darken
Faculty Senate Secretary