

**Faculty Senate Minutes**

**Signal Mountain Room, University Center, 3:10 p.m.**

**20 October 2011**

<b><u>Division</u></b>	<b><u>Present</u></b>	<b><u>Absent</u></b>
<b>President</b>	Victoria Steinberg	
<b>Past-President</b>	Pedro Campa	
<b>At Large</b>	Susan North, Colleen Harris, Mike Bell	Shela Van Ness, Lyn Miles, Richard Metzger
<b>Lecturer</b>	Andrea Becksvort	
<b>Adjunct</b>	TBD	
<b>Behavioral Sciences</b>		Zibin Guo, David Ross, Barbara Medley
<b>Business Adm.</b>	Lisa Burke, Marsha Scheidt, Greg Thibadoux	
<b>Eng &amp; Comp Sci</b>	Jim Hiestand, Claire McCullough	Mbakisya Onyango
<b>Fine Arts</b>	Gaye Jeffers, Kenyon Wilson	
<b>CHEPS</b>	Kay Cowan	Deborah McAllister, Jamie Harvey, David Rausch, Barry Dale,
<b>Humanities</b>	Ralph Covino, Heather Palmer, Verbie Prevost, Abbie Ventura	
<b>Library</b>	Beverly Kutz	
<b>Math &amp; Sciences</b>	Sumith Gunasekera, John "Matt" Matthews	Hill Craddock
<b>Ex-Officio</b>	Richard Brown, Theresa Liedtka, Roger Brown, Phil Oldham	Roger Brown, Jocelyn Sanders
<b>SGA Liaison</b>	Evan Williams	
<b>Echo Liaison</b>	Caitlin Case	

Also present were: Linda Orth, Dr. Fran Bender, Dr. Karen McGuffee, Dr. Karen Adsit, Terry Denniston, Dr. Gene Schlereth, Cindy Taylor

Meeting highlights:

- Courtney Hoss in UTC's legal office is working on compiling and indexing campus policies. She agreed to share the framework document designed by committee with

Senate Secretary Colleen Harris to be shared with the Senate and wider faculty for comment.

- The proposal to pilot a new survey for student rating of faculty instruction was passed by a voice vote of the Senate.
- The Graduate Council request to change its administrative leadership structure was approved by unanimous voice vote.
- Vice Chancellor Richard Brown reported that an additional \$50,000 was being set aside to address lecturer pay increases.
- Provost Phil Oldham recommended the Senate, along with representatives from the deans council and department heads, review the EDO form and process in light of revisions likely at the UT Board of Trustees level as reported by Dr. Covino from the Handbook Retreat.

1. **Call to Order.**

The meeting was called to order at 3:14pm by President Dr. Victoria Steinberg.

2. **Approval of Minutes.**

Dr. Jim Hiestand moved to approve the minutes of 6 October 2011, Dr. Susan North seconded the motion. Minutes were unanimously approved by voice vote.

**New Business**

3. **Campus Master Plan Presentation – Perkins + Willis Consultants**

President Vicki Steinberg reported that the campus master plan presentation will be the first week in November. The consultants should be on campus for three days, and if they cannot present to the Senate, faculty will be informed of where they can attend other presentations.

4. **UTC Policies & Procedures Progress – Courtney Hoss**

Courtney Hoss from UTC legal has the task of making sense of policies and procedures. It has been a year and a half since she and Provost Oldham talked about wrapping their arms around policies and procedures to ensure consistency, and that they are up to date, since those policies and procedures are scattered and disorganized. Another item of interest was creating a policy index for campus, much like the ones system has set up where campuses can link to specific policies. One part of this task is collecting the policies and establishing a venue for getting approval for new pol kids and procedures, then the next step is to compile them into a policy index page. Last August Ms. Hoss said she had an intern come and collect materials from

departments and university web pages. Ms. Hoss is culling through them. Ms. Hoss put together a policy review committee, with Jocelyn Sanders the representative from Academic Affairs. Ms. Hoss does not yet consider this to be a “ripe” issue because with academic affairs our policy procedures are different and may not have to go through this committee.

Dr. Ralph Covino asked where faculty input and representation was on this policies and procedures committee. Courtney Hoss said she didn't have an answer, as Dr. Sanders was considered the faculty academic affairs representative, noting that the document is as final as it is going to get. Policies going through this process won't be approved by system or board, they will largely be campus specific policies. Ms. Hoss noted that the academics portion of policies is huge, and we need to figure out if there's a faculty senate component, as well as define exactly what policy and procedure mean. Right now we have a format for policies, and an actual procedure to go through getting a policy approved, but the idea is to get some continuity. This is what she's working on and figuring out how to move forward. Dr. Vicki Steinberg said our dream was to remove university offices policies from the handbook so they can change elsewhere and simply be referred to or linked to out of the Handbook. Ms. Hoss said that the reality is that in academic affairs, colleges have their own handbooks and bylaws, and we don't know how those fit into this sort of approval process, and that Dr. Jocelyn Sanders and she still have a lot of discussing to do. Dr. Vicki Steinberg noted that the Faculty Senate would like to be involved in the discussion of colleges and department bylaws. Dr. Ralph Covino stated that we'd like to know what is the handbook that is completely out of date, and asked if Ms. Hoss knew what those outdated sections might be that need to be changed. Ms. Hoss said that our Handbook will link to active policy versus quoting them. Dr. Covino said we need to know what is already established as published policy so we can flag sections of the Handbook for editing. Dr. Covino also asked what the timeline is for the one stop shop policy index; Ms. Hoss replied that it is at least a year away since she will have to involve IT, and each department on campus is responsible for going back and looking at their division's information to report back to see what should be updated.

Provost Oldham said there might be some room to move that timeline up, since Ms. Hoss is struggling with departmental level not campus level information, so if we focus on campus-wide broader policies, cleaning them and getting them published first would be helpful. Ms. Hoss said that would be much easier to do. Ms. Hoss said it's taken two years to get to this portion, and if your department is looking at developing something for the department, in terms not of bylaws but business processes, call her and ask her about it. She invites us to look over the framework document her committee established, that also creates a sunset framework to force regular review of policies. Professor Colleen Harris asked for Ms. Hoss to send her the document to post as a draft item for Senate members to review and comment on, and Ms. Hoss agreed to that.

## **5. Living Wage Issue – Dr. Shela Van Ness**

Dr. Van Ness is out of town for a conference, making this the second week this issue would be on the agenda but unaddressed. President Vicki Steinberg asked members if they wanted to present a motion given the UTK Living Wage Resolution materials that had been provided to the Senate, no motion was made, and the item has been removed from the Senate agenda.

## **6. Student Rating of Faculty Instruction Committee Proposal & Information Item –**

### **Dr. Karen McGuffey**

Student rating of faculty instruction report from Karen McGuffey and committee. The information item was to make people aware that student evaluations of faculty would henceforth be online but in the same format as past. The transition as already occurred for various reasons as reported, mainly due to efficiency, cost, and equipment issues.

The committee has been working for the past year to come up with substitute questions for the survey. The evaluation in the past has created discontent. The committee would like permission to pilot those new questions, meet with department heads, and see who might volunteer to administer the new evaluation this term to see what the results look like. The committee is interested to know whether the questions are confusing, see what they might want to change or keep after receiving faculty and student input, tabulate the results and report back to the Senate.

Since this motion comes out of committee, discussion ensued. Professor Matthews read through item, but asked what does it mean to use SurveyDig through Banner? Looking at athletics, they just get a link in an email through a URL. Will students have to log in with their UTC ID and password to prove they are themselves? If not, then Professor Matthew noted his objection to this process. Cindy Taylor said she understood what he is saying but that is not the case. It can't be forwarded, it is set up to prevent any forwarding. Professor Colleen Harris noted that in the committee meeting she attended as a visitor, it was stated that the students would have to log in through their MocsNet accounts, and she asked if that wasn't authenticating. Professor Matthews gave an example of a roommate taking a class from the same professor as his disgruntled roommate, and noted he could allow the other student to fill out the evaluation. Cindy Taylor says it's an IT and banner issue and we trust what they say about the security of it.

Dr. Claire McCullough noted there's no such thing as a secure system. Cindy Taylor says someone else can log them into their MocsNet account, that is a possibility. Professor Matthews says with a paper evaluation, at least you know it was a student in your class that filled out the form since you handed it to them. Dr. Claire McCullough said this is not preventable if it is electronic, and noted that we need to know how it is possible for it to be secure. Dr. Karen Adsit said the system only sends the email to students enrolled in the class, but it can be circumvented. Professor Matthews said we exercised stewardship in person, and once faculty are so separated for the process, we've abdicated responsibility. Dr. Adsit asked if we checked IDs when evaluations were handed out, multiple faculty said we know our students all by face.

Dr. Jim Hiestand has background questions, said that it looks like the bottom line is the loss of the optical scanner. Dr. Karen Adsit said the placing the evaluations online part has been dictated, that is not an option. Dr. Hiestand noted that if it were still working, we wouldn't be looking at this. Dr. Adsit said we'd likely be looking at this anyway for efficiency and confidentiality. Dr. Steinberg said this is also an open opportunity to reconsider the questions on the evaluation. Dr. Hiestand noted that when he reads the information item he sees that the response rate is lower, but paragraph above that says it goes up, which is contradictory, and the report refers to a handful of unnamed studies that look cherry-picked. Dr. Adsit said initially yes,

the response rate goes down, but with time it gets better, and if professors send reminder emails, response rates improve.

Professor Lisa Burke has two remaining questions, will system prevent one student from taking multiple times, Professor McGuffey said yes. Professor Burke asked what is the minimal sample size required, especially if response rates go down and results aren't really generalizable? Professor Burke says in the current system it won't run at a certain low sample size, and asks if the new system will note validity. Previously, Cindy Taylor said, packets were not sent for classes less than five, but now they will be run no matter the size.

Dr. Pedro Campa says he wants to establish one thing, that online student evaluation was presented as a *fait accompli*, we never voted on it as a faculty. Faculty who work on student satisfaction data note that only satisfied customers respond. Second of all, Dr. Campa asked, is there any form of redress if students don't do them? Dr. Adsit said it was decided to not be punitive in nature, but to possibly use rewards like accessing grades early. Dr. McCullough says we were never punitive against students, but these reviews are already used punitively against faculty. We are creating smaller response samples and making them less reliable but they will still be used for review, and Dr. McCullough wanted that in the Senate minutes. Evan Williams, the SGA liaison, said he breezes through the current valuations, but if he doesn't have to do it, he won't, and the faculty will only get responses from students with major problems or who absolutely love the professor. He says if students are not held accountable for completing the evaluation, he says from a student perspective they will not be done.

Professor Colleen Harris noted that the motion on the floor is for the pilot, not moving electronic. Dr. Verbie Prevost said she's read more student evaluations than anyone here, and the one thing that strikes her is how generous students are with their comments aside from rare exceptions. Very few take time to do a written response, they just check the numbers, general responses are great teacher, wonderful teacher, etc., thanks to great teachers in the English department.

Dr. Jim Hiestand has questions about the pilot instrument questions five and seven, what does it mean to "emphasize time on task"? Dr. Adsit said assignments are focused on content of course versus busywork. Dr. Adsit says that is how they translated that question. Dr. Hiestand says busywork is better understood language. Number seven says "respects diverse talents and learning," Dr. Hiestand doesn't understand how he could demonstrate that. Dr. Steinberg said that may be easier in foreign language. Dr. Hiestand says that is subjective. Dr. Adsit said it's in the question about which components helped students learned best. Dr. Covino noted he understood most of the best practices translations except for the 'do you feel you learned a lot in this course?' which is vague and we have no idea what they are trying to measure. Professor Karen McGuffey says they just want to see what the answers might be. Dr. Lyn Miles noted that student evaluations are being used to determine who can teach summer classes, and since she teaches controversial fields like human evolution and her evaluations are likely to not have them say they learned a lot. Dr. Miles pointed out that others also teach controversial subjects, like Dr. Covino's class on ancient women which has sexual content.

Professor Harris said in a survey where few questions are allowed, the survey should be crafted to give you useful data if useful data is one of the reasons were moving this way, and that what useful data is should be decided before crafting the questions. Professor Lisa Burke asked what

can we do beyond forcing the faculty to own the response rate issue given what Evan said about non-response. Professor Burke also asked why a question contained a superlative when the values are anchored on the answer scale. Professor McGuffey said the “excellent” term was intended to create more variation in agreement, Professor Burke pointed out that the scale anchors the response already.

Dr. Steinberg asked speaking of punitive, will means be reported to department heads? She noted means and medians are reported to department heads, actual mean responses, so we can compare apples to apples? Professor McGuffey says questions will be the same with the same reporting structure. Dr. McCullough said if response rate is no longer required to be entire class, then data will not be the same though we'll be held accountable. Dr. Adsit says mean judgments are not significantly different between online and paper evaluations, according to research. Professor McGuffey asked Evan if he thought students in general prefer it to be online rather than in class. Evan responded that he's not sure it matters, but likelihood of actually doing it online will be low, since no one has carved out the specific time (unlike paper evaluations done in-class). Dr. Covino asked Evan how willing student would be to fill out both the required and pilot evaluation, essentially doing it twice. Evan said it was not likely. Dr. Covino says he asks because he'll volunteer, but the traditional survey and this one could possibly yield different results within the same class, and if you are depending on these for tenure, if the traditional one results in sixes and the new one creates something different, that can be dangerous. Professor McGuffey says that faculty hadn't approved change so they couldn't use the data punitively. Dr. Campa noted that the faculty didn't approve moving the evaluation online, but that would happen anyway too. Professor McGuffey said maybe it is a good idea to tell department heads only to give the pilot to tenured faculty so it can't be used punitively. Jim Hiestand has computers in classroom, and asked if he could take the time to have the students fill the online form out in class, Professor McGuffey and Dr. Adsit said yes. Professor Burke asks whether committee will look at them to compare online versus previous paper data for comparison and consistency, Dr. Adsit said they could compare online to paper responses for the traditional questions, but couldn't compare the old to new questions. Professor Burke said she approves of the committee's use of meta-analysis of data to develop new questions. Professor Matthews asked if we have the means for previous years, they only get median, and what will new report give? If were reporting means and medians for new stuff, can we compare to old means? Professor Adsit says we cannot go back to the old data and get means for comparison. Evan Williams asked if there was a plan to talk to SGA or other student groups to see what students would say. Professor McGuffey said the committee would love to visit. Dr. Adsit said they would also offer whether data is shared with the department head is up to the faculty volunteer so you can agree to pilot but whether you need to share with department head is up to faculty. The next step for the committee is to talk to department heads about how this is very different information. Professor McGuffey said the committee did not want anyone to get burned by the new process or questions.

Dr. Vicki Steinberg called for a vote on the pilot proposal. In a voice vote, there was a single nay, no abstentions, and the rest of the voice vote were ayes. The motion passed to approve the pilot.

## **7. Graduate Council Proposal – Dr. Gene Schlereth, Chair**

The proposal is a change to leadership of grad council, instead of a two year, there will be a one year chair and the vice chair takes up the chairship their next year to provide continuity. The Council is already operating under this model since last spring. President Vicki Steinberg called for discussion. Dr. Ralph Covino noted that the section on the Graduate Council in the Handbook can have its descriptor reworked, but the Handbook should not be revised to become committee bylaws, and noted this change may be more appropriate for the Graduate Council handbook. Dr. Schelereth stated that the Graduate Council had not found a handbook for their group. President Steinberg said that has been a call for bylaws and practices to be posted for each committee, which will take responsibility for those documents. Professor Colleen Harris noted that as faculty Senate Secretary, she has the ability to post committee documents on the Senate's webpage and would be happy to do so. Dr. Pedro Campa said he did not know of a Graduate Council Handbook, Dr. Verbie Prevost also did not recall there being one. Linda Orth from records said she might have an old copy. Dr. Ralph Covino said we should vote on the motion but the change may not need to be made to the Faculty Handbook. Dr. Campa moved to hold the vote, Dr. Lyn Miles seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by voice vote. Dean Theresa Liedtka located a 2006-2007 Graduate Council Handbook online.

### **8. Report on UT System Handbook Retreat – Dr. Ralph Covino**

Dr. Ralph Covino reported that he, Professor Colleen Harris, and Vice Provost Jocelyn Sanders attended a system level handbook retreat in Murfreesboro. The group reviewed Board of Trustees policies, and recommended changes in terms of changes in terms of academic freedom and tenure. The revision process will largely be standardized with tracking software to track recommended changes so that the “black hole” effect where resolutions get lost between campus, legal, and other offices will be lessened. India Lane and Katie High are looking into software to track the documents along the approval system. The outcome for UTC is that they have requested we look into the Senate's foundational documents to streamline certain processes. Our senate bylaws, because of the foundational documents, need to go to the Board for approval in some cases. They've asked that we look at campus procedures for termination for adequate cause and strengthening language with regard to faculty/administrative relations grievance procedures and timing of appeals so they don't languish, which will bring us into line with rest of system.

Proposed changes to Board of Trustees policies will come out of the handbook working group, first to the working group, then to the Senates, then they will enter the formal procedures for changing the items. A number of questions and tidying will be looked at, like pursuing degree, length of probationary period, locus of tenure, policies for expedited tenure, and disciplinary sanctions other than termination. Positive results will be that we have been encouraged to adopt UTK language with respect to things of benefit to our faculty such as financial exigency – UTK has an intermediary step called retrenchment to prevent job loss before exigency. We don't have that in our handbook but will look into it.

The group is looking to change things with regards to faculty evaluations, looking to change the current four point scale (including the two in punishment zone to trigger the CPR process). Likely a five point scale will be developed. It was recommended that UTC prepare for this and convene a group, since while legal will recommend a five point scale, campuses will be free to choose their own. Provost Phil Oldham noted that he was going to suggest that Dr. Victoria

Steinberg appoint a group to look at the EDO form itself and the process and see what changes might be recommended and implemented. Provost Oldham recommended that the Senate lead this but also include folks from Dean's Council and the Department Heads Council for representation. Dr. Covino said that will be helpful, and that the provost of UTK was shocked to learn that not every department at UTC has bylaws that are published regarding performance expectations and made public. Dr. Verbie Prevost said she thought we have that, Dr. Covino noted that not all departments do. Dr. Covino also said there was also a call for faculty bill of rights. The system also graciously offered us a copyeditor to help clean up our handbook.

## **9. Other Business**

Dr Richard Brown offered a follow-up to the last meeting, saying Dr. Covino had a point about lecturer pay, and that in addition to the \$100,000 set aside for faculty pay increases, \$50,000 has now been set aside to address lecturer pay by the Provost.

Provost Phil Oldham offered to address questions, there were no questions.

## **10. Member Concerns**

No member concerns.

## **11. Announcements**

No announcements.

## **12. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:22pm.