

UTC Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes **January 15, 2026- Hunter Hall 405, 3:30pm**

Faculty Senate President Beth Crawford, presiding
Minutes prepared by Faculty Senate Secretary Hannah Wakefield

Attendance follows the minutes.

Call to Order and Approval of Minutes The meeting was called to order with instructions for attendees to scan a QR code to record attendance. If unable to scan, members were directed to email Hannah Wakefield. The minutes from the November meeting were approved without changes.

No unfinished business or new business.

Committee Reports

Academic Standards Committee Azad Hossain presented proposed revisions to undergraduate certificate requirements.

- The committee expressed concern that existing restrictions limited student participation in certificate programs. Current rules limited course sharing to one course for minors and two for majors. Additionally, the graduate school had already removed similar restrictions.
- The committee proposed removing restrictions on sharing courses with majors or minors and increasing the UTC coursework requirement for transfer students from 25% to 50%.
- The motion to approve these changes passed with 33 yes votes and no opposition or abstention.

Administrative Reports

Chancellor's Report Chancellor Bruce provided updates on various university initiatives.

- The Chancellor thanked faculty for attending the investiture and fall graduation.
- **Strategic Plan:** An enrollment strategic plan was approved by the UT System Board of Trustees, and eight task forces have been formed to implement recruitment and retention strategies. The university's overall strategic plan has been approved by the UTC Advisory Board and is awaiting final approval from the Board of Trustees in February.
- **Carnegie Designation:** UTC recently received the Carnegie designation as a community engagement university, a selective classification shared only with UT Knoxville within the system. Chancellor Bruce recognized Vice Chancellor Stacy Lightfoot for leading that effort.
- In the fall, the university launched a new counseling center on campus through Parkridge Mental Health.
- **Campus Safety:** The university completed active violence training with over 95% participation. Follow-up efforts will include Vice Chancellor Goldberg assessing requests

for resources submitted via training feedback a campus-wide email regarding the availability of bleeding control kits, blackout curtains, and doorstops for departments.

- **Leadership and Reorganization:** Chancellor Bruce reminded faculty that when the CIO left, she took the opportunity to reorganize. She distributed some of the budget to IT user services. New appointments include Jermaine Freeman as Executive Director of Economic and Workforce Development and Dr. Mina Sartipi as Interim Vice Chancellor for Research. A national search to fill the Vice Chancellor for Research position will begin in early fall. A national search for a permanent Vice Chancellor for Advancement is also launching.
- **Compensation Study:** Results from a Huron study of 71 institutions showed that UTC tenure and tenure-track faculty salaries are closely centered around the mean market rate. Administration clarified that earlier adjustments in October also included lecturers and non-tenure track staff via a separate Segel study.
- Chancellor Bruce plans to meet with faculty in each discipline this semester.
- **Q&A:**
 - An attendee asked a question about whether Jermaine Freeman could help with analysis of market needs for the Occupational Therapy program, and the Chancellor responded in the affirmative.
 - An attendee asked whether the administration considered using local providers for the active violence response training and how much the recent training cost. Vice Chancellor Goldberg responded that the university coordinated with Hamilton County Emergency Management to bring in Defend Systems, and the cost was about \$50 per person.
 - An attendee asked whether the university was going to centrally coordinate providing active violence response supplies or whether faculty members needed to request it. Vice Chancellor Goldberg pointed to an email that was going out that would address the question and explained that each building has emergency kits that can be located on the campus map.
 - A question was raised about whether new construction projects on campus will involve collaboration with Public Safety to ensure the university is constructing safe spaces. The Chancellor has brought this concern to President Boyd in hopes of developing a system-wide effort and getting funding for safety planning when working on a new project
 - A question was raised about whether there are plans to study compensation for non-tenure-track faculty (like the Huron study for T/TT faculty). Laure Pou responded that NTT faculty were included in the previous pay study specific to UTC's campus that resulted in market adjustments.
 - An attendee asked whether administrators could speak to what the university is doing to protect immigrant members of the community. The Chancellor responded that no reports of nervousness from UTC immigrant students have come to her office.
 - An attendee asked whether UTC is cooperating with ICE in any way. Vice Chancellor Goldberg responded that to his knowledge UTC was not currently in cooperation with ICE.

Committee Reports

Faculty Rating of Administration Committee Ashley Schilling reported on recommendations for the annual administrator rating survey.

- **Approved Recommendations:** The committee voted unanimously to approve certain recommendations from the Total Organizational Health Group. These included retaining the current performance framework, improving communication regarding the evaluation process, and renaming the committee to the "Annual Review of Faculty Administrators".
- **Proposed Revisions:** Further recommendations, approved with revisions, include allowing faculty to rate all administrators, removing the "neutral" option from survey items, expanding participation to staff if anonymity is guaranteed, introducing administrator self-evaluations, and exploring a shift of survey administration to Human Resources while maintaining faculty oversight.
- **Voting:** Faculty Senate will hold an electronic vote on these recommendations following a two-week discussion period on the faculty campus group board.

Administrative Reports

Provost's Report

- Provost Hale introduced **Dr. Elizabeth O'Brien** as the new Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs.
- **Remote and Hybrid Work Guidelines:** Guidelines for staff have been sent to Department Heads and Deans. Faculty-specific guidelines are being compiled and will be vetted through the Senate Executive Committee, Deans, and Department Heads.
- **Academic Calendar:** The spring semester start was delayed this year to allow for a longer break, and next year the semester will not begin until after the MLK holiday. New class times are available on the Faculty Senate website.
- **Merit Pay:** Training for department heads regarding merit pay is ongoing. A December session was run by Dr. Michelle Deardorff and Dr. Rebecca Shortridge. Administration hopes to have Dr. Linda Martin from the system office coordinate some training as well. The Provost encouraged department heads to develop evaluation rubrics collaboratively with faculty input and suggested that faculty raise the subject with department heads if this process has not yet been addressed.
- **Honors College Search:** A national search for the Dean of the Honors College is underway, with the goal of having the new Dean in place by July 1. The search is being chaired by Dean Robert Dooley.

Faculty Concerns

- A question was raised about whether the data used to conduct the Huron compensation study will be released. Administration agreed to release raw market data by discipline related to the compensation studies.
- An attendee inquired about the lack of a legislative update this year. The legislative update was presented only to the Council of Academic Department Heads. While no

general campus update was held recently, representatives will attend a legislative retreat in Nashville later in January to monitor bills related to tenure and DEI. Some administrators also attend weekly legislative updates. In both cases, representatives at these meetings have offered to present legislative updates to the Senate.

Announcements

- **NSF Pilot Project:** Dr. Ingram announced an NSF-sponsored pilot project for a new course learning evaluation model, currently limited to general education courses in STEM and behavioral sciences.
- **Divisional Elections:** Apportionments for upcoming Senate elections are being adjusted as the College of Nursing separates from CHEPS into its own college.

Adjournment The meeting was adjourned following a seconded motion.

ATTENDANCE

Beth Crawford
Lauren Gilbert
Hannah Wakefield
Jenn Stewart
Holly Berkowitz
Hyeyoon Jung
Christi Wann
Al Salatka
Deborah McAllister
Jessica Taylor
Jenny Hogg
Shahnewaz Karim Sakib
Yingfeng Wang
Carl Springer
Caitlin Crews-Stowe
edward brudney
Francesca Leasi
Monica Miles
Pratibha Deepak
Max Jordon
Sarah Treat
Brooke Epperson
Angel Collier
Sara Lum
Carolyn Runyon
Tina Benkiser
Mike Breakey
Matthew Evans
Feng guo
Khalid Tantawi
Perry Ward
Sarah Einstein
James Guilfoyle
Jenny Hannah
Jennifer Goodrich