

Members Present:

F. Amey, M. Baggarly, D. Belcher, J. Brickey, N. Callender, W. Cribb, J. Dooley, L. Dubek, P. Fischer, L. Fisher, C. Frost, C. Harris, B. Haskew, R. Henderson, C. Higgins, R. Hoffman, W. Ilsley, P. Kelly, A. Lutz, J. Maynor, R. McBride, H.W. Means, K. Nofsinger, D. Penn, T. Perry, M. Rice, L. Selva, C. Stephens, S. Taylor, L. Warise, W. Warren, M. Arndt, L. Burriss, , M. Foster, S. Rawls, K. Rushlow, J. Dowdy, P. Oliver, R. Heinrich, P. Wall,

Members Absent: S. Daugherty, J. Pennington, B. Wallace

Members Excused: S. Seipel, R. Untch, R. Livingston, T. Greer

Additional Attendees:

From BCEN: Vincent W. Smith, Dorothy Warren, Wayne Rollins, Kay Blasingame, Marsha Smith, Raholanda White, Sherry Roberts, Jaye Kiblinger, Patrick Geho

From Sidelines: Evan Barker, Stephanie Mills, Jay Bailey

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

Deborah Belcher, 2009-2010 Faculty Senate President, called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. in the Faculty Senate Chambers. Senators signed roll.

Greeting and Welcome

Sidelines reporters, Evan Barker and Stephanie Mills, were introduced.

Approval of the September 14th Minutes

Charles Frost moved to approve the September 14th meeting minutes. Willis Means seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved by majority vote of the Senate.

Treasurer's Report

The current operating funds are \$171.97 with an additional \$400.00 for travel and a Foundation balance of \$846.28

President's Report

Information Items

• **Additional Cuts**

- We are facing another 7.3 M cut from state budget for 2011 fiscal year.

- B. Haskew pointed out an article in the Chattanooga paper that discussed a possible shift to funding institutions based on graduation rates. D. Belcher stated that this was a possibility and had been discussed in the 10/12 President's Cabinet Meeting. MTSU is 2nd in the state concerning graduation rates with UTK as 1st.
- **10-24 Homecoming**
 - Homecoming Parade
Middle Tennessee Boulevard
10:00 a.m.
 - MTSU vs. WKU
Floyd Stadium
2:30 p.m.
- **Dining with MTSU**
 - Online Coupons
 - Tuesdays and Thursdays
 - Faculty discount: buy one meal, get one ½ off
 - McCallie and JUB
- **Course Definitions for Distance Courses**
 - Online Courses – totally online
 - Hybrid Courses – being discussed as to how many hours on campus are required. Currently 9 and proposing 15.
 - Web-assisted – D2L and other resources used to provide additional learning opportunities and tools.
- **Institutional Equity & Compliance**
 - Online Training – all faculty are required to complete the following:
 - Preventing Sexual Harassment
 - Preventing Employment Discrimination
 - Title VI Compliance Training
 - Effective Management of Student Conduct
 - <http://www.mtsu.edu/countest/tutorial/>
- **Old Business**
 - TUFS Position Paper has been shared with the Governor.
 - The paper is getting some review in a variety of newspapers.
- **New Business**
 - **Proposed Restructuring of Colleges**
 - **D. Belcher suggested that we as a Senate be solution driven.**
 - Discussion from the senate:
 - Restructuring/realignments are in a discussion phase. The *Proposed Restructuring of Colleges* is a proposal. Dr. Miller looks at the proposal as “rational,” but it may not be seen as rational to faculty members affected by the changes. It was suggested to departments to meet, discuss opportunities, develop rationale, and propose more “rational” placements through the Chair and Dean to be shared with Academic Affairs. It was also suggested

that proposals be shared with the senate so that we may assist with this proactive opportunity.

- **What happens to tenure?**
 - It was determined at the Steering Committee meeting that moving from one college to another does not affect tenure, and that mergers don't change tenure.
 - It is the duty of the faculty senate to create safeguards to protect tenure. The Steering Committee asked the Provost whether there was a way that a faculty member going up for tenure could have a transition period. Once restructuring occurs, the senate might want to consider a change to T&P policies to allow consideration for candidates changing deans, chairs, etc. The key concern is that faculty can be reviewed for tenure under the context of previous department and college requirements.
 - D. Belcher noted that a faculty member could select to suspend or "stop the clock" of their tenure term to become better prepared to meet new guidelines. She also mentioned that the Provost had suggested that faculty mentor and assist tenure track faculty through the transition. Faculty presented a concern with a "stopped clock" alternative. It was considered that tenure track faculty would be at a disadvantage as a result of restructuring.
 - It was suggested that there may be a legal issue because the rules have changed, and the people reviewing tenure are not the same group.
- **How are degrees granted when multiple colleges are involved, i.e. cross-college degrees?**
 - D. Belcher does not know the answer to this question and will research.
- **Faculty members from the Department of Business Communication and Entrepreneurship were present.** They are concerned because the proposed restructuring would divide them into 3 different colleges. Colleagues are fearful of this result. They want to voice their concerns and have faculty senate hear their concerns.
 - **BCEN was concerned about Tenure** (discussed above)
 - **BCEN wanted to know what it could do to protect itself from being divided.**
 - Senate members advised that the department needs to come up with a proposal to submit to Academic Affairs to justify its position on the issue of reorganization.

- It was also suggested that all proposals be submitted to the Senate and Steering/ Liaison Committee so that they can advocate for BCEN faculty when/if needed.
- A department member stated that historically, **business education programs** die when rolled into an education unit. This needs to be considered.
- **What is the rationale for the reorganization?**
 - It seems that rationale has been proposed, but not all faculty members accept or understand the suggested rationale for the proposal.
 - Faculty are baffled by what may appear to be rational thinking. Feeling of battling shadows in the dark. No one really understands the reasons for the changes. How will these changes possibly position the University for the future? How will any of this improve quality?
 - There is frustration because many departments were not contacted and administration never sought approval of the mergers, etc.
 - Why were departments merged? What was the logic? Why weren't faculty asked to be on working groups to help with development of the reorganization? There were many faculty senators who offered to serve on committees this summer, but the feeling is that few were contacted.
 - D. Belcher stated that she participated in a brainstorming session at the Dean's Retreat regarding restructuring, and that she also attended a called meeting of the Dean's Council where the proposal was shared.
 - Some faculty senators stated that the error of this process was that it began as a way to save money, but it has turned into an opportunity for folks to move chessboard pieces. It has therefore missed an opportunity to result in any real benefits. It is simply a restructuring in a way that won't generate any real savings. Other faculty noted that the lack of cost savings would be "OK" if they could just understand the logic behind the proposal. There are two levels of approach, first what individual departments can do. Second, why are we spending time and energy on this?

- Are these college changes, when what we really need are curriculum changes?
- How will we convince students to embrace this change and how will parents be involved?
- **Senate needs to keep asking “Why is this necessary?” and “Is this the right time?”**
 - L. Burriss suggested again that all units, departments, and colleges have an opportunity discuss connections and rationale and share with D. Miller as to why the proposal will or will not work.
- **What can we as a Senate do?**
 - Everyone needs to proceed effectively.
- **Educational Leadership**
 - They were all surprised by the changes. The Department is laying out the argument that things remain the same. They want a rationale for the change.
 - This new infrastructure does not fit the new building. The building was planned when this structure was not in place.
- **Online Delivery:** The reconfiguration supports online delivery. College structure should not be supported by online delivery. It appears that the University supports online delivery. This is not necessarily the case. All of this moves us toward online. Why?
- **Faculty Cuts:** Aren't we going to have to see faculty cuts? If this is based on numbers, it seems clear that we will see faculty cuts eventually.
- **Faculty Objections:**
 - We as a faculty body, can pass a resolution opposing this. This should perhaps be considered.
 - As a faculty, do we oppose the process of how this was developed? If so, then perhaps we should address that to the Provost.
 - D. Belcher stated that concerns and opportunities proposed to the Steering Committee will be shared with administration during AA Liaison meetings.
 - Was faculty senate involved in this process?
 - D. Belcher was included in the dean's brainstorming session and in meetings in which the proposal was shared.
- **Questions and Concerns:**
 - Has there been any input from Colleges or Departments as to whether Deans and Chairs were surprised as to the outcome?

- In the College of Mass Communication's meeting, their dean indicated surprise as to some content of the proposal.
- Who determines which faculty members go where if departments are split? Especially if a faculty member teaches in two areas? This is not clear.
- There was concern expressed that D. Belcher is invited to meetings, but is not really welcome to fully participate. She assured faculty that this is not what happens.
- Timeline of the proposal is for fall 2010 implementation.
 - Some members expressed frustration at the timing and lack of time to process. It was also suggested that it was not feasible to complete such a task in such a tight time frame.
 - It was also suggested that the senate, as a body, needs to take this slower.
- **Effect on Departments:**
 - Some departments will be put in a school and lose department status. Many departments are against that. The solution is to keep the department status.
 - Cost savings is supposed to be a low priority of the rationale. Most of those savings come from elimination of chairs and directors. If cost savings is a low priority, eliminating a chair should be argued as unjustified. If cost savings are nonexistent, then that argument needs to be made.
 - Secretaries are valuable to the department. Everyone can agree that secretaries need to be saved. These are the people we all count on. Eliminating 7 secretaries needs to be considered. We as a faculty should take a position on protecting our staff.
 - There is concern about the impact on a large department like Chemistry losing its department status, and the impact in perception and consequential impact on the Science building.
 - Also, will someone be willing to administer a big program for the same release time or administrative salary as someone else administers a smaller program.
 - Concern was expressed concerning loss of existing faculty beyond the buyout program and unfilled position lines. This means additional reliance on adjuncts and elimination of temporary faculty.

D. Belcher thanked all guests for attending the meeting.

D. Belcher invited faculty to contact her via email and phone calls/voice mail. She also stated that she would continue to return email and phone calls as quickly as possible and tried to get back with folks within 24 hours. She also suggested that she would appreciate additional emails as reminders.

Adjournment

D. Belcher adjourned the meeting at 6:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Taylor
2009-2010 Faculty Senate Recording Secretary

Edited: D Belcher