
Members Present

A.Lutz, C. Frost, D. Belcher, H.W. Means, J. Dooley, L. Warise, P. Fischer, S. Taylor, W. Cribb, L. Burriss, M. Arndt, R. Heinrich,

Members Absent

T. Greer

Members Excused

S. Seipel, B.Haskew, K. Rushlow,

Additional Attendees

None

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

Deborah Belcher, 2009-2010 Faculty Senate President, called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. in the Faculty Senate Chambers.

Greeting and Welcome

- **Solution Driven** – Encourages faculty to be solution driven. If we have a situation that is a concern, we need to come up with ideas as to how to turn that into a positive solution. This is how we should format our topics for all meetings.

Approval of the Minutes

- **9-9-09 Steering Committee and 9-16-09 Academic Liaison** –move to approve by W. Means, 2nd Warner Cribb, unanimous vote to approve.

Old Business

- **Faculty Evaluations** - With regard to the concerns expressed by the Faculty Senate: 1) the results are READ only---the only way to write to these files that I know of is through Curt Curry's program; 2) the only way for anyone to get the results of another faculty member is a) if they are a chair, dean, or administrator (Provost), or b) as with ANY password protected information, if they can "hack" into the results by effectively guessing the password (or having a computer program guess millions of passwords and at some point "get lucky"). Since the password is the same as for the Pipeline account, and since each individual user can specify his/her own password, the amount of security afforded by the password is effectively up to the individual (i.e., not using common names or words, using a combination of letters and numbers, etc.). However, if a hacker

does manage to get into someone's results, they cannot change anything once there---they can only view the results.

- **Hard Copies** – Faculty Senate suggestions were sent forward and approved.
- **Workload Form: Part B - How can SC assist Faculty to understand the importance of the form? How to fill the form out?**
 - **Working with Becky Cole** – She has offered to come to our meetings to discuss. Faculty Senate must come up with ways to educate our colleagues about the importance of these forms. It was suggested that she should visit the full senate to discuss the faculty concerns regarding workload forms. She will initially be invited to the next steering committee meeting. Then, she will be invited to the full faculty senate meeting.
- **TUFS Position Paper - The following letter was sent:**
TUFS: September 30, 2009

Dear John:

Thank you for sending me a copy of the "TUFS Position Paper on Higher Education Reorganization." I appreciate hearing from you, and I look forward to reviewing this report soon.

I am confident that the Tennessee University Faculty Senates have put great thought into their ideas and recommendations, and all of will benefit from their insights. This report certainly merits my serious consideration and study.

Again, thank you for taking the time to let me hear from you. Please feel free to write to me whenever you have ideas, suggestions or concerns about the State of Tennessee.

*Warmest regards,
Phil Bredesen
PB:bm*

New Business

- **Election of a new SC Member to Replace Ken Rushlow** – Several candidates were identified to take Ken's place. D. Belcher will contact those candidates to find out who is willing to serve and bring those names to the steering committee at a later date.
- **Faculty Office Hours** – We have been asked to look at those in light of the fact that online, blended and hybrid courses may, to some extent, change the on-campus requirements. We must look at policy and procedure.
- **Effective Management of Student Conduct** – We have been asked, by TBR, to encourage faculty to complete this online course. Seems that requiring these things from faculty require more than simply an email. D. Belcher mentioned that all of the courses are online and emails are sent out for specific courses with deadlines. The discussion concluded that there should be some way for faculty to know what is required of them yearly, and that there needs to be greater clarity of communication to faculty regarding these issues.
- **University Smoking Policy** – Now that there is no tobacco sold on campus, it is requested that we make this a non-smoking campus. John Pennington did research on this in the past and may be a good resource if

we decide to pursue this. Judy Campbell has also researched this area. The policy regarding 20 feet away from the building should, perhaps, be revisited. While it was agreed that the theory of a non-smoking campus was excellent, concern was expressed as to how to monitor and/or prevent violations. We will request information from John and Judy for suggestions concerning the monitoring and other methods to control smoking.

- **Agenda Items for the Academic Sub-council for 9:00 (Central Time) on Thursday, October 22, 2009.**
 - Deb was informed that we can add agenda items to the TBR sub-council meetings. Larry Burris emailed that there is concern from the community colleges about the TUFS position paper.
 - No agenda items were brought forth to send to the sub-council.
- **Positioning the University for the Future: Proposed Restructuring of Colleges** – This reduces the number of departments/schools from 36 to 29 for a potential estimated cost savings of \$250K/yr. It does not reduce the number of degree programs nor faculty positions. Clerical personnel affected may be relocated to other positions.
 - At the point of merger of departments, which department is eliminated and which is not? Does this effects tenured faculty? If units disappear, we would like to know the legal status of those faculty members at each step along the way. Risk is that merged departments may be deemed eliminated. Even if a small department becomes part of a larger department, is the small department deemed eliminated?
 - Other risk is that upon merger, new people have a voice as to that person's tenure. There need to be rules that protect people going up for tenure, to prevent inequities.
 - D. Belcher understands that there is no intention to eliminate, but simply intention to relocate people. All of this still falls under Academic Affairs and concerns should be addressed to D. Miller.
 - How will these changes affect pay structure?
 - What will we do about the college of education?
 - It was recommended to email senators to request feedback from their faculty for the Monday meeting.
 - Additionally, faculty may wish to hear the rationale in order to develop a greater understanding of how and why these decisions are made.
 - It appears that curriculum decisions for General Education (now in the University College) are taken away from the departments which could impact the curriculum's compliance with best practices in the specific disciplines. Also, who gets the FTEs for these? All other departments in University College look to be service departments.
 - Will these new colleges lead to a proliferation of associate deans, thereby eliminating or even increasing the cost savings?
 - Faculty would like to know how everything will be discussed, disclosed, handled, and resolved. Communication from Provost's Office could be handled more effectively, and we may want to give suggestions as to how to communicate these issues with the faculty.

- **Additional issues:**

- A. Lutz questioned whether the senate should decide to get involved with the issue of faculty reductions as decisions are made. – There are concerns as to whether it is too soon to get involved in this decision making process. It would be nice to know how we are funded, and how the process for eliminating positions will be guided. Alfred Lutz will research how UTK and AAUP resolved these issues and email information to senators.
- Issue of sports cost/benefit to University. C. Frost looked at the budget, but there is little transparency as to how that was allocated. He stated that sports cost MTSU 6.8 million out of the general fund. Other universities are cutting athletic departments. NFL says that Football is causing dementia. How can this issue be addressed with administration? C. Frost was asked to research this further and to speak with Chris Masseo and/or Diane Turnham to provide a balanced perspective.
- W. Cribb mentioned that the universities keep being forced into looking at cutting programs, but we don't look at cutting at the TBR or THEC level. What should go first? Before we say cut academics or athletics, let's go back to the assembly and ask them to make cuts at THEC and TBR. The president applauded us for bringing the representatives to campus. We need get them back and make sure THEC and TBR budgets are reduced.

Adjournment

D. Belcher adjourned the meeting at 5:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Taylor
2009-2010 Faculty Senate Recording Secretary

Edited: D. Belcher