

Faculty Senate Business Meeting

April 15, 2024

via TEAMS

Members Present:

Michael Allen, Sean Alley, Megan Atkinson, Teddy Burch, Melissa Comer, Kris Craven, Mark Creter, April Crockett, Andrew Donadio, Dennis Fennwald, Mary Lou Fornehed, Steve Frye, Syed Hasan, Samantha Hutson, Krystal Kennedy, Christy Killman, Matthew Langford, Richard Le Borne, Jane Liu, Mark Loftis, Jeannette Luna, Jennifer Mabry, Twanelle Majors, Ann Manginelli, Lori Maxwell, Holly Mills, Wendy Mullen, Michael Natrass, Linda Null, Brian O'Connor, Hyewon Park, Mustafa Rajabali, Christopher Reames, Scott Smith, Troy Smith, Sandi Smith-Andrews, Amber Spears, Leslie Suters, Kyle Turner, Hannah Upole, Lenly Weathers, Brenda Wilson, Kimberly Winkle

Members Absent:

Stephen Canfield, Scott Christen, Yun Ding, Joseph Ojo, Steven Seiler, Lee Ann Shipley

Call to Order

Senate President Allen called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m.

1. Approval of Agenda

Senator Smith-Andrews made a motion to approve the agenda. Senator Fornehed seconded. The motion carried.

2. Approval of Minutes and Notes from Previous Meetings

a.) March 25, 2024 Business Meeting Minutes

Senator Fornehed made a motion to approve the minutes. Senator Rajabali seconded. The motion carried.

b.) April 1, 2024 Meeting with the President Notes

Senator Fornehed made a motion to approve the notes. Senator Rajabali seconded. The motion carried.

3. Nominating Committee and Elections

Senator Rajabali (Chair of the nominating committee) stated there was one nomination for President-Elect; he nominated Kris Craven, and Senator Donadio seconded. Senator Smith-Andrews made a motion to cease nominations and vote to elect Kris Craven as Faculty Senate President-Elect by acclamation. Senator Fornehed seconded. The motion carried and Senator Craven was chosen as Senate President-Elect for the 2024-2025 academic year.

Senator Smith-Andrews stated nominations were not sought for the position of Faculty Senate Secretary on an assumption of continued service. Secretary Mills did not volunteer to serve another term in the role and was not asked to serve by the nominating committee prior to this meeting. After a brief discussion, Senator Mills was nominated by Senator Smith-Andrews and Senator Fornehed seconded the nomination. Senator Maxwell made a motion to cease

nominations and vote to elect Senator Mills as Faculty Senate Secretary by acclamation. Senator Troy Smith seconded. The motion carried and Senator Mills was elected Faculty Senate Secretary for the 2024-2025 academic year.

4. Report from Academic Council Chair

Council Chair Winkle noted the renaming of the Study Abroad office to the Center for Global Experiences. Other activities may be read in Council minutes.

5. Report from Administrative Council Chair

Council Chair Fornehed noted the council accepted all annual reports at the April 3 meeting and elected Andrew Donadio as Vice-Chair for the coming academic year.

6. Report from Trustee Luna

Nothing to report

7. Report from Faculty Senate President

Senate President Allen stated the Cabinet meeting involved further discussion of the compensation study. Non-faculty employees find out today which family they fall under in the new classification architecture; some will be below the minimum pay range for their new classification and will be adjusted in the next round of compensation.

Further discussion took place regarding the controversy surrounding a truck parked on campus with a large display of flags. President Oldham asked Counsel Perdue and learned there was no policy violation inherent nor any legality in requesting the owner to remove the flags from the vehicle. More discussion was had regarding the “Hatch Act” and what students and employees are allowed to display. Senator Maxwell clarified that the “Hatch Act” prohibits displays of a political nature when taxpayer funding is involved.

8. Presentation by Ms. Christine Daniels from Capital Projects

Jim Cobb and Christine Daniels outlined the capital outlay for new construction, renovations, and improvements to existing structures. The Master Plan covers ten years and beyond and must be reassessed after ten years, though the plan is constantly adjusted based on what is approved and prioritized, and what impact it will have on the campus and other buildings. Ultimately, the plan is always in flux based on funding, needs, priority, and approvals. Those interested in proposing future projects should work with their Deans and begin the planning process. Please contact Jim Cobb or Christine Daniels with questions.

9. Update on QEP by Dr. Lenly Weathers

The QEP was up for reaffirmation/reaccreditation recently. The new topic has been selected and identified as “Transferable Skills and Career Readiness,” focusing on critical thinking, problem-solving, innovation, creative communication, and team building. The next step is coming up with a plan for the coming year. Developing a vision for the QEP should wrap this semester. Student input from town halls is taken into consideration during development; students seem to favor a career-centered first-year experience. Concerns were discussed regarding the inclusion of graduate students and the impact on general education. It is difficult to assess the inclusion of groups and any impact on the curriculum until a plan has been developed, and it was suggested the Provost may need to weigh in on the progress.

10. Request for questions for meeting with President Oldham on April 22

Submit questions to Senate President Allen, Secretary Mills, or via the website form.

11. Such Other Matters

Senate President Allen gave an update on the plan to propose an Ombuds Service Office; information is being pulled from other universities into a document to aid in this effort. The goal is for the office to be confidential, informal, and independent and mimic the University of Tennessee's Office of Ombuds Services. While UT's office covers students and employees, Tech's students already have an avenue. Therefore, this office would ideally exist for employees.

Senator Null asked about the status of Policy 207, and Senate President Allen said it was submitted to the Provost and she will start a review in the coming academic year.

Adjournment

Senator Smith-Andrews moved to adjourn the meeting. Senator Rajabali seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 5:11 p.m.

Approved: 9/16/2024