

UTC Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
April 18, 2024, at 3:10 pm (Zoom)

Presiding: Faculty Senate President Donald Reising
Minutes: Faculty Senate Secretary Hannah Wakefield

Attendance follows the minutes.

1. Call to Order

a. President Reising called the meeting to order at 3:10pm

2. Approval of the Minutes from the March 21, 2024 meeting

a. Dr. Beth Crawford moved; Dr. Bernadette DePrez seconded; motion passed with 33 yes, 1 abstention

3. Unfinished Business

a. Faculty Departures – Dr. Jack Zibluk

Dr. Zibluk reminded representatives that Assistant Vice Chancellor Laure Pou agreed to explore data related to faculty departures. He also reported that Dr. Chris Cunningham invited Dr. Reising and Dr. Zibluk to discuss faculty engagement and suggested that Faculty Senate would be a way for faculty to engage more on campus. Dr. Zibluk also asked Dr. Cunningham to supply some data related to faculty engagement. Dr. Zibluk hopes that we might be able to put together a report related to faculty departures.

b. Final exams being administered during the official exam window – Dr. Donald Reising

Dr. Reising reported that the Dean of the College of Engineering and Computer Science sent out an email reminding faculty to administer final exams during the scheduled final exam period. The Faculty Handbook Committee is also looking into ways to address this issue.

4. New Business

a. Faculty Senate Executive Committee – Dr. Donald Reising

President Reising introduced the 24-25 Faculty Senate Executive Committee

Faculty Senate President- Dr. Jack Zibluk

Faculty Senate President-Elect- Dr. Beth Crawford

Faculty Senate Vice President- Dr. Jaelyn Michael

Faculty Senate Secretary- Dr. Sarah Einstein

Faculty Senate Parliamentarian- TBD

Faculty Senate Past President- Dr. Donald Reising

Anyone interested in filling the role of Faculty Senate Parliamentarian should contact Dr. Jack Zibluk

b. Faculty Senate Election Results & Open Seats – Dr. Donald Reising

Some Faculty Senate seats remain open. Please look for emails soliciting nominations, and send any nominations to hannah-wakefield@utc.edu.

5. Committee Reports

a. Faculty Grants Committee – Dr. Yingfeng Wang

Dr. Reising presented a report on behalf of Dr. Wang. The committee received 39 applications (37 valid) for Summer 2024 faculty grants. 23 were fully funded and 1 partially funded.

b. Handbook Committee – Dr. Jaclyn Michael

i. Suspension of Tenure & Promotion for Parental Leave

The suggested revisions to section 3.3 and section 3.4 that were approved at the March meeting were passed on to the Provost's office and to the Chancellor's office and approved at both of those levels, so now they will go on to the Board of Trustees to be voted on in the June meeting. The proposed revisions were about adding parental leave as a specific reason why a faculty member might request an extension to their probationary period. The committee is also working on putting the Faculty Handbook all online. The project is slated to be finished next summer and launched for the subsequent fall.

c. TUFS Meeting – Dr. Jack Zibluk

The TUFS meeting took place on April 6. The meeting is the gathering of all Faculty Senate presidents in the state. Dr. Zibluk reported from the meeting.

- i. Legislative update: Anti-DEI legislation never made it out of committee at the state legislature.
- ii. Enrollment increases statewide: Throughout the UT System preliminary enrollment figures are all up, including at UTC. Knoxville in particular reported that they expect a big bump, and that may affect UTC because we often get students who want to be in the system but for whatever reason don't intend don't end up at UT Knoxville.
- iii. Former Vice Chancellor Yancy Freeman- Now Chancellor at UT Martin is flourishing in his role and bringing vital energy to recruiting.
- iv. State-Level Higher Education Budget- Not expected to be as generous as they have in the past.
- v. Tennessee State University Board of Trustees Disbanded- The state stepped in and disbanded the Board of Trustees. The decision was made because of auditing and accounting errors and came as a direct action from the governor's office.
- vi. Middle Tennessee State University Workload Policy- MTSU has passed a workload policy. You may view it here: <https://w1.mtsu.edu/provost/forms/wkguide.pdf>
- vii. Sick Leave Policy- No consensus has been reached regarding UT's potential sick leave policy. Dr. Zibluk plans to continue working on this issue next academic year.

d. Course Learning Evaluations Committee – Dr. Cindy Williamson

Dr. Williamson reminded the Senate of recommendations from the committee and said that she and Dr. Mills have met with Victoria and Anna in the Walker Center a couple of times. They have put together a plan for moving forward with the aim of ensuring that course learning evaluation results are used in an appropriate manner and educating department heads on interpreting results. Some information is already available on the Office of Accreditation and Assessment website, and they intend to enhance these resources. Send questions to Dr. Williamson or Dr.

Mills. President Reising clarified that the Faculty Senate would vote on whether to accept the proposal. Some discussion followed. President Reising called for a vote on the motion from committee to approve CLE proposal. The vote was 29 yes-1 no -3 abstentions.

e. Faculty Ratings of Administration Committee- Dr. Bernadette DePrez

Dr. DePrez reported on the workings of the committee from the year. The committee released the survey in October of 2023 after reviewing and revising last year's survey questions and invitation, and the results were provided in February. The response rate this year was 30.4%: 326 people responded out of 1072, and that included full time and part time faculty this year. Some of the challenges included survey response rate, continuous improvement for the survey process, and improving meaningful feedback to the administrators. The committee brought Dr. Chris Cunningham to consult with them twice. He did a deep dive into the analysis of the survey results and educated the committee on a framework for effective administrative performance in higher education (the academic leadership framework). Dr. Cunningham also provided education and recommendations about evidence for best practices for survey administration. The committee drafted an invitation and questions for next year's survey. In the interest of continuity, Dr. DePrez offered to meet with the chair of next year's committee, and Dr. Cunningham is also available to meet with next year's committee. The full annual report will be on the Faculty Senate website. Dr. DePrez shared that the committee recommends that the Faculty Senate revise the charge for this committee. President Reising opened the floor for discussion and questions. There was some discussion about the language of the charge pertaining to the committee's relationship to administration. President Reising then called for a vote on the motion from committee to revise the FRAC charge. The motion passed 32 yes, 1 abstention.

f. University Faculty Council- Dr. Donald Reising

President Reising reported on the UFC meeting held April 17, 2024.

i. Legislative Session

1. **Approval of 2 capital projects:** one at UTC and one at UTHSC.
 2. **Passed the NIL bill:** It lifts or removes restrictions that were state-dependent in order to provide flexibility at the state level in order to conform to changes to NIL rules based on shifts in NCAA and Federal rules and restrictions.
 3. **Removed the fine associated with failure to report DEI violations** within the 30 day period. President Boyd stated that in the time since the first DEI bill was signed into law in the state of Tennessee, we have not had one report. Every other DEI bill that was on the legislative slate was killed or failed to pass.
- ii. UT System President Boyd meeting with congressional leaders,** advocating for eight or so system-wide research-related earmarks. These earmarks are not tied to the passage of a federal budget.
- iii. Process for funding capital projects-** President Boyd is looking to find new approaches to funding capital projects because the current approach is too slow. It is in the exploratory phase.

iv. UT System Updates

1. **Quality Matters** renewal contract coming up this summer. The contract costs about \$1300 per campus. One benefit of a system-wide partnership with Quality Matters is that certification/external review can happen within the UT system, which saves money.
2. **Department Head training** was held in Nashville in March. Some feedback was a request for more campus-level opportunities for leadership development.
3. **Nine-month sick leave policy:** The plan is to continue to discuss potential policies and possibly vote on it at the May meeting of the UFC. UFC chair Michael Parsley has been talking with UT System representative, and the UT System representative seems to be a policy that accommodates both a sick leave policy and a modified duties policy. If the vote happens in May, UTC Faculty Senate would likely hold a vote on it in the fall. President Reising thanked faculty for providing feedback on this question.

6. Administrative Reports

a. Provost Hale

- i. **Faculty Marshaling-** Provost Hale thanked faculty who have volunteered to serve as marshals and said that Dr. Charlene Simmons was still in need of a few marshals. Contact Dr. Simmons to volunteer.
- ii. **Dual Enrollment-** President Boyd set a headcount target for 2030 of 14,800 students. Dual enrollment is one way the university is striving to meet that goal. The first cohort of University High is finishing this spring, and the second cohort is being recruited. Administration is also in consultation right now with Hamilton County Schools about the possibility of finding Masters-qualified instructors currently teaching in Hamilton County Schools that the university could ask to teach dual enrollment classes at their high schools.
- iii. **Workload Policy-** Provost Hale thanked Dr. Jack Zibluk for sending him the MTSU workload policy. The Provost plans to convene a new task force to work on the issue. The task force will consist of representatives from each of the degree-granting colleges.
- iv. **Department Head Training (Vice Provost Matt Matthews):** Vice Provost Matt Matthews reported that 23 people from UTC participated in the Department Head development event in Nashville. Vice President Savarese provided a great deal of positive feedback the contributions of UTC faculty. There is interest in having the keynote speaker from that event come to UTC's campus to lead some sessions for Department Heads.

b. Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration - Mr. Brent Goldberg

- i. **Salary Pool:** Vice Chancellor Goldberg clarified that the salary pool that is included in the budget is 3%, and UTC will provide a 3% increase to all eligible employees this year. The UT System is requiring that campuses do no merit increases this year.
- ii. **Budget Town Hall on April 30th**

- iii. **New Associate Vice Chancellor for Public Safety and Police Chief Sean O'Brien:** Sean O'Brien comes to us from the Chattanooga Police Department where he's had a remarkable career including being awarded for acts of bravery related to the terrorist attack that happened in 2015. He served as the Coordinator for Homeland Security for the city of Chattanooga and also is deemed to be an expert in active shooter response. He teaches and presents along with the FBI all over the country as it relates to active shooter response. He will focus on public safety as a whole and especially emergency management. He starts on May 1.
- iv. **Deputy Police Chief Matt Holzmacher:** Matt Holzmacher has been selected as Deputy Police Chief and will have a lot of responsibility for the day-to-day operations of the Police Department.
- v. **Capital Projects:** The Fletcher Hall addition was included as the only capital outlay project in the state of Tennessee for higher education. They will start working on relocation of utilities in January or February of 2025. The University Center starts in May as part of a five-phase project that will go all the way through June of 2026. Some people will be relocated out of the UC for the entire two years. Most people will move around in phases throughout that project; supervisors of those affected know what those plans are. There is work ongoing in Brock Hall. Asbestos remediation has been completed. Renovation inside that building is expected to conclude in the summer of 2025. Renovation in 540 McCallie will begin in July and will proceed over two years. Geotechnical work on the new Health Sciences building site. Some archaeology needs to be completed over the summer because it is a historic site. The Health Sciences building is scheduled to open in January of 2027. There are some capital maintenance projects related to roofs and elevators. Around 13 elevators on campus will either be replaced or modernized.
- c. **Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Strategy Officer - Dr. Bryan Johnson**
Vice Chancellor Johnson reported that the strategic plan process is moving forward.

7. **Faculty Concerns-** No faculty concerns were raised.

8. **Announcements**

- a. **Dr. Carolyn Thompson and Dr. Roger G. Brown Community Engagement Award – Dr. Jennifer Boyd**
Dr. Boyd announced the winner of this award: Dr. Amye Warren. Congratulations to Dr. Warren.
- b. **Legislative Update – UT System President Randy Boyd**
 - i. Tuesday, April 30, 2024, at 4 pm in the UC Auditorium
- c. **UTC Budget Town Hall Meeting – Mr. Brent Goldberg**
 - i. Tuesday, April 30, 2024, at 1:30 pm – 3 pm in the UC Auditorium
- d. **FARC Nominations**
 - i. Please send to Hannah Wakefield by tomorrow, April 19.
- e. **Spring commencement marshals**
 - i. Contact Charlene Simmons if willing to serve.
- f. **Ombudsperson Candidates**

- i. Meetings with faculty: Library, 12:45pm
- ii. 4/23, 4/25, 4/26
- iii. Vice Provost Shewanee Howard-Baptiste shared that the full schedule will be shared soon

g. Full Faculty Meetings

- i. Tuesday, September 17, 2024, at 3:00 pm

h. Next faculty Senate meeting in August

9. Adjournment

Motion: Jessica Taylor, Second: Sarah Treat meeting adjourned at 4:25

Abrha	Wolday	
Baker	Sybil	X
Bathi	Jejal	
Boyd	Jennifer	X
Bradley-Shoup	Mark	
Caskey	Jodi	
Crawford	Beth	X
Davenport	Stephan	X
DePrez	Bernadette	X
Einstein	Sarah	X
Epperson	Brooke	X
Evans	Matthew	n/a
Fleming	Rachel	
Franklin	Alycia	X
Goulet	Ron	
Grubb	Matthew	
Guinn	Cherry	
Harbison	John	X
Harris	Lee	
Harriss	Chandler	X
Heinrici		X
Hogg	Jennifer	X
Holcomb	Hadley	X
Huber	Thomas	X

Ibrahim	Hamby	X
Jeffers	Gaye	X
Kamrath	Barry	
Kaplanoglu	Erkan	X
Kozak	Mark	X
Laing	Craig	
Legg	Julie	
Littleton	Chad	X
Ma	Ziwei	X
Manning-Berg	Ashley	X
McAllister	Deborah	X
McDaniel	Ethan	X
McDonnell	Emma	X
McElrone	Marissa	X
McNutt	Dunstan	X
Medeiros	Jason	X
Michael	Jaclyn	X
Montgomery	Callie	X
Park	Han	X
Parks	Josh	
Purkey	Lynn	X
Reising	Don	X
Strickland	Bryan	
Strickler	Jeremy	
Taylor	Jessica	X
Treat	Sarah	X
Usman	Aneeka	
Van Buren	Harry	
Vincent	Nishani	X
Wakefield	Hannah	X
Walsh	Darrell	X

Xie	Mengjun	
Zibluk	Jack	X