

# Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

**Date:** January 20, 2022  
**Time:** 3:00 pm  
**Location:** online live at <https://tennessee.zoom.us/j/93623372221>  
**Called By:** Tammy Garland, Faculty Senate President

**Attendance:** X = present

Senator	Role	20-Jan	Senator	Role	20-Jan
Barnes, John	RCOB NTT		Knox, Sara	CAS BS NTT	
Basham, Sherah	CAS BS T/TT	X	Locander, Dave	RBOB T/TT	X
Boyd, Jennifer	President Elect	X	Mandravelis, Stephen	CAS FA T/TT	
Caskey, Jodi	At-Large, NTT	X	McPherson, Joyce	At-Large, Adj	X
Colston, Marissa	At-Large	X	Mills, Ethan	CAS HU T/TT	X
Crawford, Beth	CHEPS T/TT	X	Mitchell, Tiffany	CAS HU NTT	X
Crittenden, Courtney	At-Large	X	Nall, Rachel	CHEPS NTT	X
Court, David	CAS FA NTT	X	Nichols, Roger	CAS MS T/TT	X
Cruz, Elicia	CHEPS NTT		Ozmy, Joshua	Non-Voting	X
Cummiskey, Julia	At-Large	X	Padalino, Carolyn	CHEPS NTT	X
Debter, David	CAS MS NTT	X	Palmer, Heather	CAS HU T/TT	X
DePrez, Bernadette	CHEPS T/TT	X	Panagiotou, Eleni	CAS MS T/TT	X
Devries, Stephanie	CAS MS T/TT	X	Phuong, Chang	CECS NTT	
Dileepan, Dileep	RCOB T/TT		Schafer, Erika	CAS FA T/TT	X
Dockery, Todd	RCOB NTT	X	Schultz, Lucy	CAS HU NTT	
Epperson, Brooke	CHEPS T/TT	X	Simmons, Charlene	Past President	X
Fomunung, Ignatius	CECS T/TT	X	Simms-Robertson, Priscilla	CHEPS T/TT	X
Gao, Culian (Lani)	CAS MS T/TT	X	Smith, Wes	CHEPS T/TT	X
Garland, Tammy	President	X	Stuart, Christopher	CAS HU T/TT	X
Gillison, Stephanie	RCOB T/TT	X	Swaren, Chantelle	CHEPS T/TT	X
Goulet, Ron	CECS T/TT	X	Thul, Susan	CHEPS T/TT	X
Hansen, Christopher	CHEPS T/TT	X	Tyndal, Laura	At-Large	X
Harper, Neil	At-Large, Adj		Wang, Yingfeng	At-Large	X
Ibrahim, Hamdy	CECS T/TT	X	Ward, Chandra	CAS BS T/TT	X
Jordan, Joseph	CAS HU T/TT	X	Whightsel, Oren	At-Large, NTT	
Khmelko, Irina	CAS BS T/TT	X	Wigal, Cecelia	At-Large	X
Kimbrow, Devori	CAS HU NTT	X	Xie, Mengjun	CECS T/TT	X
Klingbeil, Thandi	CAS MS NTT	X			

**Author:** Cecelia M. Wigal, Faculty Senate Secretary  
**Date:** January 28, 2022

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The meeting was called to order by President Tammy Garland at 3:10pm and attendance was taken. President Garland noted that this is a difficult time due to Covid. Presently there are 43 faculty/staff and 213 students isolating. Just today 62 students tested positive for Covid 19.

# Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

## 1. Approval of Minutes

The meeting minutes from November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021, were reviewed. There was no discussion of the meeting minutes. There was a motion by Beth Crawford to accept the minutes and a 2<sup>nd</sup> by Joyce McPherson. The motion was approved.

## 2. Administrative Reports

The following administrative reports were provided.

### *Chancellor Angle*

Chancellor Angle spoke about possible facility projects and their status. He mentioned that Covid has been frustrating. He has heard from both students and faculty and understands the frustrations. He appreciates what all are doing and wants to ensure all that we will get through this.

### *Provost Jerold Hale*

Provost Hale discussed 4 items: Covid 19 policies and practices, DEI inquiry, Board of Trustees update, and SGA inquiry. Questions were then addressed.

### *Covid 19 Policies and Practices*

Provost Hale stated that it is important for faculty to remember they cannot require students to wear masks or remove students from class if they refuse to wear a mask. Faculty can encourage virtual office hours but must be consistent in how the hours are offered.

The Covid infection rate on campus is increasing for both faculty/staff and students. If you must isolate or quarantine, remember to arrange alternative instruction for your face-to-face instruction. If the infection rate gets much higher there may be discussion about alternative course offerings such as Hyflex and a rotating schedule. The Faculty Senate Executive Committee will be consulted on this prior to any action.

### *DEI Legislative Inquiry*

There is an inquiry for campuses to identify faculty and staff resources devoted to DEI (diversity, equity, inclusion) including committees and courses. The Provost's office has responded to this with help from the Deans and Department Heads. Presently there are no concerns regarding this inquiry.

### *Board of Trustees Update*

The UT Board of Trustees is taking up the issue of ACT and SAT as admission requirements for the UT system.

### *SGA Inquiry*

It was brought to SGA's attention that in at least one course the syllabus stated students will receive extra points toward their overall grade for turning in students for honor code violations. The Provost reminded the Senators that students should not be given course credit in a course for this type of action. Faculty should encourage honorable behavior, but this behavior should not be rewarded to support the academic grade.

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## *Question Responses*

Faculty can receive n95 masks if desired. They should contact Faith Garner at [faith-garner@utc.edu](mailto:faith-garner@utc.edu). It is preferred that the request come from department heads, but individual faculty and staff may request masks.

Legally UTC cannot require that anyone quarantine. Persons can quarantine if they desire. UTC advice aligns with CDC guidance.

UTC administration did work with legal and President Boyd to determine if masks and/or vaccinations can be required. But State law does not allow either. Chancellor Angle stated he spent much time defining mask and vaccination mandates.

## *Vice Chancellor Yancy Freeman*

We have better news on enrollment than what we had in the fall. The day 11 FTE is down 94.2 compared to fall which was 304. The head count is down 133 students from last spring. This is better than in fall. This may mean there is a recovery for us. The fall 2022 new student acceptances are running 16% to 18% ahead of this time last year.

The office is working on an enrollment management plan. There are 18 sessions scheduled to get help in developing the plan. This plan is important since the national trend is a decline in college attendance for the up coming years.

Vice Chancellor Freeman thanked the faculty for their flexibility during this pandemic.

## *Vice Chancellor Vicki Farnsworth*

Microsoft Viva, the employee experience platform, is presently active. Its notifications are turned off across the system. However, data are being collected for you. You can turn off the system for you if you do not want this data. You can also opt in if you are presently opted out. Check out <https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/viva/insights/personal/use/home-web> to learn more about the platform.

## *Associate Provost Lauren Ingraham*

Dr. Ingraham provided a short presentation on the Reimagining General Education (RGE) initiative. She reiterated that this is a prototype, not a “done deal” and that the proposed RGE curriculum will change per feedback over the spring semester.

Presently there are 8 working groups looking at the various categories to define goals and learning outcomes. The RGE committee has received 77 submissions of feedback through the online comment system. 6 themes result from this feedback. Dr. Ingraham quickly mentioned these themes. The main comments are covered in the presentation slides.

The working groups will give their recommendations to the RGE committee by Feb 1<sup>st</sup>. The RGE committee will then developed a revised GE proposal/prototype for further campus discussion. Dr. Ingraham reminded the Senators that the final GE proposal will not look like the prototype. The purpose of the prototype was to generate discussion.

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## *Responses to Questions*

Ron Goulet questioned the purpose of the RGE committee since it is not a committee of the Senate. President Garland stated that the committee comes from academic affairs and is an initiative generated from Chancellor Angles' directions. The RGE committee will present its results to the Faculty Senate for action. Dr. Goulet questions why this initiative was not an action of the Faculty Senate General Education committee.

There continue to be questions regarding the reduction in the hours for the quantitative reasoning and science categories. This will increase the total required credit hours for many programs which is not acceptable.

## *Vice Chancellor Tyler Forrest*

The budget process is in progress. Vice Chancellor Forrest mentioned that the Lupton roof assessment is complete, and it was determined that the entire roof should be replaced. A temporary solution will be created until the roof is replaced. Also, Hunter Hall construction should be completed on time.

Vice Chancellor Forest stated he is looking forward to the discussion of the Barns & Noble opportunity.

## *Brett Fuchs, Associate Dean of Students*

Associate Dean Fuchs mentioned that if students use the university Covid form and they are positive for Covid, they are required to isolate. If they do not isolate, they are not following university requirements. If students test positive but have not completed the university Covid form his office follows up with the students and tries to convince them to complete the form.

The Covid teams are working after hours to respond to student and faculty forms.

## *Dawn Ford, UTC's Chief Epidemiologist*

Dr. Ford mentioned that some people seem not aware of the protocol for covid. Please review the requirements. Please ask your students to complete the university Covid form if they have or think they have Covid. Completing the form helps UTC track the data and helps inform faculty for tracking absences. The form is found at <http://www.utc.edu/covidnotify>.

The rapid Covid tests UTC is using are the most sensitive. Positive testing rates are presently high. Of 90 tested yesterday, 45 were positive. The campus is processing approximately 150 Covid forms a day. They are having to get additional staff to process the forms. Most forms are reporting or resulting in positive Covid tests.

Dr. Ford suggested that all should get the free Covid tests from the government. They are like those being provided on campus.

## *Dean Linda Liedtka, Library and QEP Committee Chair*

Dean Liedtka reviewed the QEP project proposals being put forward. The next step of the QEP committee is to determine which of the 3 proposals to put forward. The committee has 3 months to work through this process.

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## 3. Committee Reports

None presented.

## 4. New Business

The only new business discussed was the proposed Barnes & Noble contract – First Day Complete. Chris Sherbesman, Bobby Hamous, and Jennifer Russell from Barnes & Noble College made the presentation and answered questions. Following are the key points of the presentation and discussion.

- The proposed program allows for students to receive their course materials – courseware, books, online texts, online programs -- directly, prior to the start of the semester. The cost of the materials is included in the students' UTC bills. The cost is a flat fee based on the hours the student is enrolled. For example, the cost may be \$24 per credit hour for all students. This is a rental program, and most materials are available for only the semester. All materials are electronically sourced.
- This is an opportune time to upgrade the current program which is presently limited to a small number of courses. The upgrade will make the program available for all undergraduate courses across campus.
- Spring 2022 is the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the present program (contract). 30 courses are presently included in the program. 4900 students are participating in the program at some level. A small number of students opted out of the program.
- Students can save 35% to 50% of the cost of traditional bookstore prices if they participate in the program. The materials can be delivered through Canvas.
- The cost for the students is reviewed each year to ensure it is applicable to student and course needs.

### *Question/Responses*

A question/answer session followed the presentation. Following are questions addressed.

- **Costs for some classes are not as high as others. How does this program adjust for courses that do not spend as much?** *The program is popular because students and parents can have a set price to budget for books. Students can opt out if they do not desire to participate (if they do not believe it is cost effective).*
- **What percent of the student body will save money through this program?** *UTC presently estimates a student cost of \$700 per semester for materials. Barnes and Noble cost will be much lower than this (for example \$200 per semester). The exact percentage of students who benefit or do not benefit was not identified.*
- **Will this program include graduate courses?** *This program is only for undergraduate courses.*
- **Is this a rental program?** *This is a rental program. If students need access to the textbook longer than a semester, such as for an incomplete course, access can be extended.*
- **When can students opt out of the program?** *Students can opt in and out of the program at any time before the program close date. The opt out system is very flexible. The plan is to match the refund system with the university refund system.*

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- **When is the university looking at implementing this program?** *The students requested this program. The intent is for implementation to occur Fall 2022. The backbone of the program already exists so Barnes and Noble can begin to communicate the program to students beginning in February and March. The current contract ends in 2024. The new program will be an amendment to the present contract.*
- **What if students prefer using traditional texts (instead of electronic materials)?** *Barnes and Nobles does not have an answer for this yet. They are looking into it.*

Rachel Fleming read a statement from the library personnel. The library personnel are concerned that the presentation is not a full description of the program. They feel it is unclear what the program is really going to look like. They will be happy to have further discussions on this.

Others stated that the program sounds good as an opt in program, not an opt out program.

Tyler Forrest stated he will be happy to schedule a review session in the future to answer questions in more depth.

## 5. Old Business

President Garland covered three items of old business: Covid 19 clarification, student evaluations, and sick leave policy.

### *Covid 19 Clarification*

The Spring 2022 absence statement is available on the Faculty Senate website. Faculty should ensure it is in their syllabus. Faculty should be flexible with their students and work with their department if they themselves become ill.

### *Student Evaluations*

Some faculty have mentioned that some open-ended comments on the student evaluations were quite painful. These faculty would like that the pandemic environment be considered especially as student evaluations are used for faculty EDOs and the R&T process.

### *Sick Leave Policy*

President Garland mentioned that there is no additional progress on the Sick Leave Policy.

## 6. Faculty Concerns

None

## 7. Announcements

None

## 8. Adjournment

There was a motion for adjournment and a second. Meeting was adjourned at 5:15 pm.