

# Full Faculty Meeting Minutes

**Date:** February 14, 2022  
**Time:** 3:00 pm  
**Location:** online live at <https://tennessee.zoom.us/j/97741690322>  
**Called By:** Tammy Garland, Faculty Senate President

**Author:** Cecelia M. Wigal, Faculty Senate Secretary (with assistance from Charlene Simmons and Jennifer Boyd)  
**Date:** March 4, 2022

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The meeting was called to order by President Tammy Garland at 3:01pm.

## 1. Approval of Minutes

The meeting minutes from the September 21, 2021, meeting, provided by the following link, were reviewed. ( <https://www.utc.edu/sites/default/files/2022-02/Full%20Faculty%20Meeting%20Minutes%20Sep%202021%2C%202021%5B49%5D.pdf>)

There were no discussions or corrections. There was a motion from Beth Crawford for approval. This was seconded by Jack Zibluk. The Minutes were approved.

## 2. Administrative Reports

The following reports were provided.

### *Chancellor Angle*

Chancellor Angle thanked all for what they do for the students and the University. He then reported on the following items.

### Governor Lee's State of the State address (January 31<sup>st</sup>)

The address highlighted that the budget is very friendly to higher education. The budget

- supports the Health Science building
- increases the Hope Scholarship to \$5100 per year for all 4 years. This should cover about ½ of UTC's tuition.
- Increases the salary pool by 4% for higher education employees. (President Boyd worked behind the scenes to achieve this high level of funding)
- expands UT Promise support to families with up to \$60,000 annual income.
- Expands the UT Promise to include families under \$60,000

The Governor asked Universities not to increase tuition or fees this coming year given the state has fully funded the state formula. The Chancellor added that enrollment will be key to ensuring that UTC's budget and operations align.

### The TN Legislature

The TN Legislator is in session. There are a lot of bills under consideration including one about ACT scores. UTC has found no correlation between ACT scores and college performance – high school GPA is a better indicator.

# Full Faculty Meeting Minutes

There are also several bills regarding divisive topics – UTC and Knoxville administration will continue to monitor these bills. The Chancellor described UTC as “on top of it” in trying to work with state representatives to have some say about what is enacted into law.

## ***Provost Hale***

Provost Hale thanked everyone for their hard work this year. He then reported on the following items.

### SACS/COC Update

Several groups of people are currently working on 3 categories of standards: (1) core requirements (governing board, research, and planning processes, etc.), (2) comprehensive standards (student learning outcomes criteria, degree criteria, academic policies published, faculty certifications, and library resources, etc.), and (3) federal requirements (student success and formal student complaint process, etc.). There are 6 core standards, 14 comprehensive standards, and 7 federal standards. Draft reports concerning these standards are being turned in right now – 20 are received so far.

### The Disability Resource Center (DRC)

CAD has communicated some faculty issues regarding the DRC. Provost Hale, Vice Chancellor Freeman, and Dr. Garland have met with CAD to address these issues. A review of the DRC is being conducted as a result.

## ***Vice Chancellor Tyler Forest***

Vice Chancellor (VC) Forest stated that the Governor’s budget is the best he has seen for TN higher education in the 12 years he has been at UTC. He added that the unofficial plan for the 4% salary pool is (1) to give a cost-of-living adjustment if the employee meets performance expectations and (2) to provide funds to adjust pay for promotions and other salary adjustments. VC Forest stated it is too early to comment if the distribution associated with the salary pool could be a flat increase instead of a percentage-based increase. He did state that the state is funding about 70% of the pool. UTC is funding the rest.

### Facilities

VC Forest commented that the state budget funds new capital projects totally \$110 million. This includes the construction of the Health Science building and renovations at 540 McCallie (the State Office Building) and Broke Hall. UTC funded improvement projects include the Wofford Athletic Center attachment to McKenzie Arena, the new residence hall on Vine Street, a parking facility on Houston Street, and the UC renovation.

Lupton roof repair is still in progress. UTC has requested a cost proposal for a temporary fix which is hoping to execute quickly. The total reroof is planned for the summer.

Hunter Hall renovations are progressing on time. People will be moving back into the building in Summer 2022.

# Full Faculty Meeting Minutes

## UTC Campus Master Plan

The Campus Master Plan is moving forward. Listening sessions were conducted across campus to gather information to compose a comprehensive campus plan by the end of this calendar year.

## 1<sup>st</sup> Day Complete Program

VC Forest's office has done a great deal of due diligence to investigate the benefit of the 1<sup>st</sup> Day Complete program. They have spoken with faculty at UTC and had discussions with other universities. They are presently finalizing the enquiries and will share their findings with the Chancellor.

VC Forest responded to a question concerning whether 1<sup>st</sup> Day Complete would result in an additional fee for students and whether the fee would be prevented by the Governor. VC Forest stated that since 1<sup>st</sup> Day Complete is an opt-out program, the fee is not part of the Governor's moratorium.

## ***Vice Chancellor Yancy Freeman***

Vice Chancellor Freeman was not in attendance. However, Faculty Senate President Tammy Garland encouraged faculty to familiarize themselves with the development of an Enrollment Management Strategic Plan that Vice Chancellor Freeman is leading.

## ***Vice Provost Lauren Ingraham, General Education***

Vice Provost Ingraham reported that the Reimagining General Education (RGE) Committee is going through the reports from the faculty working groups. More than 70 faculty participated in the working groups. She thanked faculty for their contribution.

The next step of the process is to take the information from the working groups and the general feedback being collected from faculty to create a revised proposal. This proposal will be presented to the faculty for additional feedback. The RGE Committee will then review this feedback to create a final proposal. The goal is to put forth a final version of Gen Ed for a faculty vote by the end of this semester.

Vice Provost Ingraham also reported that the new General Education program will have fewer and more measurable and easier to assess learning outcomes.

## ***Dean Teresa Liedtka, QEP Committee Chair***

Dean Liedtka reported that the Quality Enhancement Plan Committee recommended three projects to the Reaffirmation Leadership Committee. The QEP Committee continues to collect information and to review with respect to the 3 options. They hope to have a final single QEP recommendation in 6-8 weeks.

## ***Dr. Chris Smith, Health Team***

Dr. Smith reported that UTC COVID case numbers are declining. There were a known 22 positive cases on campus today; three weeks ago, UTC had ten times this number of cases. The Executive Leadership team has asked the COVID Task Force to recommend a plan for moving forward once COVID funding ends on April 30<sup>th</sup>.

# Full Faculty Meeting Minutes

### 3. Faculty Senate Updates – Dr. Tammy Garland, Faculty Senate President

Faculty Senate President Tammy Garland thanked the Faculty Senate representatives, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, and all committee members for their continued service.

President Garland has received concerns from Faculty about the Microsoft 365 migration and the 1<sup>st</sup> Day Complete contract. President Garland added that the COVID absence statement was passed for Spring 2022.

#### *Committee Work*

President Garland highlighted the following ongoing Faculty Senate committee work.

- The Course Learning Evaluation Committee added a diversity statement to the course learning evaluation form that emphasizes the need to evaluate faculty on their teaching.
- The Curriculum Committee is working to clean up the Catalog in terms of language related to courses counting in the minor. They are also reviewing the grade appeals process.
- The Executive Committee and the Handbook Committee are working on clarifying the Faculty Senate election process in the Senate Bylaws.
- The Handbook Committee has looked at NTT processes to improve clarity. It is now looking at EDO and RTP processes.
- The Sick-Leave Policy is still in discussion at the UT System level. President Garland will keep us updated on this.

#### *Course Learning Evaluations Survey*

President Garland detailed the responses of faculty to a recent survey about Course Learning Evaluations (CLEs). She reported that:

- Nearly 80% of respondents have received comments on CLEs that are unwarranted.
- About 1/3 of respondents reported that these comments were about age, race, ethnicity, sex, or sexual orientation, especially the appearance and/or attitude of female faculty.
- Most respondents reported that students are not completing CLEs.
- Only 30% of respondents agreed that CLEs reflect the quality of their teaching.
- 1/3 of survey respondents said that departments are not using any method to evaluate faculty teaching.
- Approximately 50% of respondents neither agree or disagree that Department Heads used data or written comments from CLEs in a constructive manner.

#### *UT System*

President Garland stated that the University Faculty Council (UFC) and the Tennessee University Faculty Senate (TUFS) are looking at various legal issues being addressed by the Tennessee legislature. These include Critical Race Theory (CRT), gun legislation, University entry test optional policies, and general vaccination requirements. The UFC is still discussing the Sick Leave Policy.

# Full Faculty Meeting Minutes

## ***University-Wide Attendance Policy***

54% of Faculty who responded to a recent survey regarding a university-wide attendance policy that a general, university-wide attendance policy is needed. Associate Dean of Students Brett Fuchs is proposing a university-wide statement. Faculty should review this policy. The Faculty Senate Executive Committee will survey Faculty about the statement to get their feedback. This feedback will be shared with the Faculty Senate for review.

## **4. New Business**

The following were addressed.

### ***University Absence Policy – Associate Dean of Students Brett Fuchs***

Associate Dean of Students Brett Fuchs commented on the development of a university-wide absence policy. This policy would be broad and meant to cover a variety of absences (well beyond COVID). He described that the policy would involve students submitting absence information to the Dean of Students Office, the faculty being informed of the situation by the Dean of Students Office, and the faculty being asked to provide a way for the students to makeup missed work or to complete alternative work. In the case of excessive absence (even if legitimate), the faculty member could deny accommodating an excuse except for absences for military obligations and religious holidays or obligations, which we are required to excuse by State Law.

The goal is to shift responsibility of accommodating absences from individual faculty to departmental policy guidelines.

Faculty can view the draft University-wide Absence Policy at:

<https://www.utc.edu/sites/default/files/2022-02/DRAFT%20Student%20Attendance%20Policy.pdf>.

### ***Grade Appeals Process – Associate Dean of Students Brett Fuchs***

Associate Dean Fuchs reported that his office is also working on a new process for Grade Appeals. The new process would involve electronic filing of appeals. Appeals would be routed to the Department Head to capture dates and times and to confirm receipts. This process is in response to student complaints received by the Dean of Students Office about not receiving replies and emails, in a timely manner to move through the Appeals Process

### ***Withdrawal Policy – Associate Dean of Students Brett Fuchs***

Associate Dean Fuchs reported on the consideration of a new Withdrawal Policy that would allow students to withdraw themselves from classes each semester up until the last day of class. Other institutions in the UT System allow this. The UT System has requested UTC to review its Withdrawal Policy. Associate Dean Fuchs wants to hear faculty opinions on this before changes are made. Registrar Joel Wells clarified that the policy would allow students to only withdrawal from the institution (i.e., all registered courses) by the end of the semester. Students could not pick and choose single courses from which to withdrawal. There would still be a drop date for individual classes.

# Full Faculty Meeting Minutes

Beth Crawford asked for clarification of how this Withdrawal Policy would be distinct from the current backdated withdrawal policy. Fuchs explained that the new system is a 3<sup>rd</sup> form of withdrawal. It would allow students to go into Banner and withdraw themselves rather than go through a more involved process. Beth suggested that any new policy clearly state that the withdrawal would be from all courses during the semester and not a single course.

## 5. Faculty Concerns

President Garland continues to address problems with CLEs from faculty. Academic Affairs is looking at these issues.

President Garland reminded the faculty to review the Faculty Senate Bylaws and Handbook for statements on the RTP process to ensure they are being followed.

## 6. Announcements

The following announcements were shared:

- Faculty Senate elections are in process. The Senate is working on divisional elections now - they are about half completed. The Senate is also in the process of nominations for a new Faculty Senate President-Elect (closes tomorrow). In addition, a call will go out shortly for At-Large representatives to the Faculty Senate.
- EDOs are due in March.
- There will be a regularly scheduled Faculty Senate meeting on Thursday, March 10, 2022. (This was an editorial correction. The 17<sup>th</sup> is during Spring Break, so the meeting is scheduled for the 10<sup>th</sup> instead).
- The State of the University address is scheduled for Wednesday, February 23, 2022.
- The Board of Trustees will meet on February 24-25, 2022.

## 7. Adjournment

Jamie Harvey motioned to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Gretchen Potts. Meeting was adjourned at 4:03 pm.