

UTC Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes AY 2022-23

(attendance follows the notes)

Meeting date: October 20, 2022 (via Zoom)

Call to Order

Welcome: the meeting was called to order by President Jennifer Boyd at 3:10 pm.

President Boyd asked for approval of the minutes from the September 18th, 2022 meeting. Beth Crawford moved and Dominik Henrici seconded. There were 33 approvals, 1 abstention, none opposed.

Administrative Reports

1. Provost Jerry Hale

Provost Hale explained that details regarding the University High Memorandum of Understanding are still being worked out with Hamilton County Schools. The University High curriculum will not require any curriculum modifications on our campus. There are fewer of these students currently because Hamilton County Schools decided that cannot leave their campus to come to UTC. They have to attend classes after their school day. The proposed MOU has been approved by UTC general counsel, UT System Counsel, and the Hamilton County Schools Attorney's Office. These students are to be treated like UTC students, there is no need to modify curriculum for these students. This should not displace any currently enrolled UTC students in any courses.

The UT system wide data is back regarding post-tenure review outcomes. This system wide data will be presented at next week's Board of Trustees meeting next week. All UTC faculty met expectations for this stage of review. Provost Hale described the contrasting ways that this data may be interpreted. Provost Hale is very pleased with the work our faculty continue to do under difficult circumstances.

There are some changes in the process that THEC uses in the future regarding new degree programs. This would mean that an already long timetable for approval might become longer. Provost Hale described the current process for submitting and getting approval for a new academic program. He also detailed the new changes that include getting prior approval from the Board of Trustees before submitting to THEC. Materials that the Board needs to review must be submitted 45 days in advance. Hale reported his expression of concern about these changes and the long timetable.

The Board of Trustees will be discussing rationale and justification for granting tenure across the system. The Board is comprised of members from different employment and community sectors, and they may not understand tenure and the tenure process. This could be an educational opportunity. Provost Hale doesn't want faculty to be over alarmed about this, and will report at

the next Faculty Senate meeting. Also everyone is welcome to join the Board's meeting virtually to see the discussion themselves.

At the next Board of Trustees meeting will be the presentation of a new educational program, the Bachelor of Applied Science degree in cyber security. This has been three years in development and approval is anticipated.

President Boyd asked if the new academic program approval process and timetable applied to minors, and Provost Hale reported that it seems to be only for majors. The new guidelines and procedures will apply to completely new academic programs.

Lucy Schultz asked if the 45 day period required to submit materials regarding new academic programs to the Board of Trustees would impact internal UTC approval processes, such as the Curriculog system. Provost Hale replied that this is about external processes and doesn't influence any internal processes. This adds a new step at the front end of the approval process, and it could extend the timeline to nearly a year.

Sandra Affare asked if there is any concern about the age gap with University High students and other students in the classroom. Provost Hale said there is no concern because there are already dual enrollment students on campus now and have been for the past few years. These students are also vetted as part of the approval process for the program, and we expect that these students are very high achieving. We have not had problems with these students in the past.

President Boyd directed everyone to the Board of Trustees website to see the agenda and Zoom links for the meeting.

Vice Chancellor Kim White concurs with the assessment of Provost Hale regarding how many members of the Board may not be familiar with tenure.

2. Vice Chancellor of Enrollment Management and Student Success Yancy Freeman

Vice Chancellor Freeman updated faculty on the UTC Road Trip / Power C Tour, with stops in Nashville, Memphis, Knoxville, and Chattanooga in the month of November. This is the first time the University is chartering a bus to speak to prospective students and families in their hometowns. Students can get admitted on the spot if they have transcripts with them. There will be representation from all colleges and many student offices. The Chancellor will participate and speak to students about the value of a college education. Alumni will also participate. Scholarships will also be given during these events to prospective students.

Another event is the Blue and Gold Preview Day, which is Saturday November 5. Prospective students and families will be on campus going on tours of departments, housing, and the library. This is the largest event on campus, since 1300-1500 people usually participate. The goal is to break the first year student enrollment record in 2023. Faculty are encouraged to participate in Blue and Gold Day, or on the Chattanooga stop on the Bus Tour.

Since the Tour will be in Memphis on Election Day, Vice Chancellor Freeman encouraged people to participate in early voting, since that is available before Election Day.

3. Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs Kim White and Assistant Vice Chancellor for Alumni Affairs Jeff Cogburn

Vice Chancellor Kim White updated faculty on the success of Mocs Give Day, which was October 4 2022. White mentioned that she is a UTC alum and how rewarding it has been to learn about the great work being done at UTC. She reported that since joining in this position, she has hired a staff of fifteen to rebuild a culture of philanthropy. They are working with the Chancellor, Provost, and Deans to identify potential donation sources. The goal is to raise thirteen million dollars this year.

Assistant Vice Chancellor Jeff Cogburn reported that this year the Office raised 1.2 million dollars from 1475 donors, setting a record for Mocs Give Day. Each College was supported, many Departments and Programs were supported, and the Student Emergency Fund received donations. Cogburn remarked that this year we had four hundred and eleven new donors, compared to ten last year. The Office wants to create more opportunities for faculty to support students in addition to the work that they are doing in the classroom and administratively.

Cogburn was asked about many faculty and staff donors were new or were they continuing through payroll deduction. He reported that the numbers this year only reflect new donors and not anyone giving previously.

4. Director of Web Development Susan Lazenby

Director Susan Lazenby spoke about developments in the IT office and how faculty could get help with any web development that they may be working on. On the IT website, there is a help button that brings up a service catalog. After accessing that page, if one clicks on Web Services it is possible to put in a specialized request for help. Faculty can also send an email to: webhelp@utc.edu with their request and someone will be in touch with them.

Lazenby mentioned that she has heard that faculty would like more web editors. The IT office is currently working with Brian O’Leary and his graduate students to develop new web trainings.

Lazenby reported that students are now asked to perform two-factor authentication using Duo to access many University services, including Canvas, MyMocsNet, and their UTC email. Faculty should be aware that students may need access to their devices in order to authenticate their login into services like Canvas in a classroom setting.

Sybil Baker asked if clearing the cache on one’s computer would trigger a need to reauthenticate using Duo. Lazenby wasn’t sure and said someone would get back to Baker on that question.

Dominik Henrici mentioned that when switching devices, they often get automatically locked out of MocsNet. Lazenby replied that she would make a note of the situation and get back to him.

New Business

1. Proposed DHON GPA Changes (Dean of the Honors College Linda Frost)

Dean Frost explained that historically in order to do a DHON thesis, the student needed to have a 3.5 minimum GPA in their major. For context, the thesis process is approved at the Department level and not in the Honors College, which was the case before. The College recently lowered their required GPA to 3.2, following national norms, and the College wants everyone to reconsider the 3.5 GPA standard. It was mentioned that there is no obligation to conduct an Honors thesis. Frost wanted to raise this with the Senate and is not sure how to take this conversation forward.

Faculty should review the DHON document posted on the Faculty Senate website (under Agendas and Meeting Notes) to see description of these changes and the several options available to faculty in regards to these theses.

President Boyd added that it seems that it is up to individual faculty to participate in an Honors thesis. If a GPA is important to the faculty, they could research more and decide whether or not to participate in the thesis project. Her opinion is that this proposal gives more power to individual faculty.

Sandra Affare asked about adjunct participation in the DHON thesis process and how one can get registered for a thesis course section. Dean Frost mentioned that this is something that the Associate Dean of the Honors College Will Kuby manages. She also mentioned that this is something that adjunct faculty are not given extra compensation for, while there are other benefits to participation.

Hannah Wakefield asked if the GPA requirement is the only threshold requirement for the Honors thesis. Frost said yes this is the case. Students can not graduate as an Honors College student without completing the thesis.

Wakefield raised a concern that while this GPA standard change could allow for more flexibility for students under the 3.5 GPA, it is possible that faculty could raise the GPA standard. She wondered if there should be a standard applied for each department? Dean Frost said that this sounds good but could be confusing if each department had a different GPA requirement.

Beth Crawford commented that because this doesn't seem to be mentioned outside the Honors College paperwork, then there does not seem to be the need for a Faculty Senate vote. An information item to the faculty suffices in this situation. President Boyd agreed and explained that this is why she is not bringing this matter to a Senate vote.

Frost was asked if this had been brought to the Council of Academic Department Heads, and she replied that Faculty Senate was the first place she brought this question to. This has also been discussed by the Honors College Advisory Committee.

2. Peer Evaluations (Dawn Ford, Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women)

Dr. Ford reported that last year work on peer evaluations began and this work continues. She described that it is a priority of the Commission to explore alternatives to standard student evaluations due to the nature of bias towards women and minorities. Many people across campus are involved in this process. The Commission is looking for a volunteer from Faculty Senate to participate. They would like all academic colleges to be represented, right now there is representation only from CAS and CHEPS. They would especially like people from the Rollins College of Business and Engineering and Computer Science.

Boyd mentioned that Faculty Senate could put together an ad hoc committee to work with the Commission to work on this issue. If faculty are interested in this, they should let President Boyd know. She requested an update in the Spring semester on this work regarding peer evaluations.

3. New Faculty Searches – Timing, Salary Offers, Application Materials

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee discussed three issues with University leadership at their monthly meeting in early October. One question is if we could get position announcements out sooner because we seem to lose out on more competitive candidates due to announcing late in the process. There is potential to have positions approved in the spring to start in the fall in the following year. A question was asked if all Colleges and Departments are impacted equally by this situation of timing. Provost Hale reported that this year and last we were waiting to get budget information to ensure that we could make academic appointments, which caused a delay. He described the typical process from the Department to higher administrator roles for processing and approving new hiring requests. This is also laid out in the Faculty Handbook.

Vice Provost Matthews mentioned that they are working on a new workflow with colleagues in HR and Budget and finance to streamline the entire hiring process. They want to ensure there is a single workflow moving from a request to an advertisement, to an appointment letter. This is still in prototype mode. The hope is that this will eliminate important aspects of the process that get inadvertently lost.

Another question is what kinds of salaries and startup funds we are offering to job candidates. After discussing with University leadership, President Boyd reported that Department Heads are allowed to be transparent about salary information for new hires and start up funds.

A final question is what kinds of materials we should be requesting from job candidates. For example, should we be asking for diversity statements? It seems that some Departments are changing their thinking on these materials. Provost Hale confirmed that if hiring committees are not asking for items like diversity statements, it is not at the request or suggestion of University

leadership. President Boyd said she personally finds diversity statements to be helpful in evaluating candidates. She has also heard that some find these materials not to be helpful, and asked the Senate for feedback on this question. Faculty in Art and Social, Criminal, and Justice Studies said that they find this information useful.

Committee Reports

1. Handbook Committee

This committee is working with Academic Affairs to discuss changes in the faculty evaluation process. We will discuss more in our November Faculty Senate meeting.

2. Faculty Rating of Administration Committee

This committee is finalizing the invitation to faculty to rate administration. Survey questions and will be distributed to faculty in late October or early November.

3. UFC Report and Proposed UT Code of Conduct Feedback

Feedback has been sent to the UT System Office of General Counsel regarding the Code of Conduct. That feedback included concerns about the time to give comments and the subjectivity in some of the language of assessments that would be used to assess professional behavior. It is not clear when the Board of Trustees will be working on this, but it is not on the next meeting's agenda. It seems that there is more time to work on this since the next Board meeting is in late February.

UFC representatives wanted to ask the Board of Trustees when periodic post-tenure review would cease. It was mentioned that we already have a post-tenure review process through EDOs, so this other review seems redundant. We also discussed online educational opportunities that could be used especially by people who haven't finished their degrees.

They also discussed state level pro-life legislation and how the UT System and each campus could be more pro-life. They mentioned wanting to keep the conversation positive and not criticizing the legislation. How we could support students who may become pregnant going forward. They plan to speak to the Board about being more supportive in these areas.

Other items mentioned to bring up to the Board include faculty morale and the relationship of that to faculty retention, ACT and SAT score requirements, since many schools are not requiring those now.

2. TUFS Report

The Tennessee University Faculty Senate asked each FS president to present a report on current state of faculty affairs on their campus. President Boyd's report included the ombudsperson vacancy, faculty wellness initiatives, and changes in our General Education programs. She said that other campuses reported working on similar issues, so there is a lot of opportunity to collaborate with other state institutions.

Unfinished Business

1. Ombudsperson Vacancy Update (Chief of Staff David Steele and President Boyd)

President Boyd updated faculty on the search for a new ombudsperson. She shared details on members of the search committee and mentioned that the job position should be posted very soon. This is an important position, and the expectation is that this would be a quick process.

In the interim, faculty can report matters to administrative persons including Chief of Staff Steele, General Counsel Yousef Hamadeh, and Vice Chancellor Stacey Lightfoot. If faculty are aware of any hesitation to report matters to any of these individuals, they should contact David Steele to identify someone appropriate to handle the matter.

2. Faculty Communications (List serves, etc.)

Faculty were confused about which list serves, including how to get on them and the particular guidelines for posting. Academic Affairs created a new webpage that explains each mailing list, their purpose, and how to get subscribed. The URL is <https://utc.teamdynamix.com/TDClient/2717/Portal/Requests/ServiceDet?ID=52647>.

Faculty Concerns

Lucy Schultz asked about the vacancy of the role of Campus Sustainability Coordinator and wondered if a search has begun to fill this position. She also asked about the objectives of this position. No one had information to report, and President Boyd said they would try to gather more information and report back at the November meeting.

President Boyd reported an anonymous faculty concern about campus safety. She relayed a story of graduate students working in Holt Hall last November who, while working in a lab in the evening with the door ajar, had a disturbing encounter with a man who exposed himself to students and committed a lewd act. This person reappeared and committed these acts again to students at several places in the building. Faculty working in that building had only been alerted to this incident nearly one month after this incident, and after faculty lodged a complaint about not being notified. The Faculty Senate is being asked to discuss faculty safety more broadly in the November meeting.

Vice Chancellor Vicki Farnsworth reported that there is a plan to add more cameras on campus, and that the request for more timely notification is reasonable and that she would look into this issue.

Announcements

President Boyd highlighted a call for faculty to participate in Commencement as marshals. Interested faculty should contact Charlene Simmons.

The Commission on the Status of Women is running a book club on a text titled “The No Club.” Interested faculty should contact Dawn Ford.

The Honors College recently put out a call for instructors to teach in the Honors College. All of these announcements were in recent weekly emails sent to the entire campus by the Communications Office.

Adjournment

Bernadette DePrez motioned to adjourn at 5:05 pm, and Darrell Walsh seconded.

Senator Name	Role	10-20		Senator Name	Role	10-20
Sara Knox	Beh Sci NTT	X		Dave Locander	BUS T/TT	X
David Croft	FA NTT			Nishani Vincent	BUS T/TT	X
Dominic Heinrici	HUM NTT	X		Ignatius Fomunung	EMCS T/TT	X
Devori Kimbro	HUM NTT	X		Hamdy Ibrahim	EMCS T/TT	
Lucy Schultz	HUM NTT	X		Erkan Kaplanoglu	EMCS T/TT	
David Debter	MS NTT			Mengjun Xie	EMCS T/TT	X
Hadley Holcomb	MS NTT			Beth Crawford	CHEPS T/TT	X
Todd Dockery	BUS NTT	X		Bernadette DePrez	CHEPS T/TT	X
Alycia Franklin	BUS NTT	X		Brooke Epperson	CHEPS T/TT	X
Chang Phuong	EMCS NTT			Christopher Hansen	CHEPS T/TT	
Elicia Cruz	CHEPS NTT			Marissa McElrone	CHEPS T/TT	X
Matthew Grubbs	CHEPS NTT	X		Susan Thul	CHEPS T/TT	X
Rachel Nall	CHEPS NTT	X		Dunstan McNutt	Library	

Sherah Basham	Beh Sci T/TT	X		Chantelle Swaren	Library	X
Emma McDonnell	Beh Sci T/TT			Cecelia Wigal (CECS)	At Large	X
Josh Ozymy	Beh Sci T/TT	X		Jack Zibluk (CAS)	At Large	X
Stephen Mandravelis	FA T/TT	X		Courtney Crittenden (CAS)	At Large	X
Lee Harris	FA T/TT	X		Yingfeng Wang (CECS)	At Large	X
Sybil Baker	HUM T/TT	X		Laura Tyndall (CHEPS)	At Large	X
Joseph Jordan	HUM T/TT			Darrell Walsh (CAS)	At Large	X
Heather Palmer	HUM T/TT			Oren Whightsel (CAS)	At Large	
Hannah Wakefield	HUM T/TT	X		Jodi Caskey (CAS)	At Large	X
Sandra Affare (CECS)	At Large	X		Jason Medeiros (CECS)	At Large	
Fernando Alda	MS T/TT			Jennifer Boyd (CAS)	Exec Comm	X
Stephanie Devries	MS T/TT			Donald Riesing (CECS)	Exec Comm	
Roger Nichols	MS T/TT	X		Tammy Garland (CAS)	Exec Comm	X
Han Park	MS T/TT	X		Marcus Mauldin (CAS)	Exec Comm	X
Dileep Dileepan	BUS T/TT	X		Jaclyn Michael (CAS)	Exec Comm	X