

## **UTC Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes AY 2022-23**

*(attendance follows the notes)*

Meeting date: November 17, 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 October 20, 2022 meeting. Jack Zibluk moved and Beth Crawford seconded. There were 25 approvals, 0 abstentions, none opposed.

### **Administrative Reports**

#### **1. Chancellor Steve Angle**

Chancellor Angle updated faculty on the budget process. THEC is recommending a tuition increase of 0 to 3 %. There are a few preliminary budgets that were shared with UPRAC this week. About a possible tuition increase, it is not clear what the UT System will want. We will know more when the Governor's budget is announced in the end of January or February 2023. The budget also depends on the General Assembly passing the Governor's budget. Compensation is one area that is being considered, including moving some of the lowest paid staff to a 15-dollar hour as the minimum salary. This depends on state funding, a possible tuition increase, and enrollment numbers.

Chancellor Angle updated faculty on the search process for the Vice Chancellor of Finance and Administration. He described aspects of the search process and some details about the final candidates. The offer went to Brent Goldberg, and he will start on December 1st.

#### **2. Vice Provost Lauren Ingraham (for Provost Jerry Hale)**

Vice Provost Lauren Ingraham updated us on the Board of Trustees meeting. The Board received information regarding post-tenure review, and no UTC faculty failed to meet the expectations. There was a discussion on the return on investment in regards to this review process, and this was the first time that Trustees said the review process may lack value. There was a discussion about disappointment with previous review processes that led to post-tenure review. Second, the new UTC BA program in information technology and cyber security was approved by the Board, and we received compliments on collaboration between TBR schools and on meeting a workforce development need. Third, the conversation on educating members about the tenure process that was discussed at last month's Senate meeting did not happen.

Ingraham also reported at the November 3rd THEC meeting the members approved the new BA program in information technology and cyber security that is set begin in January 2023. Also,

commissioners left intact the capital project priorities for work on campus. Last, Ingraham reported that THEC recommends tuition increases between 0-3 %. THEC plans to ask UT System President Randy Boyd for an increase to offset inflation but not as much as 3 %.

### **3. Vice Provost Matt Matthews**

Vice Provost Matthews updated faculty on the ongoing discussion about new definitions for course modalities. A group of people across campus has been meeting for the past few months about how course modalities work at UTC. This proposal would not require anyone to change their curriculum or how they teach. The proposal would recalibrate our definitions of course modality, provide an opportunity for a flatter fee schedule, and change how we describe the class experience to students and families. Matthews described the recent history of the process of reconsidering course modalities, the rationale for new definitions, and the draft definitions of online, hybrid, and in-person courses. He also described the next steps in this process, including obtaining and synthesizing feedback and sharing with other stakeholders on campus.

Jennifer Boyd remarked that the percentages of online and offline were pretty specific. She asked who is responsible for determining the percentages of how much a class is offline or online. Matthews said that the determination will be made post-hoc, after classes are put on the schedule. He said this is a measurement process that is best done after schedules are posted.

Hemant Jain asked if the impact on international students, and specifically regarding their visa status, had been considered. They often have limitations as to what they can take in an online modality. Matthews thinks some of the draft definitions would open up more opportunities for international students.

Courtney Crittenden asked about the status of synchronous online courses in the new definitions. Matthews said that the planning group will make sure courses like this are covered in the new terms.

Amanda Clark asked if the online fee structure would be altered as part of the process of redefining course modalities. Matthews replied that if a class modality was changed then it could impact the online fee that is assessed.

Courtney Crittenden asked if this would disincentivize departments from offering online classes. Matthews said he wasn't fully empowered to answer that question and estimated that programs measure their online offerings for how it impacts their fields of study, and not for the question of whether it would bring in more money.

Devori Kimbro expressed a concern that students would see these new modality definitions and want to return to hybrid modalities that were favored earlier in the pandemic. Kimbro also expressed concern that this would put more of an added strain on instructors. Matthews replied that there is no expectation that faculty would change anything about what methods of instruction take place; it is still the faculty member's prerogative.

Amanda Clark expressed a concern about student perceptions if more of their classes are in online modalities, and then what a shift towards offering fewer on-campus lecture hours would mean for students and our campus culture. Matthews said that he expects that departments will build their schedules in ways that work best for their courses and how they believe these courses are best taught.

Matthews updated faculty on the non-tenure track faculty promotion process. There is a plan to offer a promotion process workflow through Dynamic Forms in January 2023. This is in compliance with the new handbook process. He presented a draft calendar of the process that will be finalized by the end of the semester. The next steps in this process is to review the new plan with deans and department heads. There will be more information to come.

Tiffany Mitchell asked if this process is for every level of non-tenure track faculty, including Distinguished Lecturer. Matthews said that he understood that this particular category was severed from the sequence of promotion process, and it no longer exists as a promotion path.

Matthews updated faculty on proposals to revise the EDO process, which his office was asked to draft. This proposal has been reviewed with deans and will go to department heads soon. The goal is to finalize in December. It is also expected that the EDO process calendar for reappointment and annual review will change to be aligned with the calendar year, with the process beginning in January. Ratings for faculty will expand from the current four point scale to five points.

Beth Crawford asked if these changes would be made then how much time would be given to implement it. Matthews said that if the changes are adopted, then they would be implemented in January 2024 at the earliest.

Hannah Wakefield asked for more information about the rationale for the new five-point faculty rating scale and adding the category “far exceeds expectations.” Matthews said he has learned that there is frustration with the current four-point system because it seems to have one way in which you can exceed expectations and two ways you could fail. He said that this proposed system seems to provide more balance.

Jennifer Boyd asked if an instructor was found to not meet expectations would that continue to trigger the post-tenure review process, and Matthews replied that they have to follow the Board of Trustees policy that is in place. Boyd then remarked that having a more nuanced assessment system might impact the current discussion amongst the Board about the post-tenure review process. Matthews agreed.

#### **4. Vice Provost Shewanee Howard-Baptiste (for Chief of Staff David Steele)**

Vice Provost Howard-Baptiste updated faculty on the search for a new Ombudsperson. The committee is in place and has met with the Chancellor to discuss his vision for the role. There is an opportunity to share this position with wide audiences in order to ensure a diverse set of

applicants. They continue to work on the job description and hope to have this position posted by early December.

## **5. Executive Director of the Disability Resource Center Michelle Rigler**

Executive Director Michelle Rigler updated the faculty on developments in the DRC. The office has solicited feedback from several groups, including external evaluators, Academic Affairs, other UT system campuses, and people in the UTC community. Rigler said that the DRC website has been significantly improved and is easier to navigate. She reviewed some of the new FAQ section for faculty, including a suggested statement about the DRC for faculty to include on their syllabi.

## **6. Chair of the Quality Enhancement Plan Committee Theresa Liedtka**

Dean of the Library Theresa Liedtka updated faculty on the SACSCOC/QEP accreditation process. This happens every ten years. She explained that an on-site review team from SACSCOC will visit campus in March 2023 and shared some details of the purpose of the visit, the work to prepare for the visit, and what will happen on the visit.

Next steps include working on the Compliance Certification Report and Quality Enhancement Plan--which includes a new "Mocs First Year" plan. These are due in late January 2023. The new "Mocs First Year" plan is modeled on a learning community concept and was developed in conversation with Academic Affairs and colleagues in enrollment management. It is meant to create community for students and to build stronger connections between students and faculty early in their career. The focus will be on first year, first time students. Year three will involve transfer students. She shared some details of what the "First Year" program and process will look like. Liedtka will give another update in the Senate's January 2023 meeting.

## **New Business**

### 1. Proposed change to order of business for Faculty Senate meetings

Jennifer Boyd presented an idea to change the order of business in Faculty Senate meetings so that unfinished and new business would come first in the agenda before administrative reports, as is the case with the two full faculty meetings that occur each academic year. The order of Senate meetings is outlined in the Senate bylaws. Boyd is proposing that the new order for meetings will be: call the meeting to order, approval of the last meeting minutes, unfinished business, new business, committee reports, administrative reports, faculty concerns, announcements, and adjournment.

Several attendees expressed support for this proposed plan. A few attendees asked if administrative reports could be distributed in writing before the meeting, and then more time could be spent on questions and answers in the meeting.

Boyd suggested that next steps would have the Senate Executive Committee draft a change to the bylaws that would be voted on at the January Senate meeting.

## 2. Faculty safety discussion

Jennifer Boyd continued the discussion from last month's meeting regarding recent incidences of crime on campus and safety concerns.

Boyd mentioned that there is a Campus Safety Walk on November 22 from 12-2 pm, and again from 8-10, for people who want to participate. To go on the walk, organizers are meeting at the UC Raccoon Mountain Room to start at 12 noon.

Sybil Baker reported some concerns on behalf of students and colleagues, and requested more explicit instructions for the entire campus on what to do in an unsafe situation.

Erkan Kaplanoglu reported a recent problem in the EMCS building and said that he thinks the number of police officers on campus should be increased. Interim Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration Vicki Farnsworth confirmed that we are under-staffed in the police department and that there are new hires who are being trained to bring the department up to capacity.

Beth Crawford mentioned a former program for campus safety escorts and asked if something like that could be implemented. She also asked about card-access for buildings and possibly making more only accessible by card swipe. Vicki Farnsworth mentioned that more cameras on campus would be installed and described using a personal palm button that students may be interested in, and the University may pilot in conversation with SGA. Faculty should send Farnsworth an email if they wish to provide feedback on this issue.

Hannah Wakefield asked if the university has specific guidance for instructors who have to go into lockdown in buildings that have classrooms like those in Lupton, which have lots of glass and glass walls. Farnsworth replied that some work needs to happen to develop a campus wide communication program. It is imagined that the new Vice Chancellor of Finance and Administration Brent Goldberg will work on items such as this when he begins his position in December.

Tiffany Mitchell asked about the communication process if there was to be an active shooter in Lupton, especially in a classroom with mainly glass walls. Farnsworth said that campus communication would occur in response to developments if that situation was on-going on campus and that instructors would be counseled to shelter in place.

Sybil Baker stated that there should be a plan given before an active-shooter situation that would be specific to classrooms and offices in Lupton.

Hope Klug expressed her concern that incidents of crime on campus are being downplayed in terms of how they are communicated to faculty and on the campus crime log. Farnsworth said

that communications about these should be revisited. Klug also expressed her concern that the UTC police don't take some of these crimes seriously.

Brett Fuchs said that the language of the crime log is written using the language of the statute that is applicable. Persons have been identified in recent indecent exposure incidents in Holt Hall and EMCS.

Courtney Crittenden reported that some students have told her that notifications about crimes on campus have made them more afraid, because communications often don't include steps on what is being taken to address the relevant incident.

Erkan Kaplanoglu reported that students have expressed frustration with the campus communications regarding on-campus crimes.

Jennifer Boyd encouraged Senators to tell their constituencies about the Campus Safety Walks and to attend them if they are able. In the January Senate meeting we can revisit this issue with Vicki Farnsworth and Brent Goldberg.

## **Committee Reports**

### 1. Handbook Committee

Jennifer Boyd reported on behalf of Chair Josh Ozymy on changes to the EDO process. There will be items for the Senate to review and approve at the next meeting in January.

### 2. NTT Faculty Committee

Committee Chair Sarah Farnsley reported that the NTT Faculty Committee has held a series of town hall meetings and they have created an action item list as a result of those conversations. One desire is to bring more visibility to the accomplishments of NTT instructors. They have developed a new Faculty Spotlight program to address this objective. Nominations and self-nominations are welcome and encouraged, and those should be sent to Sarah Farnsley (Biology). The nomination process only takes a few minutes to complete.

### 3. Faculty Rating of Administration

Jennifer Boyd presented on behalf of Chair Bernadette Deprez and shared the current response rates for the survey. Everyone is encouraged to complete the survey, which is due on November 28. Cindy Williamson said that the adjunct response rate is particularly low and requested that as many instructors as possible respond to the survey.

### 3. University Faculty Council

Representative Felicia McGhee reported on a recent UFC meeting she attended in October. One takeaway she reported is the number of employees at each UT campus (13,777 in total in the System). She then reported the Employee Assistance Program numbers of services that instructors utilized in terms of mental health resources. At the UFC meeting these numbers, and faculty morale in general, was discussed with UT System Randy Boyd.

Nine-month paid sick leave, which is not currently in place, is still on the table and now the question is going to Chancellors at UT campuses. UT System President Randy Boyd is working on this issue and will provide an update at the February Board of Trustees meeting.

Dr. Bernie Savarese, acting UT System Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Student Success, is assessing all faculty evaluation policies, including resources for mental health for faculty.

Other noteworthy items are the pending Supreme Court decision on affirmative action in college admissions, and that students who are on the Hope Scholarship but have to postpone college because of a pregnancy will not lose their Scholarship. Randy Boyd said that students on this scholarship can pause it for medical reasons.

Felicia McGhee (Communications) encouraged faculty to send her ideas via email regarding faculty mental health that she could pass on at the next UFC meeting.

## **Unfinished Business**

### **1. Faculty Wellness *Ad Hoc* Committee formation**

Jennifer Boyd reported that she got two types of feedback in response to her call for a new committee to address faculty wellness. One feedback is that this is a concern for faculty, and another feedback is that faculty feel that they have a work - life balance. She showed data from the 2021 Faculty Senate survey in which many faculty reported that this is a compelling issue for them. Boyd is getting the committee list together and requested that anyone that wants to participate on the committee email her to get that committee started in the Spring

## **Faculty Concerns**

Jaelyn Michael reported recent anti-Semitic flyers that have been posted on campus and asked if others had seen similar flyers and what the University campus could do to support Jewish students, faculty, and staff. Dominic Henrici reported that he had heard about these flyers. Vicki Farnsworth said that the UTC police are working to identify camera footage from a recent incident and that they had only heard about one earlier flyer posted off-campus.

## **Announcements**

Jennifer Boyd mentioned again the Campus Safety Walks on November 22 and encouraged everyone to complete the Faculty Ratings of Administration by November 28.

## Adjournment

Courtney Crittenden motioned to adjourn at 5:19 pm, and Tiffany Mitchell seconded.

Senator Name	Role	11-17		Senator Name	Role	11-17
Sara Knox	Beh Sci NTT	X		Dave Locander	BUS T/TT	X
David Croft	FA NTT			Nishani Vincent	BUS T/TT	
Dominic Heinrici	HUM NTT	X		Ignatius Fomunung	EMCS T/TT	X
Devori Kimbro	HUM NTT	X		Hamdy Ibrahim	EMCS T/TT	X
Lucy Schultz	HUM NTT	X		Erkan Kaplanoglu	EMCS T/TT	X
David Debter	MS NTT			Mengjun Xie	EMCS T/TT	X
Hadley Holcomb	MS NTT	X		Beth Crawford	CHEPS T/TT	X
Todd Dockery	BUS NTT			Bernadette DePrez	CHEPS T/TT	X
Alycia Franklin	BUS NTT			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	
Rachel Nall	CHEPS NTT			Dunstan McNutt	Library	X
Sherah Basham	Beh Sci T/TT			Chantelle Swaren	Library	
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			Yingfeng Wang (CECS)	At Large	X
Sybil Baker	HUM T/TT	X		Laura Tyndall (CHEPS)	At Large	
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	
Han Park	MS T/TT	X		Marcus Mauldin (CAS)	Exec Comm	X
Dileep Dileepan	BUS T/TT			Jaclyn Michael (CAS)	Exec Comm	X