

MEETING MINUTES

UTC Full Faculty

February 13, 2024, at 3:00 pm

Presiding: Faculty Senate President Don Reising

Minutes: Faculty Senate Secretary Hannah Wakefield

1. **Call to Order**

President Reising called the meeting to order at 3:00pm.

2. **Approval of the Minutes from the September 18, 2023 meeting**

Minutes approved 37-0-0

3. **Administrative Reports**

a. **Vice Chancellor for Finance & Administration Brent Goldberg**

The Vice Chancellor provided an updated on the Governor's budget. Please see the budget updated document which is posted on the Faculty Senate website. Vice Chancellor Goldberg also shared that he is working in collaboration with Provost Hale to improve our compliance training on campus. They are looking at things like rotating some of the modules or having test-out options. They have also talked to UT System about leveraging some of the things we're doing from a compliance standpoint. VC Goldberg believes the UT System has more streamlined training that is less time consuming.

4. **Unfinished Business**

a. **Ombudsperson Search Update- Vice Provost Shewanee Howard-Baptiste**

The search for an Ombudsperson is still ongoing. The committee has identified a number of candidates that they continue to conduct Zoom interviews with and have identified even more to bring to campus in the coming months and weeks. There will be email communication to faculty with more information about candidates including their CV and their schedule for campus interviews in addition to ways to engage with those candidates during their open forum and presentation.

5. **Faculty Senate Reports – Dr. Donald Reising**

a. **Handbook Committee – Dr. Jaclyn Michael**

In the fall, the Handbook Committee ran discussion boards asking for faculty feedback on parts of Section 3 of the handbook that relate to reappointment and promotion. Based on this feedback, they have produced some suggested revisions for a couple of sections. Faculty Senate is reviewing these suggestions, and the committee hopes to ask for a vote on these in March. The two major suggestions are 1) inserting particular language about modifying or requesting a modification to your tenure track probationary period for the purpose of parental leave and then 2) removing the option to abstain during the departmental voting process and revising the language on recusals. These suggested changes are up for review in Canvas.

https://utchattanooga.instructure.com/courses/1777/discussion_topics

b. **Handbook: “No” vote clarification – Dr. Donald Reising**

The Chancellor and Provost have asked faculty to consider emending the Handbook to require explanations of “no” votes in tenure and promotion cases. The request comes from a desire to be able to interpret “no” votes when tenure and promotion cases reach these particular steps in the review process. Dr. Reising expressed support for this idea and requested feedback from faculty. Faculty discussion proceeded on this topic. Discussion can be found from 29:00

to 36:10 of the meeting recording. The Faculty Senate will open discussion boards on this topic.

c. **9-month Faculty Sick Leave Policy – Dr. Donald Reising**

Dr. Reising introduced a proposed Sick Leave Policy for nine-month faculty that the UT System has proposed and asked faculty on all campuses to consider adopting. All other institution of higher learning in the state have sick leave policies for their nine month faculty, and all other state employees have sick leave policies. The proposed policy was drafted by the UT system in response to something Dr. Charlene Simmons started during her tenure as faculty Senate President. President Reising presented this policy at the last Faculty Senate meeting, and it generated a great deal of discussion that Dr. Reising has shared and will continue to share with the University Faculty Council. The policy objective would be to protect faculty against loss of earnings due to personal or family illness injury or due to childbirth or adoption. One concern raised during Faculty Senate discussion was the low accrual rate (8 hours per month). Dr. Reising explained that all state employees accrue sick leave at this rate. Nine-month faculty would only earn leave for nine months of the year unless working over the summer, though the terms of this need some clarification. Accrued leave builds from year to year. Faculty were also concerned about new faculty who will have no sick leave at first and will need to build up. Dr. Reising shared that this is typical and that eligibility for a Sick Leave Bank could ameliorate this issue. Another faculty concern about the policy is the loss of modified duties. Provost Hale has written to system-level administrators to ask for clarification regarding whether a sick leave policy would replace modified duties. He will notify the Faculty Senate Executive Team when he receives a response. Dr. Reising opened the floor for a lengthy discussion of this policy. Discussion can be found from 43:00-1:37:00 in the meeting recording. [Link to UTK modified duties policy.](#)

6. **New Business**

a. **Students Joining Classes Late – Vice Provost Lauren Ingraham**

Dr. Ingraham clarified policies for students adding classes during the first three weeks of the semester. All students are free to add classes during Week 1 of classes. During Week 2, only graduate students and currently enrolled seniors may add courses (with the exception of courses that require contracts like independent studies, research hours, etc.). Faculty receive add request forms for Week 2 adds, and they may use these to determine whether or not they would like to approve the add request. There is no obligation or expectation to add students. During week 3, no students may add courses. When students contact faculty during this period to request adds, faculty should be aware that this is not allowed.

b. **Generative AI – Dr. Victoria Bryan**

Dr. Bryan explained why the AI detection feature in TurnItIn is no longer available in Canvas. She shared that the tool was not a tool that the Walker Center initially chose to turn on, nor did they choose to turn it off. TurnItIn did not give partner schools the opportunity to demo this but turned it on for everyone, which is not a common practice. The Walker Center has reached out to TurnItIn to request meetings to discuss the feature, but they have received no response from TurnItIn. The Walker Center is not aware of the cost of the feature, nor have they been able to learn the process for turning it back on. No UT System school currently has access to the AI detection tool. Dr. Bryan also shared that Walker Center staff have been researching extensively about AI and pointed faculty toward the [Walker Center page on generative AI](#) for AI-related resources. The Walker Center is keeping an eye on detection software that is proving to be

reliable. Copyleaks and GPT Zero are both free AI-detection services and are linked on the Walker Center website. Faculty should not input student-identifying information into this software. Faculty should also be aware that faculty use of AI in the classroom varies, so students may be confused about what is ethical AI use and not, so faculty should have conversations with students if they expect AI use in an assignment. Brett Fuchs shared that his office has paid versions of AI-detection to use when AI ethical violations are sent to his office.

c. **Associate Vice Chancellor for Public Safety and Chief of Police—Associate Dean Brett Fuchs**

The nineteen-member search committee has received 22 strong candidates with national backgrounds and experience and hope to begin interviews quickly.

Timeline for search:

- Priority Deadline for Application Submission: February 1, 2024
- Review of Applications: February 5, 2024 - February 16, 2024
- Scheduling of Initial Interviews: February 19, 2024 - February 23, 2024
- Initial Interviews (via Zoom) February 26, 2024 - March 8, 2024
- Scheduling of Final Interviews: March 11, 2024 - March 15, 2024
- Final Interviews (in person): March 18, 2024 - March 29, 2024

7. **Administrative Reports**

a. **Chancellor Steven Angle**

Funding for the Fletcher Hall addition- 67.4 million will be matched with a 30 million gift. This still has to go through the General Assembly. The Chancellor met with House and Senate budget chairs. When the budget has passed, the project can move forward.

Strategic plan development- A planning committee email will go out with members of the committee. Work groups will be developed, and there will be opportunities for people to be directly involved and provide input. Bryan Johnson is running this effort. There will be a website for this process. The strategic plan development will have a goal for research, and this will involve considering whether UTC should pursue becoming an R2 university.

b. **Provost Hale**

Compliance Training- The Provost thanked faculty for completing compliance training and stressed the importance of training, particularly Title IX training. Over 1200 faculty and staff completed Title IX training. All but one full-time faculty and staff completed Title IX training, and there was 92% total compliance. Academic Affairs is collaborating with Finance and Administration to streamline the process of compliance training.

Academic Calendar Changes- President Boyd will be presenting his goals for the UT System to the Board of Trustees at the end of next week. One goal is to align academic calendars of all undergraduate campuses. Vice Provost Matt Matthews is representing UTC on a system-wide committee working on the academic calendar. The UTC committee that was working on changes to the UTC academic calendar is now on hold because of these UT System developments. However, the Provost does plan to recommend to the Chancellor and Vice Chancellors a five-minute increase in the passing periods between classes because of the expanding geographic area of the campus. UTC is also committed to working on aligning the calendar for fall and spring breaks with Hamilton County School breaks. This will be challenging because UTC builds out its calendar three years in advance as opposed to HCS, which builds out its calendar two years in advance.

Commencement Updates- The fire marshal has lifted restrictions for McKenzie Arena. Commencement set-up will now once again involve a middle aisle and two sets of rows, filling the entire arena floor, as well as a faculty processional and graduate processional. This spring faculty attendance at commencement will

happen on a voluntary basis, but in the fall we will revert back to Provost Ainsworth's policy of requiring faculty attendance at one commencement ceremony.

Teaching Workload- Provost Hale distributed reports of current workload policies he gathered from the colleges and asked OPEIR to do a report to assess whether these policies were being adhered to in college teaching and workload assignments. He has received the report but not examined it closely yet.

Academic Affairs Support for Faculty- Provost Hale pointed faculty toward the Walker Center support for faculty related to generative AI. He also shared that last year Academic Affairs supported ten professional development leaves for faculty. Thirteen additional sabbaticals were paid for by Deans. Provost Hale is also in conversation with Allison Evans about an idea proposed by a department head that would support release time that is not tied to sabbaticals to support faculty research work. The Provost also explained some leadership development efforts including UTC training for department heads, SOCON trainings and AASCU Emerging Leaders programs.

Faculty Ratings of Administrators- Results of the FRA survey. Provost, Vice Provost, and Deans write self-reflection based on results and then prepare practical steps for the upcoming year. The Provost shared insights from faculty evaluations of himself: faculty desired more information from the Provost and plans to continue lunches with faculty and staff. Faculty should come to lunches planned for faculty rather than lunches planned for staff. The Provost also plans to reinstate monthly Zoom meetings where he will share items of concern as well as answer faculty questions and discuss faculty concerns. He is also considering a monthly email and will discuss this with the Council of Academic Department Heads and Faculty Senate Executive Team.

8. Faculty Concerns

a. R2 Exploration & Discussion – Dr. Donald Reising

Faculty have contacted President Reising with concerns related to the impacts on faculty teaching. President Reising encouraged faculty to voice their concerns and needs during this process and suggested that faculty also send questions and concerns to Vice Chancellor Reinhold Mann. Link to Carnegie classification system: <https://carnegieclassifications.acenet.edu/carnegie-classification/classification-methodology/basic-classification/>

Dr. Mann expressed that R2 classification is inevitable given the university's trajectory. The university already meets the qualifications for total volume of research expenditures. The university has a ways to go with the number of PhDs being awarded on average. R2 status has no formal application process, it is simply a matter of when the university meets the qualifications.

9. Announcements

a. UTC Spring Research and Arts Conference

Wednesday, April 10; submission deadline is February 25. 300 students participated last year. Volunteers are needed. See the website for details.

b. Quantum Conversations: Thursday, February 29, 4:30-6pm; James R. Mapp building

c. Faculty volunteers needed for commencement marshalls

d. Full Faculty Meetings

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

10. Adjournment

a. Tiffany Mitchell moved, Sarah Kantor seconded