

Meeting 126 Meeting Minutes
May 20, 2020; Videoconference
4 pm (ET) / 3 pm (CT)

UT Faculty Council Voting Members (Quorum, 5 voting members)

UTHSC	Peg Hartig (Faculty Senate President) Martin Donaldson (Campus Representative)
UTK	Gary Skolits (Faculty Senate President) Bruce MacLennan (Campus Representative)
UTM	Philip Smartt (Faculty Senate President) Chris Caldwell (Campus Representative)
UTC	Jamie Harvey (Faculty Senate President) Beth Crawford (Campus Representative)

Faculty Appointee to Education, Research & Service Committee (Ex-Officio voting)

UTM	Jeff Rogers (Board of Trustees ERS Committee faculty appointee)
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UT Faculty Council Ex-Officio Non-voting Members

UT	Linda C. Martin (Vice President, Academic Affairs & Student Success)
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Faculty Council Guests

UT	Jorge Pérez (Associate Vice President, AA&SS)
UT	Stacey Patterson (VP Research, Outreach & Economic Development)
UTHSC	Phyllis Richey (UTHSC)

Call to Order Chris Caldwell, Chair

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Questions of, and update from, President Boyd

Randy is in his real office. He stated that we are all getting our work done, seeing students graduate and succeed. The faculty and his team have done an amazing job. The Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees has elected a new general counsel member, Ryan Stinnett. All classes are online for Summer and we have waived all online fees for the semester. The Advisory Boards for all campuses met recently. The Chancellors are working on a 0% tuition increase plan. The Budget Committee will be meeting very soon, but we are all making a commitment to keep tuition low and affordable. The Chancellors recommend to the advisory boards, who recommend to the President. As President, Randy is agreeing and recommending

to the Board of Trustees. If we do get a cut from the state, we still plan to stick with the 0% increase plan. Randy is very proud of this and believes it is imperative in light of the Covid crisis.

There are task forces working on all campuses for re-entry plans. This morning, UT announced and revealed a system wide best-practices website. There will be slight differences per campus (for example, UTHSC has no dorms), but each campus has its own task force to work on the re-engagement process. The UT Knoxville report was released today. Chattanooga and Martin working on theirs. Donde and Randy meeting with the press on what can/will happen next. We cannot predict the future, but we can prepare. One key message is that we will have a new normal. Things will be different going forward. It can be better, it will be more flexible, and it will be safer and healthier. We will be managing risk, not eliminating risk. Randy thanked all of us for all we do.

Questions for Randy – Gary asked to what extent the different constituents will have different sets of plans heading into the future. To what level do we systematize the process? Randy clarified that related to Covid 19, there will be more social distancing, smaller classes, different food services, quarantine rooms available on campuses. We will make sure we are all sharing information and making informed decisions with proper communication. Bruce stated that when 3 scenarios are running, it sometimes triples the work. In looking at the UTK report and the system report, some of these changes are major overhauls of procedures and schedules; there is value in early decisions and clarifications. Randy responded that they get a lot of questions about that. The plan is to constantly communicate to all stakeholders, be transparent and honest, and when you do know something, make the call. Everyone needs direction and decisions (faculty, staff, students, families). That was how we made the initial decision that we would be back in the Fall. We may have to rethink it at a later point, but we made a decision. Every day we learn more; the more we know, the better decisions we can make with better information going forward. There is a lot of desire amongst the Chancellors and executive team to make decisions and to not procrastinate. Terry asked about the legislature and the budget. Randy replied that there is lots of information and lots of controversy. The state is hopeful for a good May for Tennessee to potentially not have to impose a budget cut. There is talk about a potential statewide cut. We are still hopeful for no cuts, but probably there will not be any performance funding and there is a potential 5% cut to budgets. We will be okay. The May economy is a key part of the decision. Phillip asked a question about the state delaying debt service. Randy said that it is a possibility and there is a conversation about this happening. Jeff stated that as we are looking through the best practices, there are lots of places for potential failure. Do we have a plan of action for hot spots, which would also potentially make us a media target as a place that isn't safe? Randy responded that this is a valid concern – one of the things we are doing is have as strong policies as possible and be in line with other universities, sharing with other institutions and being comparable. As to concerns for outbreaks, there are things in the reports that allow for that. We hope to be at the leading edge of being some of the safest campuses across the country.

2. Approve previous minutes (Chris)

Chris asked for any comments about the minutes. Motion to approve from Jamie and Peg and Martin. Minutes approved. Phyllis had a question about the agenda and to move the visiting scholar policy to next on the agenda.

3. Usual System Updates (Linda, Jorge, Stacey)

Linda reported that the CAOS and CSAOs convene regularly. There is lots of sharing in terms of training materials and lots of collegiality amongst the groups. They are working with national networks and other systems to see how they are approaching the Covid situation. The system is looking at contracts for portfolio options. We are doing an RFP for a single product that we negotiated with for a shared process at a cost savings. We are also looking at exam proctoring options. Campuses can choose to use or not as needed. We are just completing the RFP for the course sharing or consortium option for getting classes on the platform that will allow students to register for courses at other campuses that could then be used in the course catalog for any campus. Classes will be listed as distance, and students can enroll and financial aid will be seamless. Grading and other transcribing will happen behind the scenes and seamlessly for students. If UTK is considering a list of UT Martin classes, then departments can select and approve. We can even offer opportunities to require a course from another campus. UT Online. Degree completion program will be offered from UT Martin and will be up and running in the Fall. All the paperwork and processes will be behind the scenes and it will be easy for students to move across the processes without the current difficulties of transfer, registration, and financial aid. Students have been surveyed and the pressure points have been identified. Immunizations, for example, currently have to be completed on each campus a student attends. The new system will allow for that information to be shared across the campuses.

UT Promise student numbers are good (over 7000 – over 3200 met the qualifications) and we are working to ensure students are completing the steps to be confirmed. Over 1700 mentors have volunteered so far and we are keeping the window open to try to get 2000. Mentor training will be online. Mentors will need 1 hour a month to connect with mentees. Academic Affairs is working on promotion and tenure right now for the Board. Regular tenure and promotion are going to the president for approvals.

Jorge will be leading a work group for the external review of tenure and looking at possible things to implement at the system level and on the specific campuses. Linda gave a brief update about the system offices moving to the UT tower in the next year. System employees will all be in one place; they are currently in 5 different areas. It is difficult to do collaborative work in these multiple settings. They are consolidating processes and people. This also frees up space for UTK while allowing AA to better serve the campuses and the faculty.

Jorge gave a report on institutional effectiveness. They brought the business intelligence unit over to merge with Institutional Research under Academic Affairs to form a team. The core of IE is continuous improvement – the flow of data from the system to the campuses. Brian Hester, data contact, met with all CAOs and all IR directors to suggest they also move in the direction of appointing a single point of contact for data requests. UTHSC has already named someone. All campuses responded positively. At the end of the month, Jorge will be providing

a report to Linda and Randy with all the recommendations of the team and what this could mean for the system and for decision-making going forward. Jorge's team is working to identify gaps and find better ways to support the campuses.

Stacey provided information about the one UT collaboration grants 299 proposals. The final review team was President Boyd and his Executive Leadership Team. They awarded 25 proposals across the system – 7 discover, 9 connect, and 9 educate. The total value was just over \$1 million. All proposals demonstrate collaborative efforts that will be beneficial to the institutions as a whole. All applicants were notified. Stacey is also working at President Boyd's request related to testing for Covid, looking at what our system wide options are for plans of coming back to campus. Patients with any symptoms will be tested and robust contact tracing will also be done. We are working on partnerships across the campuses for this. New information comes forward every single day. Our plans have to be flexible because we don't know what we don't know right now. We need to have contingency plans. There are many opportunities for research across the system. Faculty have stepped up around the response, including activities such as 3d printing, N95 masks – originally created by a UTK research faculty member, who has been brought back to continue working. That is being done at Oak Ridge national lab. He has done a NPR interview, been on CNN, and been interviewed by 60 minutes. Jeff asked about the testing and dealing with the Fall semester. How much of a role does general counsel play in this process? Stacey replied that general council has been involved in the process. The challenge is that there is no case law to pull from. Nobody really knows how things will go down. There are articles being shared asking what are the risks. Universities are being sued for cancelled classes too. There are all types of potential lawsuits. We have to be open and honest with people. Linda stated that they are getting input from every group, and decisions are being made. No one office drives the conversation – everyone provides input. No decisions are being made in isolation. Stacey stated that it may be different based on city guidelines as well, and the state and CDC. Linda mentioned that most places are going through the same decisions and thought processes we are. For those institutions that do add some type of face-to-face option, students will be asked to sign some type of acceptance of risk. Phillip mentioned that they will be putting out some type of communication where students who feel a risk can opt out. They will have to decide if they are willing to face the risk. Stacey said that we are going to have to make some really difficult decisions. Linda said that we also we need to figure out how we will accommodate faculty who do not feel comfortable teaching a face-to-face class. Some really good minds are around the table trying to make the decisions. Jorge said they will be presenting information to the Board in June about the different categories of age and risk groups of faculty. Stacey reminded that we live in a litigious society. We need to give students options. Let them make their choices. Jamie stated that we have Q&A with the faculty every week, and these issues have come out every week. Faculty at UTC are being given the option to convert face-to-face classes to be online. Jorge stated that in conversations with President Boyd, there has been a lot of compassion with people who are concerned - not just with age issues, but with other risk categories. There is lots of flexibility from the leadership. Terry stated that demonstrating cause and effect will be really hard. How do you prove what is causing an outbreak?

4. Visiting Scholar Policy

Stacey Patterson reported the Visiting Scholar policy is for visitors who are engaged in research. This is a new policy, not a modification. We need to have this in place due to some of the interesting things happening related to improper foreign influence, especially those who are engaged in research and creative activity. This follows the guidelines of the policy on policies. It has been through the research policy advisory group, which includes research and business persons on all campuses. Phyllis is the faculty advisor to the group. The committee has made significant progress on the document. It is not required to come to UFC, but they thought it has a heavy faculty component and it would be good for this group to have information and input. Faculty will have lots of responsibility for these visiting scholars, in addition to responsibility from the department head level or equivalent. We want faculty to be aware and ensure that the policy is in place and being followed. Chris mentioned that he has already sent some feedback. Phyllis advocated to bring this policy back to UFC as it has changed dramatically since last seen by the committee. Stacey stated that some of the implementation has been changed a lot, but the spirit of the process not changed. The group tried to streamline the process and not duplicate the information submission a number of times. They tried to make sure the definitions are clear, though some still need to be addressed. Terry mentioned a few specific changes to be made. He agreed to send these to us to be captured in minutes and the policy (see attached). He hasn't seen a specific statement about what can and cannot be removed from the campus. Stacey mentioned that after all changes are incorporated, this policy will go to senior policy group for review and approval. It will then be submitted to the Board as an information item and will be put into place by the Fall semester. Bruce asked if this policy is pretty similar to other universities. Stacey said yes, this is one of the places where we do not have policies that other institutions do, and we need to shore up in this instance. We are working to learn from other institutions and establish best practices. Stacey wanted to make sure the group recognizes that sponsoring a visitor becomes your responsibility during the term of their time on campus. Jeff asked what protects the sponsor from a visitor who deceives them. Could the sponsor take a fall for something that was not his/her fault? Stacey stated that not as long as all of the processes and policies have been followed. If the person deceives the university, s/he commits a crime, but the sponsor has to make sure that the contracts and agreements are in place and everyone has been made aware of how it is being overseen. Chris thanked Stacey for letting us see this. We appreciate the opportunity. Martin thanked Phyllis for her engagement and asked if she is comfortable with moving forward with the current policy? She said yes, absolutely. She knows the input that has been filtered through is fantastic and is very helpful. This is about faculty and our scholarship and thanks to all for stepping up and providing quick feedback. Everyone can be much more comfortable moving forward. Stacey added that this is a system-wide policy and that each campus will need to implement a version that falls within the policy and meets the nuances of that campus. Each campus will have their own implementation process for this. Research will provide a series of checklists to help everyone to have a starting point. If it doesn't work, we can change it and talk about it. These are our policies and we need to make them the best they can so that they achieve the outcomes they were intended to have.

Bruce asked to revisit Campuses reopening discussion. He stated that 40% of faculty nationally are over 55 years old, which makes high risk groups a large percentage of the faculty. Every class may need to be partially online. The sooner we can get word to faculty, the better. There is lots of anxiety due to the unknown. Cambridge has announced they will be online next year. Terry stated that lab courses will be the real challenge. Linda said that for UTHSC, this is a bigger issue. Some labs can be done virtually, but with medical centers, that is very difficult to do that. Physical reality is different from virtual reality. Peg said that they have some really great simulations labs and are working hard to use those as much as possible. An additional problem is that some clinical sites have banned some students. They are working hard to get medical students back into those settings to get the patient contact they need.

5. UFC Schedule for the June 25-26 BOT (“Knoxville”) meeting?

Chris asked Linda about when we might be able to meet with Randy and Chair on June 25 – Linda is working on it. It may be after lunch – 1-2 pm timeslot. All will be virtual for this board meeting – the tricky part is providing lunch 😊