

Meeting 127 Minutes
June 25, 2020; Videoconference only
1 pm (ET) / noon (CT)

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

- UTHSC Peg Hartig (Faculty Senate President)
- UTK Greg 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)

UT Faculty Council Ex-Officio Non-voting Members

- UT Randy Boyd (President)
Linda C. Martin (Vice President, Academic Affairs & Student Success)

Faculty Council Guests

- UT Jorge Pérez (Associate Vice President, AA&SS)
- UT Stacey Patterson (VP Research, Outreach & Economic Development)
- BOT John Compton (Chair)
- UTHSC Terry Cooper (Advisory Board member)
- Richard Smith (Faculty Senate President-elect)
- Fruz Pourmotabbed (Faculty Senate President-elect-elect)
- UTK David Patterson (incoming Campus Representative)
- Shawn Spurgeon (Faculty Senate President-elect)
- UTM Sean Walker (Faculty Senate President-elect)
- UTC Christina Vogel (incoming Board of Trustees ERS Committee faculty appointee)

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Chris called the meeting to order and introduced minor revisions to minutes by Bruce. Minutes approved.

Questions of, and update from, President Boyd and Chair Compton

Randy greeted the group. John thanked the group for helping in the hiring process and stated he is looking forward to Fall and working with all of us. He wants to hear how we feel about all the things going forward.

Overall Covid Response

Stacey updated that the BOT just had a meeting about the Covid response for UT and how everything is going for all of the campuses.

Peg reported for UTHSC about the transition to online and how well it has gone. The biggest issue is getting students into clinical practices.

Gary reported that faculty have been amazing – he is quite proud. Colleagues are sitting on committees and problem solving. Boot camps, faculty fellows, etc. strategic ways to teach from a distance. Our 9-month faculty are engaging, even though the summer. We don't want the tremendous faculty role in this transition to be forgotten.

Terry stated that administration has been reaching out to the faculty to keep everyone more connected.

Jamie stated is has been a grand, busy, intense collaborative time at UTC. Administration has been very accommodating and finding out information. Very collaborative.

Randy said Thank you to everyone and asked us to all communicate back to the faculty. He couldn't be more appreciative of all the great work the faculty have done across the system. We are all finding ways to support our students and lots of time talking about the Fall. The New Normal may be a better normal. A lot of the things we are doing are going to be better. Things we are doing now that we may want to continue regardless of the virus. We will be healthier going forward. There will continue to be options for some staff to work from home. We aren't through this yet. We have a lot left to do. We are still working for the greatest decade of UT.

Gary asked, looking at the legislative session, how did we do? Randy responded that we have a flat budget. The week before the meeting, there were conversations about cuts. Lots of negotiation in that last week, and we are very happy to end up flat. John stated that we were preparing for the big hit, but we are glad where we landed. One good thing is that previous boards have made sure we are prepared for this type of situation. We had reserves in the budget if needed. Randy stated that we had a strong position because of the situation in the state. Several states (Illinois, etc) were already on the bubble. TN had reserves already in place and we were able to use those to balance the budget. We had the cushion to absorb the brief economic downturn. UT has no major cutbacks. John stated that there is going to be some consolidation for colleges that have operated in debt for the past few years. We want to be supportive, but we are in a good position because we had prepared and had reserves. Randy stated that we need faculty

to teach students and we need students to come to classes.

David Patterson mentioned all the plans for how to make this work coming back. What are the thoughts when taking all these precautions and moving forward with athletic program that bring 100,000-200,000 people to campus. Randy stated that we are working on guidelines to allow for as much health safety as possible. Each of the chancellors is responsible for their own athletic programs. We haven't seen the specific plans yet, but we are absolutely taking health into consideration as a number one priority.

Jamie asked about the status of the mentor training and mentee assignments for the Fall. Randy said that Linda Martin is the real expert. Linda stated that the matches will be early in the Fall. Mentor training will be completed next month

David Patterson stated that one more thing to acknowledge is the discussion of moving the system offices out of the Andy Holt tower. He wants to thank them for this move. It is an important move. Randy said he appreciated that – this is something they have been working on. Currently, they are in multiple locations. Having all of system offices in one building will allow for a better functioning team. Hopeful of moving in December, floor by floor, with full occupancy by early spring 2021.

Randy stated that he likes to ask this question every year – How we can make things better? He has now been to all of the extension offices and asked that question. Some said he was the first or second president to visit; we now have a wish list of about 300 things to answer to. Randy stated he always asks that question. Many of them we can make true.

John stated that a faculty member on the board is a priority. Bruce asked that we keep up the transparency – keep faculty in the loop. The UFC appreciates President Boyd and Mr. Compton for being more available and very communicative with the UFC group. Beth made a statement about synergy amongst the system while allowing for autonomy and individuality where appropriate.

Usual System Updates (Linda, Jorge, Stacey)

Stacey thanked the group for the input on the visitor policy; it has now moved to senior policy advisory group for the fall, then campuses will have some time to come up with specific procedures. For the One UT collaboration grant, just over 1 million dollars were awarded to 25 projects, with impact across the system. Projects are starting on July 1. One really exciting thing is the moving forward for the Oak Ridge UT Institute. We were fortunate to get a funding opportunity with the department of defense on emerging energy technology. We put together a team to do the proposal and were able to get the support of 76 personnel system wide as well as ORNL scientists for this grant. The proposal was submitted April 10, and was awarded last week – \$20 million over 5 years. We are also developing a national model for other institutions to get engaged.

Stacey also reported that research expenditures at the end of May were flat. We are in good shape. Campus proposals and values are up. We will continue to move forward and grow. Intellectual property had a banner year with 197 disclosures. We completed 50 license agreements – an all-time high. For a small staff, this is a really heavy lift and great

accomplishment for this year.

Bruce asked about the student support for the Bredesen Centers. Stacey responded that there will be 2 tracks for Bredesen and the CAS UTK Center collaborative. There are other opportunities to expand.

David mentioned Graduate Council at UTK concerns about the hiring and support of graduate students and whether the original proposal also included faculty hires?

Stacey replied that the proposal includes recruitment of governor's chair type faculty in data science – also hiring faculty who can serve as mentors for these students. Originally, we had talked about hiring 60 new faculty, however all new items were cut from the state budget. We cannot hire new faculty this year; we don't have faculty lines at this time. We will need to have funds from the state to do that. To the point about students, there will be 10 the first year, all of whom were already scheduled to be here. These are students who will count in the existing infrastructure. We won't recruit too many students for our existing faculty.

Gary mentioned that in the past, some students got to 2nd or 3rd year and then their project may have lost funding.

Stacey replied that Thomas Zacharia is making sure that they are funded to the end of their program. Our number one concern is student success, making sure we are giving them the types of experiences that launch their career moving forward.

Linda provided an update on Academic Affairs. We are moving forward with the usual initiatives, new academic programs and program modifications.

Reports to CAOs about the post tenure review process are being finalized and will be presented in November. We are optimistic that after a couple of rounds, the board will see faculty doing what they need to be doing, that we have strong annual review programs, and we can then discontinue post-tenure reviews

Bruce asked about any preliminary results of the PPPR – any insights? Linda responded that there are some cases where faculty decided not to go forward and to take this opportunity to retire. Some messages were conflicting between annual evaluations and PPPR results. We need to better document and make sure PPPR evaluations are in alignment with the annual review process.

Linda mentioned that the UT Promise has had lots of great issues getting started. 3500 students will participate, 1853 mentor volunteers to date. This is pretty remarkable for this first year. Training will occur in July, with matches between mentors and mentees in early fall; there will be a virtual mentor platform option. This allows for documentation and interaction to fulfill the UT Promise requirements. A mentor handbook is being developed to be distributed in July. Virtual community service opportunities are also being developed so mentees can meet that requirement.

Other initiatives include navigating the differences between the campuses for enrollment and document sharing. If students switch from one campus to another, they currently have to produce

the same information again. We are working through how to share these documents without putting an additional burden on our students; where are the sticking points and how do we remove the barriers.

UT Online is moving forward – CAOS and others involved in these conversations. Campuses can choose whether to opt into an online course on another campus. Financial aid and grades would be seamless for the students. The sharing of online class platform will allow grades to move seamlessly. Talking to two vendors for this and will be working on how to do this. Campuses can pick and choose from the courses for which ones they want to include/allow. We are also looking at some virtual reality software options – developing and testing VR waters without huge expense.

Lind also reported on the upcoming Student Success summit. This year, we will be talking about the topic of campuses and engaging students for diversity and inclusion. How do we communicate the values we have and let students and faculty know? If we have ideas, the CAOs are working together to come up with those topics/ideas.

Jorge shared the infographic for the ERS meeting - UT at a glance. Among other data, this gives us the opportunity to look at the breakdown of persons – age brackets according to CDC guidelines. All campuses and CAOs take a look at those data before it goes forward. Jorge is also currently heading up Institutional Effectiveness as interim – business intelligence and intuitional effectiveness/research. We want to promote a culture of continuous improvement. The regional accreditation bodies require it – we are holding the system to the same standard. One way of promoting that culture is by appointing the director of IR or a chief data officer for each campus – each CAO will identify a chief data officer for the campus. If this helps to smooth the data flow, then that is an accomplishment.

Jorge also covered the big picture accreditation issue coming up. Beginning July 1, regional is no longer required. – any university in one of the SACSCOC states can request to go with HLC. This transition will create lots of confusion. Changes may manifest slowly. We are watching the process. The BOT can decide that we will all stay SACSCOC – all campuses for the system will stay with accrediting body.

Bruce asked if it is safe to assume there will be somewhat different requirements – this is a big deal. There is a continuity problem. Is there a notion that reputations may be different from one accrediting body and others? Jorge responded that SACSCOC is seen as the most rigorous – and has a strong reputation. May use this for marketing. Ultimately students may be confused and not understand the process. Believes it would be a good idea for all Tennessee institutions stay with SACSCOC – could be very interested in the future. Linda stated that SACSCOC has typically been stricter about online and distance education. Gary mentioned our aspirational peers and said we may need to consider really rethinking the peer process.

Jorge shared about the mental health report being presented to the ERS today. He encouraged the UFC to look at that and to share with colleagues. Our goal is better access to data and working better across the campuses for ongoing mental health. Linda stated that the team across the system worked together to find synergies and ways to collaborate to make mental health issues better addressed across the campus.

Annual reports from each campus senate

- UTM report – Chris Caldwell
- UTHSC report – Peg Hartig
- UTC report – Jamie Harvey
- UTK Bruce MacLennan

The meeting was adjourned with Chris thanking everyone for their service.