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Faculty Senate Agendas and Minutes

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2010 February 1 - Faculty Senate Minutes

Faculty Senate, East Tennessee State University

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MINUTES—February 1, 2010
Faculty Senate—East Tennessee State University

UPCOMING MEETING:	FOLLOWING MEETING:
February 15, 2010 2:45 pm	March 1, 2010 2:45 pm
Forum, Culp Center	Forum, Culp Center

Present: Alsop, Arnall, Bartoszuk, Bates, Brown, Buerkle, Burgess, Byington, Calhoun, Campbell, Champouillon, Creekmore, Dorgan, Ecay, Emma, Essin (proxy for Shafer), Fisher, Glover, Granberry, Grover, Hamdy, Hemphill, Horton, Kaplan, Kelley, Kellogg, Martin, Morgan, Mustain, Peiris, Reed, Roach, Schacht, Shuttle, Slawson, Smurzynski, Stone, Stuart, Trainor, Trogen, Wang, Zhu, Zou

Excused: Bitter, Crowe, Gerard, Harker, Kortum, Loess, Mullersman, Odle, Price, Scott, Shafer

Guests: Dr. Linda Garceau, Dean, College of Business and Technology;
   Dr. Phil Pfeiffer, Professor, Computer and Information Sciences;
   Dr. Bill Kirkwood, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and
      Executive Director, Planning and Analysis

CALL TO ORDER: President Champouillon called the meeting to order at 2:47 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Minutes of the December 7, 2009, Faculty Senate meeting were approved.

NEW BUSINESS: Senator Arnall nominated Senator Smurzynski to represent the Senate on the International Committee; Senator Morgan seconded and moved that nominations cease. Smurzynski was elected by acclamation.

Champouillon introduced Dr. Pfeiffer, who described the ongoing process of creating a means for faculty to report their activities and those activities to be evaluated online. Pfeiffer noted that the system must account for faculty effort, including what we do and accolades earned. An ad hoc committee has been addressing the task since 2001, and Pfeiffer has devoted 3,000+ hours to it since November 2005, with no budgetary resources. The proposed FAS expands the categories of faculty activities by 100% based on 60+ interviews with 42 units. His mission is to satisfy the needs of three stockholders: faculty, auditors, and IT staff. The program must work on a platform of each user's choice (MS, Mac, etc.). It must be maintainable—that is, readable, easily configured, and evolvable. Prototyping is in progress. The program must permit users to differentiate between standard and confidential data, with standard requiring identification of who performs what specific activities where and confidential specifying witnesses to support claims of activities.

Pfeiffer explained that he is now strategizing to permit the establishment of "a

massive database." He plans to finish the prototype by April, deploy it in two departments, and apply for grants to ready it for use by others. Spinoff technologies could be used by local businesses in return for applications.

Senator Schacht commented that the project is impressive and asked who owns it. He also asked the source of the database. Pfeiffer said ETSU owns the program, and people who incrementally participate in the reporting process will create the database.

Senator Stone asked if D2L will be used as part of the database. Pfeiffer said he not interfacing anything yet. He is using an open source program from Oak Ridge; everything he has used is a free, open source.

Stone said that to use online reporting of activities, we need to be able to pass forms through the internet. He asked if users' signatures will be required. Pfeiffer said that if everything is electronic and each account is keyed to an individual, it is implicit that the data belong to that person. Dean Garceau affirmed that in archives of tenure and promotion materials, the fact that a person signs in equals his/her signature.

Senator Trainor said that it seems faculty spend 80% of their time doing their work and 20% reporting it, Pfeiffer said the online FAS is intended to reduce administrative time by being pre-populated with as much data as possible and by being made multifunctional—available for many purposes. ETSU needs the data to support its mission.

CONTINUING BUSINESS: **Dean Garceau reported on the work of the Faculty Evaluations Subgroup of the Task Force on Faculty Workloads, Evaluation, and Compensation.** She explained that the evaluations system developed by the subgroup has undergone a Beta Test, which has been studied and evaluated.

The system was developed on the premise that each faculty member has the right to an equitable and transparent evaluation that provides clear guidance toward tenure, promotion, and further development of all professional skills. Former Senator Chris Dula and current Senator Price have both represented the Senate while working on the system. Ten departments participated in the Beta Test; Dr. George Swisher, former dean of technology at UT-K, served as consultant. The evaluation process is based on guidelines for teaching, research, and service defined in general terms in the Faculty Handbook.

The relative weighting of activities depends on the vision, mission, and goals of the department, college, and university, and it should play to the strong suits of faculty to fulfill those missions. Although the criteria for evaluations might remain stable, weighting of activities might change over time as the direction of the unit changes, perhaps every one to three years.

A committee in each department develops an evaluation matrix that permits articulation of each faculty member's level of performance; each faculty member has his or her own matrix with criteria and weighting specified, as agreed upon by that faculty member and his/her chair. Departments or units sharing common accreditation may collaborate in developing a matrix; all matrices require majority support of the department/unit and approval of the chair and dean. An appeals process is spelled out in the policy and moves through a departmental committee to the dean.

The Beta Test was conducted in September and October 2008; its results were presented to the Subgroup for discussion. Several large departments lauded the process. Even though there is a numeric component, some departments chose to include a narrative also.

Senator Emma said that some members of his department are working on an evaluation matrix, but criteria seem to be changing. Garceau said a goal should be to match criteria with promotion and tenure standards.

Emma asked if there is a minimum score. Garceau said on a scale of one to five, three should be acceptable; faculty members should be given some latitude, depending on their strengths and responsibilities.

Senator Hemphill commented that according to the policy the dean may be identified as arbiter of appeals, but in reality appeals would probably be taken to the Senate Concerns and Grievances Committee. Garceau agreed that it is important for every faculty member's appeal to be given a full hearing.

Garceau asked Vice Provost Kirkwood if there is a minimum score for faculty to achieve in evaluations. Kirkwood said he was unaware of any.

Trainor said he chaired a committee developing an evaluation matrix. Though it is hard to indicate quality through numbers, he feels a department can develop its own baseline.

Garceau said that the chairs of some departments participating in the Beta Tests recommended that the evaluation system be given another cycle of testing.

Schacht said evaluations must be made as transparent as possible to help faculty move toward tenure and promotion. He added that faculty would benefit from peer evaluations since peers vote on their tenure and promotion applications. Garceau said that faculty are by policy subject to annual peer review, but many if not most departments find peer reviews impracticable.

Champouillon said that every department is supposed to conduct a third-year review of every tenure-track faculty member. Garceau agreed, adding that if someone is struggling in his/her third year, he/she needs to be advised

accordingly.

Champouillon thanked Garceau and asked **Senator Burgess to review the issue of intensive courses, explaining why Kirkwood has been invited to speak with the** Senate. Burgess said that in addressing some senators' concerns about intensive courses, GEAC had three possible responses: it could revise criteria for the courses, do away with the courses, or keep them the same. Burgess asked Kirkwood, as chair of GEAC, to report on GEAC's actions.

Kirkwood explained that GEAC, with 18 faculty-only voting members and 5-6 non-voting members (including himself), makes recommendations to the Provost on graduation requirements, etc. In 1995, ETSU began an across-the-curriculum approach to help students become better writers, speakers, and users of technology in response to a SACS requirement to do so. This approach is not unique to ETSU; UT-K's is the same, but other schools use different names and different means of addressing the goal. GEAC members believe that strengthening these skills helps students become better prepared for life after college. Because many other elements contribute to the development of the skills, there is no quantifiable proof that the program works, but GEAC members and others believe it does. Kirkwood took the Senate's concerns to GEAC, whose unanimous opinion is that the program should be continued.

Schacht said that logistics are a problem; students find it hard to fit the intensives into their schedules. Kirkwood responded that he receives and reviews requests for waivers of the requirements for intensives. Those requests once numbered in the hundreds, but now are a fraction of that. Most arise from problems related to transferred courses or advisors' errors.

Martin said that the size limit of writing-intensive classes burdens departments because students need to be cut in, and because some departments simply do not have the faculty to cover the intensive classes their students need. Because the numbers of intensive courses are limited, some students cannot graduate on schedule. Kirkwood replied that if a student changes programs, he/she may be put behind in graduation. But if students who neither change programs nor make errors in scheduling cannot fulfill intensive requirements to graduate on time, they should get in touch with him about making appeals. He asked that faculty let him know about such cases so he can help students.

Senator Alsop said that two advisors help biology majors, but even with their guidance students often must take additional hours to meet intensive requirements. He is also concerned about transfer students who must take additional courses to meet intensive requirements. It can be problematic to base 50% of a student's grade in a biology course on written work. Kirkwood repeated that if graduation delays appear imminent only because of intensives, he can help students with waivers. As for students getting into intensive classes, caps are flexible; if departments wish to lift them to help students fulfill

intensives, they are free to do so. There is also flexibility in criteria for writing-intensive courses. No class time has to be used to teach writing. Some courses cannot be assessed on written work.

Stone asked if a student can plan a schedule over multiple years to cover all requirements, such as intensives. Kirkwood said a program is being developed to facilitate multiyear scheduling.

Arnall said he is trying to figure out the source of the problem. Why are we remediating unprepared students? Kirkwood answered that intensives should strengthen already-adequate skills, not remediate deficiencies. Because students are required either to take entry-level courses in writing, speaking, and using technology or to demonstrate proficiency in those skills through testing, they should not need remediation in the higher-level classes offered as intensives.

Hemphill moved that the Senate accept for consideration and discussion at its next regularly scheduled meeting changes to Article 5 of the Senate By-laws. These changes are shown on the Senate website (www.etsu.edu/senate/ArticleFiveBL.aspx). His motion was seconded and passed on voice vote.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Champouillon announced the need for someone to chair a cohort committee addressing the Classroom Survey of Student Engagement (CLASSE). The committee will conduct a pilot study of the survey in ten classes. Schacht asked how the classes will be determined. Champouillon said he was unsure; he will provide more information at the next Senate meeting.

Champouillon invited all senators to the Brass "Death Match" to be held at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, February 5th. Using his cornet, he will respond to a challenge from euphonium-player Jimmie Self in a note-for-note duel to the last breath.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, Champouillon adjourned the meeting at 4:55 pm.