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Faculty Senate Agendas and Minutes

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1-22-2024

### 2024 January 22 - Faculty Senate Agenda and Minutes

Faculty Senate, East Tennessee State University

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# EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

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## Faculty Senate

*January 22, 2024, 2:45 p.m. | Culp Forum / Zoom*

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### **Faculty Senate Meeting Agenda**

1. Celebrations / Good News
2. Introductions of Guests
3. Announcements
  - a. Save the date for the Faculty Senate Retreat on Tuesday, August 20<sup>th</sup>
4. Guest Speakers
  - a. Bridget Baird, Associate Vice President for Community and Government Relations
  - b. David Golden, CEO, ETSU Research Corporation
5. Approval of Minutes from November 27, 2023
6. Action Items
  - a. Proposed resolution on periodic evaluation of administrators
  - b. Proposed resolution on incorporating faculty survey results into annual evaluations of deans and immediate supervisors
7. Information Items
  - a. Proposed resolution on employee tuition reimbursement benefit
  - b. Handbook Committee Update – Stephen Hendrix
  - c. Notes from Meeting with Provost McCorkle – Ginni Blackhart
  - d. Board of Trustees Report – Steph Frye-Clark
  - e. Reports from University Committees
  - f. Other Items of Discussion from the Floor
8. Old Business
9. New Business
10. Comments from Guests
11. Final Comments/Announcements from Senators
12. Adjourn



FACULTY SENATE MINUTES			
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	01/22/2023	<b>Time:</b>	14:45-16:30
<b>Next Meeting:</b>	02/05/2024	<b>Location:</b>	Culp/Zoom
<b>Present:</b>	Alali, Walid; Beatty, Kate; Blackhart, Ginni; Blackwell, Roger; Blevins, Emily; Boa, Jen; Bradshaw, Patrick; Burns, Bracken; Bray, Sheree; Byington, Randy; Carnevale, Teresa; Chakraborty, Kanishka; Daniels, Jean; Desjardins, Mathew; Digavalli, Siva; Dowling-McClay, KariLynn; Dunkley, Lisa; Easterday, Mary; Ecay, Thomas; Ellis, Jon; Fisher, Stacey; Fiuza, Felipe; Foreman, Robin Ann; Frye-Clark, Steph; Garris, Bill; Geiger, Matthew; Gentry, Retha; Gray, Jeffrey; Greene, Amy; Hauldren, Kacie; Hemphill, Bill; Hemphill, Jean; Hendrix, Stephen; Herrmann, Andrew; Hounshell, Jonathan; Kim, Sookhyun; Landis, Ryan; Lyons, Reneeé; Mackara, Fred; Mamudu, Hadii; McGarry, Theresa; Nivens, Ryan; O'Neil, Kason; Perry, Lisa; Robinson, Meg; Sayers, Adam; Schroder, Laurie; Scott, Dane; Sergiadis, Ashley; Stevens, Alan; Thigpen, Jim; Trogen, Paul; Waller, Justin; Uddin, Moin; Walden, Rachel; Weise, Constanze; Yampolsky, Lev; Youngberg, George; Zahner, Matthew		
<b>Absent:</b>	Fiuza, Felipe; Kim, Sookhyun; O'Neil, Kason; Uddin, Moin; Walden, Rachel		

Agenda Items
Meeting called to order
1. Celebration / Good News
2. Introduction of Guests
3. Announcements
4. Guest Speakers
5. Approval of Minutes
6. Action Items
7. Information Items
8. Old Business
9. New Business
10. Comments from Guests
11. Final Comments/Announcements from Senators
12. Adjourn

DISCUSSIONS
<p>1. Celebration / Good News</p> <p>1.1 <b>Nivens</b> published a textbook, <i>Teaching Elementary School Mathematics with Faith, Hope, and Love</i>.</p> <p>1.2 <b>Sergiadis</b> published an article in <i>College and Research Librarians</i>.</p>
<p>2. Introduction of Guests</p> <p>2.1 Academic pharmacy fellow at the Gatton College of Pharmacy.</p> <p>2.2 Fourth year student at the Gatton College of Pharmacy.</p>
<p>3. Announcements</p> <p>3.1 Save the date for the Faculty Senate Retreat on Tuesday, August 20<sup>th</sup> from 8 AM to 5 PM.</p>



## DISCUSSIONS

### 4. Guest Speakers

#### 4.1. Bridget Baird, Associate Vice President for Community and Government Relations

- Bridget Baird is a state employee and advocate for ETSU not a lobbyist. She interfaces with Dr. Noland and leadership on everything having to do with elected officials (state, local, and federal). Each Local Governing Institution (LGI) has someone with a similar position.
- During the General Assembly, she stays in Nashville to listen to hearings, meet with legislatures, attend meetings with President Noland, and talk about ETSU. The General Assembly Session started on January 9<sup>th</sup> but was out for a week due to weather. Since it is an election year, the year may move along fast as legislators want to get done quickly. The governor's State of the State Address is planned for February 5 and the budget hearings in the House are planned for February 14. One president will represent the LGIs and speak to the House Finance, Ways and Means Committee. Dr. Noland will present for ETSU during the Senate Education Committee on February 21. For higher education, the budget goes through finance in the House and education in the Senate.
- This year, the deadline for bills is January 31 for the House and February 1 for the Senate. Currently, there are over 1,500 bills. She and her staff member reviews the bills and how they affect ETSU. They use a software allowing her to categorize bills. She discusses the bills with other LGI government relations people. There will be several social issues bills this year that may (or may not) affect ETSU. Many times, bills will go through a subcommittee. This does not mean that the bill will make it all the way through. It is easier to stop a bill in subcommittee than full committee.
- A bill that might come up again is on Western Governors University, an online institution based in Utah that wants state funding. This takes money away from the state institutions.
- For the budget, ETSU is hoping that Phase 2 of Brown Hall will be approved. In addition, THEC's budget this year includes a 2.5-million-dollar request for the College of Pharmacy. This relates to last year's decision in which the College of Pharmacy was granted \$2.5 million for funding, meaning ETSU was able to lower the tuition.
- On January 31, Tony Treadway will go through confirmation as ETSU's new trustee. He will present in front of the House Finance, Ways and Means Committee as well as the Senate Education Committee.
- Dr. Randy Wykoff (Dean, College of Public Health) gave the annual state of health of the state Tennessee. Jodi Polaha spoke on behavioral health activities happening with ETSU Health.
- Faculty can email Bridget at [bairdb@etsu.edu](mailto:bairdb@etsu.edu) to request access the legislative report sent on Fridays and attached to the *Tennessee Journal*. Let her know if you are concerned about something that pertains to your department.

**Byington:** Who is pushing the Western Governors University bill?

**Baird:** Last year, Senator Bo Watson sponsored the deal but it failed, so it is expected for him not to sponsor the bill this year. I don't remember the other sponsor from last year. It was killed in subcommittee last year.

**Byington:** There is a proposal for the legislature to meet only every other year. Is that going to get any traction?

**Baird:** I have not heard about any traction on this proposal.

**Blackhart:** Previously, there has been a lot of talk about divisive concepts. Do you have an idea of what that might look going forward? Are there plans to mirror what Texas has enacted?

**Baird:** There will be something on that. I can't give specifics because they're not ready at this point. We'll just keep a watch out and see how it will affect us.

#### 4.2 David Golden, CEO, ETSU Research Corporation Golden was unable to attend meeting.

### 5. Approval of Minutes

**Blackhart** questioned whether there was an objection to approving the minutes from the 11/27/2023 meeting. **Sergiadis** noted that Senator McGarry submitted corrections.



## DISCUSSIONS

### No Objection: Minutes Approved

#### 6. Action Items

##### 6.1 Proposed resolution on periodic evaluation of administrators

**Sergiadis** and **Blackhart** introduced the resolution. **Byington** made a motion to adopt the resolution. **Carnevale** seconded.

**Hemphill (B.):** The term administrators, do you mean people with supervisory authority? Directors and others do not necessarily have supervisory authority.

**Blackhart:** The resolution mentions deans, associate/assistant deans, directors, and chairs. It is the language from the current policy.

**Garris:** Would you remind me what may have been the impetus for this this motion?

**Sergiadis:** Since I've been on Faculty Senate, there has been constant questions to the provost about getting more faculty input regarding evaluation of supervisors, specifically deans and department chairs as well as possibly assistant/associate deans and directors. Administrators only go through a big review every four years and then not all full-time faculty are asked to give feedback.

**Blackhart:** It seems like an unfair process to not give all faculty the opportunity to give input. We want to give all faculty under the supervision a chance to weigh in on the administrative review.

**Youngberg:** We have added vice deans in addition to associate/assistant deans at the university.

**Blackhart:** That may be something we need to address. Right now, this language is mirroring the policy already in existence.

**Hemphill (J.):** I was on this subcommittee. We decided because it was written in the policy as assistant/associate dean to leave it that way.

**Motion to adopt the resolution passed.**

##### 6.2 Proposed resolution on incorporating faculty survey results into annual evaluations of deans and immediate supervisors

**Sergiadis** and **Blackhart** introduced the resolution. **Byington** made a motion to adopt the resolution. **Herrmann** seconded.

**Yampolsky:** I would imagine there will be a reasonable expectation of confidentiality?

**Sergiadis:** The last point in the resolution mentions that the Provost Office and Faculty Senate will collaborate on mechanisms to ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of survey responses.

**Geiger:** We talked to the provost about how their office achieves anonymity during the surveys for the periodic evaluations. I imagine the annual review would have something similar. They collect all of the information, then put it all in one document with no mention of names. However, they don't summarize the comments but copy/paste each comment as written.

**Motion to adopt the resolution passed.**

#### 7. Information Items

##### a. Proposed resolution on employee tuition reimbursement benefit

**Byington:** Our current tuition reimbursement for spouses is limited to undergraduate tuition and some of our peers are offering graduate tuition reimbursement. We are asking that the tuition benefit be modified to include graduate education for spouses.

**Stevens:** We will be voting on this resolution during the next meeting in two weeks.

##### b. Handbook Committee Update – Stephen Hendrix

None.

##### c. Notes from Meeting with Provost McCorkle – Ginni Blackhart

**McGarry:** It says there was a discussion of limiting online general education courses, which SGA has



DISCUSSIONS

expressed support for. This is relevant to the people who are thinking of proposing them. We were going to propose an online linguistics course because we thought that would give it a better chance of being approved and getting students. We need to know if being online lessens the chance of getting a new general education course approved.

**Sergiadis:** This was simply feedback given by senators when brainstorming recommendations for general education. It is not a formal suggestion.

d. Board of Trustees Report – Frye-Clark  
None.

e. Reports from University Committees

General Education Redesign Committee -- Hemphill

Right now, the draft is going through revisions based on comments from committee members; then it will be sent to the provost. The biggest decision point right now is whether to have a first-year experience course or keep oral communications as part of the core. You should hear something more next week.

Academic Structure Task Force – Stevens

The committee’s final report was released to Provost McCorkle and President Noland right before classes started. Then, they sent it to the deans last week. It should be released soon to the entire campus. It is a list of pros and cons. It is up to the leadership to make a final decision.

f. Other Items of Discussion from the Floor  
None.

8. Old Business  
None.

9. New Business  
None.

10. Comments from Guests  
None.

11. Final Comments/Announcements from Senators

11.1 **Hemphill:** A faculty member mentioned to me that Kyle Rittenhouse is coming to speak at ETSU. What do we know about this event?

**Stevens:** It is being sponsored by Turning Point (student group). Free speech allows student organizations to bring in any side of the political spectrum as long as they follow the right processes.

11.2 **Herrmann:** Is there anything that we can do to make sure that there is not another situation in which an insurance company (Blue Cross Blue Shield) that many employees use could become out of network with the Ballad Health system?

**Stevens:** This was mentioned in a meeting with Dr. Noland with the Executive Committee. He was not concerned that they would not reach a deal. Unfortunately, the university is stuck in the middle during these negotiations.

12. Adjourn

**Motion to Adjourn: Unknown**  
**Second: Unknown**  
**Meeting Adjourned**

Please notify Senator Ashley Sergiadis ([sergiadis@etsu.edu](mailto:sergiadis@etsu.edu), Faculty Senate Secretary, 2023-2024) of any changes or corrections to the minutes.

Note: Meeting minutes are not a word-for-word transcript. Statements and questions by Senators are edited and summarized for clarity.

**A RESOLUTION TO ADMINISTER THE PERIODIC EVALUATION OF ADMINISTRATORS SURVEY TO ALL FULL-TIME FACULTY FOR DEANS, ASSOCIATE/ASSISTANT DEANS, DIRECTORS, AND CHAIRS**

**WHEREAS**, the Periodic Review of Administrators Policy states “**The vice president will consult**, at a minimum, with associate/assistant deans, directors, departmental chairs in the college or school served by the dean being reviewed, **all full-time faculty in the college or school**, selected peers, and appropriate staff **and will request (but not require) that each provide a written evaluation of the dean using the Periodic Evaluation of Administrators Survey**”;

**WHEREAS**, the Periodic Review of Administrators Policy states that for “**associate/assistant deans and directors undergoing periodic review, the dean or administrator will consult**, at a minimum, with college chairs in the college or school served by the associate/assistant dean or director being reviewed, **all full-time faculty in the college or school**, selected peers and appropriate staff **and will request (but not require) that each provide a written evaluation of the associate/assistant dean or director using the Periodic Evaluation of Administrators Survey**”;

**WHEREAS**, the Periodic Review of Administrators Policy states “**the dean will consult**, at a minimum, **with all full-time faculty in the department served by the chair being reviewed** and selected peers and appropriate staff **and request (but not require) that each provide a written evaluation of the department chair using the Periodic Evaluation of Administrators Survey**”;

**WHEREAS**, historical practice has been inconsistent as to whether all full-time faculty in the department, college, or school are given the opportunity to contribute written evaluations of deans, assistant/associate deans, and chairs through the Periodic Evaluation of Administrators Survey;

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

The Periodic Evaluation of Administrators Survey shall be made accessible to all full-time faculty members in the respective college or school during the periodic evaluation of deans, associate/assistant deans, directors, and department chairs.

The resolution shall be effective immediately, with the university administration taking prompt action to implement the expanded distribution of the Periodic Evaluation of Administrators Survey in the forthcoming evaluation cycle.

## **A RESOLUTION TO INTEGRATE FACULTY SURVEY RESULTS IN ANNUAL EVALUATIONS OF DEANS AND IMMEDIATE SUPERVISORS [E.G. DEPARTMENT CHAIRS / ASSOCIATE DEANS]**

**WHEREAS**, peer institutions of East Tennessee State University, including East Carolina University (see [Administrator Survey](#) and [Department Chair Survey](#)), University of Tennessee (Chattanooga) (see [Faculty Rating of Administrators](#)), and Wright State University (see [Review of Administrators](#)), solicit faculty feedback often in the form of surveys as part of the annual evaluations of deans and immediate supervisors of faculty [usually department chairs or associate deans];

**WHEREAS**, the practice of annually soliciting feedback from faculty on the performance of deans and immediate supervisors fosters a culture of continuous improvement and accountability in academic leadership;

**WHEREAS**, facilitating faculty feedback on the performance of deans and immediate supervisors serves to enhance communication and expectations between deans and faculty as well as immediate supervisors and faculty, instilling a sense of value regarding faculty opinions and promoting transparency;

**WHEREAS**, faculty possess invaluable insights into dimensions of the performance of deans and immediate supervisors, including but not limited to leadership effectiveness, communication skills, decision-making processes, support for faculty development, resource allocation, shared governance, and overall organizational culture, insights that may not be readily apparent to those outside the college or school;

### **BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

The Office of the Provost at East Tennessee State University shall collaboratively work with the Faculty Senate to develop a survey accessible to all full-time faculty, designed to facilitate constructive input on their deans' and immediate supervisors' [usually Department Chairs or Associate Deans] performance, as well as a timeline for the implementation of the surveys.

The survey shall be distributed annually to all full-time faculty members and the results provided to the aforementioned administrators as an integral component of their annual evaluation process, unless they are undergoing a periodic review during that academic year.

Recognizing the significance of faculty perspectives, the results of the survey will be utilized to inform decision-making processes, reinforce positive aspects of academic leadership, and identify areas for improvement, thereby contributing to the ongoing enhancement of the academic environment at East Tennessee State University.

The Provost's Office and Faculty Senate shall collaborate on mechanisms to ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of survey responses, fostering an environment in which faculty feel secure and encouraged to express their genuine opinions.



**A resolution of ETSU Faculty Senate to expand the tuition reimbursement benefit for employee spouses/partners to include graduate education.**

**Whereas**, at ETSU people come first, are treated with dignity and respect, and are encouraged to achieve their full potential; and

**Whereas**, as an institute of higher learning, ETSU supports lifelong learning for employees and their families; and

**Whereas**, spouses of full-time employees/faculty are only eligible for undergraduate tuition benefits; and

**Whereas**, many spouses of full-time employees, particularly faculty, have undergraduate degrees already

**Be it therefore resolved**

That the faculty as represented by their Senate, proposes that the tuition reimbursement benefit be expanded to include graduate education for employees' spouse/partner equal to the tuition benefits of full-time employees effective July 1, 2024.

## Executive Committee with Provost McCorkle

12/01/2023

**Question #1:** "Is there a current university workload policy? And, if so, how are colleges and departments using it to align their workload policies?"

- Dr. Byington noted that bullet point #4 of the Board's section of the Focus Act states, "The effective rules and policies of TBR shall be deemed those of the boards and their respective institutions until rescinded or revised by the individual boards. See § 19(f)(8)(C)."
- That said, we are hearing reports (most notably from faculty within the College of Nursing) that some administrators are saying that ETSU does not have a workload policy as it still refers to TBR. This is problematic for several reasons if this is in fact happening.

**Answer #1:** [The workload information is in the Faculty Handbook](#). The plan is to remove this information from the Faculty Handbook and turn it into a policy. The Office of the Provost has organized three groups to work on policies. Work Group #2 has been assigned to handle the Faculty Definitions & Workload policies.

Senators expressed several concerns that they have witnessed over the years:

- The university-wide policies currently rely on semester credit hours, which can cause issues in a couple of cases. Examples: Some colleges and departments rely on student credit hours. Some courses may require more time with similar credit hours (e.g., music courses, graduate courses) and lower enrollment. Overload is determined by semester hours not student hours.
- Overload credit hours need to be reviewed. There have been issues with faculty not receiving overload pay. 12-month faculty have been tasked with teaching an overload during one semester but teach less during other semesters against their wishes. Provost McCorkle requested that these concerns be told to the appropriate college deans.

**Question #2:** Have deans been directed to work on telecommuting / remote work policies for faculty within their colleges?

**Answer #2:** There has been no directive from the provost for deans to work on a telecommuting / remote work policy for faculty within their colleges. After the pandemic, it was expected that faculty would return to campus unless a faculty member was hired under a permanent, fully remote arrangement as stated in their contract. Deans are advised to work individually with faculty on a case-by-case basis who have requests for remote work.

Provost McCorkle addressed a concern regarding shared governance and policies affecting faculty (such as telecommuting / remote policies). There should be a shared governance process with the hope that faculty and administrators can come to an agreement. However, the dean has the final decision.

**Question #3:** "I'd like to know if/where ETSU has an official land acknowledgment that we can all use. Here's a nice one: <https://ccc.vt.edu/index/aiicc.html>" (Note: This question may be better suited for President Noland.)

**Answer #3:** A land acknowledgment was published in an [Equity and Inclusion Newsletter \(October 2021\)](#).

**Question #4:** "What paperwork is utilized for appointing collaboration faculty? Full disclosure... HR and the Provost office does not know as they have been asked."

- I included this question as this is a question that I have heard here and there over the past several years and, although this wasn't my question, this exact thing has come up in my dept. this semester. As I am in CAS, I asked Dean Bidwell, and he said there is no paperwork. Faculty in the dept. / program just vote yes or no. Department or program affiliation also doesn't seem to expire. This has been confusing. Is the policy regarding affiliated faculty vary across colleges? Are there any policies on this at all?

**Answer #4:** This is something that Work Group #2 should address when they review Faculty Definitions & Workload. [Volunteer Approval Policy](#) may also be something to consider as well. Currently, deans can appoint collaboration faculty with a memo. Sometimes an adjunct contract is involved.

### **Other Updates**

- Requests for selected faculty to serve on the three work groups reviewing policies (Course Types, Faculty Definitions & Workload, and Tenure & Promotion) will be sent soon. The Office of the Provost expects the work groups for Course Types and Faculty Definitions & Workload to be completed by late Spring. Tenure & Promotion will take longer.
- Senators discussed issues with the need for general education (and other courses) faculty to have well-designed D2L sites (e.g., balance of text and media, updated dates) and use high-impact practices. They suggested a few solutions:
  - D2L should have a dead link checker to help improve its usability.
  - A checklist around the best practices for setting up a D2L site would be helpful.
  - Center for Teaching Excellence and Academic Technology Sources are an excellent resource to help faculty address these issues. CTE can provide suggestions for high impact teaching based on research. ATS can help with creating different types of shells in D2L.
  - Limit online general education courses (which SGA has expressed support for).