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Faculty Senate, East Tennessee State University

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MINUTES—October 20, 2008

Faculty Senate—East Tennessee State University

UPCOMING MEETING: November 3, 2008 2:45 pm Forum, Culp Center	FOLLOWING MEETING: November 17, 2008 2:45 pm Forum, Culp Center
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Present: Alsop, Arnall, Bitter, Brown, Burgess, Byington, Cecil, Champouillon, Cherry, Creekmore (by proxy Odle), Crowe, Dorgan, Drummond, Ecay, Elhindi, Fisher, Fitzgerald, Franklin, Glover, Granberry, Grover, Hemphill, Horton, Kaplan, Kortum, Loess, Martin, Metts, Morgan, Mustain, Peiris, Roach, Schacht, Scott, Shafer, Smurzynski, Stone, Tarnoff, Trainor, Trogen, Zhu

Excused: Campbell, Crowe, Gerard, Govett, Hamdy, Kelley, Mozen, Mullersman, Price, Shuttle, Stuart, Zou

Guest: Dr. Bert C. Bach, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

CALL TO ORDER: A quorum being present, President Trogen called the meeting to order at 2:50 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes of the October 6, 2008, Faculty Senate meeting were approved.

NEW BUSINESS: Trogen introduced **Dr. Bach, who said he takes seriously questions he receives from senators.** He said we would get back to us about any questions he could not get to, if any remained at the end of the meeting.

Question one requested an update on the Honors College and its funding. Bach explained that at 1.93% (except for scholarships) of the budgetary support for which Bach is responsible, the Honors College provides qualitatively attractive programs. It costs about \$1.24 million. Its directors are really faculty administrators engaged in direct student support, program development, and oversight. International travel is appropriately included in the college's expenses because it houses International Programs and Services, increasing the enrollment of international students and ETSU's diversity. Its primary fiscal input has been to recruit, attract, and invite students, enhancing the quality of the overall student body. It generates formula funding for 422 students. The average ACT score is 28.69 as opposed to 22.+ for all students. The graduation rate is 91%; honors fine arts students graduate at 89%. The program attracts many other students to its research and honors-in-discipline programs, increasing their retention.

Question two asked the likelihood of postponing new programs, such as the Ph.D. in Sports Physiology. Bach said that ETSU has established a task force on budget reversion to consider strategies and options. Everything is on the table. The status of the Ph.D. in Sports Physiology is that it has been approved by all

appropriate campus entities, TBR, THEC, and external consultant reviews. He anticipated approval and implementation in January. Its cost will be \$300,000. The number of students in the program will grow through its connections to the U.S. Olympic Committee and other external organizations; it will also garner much financial support from external sources.

Question three was “What other programs are being put on hold?” There is the perception that new programs are continually coming before the present needs of current programs. Bach said many “new” programs grow out of needs and resources created by already-existing programs. The bluegrass program has led to the B.S. in bluegrass; the MBA program has been reorganized; CASS has made possible a Department of Appalachian Studies. A new MFA in Digital Arts is being made possible through the Niswonger Center. Many of these require no increase in faculty. His office is continually involved with evaluating, supporting, and balancing all programs with a long view toward recruiting students and meeting students’ professional needs.

Question four, closely related to three, presented Arts and Sciences as teaching about 54% of credit hours and receiving only 26% of the revenue; if tuition covers half the cost of higher education, is not Arts and Sciences already self-supporting, subsidizing more expensive programs? Bach replied that A&S offers a large portion of courses that serve programs throughout ETSU. It generates 86% and 71% of the total first- and second-level courses, but its contribution decreases to 22% at the graduate level. Those first- and second-year courses are core courses for nearly all undergraduate majors, but they are justified by the degrees they contribute to, many of which are outside A&S. ETSU “pushes the envelope” in providing support to all these programs. Upper-division and graduate support comes from all over the University and balances the revenues generated by A&S.

Question 5 concerned the impact of the inversion on staffing and scheduling in the “already trimmed into bone and muscle” College of A&S. Bach agreed that the inversion will unavoidably affect staffing and scheduling. Until the economy improves, travel must be severely limited, and every faculty position will have to be justified. But the Department of English has provided a prototype model for staffing he hopes other departments will follow.

Question 6, “What does it mean that ETSU has a health-fields focus even though the majority of students are not in health fields?” went on to ask **what percentage of state appropriations goes to Health Sciences and what percentage goes to the rest of ETSU.** Bach explained that ETSU is recognized for its unique contributions to Health Sciences. It is the only TBR school with Colleges of Medicine, Public Health, Pharmacy, and Clinical and Rehabilitative Services; it has the largest College of Nursing. The MSW is interdisciplinary. Early Childhood Development also has a health component. ETSU has a large population, 1500 students, who identify themselves as pre-health. On the post-

graduate level, 19% of masters' and 67% of doctoral degrees are in medicine and pharmacy. In the 2008-2009 budget, 13.76% goes to Health Sciences; 56.8% goes to academic units, including the library and so on. Medical and other health programs are a major part of ETSU's mission and identity.

In response to question seven, about squaring the costs of new colleges with the percentage of their enrollment, Bach said some departments and programs will be able to increase their revenue streams by making room for students, but others have set limits on enrollment to ensure maximum use of resources when they cannot anticipate increased funding—again, for example, the Art Department. New colleges are created to meet the needs of already identified enrollees and are expected to support themselves.

Senator Hemphill said that some community colleges are not seeking accreditation of their programs to save money; might ETSU ever follow their lead? Bach said no. The Reversion Committee has decided to address the issue on the front end: qualitative measures are non-negotiable. Performance funding is related to the percentage of accreditable programs that are approved. We look hard at accrediting agencies and make sure their standards make sense, and we are proud of the high standards our accrediting agencies have.

Senator Kortum asked how much is budgeted for international travel. Bach answered that he is not sure because the funds come from different sources such as faculty travel budgets, exchange student programs, and so on. It is not a significant amount, and it receives contributions from student fees.

Senator Bitter asked about differences in funding coming to ETSU for students seeking different levels of degrees—bachelors', masters', and doctorates. Bach replied that if the formula were fully funded, he could provide a specific answer. A primary aspect of the formula is based on enrollment and the assumption that there will be a student-faculty ration of 10:1. Enrollment by level is a significant factor, for smaller classes in upper-division and graduate courses both generate and cost more. THEC requires that graduate programs produce an average of ten per year for masters' degrees and three for doctorates.

Senator Alsop asked how current searches for a chair for Chemistry, a dean of Nursing, etc., are affected by budget concerns. Bach explained that since 80% of the budget is in personnel, there is an obvious relationship, and the corollary is "to look where the money is." Positions most likely to be financially supported by their units are also most likely to be filled.

Alsop added that some programs increase cash flow. Bach responded that the filling of positions is affected by position expectations and periodic program reviews. Consultants make recommendations; if the positions are in Academic Affairs and he agrees with them, he seconds the recommendations. No department does not need faculty; all can make cases for more. The English

Department has historically evolved to a situation in which 70% of its classes are taught by adjuncts; it has now exhausted its pool of adjuncts. Chair Judith Slagle stressed the need to cover different fields needed by English majors (such as modern British literature, now filled by Bonny Stanley, who is in post retirement) and to decrease the number of adjuncts, thus justifying the addition of at least two new faculty members. ETSU does have departments that do not depend on adjuncts, and they will be tapped for resources.

Bitter asked about the possible scenario if a \$6 million reversion becomes necessary. Are we talking about freezing positions or canceling programs yet? Bach said no. There is a conceptual difference about funding today versus that of 15 years ago, when 70% of funding came from the state and 30% from students. If there is a 15% reversion, there will be a significant increase in maintenance fees paid by students. We have addressed 92% of the 15% already demanded through hard decisions, and there were reserves to handle half the cuts. If February and July require further cuts, we have no more reserves. Fees will address some needs, but then we will be looking at staffing for more cuts. Existing filled positions would be the last cut.

Hemphill asked, "If 40% of the budget concerns summer school, should it be cut?" Bach replied, "Take it to the bank—enrollment decrease will make problems worse." Summer classes did well last year; this week he will be telling deans of summer school of the earnings being returned to the colleges. We will eliminate flexibility for both faculty and students if we eliminate summer school.

Senator Arnall asked if we will cut staff to meet the budget. Also, does Bach foresee an increase in state tax revenues in the future to meet the expenses of higher education? Bach said that Tennessee government has increased only sales taxes, which decrease during hard times; we must deal with constraints as they are. We will be very transparent in dealing with cutbacks, especially if they involve personnel. The Reversion Committee ensures there is no ambiguity.

Senator Byington asked how much leverage ETSU has with TBR. Bach replied that ETSU has done much more than other schools to contain costs responsibly. Our entrepreneurial model of summer school, returning money to colleges after 36% goes to the general budget; cohort programs; library initiatives, including online data facilities and the Watauga Library Association—we do well with all of them. TBR has been consistently supportive of initiatives originating on our campus.

Arnall said that other schools are on three- to five-year plans to build endowments. He asked if ETSU has an alumni base we can go to for endowments. Bach answered that private fundraising is something we need to continue to pursue, but it is not a panacea. Donors respond to requests for specific gifts, not for general funds.

Trogen said that some people suggest limiting enrollment to save funds. Bach explained that students pay 50% of their costs. Enrollment increases in freshman- and sophomore -level courses require incremental cost increases. By contrast, increases in upper-division courses are marginal because they do not entail whole sections. Cutting enrollment will lead to decreases in formula funding. It would be irresponsible to take from fully functioning programs. If cuts in enrollment become necessary, low-functioning programs would go first; then, decreases in funding need to be across the board.

Senator Schacht said we have a complicated cost structure, where parts of ETSU help fund others; has anyone figured out an optimal balance? Bach said that the English Department's burden was out of balance, but administrators were unaware of its full extent. Administrators must depend on evaluations and reports for such information.

Schacht added that the macro-economic situation of overextension exists outside of the university; have we similarly overextended ourselves? Bach replied that historically, poor economic times bring more students to colleges. If they pay greater percentages of their costs, they can help balance the budget. We need all the resources possible to help them become competitive for employment as they complete their degrees.

Senator Stone commented that we have the ability to turn out-of-state tuition to in-state. Bach agreed. We have done so; we could like to have regional tuition. We tried to increase the number of border counties whose students would pay in-state tuition from 10 to 26 but failed. We can use 10% of student fees for scholarships and asked for a 2% increase for international students, but we could not get that either.

Kortum suggested that we need to move toward enterprise—online courses, international studies. Is there a concern that we are becoming too international? Does our exchange program with China affect our problems? Bach replied that diversity is an important component of our community. The College of Business has many international students, and Dr. Christopher Liu's biological work with China enhances our University on multiple levels.

Alsop commented on the projected 2% increase in undergraduates and 4% in graduates. They can generate income through grants, but they also increase expenses in research. Bach said we anticipate a 3.45% increase in headcount and about the same in FTE. Alsop asked if we look for incremental increases in funding as changes occur. Bach responded that some programs have capped enrollment because they did not have faculty to teach students. Art has had to do so. We will have to address these problems.

Schacht asked if people can give ideas to the Reversion Committee. Bach said to give ideas to Trogen, the Senate's representative on the committee. Schacht said

he has been told that tuition generated by Quillen goes elsewhere instead of remaining at Quillen to meet the CoM's needs. Bach referred the question to Dr. Wilsie Bishop, his counterpart in Health Sciences.

Trogen thanked Bach for answering our questions and providing some much-needed information.

CONTINUING BUSINESS: Senator Morgan requested representatives for several ETSU standing committees:

1. Intercollegiate Athletics: one each from Nursing, Pharmacy, Public Health, Medicine, and Clinical and Rehabilitative Health Services;
2. Scholarship: one from any academic unit;
3. General Education Advisory: one from any academic unit.

In addition, two Sick Bank Trustees are needed to fill three-year terms, and one is needed to complete one year left on a term by a retirement.

Trogen added that another representative is needed on the Parking Committee, and a representative from Nursing is needed on the Safety Committee. He would like for as many of the standing university committees as possible to contain senators to strengthen communications.

ANNOUNCEMENT: Senator Fisher provided copies of the University of Memphis Buyout Details, a handout identifying means by which UM intends "to rebalance financial and human resources." It invites eligible employees to consider leaving the University and provides a process for them to do so to avoid a forced faculty and staff reduction.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 pm.

*Please notify Kathleen Grover (grover@etsu.edu or x96672), Faculty Senate Secretary, 2008-2009, of any changes or corrections to the minutes. Web Page is maintained by Senator Doug Burgess (burgess@etsu.edu or x96691).
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