

TUFS Fall Meeting (September 11-13 2015) DRAFT MINUTES
"The Future of Higher Education"

September 11, 2015

The meet and greet at the Civil Rights museum convened at 6:00 PM. Dinner was served in the conference room at 6:30 PM. Dr. Russ Deaton, Interim Executive Director of Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) addressed the group. Subjects included new statewide initiatives (Tennessee Promise, Tennessee Reconnect, etc) and the revisions of the budget model. The group asked several difficult questions concerning the changes and impact on the TUFS universities. TUFS recommended better representation in the future regarding pressing issues. Dr. Deaton agreed.

The meeting was followed by a guided tour of the Civil Rights Museum. A fabulous time was had by all. A special thanks for providing this opportunity.

September 12, 2015 Meeting convened in the Student Activity Center (SAC) UTHSC Campus.

Campus Reports

Middle Tennessee State University (Tricia Farwell and Mary Martin)

1. Bylaws revised and approved by Faculty Senate. Expected vote in August.
2. Reported various maintenance issues on campus are being addressed by an Ad Hoc committee.
3. Textbook bundling policy (textbook bundled with class registration) being considered— faculty had concerns about the system and it was suggested that there might be that a federal financial aid has rule against bundling.
4. Senate celebrating 50th anniversary!
5. New advising software (so far limited to advisors only).

University of Tennessee-Knoxville (Martin Griffin and Bruce MacLennan)

1. A new sexual misconduct policy (mandatory reporting aspect) was developed and implemented on campus. Also a new policy on faculty-student romantic relationships was developed and implemented on campus.
2. Ill-advised de-tenure" remark by President DiPietro to the Board of Trustees over the higher education "broken business model" has led to much discussion and ultimately a study with representatives from 5 campuses exploring post tenure review--faculty are represented in the dialogue--outcome is currently unknown.
3. New software (iMedris) and procedures for IRB (faculty are extremely unhappy) software is geared toward medical forces a cumbersome process. It is affecting the undergraduate student research abilities with the delayed responses.
4. Non-tenure track faculty on faculty senate being debated as potentially weakening faculty senate effectiveness.

5. Faculty evaluation has been revised (5 levels)--all defined in terms of expectations.
6. The Senate passed a resolution that the university require its licensees to sign the Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh.
7. Online student evaluations are not popular and disliked by students – a new system will be used this fall; concerns about evaluations being nothing but numbers; (Conversation ensued: about the "validity" or ability of students to evaluate faculty and whether it is appropriate to use the evaluations to impact faculty careers (retention, promotion or possible firing); concerns about evaluation review being used only "punitively"; concerns expressed about instruments measuring only popularity because of lack of validity (actually measuring student success post course versus students who attended under lower scoring instructors). The important aspect of the changes to SAIS is that it can trigger a "Cumulative Performance Review" which can lead to termination for cause.

Tennessee Tech University (Jeff Roberts and Sandi Smith)

1. The tone of conversation with administration has improved.
2. Many concerns about administrative bloat exist (several "new" vice presidents and associate positions have been hired).
3. Lecturer committee completed their recommendations. Final guidelines will come from the tenure and promotion committee.
4. Online leave reports has been addressed with the President each time. Many promises but no change yet.
5. Other topics or issues include: notetaking sales by students (Flashnotes), Faculty Lecture Corps, the effectiveness of First-Year Experience courses, and Degree maps (another software purchase) for student completion.
6. Many simultaneous facilities projects are underway (campus construction with too much flux and no apparent deadlines) money seems to be flowing on campus improvements.
7. The issue of year-round registration has been postponed indefinitely. It was NOT popular with most of campus.
8. Code yellow removed from TTU (7 snow days).
9. Gearing up for Centennial Celebration and SACSCOC visit in Spring 2016.

East Tennessee State University (Randy Byington)

1. Committee working on Center for Faculty Excellence was asked to develop a full proposal to present to Academic Council.
2. New questions on SAIS are being developed.
3. Procedures for termination of tenured faculty synchronized with TBR policy (unfit for duty policy resulted in lawsuit).
4. Pilot about class size minimum in summer courses in "Teach for Less" program underway.
5. Many facilities improvement (flood gates open w money).
6. A governance council being flushed out.
7. A proposed merger of two healthcare systems (ETSU would gain status, significant research monies) The geography of endeavor is significant for employees.
8. Fine Arts facility has been approved and should begin the next academic year.

9. Enterprise is our new choice for motor pool.
10. Financially better than expected (student enrollment not as low as had been budgeted).

University of Memphis (Wade Jackson and Michael Gkolias)

1. A reorganization mode is underway with a period of transition. Name changes and reconfiguration of academic units happening (details in the report).
2. Reaffirmation process completed during Spring 2015.
3. A new economic model -- came with newly appointed Provost makes the Deans are more accountable for budgets.
4. Our QEP coaching focus is a great success.
5. A partnership with church health center
6. The university is currently digging out of \$20 million hole
7. The President appointed Provost without faculty input.
8. The Administration assumed control of degree changes by bypassing the Faculty Senate...faculty movement is underway to get it back.
9. Discussions about the power of a faculty handbook which is not a contract—only a set of guidelines.

University of Tennessee Health Sciences (Thad Wilson and Martin Donaldson)

1. Faculty handbook (legal battle over changes not ratified by faculty)
2. Senate recommended 3% cost of living raises and they were received.
3. Currently developing a campus master plan to increase campus security (closing some of the streets, remove some buildings, and build housing on periphery of campus).
4. Proposal to use simulation models instead of live in early college experiences is being considered.
5. Training for administrators (chairs, deans, etc) on how to evaluate and increase understanding of faculty governance, etc is under discussion.
6. Currently a shift is underway at UTHSC by "satellite" locations of dental program that were previously centered in Memphis.

Tennessee State University (Michael Catanzaro and Phil Ganter)

Issues facing Senate:

1. Tablets (1 to 1 initiative);
2. Book bundling/book standardization across all sections;
3. Four day class schedule (Fridays were designated as research days) Instead, Fridays are used for meetings;
4. Block scheduling for freshmen (where they can't drop courses);
5. Faculty senate revised constitution (3 years);
6. Senate revised faculty handbook;
7. Non-instructional assignment grant (faculty expressed concern over the nomenclature "sabbatical");
8. Concerns over funding for job candidates and "surprise" candidates showing up as new in the fall;

9. A faculty salary schedule (across the board received) but existing faculty discrepancies rampant;
10. Concerns that faculty did not "vote" for Chair and instead appointed by Dean;
11. All money is going back to departments from grants
12. Faculty sick bank
13. There's been a revision to office hours policy (TBR policy 10 required hours) changed to 1 office hour per 3-hour course;
14. University sent students home due to lack of housing (50+ students), Initially, the university solicited faculty/staff as potential housing initially concerns about vetting arose.
15. The grade appeal process under discussion.
16. -faculty senate structure under review (proposed a new position to represent at board); changed from 3 years to 2 year renewable terms); President's term changed from 1 to 2 years. The constitution has been changed
17. -card swipe to enter and exit classrooms for students for attendance
18. -evaluations online
19. -must assign grade (forced to give an "F") when they do not attend;

Luncheon Speaker: Chancellor Steve Schwab, UTHSC

Status of Tenure Discussion

Breakout discussions regarding tenure questions:

1. Does academic tenure need to be reformed?
2. Why should tenure be retained rather than abolished?
3. How could a system of multi-year contracts be used for protection of non-tenure track faculty?
4. How can tenured faculty work to protect the academic freedom of contingent faculty?
5. Should non academics who become college presidents get tenured faculty positions?
6. What structures are in place for mentoring and faculty development at your institution.
7. What systems are in place for retention of faculty at your institution?
8. In this era of declining revenue from state legislatures to public universities, how can administrators work with research faculty who are no longer receiving grants?
9. What types of "service" are rewarded or not rewarded on campus?
10. How would students benefit from having more tenure/tenure-track faculty?

Some of concerns discussed were:

1. Pressure to inflate grades or modify content;
2. Lack of personal care with lecturers;
3. Lack of connection/consistency;
4. Academic freedom undermined;
5. Assumption of quality faculty; and
6. Prestige of the institution.

University of Tennessee Chattanooga (Sheila VanNess and Lyn Miles)

1. University legal must approve all documentation related to the faculty handbook--waiting to see fallout of that system.
2. Dr. Joanne Romagni has joined the campus as Vice Chancellor for Research and Dean of the Graduate School.
3. Takeo Suzuki is the new campus Executive Director of Community Partnerships.
4. New enrollment management committee with little faculty involvement implemented to address concerns about Tennessee Promise, transfer students and increasing graduate enrollment;
5. New library in place this fall;
6. Having issues in some departments with bylaws not being followed by Chairs;
7. Debate between department head versus chair...and who selects them?
8. Implemented mandatory reporting of sexual harassment; with the examples given: student was "harassed" and felt her case was not properly handled sued; student athlete had relations w underage, upon dismissal, he sued and was awarded money; "fake" story made its way up channels, faculty member asked to leave office and was eventually fired with little to no due process; The first two did not follow title IX.

Austin Peay (Tim Winters and Ken Shipley)

1. Dr. Rex Gandy hired as new Provost/VPAA with an assistant to follow;
2. Evaluation of chairs (often associate going to full but might not be teaching);
3. Trying to get a handle on the use of overload, reassigned time, and low enrolled courses;
4. A new art building underway;
5. Despite some of the lowest salaries, faculty remain optimistic and generally happy.

UT Martin (Bob Bradley)

1. Early retirement incentives implemented;
2. Brick & mortar—STEM will be first academic building in many years;
3. Hired consultant to finish learning outcomes for gen education (new SLOs are more concise and should make the collection of data more accurate and efficient);
4. Revising handbooks to address faculty-student relationships;
5. Robert Smith became new Interim Chancellor in June;
6. Facing a hiring freeze due to being down approximately 100 students;
7. Potential significant budget cuts beyond initial expectations possible.

Guest Speaker: Senator Reginald Tate 1st Vice Chair of the Senate Education Committee

1. New money to higher education expect fully funding the formula
2. Drive to 55
3. \$1.5 million for adults to return to complete degrees through TN Reconnect
4. Community college and reconnect grants (last dollar scholarship) to complete associate's in applied science
5. GED with score of 170 will qualify for HOPE
6. CTE (rename away from vocational label)

7. Welcomes communications from TUFs president on behalf of the group
8. Concerns that even with promise--500 fewer students are enrolled why?
9. Welcomes input about lack of readiness for college and dissolution of remedials
10. Suggests spend time meeting with faculty senate presidents or receive a collective report from TUFs president
11. Strongly encouraged the sharing of information from TUFs
12. Opinion on guns on campus (justification for legal carry is the "badguys" have them already)
13. Lauren (his assistant) is the one to contact with any concerns from TUFs
14. Request from TUFs was made to take a message back to senate "We care!".
15. Requested, if TUFs have solutions to issues, please share them.
16. Expressed foreign language exceptions are a concern
17. Also, decline in tenure-track is impacting students (asked by Sheila VanNess) lack of funding creates limits on the amount of contact with students.
18. The ethics of hiring adjuncts at ridiculously low salaries was raised.
19. Senator Tate can be reached at: regtate@comcast.net (personal email) if items are submitted of an informal nature

Sunday

Next meeting...UTKnoxville

Date: April 1-3rd (pending approval of university)

New President elect: Randy Byington is congratulated!

Requested agenda items:

Faculty handbooks (ETSU has a flow chart to make changes). Concerns about Provosts changing without faculty input. A brief survey of TUFs members asked how many faculty senates have control of handbook? Most of the membership said "yes".

***A request to place all faculty handbooks in a shared drive was made.

Fitness for duty policies (please send any information to Randy Byington about what each school is doing regarding this issue).

Partners for Health--dissatisfaction with the forced coaching and overall system continues (Mary Martin will share link about article).

Lecture/Instructor positions--overall concerns by each constituent with forced positions replacing faculty lines. The discussion loops back to several concerns expressed during the tenure discussion.

Confidential administrator evaluations--concerns about access to the results were expressed concerning the new law protecting the results. If higher education evaluations are protected by law, can administration require evaluations in dossiers?

Recommend further investigation, please share any additional information.

Higher Education Resource Officer

Enacted by law, passed by legislature--defined as ombudsman--position is out of Comptroller's office (between faculty but she claims to be for "students"). Concerns about her actual role and purpose were expressed.

Tennessee Promise Impact on enrollment

An enrollment data document was discussed and should be distributed to TUFS.

Follow up letter to THEC to establish regular meetings and involvement of TUFS in decision-making.

Motion: draft letter to Reginald Tate about educational issues/concerns (Sheila)

Outsourcing Services on Campus?

- local decision by each campus
- social justice issue (of outsourced workers)
- quality of services on campus
- concerns expressed about the impact
- concerns about living wage and quality
- moral righteousness

Discussion about "Branding" higher education

Michael Catanzaro suggested sharing information about changes occurring at each institution.

Motion: Lynne will draft a letter about value of liberal arts.

Send Tim Winters any information about sabbatical policies.

Motion to Adjourn 10:30 AM

Respectfully submitted,
Sandi Smith