

Faculty Senate Meeting

July 16, 2020 at 3:10pm.

The meeting was called to order at 3:11 pm via Zoom video conferencing. A video recording of the meeting can be viewed at:

https://tennessee.zoom.us/rec/share/99ZcM7vR2kpITInuxH7bQqUzFYK_aaa82nQWrKdYy0dfnfjY9kl7NWXuE4Rkn9tq

Senators in Attendance: Charlene Simmons, Tammy Garland, Nominanda Barbosa, Jamie Harvey, Marissa Colston, Zibin Guo, Nicholas Boer, David Giles, Julia Cummiskey, Susan Thul, Natalie Owsley, Alexandra Zelin, Erika Schafer, Ethan Mills, Christopher Stuart, Jaclyn Michael, Joshua Hamblen, Cuilan (Lani) Gao, Phil Roundy, Spencer Usrey, Stephanie Gillison, Ignatius Fomunung, Ron Goulet, Liz Hathaway, Joanie Jackson, Barry Kamrath, Beth Crawford, Bernadette DePrez, Priscilla Simms-Robertson, Wes Smith, Brian Rogers, Anne Swedberg, Mengjun Xie.

Senators not in attendance: Jodi Caskey, Irina Khmelko, Sarah Einstein, Hill Craddock, Eleni Panagiotou, Donald Reising.

Call to Order:

Confirmation of secretary nominee: Nominanda Barbosa

Charlene Simmons, the president of senate had nominated Nominanda Barbosa a Lecture in the Biology, Geology and Environmental Science department. The motion for confirmation of secretary was seconded by Jamie Harvey. Nomination of Nominanda Barbosa as the senate secretary was approved by majority. Vote confirming the nomination: 29 “Yes” - 0 “No” - 2 “abstention”

Approval of the minutes:

Approval of the minutes of the April 16, 2020 and June 18, 2020 meetings posted on the web site of the Faculty Senate were unintentionally skipped and therefore not approved during this meeting. A motion for approval should be put forward next scheduled meeting.

Administrative Reports:

Chancellor Steve Angle thanked the outgoing Senators and President Charlene Simmons for stepping in early and for this unusual early senate meeting. Referring to the pandemic, the Chancellor acknowledged that this is an unprecedented time for all of us but particularly the higher education. He then acknowledged the long agenda to be discussed over the senate meeting and closed by thanking again and passing the words to the provost.

Provost Jerold Hale provided a short update on the continuing planning and implementation for Fall 2020 semester. He indicated that currently students continue changing and adjusting their schedules and to this point, there is no indication of decrease in enrollments. He also indicated that according to the last information passed along to him, there is only a small number of face-face head count seats left available and a slightly larger number of online seats. He assured that the system will continue monitoring this aspect. They will continue using the wait list to serve its function as in the past on giving a good gage on what courses to add but also for this Fall to give ideas about the modality in which these courses should be added. He thanked Tom Ellison and his team, facilities, vice chancellor in the IT group, Matt Mathew and many others that are involved in putting together the classrooms. He pointed that this task has been time consuming but essential to the effort of keeping UTC faculty, students and staff members safe.

Provost Jerold Hale announced that the Chancellor, Vice Chancellor, Chiefs of staff, the assistant vice chancellor for emergency, the vice provost Matt Mathew and the assistant vice chancellor for human resources have been participating in several webinars for the last couple of days and there are some additional ones coming in the next two weeks. The first webinar in which a small group of around forty people participate was for graduate students; the second one was a much larger group (400 to 600 people) and for parents of incoming students. The ones coming are for commuter students as well as campus residential students. The format of these webinars is like what Chancellor Angle has been using on Wednesday's afternoon and they are mainly to address questions and concerns as well as for comments and feedbacks.

Provost Jerold Hale also reported that him and Charlene Simmons, Faculty Senate President, have been meeting weekly via Zoom on Q & A sessions. During these sessions, they answer questions from the faculty as UTC work through the ongoing challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. He strives that these sessions will keep him, the Faculty Senate leadership, and the faculty of UTC in close communication. He invited everybody to participate, ask questions, share experiences.

Committee reports:

General Education Committee

Lauren Ingraham spoke on behalf of the committee chair Talia Welsh which at the time was having computer issues. She said that the committee got together over summer to carefully and candidly look at the curriculum and decide how to address issues of race, diversity, equity and inclusion. At the time they considered possible quick fixes but then realized that it was not the way the committee wanted to move forward. At the end of several and more thoughtful conversations, they developed a statement of intent to hold the committee accountable for moving forward with issues of the curriculum, but other issues related with race, diversity, equity and inclusion. The statement was shared to the faculty senate and allowed for comments and suggestions but not exactly for vote at this meeting. A question was posed by a senate member to the committee on how they came about to write the statement presented and shared to the senate.

The chair of the committee answered that the committee met, made revisions and voted on it. Another point was brought about by another senate member on the ability or necessity to come up with something measurable as they move forward. Lauren Ingraham admitted that the outcomes are still little too broad so that's a top of mind aspect. She also mentioned that with meetings taking place over zoom, more people are logging in and participating so there are more opportunities for people to comment, help design and access principles to adopt and go from there.

New Business:

COVID Absence Statement

Senate president Charlene Simmons shared and spoke on the COVID Absence Statement. Fall Task Force suggested that a statement on COVID Absence be added to the Fall 2020 syllabi. The Faculty Senate created an ad hoc committee that in late June and early July drafted a syllabus statement. The Senate met, discussed, and revised the statement during the meeting of July 16, 2020. At this meeting the Senate voted to circulate the proposed statement with changes to the faculty and then conduct an electronic vote on the statement in one week (starting July 23rd). The faculty have been invited to review the statement, to make comments on the discussion board, and/contact their Senator to express their views. Beth Crawford put a motion forward to conduct the COVID-19 Absence Statement vote electronically. Vote on motion about electronic vote on COVID statement: 28 “yes”-0 “no”-3 “abstention”.

Confirm 2020-21 Committees

A motion to confirm Committees was put forward by Alex Zelin and seconded by Beth Crawford

Vote to confirm committee assignments: 28 “yes”-0 “no”-3 “abstention”.

Unfinished Business:

No Unfinished business

Faculty Concerns:

A suggestion by a senator member to charge the “Diversity and Inclusion Committee created recently with looking into service. She also mentioned she is glad that we are looking into course evaluation an issue that has been charged to the Course Evaluation Committee.

Charlene shared to the faculty senate a faculty concern expressed offline prior this meeting. The question was related to how UTC community view “Black Lives Matter and Juneteenth. The concern was if these two aspects are important to the UTC community then why are they being held after work hours? As the senate president, Charlene acknowledged the importance of this type of concern and promised to address this issue with the right services and organizations within the University.

Ethan Mills shared a link about United Campus Workers an organization him and others are involved with to those that might show an interest on the organization; he also brought a point about Fall 2020 face to face versus online and hybrid classes and wondered on how it is decided on who can teach online and who can teach face to face.

Christopher Stuart brought concerns about voting rights for lectures across all departments. He suggested that because lectures are becoming more substantial, and more permanent, more conversations need to take place on how to empower them to review curriculum in which they teach, but not in other areas of the curriculum. Charlene stated that the priority is to look at representation of lectures. She acknowledged that currently there are three senators that fall into the category of NTTF and that the issue on the NTTF vote varies from department to department.

Announcements:

Charlene Simmons announced that there is still need for a volunteer on the Faculty Handbook Committee. Only senators can volunteer. An email will be sent by Charlene Simmons. Please respond to her email if interested. She also welcomes additional ideas and concerns whether broad or specific.

Tammy Garland announced that there is still an open slot on the senate - Behavioral on Social Sciences Committee. She encouraged volunteers to fill the senator open slot. She greatly encouraged adjuncts as senators. Another faculty senate member highly encouraged adjunct on the NTTF committee.

Adjournment:

At approximately 5:00 pm Jamie F. Harvey called for adjournment. The call was seconded by Tammy Garland.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully,

Nominanda Barbosa, Senate Secretary

