

TTU Faculty Senate Meeting with the President ~ Notes December 4, 2017

Members Present: S.K. Ballal, Jason Beach, Tammy Boles, Troy Brachey, Chris Brown, Debra Bryant, Andrew Callender, Corinne Darvennes, Ahmed ElSawy, Billye Foster, Steven Frye, Stuart Gaetjens, Melissa Geist, Mark Groundland, David Hajdik, Jeremy Hansen, Paula Hinton, Shelia Hurley, Steve Idem, Barbara Jared, David Larimore, Regina Lee, Jane Liu, Lori Maxwell, Tony Michael, Christine Miller, Holly Mills, Linda Null, Brian O'Connor, Joseph Ojo, Richard Rand, Jeff Roberts, LeeAnn Shipley, Cara Sisk, Troy Smith, Sandi Smith-Andrews, Holly Stretz, and Jeremy Wendt

Members Absent: Douglas Airhart, Ismet Anitsal, Deborah Ballou, Ward Doubet, Ann Hellman, Christy Killman

Guests: President Oldham

Announcements

Senator Lee began the meeting by reminding Senators about the breakfast with the TTU Board of Trustees next Monday, December 11, 2017 from 7:30-8:30 am. Please RSVP to Debbie Combs.

Announcements by President Oldham

President Oldham said we had some good news items lately. TTU faired very well with the THEC recommendations for funding next year. We were the top performing former TBR university last year, by the funding formula. THEC recommends funding the formula fully, so TTU would get about \$3 million next year. This is the first step in the budget process. State money support to TTU amounts to less than 30%, but it's still a big component in our budget. THEC also suggested a 0-3% tuition increase. Now we can start planning for next year's budget. Next, is the Governor's State-of-the-State address in late January. Then, the General Assembly will start working on it during their legislative session.

Another bit of good news is on the enrollment front. Freshmen applications are up 10% at this time over last year. For next fall, we are up about 24% for freshmen admits from this same time last year. Every year we participate in a survey of high school students around the State that measures high school students' check on the level of awareness of TTU. We have improved on this, due to more marketing around state with billboards and commercials. Pricing of billboards is based on potential views (location), but we buy it as a package deal. We are making attempts to market in west Tennessee, but mainly concentrating on advertising in Nashville and Chattanooga now. Maybe after getting a new VP for Enrollment Management, we can expand. West Tennessee is an important component, in terms of diversity.

VP for Enrollment Management Search Update

The search committee is "rebooting" for the VP for Enrollment Management search. The preferred candidate got away at the last minute. Timing is critical, as well as confidential. We

have reached out to collect additional names to pursue. It's better to have an open position than wish you did. President Oldham said we want to get the right person, and not hire just anyone.

Parking for Adjunct Faculty

There is a partial subsidization of \$50 for adjuncts to help them with the parking fee increase. Adjunct and temporary employees can pay for only their term of employment. There is concern over professional people coming for only 1 hour, three days per week and having to pay \$170 per year for a gold permit. Colleges can pick up the tab for adjuncts and temporary employees, according to President Oldham. He said he has no problem with colleges and departments paying for this. The adjunct pay varies by discipline, so their pay could be increased a bit to offset the parking fee. President Oldham will try to confirm this. There is a problem using State money to pay directly for parking, so maybe their salary can be raised to offset the parking fee.

Prayer Policy

There is no policy on prayer in place. President Oldham had no strong opinion on this. Senator Mills saw a question in our comment box about one school opening their meeting with a prayer. President Oldham suggested raising this concern within the school doing this if someone has a problem with it. It's best to handle it at the unit level.

Tenure & Promotion Update

Interim Provost Stephens is working on streamlining the tenure and promotion policies and procedures with a committee. President Oldham doesn't really know the status, but knows it is difficult to pull out policy from procedures. Jeff Boles is leading the committee. There are also timing issues with lecturer and instructors in the policy, with the possibility of promotion (career ladder). More thorough vetting is needed. There is a lot of discussion about submitting dossiers electronically.

Specific questions were asked and President Oldham said his position has always been that decisions are best handled at the department level. He strongly recommends negotiations when someone is hired. Any agreements need to be in the letter of offer. What he sees, is "departments kind of taking an ambivalent position, and that's when it gets really clumsy". However, a case might be able to be made later. Every case has different quirks to it. President Oldham will follow up on this.

Scholarships Offers & Update

President Oldham said we have no budget deficit due to scholarships. The budget is balanced. The scholarship budget has been increasing over the last several years here for many reasons: average ACT scores are going up, and we are retaining more students by maintaining their grades. The expectation for this coming year is that we will have less money for new scholarships, primarily for transfer scholarships. This whole scholarship picture is dynamic and continues to change because student behaviors change. Scholarships help us maintain a healthy enrollment. President Oldham has been to most of the high schools in the Upper Cumberland region.

President Oldham said that last year, no academic units had reductions, nor reduction in force, to cover the scholarship money shortfall. The administrative side of the University took reductions and any cuts to the academic budgets were offset with program fee revenues. The academic units had cuts months before the scholarship problem, primarily due to the decrease in international students. You could know the number for incoming freshmen, but not for continuing students yet, so the total figure is not known yet. We are on track so far this year. Even with 10% more freshmen, we are still down about 100 FT overall.

Senator Rand said many are concerned that services should be increased, or move forward, with the tuition and fee increase. President Oldham said you have to remember that faculty also had salary increases over the past years. The total E&G per student has increased over the past years, so we are moving in a positive direction. As enrollment grows and brings in more tuition dollars, then maybe services can increase, or if the State gives us more money.

Data Science & Analytics Collaboratory Staffing

President Oldham said he thinks we have identified where the funding is coming from for faculty positions. Four positions are currently undergoing searches for next fall, within three different departments. Another eight positions will be filled over a two- to three-year period. President Oldham said we have the student credit hours, especially in computer science now. We are seeing increasing enrollments in all area of IT, and the job future is looking good. Another factor is the strategic alignment of the campus. Tech received a \$4 million NSF grant in cybersecurity. We don't want to lose any leadership position we have.

Other Such Matters

Senator Maxwell asked President Oldham for his word to not separate Criminal Justice. He said he supports success for students and the State of Tennessee. President Oldham said that Criminal Justice is their program, so if the program is functioning successfully, then he's not in support of moving it.

Senator Rand asked if we any closer to developing an online & distance education plan moving forward, and if there is any strategy in place. President Oldham said there have been some organizational changes, and a strategic plan is in process, yet the committee members in Faculty Senate have not been asked about this. Some general education opportunities are being built to replace some RODP courses. Senator Rand wants President Oldham to address this with Provost candidates.

Criminal justice major recruits are being told to see Kim Godwin, with applications submitted to Terry Saltsman. President Oldham will clear this up, as he wants this to work.

Senator Null voiced concern about future of TN eCampus. Tech's Education Department has already pulled out. It is still good for general education courses.

Senator Smith asked about plans to opt-in or out now for outsourcing, especially for custodial services. There is a SGA bill coming to President Oldham, which follows UTK. President Oldham said right now, the numbers are not compelling to outsource anything else. We don't have any numbers from JLL; no cost proposal yet. Custodial decisions have not been made, but it's going toward an open bid process. What level of service can we get for the

money? Custodial service is not our core business, it is educating students. This impacts student costs, so President Oldham wants to do it the best way possible.

The meeting adjourned at 5:11 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Regina A. Lee

Approved: February 12, 2018