THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER

Faculty Senate
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FACULTY SENATE MINUTES

UTHSC Faculty Senate Meeting

Zoom Monthly Meeting
May 13th, 2025

Attendance: (senators, administrators, and faculty)

Attending: Alex Schaller, Anna Bukiya, April Hilsdon, Ashton Brooks, Ayman Al Dayeh, Ben Maddox, Brett Wilson, Carrie Harvey, Cheran Elangovan, Cindy Russell, Dan Young, Donna Lynch-Smith, Fatima Ahmed, Fuming Zhou, Ioannis Dragatsis, James M. Lewis, Jaqueline D Venturin, Jayc Sedlmayr, Jeffry Bieber, Jenessa McElfresh, Jess Wesberry, Jill M. Maples, Jillian McCarthy, Karen Derefinko, Karine Guerrier, Keith May, Kevin William Freeman, Kim Carter, Kimberly M Kelly, Kristen Bettin, Laura T Reed, Laurentia Nodit, Lin Wu, Lisa Beasley, Mahmoud Hassouba, Maria Carrillo, Maria Gomes-Solecki, Mary Erickson, Mary Patton, Michael Winstead, Natasha Goins, Nikhil Gopal, Nina K Sublette, Paul C Gahn, Paul J Koltnow, Peter Buckley, Rajashekhar Gangaraju, Ramesh Krishnan, Ranjit Philip, Rebecca Reynolds, Richard John Kasser, Rima Zahr, Ron Espinal, Scott Hollis, Sharon Little, College of Nursing, Shaunta' Chamberlin, Stephen Pishko, Stephen Rauls, Steven M Doettl, Ted Cory, Terrance G Cooper, Thaddeus A Wilson, Tosha Harris, Tracy McClinton, DNP, Valarie Fleming, Vickie Baselski, Yanhui Zhang, Yi Lu, Ji Yochim

Faculty Senate Meeting

Meeting was called to order at 4:00 pm CDT/5:00 pm EDT

Presiding: Dr. Tracy McClinton, President

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Business Discussion with Dr. Tracy McClinton

- Thanks for support in assisting the faculty, have made it through another academic year
- Reminder of the June 10 meeting, 3:30 PM in the Hamilton Eye center, with zoom as an option
    - Will be doing Senate Awards
    - Voting on Officers for 2025-2026
    - Review committee accomplishments
    - Still accepting nominations for the Clinical Excellence award until 5/15

Discussion and Approval of the March 11th, 2025 minutes

- The floor was opened for discussion of the March 11th, 2025 meeting minutes. No edits were recommended. Dr. Karine Guerrier motioned to accept the minutes as written. Motion was seconded by Dr. Ionnis Dragatsis
- Poll Everywhere Vote:
    - Approve: 47
    - Do not approve: 0
    - Abstain: 3

Vote on Faculty Handbook change on Statement of Aspirations (Appendix A)

- Developed by UT system in collaboration with Chancellors and President of the UT system.
- Would be used across the UT system
- Discussion on the causes of the revision
- The floor was opened for discussion for the Faculty Handbook change on a Statement of Aspirations. No edits were recommended. Dr Terry Cooper motioned to integrate it into the faculty handbook. Motion was seconded by Dr. Anna Bukiya
- Poll Everywhere Vote:
    - Approve: 35
    - Do not approve: 7
    - Abstain: 5

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Vote on Faculty Handbook revision on UTHSC's Statement of Connection and Communication (Appendix B)

- Replacement of the current diversity statement as approved by the Faculty Senate
- Is not intended to change what the board of trustees has previously approved
- Discussion on how the name was developed
- The floor was opened for discussion for the Faculty Handbook change on UTHSC's Statement of Connection and Communication. No edits were recommended. Dr Terry Cooper motioned to accept the revision as written. Motion was seconded by Dr. Thad McGiness
- Poll Everywhere Vote:
  - Approve: 42
  - Do not approve: 3
  - Abstain: 2

Vote on Faculty Handbook revision on Certification of English Language Competency (Appendix C)

- Policy has been previously voted on in the past. Current language in the handbook includes verbiage which was not included
- Adding statement back in requires a new vote
- The floor was opened for discussion for the Faculty Handbook change on Certification of English Language Competency. No edits were recommended. Dr Terry Cooper motioned to accept the revision as written. Motion was seconded by Dr. Jillian McCarthy
- Poll Everywhere Vote:
  - Approve: 38
  - Do not approve: 6
  - Abstain: 2

UTHSC AI Policy with Vikki Massey, Associate Vice Chancellor for Information Technology

- Policy revision has been in process for a while

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- Have developed guidelines in partnership with academic affairs
- Taskforce from across the University put together
- Worked to develop an institutional policy
- Draft policy circulated and feedback requested
    - Feedback was that it was too general, need for AI training resources, governance, how to address overlaps between University and College policies, should different tools be mentioned
- Next steps are to formally approve the policy
- Need to identify tools to be used, use situations, pay/resources for the tools
- Some questions on AI use are not just for IT to develop
- Need to develop policies so they nest across campus without contrast and discrepancies
- Developing training with UTverse and Copilot
- Students want guidance, AI should be part of their training.
- Questions
    - Will the policy be part of handbook or policy on website
        - Unsure what the formal adoption process will be
    - Is there a policy in place right now?
        - No formal across the board guidance exists right now
        - Additional policies need to exist at different levels
    - What tools should be avoided?
        - Preference is UTverse and Microsoft copilot through NetID, which are secured within UT system
        - Still do not put PHI, FERPA data into any tool, even if secure

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- Make sure that you do not put anything in that you want to protect copyright for
- DeepSeek is not secure

AI in the Classroom with Dr. Tom Laughner, Director, Teaching and Learning Center

- TLC is developing programs for AI use
- Landscape is rapidly changing
- Blackboard has gone very heavily into AI tools
- Discussion of tools we have access to which the TLC is experimenting with
  - Adobe Firefly
    - Allows creation of images and videos
    - Part of UT Adobe license
  - NotebookLM
    - Tool from google
    - Can create a summary of a document
    - Summaries, study guides, quiz questions, can create a podcast
    - Google states that information is not shared
  - Stanford Accelerator for Learning build a bot
    - Allows the creation of chat tools
    - Can customize tone, content, load information
- Tools for data analysis of quantitative and qualitative data
  - Tools can do recoding, what statistical test to use
- Upcoming webinars later this year
- Discussion on verbiage on model syllabus statements on AI use
- Questions
  - How can you reference generated images?
    - Can state image created by resource used

New business
Announcements
The meeting was adjourned at 5:01 pm CDT/6:01 pm EDT.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Dr. Ted Cory
Faculty Senate Secretary

Appendix A
Board approved statement:

Statement of Aspirations
We are dedicated to expanding access to educational opportunities, striving to remove barriers, and making academic pursuits more affordable. Consistent with the University's commitment to high academic standards, student achievement, and the preparation of responsible citizens, we believe that engaging with individuals from all backgrounds and perspectives fosters a vibrant learning environment that enhances critical thinking and intellectual growth. Our collective strengths make us stronger, and we are committed to promoting an atmosphere where all members of the University community feel welcome, can thrive, and achieve success.

Accompanying Board resolution reads as follows:

Resolved:
The Board of Trustees hereby: (i) affirms the University's land-grant designation, which
underlying principles and values shall be extended to all of the University's campuses
and institutes; and (ii) approves the Statement of Aspirations as presented in the meeting
materials, a copy of which shall be attached to this resolution following adoption.
The Board's Statement of Aspirations shall supersede all prior Board statements, and the

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**Board Secretary is authorized to take such actions as deemed necessary or appropriate to
reflect the adoption of the Statement of Aspirations.**

Appendix B

Original Diversity Statement approved by the UTHSC Faculty Senate:

We are a community with an obligation to acknowledge the humanity and dignity of others and uphold their right to express differing opinions. We are an institution that supports and inspires diverse voices, one where ideas that we do not agree with are respected, not marginalized. We seek to create opportunities for open dialogue across differences, to generate connection and communication rather than polarization. We celebrate multiple approaches and points of view because it is this diversity that drives **they drive** innovation and progress in our rapidly changing world. We recognize that the success of each UTHSC member strengthens our creative community and that the collective union of all individuals will make us stronger. **and more inclusive**.

Revised statement:
UTHSC's Statement of Connection and Communication:
We are a community with an obligation to acknowledge the humanity and dignity of others and uphold their right to express **unique** opinions. We are an institution that supports and inspires **all** voices, where ideas that we do not agree with are respected, not marginalized. We seek to create opportunities for open dialogue across differences, to generate connection and communication rather than polarization. We celebrate multiple approaches and points of view because they drive innovation and progress in our rapidly changing world.

PROPOSED DRAFT LANGUAGE FOR FACULTY HANDBOOK (2 sections: 4.6.5 and 5.1.6)

___.   Certification of English Language Competency

As set forth in the Board of Trustees Policy Concerning English Language Competency of UT Instructional Staff, no individual shall be appointed to a teaching position or recommended for tenure in such a position at UTHSC unless the appointing officer certifies to the Chancellor that such person can communicate effectively with students in the English language. Persons who teach courses that are conducted primarily in a foreign language are exempt. The procedure to implement this Board Policy is that individuals who are candidates for appointment to a teaching position or (if not previously evaluated) for tenure in such a position and whose native language is not English will be evaluated by the department chair as to their ability to communicate effectively with students in the English language. **The method of evaluation shall be noted in the college bylaws and must provide for consistent, thorough, and effective evaluation.** If the department chair, in consultation with the faculty, finds this ability acceptable or unacceptable, he or she will so certify in writing to the candidate, the search committee/faculty, the dean and to the Vice Chancellor for Academic, Faculty and Student Affairs, using a form available on the website of the Office of Academic, Faculty and Student Affairs. If the department chair cannot so certify, the department chair will not appoint the individual to a teaching position, assign the individual teaching responsibilities, or recommend the individual for tenure.

EXISTING DOCUMENTATION
Current language in section 4.6.5
An individual who is a candidate for an appointment to a teaching position or for tenure in such a position and whose native language is not English is evaluated by the Chair regarding the ability to communicate effectively with students in the English language (URL no longer usable).

The method of evaluation shall be noted in the college bylaws and must provide for consistent, thorough, and effective evaluation. If the Chair finds the individual's ability acceptable, he or she certifies in writing to the Dean, indicating the method of assessment that was employed.

Current language in section 5.1.6
An individual who is a candidate for an appointment to a teaching position and whose native language is not English is evaluated by the Chair regarding the ability to communicate effectively with students in the English language (reference to policy; URL no longer usable). The method of evaluation shall be noted in the college bylaws and must provide for consistent, thorough, and effective evaluation. If the Chair finds the individual's ability acceptable, he or she so certifies in writing to the Dean, indicating the method of assessment that was employed.

Link to current policy - note that the form for assessment, as noted above, is the last page of the policy. We have greatly condensed the policy language, as well we have removed unnecessary explanatory

language.