

Exempt Staff Council Meeting Minutes

March 26, 2019 &
1610 University Avenue, Room 118 &

Present: Jeannie Berge, Brad Briggs, Leah Buffington, Eric Carr, Joe Christian, Kimberly Hardaway, Johnny Jones, Heath Nokes, Will Ploskonka Charles Primm, Tammy Renalds, Julie Roe, Rosie Sasso, Nicholas Simson, Jeannie Tennant, Michelle Whited, and Wesley Wright.

Absent: Michelle Atkins, Rex Barton, Brian Browning, William Bruhin, Linda Daugherty, Teresa Fisher, Deanna Flinchum, Elizabeth Greene, Keith Groves, Kandi Hodges, Kevin Lauer, Emily Miller and John Rich.

Welcome – Eric Carr, ESC-Chair-Elect & Research Representative, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Presentation – Julie Roe, Sr. Employee Relations Consultant, introduced Will Ploskonka and Jeannie Tennant from the new Learning and Organizational Development department (L&OD).

Mr. Ploskonka and Ms. Tennant gave a brief introduction L&OD. They are excited to serve the UTK campus via professional development.

Eric Carr made a motion to accept the minutes from last meeting. Tammy Renalds seconded the motion. All in favor. Minutes were accepted.

Commission reports

Commission for LGBT People– Tammy Renalds

The LGBT Commission met on March 4, 2019. Ferlin McGaskey, Director, Teaching & Learning Center, spoke about the Innovative Teaching & Learning Conference happening on April 8. A subcommittee is still working on a campus climate survey and hopes to have it ready for distribution sometime in April. Tyvi Small, Interim Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Engagement, spoke at the meeting. He shared that the focus will be on institutional structure as opposed to programming. One of his priorities is accountability. The Trans Rights and Resources Teach-In with The Pop-up Shop will be held March 26 from 6 pm – 8 pm in Hodges Library on the 1st floor.

Faculty Senate – Leah Buffington

The Faculty Senate met on March 4, 2019. President Misty Anderson opened the discussion with conversations about general education curriculums and what changes will be taking place. The faculty are very adamant about transformational courses and to educate students about our current climate crisis. The Faculty Senate also approved the Student Government Association (SGA) statement regarding the Comptroller's report on Sex Week.

Commission for Women – Rosie Sasso

The Commission for Women met on March 5, 2019. Ferlin McGaskey, Director, Teaching & Learning Center, spoke about the Innovative Teaching & Learning Conference happening on April 8, 2019. Tyvi Small, Interim Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Engagement, spoke at the meeting. He shared that the focus will be on institutional structure as opposed to programming. One of his priorities is accountability. The Commission ask how local media reports campus issues and incidents, and how the media becomes aware of situations often before our faculty and staff. Mr. Small said we need to educate and hold people accountable. There are several events going on around campus for National Women's Month. This includes looking at leave policies for faculty and staff after the arrival of a child and a salary analysis of the gender gap pay. UTK has joined with the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine to collaborate on how to prevent sexual harassment in higher education. UT is 1 of 28 universities joining as a founding member. This was a big announcement coming from Jennifer Richter, Associate Vice Chancellor, Office of Equity & Diversity

Commission for Blacks – Eric Carr

The Commission for Blacks met February 27, 2019. They have just finished a review of their by-laws. Eric Carr will put a copy on Google Docs for the ESC to review as an example.

Eric Carr provided the link for the Innovative Teaching and Learning Conference.

<https://teaching.utk.edu/itlc2019/>

Constituent issues

Carry over from February meeting.

1. &President Boyd's remarks to the Senate Education Committee were inflammatory and derogatory.

"We, along with our Board of Trustees, are committed to doing all we can legally to discourage and distance the University from salacious, irresponsible content."

[\(https://tennessee.edu/transparency/2019-feb-randy-boyd-prepared-remarks-senate-education-tn-comptroller/\)](https://tennessee.edu/transparency/2019-feb-randy-boyd-prepared-remarks-senate-education-tn-comptroller/)

2. &The actions promised by President Boyd are arbitrary and chilling to student voices and to their choices of student-organized programming. The immediate elimination of the SPAC is described in such terms as to make it clear that the administration does not trust UT Knoxville students to be leaders. The young adults who choose to come to UTK should be supported by their University as they organizes activities and programs that interest them, and that provide much-needed educational content denied them if they were public school students in Tennessee prior to attending UTK. This policy hurts not only the students in SEAT, as this policy expressly sets out to do, but also hurts all other student organizations who no longer have control over the fees that they paid into the student activity fund.

"Regarding the Comptroller Policy Consideration 8, we will work with the UT Board of Trustees to make the policy change necessary to cease future allocations of funds directly to registered student organizations and completely eliminate the Student Programming Allocation Committee often referred to as SPAC. We will also work with

the Board to develop a process in which ***the administration decides what programming to fund***, including sex education programming, with input from students.”

3. &This policy hurts not only the students in SEAT, as this policy deliberately sets out to do, but also hurts all other student organizations who no longer have control over the fees that they paid into the student activity fund. The Administration is transparent in its intent to harm SEAT’s organizing abilities.

“It’s important to note, the new policy considerations will not affect this year’s programming which was approved last fall. To remove the limited student fee funding for Sex Week’s programming this year, we would have to also impact a wide range of other very valuable programming. And, even if we did attempt to do that, much of the Sex Week programming would still continue without the funding.”

Eric Carr asked if everyone was aware of the above statement. Statement is on the SGA website.

<https://sga.utk.edu/sga-statement-regarding-the-comptrollers-report/>

Do we want to put a joint statement with the SGA statement? Committee members said although they may agree with the statement they cannot speak for their constituents. Eric Carr stated that we may be too late to respond to this statement but in the future the committee should review our process so that we can respond proactively to issues as they arise. This may be accomplished during the April meeting to review the by-laws.

Other business

Kimberly Hardaway asked about being able to advocate for our healthcare. Eric Carr stated that our benefits must be align with the State and that Rob Chance, Director, Payroll is our liaison between UT and the State. Mr. Carr suggested that Kimberly Hardaway prepare a paragraph and present to the committee for discussion next month. This may be something to share with Mr. Chance.

Mr. Carr reminded the group that UT is getting a new Ombudsman. In the past we had two part-time Ombudsman positions. These have been combined to form one full-time position. Interviews are currently underway.

Next Meeting

Tuesday, April 23rd, 2019 from 2:30 to 4:00 pm &
IPS, 1610 University Ave. Room 112 &

Please send agenda items to Rex Barton at rex.barton@utk.edu