

Tennessee State University
Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
August 22, 2024

Present: President Ronald Johnson, Ms. Zanetta Gooch, VP/Provost Robbie Melton, AVP Deborah Chisom, AVP Erik Schmeller, Dr. Cheryl Seay, Dr. Johnnie Smith, Senator Reginald Archer, Senator Ahmed Aziz, Senator Carlos Beane, Senator Guinevere Bennett, Senator Kenneth Chilton, Senator LaPorchia Davis, Senator Poliala Dickson, Senator Cynthia Gadsden, Senator Cynthia George, Senator Sagnika Ghosh, Senator Sujata Guha, Senator Retta Guy, Senator Mohammad Habibi, Senator Beatrice Harris, Senator Shone Hughes, Senator Julie Huskey, Senator Bill Johnson, Senator Natasha Johnson, Senator Reynard McMillian, Senator Megan O'Neil, Senator Nsoki Phambu, Senator Sean Posey, Senator Brian Russell, Senator Miranda Sanford-Terry, Senator ZaDonna Slay, Senator Martene Stanberry, Senator Venkataswarup Tiriveedhi, Senator Kimberly Triplett, Senator Artenzia Young-Seigler

Meeting started at 2:40 PM

AGENDA:

Welcome & Call to Order

Senator Tiriveedhi asked President Johnson to address Senate

Provost and Interim Vice-President of Academic Affairs Dr. Melton · Address to the Senate

Provost Melton welcomed everyone and introduced herself to new senators. She is VP of Academic Affairs and VP of Smart Technology Innovation.

Records Office is now in Academic Affairs. Dr. Deams is in Academic Affairs. Provost Melton welcomed Dr. Seay – Global Online and point person of Degree Works/CPoS – now in Office of Academic Affairs. Also introduced AVP Deborah Chisom – Avon Williams Campus – Adult Education and Continuing Education. Dr. Johnnie Smith is in Office of Academic Affairs. Academic coaches, retention, dual enrollment, and high school initiative. Dr. Erik Schmeller is Dean of Undergraduate Studies – overseeing UNIV and Tenure and Promotion. Dr. Jewell Winn oversees international programs. Glenda Alvin – library. ROTC – Lt. Col Cash. Other office personnel were also introduced.

Provost Melton gave enrollment count – August 22, 2020, 12 noon, total = 6295 head count (1228 graduate and 5031 undergraduate students).

Total FTE (both undergraduate and graduate) = 5664

Issues this summer was purge of approximately 1300 students – they had to step out due to lack of good financial standing – some students took time to collect money and then return.

In the academic calendar the big date is August 29 – when those students not in good financial standing will be removed from their courses unless all of their awards, scholarships, etc. will have applied to their account.

Final grades are due on December 12.

Interim President Johnson · Address to the Senate

Provost Melton introduced President Johnson. The President showed TSU Trajectory Change Initiative and mentioned that accountability, transparency, and communication are essential. There are 6 components to the Initiative from the perspective of risk exposure – Productivity, Practices, Programs, Place, Performance, and Presence.

TSU comprises of 4 enterprises – HBCU, 1890 land grant institution, R2 classification aspiring to become R1, and a comprehensive university. We need to figure out how to consolidate the 4 enterprises to be on the same foundation and look at how these 4 silos affect our productivity. It is important to take the institution, change its trajectory, and add a booster to achieve its goals. At financial and administrative levels, there is budget built out. Change will happen since people in the organization believe in it and want it to happen. We have to build credibility.

Question from Senator McMillian – Will you share plan with faculty? President answered that they are still in development and won't be complete in near future. Assessments are being done. Details involve implementation – Board may have to vote. It is important to lay out the basic framework of what has been done, what should be prioritized, and then assessment should be done.

Statement from Senator Bill Johnson – There is a lot of chatter about financial structure of university. Informed President that Faculty Senate has various committees including the Committee on Budget/Finance and requested the President to engage some of the Faculty Senate committees and leverage their expertise and financial experts that this university has available. President agreed. Although voices must be heard – you should communicate externally and internally. A lot involves structure. Figuring out structure involves talking to the faculty – where we are going – that conversation with faculty should take place. Then the mechanics of the process should be detailed.

Question from Senator Russell – one of the missions talked about by the President was the 30-day plan – launch efforts to promote positive culture – what does it mean to make our campus

more inclusive? President answered – create setting where people live, work, and want to be there. Talked about how students are treated. It's a mindset change that needs to happen.

Senator Tiriveedhi thanked President Johnson.

Provost Melton – over summer, on behalf of Senator Tiriveedhi, OAA conducted survey asking faculty what their priorities were. There were various categories. 1. Facilities – OAA took information and worked with Facilities staff – they are doing a personal eye-to-eye walk of buildings. 2. Compensation – will come back with recommendation of comprehensive study in the next meeting. Approved Chair summer workload plan. Faculty travel allowance is not canceled – still travel at \$2100 rate. Provost Melton asked Deans for faculty workload. SACSCOC conducted administrator and faculty credentialing. Implemented administrator survey. Retention is a priority in order to increase enrollment. OAA hired full-time CPoS director – process is automated. Provost Melton reminded Senate about Attendance Reporting Phase I.

Question – what is census date? Answer – September 1 (included in academic calendar).

Senator Bill Johnson – asked about Academic Performance Incentive Plan (APIP) – hoping that there is some funding. Provost Melton – approached CFO and President Johnson and will return to next meeting to let us know the status of funding.

Senator McMillian – does implementation of payment plan provide good financial standing? Provost Melton – students should contact the Office of Financial Aid. There are various payment plans.

Senator Tiriveedhi thanked Provost Melton.

Approval of Minutes · Senator Venkataswarup Tiriveedhi, Senate Chair

Previous meeting minutes (from April 18) were approved by Senator Bill Johnson and seconded by Senator Ghosh. Those minutes will be put on the Senate website soon.

Nominations (and Appointments) to various vacant committee-chair positions ·

Senator Sagnika Ghosh, Chair, Nominations Committee

Senator Ghosh mentioned that chair positions would need to be filled.

Senator Tiriveedhi showed Faculty Senate committee chair's list and went over it.

Academic Committee – Senator Ghosh was nominated and seconded.

Budget Committee – Senator McMillian will serve for one more year.

Alumni Relations Committee – Senator Dickson volunteered.

Constitution Committee – Senator Bill Johnson will continue.

Curriculum Committee – Senator Roberts will check and confirm at next meeting.

Executing Committee – standing

Faculty Grievance Committee – Senator Sanford-Terry volunteered.

Faculty Benefits Committee – Senator George will continue.

IT Committee – Senator Johnson will continue.

Nomination Committee – Senator Ghosh will continue.

Library Committee – Senator Huskey volunteered.

Professional Development Committee – Senator Shelton will stay.

Research Committee – Senator Tiriveedhi stays. Senator Phambu joins.

Student Appeals Committee – Senator Russell will stay.

Ad hoc – Promotion and Tenure Review Committee – Senator Shelton self-nominated. Senator Bill Johnson for Co-Chair.

Ad hoc NIA Committee – Senator Posey joins.

Ad hoc Fair Funding Committee – Senator Tiriveedhi continues. Senator George joins.

Faculty Handbook-SACSCOC compliance · Faculty Senate Vice-Chair and Senator William Johnson; Chair, Constitution Committee

Senator Johnson stated handbook and constitution were updated last year with revised SACSCOC statement. Contents of both remain the same. Post-tenure review issue needs to be discussed with Constitution Committee immediately. Also, Faculty Handbook needs corrections.

Faculty Trustee Report · Dr. Young-Seigler; Faculty Trustee

Senator Young-Seigler – Faculty Trustee. Next Board of Trustees meeting will be in September – invited Faculty Senators to join Board meeting and mentioned that all of us should help the President move TSU in a better direction. Senator Young-Seigler thanked Senator Tiriveedhi for his hard work and encouraged everyone to fill the faculty survey.

Closing Comments and Adjournment · Senator Venkataswarup Tiriveedhi, Senate Chair

Faculty survey will end August 28. Next Senate meeting – September 19.

Meeting adjourned – 4:30 PM.

Minutes recorded by Sujata Guha