

JSCC Faculty Council Meeting Minutes October 24, 2012

The meeting began at 2:00 p.m. with the following people present:

Council Members: James Mayo, Council Chair (English); Kim Todd (Radiography); Jerry Gilbert (English); Teri Maddox (English); Becca Rhea (Communication); Emily Bates Fortner (Sociology); Don Brown (CIS); Bob Raines, ex-officio (Psychology); Dee Jones (Nursing)

Absent Council Members: Kim Holland, Vice-Chair (Nursing); Sara Youngerman, Secretary (Agriculture); Barbara Scott-Goodman (Nursing); Shelia Holland (Nursing); Andrew Kelley (English)

Visitors: Liz Thompson (English); Nell Senter (Philosophy)

James Mayo reported on a number of items addressed at the recent TBR academic subcouncil meeting:

- Beginning in 2014, a new TBR common calendar may be introduced. While TBR colleges and universities may have a slightly different calendar, all community colleges will follow the same schedule, which will be determined by the “unified community college system” (which apparently does not exist at this point). Start and end dates for the academic year/semesters do not seem to be impacted; however, the biggest difference may be seen with the scheduling of “fall break” at community colleges. This break could possibly be moved back to the week of Thanksgiving, including the Wednesday before Thanksgiving.
- UT Knoxville faculty senate submitted a resolution to the UT system Chancellor, Jimmy Cheek, regarding support for benefit equality at UT. This resolution requested benefit equality for all employees regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. This resolution was rejected. TBR academic subcouncil representatives were asked to take this issue back to their individual colleges and discuss if TBR faculty members would like to respond to this issue. James Mayo is sending out this resolution to all faculty for consideration. The faculty council has been asked to get feedback from our constituents and decide if the subcouncil will (1) do nothing in response to this issue, (2) provide a statement of support (or lack of support) to the UT faculty senate, (3) support efforts for TBR to adopt such a statement and policy.
 - o In response to the statement that all faculty council members should get in touch with their constituents, council members addressed the idea that it was unclear which specific divisions were being represented due to our recent reorganization. Faculty council positions have been chosen based on the divisions of Professional/Technical and Arts/Sciences. Now that those divisions are no longer intact, faculty are uncertain which areas they are now representing.
- The use of sick leave banks for faculty was also discussed. Currently state law only allows employees to draw from the bank for personal illness. An employee cannot use sick leave time from the bank if a family member is ill. Faculty council members were asked to get feedback from constituents on this matter so that our voice could be heard at TBR subcouncil.
- It was brought to the attention of the academic subcouncil that faculty who are hired under temporary appointments can be fired with a 30-day notice. James Mayo is inquiring about this policy and the details of the temporary contract with Human Resources.

Emily Fortner discussed some growing concerns regarding distance education and eLearn. Multiple faculty members have discussed these concerns with Ms. Fortner and have requested that faculty council discuss these issues. The following items were highlighted:

- The lack of guidelines or policies/procedure for online course development and implementation.
- Inadequate technical support for faculty.
- Problems with courses cloning (allowing developers the power to clone all sections)
- Lack of a clear policy (or at least implementation of the policy if there is one) regarding online civility and etiquette for students.

- Problems with standardization of course textbooks required regardless of online or on-ground format.
- Lack of required eLearn training for all new employees and adjuncts regardless if they are teaching online or not but especially if they are teaching online.
- Confusion regarding remuneration for course development and maintenance.
- Lack of clear knowledge of the available technology that JSCC has access to and the ability to easily utilize that technology.

Nell Senter spoke to these concerns regarding Distance Education and eLearn. Dr. Senter also addressed that one of our faculty at JSCC serves as an RODP mentor and has designed multiple online courses for RODP, but that faculty member is not being included in the Online Quality Council at JSCC, a committee which is creating policy and procedure for Distance Education programs. Dr. Senter also addressed the hard work from the SLI (student learning initiative) committee that created the new survey regarding online courses for all incoming students. This survey helps identify if students are a potential good fit for online courses based upon their time management skills and learning styles. Dr. Senter reemphasized these ongoing issues with Distance Education and the lack of clear processes and guidelines. The council agreed that faculty who are actually involved in distance education courses should be included in the ongoing discussions about policies and procedures. Emily Fortner is serving on the Distance Education Committee and requested that these concerns be presented to the committee at their upcoming meeting. A motion to present these concerns to the D.E. committee was proposed and was unanimously supported by faculty council.

The initiative between the council and the VPAA to appoint a subcommittee of tenured faculty to create and implement a “New faculty orientation and mentoring program” to aid new faculty members and provide adequate support through the promotion and tenure processes was discussed. Teri Maddox stated that in the past the Vice President of Academic Affairs led these initiatives, since the ultimate decision of promotion and tenure came from that office. Faculty council members discussed a concern that this subcommittee would not provide adequate support without direct leadership and direction from the VPAA. The council requested that all faculty be provided with clear guidelines on the expectations for promotion and tenure from the VPAA and that this committee that will provide such services to new faculty be led by the VPAA.

James Mayo addressed the use of sick leave by faculty. Currently faculty must use sick leave for any absence. When faculty members are absent, they are required to take 7.5 hours when they may, for example, be only missing 4 hours of class and office hours. This seems to be in violation of Tennessee state law. The faculty council has asked that Mr. Mayo request clarification on this policy and use of sick leave from Human Resources.

Faculty Council was asked to consider the issues and concerns regarding Service Learning. Members have been asked to respond via email to the statement and decide how the council will respond to this issue.

Dee Jones reported that the efforts in the civility campaign are still ongoing. Dee Jones and Kim Holland have been in contact with Linda Nickell, Dean of Students.

James Mayo requested that all council members email him regarding which standing committee appointments they desire to serve on. Members are to email him directly.

The meeting adjourned at around 3:40 p.m.