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**SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**November 13, 2014**  
**12:45 P.M. in SKH 369**

***Present: Wai Mok, Kader Frendi, Mitch Berbrier, Deborah Heikes, Carolyn Sanders, Michael Banish, Debra Moriarity, Azita Amiri, Charles Hickman, Eric Seemann, Linda Maier***

***Guests: President Altenkirch***

***Provost Curtis was not present.***

- Wai Mok called the meeting to order at 12:50 pm
- Administration Reports
- ❖ President Altenkirch  
The **Shelby Center** lot will close probably sometime next week. Facilities will send out a notice.

**University Park**

We started talking about this with the city in the summer. We both got appraisals over the summer and came to an agreement on the price. We were working on what needed to be done but then they decided that they wanted it to be done as soon as possible—they didn't want to wait until November or February when the next Board meetings are because they wanted the money in order to shift it to this other park where the athletic teams are moving to. So they tried to slide it into the city council agenda without telling anyone. I had a meeting with the neighborhood association, not to talk about University Park, but to talk about our long-term plans and buying houses, etc. On October 13, I met with the two leaders of the association and we talked about the logistics. I nonchalantly said that we were purchasing this park and got no reaction, so I figured the city had told everyone, but they hadn't. The city slipped it on the October 23 agenda and didn't tell anyone until the day before, so there was a big issue about it in the newspaper. There was a 5-0 vote.

The Board of Trustees approved it and now we are in the process of closing. We had a community meeting on November 10. 170 people were there and we fed them dinner. There weren't any questions, complaints, or issues about the park. They were concerned with where our next buildings were going, signage, and buying buildings in the neighborhood, what events we have on campus. The only thing anyone complained about was the noise from Charger Park during the game because we play music in between periods. So we will have to turn the volume down.

We purchased the park for safety purposes. We will use it as a buffer to keep drugs out. Too much drug sales going on there. Also, we will use it for intramurals and summer camps for kids,

departmental gatherings and picnics, etc. It's 10 acres. We will close the entrance from the neighborhood. There is a pedestrian access. We will patrol the park, as well. The facilities are in good shape. There will be some upgrade on parking surfaces.

### **Smoking Policy**

Smoking Policy says no smoking in buildings and no smoking within 25 feet of entrances. Several people want us to amend this policy to add electronic cigarettes to this. The main concern was that from far away, electronic cigarettes appear to be real cigarettes. I have worked with Bob Reider to amend the policy to include electronic cigarettes. I'm proposing to put it in place on an interim basis and send to you and other two groups to look at it.

- Carolyn Sanders: What about cigarette butts? And people don't follow the "within 25 feet policy."
- President Altenkirch: It's like a speed limit sign. Don't see many people following it. Tuscaloosa just passed a smoke free campus policy.
- Carolyn Sanders: Are we going to go to that policy?
- President Altenkirch: It's up to us.
- Carolyn Sanders: What about the butts?

Charles Hickman pointed out that in Business, they don't put the ashtray receptacles within 25 feet of the building, so if a person finishes their cigarette close to the building, they just throw it on the ground.

- Mitch Berbrier: We can encourage people smoking farther away by placing ashtrays in certain areas.
- President Altenkirch: I think A&M went smoke-free too a while back.

### **Policy on Postdocs**

Ray Vaughn drafted another policy that I would like to put in place now and have you look at. The Deans and Christine have looked at it. It redefines what a postdoc is—making a postdoc a student. Right now they're an employee, so they're paying into the retirement system, but the majority might not be here in 10 years. So they're putting money in and when they leave they will get that money out. It just doesn't make sense for them to put it in. We looked around. Tuscaloosa treats postdocs as students—so they don't pay into the retirement system. This policy mirrors what they do in Tuscaloosa.

Deb Moriarity asked about the benefits. President Altenkirch said he thinks it only impacts the retirement system.

Another aspect of this is that payments into the retirement system are matched, and we don't get those back.

Michael Banish said with postdocs comes researchers at centers, and there is the idea here

to integrate centers with academic departments. He also mentioned the possibility of seeing less equality of postdocs if we start to take away the retirement and TIAA-CREF because they might begin going to other institutions, i.e. those that offer these. He's worried it will give off the impression that UAH is saying to the student that they are only here temporarily so not to think of this as a permanent home. Deb Moriarity said that's what a postdoc is by definition. Michael Banish agreed, but made the point that UAH has a much stronger center structure than most universities do.

- President Altenkirch: This causes postdocs not to have to pay into the retirement system. That's all this does.
- Kader Frendi: Can they elect to pay into it?
- President Altenkirch: No. If they aren't here 10 years, then they aren't vested. They leave and get their money back, but grants and contracts that are paying into the retirement system are getting no benefits out of it.
- Carolyn Sanders: If they get TIAA-CREF, then does the university match that? And will they get it back?
- President Altenkirch: I will check to see if they get TIAA-CREF, but whatever we do with that, that's what they get.
- Michael Banish: So it's just the state retirement?
- President Altenkirch: As far as I understand it. The retirement system is out of our control. You're either an employee in it, or a student who's not.

We talked about a 4-day workweek over the summer. Originally, the staff wasn't in favor of it. The Staff Senate passed a resolution in favor of it recently. I'm not sure what is in the resolution because I just received it. It will be longer workdays with shorter workweeks. My experience is that there will be a group, i.e., faculty, who will complain. But they will complain based on the principle that they should complain because if they don't complain then it won't look good because they're supposed to be working hard. Another group has a complaint about facilities, specifically labs. And in the beginning, people were there, but as time went on, there weren't any people there. I know that because I had people take attendance.

Special accommodations will be made when justified and this is only for the summer, not the whole academic year.

- Deb Moriarity: Does this come to the Faculty Senate?
- Wai Mok: It does affect us.
  
- Kader Frendi: One issue my colleagues had is how does it sound to the local sponsors such as NASA and Army that we are only working 4-day weeks?
- President Altenkirch: There's nothing sacred about 5 days per week.

## Recruiting and Retention/Graduation Rates

On the recruiting trips, retention rate and graduation rate always comes up with the parents. Our retention rate from freshmen to sophomore and graduation rate comes up in popularity rankings that parents look at.

- Deb Moriarity: Haven't all of the Deans been told to go back to their departments and start working on questions that we need answers to in order to figure out why our retention rate was lower, why the DFW rate was so high, etc.
- President Altenkirch: On the recruiting side, it's going well. We are spreading out. We've hit more counties in Alabama. We have received double the applications this year compared to last year. 83 students already accepted admission for next fall. Last year at the same time it was 0.
- Deb Moriarity: There has been no deposit for that, though, right? Just a verbal acceptance?
- President Altenkirch: Right. The only deposit is if they come to summer school. 35 students did that this past year—came in the summer and transferred that into the fall. There was an increase in freshmen numbers this year. The ACT went up nine-tenths of a point. Out-of-state has the high ACT students. In-state students have lower, but in state students will bring the numbers. There will be an open house next Saturday, the 22<sup>nd</sup>. It will be the biggest we've ever had. It's so big that we can't accommodate it in one place. We have to split it into 2 locations: in the Theater in Charger Union and in the Exhibit Hall.

### ➤ Discussion Items

#### ❖ Climate Survey

I talked with Christine. She said Delores Smith will be on the committee, plus Suzanne Simpson.

- Carolyn Sanders: I thought the plan was to go to an outside source.
- Wai Mok: Yes, but we will still have a committee.

The discussion of anonymity and confidentiality being maintained was discussed. Mitch Berbrier said that that's based on one interpretation of the law. He also stated that who wrote answers won't be released, but the actual answers will be. So if names are included in the answers, then the author is compromising their own anonymity. Eric Seemann mentioned that the collection of certain demographic information reduces anonymity. Deborah Heikes brought up the issue of the survey being linked to certain email addresses.

- Deborah Heikes: It needs to be made clear to people that anything they say can be used against them.
- Mitch Berbrier: It can also be said that from our perspective, we will maintain your confidentiality.
- Deb Moriarity: We can take all reasonable steps to protect.

- Carolyn Sanders: I have to believe that this has been done before at other universities and they've gone through all of this and have solved these issues and have done this successfully.
- Deborah Heikes: We started with the University of Michigan survey, which is much more complicated, and it asked for a lot more demographic information. But since we aren't the University of Michigan, we had to get rid of a lot of things—almost all of the demographic information—and so in the end it wasn't really usable. There aren't any women in some colleges.
- Wai Mok: To get the ball moving, I need members for the committee.
- Michael Banish: I'm about to be finished with SACS so I can sit on it.
- Wai Mok: As Chair of Personnel, you should sit on it. Anyone else?

Charles Hickman voiced his disagreement about conducting another survey. He said he would be happy to help out with research if anyone had a question, but he does not want to sit on the committee. Carolyn Sanders said she was surprised at the vote at the last Senate meeting.

- Michael Banish: The Provost said something very interesting. She wants this done to influence new hires—not to get rid of people. She's looking for a survey result.
- Wai Mok: She said we have so many opening positions that we need to improve the climate.
- Carolyn Sanders: I posed the question to the President and he said there's little worth.
- Deb Moriarity: What was the objective, what was the mechanism for the objective? If the objective is to complain, then this is a bad idea. If the objective is to truly find out the climate, then there is a good reason to do it.
- Deborah Heikes: It was never supposed to be what it became. It was supposed to be to take the temp of what is going on. I suggest another recommendation: that there are no open-ended questions.
- Michael Banish: I will be on the committee as part of my duty as the Chairman of the Personnel Committee.
- Wai Mok: Delores Smith wanted to do something about affirmative action.
- Deborah Heikes: When you do that, you begin identifying people easily.
- Wai Mok: Suzanne Simpson has the skill for this. I think I need more than 3 people.
- Carolyn Sanders: Mitch, you mentioned the possibility of an outside firm. Have you done research into this?
- Mitch Berbrier: I mentioned Alabama has a research center, so they would be better to use than a private one. Wai, I sent you some names for the committee.
- Wai Mok: They aren't senators.

- Mitch Berbrier: They don't need to be senators. It's routed through the Senate.
- Deborah Heikes: It's generally interpreted that the Senate recommends, but it doesn't need to be a senator.

❖ Governance and Operations Committee Chair

There is still no Chair for the Governance and Operations Committee. I'm going to email the members on this committee and ask for a volunteer. The committee also still needs a representative from the College of Science. If no one volunteers to be Chair, then I will add someone from Science and they will be the Chair.

❖ Student Affairs Advisory Board

Need one more volunteer

- Eric Seemann: What does that committee do?
- Mitch Berbrier: We have a new VP of Student Affairs so maybe it's to advise that unit.
- Eric Seemann: I'll volunteer for that given my involvement with the veterans.

Mitch got the charge from Joy. Wai Mok read the charge to the Executive Committee

❖ RIF Committee / IIDR Committee

I sent out an email earlier this week asking for volunteers to sit on the RIF committee. I sat on this committee last year, as well as the IIDR Committee. I asked Ray Vaughn what all I could disclose to the Faculty Senate—with one specific thing being the identity of the committee members. He said I could not disclose their identities to you. Finally, I agreed with him that the panelists should not be disclosed because of possible harassment, prior to or after submission of the proposal—and it has happened before.

Carolyn Sanders said it was surprising that we would be disclosing the panelists' names. Michael Banish said NASA and NSF don't disclose. People always deal with a program manager, not a panel member. He brought up the point that in the past, scores and/or reviewers' commenters haven't been sent out, but that they should be sent back with the proposal. Deb Moriarity agreed and said some faculty in her department were confused why they weren't funded.

The IIDR is another internal grant program. Names of people on this committee should not be disclosed.

I was planning on reporting the full process to the full Senate. For example, we received 72 proposals and initially we cut that down to 36.

- Deb Moriarity: Immediately?
- Wai Mok: After about a week or two.

There are 8-9 people on the committee and we have to cut the proposals to 50% within one week. Then each proposal is given to 2 reviewers—one primary and one secondary. The primary reviewer will speak on behalf of the proposal. If either one gives a negative review, it's pretty

much dead. The Call for Proposals says it should be written for the layperson; however, in my opinion based on past reviews, it should have some substance to convince experts, or else it will be shot down at the meeting.

- Deb Moriarity: A person of your education level, not necessarily in your discipline.
- Michael Banish: Not a specialist in your field.
- Deb Moriarity: But someone of similar education should be able to read it and understand it. So you can have some technical in it, but it needs explanation in it.
  
- Kader Frendi: You mentioned 72 proposals and then cut it in half. So there were 36 reviewed?
- Wai Mok: Yes, 36 reviewed by 2 reviewers.
- Kader Frendi: How did you get from 72 to 36?
- Wai Mok: In the beginning, each one of us was assigned 8 and we ranked our top 4.
- Kader Frendi: Did you review and rank them in the same fashion? Just making sure there is due process.
- Wai Mok: Yes.

❖ Bill 378

Deb Moriarity: We had the Bill that was to define the accelerated review process for tenure, time at first appointment.

*“Instead of a sequential review process from the departmental committee on up the chain described above to the Provost, the application file and curriculum vita shall be distributed simultaneously to all committees and individuals in the chain concerns. And that in addition to sending recommendations to the next committee or individual in the chain described above, recommendations shall also be submitted directly to the Provost. And that all recommendations shall be submitted within 5 business days after distribution of the file and vita.”*

As I recall, the 2 concerns were (1) the Provost was getting the recommendations at each step, and that’s not a part of the normal process, and (2) the 5-day time limit. Why not, when it’s down to 2 to 3 finalists on campus, we start the deliberations and the tenure process at that point. That way, when we hire a person, tenure is already set.

Mitch Berbrier thinks this idea of Kader’s was a brilliant idea.

Now that I’m looking at it, we are going to do a sequential review process, so the first part (*“Instead of a sequential review process from the departmental committee...”*) should be taken out. And it should say, “The application file and curriculum vita for all finalists for the position shall be distributed simultaneously to all committees and individuals in the chain prior to the campus visit of the candidates.” And that *“In addition to sending recommendations to the next committee or individual in the chain, the recommendation should be submitted directly to the Provost,”* should be taken out. “The recommendations would be sent up the chain—”

- Mitch Berbrier: “—at a very accelerated rate”
- Deb Moriarity: Do we want to put times in right there? “And that all reviews shall be

completed and recommendations shall be submitted no more than 7 business days after the campus visit of the final candidate.” The reason for 7 is because 5 is sometimes a weird time to turn things around if it’s Monday to Friday. In most cases, they could if it’s a summer. Unless we start the 5 working days on that Monday. It used to say, “*within 5 business days after distribution of the file and vita.*” So you only had those 5 days, but now if you get it before their visit, we will have the time of their visit.

- Michael Banish: 5 working days after the last visit, the departmental committee or everyone owes it?
- Deb Moriarity: Well do we want it after the last visit, or after each?
  
- Carolyn Sanders: I worked on the original bill and the main concern of the administration was the turnaround. With this, we are increasing the work from just one final candidate to all finalists.
- Deb Moriarity: But it will be the department that they will be tenured in, their Dean, and PTAC, and the URB. The reason I said wait until the end is because you only have to meet once, instead of three times or however many candidates there are.

The purpose of the visit was discussed—its role as a simple time marker in the tenure process versus its role as a candidate’s evaluation in the tenure process. There was a discussion if the candidate’s visit should play a role in this accelerated review process for tenure, since the candidate might not be known to campus faculty and administration.

- Deb Moriarity: The idea is that they will say all three are tenurable on paper, but this one is more favorable in person. What you want to be able to say is that you can give input on the hire. That is what I wanted to bring to this committee. That’s why I left the visit as a time marker.
- Mitch Berbrier: At the moment that all finalists are announced and CVs are given out. Because they visit at different times, it gives the review boards more time to review. So there’s no issue about rushing to hire a person without tenure.
- Deb Moriarity: Everyone gets the packet at the same time so they are only waiting on the letters. So should they be done in parallel?
- Kader Frendi: Especially if they are from different colleges.
- Deborah Heikes: It might be harder for a Dean search.
- Mitch Berbrier: Most of these people are going to be tenured elsewhere. You’re looking at an application and letters of recommendation, not a dossier.
  
- Deb Moriarity: So in that case, “The review shall be completed and recommendations shall be submitted” within how many days?
- Mitch Berbrier: “to the next level within 5 business days.” The idea being that those 3-4 weeks should be plenty of time.
- Carolyn Sanders: Otherwise it could kill the upper levels.
- Deb Moriarity: There are 5 levels before it gets to the Provost: Department Committee,

- Department Chair, PTAC, Dean, and then URB.
- Michael Banish: The Chair doesn't get 5 days.
  - Deborah Heikes: The Chair doesn't need 5 days because they'll have it immediately.
  - Michael Banish: The Department gets 1 week, PTAC gets 1 week, Dean gets 1 week, and the URB.
  - Deb Moriarity: As a Department Chair, there are letters that need to be written.
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- Carolyn Sanders: From a practical standpoint, candidates could be brought onto campus before that month is even over.
  - Deb Moriarity: It shouldn't take any of them more than one meeting, one day.
  - Michael Banish: You could say that the department process could take up to 2 weeks. If you're looking at candidates all within one department, or most within one department, and they all submit dossiers, then it could take a while.
  - Mitch Berbrier: You are ratifying or not-ratifying their tenure from their home institutions.
  - Carolyn Sanders: Is it a full-fledged letter?
  - Deborah Heikes: When I was on PTAC, it was an up/down thing, not a full justification.
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- Mitch Berbrier: It might be useful to go back the last 3 to 4 tenured upon hires, to see how much time there was before the announcement of the finalists was made and the tenure decision was made.
  - Kader Frendi: If you think back to the Provost search, all 4 finalists were on myuah. Therefore, that's the time you want to look at them.
  - Mitch Berbrier: The issue is going to be that this person got tenure at an institution that isn't an "aspirant" institution, or they received tenure and haven't been published in 6 years. There should be some due diligence done.
  - Carolyn Sanders: At URB there's just a form. They just recommend, although they have the letters from all of the other committees.
  - Kader Frendi: The 5 working days we are talking about here will be just the decision.
  - Carolyn Sanders: Do we want consistency?
  - Michael Banish: The Dean doesn't need 5 days. The department, in order to get everyone together, to get a committee together, needs time.
  - Deb Moriarity: You can use electronic means.
  - Michael Banish: I'm for 10 days for this reason. If people in the department aren't available, 5 days isn't enough.
  - Mitch Berbrier: That sounds good to me.
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- Deborah Heikes: URB gets a certain amount of time but no one else because the President can put pressure on a department.
  - Deb Moriarity: Is it okay procedure-wise for me to go talk to the Provost?
  - Mitch Berbrier: Yes. We also need to pay attention to the pre-ambler statements.

- Michael Banish: Another argument, too: if we take a month to do this, they better have ported this over to us ahead of time.
- Deborah Heikes: Are we asking for dossiers or CVs? If the former, that's a little much.
- Deb Moriarity: Just the CV and application.

❖ SIEs

SIEs are turning electronic.

- Carolyn Sanders: We depend so much on those SIEs for reappointment and tenured reviews.
- Deb Moriarity: The committee met and all of these issues were brought up. We are looking at ways to encourage participation. There are a variety of ways to do this—up to not releasing grades until it's done.
- Carolyn Sanders: What's the plan for this semester?
- Deb Moriarity: It will be the paper ones. We just met 2 weeks ago for the first time.

❖ Agenda for Faculty Senate Meeting #553, November 20, 2014

Approved

Meeting adjourned at 2:20 pm



## **Senate Bill 378: Defining the Accelerated Review Process for Tenure at the Time of First Appointment**

### Bill History:

- 3/10/14 Submitted to President-Elect Wai Mok by Personnel Committee Chair Dr. Carolyn Sanders on behalf of Personnel Committee
- 3/13/14 Remanded by FSEC to Personnel Committee for revision
- 4/5/14 Resubmitted to President-Elect Wai Mok by Personnel Committee Chair Dr. Carolyn Sanders on behalf of Personnel Committee

**WHEREAS** administrators and faculty with appropriate credentials and experience are eligible to be considered for tenured status at the time of their first appointment, and

**WHEREAS** in order to ensure tenure review procedures that are fair and equitable to the entire faculty body, both the review process and minimum qualifications for tenure at first appointment must be substantially similar to that of both the tenured and tenure-track faculty throughout the institution, and

**WHEREAS** in these cases, an accelerated process of tenure review may be necessary in order to attract and hire the most qualified candidates, and

**WHEREAS** these cases might be brought forward at any time during the calendar year,

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** determinations for awarding tenure at first appointment must include review by the appropriate Departmental Committee, Department Chair or equivalent, College Promotion and Tenure Advisory Committee (PTAC), Dean, as well as the University Review Board (URB) and the Provost, the only exception being for those considered for tenure into the College of Nursing (CON), where such reviews shall include the Faculty Committee, the Associate Dean, the Dean, the University Review Board, and the Provost.

**AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** in these cases, upon the written request of the Provost to each appropriate individual and committee, this process shall be accelerated according to the following variation from the regular process:

1. Instead of a sequential process from Departmental Committee (or CON Faculty Committee) on up the chain described above to the Provost, the application file and

*curriculum vita* shall be distributed simultaneously to all committees and individuals in the chain

AND

2. That in addition to sending recommendations to the next committee or individual in the chain described above, recommendations shall also be submitted directly to the Provost

AND

3. That all recommendations shall be submitted within five business days after distribution of the file and *vita*.

**AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** in order to offer the widest possible opportunity for inclusion of all faculty and administrators in the chain, whether these cases are brought forward during the academic year or during the summer, whether these cases are brought forward while classes are in session or between sessions, deliberations can include electronic (including but not restricted to telephone conferences calls, emails, and remote video communications systems), even as face-to-face meetings are preferred where possible.