

Minutes of the Faculty Assembly Meeting
September 8, 2004

Faculty members present: John Caruthers, Horace Crater, Lloyd Davis, Gary Flandro, Ralph Kimberlin, Joseph Majdalani, Trevor Moulden, Chris Parigger, Al Pujol, K. C. Reddy, Roy Schulz, Atul Sheth, Monty Smith, Peter Solies, Bruce Whitehead, Max Hailey, Kenneth Kimble, J. W. L. Lewis, John Steinhoff

Faculty not present: Basil Antar, Bruce Bomar, Y. L. Chen, George Garrison, Narendra Dahotre, Joel Muehlhauser, Boris Kupershmidt, Trevor Moeller, Rich Ranaudo, Ahmad Vakili.

The faculty meeting was called to order at 10:10 A.M.

The minutes from the 4/14/04 meeting were approved (motion made by Dr. Davis and seconded by Dr. Steinhoff)

The vacancies recently created in a number of committees were filled. In particular Dr. Davis, Dr. Antar, Dr. Moeller, and Dr. Majdalani, were elected by acclamation to fill one year vacancies (terminating in 2005) in respectively the Budget, By-Laws, Library, and Executive committees. Steinhoff has agreed to fill the tenth position in the Research Committee (Kimble's position is ex-officio). Committee members and their respective committees will appear on the web. Solies and Vakili were nominated as proxy members of the Graduate Council (election to take place electronically)

Dr. Kimble emphasized the importance of well run committees in helping the Faculty Assembly meetings run more efficiently and effectively.

Dr. Caruthers' Report:

Student Dean Position has been eliminated. Student Recruitment Committee (Bomar, Solies, Steinhoff) will now play a larger role.

Dr. Lewis has tentatively agreed to serve as interim director of CLA

Dr. Petersen (new UT President) visited UTSI and met with Dr. Caruthers and Support Council. The Gov. Bredesen has said he will support Petersen in his efforts in the revitalization of UTSI.

General David M. Stringer, the AEDC commander, visited UTSI.

Dr. Petersen was asked to appear before the Fiscal Review Committee of the State Legislature and asked a number of questions (about revitalization, productivity, and student enrollment). Answers were provided by Dr. John Caruthers and others. A number of supporters on the committee made some very constructive comments. Fly recommended a consultant to review our revitalization plan. (Dr. Skip Fletcher – Texas A&M) He will visit on 9/22. Presentations (consisting of lab visits and/or three power point slides) will be made by some of the faculty. All of the faculty are asked to send in same (for later reading by Dr. Fletcher)

Support Council will invite a number of influential Legislators to visit UTSI on 9/21

Dr. Muehlhauser was not present but for him it was stated that the time for Federal Agenda Planning has arrived. New HVIPS funding approved. Electrical Propulsion money being sought.

Dr. Reddy's Report

For five years (1998-2003) no UTSI faculty recruitment was permitted. Recently one tenure track faculty (Dr. Majdalani) and one research faculty (Dr. Moeller) have been hired. Three others positions have been or will be recruited for. (A still more recent hold on faculty recruitment by Mr. Fly has been modified to allow progress on filling these positions)

Enrollment down slightly to 128 (40 full time, including 22 on UTSI support, 8 on contracts, 3 Space Grants, 7 self and externally funded) 16 of the students are Ph. D. It was emphasized that Student Recruitment is now more of a faculty responsibility.

Question for Dr. Petersen at Faculty Senate meeting:

First of all Dr. Kimble emphasized the importance of the link between UTSI and UTK by Senators and Graduate Council Members.

Dr. Steinhoff said that complementing this would be seminar exchanges between the two institutions.

The main question that was proposed would deal with the problem we are having with the UTK graduate school bureaucracy in the admissions of international students. The UTSI Senators and Graduate Council members were charged with coming up with a good question or remarks for Senate and Graduate council (in consultation with Dr. Reddy)

TIAA-CREF - Dr. Kimble emphasized that now would be a good time to bring up with the Senate the idea of increasing from 50% to 100% that amount of TIAA-CREF retirement funds that could be controlled by faculty members upon their retirement (since there may be change in the administrator with the new administration).

Raises - There is no money available to raises above the 3% mandated by the State (even 2% of this must come from UTSI) since money is needed for recruiting new faculty.

Dr. Steinhoff said, essentially, that we should assess as best as we can, the danger of the Institute being closed if we do not reconstitute the faculty. If that should happen, our salaries would, of course, go to zero. If it would have an impact on avoiding this catastrophe by forgoing a 2 or 3% raise and having funds to hire new faculty, he said he thinks it's a "no brainer".

Dr. Steinhoff also brought up the possibility of instituting reciprocal research seminars with Knoxville, as a way of acting on Dr. Kimble's great idea of enhancing communication with them. - This idea seemed to be well received, and it was suggested that it be discussed with the research committee.

Finally – After Dr. Reddy talked about student recruiting efforts that he will be involved in.

Dr. Steinhoff brought up the question as to whether these will be coordinated with the ad-hoc committee on student recruiting; otherwise, there is no point in having that committee. Dr. Reddy said that the committee would definitely be involved.

Horace Crater
Faculty Assembly Secretary