

**Faculty Senate Business Meeting**  
February 21, 2022

Guest Holderman discussed the explicit rights for faculty to use OERs in their courses. There is no need to ask, this is licensed material that is truly open and absolutely free to use. You can mix and edit the material as well. OERs are becoming very popular. She explained that there are search resources on the library site and faculty can create their own content, although this requires a much larger investment on your part. Unfortunately, the quality of the materials varies and there is a need to review it before adopting for your class.

Guest Holderman also talked about a grant that the university participated in to explore the savings these resources can provide. The students seem to be happy with their use. Some of the participating faculty have sighted higher quiz scores. There is a plan to reapply for the grant.

### **Tennessee Faculty Senates (TUFS) Update (Smith-Andrews and Maxwell, 20 minutes)**

1. Report from January TUFS meeting

2. Upcoming legislative challenges: faculty tenure, over-reach into higher ed classrooms, other topics

3. Discussion

TUFS consists of 11 4-year institutions. There is a lot of information on the web site. The last meeting was on January 28, this is one of 4 meetings per year. Topics that were discussed included the rainy day funding, changing in the funding formula, athletes kneeling, military and in-state tuition, the name-image-likeness policies, Covid 19 issues and challenges, guns on campus, changes in the use of the ACT test for admission, the attack on tenure (there is a desire to make it harder to attain and easier to remove), the efforts to supply broadband for all, and the increase in the Hope scholarship. TTU is potentially hosting the next meeting which will be in April.

Question Texas is proposing getting rid of tenure entirely, is there a chance that Tennessee will follow?

Response It is believed that if they could, they would. However, they will not be as forward about it, but will attack it incrementally such that it is likely to be eroded and not just chopped outright.

Question What can we do?



Conclusion The Faculty Senate Procedures state that the business meetings are open to faculty members. All others must request permission at least one business day prior to the meeting and the decision will be made by the leadership team. In order to change this, the procedures would need to be changed. Therefore, any further consideration will require distribution to the Senators of the proposed procedures change prior to the meeting at which a vote would take place.

**Tennessee Senate Bill 2290 (Smith, 45 minutes)**

1. Overview of the bill

2. Responses from other universities and TUFS

3. Discussion

Chief Government Affairs Officer and Legislative Liaison Terry Saltsman discussed the situation. This is not the first or likely the last time we will see a bill like this being proposed. Mr. Saltsman is in frequent communication with many of the key constituents for these bills. Currently there are two powerful members of the legislature leading the charge. One concern is to say that the comptroller of Tennessee can assess large fees. As for the issue with tenure, they are not going after it directly and there is an opportunity for this to be addressed. Mr. Saltsman applauded the TUFS for drafting the letter that is going out to the legislature soon. He feels that this letter gets the point across. He will continue to participate in the dialogue with the legislature members.

Senate President Elect Maxwell expressed gratitude at all of the extra time working on this.

Mr. Saltsman expressed his appreciation for the Senate and the assistance in educating him on the issue.

Question This is deeply disturbing. Both bill 2290 and 2283 are concerning. There have been similar bills passed in other states where tenure has been tied into it. If either or both of these become law, what is it going to mean for us?

Response

Response Mr. Saltsman agrees that there is strength in a joint message. If you want to send your own message, consider including the joint message developed by TUFS to show that you support it.

Comment Not sure exactly what bill 2283 means. Is it saying that we are not to compel students to talk about certain topics? It seems like we are not to controvert obvious falsehoods. There is some concern about the portrayal of TTU we need to advocate for TTU.

Comment The bill prohibits faculty from addressing certain issues. There are substantial fines involved.

Comment Bill 2290 is carefully crafted and coordinated with overriding and lofty principles. It is very close to the edge and could easily be misinterpreted.

Response Mr. Saltsman attended a subcommittee meeting where they discussed if this would affect it.

Comment About 90% of what I teach is touched by this. We need to make sure that this will not impact our academic freedom or be directed toward the institution itself. Many history courses involve content that would be offensive to some students, so this has been discussed at the department meeting. None of the faculty intend to change their course, if that means firing one of the faculty members, then you will need to fire them all.

Comment The supporters of these bills will see that as a victory and not a tragedy. It would seem that they are interested in qualified faculty, but they want faculty that they can control. This is not a victory but a financial catastrophe.

Comment Potential amendments are deeply concerning.

Response Mr. Saltsman feelef0 612 792 reW\*ñBT/F2 12 Tf1 0 0 1 197.69 247.13 Tm0 G{fe)7(e& 72.024 261 0

Senator Allen raised a concern about the use of the tenure and promotion check- this required for new faculty and not retroactive to faculty already on tenure track? Does it have to be approved by the Council for that? It is not shown in the faculty handbook, but is being required in the process for everyone.

Senator Null will need to check into it as she is leading the revision of the pertinent policies. This will be added as an agenda item for the next meeting.

1. Update on Revising Policies 205, 206, 207 Dr. Bruce asked Dr. Mark Stephens to help us with the next steps of making changes. We will bring updated policies back to Senate before we take them to Councils for approval. Dr. Luna will follow up with Dr. Stephens and ad hoc Chair Null for the next step.

2. Announcement: Council elections are just around the corner in March! This is a good time to speak with faculty interested in serving on Senate.

3. Topics/requests for meeting with the President on March 7th?

4. Any other such matters

### **Adjournment**

Senator Fornehed moved to adjourn the meeting. Senator Mills and Duncan seconded. The meeting adjourned at 5:27 p.m.

**Approved:** March 21, 2022