

Reminder: The February meeting of the Faculty Senate will be  
Thursday, February 17, 2000  
3:30 pm in Claxton 103.

FACULTY SENATE CALLED MEETING  
Approved Minutes  
Monday, October 4, 1999, 4:35-5:30 PM  
Claxton 103

**ROLL CALL OF SENATORS IN ATTENDANCE:** Steven Anderson, John Blake, Dewey Browder, Willodean Burton, Roger Clark, Debbie Cochener, Doris Davenport, Gloria Gharavi, Meredith Gildrie, Bud Glunt, Dolores Gore, Frederick Grieve, Ronald Gupton, Kay Haralson, Allen Henderson, Mark Hunter, Ellen Kanervo, Phillip Kemmerly, J. D. Lester, Ramon Magrans, Robin Mealer, James Prescott, April Purcell, Bert Randall, Peter Stoddard, Cindy Taylor, Jaime Taylor, Jim Thompson, David Till, Danielle White, Howard Winn, Pei Xiong-Skiba, Greg Zieren.

**President Gupton:** There is only one item on the agenda for this called meeting, discussion of a response to the Chancellor's letter and subsequent communications to TBR and faculty and staff at Austin Peay. The floor is open for discussion.

**Discussion:**

**Senator Browder:** Has the resolution passed by AAUP gone to the chancellor?

**Senator Gildrie:** I believe it comes back to the chapter and we decide who we should send it to.

**Senator Browder:** I liked what John Butler said in the open faculty meeting concerning the fact that we know what our job is at this university and we are doing it.

**Senator Thompson:** I think we need to vote first on whether or not we want to make any kind of response. If the vote is no, the discussion is not necessary. I move we draft a response to the Chancellor.

**Senator Randall:** I second the motion.

**Senator Grieve:** We need to make sure we represent the people we are here to represent and reflect what we heard in the last hour of discussion.

**Senator Hunter:** Chancellor Smith's response to a request that should be standard procedure appalled me. My inclination is to declare a victory, ignore his letter and wait until the new chancellor is appointed.

**Senator Henderson:** The overwhelming sense of the faculty during

the last hour was we should not respond in an offensive way. We need to consider their wishes. We should not interpret the discussion to mean that other faculty are not supportive of the Senate.

**Senator Anderson:** I am not sure whether the faculty are supportive of our response or not. The response should be reasonable. The Senate must support the Executive Committee. We voted with only 1 no vote to give the Executive Committee the authority to write a cover letter. It seems some faculty members have short memories. This senate was asked to run interference when 80 adjunct classes were to be cut, when the graduate dean was in jeopardy, when reorganization and moving of programs was being done without board approval. In the last three years there has been a total administrative turnover from the vice-presidents down. The Senate has been the protector of this campus for five years. We are any easy target for TBR. If we don't respond, they may consider that an insult.

**Senator Blake:** Concerning the question of whether to respond, I e-mailed suggestions to the Executive Committee. If we fail to do anything the perception is we accept the assessment of our situation. We should come across on the side of reason. If it gets into the press, it reflects well on us. I recommend a simple, conciliatory response. We can do things at our end to reach out.

**Senator Randall:** I call for the question. The motion was made to response to the Chancellor's communication.

**Vote:** ayes - 18, nays - 11, abstentions - 0.

**Senator Randall:** The split vote to me represents a problem. When we sent the letter to the Chancellor in 1997, the senate voted 83% in support of the letter. During the vote of no confidence we had a similar open faculty meeting like today. There was ample time for faculty to express their views. But for the second time the Senate was accused of not representing the faculty. The Faculty Senate is elected by the faculty, and the Executive Committee is elected by the Senate. The problem is not that we are dysfunctional, but that we function too well. Our response needs to make clear that we are elected by the faculty, and that we represent the faculty who chose us. We have nothing to apologize for. What this group recommended has been recommended numerous times and reaffirmed by organizations throughout the country. It is an attempt to eliminate political appointees. It has been attempted by other campuses without this type of response. From the very beginning in dealing with Dr. Rinella, the most important principle throughout has been academic freedom, the freedom to express our view without fear of retribution. Without shared governance, academic freedom does not exist. Decisions made outside the classroom have a direct affect inside the classroom.

**Senator Kemmerly:** Due to the lateness of the hour, I move we adjourn and ask the Executive Committee to draft one or more proposals, in the spirit of the comments made today, to bring to the

next senate meeting for discussion and vote.

**Senator Kanervo:** I second the motion.

**Senator Lester:** If we write a letter, I want it to reflect the concern of the faculty and the senate and ask that the Executive Committee look carefully at the suggestions of others.

**Senator White:** I have a conflict with the response. What is the purpose? If we do not have a goal, how do we know if we have accomplished it?

**Senator Randall:** We did have a goal, it was to increase faculty membership on the search committee.

**Senator Lester:** That goal has been rejected, now we need to decide how to respond to the rejection.

**Senator Henderson:** Perhaps we did not communicate correctly or we would have gotten what we wanted. We did not put ourselves in the place of the person reading the letter.

**Senator Haralson:** We would not have gotten what we wanted regardless of how the letter was worded. We discussed the probability of this when the resolution passed.

**Senator Browder:** We did consider the response, now we have to deal with the answer we received.

**Senator Magrans:** I was on the search committee when President Rinella was appointed. Our committee was told by an administrator on the committee that the directive was that Dr. Rinella must be one of the three names we forwarded to TBR. This administrator was the first to go when Dr. Rinella was appointed. We have not had input. In every meeting with the Chancellor he has sworn to support AAUP standards. The Senate must stand for something.

**Senator Winn:** We are responding to an attempt to ask the governing board to discuss with us the manner of selecting our president. The chance that they would pay attention to us was slim. We are taking steps, we are not going to achieve reform in 1 or 2 letters. It is our obligation to pursue, even when it is hard to bring about change. It is about academic freedom. In 1997 we were told not to have a vote of no-confidence. Ultimately Dr. Rinella resigned. We did not win. We had to stay with it and do what we had to do. It is lonely and scary to try and change the system. We are doing what we are supposed to do, protecting the academic integrity of this university. We must tone down the response. I wrote the letter that went to the Chancellor and the Executive Committee all agreed on the letter. As in the past the Executive Committee has been criticized for trying to do what it was called upon to do. If we don't get the response we like, we have to keep trying. It could take years to bring

about any real change.

**Senator Cochener:** I was not surprised at the Chancellor's letter. The vote of no-confidence was a slap to Smith. The request for input was a slap to Smith. If he has a chip on his shoulder, how the letter was worded would not have mattered. It is like a parent/child argument. Smith is determined to show he is in control of the situation.

**President Gupton:** I do not feel there is any way to send a response without it being considered inflammatory.

**Motion made by Senator Kemmerly and seconded by Senator Kanervo to have the Executive Committee form a committee to draft a response to Chancellor Smith and present the response at the next senate meeting. Motion carried with a vote of: Ayes - 22, Nays - 0, Abstentions - 0.**

**Meeting Adjourned 5:30**