

Summary of Activities of the UTK Faculty Senate Budget and Planning Committee 2017-2018

Prepared by Louis J. Gross, Chair

Committee members: Joe Bailey, Ken Baker, Chris Cimino, Sarah Eldridge, Jennifer Franklin, Louis Gross, Michael Kent, Beauvais Lyons, Tomás Martín-Jiménez, Larry McKay, Beth Schussler, Jon Shefner, Tyler Wall

The B&P Committee focused on a few main initiatives during this academic year and detailed reports on several of these are posted on the Committee website at

<http://www.nimbios.org/~gross/SenateBudgetPlanningCommittee.html>

This summary is not intended to cover the full panoply of Committee activities, nor many of the interactions and correspondence the Chair of the Committee had with Senate Executive Committee members on matters that the Committee had insight about.

1. Living Wage Report. At the request of Faculty Senate President Lyons and with extensive assistance from Senate GRA Brooke Killian, this reanalysis of previous Senate Living wage reports was carried out by Sarah Eldridge, Beauvais Lyons and Jon Shefner. The report included a history of previous reports, considered two methods to define a living wage based upon cost of living increases from the wage established in earlier reports as well as one based on federal poverty standards, collected data from UTK human resources and from Aramark, carried out an analysis, and made several recommendations for future Senate consideration.
2. Faculty Salary Analysis. As has been done in previous years, a report was developed based on data provided by Institutional Research which analyzed the data from 2016-17 faculty salaries. The study was developed by Ken Baker and Louis Gross and noted in particular that the formal comparison groups of institutions had been changed from those used in previous years. Therefore the report made comparisons not only to the formal UTK comparison institutions but also to the Research 1 institutions that had been used in previous reports. The report noted several problems with the use of the new comparison groups. In addition to providing the spreadsheet-type summary comparisons by unit and rank, the report provided graphical illustrations of many aspects of the data.
3. Budget Presentations. As had been initiated several years ago, in order to enhance the transparency of budgets across UTK as well as to provide Committee comments to the UTK leadership, the Committee held meetings with all the members of the Chancellor's Cabinet including Vice Chancellors (Advancement, Communications, Finance and Administration, Research and Engagement, Student Life) as well as the Provost and the Athletic Director. Prior to each meeting a set of questions was developed by the Committee and these were provided to each Cabinet member with a request that they address these during the meeting. The Committee had planned to meet with the Chancellor to provide overall comments based on the discussions with Cabinet members, in sufficient time to allow these to potentially impact the UT budget process. However, this was not feasible given the timing of administrative changes (e.g. the firing of Chancellor Davenport) and the very limited time period in which to provide any comments.

4. Costs of Periodic Post-Tenure Performance Reviews (PPPR). The Chair of the Committee, at the request of the Senate Executive Council, produced an estimate of the additional costs to the campus if PPPR were to be implemented every six years for all tenured faculty. This was presented to the Faculty Senate in conjunction with several resolutions discussed by the Senate regarding PPPR.

In addition to the above, the Committee had extensive discussions on several other topics. A subcommittee initiated a process in conjunction with the Graduate School to collect data on and analyze the variation in both graduate student stipends (e.g. GTA and GRA salaries) and the variation in expectations for the work to be carried out when supported by these funds. The Committee discussed the issue of a risk management assessment of Athletics similar in notion to one that had been carried out by the Committee many years before that estimated the probability that Athletics would not be able to meet its financial commitments. At the request of the Senate Leadership, the Chair provided some analysis of the cost of the UT System Administration and in this process provided on the Committee website the collection of Board of Trustee documents, presented to the Board at its June meetings, which included the annual budget proposals, since these had been removed from the Board of Trustees website. The analysis provided a basis for discussions the Senate Executive Council had with President DiPietro and his staff in July 2018.