

Faculty Senate  
Feb. 11, 2003

This was a specially called session of the faculty senate to consider questions that have arisen concerning changes to the way faculty will be paid for summer school. These proposed changes are being considered because of the budget situation.

**Pres Black:** Anyone will be allowed to speak, senate members and others.

The reason for this meeting is as follows: when the Executive Committee met with the president last week, many items came up. Some changes have been made already. The 27% overhead figure has been changed to a \$50 per credit hour figure. Secondly, it is now clear that TBR mandates the formula we have been following for years, and we can only ask for a temporary variance. The administration has agreed to put into writing a commitment to get back to the traditional way of funding summer school teaching as soon as possible.

**VPAA Speck:** VPs and president met last week to discuss how to meet the 5% cut in funding. We talked about various options, about making summer school entrepreneurial. When we looked at it more carefully, the overhead was overstated. We went back and figured it again, came up with the new figure. We reconsidered benefits, as well.

It is policy that 1/32 is what we should pay. We have applied with the chancellor for a temporary variance. At a president's telephone conference, the subject came up. Should there be a change in policy? Presidents agreed that it was better to have a temporary variance.

We have asked for an exception for one summer.

One concern is, how long will this last? My sense is that the 8.8 % we are currently being asked to come up with is not the end of our tough years. We may have another impoundment. The situation may remain difficult.

We have some funds now that we may not have in the future: lapsed salaries, and the increase in enrollment revenue.

Travel will be released in the next day or two, and department budgets will be released.

One suggestion has been to let departments take care of problems, rather than have a single policy. The executive committee found no support for that. Historically we have had minimums in place. The question is what to do with those minimums, and the 7 day deadline.

In an attempt to be fair, the first day figures will determine the salary. Whatever enrollment is in place the first day, will count, unless the enrollment increases by the 7<sup>th</sup> day. This will increase the university's expense if enrollment drops.

We don't have much time to figure this out, so we are moving as conservatively as possible.

We need to be rethinking what we offer. We need to think about offering more lower division courses, fewer grad courses. We can't offer courses to take care of individuals who need a course to graduate. We need to think about how to structure the summer offerings.

We want growth, which means we want to have more students, fewer faculty. We must be fiscally responsible.

Another argument is that last year we allowed chairs to manage the money, and we had 7 departments that went over budget.

We have to find new ways to do business. More adjuncts, more overloads are possibilities.

We may not meet the TBR budget by factoring in a tuition increase. Tuition increase could be an offset but we can't figure on it when we plan our budget.

**Prof Till:** was there an analysis done that would suggest how much money can be saved by approaching summer teaching this way?

**VPAA Speck:** No. we are trying to keep from losing money, rather than to make money in this way.

We do run a risk in guaranteeing the salary based on the first day figures.

**Sen Griffy--**Will this happen at Ft Campbell as well?

**VPAA Speck:** I'm not sure, but it seems like it should.

**Prof Ryan:**

I don't like the summer system at all. It does target senior faculty. It creates an atmosphere when profs will be tacitly encouraged to give higher grades or to require less work. But I understand. My major concern is that this change will weasel its way in and become permanent. What I envision is that each year we will make a phone call and get a fresh exemption from the TBR policy. Can you give an assurance that that won't happen?

**VPAA Speck:** That is not our intention. A change in policy would have to come from TBR. The president has said there is no support for that there. I can't give any assurance that it won't happen, only that we are not trying to do that.

Our intention is not to target senior faculty. It is never our intention to find a way to hurt senior faculty.

**Prof Grah:** I see two problems. One, the adverse impact on senior faculty. Two, it will decrease the number of courses we can offer at the upper division level.

We have suggested the following: we accept the minimums, but then make an academic unit make sure their courses are cost-effective. If the income derived by a dept. falls short, then reduce all faculty in that dept. but whatever is necessary. This would provide the possibility to offer the upper division courses. I didn't hear the compelling argument against that.

**VPAA Speck:** It is fairly complex.

**Prof Grah:** It seems simpler to me.

**VPAA Speck:** It would be harder to figure for payroll.

**Prof Grah:** It could be done the same way.

**VPAA Speck:** I don't know.

**Prof Fredericks:** Summer School hasn't lost money but one time in 10 years. I agree that Buddy's system would work.

Professor Frederick's comments began a long discussion about whether the university is asking people to teach for less money.

**VPAA Speck:** The system being proposed (by Grah and Fredericks, among others) might make things more difficult for Bob Bird.

What you're asking is that if a junior professor teaches a course for 25, and meets the minimum, someone would be subsidizing others in the department. The system we have does that already. The problem is that we want to end that. The new way would make it possible to sort things out without subsidizing people.

Its true, the majors will probably suffer if we have to offer fewer courses.

**Prof Frederick:** How many years in the last five has summer school lost money?

Additionally, the way this is set up, the incentive is to teach the absolute minimum. To cap the class at the lowest number. Why not give people a credit for having more than the smallest number of students to cover the course?

**VPAA Speck**--I assume we are going to do this in good faith. We need to make some money off summer school, for the good of the university. Self interest here could hurt us as a university.

**Prof Fredericks**: Why not have a system that puts self interest and university interest together? Why not pay people more than the old base amount?

**VPAA Speck**: Summer school is not guaranteed for anyone. It's extra pay. Our intention is to make the courses available, give profs a chance to make some extra money.

**Prof Nancy Woods**: Can you explain this sentence? Those teaching summer school will be asked to advise. Teachers can't get away from class to go do advising. We are moving in the wrong direction when it comes to providing students an experience that will keep people here. The department can make the best decisions when it comes to summer school, and to staffing.

**VPAA Speck**: We may need to rethink what courses are offered in the summer, and that will make it take longer for a student to graduate.

**Pres Black**: It is clear that TBR is looking to adjunct out more and more classes. TBR recently approved a raise in adjunct caps

**Sen Guppton**: Since we have some inequity issues in the pay we have now, why not just across the board compute how much money we have to spend, and reduce everyone's salary. We have always covered each other. Lower everything by 5% or 7 %.

**Sen Kemmerly**--over the years we have learned that we do have a summer school budget covered by the formula. In the last several years there have been a number of studies that show we have rarely lost money on sum school. Why are we adding 150 dollars? Which is minimal, but if the formula is covering expenses, why are we adding that ? Are we losing money on summer school, or we just not making a profit?

**VPAA Speck**--we were okay last year. But we are in a different position this year.

**Sen Kemmerly**: Are we trying to make a little more out of summer school?

**Houston Davis**--I am not a funding formula expert. But summer is treated as a pay as you go situation, according to THEC. A true cost study hasn't been done in Tennessee since about 1993. We would like to get one up in the next few months.

Davis gave an explanation of why the 50 \$ per credit hour figure replaced the earlier figure. Following that, he gave another explanation of how administration came up with the 20% benefits figure.

**Sen Gupton**--These figures on the board show that summer school is paying for itself.

**Davis**--I would have to run a spread sheet

**Pres Black**: 3 good suggestions:

1. That faculty are being penalized for small classes but not rewarded for big classes.
2. That academic departments might be entrusted with a lump sum and allowed to decide how that money is best spent.
3. An across the board percentage decrease.

What is the timeline for replacing our current system is the door still open for changing this system.

**Sen Gupton**--Why aren't the deans here?

**Prof Till**--People have already signed something. My advice is, from now on we don't sign anything until there has been considerable discussion. We are moving too fast.

**Prof Andersen**--our school is not unique in the notion that people have taught special courses, put in extra hours. Is it possible this time, for faculty who teach one or two students in independent study, special problems, to have what they are doing added to what they are being credited with teaching.

**VPAA Speck**--no one knows.

**Sen Winters**--no one has addressed Steve Ryan's worry about how academic integrity is being affected. We are being asked to sell a class, with temptation to slack on grading, in order to get the classes.

**VPAA Speck**--can you defend summer school, in general?

**Sen Winters**--yes, I've seen what faculty member have done. I have no problem with defending the integrity of our courses. But this new system could create problems.

**Sen Glass**--in our summer school our grad courses are supported by our undergrad courses. Academic integrity is an issue when we are asked to find adjuncts to teach grad students. We draw students by promising them they can graduate in a timely manner.

The meeting ended with Pres. Black urging the VPAA to consider the discussion and the options that were presented by senators and other professors.

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