



THE UNIVERSITY OF
TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE

September 17, 2021

TO: Beauvais Lyons
Chair, Faculty Senate Faculty Affairs Committee

FROM: John Zomchick
Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor

SUBJECT: Response statement

As I wrote last month, I believe the best forum to discuss the questions you submitted on behalf of the Faculty Affairs Committee is the Faculty Senate meeting, and I will answer questions at that time. I do want to emphasize a few key points in advance of our discussion Monday.

This was, and remains, a complex case, and our colleagues have strong feelings about it. I appreciate and understand that. I also think it's important to understand that policy and process exist for that very reason, to help all of us navigate difficult situations as well and fairly as possible. We have followed the letter and spirit of the faculty handbook throughout this process, and we will continue to do so.

I also want to reiterate that policies exist to respect faculty rights *and* protect university interests. In any faculty issue that arises, the Office of the Provost strives to protect both while respecting the privacy expectations of everyone involved. As I said in my earlier statement, we are committed to fair, just, and equitable treatment of all faculty, staff, and students.

Each event brings opportunities to improve and learn, and our leadership team will always listen to your ideas.