

EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
ACADEMIC, RESEARCH, AND STUDENT SUCCESS COMMITTEE

MINUTES

February 18, 2022
Johnson City, Tennessee

The East Tennessee State University Board of Trustees' Academic, Research, and Student Success Committee met on Friday, February 18, 2022, at 8:00 a.m. in the East Tennessee Room of the D.P. Culp Student Center.

I. Call to Order

Board Chair Dr. Linda Latimer called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. Committee Chair, Janet Ayers, arrived later in the meeting due to an unexpected delay.

II. Roll Call

Board Secretary Dr. Adam Green led the roll call and confirmed to Board Chair Dr. Linda Latimer that a quorum was present.

Committee Members present were:

Trustee Charles Allen
Trustee Virginia Foley
Board Chair Dr. Linda Latimer
Trustee Melissa Steagall-Jones
Committee Chair Janet Ayers
Absent: Trustee Dorothy Grisham

Trustees Steve DeCarlo, Kara Gilliam, Ron Ramsey, and Kelly Wolfe also participated in the meeting.

III. Approval of the Academic, Research, and Student Success Committee Minutes from November 19, 2021

The minutes from November 19, 2021, were approved as submitted, with Trustee Virginia Foley making the motion and Trustee Melissa Steagall-Jones seconding the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Provost Update

Dr. Kimberly McCorkle, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academics, presented an update on several current initiatives underway across the Division of Academic Affairs.

Currently, the University is preparing for a 10-year accreditation reaffirmation with SACSCOC (The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges). According to Dr. McCorkle, writing teams have been formed to address the reaffirmation's topic areas. The teams are currently working on report drafts and gathering supporting documentation. Policy updates, which are also part of the process, are now underway, and the final report will be delivered in September of this year.

SACSCOC reaffirmation will necessitate the submission of a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) that demonstrates the institution's ability to focus on a plan targeted toward student success or enhancing student learning outcomes. "Engaged Learning" has been approved as the QEP Plan topic. Following the appointment of a QEP Director, a report containing assessment data and outcome measurements, as well as a commitment of University resources, will be finalized, and the QEP will be submitted as part of the SACSCOC reaffirmation process.

The Committee was provided with an update on leadership searches at the University. Two Deans are being sought, and those national searches are currently underway. With a planned completion date of July 1, 2022, new Deans will be appointed to the Colleges of Business and Technology and Arts and Sciences. Furthermore, Dr. McCorkle informed the Committee that searches for a Vice Provost for Research, Executive Vice Provost, and appointment of a QEP Director will be completed soon.

Spring enrollment is 12,546 students, a slight decrease from the previous spring, which had an enrollment of 12,716. From fall to spring, the retention rates are encouraging. Applications for the fall of 2022 are up from this time last year. Dr. McCorkle stated that she is optimistic enrollment will continue to rise in the aftermath of COVID. Included with the meeting materials were charts with enrollment data and trends for spring 2022.

Dr. McCorkle discussed curriculum development efforts, such as the investigation of new online programs in areas where enrollment growth is expected, as well as potential areas of focus for new degree programs. The Huron Consulting Group completed an evaluation of ETSU's online program offerings under the direction of

Dr. Karen King. The assessment findings were encouraging, and they point to opportunities for online programming in undergraduate workforce areas such as computer science, logistics and supply chain management, health sciences, and communications. Hospitality and tourism, data science, engineering, synthetic biology, and health programs are all possible areas of focus for new degree programs.

Finally, Dr. McCorkle updated the Committee on strategic planning activities. Curriculum planning and development, including online programming, will be among the planning initiatives, along with a review of the University's budget model, strategic enrollment planning, a review of all academic policies, and general education reform.

V. Student Success at ETSU: A Framework

Dr. McCorkle and Vice President for Student Life and Enrollment Dr. Joe Sherlin updated the Committee on current successes and challenges across Academic Affairs and Student Life and Enrollment.

ETSU has made good retention progress since 2013, with the exception being 2020 due to COVID. Dr. McCorkle pointed out that retention rates fell in 2020 but rebounded in the fall of 2021. Prior to the pandemic, first-year persistence had been steadily declining; in 2019, that figure increased from 66 percent to 78 percent. The six-year graduation rate increased by 10 percent during the same time period, and a high graduation rate is expected in May 2022. The time to degree was shortened during the same time period, and students completed the 30, 60, and 90-hour benchmarks much faster. As a result, ETSU has received an additional \$37 million in outcomes funding since 2012, an 81 percent increase.

Dr. Sherlin noted that progress was made at ETSU in the last 10 years, but gaps remain in student success. The equity success gaps mirror national trends. In terms of retention and graduation, women outperform men. White students are more likely than students of color to complete their education. Academic Affairs and Student Life and Enrollment are currently identifying and taking steps to close achievement gaps. The university hopes to increase the number of advisors so that they can assist students from the moment they contact the University until they complete their education.

The following initiatives were outlined as programs underway at ETSU to support student success:

- Preview and Quest are college transition programs designed to help incoming freshmen connect socially and academically to the institution.
- Bucs Academy and First-Year Experience Courses are also available to assist students in succeeding and transitioning.
- The Dean of Students Office targeted and awarded microgrants to over 100 students experiencing unexpected financial hardships.
- Care reports and academic alerts - academic advisors meet with students each term and reach out when they are off track or are not making expected progress related to their degree.
- Counseling Services and Peer Mentoring - an interdisciplinary care team served over 1200 students with various personal issues.
- The Mary V. Jordan Multicultural Center and Dr. Patricia Robertson Pride Center.

VI. Internationalization Initiatives at ETSU

Drs. Christopher Keller, Dean of the Honors and Senior International Officer, and Sam Mayhew, Associate Vice President for Student Life and Enrollment, provided an overview of the internationalization initiatives currently underway at ETSU. The Center for Global Engagement at ETSU was established on July 1, 2021, with the mission of enhancing internationalization across ETSU's teaching, service, and community engagement missions. The Center is dedicated to improving the educational experience of all students and providing valuable skills to meet workforce needs.

The primary programs and services housed in the new Center for Global Engagement include:

- Education Abroad
- International Student and Scholar Services
- Strategic International Partnerships
- ETSU Global Year Program (Ecuador, 2022-23)
- International Education Week
- Travel Abroad Risk Management (for ETSU students and staff employees)
- Global Living-Learning Community (collaboration with HRL)
- Faculty Course Internationalization Grants Program (e.g., COIL)
- K-12 Global Engagement Outreach Programs
- Bucs Abroad Passport Program (Donor Funded)

The presentation concluded with an update on the enrollment of international students and the efforts to increase enrollment in targeted areas. Charts and statistics were included in the meeting materials.

VII. Update on Recruitment and Marketing Efforts to Increase Enrollment

Ms. Heather Levesque, Director of Admissions, and Ms. Jessica Vodden, Chief Marketing and Communications Officer, presented an update of recruitment and marketing efforts for the fall 2022 semester. The Office of Admissions and the Office of University Marketing and Communications collaborated to create integrated marketing and recruitment plans which target key markets, audiences, and marketing channels. The new approach to recruitment and marketing resulted in an increased number of freshmen and international applications for fall 2022.

A new recruitment campaign, “Intent to Enroll,” is a data-driven initiative that focuses on yield efforts. The fall 2021 campaign efforts included the following activities:

- Personalized events on campus and in key high schools, including the expanded market areas of Chattanooga and Nashville
- Direct mail, handwritten letters, phone calls, text messages, and emails for personalized outreach
- Academic-specific campus tours
- Enhanced online, traditional, and social media marketing campaigns

VIII. Research Update

Dr. Nick Hagemeyer, Interim Vice Provost for Research, updated the Committee on current external funding metrics, current University research rankings, and initiatives underway to increase the University’s research profile. The Higher Education Research and Development (HERD) Survey is conducted annually by the National Science Foundation (NSF). It is the primary source of information on research and development expenditures at U.S. colleges and universities. The fiscal year 2020 numbers indicate \$54 million in extramural sponsored activity for ETSU, of which \$13.925 million was spent on research and development.

Dr. Beaumont, Professor and Associate Dean for Research in the ETSU Quillen College of Medicine, provided an overview of his current funded research projects in biomedical sciences and discussed the process for research support in the Quillen College of Medicine.

The Quillen College of Medicine Office of Research and Graduate Education provides oversight of the COM research enterprise. This office acts as a liaison between COM and other ETSU colleges and external partners, and they also publicize and promote research accomplishments. Among the topics discussed were:

- There are currently 10 Quillen Distinguished Research Fellows working in the Department of Research and Graduate Education.
- Quillen Research and Scholarship Enhancement awards funded four research grants in the past two years (up to \$25,000 for one year).
- The Office of Research and Graduate Education administers the Biomedical Science Graduate Program, an interdisciplinary graduate program leading to a Ph.D. in Biomedical Science. There are 35 students currently enrolled in the program.
- Dr. Beaumont spoke about his current research focus, engaging the brain using vagal nerve stimulation (VNS) for the treatment of heart failure. The meeting materials included details of this research.

IX. Committee Discussions

Topics of Committee discussions included:

- Enrollment trends in postsecondary higher education – private versus public.
- The possibility of increasing the breadth and depth of interdisciplinary programs and offerings.
- Students who are at risk and the criteria used to define risk. Recognizing and assisting students who are experiencing non-academic difficulties.
- The need for data on employment outcomes and economic development, and the process for obtaining the data from the Boyd Center for Business and Economic Research at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.
- Relationships, engagement, and recruitment, as well as athletics inclusion.

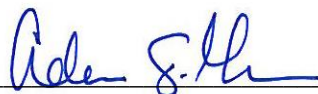
X. Other Business

No other business items were discussed.

XI. Adjournment

The Committee was adjourned with Trustee Virginia Foley making the motion and Trustee Melissa Steagall-Jones making the second.

Respectfully submitted,



Adam Green
Secretary of the Board of Trustees