

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

MINUTES

September 17, 2021  
Johnson City, Tennessee

The East Tennessee State University Board of Trustees' Academic, Research and Student Success Committee met at 9:45 a.m. on Friday, September 17, 2021, in the East Tennessee Room of the D.P. Culp Student Center.

**I. Call to Order**

Dr. Linda Latimer, outgoing chair of the Academic, Research and Student Success Committee, called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m. and asked Trustee Janet Ayers to preside over the meeting as the new chair of the committee.

**II. Roll Call**

Board Secretary Adam Green led the roll call. Committee members present were:

Trustee Janet Ayers  
Trustee Virginia Foley  
Trustee Melissa Steagall-Jones  
Trustee Linda Latimer

In addition to Committee members, Trustees Kara Gilliam, Ron Ramsey, and, Dorothy Grisham participated.

**III. Approval of Minutes of the Academic, Research and Student Success Committee  
April 23, 2021**

The minutes for the April 23, 2021, Academic, Research and Student Success Committee meeting were reviewed. Trustee Steagall-Jones made a motion for approval, and Trustee Foley seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

**IV. Recommendation for Tenure upon Appointment**

Provost and Senior Vice President for Academics Kimberly McCorkle presented a recommendation to grant Dr. Leann Horsley, Dean of the College of Nursing, tenure

upon appointment based upon her experience from previous appointments (*see meeting materials*).

Trustee Foley made a motion that the committee recommend adoption of the proposal by the Board of Trustees. The motion was seconded by Trustee Steagall-Jones and passed unanimously.

#### **V. Academic Action Notifications for the Period of January 1- July 31, 2021**

Provost McCorkle presented the academic actions associated with curriculum development or revision taken by the university between Jan. 1-July 30, 2021 as outlined in the agenda materials. Actions included new graduate certificates and concentrations; program name changes; inactivation and termination of concentrations; program consolidation; new minors; and more.

#### **VI. Fall 2021 Provost Update**

Provost McCorkle gave a presentation highlighting the current state of the academic enterprise at ETSU, detailing ways in which the university is providing a distinctive, mission-focused educational experience despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and continuing to meet its mission.

Provost McCorkle noted that ETSU has a 15:1 student-to-faculty ratio, with average class sizes of nine students at the graduate level and 21 at the undergraduate level, which gives students close contact with faculty. ETSU has a proper balance in tenure-track faculty, and instructors have a promotion ladder available to the level of senior lecturer. The Provost noted that ETSU has made improvements between 2015 and 2021 in the Great Colleges to Work For survey, and this year, matched the overall Carnegie benchmark for the first time.

In the area of enrollment, ETSU is down approximately 400 students. However, this 2021-22 marks the largest incoming class for the Quillen College of Medicine, and other areas seeing growth include the MFA in Digital Media, as well as the health sciences and computer science. ETSU also has a strong freshman class. These enrollment figures are comparable to the other Locally Governed Institutions (LGIs) in Tennessee, with undergraduate numbers showing declines and graduate numbers remaining mostly flat.

Provost McCorkle said ETSU is seeking new opportunities to expand its research efforts, and two colleagues – Mr. David Golden leading the new ETSU Research Corporation and Dr. Nick Hagemeyer serving as Interim Vice Provost for Research – are making strides toward that goal. Provost McCorkle noted that within the past year, the university has increased the amount of sponsored programs activity despite the pandemic.

ETSU submitted its required documentation regarding Quality Assurance Funding to THEC in late July, and when the university receives the final results, those will be presented to the Board of Trustees. These reports ensure that universities are meeting their stated priorities that are outlined in the 2015-2025 Master Plan, which is guided by the Drive to 55. The purpose of Quality Assurance Funding is also to demonstrate that the institution is maintaining academic integrity. She pointed out that in Standard 3, Academic Programs: Accreditation and Program Evaluation, ETSU reported on recent gains in disciplinary accreditations that were reviewed this year, including AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business) for the business programs, ABET (Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology) in the Engineering Technology program, CAEP (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation), and, for the first time, NASPA (National Association of Student Personnel Administrators) for the public administration program.

Provost McCorkle included an update on preparations for Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Committee on Colleges (SACSCOC) Reaffirmation. The university's final report to SACSCOC is due Sept. 9, 2022, documenting the university's judgment of compliance with select Core Requirements and Standards for accreditation, and the Provost gave a timeline of steps the university will take in that process leading up to the deadline.

Provost McCorkle also discussed the pipeline for new academic program development at the undergraduate, graduate and non-credit levels. She stated that she has been in discussions with deans and faculty regarding new programs in growth areas as defined by state-level data and data from the Bureau of Labor and Statistics. New graduate programs already in the pipeline for a master's degree in applied data science that could launch as soon as Fall 2022 and a Master of Music degree slated to begin in Fall 2022. A new STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) focus is being examined for the MBA program. At the undergraduate level, a hospitality program is being explored, as are new concentrations in biomedical science, entrepreneurship, and cybersecurity. New certificates are being planned in Public Health and in Clinical and Rehabilitative Health Sciences. There are also areas for growth in social work and mental health counseling. In response to a question by Trustee Ayers, Dr. Bill Flora stated that entrepreneurship could be addressed at both the undergraduate and graduate levels based on market projections. Trustee Foley commended Dr. Flora and his team for making it easier for new academic programs to be processed through the university's various shared governance entities.

## **VII. Committee Discussions**

Trustee Ayers opened discussion. She began by noting that ETSU will enhance its retention and completion rates by providing individualized, one-to-one academic and

student support services—similar to a concierge service model. She also said the research has great opportunities for growth.

Student Trustee Kara Gilliam said she was encouraged to see a variety of new programs being offered, which may lead to diversity of thought, strength and personality on campus. President Noland said that one area being examined by the Committee for 125 Chapter II is identifying opportunities and gaps in the curriculum, and the university will bring more to the Board for review and approval. Conversations with regional employers have revealed themes in the health sciences, particularly in areas related to STEM.

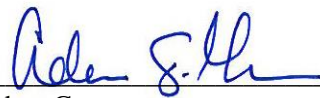
President Noland also acknowledged Board members' desire for a deeper engagement for our students. Trustee Ayers compared the student success area to a social work model, which doesn't mean that a point of contact knows everything but knows where to go to help students get the services they need. She said every student presents a unique set of circumstances and a social work model can provide that. Trustee Foley noted that the university does that well in some programs and said it is a matter of identifying where to scale up. She mentioned ETSU's Military Friendly designation and Bridge Program as examples of success.

Trustee Latimer asked how this could also translate to high school students as the university looks to bring them into the pipeline, and Trustee Ayers added that the university could also reach out more to adult learners. She expressed the need to find ways to recruit, retain, and place all students into high-paying jobs in the region.

## **VIII. Adjournment**

The committee meeting was adjourned by Chair Ayers at 10:34 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



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Adam Green  
Secretary of the Board of Trustees

Approved by the Board of Trustees at its November 19, 2021 meeting.