

University Council
April 13, 2020
Meeting conducted via Zoom

1. Call to Order

Dr. Wilsie Bishop called the meeting to order.

2. Roll Call

Ms. Amanda Mowell called the roll. Those in attendance were: Ms. Bridget Baird, Dr. Joseph Bidwell, Dr. Wilsie Bishop, Dr. Bill Block, Mr. Scott Carter, Dr. Cheri Clavier, Dr. Dennis Depew, Dr. William Duncan, Dr. Susan Epps, Dr. Mark Fulks, Dr. Adam Green, Mr. Stephen Hendrix, Dr. Mike Hoff, Dr. Keith Johnson, Dr. Karin Keith, Dr. B.J. King, Dr. Karen King, Dr. Claudia Kozinetz, Mr. Joseph Kusi, Ms. Candy Massey, Dr. Sam Mayhew, Dr. Brian Noland, Ms. Pamela Ritter, Dr. David Roane, Mr. Jeremy Ross, Dr. Don Samples, Dr. Jana Scarborough, Mr. Amir Shaikh, Dr. Joe Sherlin, Ms. Alicia Williams, Mr. Andrew Worley

Those absent were: Mr. Joe Smith

Others in attendance: Dr. Batchelder, Ms. Mary Cradic, Ms. Amanda Mowell

3. Standing Items

3.1 Approve minutes from [March 9, 2020 meeting](#)

A motion by Dr. William Duncan to approve the minutes was unanimously approved.

3.2 Review agenda

No changes were made to the agenda as presented

3.3 Voluntary Reports of UC-Essential Action Items from Governance Organizations

Mr. Stephen Hendrix had no updates to report for Faculty Senate.

Dr. Joe Bidwell reported that the Council of Chairs is working with colleagues to check in and get a sense for how the transition to remote learning is going. In March, the Council held a productive meeting with Drs. Joe Sherlin and Sam Mayhew to discuss ideas on recruiting in a virtual context.

Ms. Candy Massey said Staff Senate will begin accepting nominations for Distinguished Staff Awards.

Mr. Joseph Kusi had no specific updates to report for the Graduate and Professional Student Association but said graduate courses are transitioning well to the online format.

Mr. Amir Shaikh had no specific update to report for the Student Government Association but said the volume of questions and concerns from students has

decreased significantly. The big picture questions remaining are related to refunds and graduation.

Dr. Karen King stated that the Information Technology Council is working on two-factor authentication for GoldLink that will go live this month and will be announced to campus.

Dr. William Duncan reported that the Research Council is meeting with Associate Deans for Research and communicating with researchers across campus to learn about issues and concerns. A plan is also being developed for how to resume research when the time is right, which is a major topic across the country.

Dr. Bishop said the Academic Council has approved three new graduate certificates – Data Analytics, Esports Management, and Heritage Interpretations and Museum Studies.

4. President's Report

Dr. Noland said campus operations have changed dramatically since the last meeting – classes moved online and the university issued a remote work policy. Senior leadership is finalizing decisions on camps, conferences, travel, and other activities scheduled in May and June. All summer courses will be offered online, and Dr. Noland said he is hopeful that a mini-term may be offered later in the summer for on-ground practicums, internships, and other educational gaps from spring semester.

Around 400 students remain in the residence halls, and students with extenuating circumstances will be allowed to remain in the residence halls on a limited basis throughout the summer. Pro-rated refunds for students who vacated the Residence Halls and incurred out-of-pocket expenses for housing will begin soon. Dr. Noland said many students are facing economic hardships, which is why the annual Day of Giving campaign has been refocused toward crisis relief. Donations to “Bucs Help Bucs” will provide emergency assistance funds for students.

In the coming weeks, an employee job pool will be activated with individuals who, due to the nature of their jobs, may have extra time on their hands while working at home and could use their talents to work on other projects if needed.

Hiring justification protocols have been scaled back in an effort to simplify workflow. Dr. Noland reminded University Council members, who have hiring authority, to consider possible budget impacts when moving forward with searches. ETSU does not have a formal hiring freeze in place.

Education Secretary DeVos has released some details about the CARES Act funding. ETSU will receive \$11.3 million, which will be primarily directed toward students. Some of the funding may also be used to cover institutional costs associated with taking programs online and other impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak. Dr. Noland said senior leadership will continue to explore options for how to best distribute these resources. They will not be used to backfill housing and food service refunds.

The Tennessee General Assembly wrapped up activities and paused the legislative

session. The amended budget was approved and contains enhanced operating and outcomes funding, as well as a reduced 1.5% salary pool. Dr. Noland noted that the General Assembly may choose to revisit the budget this summer. The university would like to put the salary pool in a reserve fund to see how enrollment and state budget looks for fall and then come back and use that information to make the best decision on how to use the funds. No new capital projects were funded in the state budget.

The Board of Trustees will meet April 24 and will take action on tuition and fees, budget, and promotion and tenure. The Finance and Administration Committee has recommended a 0% increase for tuition and fees. Quillen College of Medicine and Gatton College of Pharmacy have also decided to eliminate previously approved tuition and fee increases for this fall.

Prior to the meeting, Dr. Noland shared several articles from the Chronicle of Higher Education, which he referenced. He said, as we look toward the fall, now is an opportunity for institutions to reflect and innovate. Dr. Noland has been meeting with individuals to get a sense of emergent opportunities for ETSU, including the chance to be more aggressive in the online space. Growing online programs, not just courses, has been discussed for a long time. Dr. Noland asked how we can take the online experience we quickly moved and adapted to and position ourselves to grow and establish new online programs.

Dr. Noland said he is also envisioning marketing opportunities. He said we are doing a good job as a university of telling the story of ETSU on the ETSU News website and receive a lot of media coverage. Dr. Noland then discussed his reflections regarding ETSU's mission and vision and reasons to simplify the lengthy language.

Dr. Noland remains dedicated to holding the Committee for 125, Chapter II, but it may not occur as soon as originally thought. He is gathering feedback from faculty, staff, students, employers, and community leaders. Visioning work will move forward in late summer and early fall.

To conclude his report, Dr. Noland said the immediate focus is to ensure that students receive the best experience possible through the end of the semester. Although there are likely budget challenges on the horizon, he said the significant opportunities to transform portions of campus remain as long as we follow our hearts and our mission. Dr. Noland expressed his excitement for the fall semester because ETSU has shown the community that we have the ability to lead with excellence and compassion.

Dr. Noland then answered questions regarding the impact of the state budget on the university budget.

5. Action Items

5.1 Old Business

No old business was brought before the University Council for consideration.

5.2 New Business

- 5.2.1. Dr. BJ King provided [materials](#) that she will present to the Board of Trustees at the forthcoming quarterly meeting. The Finance and Administration Committee met April 1 to discuss the impact of the governor's amended budget. Operation increases for Quillen College of Medicine and Family Medicine were eliminated. Main campus did not see a reduction in the outcomes formula and retained dollars for operating increases, but salary increases were reduced from 2.5% to 1.5%. Although tuition increases were approved at the February Board of Trustee meeting for Quillen College of Medicine and Gatton College of Pharmacy, each college has since decided to forgo the increase; therefore, we are proposing flat tuition for the entire university, Dr. King said. The previously approved housing rate increase will also be rolled back to current rates. Additional program service fees that were planned to begin this fall, such as a new wellness fee brought forward by SGA and year four of a five-year TAF fee increase, will not go into effect.

Dr. King said both the spring estimated budget and July proposed budgets will go before the Board of Trustees. The most significant impacts to the spring estimated budget was decreased revenues in auxiliaries for housing, food service, and bookstore. Dr. King said she and her staff are working on pro-rated refunds for unused housing and food services for students. The university has budgeted for an estimated decline of 100 students and to cover the faculty tenure and promotion pool. Dr. King said the budgets are balanced, and everything looks to be in good shape at this time. There are many unknowns, and the main impact will be fall enrollment.

Housing and Food Service are the units most impacted so far, Dr. King said. She is reviewing the debt service for next year and said things look fine through November, but if enrollment is down more than 100 students, budgets will need to be revisited in October.

A discussion ensued about enrollment projections for fall 2020 and the financial impacts of moving coursework online.

Dr. Janna Scarborough made a motion to approve the budgets as presented. Dr. Epps seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

5.2.2. [Policy on Information Security Awareness Training](#)

Dr. Karen Kings reported that the proposed policy has been out for public comment, went through University Counsel, and the Information Technology Council. State audit groups require the university to provide security training. Phishing and scamming attempts are on the rise, so this security training is needed, and the policy outlines how it will be implemented for employees.

A discussion followed about the policy and procedure sections, and grammatical changes were suggested.

Dr. Susan Epps made a motion to accept the policy as edited, which was seconded by Mr. Stephen Hendrix. The policy passed unanimously.

6 Information Items/Presentations

6.1 [Review of Student Responses to COVID-19 Adjustments](#)

Dr. Mike Hoff said students received a survey a week prior that was designed to see if students had specific needs as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Student Life and Enrollment, Department Chairs, and others have been receiving email from students asking for assistance, and the survey was a way to reach out to all students to measure overall needs. Of the 3,360 surveys started and 1,712 completed, Dr. Hoff said the number of responses noting food and/or housing insecurity was lower than suspected, but he fears the number may increase the longer the shelter at home orders remain in place. The survey will relaunch with some new and adjusted questions in order to reach students who may have had a resurgence of needs since the first survey went out.

Dr. Hoff is collecting the comments provided in the survey and will send reports to deans. The majority of respondents said the university has communicated well with students, and about 72% indicated they had no opinion or were satisfied with academic courses now online. He said the other 30% is normal with behavioral data because some people expect results that are unattainable. He welcomed feedback for what should be included in the next version of the student survey.

The second survey may also help with enrollment projections for fall. In reality, Dr. Hoff explained, enrollment will be down more than 100 students, but the margin of error in the Markov Chain is down more than 100 students, so the focus is keeping enrollment projections inside the margin of error. Everyone is doing a lot to make a positive impact, and deans will receive weekly enrollment reports and comparisons of credit production.

Dr. Hoff will meet with Dr. Amy Johnson and faculty members to finalize the draft of a faculty survey to be distributed soon.

Dr. Hoff answered a question about the availability of EAB profiles.

7 Announcements

7.1 Day of Giving Initiative

Ms. Pam Ritter spoke about the transition from the annual Day of Giving fundraiser to the Bucs Help Bucs campaign to concentrate on providing crisis relief for students, faculty, and staff. Funds will go to help students such as those identified in the survey Dr. Hoff discussed. She charged University Council members to help promote and participate in Bucs Help Bucs.

7.2 Other announcements

Dr. Sam Mayhew said Admissions has several “Get Connected” events underway and is receiving assistance from Athletics to produce the videos for the virtual events.

Dr. Noland said plans for a Virtual Commencement are underway and all graduates will be welcomed back to participate in a separate ceremony in December.

8 Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 a.m.