

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

MINUTES

April 26, 2019
Johnson City, Tennessee

The East Tennessee State University Board of Trustees Academic, Research and Student Success Committee met at 10:15 a.m. on Friday, February 22, 2019, at the Millennium Center.

I. Call to Order

Dr. Linda Latimer, chair of the Academic, Research and Student Success Committee, called the meeting to order.

II. Roll Call

Deputy Secretary Mr. Nathan Dugger called the roll. Board members in attendance were:

Dr. Linda Latimer, Chair
Dr. Fred Alsop
Janet Ayers
David Golden
Scott Niswonger, Chair, Board of Trustees

III. Approval of the Committee Minutes from February 22, 2019

Trustee Golden made a motion that the minutes of the February 22, 2019, meeting of the committee be approved and submitted. Trustee Alsop seconded the motion and the minutes were unanimously approved.

IV. Update on University Operations Alignment Initiative

Dr. Wilsie Bishop, Senior Vice President for Academics, provided an update of the work anticipated and completed since the committee's last meeting with respect to the university's operations alignment initiative introduced by Dr. Brian Noland, President, at the Board of Trustees meeting in February. She provided a handout outlining organizational and staffing changes as part of this effort. Among these changes are several upcoming retirements, including that of Dr. Bert C. Bach as

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; Dr. Bishop's appointment as Interim Provost effective May 6; the appointment of Dr. Keith Johnson, Chair of the Department of Engineering, Engineering Technology and Surveying, as Special Assistant to the President to focus on inclusion and diversity; and the appointment of Dr. Ramona Williams as Vice Provost for Community Engagement.

Under the realignment, the former Division of Student Affairs, led by Dr. Joe Sherlin, became the Division of Student Life and Enrollment. The new division includes the Office of Undergraduate Admissions, the Scholarship Office, Veterans Affairs and TRIO Programs in addition to the units that were already part of Student Affairs.

Several alignment initiatives are under way, including the coming establishment of work groups and task forces to address the areas of research, innovation and economic development; integration of finance, budgeting and planning; coordination of recruitment and retention efforts to meet strategic initiatives; and integration of service and outreach. These efforts are expected to be deliverable in the summer/fall of this year.

Dr. Bishop noted that these and other changes specified in the handout are critical for ETSU's accreditation efforts.

V. Promotion and Tenure of Faculty Members

Dr. Bert Bach recommended that the Committee approve President Noland's recommendation regarding tenure and promotion. He noted that all of the faculty members recommended had been through a thorough review process at multiple levels of the university, and that six of the recommendations required exceptions based on such factors as exceptional qualifications and tenure earned at previous institutions.

Forty individuals were recommended for promotion to the ranks of Professor and Associate Professor. Thirteen individuals were recommended to be awarded tenure in addition to promotion, and six additional individuals were recommended for tenure.

Trustee Alsop made the motion to approve the recommendation. The motion was seconded by Trustee Golden and approved unanimously.

VI. Approval of the Letter of Notification Regarding the Establishment of a Doctorate in Occupational Therapy

Dr. Bach recommended approval of the Letter of Notification Regarding the Establishment of a Doctorate in Occupational Therapy. Upon approval, this letter would be sent to the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC), and there would be a period of public comment. Dr. Bach told the committee that ETSU would

be the first public institution within 200 miles to offer this program, which could be available to students by the summer of 2022.

Discussion ensued regarding the speed at which new programs are approved through THEC protocols and the need to increase that speed to enhance ETSU's competitiveness.

Trustee Ayers made the motion to approve the Letter of Notification. This motion was seconded by Trustee Golden and approved unanimously.

VII. Approval of the Letter of Notification Regarding the Establishment of a Master of Fine Arts in Digital Media

Dr. Bach recommended approval of the Letter of Notification Regarding the Establishment of a Master of Fine Arts in Digital Media, which would also be sent to THEC and subject to a period of public comment. He noted that this M.F.A. would build on ETSU's signature program in digital media and meet the needs of a niche market. It would have some interlinking courses with the M.F.A. offered through the Department of Art and Design, and potential duplication of courses has been addressed.

During discussion, a question regarding the mathematics in the Faculty Salaries line of the One-Time Expenditures chart led to clarification of wording; the Professor of Professional Practice would be a three-year recurring position for seven years, in perpetuity. The position would start at \$65,000, with a 3 percent annual increase.

Trustee Alsop made the motion to approve the Letter of Notification. This motion was seconded by Trustee Ayers and approved unanimously.

VIII. Academic Calendars for 2020-2021, 2021-2022, and 2022-2023

Dr. Bach recommended approval of the Academic Calendars for 2020-2021, 2021-2022, and 2022-2023 as outlined in the meeting materials.

The motion to approve was made by Trustee Golden, seconded by Trustee Ayers, and approved unanimously.

IX. ETSU Student Success and Enrollment Initiatives

Dr. Sherlin introduced Carshonda Harris, Director of the Multicultural Center and Access and Student Success Programs, along with student Amyre Cain. Ms. Harris gave an overview presentation on the Talent, Innovation and Equity (TIE) Grant and Summer Bridge Plus programs. Tennessee was one of two states to receive the

inaugural TIE grant from the Lumina Foundation, and ETSU was one of five THEC institutions awarded funding because of its demonstrated commitment to improving outcomes for students of color on campus. Ms. Harris described the challenges facing African American, Hispanic/Latino, Native American and biracial students – challenges that she said are not unique to ETSU – including unmet financial need, lack of participation in peer mentoring and academic support programs, and a college completion rate 15-20% lower than that of other populations. She outlined the Bridge Plus Program, which uses these TIE funds to provide an all-expenses-paid summer experience that gives participating first-time entering freshmen a jump start on college. Students earn three free college credits while taking part in pre-advisement, early registration, a cohort student learning experience, weekly tutoring and monthly mentoring/coaching sessions, and more. The program helps students gain confidence and skills for the transition to college and a sense of inclusion and belonging. Ms. Harris noted that there was a 100% retention rate in fall 2018 and a 96% retention rate in spring 2019 among students who participated in the Bridge Plus Program in 2018, and these students also demonstrated high campus engagement.

Ms. Harris introduced Bridge Plus student Amyre Cain, who shared her experiences with the program. Ms. Cain told the Committee that she is a first-generation college student and a sociology and special education major. She said the Bridge Plus Program inspired her to get involved on campus, and she was proud to have made the dean's list.

Ms. Harris also gave an overview of the Multicultural Center and its staff and services.

Discussion ensued regarding the benefits of the Bridge Plus Program, and Board Chairman Niswonger questioned whether other programs exist to provide mentoring and support to students outside the demographics served by Bridge. Dr. Sherlin noted that around one-third of ETSU students take advantage of the learning support services offered for all students at the university; he said that the full, 360-degree experience offered by the Bridge Plus Program has not been scaled for the general student population, but the university is heading in that direction. Dr. Sherlin said the Bridge Plus Program is resource-intensive; Ms. Harris added that it costs approximately \$1,000 per participant (which includes food, transportation, books, and more), and the TIE grant was \$100,000 for two years and is supplemented with funding from other areas of the university. Trustee Niswonger asked if the Committee could request the university to develop a plan to serve the needs of the whole student population.

X. Research Metrics and Teaching Profile of ETSU Faculty

Dr. Mike Hoff, Associate Vice President/Chief Planning Officer, gave a slide presentation providing definitions and metrics pertaining to organized research at ETSU, with an emphasis on medical research. He noted that competition for federal research dollars is steep, and the state of Tennessee has not invested as much in

research as such states as Texas and Florida. He said ETSU has had more grant submissions over time but received less money, but small grants will help garner larger awards.

Dr. Hoff referred Committee members to the “Research and Sponsored Programs FY2018 Annual Report” handout in their meeting materials, and pointed out the data from the Higher Education Research and Development (HERD) Survey that indicated how ETSU compares to top medical schools in the South. He said ETSU needs to stay focused on continuing to be competitive in its current environment, but not lose sight of the ultimate goal of becoming relevant in the larger market.

Dr. Hoff defined different types of research: applied and basic research lead to acquired new knowledge; experimental research takes what is known and begins to apply it, and is directly related to individual health outcomes; and translational research takes everything learned from previous research and impacts population health. He said the Ballad Health partnership could have a large impact on the region through research. He turned the presentation over to Dr. William Block.

XI. Quillen College of Medicine Strategic Improvement Plan

Dr. William Block, Dean of the Quillen College of Medicine, continued the presentation on research. He noted that National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding is a good overall research activity indicator and said ETSU jumped from \$4.6 million in NIH funding in fiscal year 2017 to nearly \$6.7 million in fiscal year 2018; the U.S. News 2018 NIH Funding Ranking, which he said is a composite ranking of research activity, has ETSU ranked at 118 of 147 medical schools. Dr. Block said that is not a dismal ranking and compared ETSU to Vanderbilt – Vanderbilt, which ranked 11th, garnered over \$356 million in NIH funding in fiscal year 2018 but has 2,800 medical faculty as compared to ETSU’s approximately 225.

Dr. Block said one of the biggest areas of growth in medical research at ETSU has come in the field of neuroscience, followed by the areas of cardiovascular, immunology/infectious disease, microbiology, and cancer.

The strategy for growth in medical research activity includes improving communication between ETSU colleges to see where synergies exist; improving funding among current faculty and recruitment of additional faculty; providing more seed money for smaller projects that will result in the data needed to back up larger NIH grant proposals; partnering with Ballad Health to increase rural health care, targeting areas that need more providers, such as neurology, urology, orthopedic surgery support, after-hours care, and more; expanding clinical services; continuing the ongoing faculty evaluation and mission alignment process; and enhancing the infrastructure. Dr. Block said he hopes to develop a medical campus comprised of the Innovation Lab, Johnson City Community Health Center, existing and future Clinical Education Buildings, and amenities. He also noted that additional faculty and staff, as well as scholarship support, will be needed to grow the student body.

During discussion, trustees expressed appreciation for the clear picture Drs. Hoff and Block provided in their joint presentation of where ETSU stands in relation to other institutions in external funding, and indicated that this information will help Board members as they look creatively at ways to garner increased funding for research.

XII. Committee Discussions

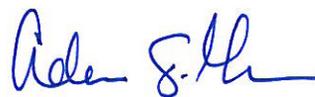
Chair Latimer said this item would continue discussions that had already been occurring throughout the meeting. She noted that the Committee would need to follow up on 1) finding funding that would allow the university to provide for other student populations success initiatives similar to those covered by the TIE grant and 2) finding ways for the Board to help ETSU move faster on new program approvals and other initiatives. Trustee Ayers added that she would like to see ETSU gain additional legislative influence, becoming a greater “go-to” resource to inform decisions on legislative policies and directives from the beginning.

XIII. Other Business

Trustee Alsop noted that he would be transitioning out of his role as the faculty representative on the Board and introduced Dr. Virginia Foley, Past President of the Faculty Senate and Associate Professor in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis in the Clemmer College, whom the Faculty Senate selected to serve as the new faculty representative.

There being no further business, Chair Latimer adjourned the meeting at 11:48 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Adam Green
Secretary of the Board of Trustees

Approved by the Board of Trustees at its September 20, 2019 meeting with accompanying amendment.