



THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MINUTES OF THE EDUCATION, RESEARCH, AND SERVICE COMMITTEE  
October 22, 2020  
Knoxville, Tennessee

The Education, Research, and Service Committee of The University of Tennessee Board of Trustees met at 1:30 p.m. (EDT) on Thursday, October 22, 2020. Following continuing guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding COVID-19 and in compliance with the Tennessee Pledge and other state and local guidelines, the meeting was held virtually with Committee members participating electronically or by telephone. The meeting was hosted from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville campus.

**I. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Committee Chair Donnie Smith called the meeting to order. Board Secretary Cynthia Moore called the roll, and the following members were present: Donald J. Smith, Committee Chair; Leighton Chappell, Student Trustee; John C. Compton, Board Chair; Charlie Hatcher; Christina Vogel, Faculty Representative; Alan D. Wilson; and Jamie R. Woodson. In addition, the following trustees were in attendance: Bradford D. Box and Decosta E. Jenkins.

Others present included: President Randy Boyd; Linda Martin, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Success; Tiffany Carpenter, Vice President for Communications and Marketing; Brian Daniels, Chief Audit and Compliance Officer; Stacey Patterson, Vice President for Research, Outreach and Economic Development; Ryan Stinnett, General Counsel; Chancellors Angle, Carver, Plowman and Schwab; Tim Cross, Senior Vice President/Senior Vice Chancellor for the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture; Jorge Pérez, Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness; Ashton Braddock, UT Promise Coordinator; and other members of the UT senior leadership and administrative staff.

Ms. Moore addressed requirements for meetings conducted with members participating electronically and announced the presence of a quorum. The meeting was webcast for the convenience of the University community, the general public, and the media.

**II. Opening Remarks of the Committee Chair**

Committee Chair Smith began the meeting by extending his gratitude to President Boyd, the senior leadership team, the staff, faculty and students for their efforts in persevering and continuing to make progress during the pandemic.



Committee Chair Smith welcomed Leighton Chappell, the newly appointed student trustee, and Associate Professor Christina Vogel, the appointed faculty representative to the Committee.

### **III. Requests to Address the Board**

None.

### **IV. Consent Agenda**

Committee Chair Smith called the Committee members' attention to the Consent Agenda and asked if there were any requests to remove an item from the agenda. There being none, upon motion duly made and seconded, a roll call vote was taken, and the Committee approved: (i) the minutes of the June 25, 2020 meeting of the Committee, and (ii) the Resolutions pertaining to the other action items included on the Consent Agenda. (A complete list of the approved items appears at the end of these minutes.)

### **V. Grant of Tenure upon Initial Appointment**

President Boyd stated that he and Chancellor Plowman are recommending that tenure be granted to Milagros Zingoni Phielipp, who has been recruited to serve as the Director of the School of Interior Architecture, College of Architecture and Design. President Boyd advised that the candidate meets the requirements to be considered for tenure upon initial appointment, all steps in the review process outlined in the Board policy have been completed, and she has received strong support at each level of review. Upon motion duly made and seconded, a roll call vote was taken, and the Committee approved a recommendation that the Board of Trustees adopt the Resolution approving the grant of tenure upon initial appointment (as presented in Tab 2 of the meeting materials).

### **VI. Report on Periodic Post-Tenure Performance Review (PPPR)**

Linda Martin, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Success, began her presentation by providing background information on the development of the Periodic Post-Tenure Performance Review (PPPR). She explained that Academic Year (AY) 2019-20 was the first review period under the new requirements of Board Policy BT0006 — Policies Governing Academic Freedom, Responsibility, and Tenure.

Dr. Martin indicated that PPPR is not a re-evaluation of tenure. Instead, it is intended to serve as a comprehensive review as to whether a faculty member has demonstrated continued professional growth and productivity consistent with established expectations. The review committee must determine whether the faculty member's performance satisfies expectations based on discipline and rank (a yes/no determination).



She explained that the Board Policy outlines procedures for a comprehensive evaluation of tenured faculty, no less often than every six years. At a minimum, the procedures for PPPR require: (i) an internal peer review committee of faculty at the same or higher rank; (ii) external reviews when deemed necessary by the review committee or the dean; (iii) staggered reviews to avoid administrative burden.

Dr. Martin indicated that PPPR is in addition to the Annual Performance and Planning Review (APPR) and Enhanced Post-Tenure Performance Review (EPPR). She advised that APPR examines a faculty member's current year's activities and plans for the upcoming year. The annual reviews are a key element for determining merit pay or performance-based salary adjustments. EPPR is an in-depth performance evaluation, administered by the chief academic officer, initiated by (i) the request of a faculty member; (ii) one overall annual performance rating of "unsatisfactory;" or (iii) two overall annual performance ratings of "Needs Improvement" during any four consecutive annual performance review cycles. It was noted that the prior Board of Trustees had concerns over the rigor and consistency of the APPR process, as well as the review process associated with the granting of tenure.

In connection with PPPR, each campus was asked to collect data including, but not limited to the following: (i) all individuals, departments, and colleges involved in the process; (ii) summary results of outcomes for faculty under review; (iii) estimates of hourly rates/salary for all parties involved; (iv) hours spent per faculty under review; (v) and total costs for groups, campuses, and the system as a whole. The campus reports were provided in an Appendix to the meeting materials. Dr. Martin reviewed the key findings associated with the campus reports, along with certain conclusions and recommendations.

Following the presentation, the members of the Committee raised questions regarding the costs reported with the PPPR process. It was noted that most of the costs identified were opportunity costs associated with the time involved; however, there were certain expenses incurred in creating websites/portals and administering the new process. The trustees reflected on the data presented, including the increased number of retirements and the widespread distribution of retirements among campuses/institutes.

Dr. Martin observed that one of the positive outcomes of the PPPR process may be potential improvements to the APPR process. She believes that most faculty are performing at a very high level, but there may be opportunities to address mentorship (mid and late career faculty), incongruencies, and other options to provide more meaningful support for professional development.

The Chancellors provided their perspectives on the PPPR process. In general, the Chancellors were not surprised by the data, and they did not believe that the PPPR process added much value, in light of the costs and effort involved. With respect to the opportunity cost, the time spent conducting reviews was in, most cases, in addition to and not a substitution of other



effort. A concern was raised that the additional effort associated with the PPPR process limits the faculty from pursuing other academic/research activities. It was also suggested that the higher than average retirement figures may have been impacted by the order in which faculty were selected (i.e., those with the longest tenure who may be closer to retirement).

Professor Vogel shared her perspectives as a tenured faculty member. She indicated her support for the concepts of continuous improvement, improved clarity as to expectations, and meaningful faculty engagement. However, Professor Vogel expressed her concern that the policy may feel more punitive in nature and that it may have the unintended consequence of communicating a lack of trust in the faculty. Professor Vogel raised the question of what is the measure of effectiveness of the PPPR process and whether it is an improved APPR process.

Board Chair Compton asked for an update of the peer research that was conducted initially in this area to see what changes, if any, other institutions have made since originally adopting a comprehensive post-tenure review process. Dr. Martin confirmed that the peer research would be updated and presented to the Committee at a future meeting. Dr. Martin also advised that the PPPR process may be impacted/delayed for AY 2020-21 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Trustee Woodson expressed her concern that there was too little data to properly assess the PPPR process or to gauge any meaningful improvements to the APPR process. Committee Chair Smith concurred with Trustee Woodson's assessment and stated that more work needs to be done to ensure that the APPR and EPPR processes have the necessary level of rigor to be instructive and meaningful for the growth and development of faculty members across the UT System. Committee Chair Smith stressed that it is not an issue of the Board distrusting faculty, but assessing and addressing the weaknesses identified previously in regards to the various review processes.

## **VII. Annual Report on Intercollegiate Athletics Programs**

Committee Chair Smith reminded the members of the Committee that the Board of Trustees adopted Board Policy BT0033 – Policy on Oversight of Intercollegiate Athletics, which details the Board's oversight role and the specific responsibilities of the Chancellors with respect to the administration of intercollegiate athletics programs.

The policy requires the Chancellor for each UT campus with an intercollegiate athletics program to submit a written report to the Education, Research, and Service Committee each fall. The campus report is required to contain the following information: (1) the role of athletics on the campus; (2) oversight of the faculty athletics representative (FAR) on each campus; (3) how success of the athletics program is measured; (4) National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Academic Performance Rate (APR) data; (5) NCAA graduation success



rate (GSR); (6) department benchmarks for student performance assessment; (7) admissions policy; (8) student-athlete summary information; and (9) academic standards and policy descriptions.

The Chancellors of the Knoxville, Chattanooga, and Martin campuses submitted an initial, annual report outlining the required information. The campus reports were provided in an Appendix to the meeting materials. Dr. Martin reviewed the key findings associated with the campus reports, along with achievement highlights provided by the campuses.

## **VIII. Presentations**

### Academic Affairs & Student Success Update

Dr. Martin provided a presentation on key student success indicators (enrollment, retention, and graduation rates). Highlights included:

- All-time high for UT System-wide enrollment (52,559), representing a 1.9% increase over Fall 2019;
- Undergraduate enrollment was up 4.1% for UTK over Fall 2019;
- First-year retention (new full-time, first-time freshman) increased for UT System to 83.5%, representing a 2.6% increase over Fall 2019;
- Six-year graduation rates (new full-time, first-time freshman) increased for UT System to 62.9%;
- Six-year graduation rates for UTM were remarkably improved from 47.2% to 53.7%, reflective of targeted interventions;
- Four-year graduation rates (new full-time, first-time freshman) increased for UT System to 47.2%, reflective of steady improvements at UTC, UTK and UTM; and
- All-time high of bachelor's degrees conferred (8,622).

The presentation also addressed enrollment trends by campus for the last five-year period pertaining to: (i) freshman (total freshman applicants by campus, admission rates, yield, and fall enrollment), (ii) transfer students; and (iii) graduate/professional students. UTM reported an almost 40% increase in graduate/professional student enrollment over Fall 2019, and the UT System had an all-time high of 3,655 graduate/professional degrees conferred. The Committee members remarked on the successes, especially in light of the challenges presented by the pandemic. It was noted that, across the state, very few institutions were able to grow or even maintain enrollment levels.



Dr. Martin also reviewed the University's efforts with respect to the following initiatives:

- Reverse Transfer and TN Reconnect
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Student Experience Survey
- One UT for Campus Change
- 2020 Academic and Student Affairs Summit

### UT Promise Update

Ashton Braddock, UT Promise Coordinator, updated the Committee on the UT Promise scholarship program. She reviewed the goal, mission, and desired outcomes for the program, along with the eligibility requirements.

Ms. Braddock reported that in the inaugural year, the University received 7,433 student applications for the program. This figure included 2,857 current UT students. She explained the recruitment cycle and the reasons for eligibility loss. At the end of the process, a total of 1,191 students were identified as being eligible for the UT Promise scholarship. The demographics of the eligible students were presented to the Committee. In addition, an overview of the mentorship component of the program was provided, including the demographic composition, affiliation, and geographical distribution of the mentors.

The overall cost of the UT Promise scholarship program was approximately \$865,000. Ms. Braddock concluded her remarks by discussing the successes and challenges identified in the first year of administering the program. She highlighted efforts to address the software application being used for the program and to better inform the applicants of the eligibility requirements.

In response to questions from the members of the Committee regarding the program, Ms. Braddock advised that the failure of applicants to meet the community service requirements was the largest contributing factor for not meeting the University's goal of having 2,000 UT Promise scholarship recipients. She also addressed issues associated with the website and plans for assigning additional UT Promise scholarship recipients to mentors.

### Institutional Effectiveness Update

Committee Chair Smith reminded the Committee members of the recent organizational restructuring of the offices of Institutional Research (IR) and Business Intelligence (BI). He introduced Jorge Pérez, Associated Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness, who provided an update on the efforts of the newly formed Institutional Effectiveness (IE) group.

Dr. Pérez discussed the concept of integrated institutional effectiveness. He reviewed both the mission and vision statements of the IE team, noting that its mission is to promote a



culture of continuous improvement and enhance decision support. Additionally, he shared SACSCOC's definition of institutional effectiveness, which is as follows:

*Ongoing, comprehensive, and integrated research-based planning and evaluation processes that –*  
*(a) focus on quality and effectiveness, and*  
*(b) incorporate systemic review of goals and outcomes consistent with mission.*

Information was provided to the Committee on the organizational model for IE, peer benchmarking, and selected accomplishments. Dr. Pérez highlighted the work done to successfully combine disparate cultures in virtual setting. Dr. Brian Hester has been appointed to serve as the Chief Academic Data Officer, and the campuses have designated a single point-of-contact for data requests. Dr. Pérez concluded his remarks by showcasing certain infographics, reports, and dashboards that have been developed by the IE team, along with near-term projects that have been identified. A key goal for the upcoming year will be to work with the goal champions on the UT System Strategic Plan.

Committee Chair Smith thanked Dr. Pérez for the update. He then asked David Miller, Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, to confirm that the IE group will be closely involved and integrated into the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) project in the identification of data fields. Mr. Miller verified that IE would be involved and that its participation will be especially critical with respect to the student data system component of the project (contemplated as phase 2).

#### **IX. Other Business**

None.

#### **X. Closing Remarks**

Committee Chair Smith thanked the Committee members for their time, given that the meeting ran longer than anticipated. He extended his gratitude to the presenters and the administrative team for their efforts in preparing for the meeting.

#### **XI. Adjournment**

There being no other business, the Committee Chair adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Cynthia C. Moore".

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Cynthia C. Moore  
Secretary and Special Counsel



### Approved Consent Agenda Items

- Minutes of the Last Meeting (June 25, 2020)
- Comprehensive List of Academic Programs
- Ratification of Administrative Action to Terminate or Inactivate Academic Programs

### List of Information Items Presented to the Committee

- Certification of Degrees Conferred, 2020 Summer Semester

Attachments. Copies of the following documents are filed with the official minutes of this meeting.

- Presentation Materials:
  - Periodic Post-Tenure Performance Review (PPPR)
  - Annual Report - Intercollegiate Athletics Programs
  - Academic Affairs and Student Success Update
  - UT Promise
  - Institutional Effectiveness