



THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MINUTES OF THE EDUCATION, RESEARCH, AND SERVICE COMMITTEE
February 25, 2021
Knoxville, Tennessee

The Education, Research, and Service Committee of The University of Tennessee Board of Trustees met at 11:00 a.m. (EST) on Thursday, February 25, 2021. 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; Charles Hatcher, Commissioner, Tennessee Department of Agriculture; Kara Lawson; Christina Vogel, Faculty Representative; Alan D. Wilson; and Jamie R. Woodson. In addition, Trustee Decosta E. Jenkins joined the meeting.

Others present included: President Randy Boyd; Linda C. Martin, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Success; Stacey Patterson, Vice President for Research, Outreach and Economic Development; Ryan Stinnett, General Counsel; Chancellors Angle, Carver, Plowman, and Schwab; Frank Cuevas, Vice Chancellor for Student Life, UTK; John Zomchick, Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor, UTK; Jorge Pérez, Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness, UT System; Karen Etzkorn, Director of Academic Affairs, UT System; 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 Donnie Smith welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided a high-level overview of the agenda.



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 October 22, 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, UTK

President Boyd stated that he and Chancellor Plowman are recommending that tenure be granted to two candidates (Dr. Janet Fox and Dr. Robert Williams). President Boyd advised that the candidates meet 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 the candidates have 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. MMC-Related Policy and Procedure Considerations

Linda C. Martin, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Success, shared with the members of the Committee an update on activities pertaining to academic matters associated with the possible acquisition of Martin Methodist College (MMC). She highlighted items that would need to come before the Committee in the future should the acquisition continue to progress. These items include matters relating to transition of tenure and approval of academic programs for the new UT campus. Dr. Martin advised that the accreditation liaison at MMC has been working on updated narratives for a prospectus that is required to be submitted to SACSCOC by March 15, 2021. She expressed her gratitude to the accreditation liaisons from across the UT System, who have been assisting MMC with this process. In closing, Dr. Martin advised that other items, such as a faculty handbook, mission statement, and annual academic program inventory, would also be presented to the Committee similar for what is generally done for other UT campuses.



VII. Proposed Revisions to Rules, UTK Student Code of Conduct

Committee Chair Smith advised the members of the Committee that the proposed revisions to the UT Knoxville Student Code of Conduct Rule were being presented as an informational item. A public rulemaking hearing will be held on March 8, 2021 to solicit comments from the public regarding the proposed revisions. After the rulemaking hearing, the proposed revisions (inclusive of any changes resulting from the feedback received at the hearing) will then be presented to the Committee and the full Board of Trustees for consideration and formal approval.

Frank Cuevas, Vice Chancellor for Student Life, UT Knoxville, provided an overview of the history of the Student Code of Conduct, which was adopted in 2017, and the work that has been performed with campus constituents to provide greater clarity. Dr. Cuevas reviewed the key changes, which encompass, among other things, the following items: (i) incorporating UT Knoxville's Principles of Civility & Community; (ii) revisions for consistency and to reduce redundancies; (iii) updates per national recommendations; (iv) streamlining processes; and (v) changes reflective of the new Title IX regulations.

In response to a question raised by a trustee, Dr. Cuevas does not believe that there will be any unintended, negative consequences to the students from having grade appeals no longer heard by the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards given how the undergraduate and graduate grade appeal committees are structured.

VIII. New Academic Program, Bachelor of Science - Geographic Information Science and Technology, UTK

John Zomchick, Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor, presented a new academic program for the Committee's consideration. He provided an overview of the proposed Bachelor of Science degree in Geographic Information Science and Technology (GIS&T) in the Department of Geography. The program will teach students to bridge the gap between advanced geographic information technology and real-world problems/applications using spatial mapping, modeling, and analytics to make informed decisions. Dr. Zomchick explained how the proposed program will align with the State's Master Plan and the University's mission. Demand for well-trained GIS&T professionals currently exceeds the supply of graduates in the state and region. Dr. Zomchick also reviewed the financial and enrollment projections for the new program.

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 new academic program (as presented in Tab 4 of the meeting materials).



IX. Presentations

Academic Affairs & Student Success Update

Dr. Martin noted that there are a number of academic affairs and student success initiatives. For today's meeting, the presentations will focus on: (i) an Enrollment Update; and (ii) the results of the 2020 Student Experience Survey.

- **Enrollment.** Jorge Pérez, Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness, presented post-secondary enrollment trend information for Tennessee High School Graduates for the five-year period (2015-2019), which highlighted the following findings:
 - ❖ Although the total number of high school graduates has grown (3.6%) during the period, the total percentage of high school graduates enrolling in post-secondary programs has declined from a high of 64.8% in 2017 to 62.7% in 2019.
 - ❖ Over the period, there has been an aggregate 8.8% increase in the number of Tennessee graduates enrolling at UT campuses.
 - ❖ During the period, the percentage of Tennessee high school graduates enrolling at UT campuses has remained relatively steady (approximately 8.9%).
 - ❖ During the period, the percentage of Tennessee high school graduates attending colleges in-state has declined by 2%, and graduates attending out-of-state colleges has increased by 2%.
 - ❖ During the period, the percentage of Tennessee high school graduates attending public universities and colleges has declined by 3.0%, and enrollment in private universities and colleges has increased by 3.0%.
 - ❖ Nationally, there has been a decline in the number of high school graduates enrolling in 2-year institutions (approximately 8%), with growth in enrollments in 4-year institutions (approximately 7%).

Additionally, Dr. Pérez reviewed with the members of the Committee: (i) first-time freshman 1-year retention rates, measured in terms of both high school grade point averages and ACT scores; and (ii) retention rates by residency status (in-state v. out-of-state/foreign) for first-time freshman, by campus and system-wide.

In response to questions raised by the trustees, Dr. Pérez believes that the new proposed UT campus in southern, middle Tennessee, along with the online education and a focus on adult learners are potential areas of opportunity for the University with respect to enrollment growth. Chancellor Plowman (UTK), Chancellor Carver (UTM), and Chancellor Angle (UTC) highlighted areas of focus relevant to their respective campuses.



Trustee Alan Wilson reflected on the information contained in the chart regarding 1-year retention rates and the correlation to grade point averages. He inquired as to the University's success in attracting and enrolling these high achievers, especially those students from Tennessee, as compared to UT's peer institutions. The Chancellors discussed a number of efforts being employed by the UT campuses to attract these students, including early engagement, scholarships, and other activities.

- ***Student Experience Survey.*** Karen Etzkorn, Director of Academic Affairs, reviewed the results of the 2020 Student Experience Survey, which was distributed by the campuses in October/November 2020. Dr. Etzkorn remarked on the fact that 2020 was a very difficult year for students due to the COVID-19 pandemic. She reviewed the survey objectives: (1) assess the student experience and satisfaction at UT; (ii) identify greatest challenges faced during 2020; and (iii) understand how UT can best respond to students' needs. Dr. Etzkorn outlined the design and data collection process associated with the survey, shared the respondent demographics, and reviewed the survey results. Most noteworthy, 43% of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that they had adjusted well to online learning. She reviewed the survey results by UT campus, and she discussed the primary concerns of students (Academic Success (48%), Mental Health (34%), Pandemic/Public Health (32%), General Uncertainty (21%), and Finances/Economy (19%).

Chair Compton thanked the Office of Academic Affairs and Student Success and the Chancellors for their efforts in completing the student survey. The Board was very interested in hearing the voice of the students in an unfiltered fashion and this information confirms what the Board has been hearing anecdotally from parents and students.

Graduate and Professional Education Overview

Committee Chair Smith introduced Graduate Deans Ethan Carver (UTC), Donald Thomason (UTHSC), Dixie L. Thompson (UTK), and Joey Mehlhorn (UTM), who provided a presentation on graduate and professional education at the UT campuses. The intended purpose of the presentation was to:

- Provide a Campus Overview;
- Review initiatives, programs, and planning;
- Share information on research and community outreach activities; and
- Showcase the successes of students and faculty.

A full copy of the presentation materials is included with these minutes.



X. Other Business

None.

XI. Closing Remarks

Before concluding the meeting, Committee Chair Smith requested that the Committee members contact the Board Secretary or any of the Committee Liaisons if there is any additional information that they would like to see on a regular basis, whether student data related or otherwise, so that the work plan can be reviewed to ensure that the agendas and materials provided are meeting the expectations of the Committee members.

XII. 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".

Cynthia C. Moore
Secretary and Special Counsel

Approved Consent Agenda Items

- Minutes of the Last Meeting (October 22, 2020)
- Academic Unit, Occupational Therapy, UTC
- Academic Unit, Physician Assistant Studies, UTHSC
- Academic Unit, Psychology, UTM
- Academic Program Modification, Bachelor of Science in Communication, UTC

List of Information Items Presented to the Committee

- Certification of Degrees Conferred

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

- Presentation Materials:
 - UTK Code of Conduct
 - Bachelor of Science in GIS&T, UTK
 - Academic Affairs and Student Success Update
 - Graduate and Professional Education at UT