



THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MINUTES OF THE EDUCATION, RESEARCH, AND SERVICE COMMITTEE June 24, 2022

The Education, Research, and Service Committee of The University of Tennessee Board of Trustees met at 8:30 a.m. (EDT) on Friday, June 24, 2022. The meeting was held in the Student Union Ballroom located at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Committee Members Present: Donald J. Smith, Committee Chair; John C. Compton, Board Chair; Lane Gutridge (Student Trustee); Shanea A. McKinney; and Phyllis A. Richey (Faculty Representative).

Others in Attendance:

Trustees: Bradford D. Box, Decosta E. Jenkins; Amy E. Miles, Christopher L. Patterson; and William (Bill) C. Rhodes III.

University Administration: President Randy Boyd; Linda Martin, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Success; Cynthia Moore, Board Secretary and Special Counsel; Stacey Patterson, Vice President for Research, Outreach, and Economic Development; Chancellor Steve Angle (UT Chattanooga); Chancellor Keith Carver (UT Martin); Chancellor Mark LaBranche (UT Southern); and Chancellor Donde Plowman (UT Knoxville).

Ms. Moore announced the presence of a quorum. The meeting was webcast for the convenience of the University community, the general public, and the media.

Committee Chair Smith opened the meeting. He began the meeting by acknowledging the conclusion of the terms of service for both Lane Gutridge (Student Trustee) and Phyllis A. Richey (Faculty Representative). Chair Smith thanked Dr. Richey and Mr. Gutridge for their service. He also extended a warm welcome to the new student member of the Committee Hayden Galloway, an undergraduate at UT Southern; and to the new faculty representative, Dr. Andy Puckett, Professor and Finance PhD Program Director in the Department of Finance at the Haslam College of Business at UT Knoxville.

Consent Agenda

Committee Chair Smith asked if there were any requests to remove an item from the agenda. There being none, upon motion duly made and seconded, the Committee approved: (i) the Resolution to adopt the minutes of the last 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.)

Proposed New Academic Programs

Master of Health Science in Pathologists' Assistant, UT Health Science Center (UTHSC)

Cynthia Russell, Vice Chancellor for Academic, Faculty and Student Affairs at UTHSC, presented an overview of the proposed Master of Health Science in Pathologists' Assistant program. Dr. Russell advised the Committee that, at the time of the meeting, there were only 13 accredited Pathologists' Assistant programs in the United States and Canada for what is one of the fastest growing allied health professions. She reviewed the number of credit hours, the proposed time period for implementation, the projected enrollment, the resources needed, and the accreditation process for the program. In addition, Dr. Russell discussed the intended purpose and outcomes for the program.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Committee approved a recommendation that the Board of Trustees adopt the Resolution approving the proposed Master of Health Science in Pathologists' Assistant program at UTHSC (as presented in Tab 2.1).

Bachelor of Science in Public Health, UT Knoxville (UTK)

John Zomchick, Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor at UTK, presented an overview of the proposed Bachelor of Science in Public Health in the Department of Public Health at UTK's College of Education. Dr. Zomchick advised the Committee that UTK currently offers a minor in public health and that interest in a major in public health has grown over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. Dr. Zomchick reviewed the enrollment and financial projections for the proposed program, noting that UTK already has faculty in place to offer the new major to its students. He also discussed the intended purpose and outcomes of the program, as well as how it relates to the UTK Strategic Plan.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Committee approved a recommendation that the Board of Trustees adopt the Resolution approving the proposed Bachelor of Science in Public Health program at UTK (as presented in Tab 2.2).

Bachelor of Science in Construction Management, UT Martin (UTM)

Philip Cavalier, Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at UTM, presented an overview of the proposed Bachelor of Science in Construction Management. Dr. Cavalier advised the Committee members that the program is intended to help students pursue degrees and careers in engineering-/construction-related fields. He reviewed the number of credit hours, the proposed time period for implementation, the projected enrollment, and the resources, if any, needed for the program. In addition, he discussed the intended purpose and outcomes of the program and how it relates to the UTM Strategic Plan. He noted that the program also aligns with the State's science, technology, engineering and math ("STEM") initiatives.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Committee approved a recommendation that the Board of Trustees adopt the Resolution approving the proposed Bachelor of Science in in Construction Management program at UTM (as presented in Tab 2.3).

Undergraduate Admissions

Chair Smith reminded the Committee members that the UT campuses had instituted a test optional exception to the UT System's admission practices to accommodate students during the COVID-19 pandemic. Following further review and thorough discussions held at previous Board meetings, the UT campuses indicated that no proposed revisions to the University's admission policies will be brought forward. Consistent with pre-COVID admission policies, the submission of standardized tests for student applicants will be required for the Fall 2023 admission cycle as further described in the materials provided in the Appendix to the meeting materials.

Presentations

Update on UT Research Enterprise

Stacey Patterson, Vice President for Research, Outreach and Economic Development, reminded the Committee members that her presentation is the first since the reunification of UTK and the UT Institute for Agriculture. Certain highlights of her presentation (Tab 4.1) included:

- FY 2021-22 marked the fifth consecutive year in which UT topped its previous record in terms of research expenditures (\$437 million), with total research expenditures growing by 32.4% since 2016.
- Federal funding has grown by 16.6% over the past five years and 14.5% over the last ten years.
- While the number of faculty research proposals remained constant in Fiscal Years 2020 and 2021, the value of those proposals increased significantly. For Fiscal Year 2021, it is projected that research proposal amounts will total in excess of \$1 billion for the first time.
- The UT Research Foundation currently has 287 active licenses – 33% higher than three years ago – and is supporting 45 start-up companies.
- The Foundation has stood up five wholly owned subsidiary companies to support the University, including TennEra LLC.

Dr. Patterson stated that on the morning of the Board Meeting, the *Knoxville News Sentinel* carried a story announcing that Genera, a spinout of TennEra, was acquired by ARA Partners, which has invested \$200 million into an expansion deal intended to support the manufacture

of biodegradable, plant-based pulping products in Tennessee and create approximately 120-150 jobs.

In response to questions from the Committee members, Dr. Patterson and Dr. Donde Plowman, Chancellor of UTK, advised:

- The National Science Foundation (“NSF”) is encouraging universities to enter into multi-state research partnerships known as “Regional Innovation Engines” or “NSF Engines” in order to expand innovation capacity by leveraging resources across the country.
- UTK receives a major share of its federal research expenditures from the U.S. Department of Energy and is looking to diversify and expand its outreach to other federal agencies.
- UT is looking to establish a seed opportunity to encourage cross-campus collaborations similar to the NSF Engines program.

Update on UT-Oak Ridge Innovation Institute

Dr. Joan Bienvenue, Executive Director of the UT-Oakridge Innovation Institute (“ORII”), a partnership between UT and the Oakridge National Laboratory (“ORNL”). ORII is designed to bring together researchers from ORNL, UT students, faculty from across the State of Tennessee, and industry partners to create new programs in education and workforce development, while also encouraging innovation and discovery. A few of the highlights included in Dr. Bienvenue’s presentation (included under Tab 4.2) were:

- The State budget for Fiscal Year 2022-23 includes \$72 million in funding for ORII, which completes the State’s \$80 million funding commitment.
- ORII is currently focused on hiring, particularly in the fields of clean manufacturing and energy storage, two areas in which both UT and UT-OII have capacity.
- ORII has also established a Seed Funding program to support new innovative multidisciplinary research projects.
- At the recently held Tennessee Valley Corridor Summit, ORII announced the creation of a partnership to launch a second-life battery storage project to repurpose used electric vehicle batteries to provide supplemental power to both Nissan’s facilities in Tennessee and the Middle Tennessee electric grid.
- ORII has 155 students in its joint Ph.D. programs, with a goal of increasing that number to 500 Ph.D. students through programs such as the SMaRT Internship Program (“Student Mentoring and Research Training”), which focuses on undergraduate students.

Student Experience Survey Spring 2022

Vice President Linda C. Martin, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Success, gave a brief presentation on the 2022 Student Experience Survey (Tab 4.3). Dr. Martin cautioned that only 2,000 of UT's 55,000 students responded to the survey, making it difficult to draw conclusions for each campus. Dr. Martin attributed this low response to the numerous surveys and requests for feedback that students have received over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The survey focused on five questions, which respondents were asked to rank using a scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Despite the low participation rate, it should be noted that the questions that ranked the highest related to student satisfaction, with students responding that they felt that: (i) their campus is providing the support and resources they need to be successful; and (ii) they would recommend their campus to a friend and/or family member.

Student Mental Health and Wellbeing

Dr. Bernard Savarese, Associate Vice President for Student Success, provided an update on the System-wide efforts to address student mental health and wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as plans for the future. The information provided in Dr. Savarese presentation (Tab 4.4) was provided by the OneUT Mental Health Task Force (the "Task Force").

Over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, surveys of college and university students across the country documented increasing levels of stress, depression, anxiety, and loneliness and isolation. Clinical and nonclinical practitioners at the UT System reported similar trends in students utilizing the counseling centers. The Task Force stressed that the importance of remaining focused on supporting UT students and ensuring that they are connected to the people, resources, and information needed to thrive. The Task Force provided a snapshot of how the pandemic impacted each of the campuses and the efforts each campus is taking to address service gaps, including: (i) increasing the use of technology so that students can easily access services; (ii) assessing each counseling center, including increasing staffing where appropriate; and (iii) expanding partnerships between clinical and nonclinical services to better address prevention and intervention strategies.

The Task Force recently updated its charge to include new priorities, while continuing to address the recommendations contained in the 2019 Comptroller's Performance Audit, such as: (i) providing faculty and staff with training so that they are able to recognize, refer, and support students in need; (ii) implementing an annual System-wide convening of counselling teams to encourage cross-campus collaboration; and (iii) developing a more consistent, System-wide approach to student leaves of absence.

UT System Performance Compared to Peers

Vice President Martin provided an overview of how the UT System compares to its Board-approved peers and Board-approved aspirational peers (Tab 4.5). Her presentation focused on enrollment, retention, and four-/six-year graduation rates – all of which were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. She reminded the Committee members that there has been a decrease in the number of college-aged students across the country, which has impacted all sectors of higher education. Despite both the pandemic and the decrease in eligible students, each campus has seen success in certain areas, including:

- UTK has seen a steady increase in total enrollment from 2016 through 2020. In terms of undergraduate and graduate enrollment, UTK ranks third when compared to the average of its Southeastern Conference (“SEC”) peer group and its aspirational peers. When looking at undergraduate growth, UTK ranks first when compared to the SEC average and second among aspirational peers.
- UTC has seen progress in two important areas: (i) from 2019 to 2020, UTC saw a dramatic improvement in the first-year retention of first-time, fulltime students when compared to its peer groups; and (ii) for the period from 2016 to 2020, UTC saw a dramatic improvement in both its four-/six-year graduation rates, with four-year graduation rates increasing by ten percentage points.
- UTS has seen total enrolment increase since it became part of the UT System (July 2021). UTS is focused on developing plans to make significant improvements in all of its metrics.
- UTM has seen a significant increase in its graduate student enrollment, due in large part to its online MBA program, which has received national attention. In addition, UTM outpaced all peer groups in terms of four-/six-year graduation rates.
- UTHSC, like the members of its peer groups, has seen an increase in enrollment growth from 2020 to 2021.

Board Chair Compton reminded the members of the Committee that, four years ago, the Board recognized that there would be a drop in the number of college-aged students, and it began discussions regarding how to compete in this changing environment. He congratulated everyone at each campus who has contributed to the success the UT System is seeing in terms of its performance and rankings

With no further business to come before the Committee, the Committee Chair adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/ Cynthia C. Moore

Cynthia C. Moore
Secretary and Special Counsel

Approved Consent Agenda Items

- Minutes of the Prior Meetings (February 25, 2022)
- 2022 Institutional Mission Profile Statements
- Authorization for Conferral of Degrees, 2022-2023 Academic Year
- Proposed Academic Program Modifications:
 - Master of Science in Industrial and Organizational Psychology (UTC)
 - Bachelor of Arts in Africana Studies (UTK)
 - Bachelor of Arts in Physics (UTK)
 - Master of Science in Engineering Management (UTK)
 - Bachelor of Science in Philosophy (UTM)
 - Bachelor of Fine and Performing Arts (UTM)
- Tenure Recommendations Requiring Board Approval:
 - Grant of Tenure upon Initial Appointment
 - Grant of Tenure upon Early Consideration
- Proposed Faculty Handbook Revisions (UTC)