



# THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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## MINUTES OF THE EDUCATION, RESEARCH, AND SERVICE COMMITTEE October 28, 2022

The Education, Research, and Service Committee of The University of Tennessee Board of Trustees met at 9:30 a.m. (CDT) on Friday, October 28, 2022. The meeting was held in the Duncan Ballroom of the Boling University Center located at the University of Tennessee at Martin, in Martin, Tennessee.

Committee Members Present: Jamie R. Woodson, Committee Chair; John C. Compton, Board Chair; Hayden Galloway (Student Trustee); Charles Hatcher, Commissioner, Tennessee Department of Agriculture; Shanea A. McKinney; Andy Puckett (Faculty Representative); and Donald J. Smith.

Other in Attendance:

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

University Administration: President Randy Boyd; Bernard Savarese, Acting Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Success; Cynthia C. Moore, Board Secretary and Special Counsel; Chancellor Steve Angle (UT Chattanooga); Chancellor Peter Buckley (UT Health Science Center); Chancellor Keith Carver (UT Martin); Interim Chancellor Linda Martin (UT Southern); and Chancellor Donde Plowman (UT Knoxville). In addition, other members of the UT senior leadership and administrative staff were present.

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.

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### **Opening Remarks of the Committee Chair**

Committee Chair Woodson welcomed everyone to the meeting. She expressed her gratitude to Trustee Donnie Smith for his service as Chair of the Education, Research and Service Committee over the past few years and thanked him for continuing to serve as a member of the Committee. She also welcomed new Committee members Hayden Galloway, an undergraduate at UT Southern, and Dr. Andy Puckett, Professor and Finance PhD Program Director in the Department of Finance at the Haslam College of Business at UT Knoxville.

### **Presentations**

#### *UT System Student Success Indicators*

Dr. Bernard Savarese, Acting Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Success, began his presentation by noting that while enrollment and retention are down at many institutions across the nation, the UT System is, for the most part, seeing gains in both areas,

as detailed in the “UT System Student Success Indicators” report (Tab 1.1). Key student metrics for the UT System and its campuses include:

- UT System: Enrollment in the UT System has reached an all-time high of 56,032, representing an increase of 3.8% from 2021 to 2022 and an increase of 10.3% for the five-year period from 2018 to 2022. The System has also seen modest gains in retention and graduation rates have also increased over that same five-year period. Over the past five years, the number of students earning their bachelor’s degrees has risen by 9.6%, with rates for those earning graduate and professional degrees increasing by 15.3% over that same period.
- UT Knoxville: Enrollment at UTK has increased by 17% over the past five years, with enrollment rising by 6.6% from 2021 to 2022, driven by the enrollment of nearly 2,000 undergraduates and 130 graduate students. Retention rates have increased slightly, with an overall increase of 1.8% over the past five years. While graduation rates for those completing their degrees in six years have not seen a significant increase, over the past five years, four-year graduation rates have climbed by 5.6%.
- UT Chattanooga: UTC has seen slight declines in enrollment. The campus is working to increase enrollment, which had seen moderate gains prior to the pandemic. Graduation rates have increased over the past five years, with the number of degrees earned in four years rising by 2.8% from 2021 to 2022 and by 4.6% for those completing degrees in six years.
- UT Southern: The University’s newest campus saw substantial growth from 2021 to 2022, with enrollment increasing by 6.6%. First-year retention at UTS increased by 11.8% over the past year, and by 14.7% from 2018 to 2022. Over the past five years, the four-year graduation rate rose by 3.0%; however, the six-year graduation rate fell by -6.3%. Dr. Savarese noted that graduation rates can be a lagging indicator that should improve if the positive trends in retention continue.
- UT Martin: While enrollment fell by -2.6% over the five-year period from 2018 to 2022, enrollment grew by 2.3% from 2021 to 2022. The decline in retention over the past five years (-2.7%) may be attributable to the pandemic, as there was a modest increase in retention (1%) over the past year. UTM recently hired a Director of Retention to identify and address barriers that may impact a student’s decision to return following their first year. Graduation rates have increased, with a 4.9% rise over the last five years for those completing their degrees in six years, with four-year graduation rates increasing by 1.9% over that same period.
- UT Health Science Center: Dr. Savarese pointed out that the reporting of retention and graduation for the UTHSC is different from that of other campuses. While there have been declines in enrollment at UTHSC (-2.9% from 2021 to 2022 and -4.2% over the past five years), undergraduate enrollment is increasing slightly, and this past fall saw the highest transfer student enrollment over the past five years.

Dr. Savarese concluded his presentation by stating that, overall, the UT System is performing well in terms of enrollment, retention, and graduation rates.

### 2022 Student Experience Survey

Dr. Savarese reviewed the results of the 2022 Student Experience Survey. The Survey was first implemented in Fall 2020 to gauge the student experience during the pandemic. The survey is distributed to all levels of students from undergraduate through those pursuing doctoral degrees during the fall and spring semesters.

Students are asked to respond to five questions: (i) I believe my campus listens and responds to student needs; (ii) I agree that my campus offers the resources and/or support needed for my success as a student; (iii) I am currently accessing the resources and/or support I need to be successful; (iv) I would recommend my campus to a friend/family member as a great place to study; and (v) I believe that I matter and belong at UT.

Participation in the Survey has been mixed, although the number of students participating this fall was higher than that of the past two terms. More first-year students responded to the Fall 2022 Survey than any other constituency. In addition, two of the UT System's smaller campuses, UTS and UTHSC, generated the largest percentage of respondents. The Survey also reflects the composition of the UT System in terms of undergraduate and graduate students, as well as race and ethnicity.

The results of the Survey show increases in the number of students responding positively to each of the five questions, with the most positive responses being to the statements: "I agree that my campus offers the resources and/or support needed for my success as a student;" and "I would recommend my campus to a friend/family member as a great place to study."

The Committee members expressed concerns regarding the overall participation rate in the Survey. The Chancellors shared the steps they took to encourage participation. The Committee members questioned the impact of "survey fatigue" on the level of participation. UT President Randy Boyd stated that the University community is asked to respond to numerous surveys throughout the year, including surveys requested by the State Legislature and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission ("THEC"). He suggested that it may be important for the University administration to consider the timing of all surveys and whether certain surveys could be consolidated to improve participation.

### **Campus Reports**

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

Dr. Savarese turned to the presentation on Periodic Post-Tenure Performance Review ("PPPR"). He indicated that Section I of UT Board Policy BT0006, "Policies Governing Academic Freedom, Responsibility, and Tenure," outlines procedures for the evaluation of tenured faculty, which included: (i) the Annual Performance and Planning Review

("APPR"); and (ii) the Enhanced Post-Tenure Performance Review ("EPPR"), which is used if a faculty member receives an "unsatisfactory" or "needs improvement" ranking. The policy was revised in March 2018 to include PPPR, which is a comprehensive peer review of faculty members that is to take place every six years. Faculty members may request an exemption from participating in PPPR for reasons that include retirement, administrative appointments, or leaves of absence. The first cycle of PPPR reviews was completed during the Academic Year 2019-20. However, during the pandemic, with the support of the Board, the PPPR process was paused. The PPPR process was reinstated during AY 2021-22. Dr. Savarese briefly reviewed the results of the 2021-22 PPPR report (Tab 2.1).

Dr. Andy Puckett provided a few observations from a faculty perspective, noting that while University faculty recognizes that review processes are designed to incentivize excellence, concerns have been expressed about PPPR, including: (i) if PPPR is meant to enhance the APPR, consideration should be given to revamping the APPR; (ii) PPPR adds additional work to the faculty portfolio; and (iii) faculty serving on a review committee may be hesitant to provide a negative assessment if it would conflict with the assessment of the department chair.

The Committee members discussed the costs associated with PPPR, as well as the history of the process. Dr. Linda Martin, who has served as Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Success prior to being appointed as Interim Chancellor of UTS, stated that, when the decision was made to implement PPPR, it was more common among large flagship institutions. She noted that some institutions have eliminated PPPR after demonstrating that the annual evaluation process improved. Based on the discussion, it was acknowledged that more information was necessary to continue to assess the cost/benefits of PPPR, as well as the peer landscape.

#### Annual Report on Intercollegiate Athletics

Committee Chair Woodson noted that pursuant to Board Policy BT0015, any UT campus with an intercollegiate athletics program is to submit a written report to the Committee each fall. She directed the Committee's attention to the report in the meeting materials (Tab 2.2), as well as the individual campus reports contained in the appendix to the meeting materials. Committee Chair Woodson asked Dr. Savarese to provide a summary of the information found in those documents.

Dr. Savarese began his presentation by noting that UTK, UTM, and UTC are members of the National Collegiate Athletics Association ("NCAA"). However, UTS is a member of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics ("NAIA"). UT campuses are to report on a number of items relating to athletics, including, but not limited to: (i) the role of athletics on campus; (ii) faculty athletics representatives; (iii) how success is measured; (iv) academic progress rate ("APR"); (v) graduation success rate ("GSR"); (vi) grade point averages ("GPA"); (vii) admissions; and (viii) student athlete majors. Dr. Savarese briefly summarized key points of the reports provided by the UT campuses.

## **Peer and Aspirational Peer Institutions**

Dr. Jorge Pérez, Associate Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness, discussed the list of Proposed Peer and Aspirational Peer Institutions. Dr. Pérez explained that the UT System gauges its progress and that of its campuses on key performance indicators relative to peer systems and institutions. The University is currently using a set of comparable and aspirational peer institutions that was approved by the Board in 2017. Dr. Pérez described the detailed process and analysis used to review and update the lists, as further described in the meeting materials. Dr. Pérez answered a number of questions regarding the factors considered in and process used to identify the comparable and aspirational peer institutions.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Committee approved a recommendation that the Board of Trustees adopt the Resolution approving the proposed Peer and Aspirational Peer Institutions for the UT System and its campuses (as presented in Tab 3).

## **New Academic Unit: School of Natural Resources, UTIA**

Dr. Carrie Castille, Senior Vice Chancellor/Senior Vice President for the UT Institute of Agriculture (“UTIA”), presented an overview of the proposal to elevate the existing Department of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries in order to establish the School of Natural Resources. Dr. Castille observed that natural resources are a fundamental component of Tennessee's economy, culture, and quality of life. Establishing the School of Natural Resources will play an important role in advancing the science and sustainable management of the State's natural resources, while also making the University's program more competitive with natural resource programs in the region and the country. Creating the School will also serve to enhance program visibility, provide opportunities for further expansion, and increase enrollment. The establishment of the School is supported by a number of entities, including the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, the Tennessee Forestry Association, the Tennessee Wildlife Federation, and the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agencies.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Committee approved a recommendation that the Board of Trustees adopt the Resolution approving the establishment of the proposed School of Natural Resources, UTIA (as presented in Tab 4).

## **New Academic Programs**

### *Bachelor of Applied Science in Information Technology Cybersecurity, UTC*

Dr. Jerold Hale, Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs at UTC, presented an overview of the proposed Bachelor of Applied Science in Information Technology Cybersecurity program. Dr. Hale advised the Committee that the program will provide an innovative interdisciplinary education in information technology aimed at transfer students and working professionals, who have completed programs at other institutions. The

program will provide students with intensive experiential learning opportunities, as well as field experience. Moreover, the structure of the program will allow students to finish their coursework in a year so that they can quickly move into the workforce. He reviewed the number of credit hours, the proposed timeline for implementation, the projected enrollment, the resources needed, and the accreditation process for the program. In addition, Dr. Hale 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 Bachelor of Applied Science in Information Technology Cybersecurity program at UTC (as presented in Tab 5.1).

*Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a Major in International Business, UTK*

Dr. John Zomchick, Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor at UTK, presented an overview of the proposed Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a major in International Business at UTK's Haslam College of Business ("HCB"). Dr. Zomchick advised the Committee that HCB has seen a consistent increase in the number of students pursuing international business content, participating in study abroad courses, and studying foreign languages. If approved, this new major will accompany a second major within HCB and equip students with skills that will enhance their effectiveness as business professionals and advance UTK into the ranks of an elite set of institutions that prioritize international business education. He 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. He also discussed the intended purpose and outcomes of the program.

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 Business Administration with a major in International Business program at UTK (as presented in Tab 5.2).

**Grant of Tenure Upon Initial Appointment**

President Randy Boyd stated that he and Chancellor Plowman are recommending that tenure be granted to nine faculty members upon initial appointment (a detailed list of the recommended individuals was set forth in the meeting materials). 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 they have received strong support at each level of review.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Committee approved a recommendation that the Board of Trustees adopt the Resolution approving the grants of tenure upon initial appointment (as presented in Tab 6).

## **Granting of Honorary Degree, UTK**

President Boyd stated that Chancellor Plowman has recommended that William “Bill” Haslam be granted an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree within the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences at UTK. Bill Haslam served for two terms as Mayor of the City of Knoxville (2003-2011) and two terms as Governor of the State of Tennessee (2011-2019). President Boyd and Committee Chair Woodson both praised former Governor Haslam as a passionate advocate for education at all levels, particularly for post-secondary education.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Committee approved a recommendation that the Board of Trustees adopt the Resolution approving the granting of an Honorary Doctor of Human Letters degree from the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences at UTK to William “Bill” Haslam (as presented in Tab 7).

## **Consent Agenda**

Committee Chair Woodson 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).

## **Other Business and Adjournment**

With no further business to come before the Committee, the 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 Meeting (June 24, 2022)
- Comprehensive List of Academic Programs
- Ratification of Administrative Action to Terminate or Inactivate Academic Programs

## Information Items

- Certification of Degrees Conferred
- 2022 Tenure and Promotions