



THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MINUTES OF THE EDUCATION, RESEARCH, AND SERVICE COMMITTEE October 13, 2023

The Education, Research, and Service Committee of The University of Tennessee Board of Trustees met at 1:00 p.m. (ET) on Friday, October 13, 2023. The meeting was held in the Pilot Company Ballroom of the Student Union located at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, in Knoxville, Tennessee.

Committee Members Present: John C. Compton, Board Chair; Charles Hatcher, Commissioner, Tennessee Department of Agriculture; Shanea A. McKinney; Donald J. Smith; Sean Walker (Faculty Representative); Woodi H. Woodland (Student Representative).

Other in Attendance:

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

University Administration: President Randy Boyd; Bernard Savarese, Acting Vice President for Academic Affairs, Research, and Student Success; Cynthia C. Moore, Board Secretary and Special Counsel; Chancellor Steve Angle (UT Chattanooga); Chancellor Peter Buckley (UT Health Science Center); Chancellor Yancy E. Freeman (UT Martin); Interim Chancellor Linda C. 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.

Opening Remarks of the Committee Chair

Board Chair John C. Compton opened the meeting by announcing that he would be chairing the meeting as Committee Chair Jamie R. Woodson was unable to attend. Board Chair Compton welcomed those in attendance to the meeting, including new Committee members Dr. Sean Walker, Professor and Chair of the Department of Management, Marketing, and Information Systems in the College of Business and Global Affairs at UT Martin, and Woodi H. Woodland, a fourth year medical student at the UT Health Science Center.

Consent Agenda

Board Chair Compton 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).

President's Enrollment Update

President Randy Boyd began his remarks by discussing the University's role as a land grant university and its mission to ensure that its campuses are accessible and affordable for all Tennesseans. The University has established several programs to fulfill that commitment, including:

- UT Promise. In September, the University announced that the qualifying adjusted gross family income for UT Promise recipients would be extended from \$60,000 to \$75,000. In addition to the adjustment to the gross family income level, the UT Promise will also guarantee a \$500 award per semester for qualifying students to be used for items such as books. With these changes, close to 67% of all Tennessean families, from a financial standpoint, will be eligible to apply for the UT Promise so that their student can attend any UT campus free of tuition and fees. President Boyd is continuing his efforts to publicize the availability of the UT Promise and recently completed his second tour of the State visiting 15 high schools and meeting with four editorial boards.
- Guaranteed Early Admissions Policy. Recently, the Board of Trustees approved a new Guaranteed Early Admissions Policy. Under the new policy, all UT undergraduate campuses will guarantee admission to Tennessee high school students who: (i) finish in the top 10% of their high school's graduating class; or (ii) achieve a 4.0 or higher cumulative grade point average (GPA). The UT campuses in Chattanooga, Martin, and Pulaski (UT Southern) will extend this offer of guaranteed early admission to students who achieve a 3.2 or higher cumulative GPA and have an ACT composite score of 23 or higher (or an SAT score of 1130-1150 or higher). This new policy is expected to expand the University's ability to attract more students from across the state.
- UT Access Collaborative. The University is also working to enhance the "Vol Access Network," a pilot program that was designed to expand and streamline admission options to other UT campuses for prospective first-year undergraduate students who were not admitted to UT Knoxville for Fall 2023. The program will now be known as the "UT Access Collaborative." The UT Access Collaborative will build on the pilot program to make it easier for students who are not admitted to their first-choice UT campus to be admitted to another UT campus.
- Common Application. The Common Application streamlines the application process and allows high school students to apply to multiple colleges and universities. This online form used by over 1,000 colleges and universities across the nation, including UT Knoxville. The University is working to add UT Chattanooga, UT Martin, and UT Southern to the list of institutions that participate in the Common Application.

President Boyd concluded his presentation by discussing the enrollment analysis project being undertaken by the senior leadership team with the assistance of the Huron Consulting Group.

Presentations

Student Success Outcomes: Degrees Awarded, Debt, and First Destinations. Dr. Bernard Savarese, Acting Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Success, began his presentation by announcing that, across the UT System, the total number of degrees awarded is up (rising 10.1% over the last five years); total enrollment is up by almost 5% over the prior year (with more than 58,700 students attending UT institutions); and average student debt of bachelor's recipient borrowers is down by 4.4%, with 48% of graduates completing their studies with no debt.

Dr. Savarese provided an overview of degrees awarded, student debt, and graduate outcomes, as further described in the meeting materials (Tab 2.1). He noted several trends that carry across most of the System's campuses, including: (i) an increase in the number of first-generation students completing their degrees; (ii) a decline in the number of adult learners earning degrees; and (iii) an increase in the number of students who graduate with no debt, which extends across all racial and ethnic categories. Dr. Savarese pointed out that nationally, the college-going rate for women is higher, particularly in the State of Tennessee. That trend is reflected in the increase in the number of women earning degrees at UT Chattanooga, UT Knoxville, and UT Martin. He noted that the undergraduate population at the UT Health Science Center is somewhat smaller than that of the other campuses, which is reflected in the reporting for that campus.

In discussing the data for UT Southern, Dr. Savarese explained that the five-year trends, include information collected prior to the System's 2021 acquisition of Martin Methodist College. Since joining the UT System there have been a number of changes at UT Southern, including a reduction in the cost of tuition. Dr. Savarese pointed out that the smaller size of the student population causes percentage changes to look more dramatic. He predicted as enrollment rises at UT Southern, the metrics for that campus will improve dramatically.

Responding to questions from Committee members and Trustees, Dr. Savarese provided the following information:

- The increase in graduation rates for first-generation college-going students may be attributed to the proactive, targeted services the System's schools provide to those students.
- The University is hopeful that the upcoming launch of a new online education initiative will have a positive impact on the number of adult learners and other non-traditional students seeking to earn a college degree.

Board Chair Compton requested that future reporting on degrees awarded include benchmarking against peer groups. Committee member Shanea McKinney asked if it would be possible to provide additional information on the percentage of Tennessee residents that do graduate with debt.

UT Research Update. Dr. Savarese stated that on a daily basis hundreds of members of the University community – faculty, students, and support personnel – are working on research and considering how to transform ideas into practical applications that will impact and improve lives. He noted that industry and community partners are critical to the University’s research endeavors, particularly in moving innovation from the laboratory/classroom to the marketplace. Highlights from the update included the following topics.

- **UT Research Enterprise** (Tab 2.2.1). Systemwide, total research expenditures increased 3.5% in the last year and 27.7% in the last five years. He reminded the Trustees that research endeavors of UT Knoxville and the UT Institute of Agriculture are combined and are among the primary drivers of the growth the University has experienced, followed by the UT Health Science Center. Both UT Chattanooga and UT Martin have research programs as well. Looking at total research expenditures allows the University to compare its programs with those of its peers. The University reports and compares its research expenditures through the National Science Foundation’s (NSF) Higher Education Research and Development Survey (HERD). Dr. Savarese noted that there is a one-year lag in reporting so that the HERD results represent information provided for Fiscal Year 2021. Even so, HERD still provides information that allows for comparison and ranking. Using the HERD data, UT Knoxville ranked 57th in the nation in terms of total research expenditures, the UT Health Science Center ranked 116th, and UT Chattanooga ranked 244th. Dr. Savarese noted that if UT Knoxville were compared to other research institutions without a medical school, it would rank in the top 15 in terms of federal research funding.

In terms of dollar figures, this past year saw research expenditures at UT Knoxville exceed \$400 million. Dr. Savarese pointed out that federal research expenditures are a subset of total expenditures and allows the University to determine how it competes against other research universities in terms of funding received from the NSF, the National Institutes of Health, the U.S. Department of Energy, and the U.S. Department of Defense. Over the past year, the University has seen federal research expenditures grow by 9.7%, and when looking at the past five years, those dollars have increased by 16.3%. Dr. Savarese predicted that those funds will continue to grow over the coming years.

Dr. Savarese pointed out that there was a slight drop in terms of the number of research funding proposals submitted, which can be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, while the number of proposals may have decreased, the dollar amounts of those proposals increased, with UT Knoxville topping \$1 billion in proposals submitted, followed by \$700 million for the UT Health Science Center. Dr. Savarese noted that the implementation of the Huron Research Suite will help to further advance the University’s research endeavors by introducing efficiencies for researchers and those who work to support the University’s research enterprise. The Huron Research Suite has multiple modules spanning the entire research enterprise. The first two modules that will be introduced will be conflict of interest effort certification.*

* Effort certification is the federally mandated process by which the government and other sponsors verify that salaries charged to a project reasonably reflect effort spent on that project during the reporting time frame.

Dr. Savarese concluded his presentation by reviewing highlights of the University's research endeavors across the UT System

Board Chair Compton inquired as to whether there are additional steps that could be taken to allow the University to grow its research enterprise in a more dramatic fashion. Dr. Savarese explained that federal research funding is moving toward a focus on awards that focus on multidisciplinary, cross-institutional collaborative research. Campus Chancellors shared additional information as to recent steps taken to help position their institutions to better compete for those awards.

- **UT Research Foundation** (Tab 2.2.2). Dr. Maha Krishnamurthy, President of the UT Research Foundation (UTRF), began her presentation by discussing the history and mission of the UTRF. Dr. Krishnamurthy also discussed the organizational structure of the UTRF and reviewed its operating agreement with the University.

Over the last five years, the UTRF has filed 574 patent disclosures, with 160 patents issued during that same period. Dr. Krishnamurthy noted that 50% of the UTRF patent portfolio has been licensed, which indicates that the UTRF is moving University-developed innovations into the marketplace. Dr. Krishnamurthy noted that 15% of UTRF's portfolio is jointly managed with the Oak Ridge National Laboratory through UT-Batelle. The University is also seeing the number of startup licenses grow as more University seek to commercialize and spinout their innovations into companies.

Dr. Krishnamurthy expressed her gratitude to President Boyd for the \$5 million the UT System provided to establish the Accelerate Fund. This initiative will provide much needed seed capital (ranging from \$20,000 to \$150,000) to UT's innovators and provide them with the resources needed to transform their ideas into companies through early mentorship and guidance for commercialization. In return, the UTRF will hold a minority interest in the innovation or startup company, with any returns being invested back into the Accelerate Fund. UTRF has also created the Venture Launch Program to educate University students on how to take innovation from the laboratory into the marketplace.

Responding to a question raised by Board Chair Compton, Dr. Krishnamurthy noted that it can take several years for the University to receive royalties from the time a product is developed until it is licensed and brought to market.

UT/Huron Enrollment Analysis Progress Update: As discussed at the June 2023 Committee meeting, the University is in the process of conducting an enrollment analysis project with assistance from the Huron Consulting Group (Huron). Joining the meeting to provide an update on the project were Steven Hahn, Senior Director of Education Strategy at Huron, and Breanne Simkin, Consulting Manager for Higher Education at Huron. Both Drs. Hahn and Simkin have extensive experience in higher education and enrollment management. A copy of their presentation was included in the meeting materials (Tab 2.3). Highlights from the presentation included the following topics.

- **Enrollment Trends.** Using a map created by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, Dr. Simkin observed that the total high school student population will drop by over 5% over the next decade. However, while other states will experience declines in the number of college-aged students, the State of Tennessee will see its high school student population remain stable and possibly grow by 12% over the next decade, which could add 52,000 additional college-going students. However, states experiencing a decline in the college-age population (e.g., South Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi, and Kentucky) are also states with which the UT System competes for students.

Dr. Simkin looked at the distribution of students from counties surrounding University campuses, noting that some counties are expected to see the population of college-age students grow, while others will not. Another variable is whether those students will decide to attend college as there has been a decline in the state's college-going rate. She observed that information provided by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) shows that over the four-year period from 2018 to 2022, the number of students choosing to attend college dropped, except for Knox County, which held steady with approximately 64% of eligible students choosing to enroll in higher education. Dr. Simkin stated that even if the population of college-aged students increases, if the college-going rates continue to decline, the University may face recruitment challenges.

Dr. Simkin explained that for the four-year period from 2018 to 2022, the University increased its in-state enrollment market share by 2.1%. The next step will be to determine why that shift occurred in order to use data attributes (such as academic profile and academic ability) to predict what type of student chooses to enroll at a UT institution as compared to another in-state school. In looking at ACT scores and enrollment for the period 2021-2022, UT System grew its market share of high achieving students (29+ ACT) by 5%. Dr. Simkin stated that additional study is needed to gain a better understanding of the role brand recognition and academic quality have on how students compare the institutions within the UT System and to other educational institutions.

- **Feeder Markets.** Feeder markets are defined as the geographic areas that supply the largest numbers of students to the System schools. Other factors in identifying feeder markets include average household income and population of college-aged students. Dr. Simkin provided an overview of the top feeder markets for all of the University's undergraduate campuses. During her presentation, she noted that out-of-state feeder markets often reflect the composition and demographics of a UT campus and its home community.
- **Workforce Needs.** A recent report* identified several workforce priorities, including, but not limited to: science, technology, engineering, and math; logistics; agriculture; and the health sciences. Dr. Simkin noted that Huron will be analyzing current enrollment trends, both at UT and other institutions, and determining if enrollments/graduations are

* *Improving the Pipeline for Tennessee's Workforce: Academic Supply for Occupational Demand Report 2023, a joint report prepared by THEC, the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development, and the Tennessee Department of Education.*

meeting the State's workforce needs. She noted that the UT System is well-situated to build upon its existing strengths to strategically align its programs with the state's workforce needs.

- **Competition.** The UT System's institutions not only compete for students with other institutions, but also with each other. Dr. Simkin provided an overview of UT institution admissions, with cross applications. The next steps are to determine why a student elected not to attend a UT institution and whether that decision was based on cost, academic profile, or program offerings.

Dr. Simkin stated that Huron is working to determine if the net cost of tuition (after financial aid) can be used to predict the likelihood of a student enrolling. She noted that Huron is also working to determine how the University's campuses compare to and/or differ from other institutions so that information can be factored into strategic enrollment plans. She concluded her presentation by discussing next steps, which include: (i) developing points of distinction for each campus; (ii) identifying how each campus provides the UT System with the opportunity to provide access to Tennesseans; (iii) how to raise the profile of the importance of higher education; and (iv) how the UT System can contribute to support workforce and economic development in the State. Following the presentation, the Trustees raised a number of questions and recommendations, including:

- How does residency status factor into a student's decision to attend an out-of-state campus?
- For the Fall of 2022, 650 applicants to both UT Knoxville and the University of South Carolina (USC) elected to attend USC. Were these students residents of South Carolina or Tennessee?
- Is it possible to further breakdown the competitor list to show residency status, as well as the numbers of students who elected to go to another institution, and the number that ultimately enrolled at the University?
- Consider preparing a future report that focuses on the GPA and ACT scores for UT institution graduates.

As discussion continued, President Boyd noted that there is a great deal of effort being devoted to increasing the college-going rate, with THEC developing a number of initiatives.

Other Business and Adjournment

With no further business to come before the Committee, Board Chair Compton 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 (June 29, 2023 and September 8, 2023)
- Ratification of Administrative Action to Terminate or Inactivate Academic Programs
- Proposed New Academic Units and Unit Modifications
 - Department of Performing Arts, UTC
 - Department of Engineering Management and Technology, UTC
 - Department of Data Analytics, UTC
- Proposed Academic Program Modifications
 - CIP Code Change for Ph.D. in Plant, Soil, and Environmental Sciences, UTK
 - CIP Code Change for Master of Architecture, UTK
 - CIP Code Change for Bachelor of Architecture, UTK
- Grant of Tenure upon Initial Appointment

Information Items

- Annual Report on Intercollegiate Athletics
- Report on Periodic, Enhanced, and Annual Post-Tenure Performance Review
- Certification of Degrees Conferred
- 2023 Tenure and Promotion

Appendix - Supplemental Materials

- Proposed New Academic Units and Unit Modifications:
 - Department of Performing Arts, UTC
 - Department of Engineering Management and Technology, UTC
 - Department of Data Analytics, UTC
- Proposed Academic Program Modifications:
 - CIP Code Change for Ph.D. in Plant, Soil, and Environmental Sciences, UTK
 - CIP Code Change for Master of Architecture, UTK
 - CIP Code Change for Bachelor of Architecture, UTK
- Campus Intercollegiate Athletics Reports
- Degrees Awarded, Student Debt & Graduate Outcomes Report

Attachments

Copies of the following materials were shown or distributed at the meeting and are filed with the official minutes of this meeting.

- PowerPoint Presentation: President's Enrollment Update