



THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MINUTES OF THE EDUCATION, RESEARCH, AND SERVICE COMMITTEE February 29, 2024

The Education, Research, and Service Committee of The University of Tennessee Board of Trustees met at 2:00 p.m. (CT) on Thursday, February 29, 2024. The meeting was held in the Warren-Wilson Hall Room in Martin Hall, located at the University of Tennessee Southern, in Pulaski, Tennessee.

Committee Members Present: Jamie R. Woodson, Committee Chair; John C. Compton, Board Chair; Shanea A. McKinney; Donald J. Smith; Sean Walker (Faculty Representative); and Woodi H. Woodland (Student Trustee).

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, 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 Freeman (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.

Opening Remarks of the Committee Chair

Committee Chair Jamie Woodson welcomed everyone to the meeting. She offered her congratulations to Dr. Bernard Savarese on being recently named Vice President for Academic Affairs, Research, and Student Success for the UT System, having served in that position on an interim basis since July 2022.

Presentations

Tennessee Public High School Graduate Trends. Dr. Savarese began his presentation by advising the Committee members that for the first time in several years, the State of Tennessee experienced a slight increase in the number of high school graduates (up 1.4% from 2021 to 2022). During that same period, the number of college-going high school graduates rose by 1.5%. The University is projecting this trend will continue when the data for 2023 is analyzed. It is important to note that even when the number of college-going high school graduates declined, the number of students who chose to enroll at the University increased by 7% over the period from 2018 to 2022.

Dr. Savarese shared information regarding the number of college-going high school graduates enrolling at the University and those choosing to enroll at one of Tennessee's six locally governed institutions (LGI).¹ From 2018 to 2022, there was a 4.5% increase in the number of Tennessee high school graduates choosing to attend a four-year institution in Tennessee. However, the number of Tennessee students choosing to attend an out-of-state institution also increased, resulting in a 2% decrease in the number of students attending in-state schools

Looking at demographics, Dr. Savarese discussed trends in the racial and gender diversity of high school graduates, college-going high school graduates, and students choosing to enroll at the University for that same five-year period (2018-2022). For additional information, see Tab 1.1 of the meeting materials. Dr. Savarese responded to questions raised by members of the Committee pertaining to market share changes between the UT System and the LGI's, along with questions associated with where Tennessee graduates are choosing to enroll outside of the state of Tennessee.

Campus Admit, Yield, and Retention Rates. Dr. Savarese began his presentation by defining: (i) Admit Rate – the percentage of applicants admitted to the University; (ii) Yield Rate – the percentage of admitted applicants who enroll at the University; and (iii) Retention Rate – the percentage of University's first-time, full-time students returning for their second year. Dr. Savarese reviewed key metrics for four of the UT System's undergraduate campuses for the five-year period from 2019 through 2023 (for additional information, see Tab 1.2 of the meeting materials). He noted that applications for admission increased at all campuses, as did first-year retention rates.

Responding to questions from the Committee members, Dr. Savarese, UT Knoxville Chancellor Donde Plowman, and President Randy Boyd provided the following additional information:

- The Access Collaborative provides an avenue for applicants to be admitted to other UT campuses if they are not admitted to UT Knoxville.
- UT Knoxville continuously updates the admissions website so that applicants are aware of the percentage of applicants accepted and the academic profiles of successful applicants.
- The Common Application (Common App) has had a dramatic impact on the college applications process. High school students who may have applied to three to five institutions of higher education in the past are using the Common App to apply to, on average, to eight to ten colleges/universities.
- The admit rate for in-state students is higher (63.3%) than that of out-of-state students (40%).

Committee Chair Woodson offered her congratulations to the Chancellors, admissions, officials, faculty, and staff for their combined efforts to increase first-year retention rates.

UT System Enrollment Analysis and Planning: Update and Next Steps. For the past year, the University has been conducting an extensive enrollment analysis project with the assistance of the Huron Consulting Group. President Boyd and the University Chancellors developed an enrollment planning Vision Statement, which Dr. Savarese shared with the Committee members (included in

¹ The six LGI's are: Austin Peay State University, East Tennessee State University, Middle Tennessee State University, Tennessee State University, Tennessee Tech University, and the University of Memphis.

the meeting materials under Tab 1.3). Responding to questions from Trustees, Dr. Savarese explained that the Vision Statement was drafted to underscore the University's role as a land grant university. President Boyd stated that Vision Statement's reference to "prioritize serving Tennesseans" should not be taken as a guarantee to admit all applicants, but as a commitment to ensure that the application process is done in a fair manner. Chancellor Plowman explained that "prioritizing" is intended to capture the steps the UT System will take to reduce the number of high achieving Tennesseans leaving the state to attend out-of-state institutions. Several members of the Board expressed the need to better articulate what "prioritizing" means in terms of practical application to the admissions process.

Dr. Savarese noted that Tennessee is currently experiencing an increase in the number of high school graduates, which increases the level of competition with other higher education institutions, particularly those in neighboring states which are experiencing a decline in that same population. He observed that during the year-long analysis, the University learned that growing enrollment would require cross-campus collaboration, improved coordination, and a focus on the unique strengths of each of the individual campuses. The University must also work to educate Tennesseans about the University's ability to provide students with a range of choices in terms of campus settings and academic offerings.

Dr. Savarese discussed the University's future efforts to grow enrollment and updated the Committee on three components of the University's ongoing enrollment planning efforts:

- Common Application. As discussed earlier in the meeting, the Common App allows high school students to easily apply to more than 1,000 colleges/universities across the nation, including UT Knoxville. The University intends to have all its undergraduate campuses participate in the Common App in time for the next application cycle.
- One UT Access Collaborative. Introduced last year as the "Vol Access Collaborative," the program provides students who are not admitted to UT Knoxville with a pathway to enroll at one of the University's other undergraduate campuses. In its first year, the Collaborative saw 130 students choose to enroll at UT Chattanooga. It is hoped that as more applicants become aware of the program, many will choose to enroll at UT Chattanooga, UT Martin, or UT Southern.
- Guaranteed Admissions Policy and UT Promise Enhancements. Both programs underscore the University's commitment to access and affordability. This summer will be the first opportunity for the University to analyze the impact of the Guaranteed Admissions Policy and the expansion of the UT Promise scholarship program.

Dr. Savarese advised that the University will be moving forward with: (i) establishing the One UT Strategic Enrollment Council; (ii) engaging with a firm to assist in developing the systemwide strategic enrollment framework, which will be shared with the Board at the 2024 Annual Meeting; and (iii) beginning work on individual campus enrollment strategies. It is hoped that the plans would be developed and ready for implementation for the Fall 2026 admissions cycle.

Tennessee Grow Your Own (GYO) Update. Dr. Erin Crisp, Executive Director of UT's Tennessee Grow Your Own Center (the "Center"), began her presentation by briefly discussing the mission of the

Center and the work it has done since it was established in March 2020. Since that time, the Center has worked to target the shortage of teachers in the State through a registered teacher apprenticeship program that equips school districts with a workforce development strategy. Dr. Crisp reviewed the progress the Center has made over the past year, including:

- Increasing school district participation in the teacher apprenticeship program by 114% (73 school districts);
- Reaching a 91% retention rate in terms of apprentices who continue participating and/or have completed the program; and
- Establishing partnerships with 11 colleges/universities to serve as Educator Preparation Providers (EPP).

Dr. Crisp stated that Tennessee now leads the nation in terms of the number of individuals participating in teacher education apprenticeship programs. Dr. Crisp provided an overview of the Center's recent accomplishments:

- Publishing the "Hallmarks of High-Quality Teacher Apprenticeship," which assists EPP's in submitting proposals for GYO scholarships so that their students can participate in the program with no tuition fees;
- Working with school districts to see GYO as a workforce development tool;
- Securing a \$1.8 million grant from the Ascendium Education Group to develop: (a) *Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program of Study*, which is an online curriculum that will be freely available to all approved EPP's in the state; and (b) establishing the *Institute for Competency-based Teacher Education* to support 16 faculty fellows in developing and maintaining the online curriculum; and
- President Boyd added that last year, the State of Tennessee awarded \$5.1 million in recurring funds to support the Center.

Dr. Crisp concluded her presentation by stating that: (i) the success of the GYO program underscores the facts that working learners are assets and not burdens to Tennessee's colleges/universities; (ii) that teacher apprenticeships are not a shortcut to licensure, but a high quality, accessible pathway that requires all the same competencies as any other pathway to licensure; and (iii) the Center is prepared to customize workforce development strategies tailored to fit the needs of every school district in Tennessee.

Fall 2023 Student Experience Survey Results. Dr. Savarese presented the results of the Fall 2023 Student Experience Survey. He indicated that it was the sixth time the survey was conducted since it was introduced in the Fall of 2020. Initially, the Survey was done twice a year, but it is now conducted annually in the fall. Undergraduate students make up 83% of the respondents, and the University intends to work on increasing participation by its graduate student population. The Survey is comprised of five questions that are designed to measure the student experience and sense of belonging. The University saw the metrics rise for four of the five questions (as detailed in Tab 1. the meeting materials). Dr. Savarese noted that since the Survey was introduced, the University has seen growth in participation and positive feedback from its students. Dr. Savarese

concluded his remarks by stating that the Survey is a powerful tool that has allowed the University's campuses to implement changes that benefit students.

Proposed Changes to the UTK Faculty Handbook

Dr. Savarese briefly reviewed the proposed revisions to the UT Knoxville Faculty Handbook. The revisions were reviewed by Dr. Savarese and the Office of General Counsel and are recommended by the UT Knoxville Faculty Senate, UT Knoxville administrators (including Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor John Zomchick), UT Knoxville Chancellor Plowman, and President Boyd. Dr. Savarese explained that the revisions are intended to: (i) address unique situations in which a faculty member's length of probation may be interrupted; and (ii) to align the handbook provisions with current Board policy.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Committee approved a recommendation that the Board of Trustees adopt the Resolution approving revisions to the UTK Faculty Handbook (as presented in Tab 2).

Proposed New Academic Programs

Dr. Zomchick explained that the proposed new academic programs are student focused, address the workforce needs of the state, and will assist in increasing UT Knoxville's retention and graduation rates. The first three programs will be housed in the new College of Emerging and Collaborative Studies (CECS), while the fourth program will be housed in the Tickle College of Engineering's Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering. Dr. Zomchick provided brief overviews of the four proposed new academic programs, including reviewing the number of credit hours, proposed time periods for implementation, the projected enrollments.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Committee approved a recommendation that the Board of Trustees adopt the Resolution establishing the three new academic programs in CECS (as presented in Tabs 3.1-3.3).

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Committee approved a recommendation that the Board of Trustees adopt the Resolution establishing the new academic program in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Tickle College of Engineering (as presented in Tab 3.4).

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, Committee Chair Woodson 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 (October 13, 2023 and January 26, 2024)
- Proposed Academic Program Modification, Doctor of Engineering in Industrial Engineering, UTK
- Proposed New Academic Units
 - Department of Applied Leadership and Learning, UTC
 - Department of Biomedical Engineering, UTK
 - Department of Applied Engineering and Technology, UTK
- Proposed New Off-Campus Centers
 - Springfield Center, UTM
 - Off-Campus Centers for College of Pharmacy: Knoxville and Nashville Centers
- Grant of Tenure upon Initial Appointment

Information Items

- Certification of Degrees Conferred

Appendix – Supplemental Materials

- Proposed New Academic Programs:
 - Bachelor of Science in Data Science, UTK
 - Bachelor of Science in Applied Artificial Intelligence, UTK
 - Bachelor of Science in Innovative Transdisciplinary Studies, UTK
 - Bachelor of Science in Environmental Engineering, UTK
- Proposed Academic Program Modification, Doctor of Engineering in Industrial Engineering, UTK
- Proposed New Academic Units:
 - Department of Applied Leadership and Learning, UTC
 - Department of Biomedical Engineering, UTK
 - Department of Applied Engineering and Technology, UTK
- Proposed New Off-campus Centers:
 - Springfield Center, UTM
 - PharmD-Knoxville, UTHSC
 - PharmD-Nashville, UTHSC