

EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
ACADEMIC, RESEARCH AND STUDENT SUCCESS COMMITTEE

MINUTES

February 19, 2021
Johnson City, Tennessee

The East Tennessee State University Board of Trustees' Academic, Research and Student Success Committee met at 9:40 a.m. on Friday, February 19, 2021, at the Martin Center for the Arts on State of Franklin Road in Johnson City. Due to the extraordinary circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, only board members and staff attended in person; public attendance to the meeting was available via livestream.

I. Call to Order

Dr. Linda Latimer, chair of the Academic, Research and Student Success Committee, called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m.

II. Roll Call

Board Secretary Adam Green led the roll call. Committee members present were:

Trustee Janet Ayers
Trustee Virginia Foley
Board Chairman Scott Niswonger
Trustee Melissa Steagall-Jones
Chair Latimer

Dr. Green stated there was a quorum; however, in accordance with Tennessee Code § 8-44-108 Section (c)(3), he needed to present a series of questions to the committee members, and that due to some trustees participating remotely, all votes must be taken by roll call. In response to these questions, Trustee Ayers indicated that she could hear clearly and that no one was present in the room with her; likewise, all trustees present in person indicated they were able to hear Trustee Ayers. Dr. Green also noted for the record that Trustees Dorothy Grisham and Steven DeCarlo were participating remotely and that Trustees Ron Ramsey and Kelly Wolfe were participating in person.

III. Approval of the Committee Minutes from November 13, 2020

Trustee Steagall-Jones moved that the minutes from the November 13, 2020, meeting be approved. The motion was seconded by Trustee Ayers and passed unanimously through a roll call vote.

IV. Approval of the new Academic Program Proposal – Doctorate in Occupational Therapy

Dr. Wilsie Bishop, Senior Vice President for Academics and Interim Provost, presented the New Academic Program Proposal for the Clinical Doctorate in Occupational Therapy, the final step in a series of review protocols necessary for the new program's establishment. The occupational therapy program had previously been approved as a Letter of Notification by the Board of Trustees in April 2019, under the former procedure that required two reviews by the Board, and has been reviewed and approved by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) following public comment. If approved by the Board of Trustees, it will be sent again to THEC for final approval. She noted that under the old procedure, the Board saw a given academic program proposal twice – once as a letter of notification to obtain approval to plan the program and again as a final proposal to go before THEC; the new procedure, which could save three to six months in the review process and bring new programs to students faster, involves a letter of notification that says following Board review, the university may take action and proceed to THEC.

Dr. Don Samples, Dean of the College of Clinical and Rehabilitative Health Sciences (CCRHS), presented the proposal for the Clinical Doctorate Degree in Occupational Therapy (OTD) (*see full program proposal and PowerPoint presentation in meeting materials*). He noted that the college has been working on this process for a little over two years, developing the curriculum and addressing accreditation issues with the goal of having the program operational by summer 2022. He stated the OTD is desirable for ETSU because the occupational therapy profession's mission and goals align appropriately with the university's missions and goals of improving the quality of life of the citizens of this region and the greater Appalachian area. It will add to the diverse academic portfolio in the health sciences at ETSU and broaden the comprehensive nature of the rehabilitative educational offerings within his college. It will have a positive impact on the quality of care delivered to the citizens of the region.

Dr. Samples noted that initial application for accreditation by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) will be submitted this spring. He pointed to high demand both regionally and nationally for occupational therapy practitioners. Job growth is projected to be 31.9 percent regionally due to the aging of the population.

Dr. Samples said the proposed program features an interdisciplinary curriculum that may be completed in eight terms over three academic years. Six full-time faculty will be needed to serve the projected enrollment; space will be available for 30 students per

cohort (24 in the inaugural cohort), and the program is expected to operate at a full capacity of 90 students by year four (2025-2026). ETSU would be the first public institution within more than 200 miles to offer an OTD program in Tennessee, and the only one to offer the degree with other established graduate rehabilitation programs within the same college (currently Physical Therapy, Speech-Language Pathology, and Social Work, with Orthotics and Prosthetics now in development) and within a broader university interprofessional education program.

Dr. Samples pointed out that the program will be funded through carryover and contingent funding by the CCRHS, and there are currently no grants or gifted funds available for establishment. He said the program is expected to have revenue that exceeds expenditures by the third year. The classroom, laboratory, office and storage space for the program will be located on the first floor of Building 2 on the Quillen Veterans Affairs Medical Center campus, which will also house the proposed Orthotics and Prosthetics program. The Physical Therapy program is housed on the second floor of the same building.

Trustee Foley moved that the committee recommend adoption of the proposal by the Board of Trustees. The motion was seconded by Trustee Steagall-Jones and passed in a roll call vote.

V. Approval of Letter of Notification – M.S. in Applied Data Science

Dr. Bishop presented the Letter of Notification for a new Master of Science in Applied Data Science following its approval internally by the Academic Council, University Council and President Brian Noland. Pending Board of Trustees approval, the item will be sent to THEC, where it will be posted for public comment, undergo review by external academic evaluators, and be submitted for final approval. Unless substantial changes are made in the THEC review process, no additional action will be required by the Board.

Dr. Sharon James McGee, Dean of the College of Graduate and Continuing Studies, presented the details of the new program (*see full program proposal and PowerPoint presentation in meeting materials*). She said data scientists, who organize and analyze data for decision-making in multiple industries, are in high demand, with 11.5 million job openings predicted to be available by 2026. In this region, it can take up to a year to fill a position. Average salaries range from \$95,000-\$102,000. The program will appeal to working students due to its flexibility; it features on-ground and online, full-time and part-time, and thesis and non-thesis options. It will be distinctive because of its applied nature and partnerships with industry. It is interdisciplinary, with the Departments of Mathematics and Statistics and Computing providing the core curriculum; electives will be drawn from such disciplines as geosciences, public health, economics, psychology, anthropology, sport science and more, which will give students a wide breadth of experience. Current interest among students is high, and the 36- to 39-credit-hour

program is expected to start with 12 and ultimately accept 24 new students each year. The program will contribute to revenue growth and supports state and ETSU goals, including enrollment growth, increasing computer science and data analytics offerings, providing partnerships between higher education and industry, and improving the quality of life in the region and beyond.

Following brief discussion regarding the interdisciplinary nature of the program and the efforts made by faculty in planning, a motion was made by Trustee Niswonger and seconded by Trustee Steagall-Jones to recommend adoption by the Board of Trustees a resolution approving the establishment of the Master of Science in Applied Data Science and directing the university to submit the Letter of Notification to THEC and complete all additional steps required by THEC and ETSU for full implementation of the program should THEC support the proposal during its post-external judgment determination. The motion passed unanimously with a roll-call vote.

VI. Academic Action Notification for Period of August 1, 2020, through December 31, 2020

Dr. Bishop presented the Academic Action Notification for the Period of August 1-December 31, 2020 (*see summary and full report in meeting materials*). Dr. Bishop said that while all of the academic actions are taken to improve the strength and variety of academic programs, she wanted to call particular attention to the M.S. in Information Systems, which is developing as a free-standing degree program from an existing concentration within the current M.S. in Computer Science program. She noted the name change of the Clinical Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counseling Studies in the Department of Social Work to Clinical Addiction Counseling Studies, reflecting more current terminology. A new concentration Health Care Marketing is being added to the MBA program, offered in partnership with the Department of Allied Health, in response to feedback from current students, recent graduates and industry leaders. The Accelerated MBA program has added three new popular concentrations: Cybersecurity Management, Business Analytics, and Health Care Marketing.

As this was an information item, no action was required.

VII. Update on Center of Excellence in STEM Education

Dr. Janna Scarborough, Dean of the Clemmer College, provided an update on the Center of Excellence in STEM Education (*see summary and PowerPoint presentation in meeting materials*), which is seeking THEC approval for a name change from the original Center of Excellence in Mathematics and Science Education. This Center was started in 2006 and was one of the first Centers of Excellence of its kind in Tennessee. At that time, the STEM acronym (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) was not in widespread use. Since then, technology, engineering education and computing have been

added to mathematics and science as areas of focus, and the College of Business and Technology has joined the original collaborators – Clemmer College and College of Arts and Sciences – in this venture, which seeks to achieve excellence in STEM education at all levels, from P-16. The name and structure change better reflect the work of the Center in integrated STEM education and new science education standards. Dr. Scarborough shared more of the history of the Center and noted its ongoing projects, including the Governor’s School in Integration of Biological and Statistical Sciences, Eastman MathElites and SciencElites programs, the Northeast Tennessee STEM Hub, and a Mathematical Olympiad for elementary and middle schools. In 2020, the Center stayed current by focusing on virology and COVID-19 data sets. Future endeavors planned by the Center include a Governor’s School in Synthetic Biology starting in 2022, seeking additional major funding from the USDoE and National Science Foundation, a focus on “Epidemiology as a STEM Education Field,” and partnering with the Niswonger Foundation on its \$8 million Department of Education grant by engaging in teacher training in epidemiology and open source computer languages in statistics. The Center also provides professional development for current teachers, helping them keep up with emerging information and skills in the field, while preparing the next generation of educators. Dr. Scarborough said the Center’s desire is to contribute to a comprehensive, coordinated vision of STEM education and economic development.

Chair Latimer said she was excited about the integration and collaboration among colleges exhibited by the Center. President Noland added his thanks to the Center leadership and faculty across campus for the work they have done in this effort, noting that the Board has encouraged the university to pursue important opportunities available to the institution in the space of STEM, and this brings the campus closer to some of the visions and aspirations that have been established by the Board.

VIII. Update on Search for New Senior Vice President of Academics/Provost

Dr. Keith Johnson, Vice President for Equity and Inclusion and Chair of the Search Committee for the new Senior Vice President of Academics/Provost, gave an update on the search process (*see timeline in meeting materials*). He outlined key upcoming dates in the process: On March 9, the Search Committee will receive a recommendation from the search firm of 8-10 of their recommended top candidates; the Committee will recommend 8-10 candidates on March 19; in late March, the Committee will conduct interviews via Zoom with 8-10 candidates, and then narrow the pool down to four to invite for interviews on campus during the first two weeks of April; and upon the conclusion of the interview sequence an offer may be extended to the selected candidate.

Chair Latimer said this is an important step for the university. She said the successful candidate will have big shoes to fill following Dr. Bishop, and said Board members would be excited to meet the finalists.

IX. Update on Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

Dr. Cheri Clavier, Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Accreditation Liaison, provided an overview of the process and timeline that will be followed in the upcoming Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges reaffirmation process (*see summary and PowerPoint presentation in meeting materials*). This process is required every 10 years; the last reaccreditation process occurred in 2013, with some significant visits taking place since that time due to the governance change to the Board of Trustees in 2016 and the fifth-year report in 2018. The three-year process leading up to 2023 began in December 2020 with virtual orientation, which was attended by 37 administrators and staff from ETSU. The next step is compliance certification, which must be completed in September 2022. Dr. Clavier explained that this normally involves the institution responding to all 75 core requirements and standards, but SACS implemented a differentiated review process this year, in which institutions must apply and meet eligibility requirements and be approved to take part. ETSU was approved to be one of the first classes to undergo this differentiated review process and will therefore complete a modified compliance certification in which it responds to fewer standards; by participating in this process for 2023, ETSU will not be eligible to participate it again in the 2033 reaffirmation process. ETSU will document compliance with 40 core requirements and standards instead of all 75, but is expected to maintain compliance with all 75.

An off-site peer review process will take place in November 2022, followed by the submission of a Quality Enhancement Plan in February 2023; this is a five-year initiative designed to improve student learning and/or success, and ETSU is looking to address student equity and student access and success in this QEP, in alignment with THEC Quality Assurance Funding standards. The most public step in the process is the on-site peer review that will take place in April 2023, with a team of evaluators visiting campus and talking with faculty, staff and students, followed by the final decision in December 2023.

President Noland stated that December 2023 seems like an eternity from now, but the activity that must occur between now and then to ensure that the university remains in compliance with SACS is comprehensive. He noted that the last time ETSU went under a SACS review, it was governed by the Tennessee Board of Regents, and the university wished to provide the Board a picture early of the efforts that will be undertaken to ensure continued compliance, which is critical for receipt of federal funding, federal financial aid, and a broad range of other elements.

X. Update and Discussion on Ballard and the Coordinating Council

Dr. David Linville gave an update on the ETSU/Ballard Coordinating Council. He said the Council has not met as a group since the last Board meeting in November, but the sub-

councils in education, research, and clinical services have been working. He said work this year is focused on how to respond as partners in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, which is dictating the issues that must be dealt with. He said ETSU has worked closely with Ballard to ensure maintained academic continuity for learners, so despite the fact that Ballard had significant numbers of patients in the hospital, ETSU's ability to rotate students in clinicals was not limited. Now that vaccines are becoming available, ETSU nursing and pharmacy students will participate with Ballard in providing these to the community. Work continues with the Center for Rural Health Research and Strong BRAIN Institute. Dr. Linville reminded the Committee that the challenge in continuing to grow and develop the relationship between ETSU and Ballard relates to marrying different cultures of health care delivery. He said Board members' help in having conversations with community partners and colleagues is still vital in this developing partnership, through which both institutions will become stronger in terms of their ability to provide health care for the people of the region. Dr. Linville noted that there are other clinical enterprise items that Dr. William Block, Vice President for Clinical Affairs and Dean of medicine, and his team have been working on. He said ETSU has been partnering with Ballard and exploring a clinic for individuals who have long-term problems related to COVID.

XI. Research Corporation Update

President Noland provided an update on efforts to restructure the long-standing Research Foundation into a flexible and innovative Research Corporation. The Research Foundation Board met in December to take action on bylaws revision, structure, board composition, staffing, and vision. Dr. Noland said the bylaws were reconstituted and the membership of the board, from a structural and competency perspective, was outlined. Over the next few months, the new President and CEO of the Research Corporation, Mr. David Golden, will begin working to round out the board to fill the needed competencies and begin to shape a vision to deepen a culture of research at the university.

Mr. Golden said one of the challenges that has occurred since the university's founding in 1911 is the redefinition of a region. At that time, the region was insular and not really affected by things that happened outside the region, and the world moved more slowly. He referred to Board Chairman Niswonger as someone who has done well in learning to fly, and said that the question now is how ETSU continues to fly faster and farther given how fast the world is changing. Mr. Golden said that the Research Corporation can help remove barriers and help faculty run faster in meeting the academic demands of the world, such as enhanced offerings in digital media marketing certification for working adults and the synthetic biology offerings referenced earlier in the meeting.

Mr. Golden said that in addition to STEM education and experiential learning, the Research Corporation will also focus on regional development and entrepreneurship. He said an entrepreneurial student or faculty member could approach the Research

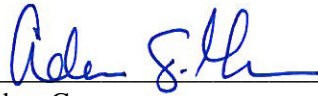
Corporation with a great idea and find assistance in helping that idea take off. He said he is excited about the potential of ETSU to rise up 110 years after its founding and better not only the lives of the people of the region, but people around the world.

Mr. Golden also shared a mock-up of the Research Corporation's website.

XII. Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Latimer adjourned the meeting at 10:51 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Adam Green
Secretary of the Board of Trustees

Approved by the Board of Trustees at its April 23, 2021 meeting.