

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

MINUTES

November 15, 2024
Johnson City, Tennessee

The East Tennessee State University Board of Trustees' Academic, Research, and Student Success Committee met on Friday, November 15, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. in the East Tennessee Room of the D.P. Culp Student Center.

I. Call to Order

Trustee Janet Ayers, chair of the committee, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

II. Roll Call

Board Secretary Dr. Adam Green conducted the roll call. The following committee members were physically present:

Committee Chair Trustee Janet Ayers
Trustee Charles Allen
Trustee Dr. Steph Frye-Clark
Trustee Dr. Linda Latimer
Trustee Tony Treadway

III. Approval of the Committee Minutes from September 13, 2024

The minutes from the September 13, 2024, meeting of the Academic, Research, and Student Success Committee were approved as submitted with Trustee Charles Allen making the motion and Trustee Tony Treadway seconding the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS

IV. Recommendation for Tenure Upon Appointment of Faculty Member

Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Kimberly McCorkle presented a recommendation to award tenure upon appointment and the rank of full Professor to Dr. Dena Evans, who will become ETSU's Dean of Nursing on January 1, 2025. Dr. Evans is Professor

and Vice Dean of Faculty and Academic Affairs at the University of South Florida. She earned a doctorate in education from North Carolina State University.

Trustee Dr. Steph Frye-Clark made a motion to approve the recommendation as presented, and Trustee Dr. Linda Latimer seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

V. Approval of the Expedited Letter of Notification (ELON) Regarding the Establishment of a Digital Development, BS Degree

Provost McCorkle noted that the Department of Digital Media and the Department of Computing have collaborated to create this innovative degree program in Digital Development. It will be a 120-credit-hour program and will feature full stack and game development, which are fields with expanding entrepreneurial and workforce growth across the region, state, and nation. If the program is granted approval by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, the program is expected to launch in the fall of 2025.

Trustee Treadway underscored the high demand for professionals in these areas and applauded the university for creating the new degree.

Trustee Treadway made a motion to approve the Expedited Letter of Notification, and Trustee Allen seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

VI. Approval of Institutional Accreditation Policy per Tennessee Code § 49-7-187

Dr. McCorkle indicated that the Institutional Accreditation Policy specifies the accrediting agencies or associations that may serve as an accreditor for ETSU and that the Board of Trustees is required to adopt a policy on accreditation before December 31, 2024. She said that ETSU has developed a new policy consistent with state law that indicates the university can select an institutional accreditor from the list of all accreditors approved by the U.S. Department of Education.

Trustee Latimer made a motion that the new Institutional Accreditation Policy be approved, and Trustee Treadway seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

VII. Quality Assurance Funding Update

Dr. McCorkle reviewed the history and purpose of Quality Assurance Funding, formerly known as Performance Funding, which provides incentives for all public colleges and universities in Tennessee to measure student learning and institutional effectiveness as part of the continuous improvement process. The Provost noted that institutions may earn an additional 5.45 percent over their base operating budgets predicated on performance across a

series of metrics. Traditionally, these metrics assess student learning outcomes, program viability, student and alumni satisfaction, and a variety of other academic quality metrics. Provost McCorkle told the committee that the metrics are evaluated every five years by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, and ETSU has one more year in the cycle before the metrics change.

Dr. McCorkle then introduced Dr. Michael Hoff, Vice Provost for Decision Support and University Chief Planning Officer, who summarized how ETSU performed in the various standards in the 2023-24 review. In the General Education assessment, ETSU outperformed the national mean by three points, therefore earning the maximum 10 points. The Major Field Assessment standard is designed to provide incentives for institutions to improve the quality of major field programs as evaluated by the performance of graduates on approved examinations. For this standard, ETSU earned the maximum 15 points. The Academic Programs standard, Dr. Hoff explained, is a measure of quality, and ETSU earned a total of 32 points, out of a maximum of 35. For the Institutional Satisfaction standard, which is based on surveys of undergraduate students, recent graduates, and faculty, ETSU scored 10 out of a possible 10. Dr. Hoff explained that the Equity standard focuses on specific populations of students. In the most recent cycle, ETSU focused on first-generation students and earned the maximum 10 points for the standard. Commenting on the Focus Populations standard, Dr. Hoff told the committee that ETSU is increasing articulation efforts and other programs to attract more community college graduates, as well as working to encourage more students who are here and close to a bachelor's degree to finish that degree. Dr. Hoff underscored the success ETSU has had with low-income student progression toward graduation.

For the past two years of the Quality Assurance Funding cycle, Dr. Hoff reported, ETSU has received 96 points out of a possible 100, achieving a perfect score on all but two standards, and placing us second among Tennessee's Locally-Governed Institutions for the second year in a row.

President Noland emphasized the importance of Quality Assurance Funding and its role in achieving and ensuring academic quality, and he reminded the committee that 5.5 percent of the institution's state budget is riding on these outcomes.

VIII. Roan Scholars Leadership Program and Office of Prestigious Awards Update

Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Scott Jeffress, Executive Director of the Roan Scholars Leadership Program, reported on the program's expansion from a core area of 27 counties to six states at present. Two years ago, some 350 students applied for the Roan program. This fall, more than 1,000 students requested applications, and 150 will be interviewed. From the inaugural class of four students, the program has expanded in size and scope, as eleven students joined Roan Scholars in the fall of 2024. LTC Jeffress reported that the Roan's endowment balance has also grown from \$6.5 million in the fall of 2022 to \$11 million in the fall of 2024.

In the past two years, two Roan Scholars have been recognized as finalists for the Rhodes Scholarship, and one has been selected as a Truman Scholar. LTC Jeffress shared stories of Roan Scholars Shaina Thompson and Abby Simpson. Shaina started ETSU Letters of Love 18 months ago. After Hurricane Helene, they asked the campus community to join them in writing notes to first responders and people affected by the devastation. Their efforts have resulted in some 2,000 notes of encouragement distributed across the region.

LTC Jeffress then introduced Dr. Carson Medley, Assistant Dean of ETSU's Honors College and Director of the Office of Prestigious Awards. Dr. Medley shared his vision, which is for ETSU to be Tennessee's leading institution in guiding students through the process of applying for and securing nationally and globally competitive awards. This fall, he said, we have had five applicants for the Fulbright U.S. Student Program, eight for the Gilman Scholarship Program, and 12 for the Critical Language Scholarship.

IX. Annual ETSU Research Corporation Update

David Golden, CEO of the ETSU Research Corporation, provided his annual update on progress toward building connections between the university and university partners to advance regional prosperity, with the theme "world-class in a rural setting." He provided for the committee a brief overview of the corporation's staffing and its Board of Directors.

Mr. Golden updated the committee on the corporation's innovation partners and its role in recruiting partners like Polysilicon, which is investing \$850 million and bringing more than 400 jobs to Hawkins County.

Mr. Golden reported that we are about to rebrand our Appalachian Highlands Center for Innovation, supported by a grant from Ballad Health. He gave an update on the Innovation Lab, indicating that it is at 95 percent occupancy. He then highlighted ETSU's presence at the Select USA Summit, attended by over 5,000 people and more than 1,000 economic development organizations.

Mr. Golden presented a brief update on StoryCollab, including the ongoing Nurse Narratives Initiative, the Virginia Neonatal Perinatal Collaborative, and Bring Your Brave, a project with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Association of County and City Health Officials that includes a digital storytelling workshop with breast and ovarian cancer survivors.

Mr. Golden then updated the committee on the work of the Center for Bioindustrial Manufacturing and synthetic biology. He also announced a major grant from the Department of Defense through its Distributed Bioindustrial Manufacturing Program.

GENERAL INFORMATION ITEMS

X. Committee Discussions

There were no further discussions.

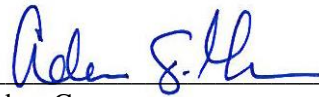
XI. Other Business

There was no other business to come before the committee.

XII. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Adam Green
Secretary of the Board of Trustees

Approved by the Board of Trustees at its February 21, 2025 meeting.