University Council
July 13, 2026

1. Call to Order

Dr. Kimberly D. McCorkle called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. She opened the meeting by welcoming new University Council members and asking Dr. Heather Levesque, Associate Vice President and Executive Director of Undergraduate Admissions, to present a mission moment.

Dr. Levesque shared an email from the parent of a prospective student describing an exceptional campus visit experience. The parent praised Assistant Director of Recruiting Events, Dr. Rob Meier, and student tour guide Nancy, a Roan Scholar, for their professionalism, enthusiasm, and genuine commitment to ETSU. The parent also commended the university's student-centered culture, personalized support systems, and strong academic programs, noting that the visit left a lasting positive impression on their family.

2. Roll Call

Ms. Claire Shoun led the roll call. Members present were: Ms. Bridget Baird, Dr. Kate Beatty, Dr. Joe Bidwell, Dr. Bill Block, Dr. Debbie Byrd, Dr. Cheri Clavier, Ms. Christy Graham, Dr. Adam Green, Dr. Nick Hagemeier, Dr. Mike Hoff, Dr. Keith Johnson, Ms. Myra Jones, Dr. Dhirendra Kumar, Ms. Kay Lennon-McGrew, Dr. Sam Mayhew, Dr. Kimberly McCorkle, Mr. Cody Morelock, Dr. Brian Noland, Dr. Tony Pittarese, Mr. Howard Reddy, Mr. Jeremy Ross, Dr. Richard Sander, Dr. Joe Sherlin, Mr. Alex Simmons, Dr. Jeff Snodgrass, Dr. Alan Stevens, Dr. Sarah Thomason, and Ms. Jess Vodden.

3. Standing Items

3.1 Approve Minutes of the June 8, 2026, meeting.

A motion was made to approve the minutes from the June 8, 2026, meeting. The motion was seconded; the minutes were approved.

3.2 Review Agenda

3.3 Consent Agenda Items
A motion was made to approve the policies on the consent agenda (noted below). The motion was seconded and approved.

3.3.1 International Student Health Insurance Policy

3.3.2 Telecommunications Policy

3.4 Call for Voluntary Reports of UC-Essential Action Items from Governance Organizations

Faculty Senate: Dr. Alan Stevens reported that the Faculty Senate continues implementation of recently approved policies while working with a consultant to comprehensively revise the Faculty Handbook. During the revision process, the handbook has been temporarily removed from the website to avoid confusion with outdated policies. Existing policies remain available through Digital Commons until the revised handbook is completed. The updated handbook is anticipated by the end of the Fall 2026 semester, with campus review opportunities planned.

Staff Senate: Mr. Cody Morelock reported that Staff Senate elections are underway, with competitive races in several EEOC categories and increased interest from new candidates. Elections are expected to begin later in the week. New executive officers, including Treasurer, Secretary, and Member-at-Large, will be elected in August.

Council of Academic Chairs: Dr. Sarah Thomason reported that the Chairs Council has developed a draft policy and procedure for the periodic review of department chairs in coordination with the Associate Deans. The Council has also created a comprehensive year-long department chair development program based on the results of a university-wide needs assessment survey. Training will begin in August and will initially focus on tenure and promotion guidelines aligned with the university's new policies. Provost McCorkle encouraged all department chairs, regardless of experience, to participate in the training, noting that numerous institutional changes, including the implementation of Voyager and revised university policies, make the professional development especially valuable.

Student Government Association: No report was presented.

Athletics: Dr. Richard Sander provided an update on recent NCAA legislative changes that provide student-athletes with five competitive seasons within a five-year eligibility window and restrict eligibility for certain international student-athletes with prior professional experience. He also noted that the legislation continues to face legal challenges regarding transitional eligibility, with additional court proceedings anticipated in early August.

Information Technology Services: Ms. Myra Jones reported that a university-wide cybersecurity tabletop exercise will be held on September 23 in partnership with Emergency Preparedness. She also shared that testing is in progress on the direct submission of grades from D2L into Banner, with implementation anticipated this fall. Additionally, she shared that ITS is purchasing and implementing Accessibility Plus within D2L to assist faculty in identifying and correcting course accessibility issues using AI-assisted tools. She noted that Accessibility Plus would be optional, and that faculty would choose whether to upload it. Dr. McCorkle asked for an update on Proctoring. Ms. Myra Jones noted that the university decided not to move forward with ProctorU, and that Respondus Monitor remains available at no cost as the university's primary remote proctoring solution.

Graduate and Professional Student Association: Mr. Alex Simmons, Vice President of the Graduate and Professional Student Association, reported that GPSA leadership is revising the organization's constitution to better define its mission, reduce duplication with other organizations, and strengthen governance.

4. *Action Items*

4.1 Old Business

There was no old business to come before the council.

4.2 New Business

There was no new business to come before the council.

5. Information Items/Presentations

5.1 FY 2027 Budget Process Update: Ms. Christy Graham

Christy Graham, Chief Financial Officer, presented an overview of the second year of ETSU's performance-based budget model. She reported that the university generated approximately $9.9 million in new recurring revenue, with nearly $7 million allocated to recurring institutional obligations, including salary enhancements, health insurance increases, utility cost increases, and graduate stipend enhancements. After funding these commitments, approximately $3 million remained available for strategic allocation. The recurring funds were distributed equally between academic credit-hour producing units and administrative units in accordance with the budget model's allocation methodology. Ms. Graham emphasized that the model is designed to promote transparency, measurable outcomes, and alignment with the university's strategic priorities. She also reported that eight Strategic Initiative Fund projects were selected for FY27 funding and noted that future enhancements to the budget model will include the addition of research metrics, expanded dashboards, and continued refinement of the allocation process.

5.2 Ellucian Banner SaaS Implementation Update: Dr. Heather Levesque

Dr. Heather Levesque provided a comprehensive update on the implementation of Banner SaaS. She reported that the project remains in the Discovery Phase and continues to progress on schedule for an October 2027 go-live. Functional teams are evaluating current business processes, identifying opportunities to improve workflows, reduce manual processes, and increase automation. She also highlighted ongoing change management efforts, including monthly campus communications, the development of a dedicated project website, and regular engagement with functional subject-matter experts across the university.

Dr. Levesque also provided an update on the development of the new MyETSU Portal. She explained that student focus groups are helping shape the portal's design and functionality, with an emphasis on simplifying navigation and providing quick access to frequently used services through customizable "cards." Additional engagement with faculty and staff is planned as development continues to ensure the portal meets the needs of all users.

Dr. Levesque emphasized that all functionality currently available will remain available after implementation, delivered through a modernized, cloud-based interface designed to improve the user experience for students, faculty, and staff.

6. President's Report

President Noland thanked Dr. Levesque for her work with Ellucian on the Banner SaaS Implementation, acknowledged continued improvements to Voyager, and thanked campus leaders for ongoing efforts to refine business processes before the start of the Fall semester. He then provided an update on the ETSU leadership searches currently underway, noting that four General Counsel finalists will be on campus to interview during the week, and that the search for the ETSU marketing and communications leadership position is underway with the goal of filling the position by spring 2027.

President Noland noted that he will attend the THEC Summer Meeting, where revisions to Tennessee's outcomes-based funding formula will be considered, including workforce-related performance measures and the calculation of short-term bachelor's degrees. He also discussed significant federal financial aid changes resulting from recently enacted legislation, including revised definitions of professional programs that now include Nursing and Physical Therapy, which affect loan eligibility, and new Pell Grant enrollment rules that link future aid eligibility to previous semester enrollment status. University leadership continues developing communication strategies to ensure students understand these changes.

President Noland reported that a limited number of faculty salary adjustments related to administrative stipends were calculated incorrectly during implementation of salary enhancements. Impacted faculty will receive retroactive pay to the effective date at the beginning of May. Announcements will go out to the impacted faculty by the end of the month.

He concluded by announcing that freshman enrollment continues to exceed budget projections, housing demand remains strong, and the university is in a solid financial position entering the fall semester. He encouraged institutional leaders to continue budgeting conservatively in light of potential uncertainty surrounding future state funding priorities and anticipated changes in the state legislative landscape.

7. Announcements

Following the President's Report, Dr. Heather Levesque provided additional information regarding implementation of federal financial aid changes. She reported that the university is developing targeted communications for undergraduate, graduate, and professional students, creating a dedicated informational website, and working closely with advisors to ensure students understand how course withdrawals or reduced enrollment may affect future financial aid eligibility. She also noted that enhanced warning messages are being developed within GoldLink to notify students of the potential financial aid implications before they drop below full-time enrollment.

Dr. Cheri Clavier provided an accreditation update, reporting that SACSCOC will begin operating under the name "The Commission," although the change is primarily a branding update and will not affect ETSU's accreditation processes. She also shared that the accreditation standards are currently under review, with revised standards expected to be released in December. An ETSU delegation will attend the SACSCOC Summer Institute to receive updates on the accreditation changes and related developments.

Dr. Sam Mayhew provided an update on Campus Move-in Day, which is scheduled for Wednesday, August 19, from 8:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m. To improve traffic flow and allow University School traffic to clear, move-in hours have been shifted 30 minutes later than in previous years. Students will select 15-minute move-in appointments through the StarRez portal to support a more efficient arrival process. This year’s move-in also coincides with the 45th anniversary celebration of Preview. Alumni will be invited to celebrate at homecoming.

Jess Vodden, Chief of Marketing, provided an update on the website redesign project, which is currently underway with support from consultants and a focus on design development. Faculty, staff, and student stakeholder groups have been established to provide feedback and ensure the redesign meets the needs of key audiences, particularly prospective and current students. Campus community members are encouraged to share ideas or website challenges with the web team for consideration. Additional updates will be provided in August.

Provost McCorkle then recognized Jess Vodden at her final University Council meeting and thanked her for her service to the university.

8. Adjournment

Provost McCorkle adjourned the meeting at 9:44 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for August 10, 2026, at 8:30 a.m. in the Culp East Tennessee Room.