

**University Council**  
**May 12, 2025**  
**East Tennessee Room**

**1. Call to Order**

Provost Dr. Kimberly D. McCorkle called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

**2. Roll Call**

Melissa Nipper led the roll call. Members present were: Ms. Bridget Baird, Dr. Ginni Blackhart, Dr. Joe Bidwell, Dr. Bill Block, Dr. Cheri Clavier, Dr. Dena Evans, Dr. Joel Faidley, Mr. David Finney, Ms. Joy Fulkerson, Ms. Christy Graham, Dr. Adam Green, Dr. Nick Hagemeyer, Dr. Mike Hoff, Dr. Keith Johnson, Dr. Chris Keller, Mr. John King, Dr. Karen King, Ms. Tricia Korade, Dr. Dharendra Kumar, Dr. Sam Mayhew, Dr. Kimberly D. McCorkle, Dr. Brian Noland, Dr. Rob Pack, Dr. Tony Pittarese, Dr. Alan Stevens, and Dr. Sarah Thomason.

**3. Standing Items**

*3.1 Approve Minutes of the April 14, 2025, meeting*

A motion was made to approve the minutes from the April 14, 2025, meeting. The motion was seconded; the minutes were approved.

*3.2 Review Agenda*

There was no update from the Budget and Strategic Planning Committee, so that agenda item was tabled.

*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 Personal Transport Devices
- 3.3.2 Executive Officer Emeritus Policy
- 3.3.3 Emeritus Policy for Faculty, Chairs, and Deans
- 3.3.4 Non-exempt Employees Who Teach as Adjunct Faculty
- 3.3.5 International Student Health Insurance Policy

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

*Faculty Senate:* Dr. Alan Stevens thanked Dr. McCorkle for speaking at the final Faculty Senate meeting of the academic year. During the summer, Faculty Senate will communicate with the committees working on Tenure and Promotion, Faculty Definitions, and Faculty Workload as they progress.

*Council of Academic Chairs:* Dr. Sarah Thomason reported that the Executive Council of Chairs continues planning the Department Chair Leadership Institute, which will be held August 6-7. This is being planned with the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. They are also working with the Provost's Office to provide feedback on policies.

*Staff Senate:* Mr. David Finney reminded the council about the Staff Senate Celebration on Wednesday, May 21. It begins at noon, with remarks from President Noland at 1 p.m. He reported that William Cate is serving as Chair of the Staff Senate's Staff Concerns Committee. In July, Staff Senate will send out a request for nominations for new Staff Senators.

*ITS:* Dr. Karen King reported that ETSU is preparing to transition to Windows 11 operating system on PCs, as Microsoft is discontinuing support for Windows 10 in October. Further information about the transition will be communicated in the weekly BucWire newsletter. ITS is also preparing summer classroom updates in collaboration with the Provost's Office. Finally, Voyager is in user acceptance testing, which is the final testing phase.

#### **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 Research Update*

Dr. Nick Hagemeyer, Vice Provost for Research and Chief Research Officer, updated the council on ETSU's Trailblazers research initiatives. He provided a brief update on the federal funding landscape. ETSU has felt the effects of the shifting landscape, with three awards lost and other anticipated awards lost.

He reviewed ETSU's sponsored programs portfolio, noting the external awards in FY 2024 amounted to just above \$70 million, which encompasses service, clinical service, research, and training.

He provided an overview of numbers and milestones from FY 2024, including a recap of the inaugural Celebration of Research Awards held in October 2024. Nominations are now open for this year's Celebration of Research Awards. He noted several research position updates, including the naming of Drs. Pamela Mims and Saurabh Mehta as inaugural Research Fellows and Mr. Jon Wood's work as the Chief Intellectual Property Officer for the ETSU Research Corporation.

He updated the council on the Carnegie Classification's recent change to the R1 and R2 research designations. ETSU is currently recognized, through funding and program rankings, as one of the premier R2 research universities in the nation. In the historical classification system, R1 designation for ETSU was arguably out of reach and not mission aligned. Under the new classification system, ETSU is approaching the Higher Education Research and Development (HERD) threshold and is well above the research doctorates threshold. ETSU is not yet an R1 institution, but since it is now arguably missionally aligned, ETSU will review its missional HERD ranking and vision statement for research moving forward during its research strategic planning process.

Dr. Hagemeyer is looking forward to the upcoming development of a research strategic planning task force to develop ETSU's research strategic plan. He outlined some key ways that ETSU can continue to pursue excellence in research. The strategic planning process will begin this August and should conclude by the end of the fall semester.

Provost McCorkle noted that Dr. Hagemeyer will present the Trailblazers update to the ETSU Board of Trustees on May 23, and she looks forward to hearing their feedback.

## **6. President's Report**

President Noland thanked staff for their work at Commencement, where 2,012 degrees were awarded. He welcomed suggestions for ways the university can continue to improve commencement and noted multiple positive comments about the ceremonies and attendance.

President Noland noted that final deliberations about next year's budget will conclude in mid-June. In mid- to late-June, ETSU will run the new model and set the new base for 2025-26. He thanked everyone for their patience throughout the budget model and Voyager processes.

He reminded the council that in a few days, the university will pause hiring for approximately a month and a half for the cutover from Banner to Voyager. He emphasized that this is not a hiring freeze – only a pause – for the cutover to occur.

Later this month, ETSU will distribute \$2.4 million in new salary enhancements to staff, bringing all staff to the entry point of the market range of our new job family classifications.

Notifications about the salary enhancements will go out to staff later this month and will be reflected in this month's paychecks.

The ETSU Board of Trustees meets May 23. The agenda includes tuition and fees, tenure and promotion, and budgets. The Board also will vote on new leadership, including chair, vice chair, secretary, and committee chairs. Additionally, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission will meet this Thursday.

As the summer progresses, Dr. Noland encouraged the council to focus on the university's mission and strategic goals. He emphasized the importance of staying grounded in ETSU's progress in such areas as student success, research, infrastructure, and national recognition, rather than being swayed by external political noise.

## **7. Announcements**

Provost McCorkle asked the deans and chairs on the council to remind faculty that grades are due by 4:30 p.m. today.

Dr. Karin Keith announced that the 2025 Common Read is *The Anthropocene Reviewed* by John King. She encouraged everyone to explore the book and the podcast over the summer. Dr. McCorkle added that they hope to welcome John Green to campus in the coming year.

## **8. Adjournment**

Provost McCorkle adjourned the meeting at 9:11 a.m.

*The next meeting is scheduled for June 9, 2025, at 8:30 a.m.*