

EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

MINUTES

April 24, 2017  
Johnson City, Tennessee

The East Tennessee State University Board of Trustees Academic and Student Affairs Committee held its first meeting at 2 p.m. on Monday, April 24, 2017, in the President's Conference Room in Burgin Dossett Hall on ETSU's main campus in Johnson City, Tennessee.

**I. Call to Order**

Dr. Linda Latimer, chair of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee, called the meeting to order.

**Roll Call**

Deputy Secretary Mr. Nathan Dugger called the roll. Committee members in attendance were:

Dr. Linda Latimer, chair  
David Golden  
Fred Alsop  
Janet Ayers (via telephone)

Mr. Dugger told Chair Latimer she had a quorum.

Guests in attendance included: Joe Smith, University Relations; Dr. Wilsie Bishop, vice president for Health Affairs; Dr. Mike Hoff, associate vice president of Planning and Decision Support and chief planning officer; Dr. Bert Bach, provost and vice president of Academic Affairs; and Kristen Swing, University Relations (taking minutes).

**Housekeeping Items**

Mr. Dugger asked Trustee Ayers two questions in accordance with Tennessee Code 8-44-108 section (c)(3). He asked if Trustee Ayers was able to clearly hear the folks at the meeting so that she could participate. Trustee Ayers said she could hear. Those physically present at the meeting confirmed they could hear Trustee Ayers. Mr. Dugger also asked Trustee Ayers to identify any persons present in the room with her, to which she said no one was in the room with her.

## II. Briefing Items

Chair Latimer explained that, due to the short timeline before the accreditation visit by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges occurring May 15-17, it was necessary for the committee to meet in order to review and approve for recommendation to the full board agenda items related to faculty promotion and tenure, faculty rank and academic freedom.

Dr. Bert Bach provided an orientation to matters relevant to committee deliberations and actions that pertain to responsibilities set forth in bylaws. Dr. Bach reported that he met with Chair Latimer about two weeks ago and walked her through the presentation he was about to give to the entire committee. He said the presentation attempts to address how various actions and the university relate to the charge of this specific committee.

- A. Dr. Bach began by providing the committee's charge, which spans 14 areas of responsibility or oversight, including nine relating to Academic Affairs, three relating to Student Affairs and two relating to Athletics. (*Committee Charge, Section 5 of bylaws.*)
- B. Those areas fall under three vice presidents – Dr. Bert Bach; Dr. Wilsie Bishop, vice president for Health Affairs; and Dr. Joe Sherlin, vice president of Student Affairs. He shared with committee members organizational charts for each of those individuals.
- C. Dr. Bach noted that the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, in light of the governance change, has revised a number of policies related to academic programs, which were approved by the Board of Trustees at the inaugural meeting in March. THEC will be revising additional policies and ETSU will have to reflect those revisions in its policies.

The authorization for final approval of programs (changes to, creation of, etc.) is reflected in Tennessee code and THEC policy. Those actions are established through a series of protocols that Dr. Bach referred to as “what is” done currently and pointed out that the Board of Trustees will determine what “will be.” Dr. Bach noted that curricular matters, by policy, emerge from the faculty. Dr. Bach shared a matrix that depicts final authority for approval of academic policy or actions. The matrix shows various types of academic actions (in the left column) as well as the various bodies that consider the actions and where an action is approved. Dr. Bach noted that the Division of Student Affairs is developing a comparable matrix.

Trustee Golden asked a question regarding the matrix and who approves specific actions (for example, the Name/Title change for Program/Concentration) because it did not say “approves” anywhere. Dr.

Bach explained that it is the last blue box on the line that indicates who makes the approval. (In the given example, he said the president would be the one to approve.)

- D. Dr. Bach explained that, as provost and vice president for Academic Affairs, he chairs the Academic Council. He provided the charge of the Academic Council as well as its membership. He said he also serves as staff for this committee. He noted that he served for 12 years staffing the equivalent of this committee for the Tennessee Board of Regents and, over that period of time, worked with a number of committee members and chairs.
- E. Different committees, Dr. Bach said, have different preferences on reports they want to see and ones they do not wish to see. He said he is presenting fairly common reports that existed at the TBR committee meetings but said it is up to this committee to determine if this is the information it wants to see or if there is other information it wants to review.
- F. Recurring reports typically reviewed by the TBR equivalent of this committee include items relating to accreditation and program quality in September (Regional Accreditation Status, THEC Quality Assurance Program Reviews, Licensure Exam Results, etc.); items relating to student outcomes, engagement and state funding implications in November (ETSU Outcomes Based Funding, Markov Chain Enrollment Projections, Student Engagement Review, Student Athlete Profile and Success Report, etc.); items pertaining to quality assurance funding in February (Quality Assurance Funding, etc.); and instructional profile and student success initiatives in April (Teaching Profile by time status and tenure status, etc.).

Second kinds of reports that are traditionally recurring include reports focused on enrollment, student success and Drive to 55 data. This includes items relating to retention, progression, graduation and the engagement profile. It also includes a faculty profile by type and credit hours produced. Dr. Bach noted that trustees might ask for things such as the teaching distribution (by course level, faculty type and/or by college).

There also traditionally have been ad hoc, or non-cyclic, reports provided to this type of committee. As examples, these might include updates on the potential Mountain States Health Alliance/Wellmont merger; information on the minors on campus policy being created; policies and procedures related to public forums on campus; and information related to emergency preparedness.

Trustee Golden asked, Who feels they own Goldlink? Referencing the customer orientation around Goldlink, Trustee Golden said he felt that affects Student Affairs and suggested this committee take some oversight

of that, with the front-end user (student) in mind. He noted that nothing touches ETSU students more than Goldlink.

Trustee Golden also asked which committee owns Alumni. He said he has had a number of ETSU alumni asking him questions since he was appointed to the board. While he understood that alumni may not have been an area of focus for the TBR, he said he felt it was an area of opportunity that needed to belong to one of the Board's committees. Trustee Golden said he did not want it to fall through the cracks.

### **III. Adoption of Policies**

Dr. Bach presented four policies: Tenure; Faculty Ranks and Promotion; Definition of Faculty and Types of Appointment; and Academic Freedom and Responsibility.

He said some members of the ETSU faculty were notified last year that they would be eligible for tenure. Those individuals began going through the review while ETSU was still under the TBR. Dr. Bach said there was particular concern that we did not change the review process on the people in this situation as governance is moved to the Board of Trustees. He said there must be a policy in place in this area for accreditation standards. He noted that these four policies are longstanding policies that currently reside in the faculty handbook and align with corresponding TBR policy. With the tenure policy in particular, Dr. Bach said it must be changed to indicate the Board of Trustees now awards tenure. He said changes to the policy are all minor editorial changes, essentially removing references to the TBR. There also were some hyperlinks that led to other TBR policies, so the verbiage of those sections were added to the policy rather than just a hyperlink to the sections. Given the fact that this is a very sensitive issue, Dr. Bach asked past president of the Faculty Senate Dr. Virginia Foley and current Faculty Senate President Dr. Susan Epps to review the policy and ensure no changes have been made. They went thorough it page by page and confirmed there were no substantive changes. The policy was then approved at Academic Council.

Dr. Bach recognized there may be parts of the policies that the Board of Trustees will want to change over time. While there are opportunities for improvement, he said it was important to be able to say that, to the extent possible, we are only proposing changes that indicate the Board of Trustees is replacing the TBR.

Trustee Also pointed out that as past president one of Dr. Foley's duties is controlling any editorial changes to the faculty handbook and noted that a committee, on which he served, looked at the policies.

Trustee Golden said it makes a lot of sense to him, with so much new happening right now, to not do more new than we need to, particularly around an issue as sensitive as tenure. He also aired his appreciation for the extra effort (in getting Drs. Foley and Epps to review) to provide assurance.

Dr. Bach noted that what he said about the tenure policy essentially applies to the other three proposed policies as well. He did point out that the Academic Freedom and Responsibility policy is noted in the meeting materials as being new, but said it was a mistake and should, like all the others, be noted as “revised.”

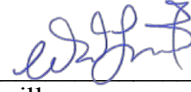
Trustee Golden made a motion to recommend the adoption of the policies. It was seconded by Trustee Alsop and unanimously approved. The recommendation will now be presented to the full Board of Trustees for approval.

#### **IV. Other**

- A called Board of Trustees meeting is expected to take place in early May. Deputy Secretary Dugger indicated it was tentatively scheduled for May 12 at 9 a.m., however several committee members indicated potential conflicts with that date. Deputy Secretary Dugger said once the necessary committee meetings were scheduled, the called meeting of the full Board would be scheduled according to availability of trustees.
- Trustee Alsop asked for an update on the upcoming SACS accreditation visit. Dr. Bach said SACS has a template review document that indicates there will be meetings with the Board of Trustees as part of the visit, but noted the itinerary will be up to the SACS chair for the visit. Dr. Wilsie Bishop, having conducted several visits to other institutions for SACS, reviewed the process for team accreditation visits, particularly those initiated by a governance change. She said the team will want to know from the Board of Trustees if policies have been established and if those policies are being followed. She said the team typically looks at meeting minutes to ensure the Board of Trustees is focusing on policies and not the operation of the university. She said there will likely be at least one meeting with available trustees and that the team is interested in the processes trustees have gone through to be oriented. Dr. Bishop said there will probably be a president or chancellor of a university and the SACS vice president will definitely be part of the team. Dr. Bach noted that the current SACS vice president Dr. Cheryl Cardell is retiring soon but has agreed to staff the ETSU visit. Dr. Bishop added that the chair of the team coming to ETSU is the provost at Texas A&M.
- Chair Latimer encouraged all of the committee members to start sending information on what they want to look at in future meetings.

Chair Latimer adjourned the meeting at 2:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David Linville", positioned above a horizontal line.

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David Linville  
Secretary of the Board of Trustees

Approved by the Board of Trustees at its June 9, 2017 meeting.