

ACADEMIC & STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

November 30, 2023

Roaden University Center, Room 282

MINUTES

Meeting was streamed live via link found on this web page:

<https://www.tntech.edu/board/board-and-board-committee-meetings.php>

AGENDA ITEM 1 – CALL TO ORDER

The Tennessee Tech Board of Trustees Academic & Student Affairs Committee met on November 30, 2023 in Roaden University Center, Room 282. Chair Rhedona Rose called the meeting to order at 8:20 a.m.

Chair Rose asked Mr. Lee Wray, Secretary, to call the roll. The following members were present:

- Rhedona Rose
- Jeannette Luna
- Addison Dorris
- Barry Wilmore

Other board members also in attendance were Trudy Harper, Thomas Lynn, Fred Lowery, Tom Jones, and Johnny Stites. A quorum was present. Tennessee Tech faculty and staff and members of the public were also in attendance.

AGENDA ITEM 2 – APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Rose asked for approval of the minutes of the September 28, 2023 Academic & Student Affairs Committee meeting. Trustee Wilmore moved to recommend approval of the September 28, 2023 Academic & Student Affairs Committee minutes. Trustee Luna seconded the motion. Mr. Wray called a roll call vote. The motion carried unanimously.

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AGENDA ITEM 3 – PROVOST’S REPORT

Provost Bruce began her report by giving an update on Tennessee Tech’s Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) accreditation. She reminded everyone that Tennessee Tech recently went through our fifth-year interim report, and explained that in the next few years Tennessee Tech will be going through the full reaffirmation process. Provost Bruce reported that Tennessee Tech recently received news of approval for a differentiated review process. She explained that with the regular reaffirmation process, there are between 80 and 100 standards to document and demonstrate compliance, but with the differentiated the number goes down to 40.

Next, Provost Bruce announced that Tennessee Tech received a perfect score on academic quality assurance from the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC). Provost Bruce explained that when defining success, we go back to the mission and vision statement of the university and ask the questions, are we educating & graduating students in disciplines needed by Tennessee and are we supporting government, industry, & citizens of Tennessee, particularly through the application of our faculty members’ expertise? With those two questions in mind, we quantitatively and qualitatively measure virtually every aspect of Academic Affairs and roll those measurements into 4 key metrics: Degrees conferred, Academic Quality Programs, Research & Service, and Fiscal Gain. THEC scores universities annually on a 100-point scale through its Quality Assurance Funding (QAF) program. Under the program, institutions can earn up to 5.45% over their operating budget based on their score. Last year, the university received an additional \$3.2 million funding from the state as a result of our high score. Provost Bruce noted that this year’s perfect score of 100 is believed to be the first perfect score in the history of the QAF program in Tennessee. She emphasized that in addition to state funding, the primary value is that data collected is used to continuously improve our programs.

Provost Bruce concluded her report by highlighting 4 key faculty members for their contributions to two new programs that the Board recently approved. Mr. Aeric Gunnels and Dr. Hannah Upole from the School of Human Ecology in the College of Agriculture & Human Ecology were highlighted for their contributions to the new B.S. in Design Studies. Provost Bruce also highlighted Dr. Victoria Ayres and Dr. Ciana Bowhay from the School of Agriculture in the College of Agriculture and Human Ecology for their contributions to the new B.S. in Animal Sciences.

AGENDA ITEM 4 – Academic Program Update: Post Approval Monitoring

Provost Bruce gave her annual update on new academic programs previously approved by the Board of Trustees. She explained that Tennessee Tech monitors new degree programs for a period of 5-7 years, monitoring enrollment levels and numbers of graduates (comparing those actuals to the projections made during the proposal process). The progress of achieving national accreditation is also monitored. She explained that based on the post approval monitoring (PAM) reports, anywhere we find that we are not meeting the enrollment and

graduation goals for newly launched degree programs, strategies are implemented to self-correct in those areas. She explained that this feedback process helps continuously improve programs and keep the new programs on track.

AGENDA ITEM 5 – Policy 224 (Academic Actions Notification)

Provost Bruce explained that the proposed revisions to this policy were primarily driven by changes to THEC policies, and we proposed revisions to our policy to bring it into alignment with THEC requirements. Clean up of the policy was also done at the same time.

Provost Bruce explained that for Policy 224, Academic Actions Notification, THEC revised some of the criteria for universities notifying THEC about the establishment of certificate programs. Also, THEC changed their requirements for universities consolidating multiple academic programs. They changed that requirement from a notification to a modification request. Therefore, in order for our policies to align with these THEC requirements, Provost Bruce explained that we propose to change our policy accordingly. The notification requirement was removed from Policy 224 (the Academic Actions Notification policy) and added to Policy 226 (the Academic Program Modifications policy). Finally, one significant proposed revision to the policy was the addition of a requirement for the Provost to present to the Board of Trustees as an informational item all of the Academic Actions that are notified to THEC. She explained that in practice, we had already been doing that, but the proposal included having it as a requirement in the policy.

Trustee Wilmore moved to send Policy 224 to the Board for approval and to be placed on the Board's consent agenda. Trustee Luna seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM 6 – Policy 225 (New Academic Programs)

Provost Bruce explained that the proposed revisions to this policy were primarily driven by changes to THEC policies, and we proposed revisions to our policy to bring it into alignment with THEC requirements. Clean up of the policy was also done at the same time.

Provost Bruce explained that for Policy 225 proposed revisions are related to New Academic Programs. She explained that when we propose a new academic program, there are two phases: a pre-proposal (referred to as LON) and a full proposal (referred to as NAPP). In the past, THEC required the university to have approval of the Board of Trustees for both the LON and the NAPP. The Board delegated approval of the LON to the Academic and Student Affairs Committee, so that only the full proposal (the NAPP) would be presented to the full Board for approval. THEC revised their policy eliminating the requirement for Board of Trustees approval for the LON, reducing the Board's actions from two approvals to one, with the one being an approval of the full proposal (NAPP). Provost Bruce explained that we propose to change our policy to reflect this change in THEC requirements. Provost Bruce explained that we also added a requirement for the Provost Office to present the LON to the Board of Trustees as an informational item, so that the Board is kept informed of any new academic proposals being

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developed.

Trustee Luna moved to send Policy 225 to the Board for approval and to be placed on the Board's consent agenda. Trustee Willmore seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM 7 – POLICY 226 (Academic Program Modifications)

Provost Bruce explained that the proposed revisions to this policy were primarily driven by changes to THEC policies, and we proposed revisions to our policy to bring it into alignment with THEC requirements. Clean up of the policy was also done at the same time.

For Policy 226 (Academic Program Modifications), the proposed revisions were to align Tennessee Tech's policy with THEC's requirements related to major modifications to academic programs. Dr. Bruce gave the example of changing an academic program designation (e.g. changing a degree program from a Bachelor of Arts to a Bachelor of Science) as something that would fall under the academic program modifications policy. Provost Bruce explained that the proposed revisions specify that an Academic Program Modification will be presented to the Board of Trustees as an information item rather than an action item. This would ensure that the Board of Trustees are kept informed while also ensuring timely submission and implementation of modifications.

After much discussion and questions from Trustee members President Oldham asked for clarification regarding the most significant item that the Board would now only be seeing as an informational item under the new proposed revision of this policy. Provost Bruce explained that the most significant item in the policy that falls under this category would be taking an existing concentration that we would pull out and have as a stand-alone degree program. She then explained that in those cases, we have to have years of data to show sustained enrollment and that the recourses are in place. President Oldham requested that we take pulling an existing concentration to create a stand-alone degree program to the Board for approval and to leave the other items as information only items.

Trustee Wilmore moved to send Policy 226 to the Board for approval and to be placed on the Board's consent agenda following the President's comments. Trustee Luna seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM 8 – Policy 227 (New Academic Units)

Provost Bruce explained that the proposed revisions to this policy were primarily driven by changes to THEC policies, and we proposed revisions to our policy to bring it into alignment with THEC requirements. Clean up of the policy was also done at the same time.

Provost Bruce explained that for Policy 227 (New Academic Units), revisions are being proposed to ensure it is in alignment with the THEC policy to clarify approval processes for establishing

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new academic units and this does require Board approval (not altered).

Trustee Luna moved to send Policy 227 to the Board for approval and to be placed on the Board's consent agenda. Trustee Willmore seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM 9 – Updates on Research and Economic Development

Dr. John Liu, Vice President for Research, began his presentation by sharing some background information about himself including that he is a first-generation immigrant with a college education from China. He shared that he has a Master's degree and Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota and that he comes to Tennessee Tech with 22 years of service with Auburn University and 6 years of service with Syracuse University. He shared two messages from his first slide including that education is a game changer and research is the accelerator.

Dr. Liu noted that research at Tennessee Tech has more than doubled over the last six years. He outlined plans to increase Tennessee Tech's proportion of research-active faculty and to increase faculty's research overall. A couple of examples of these plans included setting expectations for new hires and helping existing faculty who want to be research active. Other immediate plans include increasing research of research active faculty, increasing collaborations/teamwork, and improving research infrastructure.

AGENDA ITEM 10 – Counseling Center Update on Mental Health Services

Dr. Christina Mick, Director of the Counseling Center, provided an update on mental health services on campus. She began her presentation by providing information about the number of students that received services for academic years 2007/2008 through 2022/2023. She reported that 1,043 students received services from the center during the 2022 – 2023 academic year, which was a 21% increase from 2021/2022.

Dr. Mick then showed Board members the number of counseling sessions per academic year for academic years 2007/2008 through 2022/2023. There were 2,492 sessions for academic year 2022/2023, up from 2,064 sessions for academic year 2021/2022 (21% increase from 2021/2022). Dr. Mick added that the Counseling Center is now fully staffed to help navigate these increases.

Dr. Mick also shared information regarding visit types, with the highest numbers being follow-up appointments. Other visit types included supportive check-in, crisis (rapid) walk-in, couples counseling, intake appointments, psycho education appointments, non-face to face contact, and premarital counseling.

Dr. Mick then shared the number of psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner visits from June 2021 through October 19, 2023. She reminded Board members that in June of 2021 the Board passed that the Counseling Center could contract with a mental health practitioner to

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work with Tennessee Tech students. This person began seeing clients in July 2022 and currently works 10 hours a week. Dr. Mick indicated that the use of the mental health nurse practitioner by students has been very successful thus far.

Dr. Mick then shared data regarding the primary diagnoses for Mantra health (contracted telehealth service to expand capacity) from March 1, 2023 through October 19, 2023. The primary diagnoses were depression (38.1%), anxiety (33.3%), trauma (28.6%), medication management (23%), neurodevelopmental (4.8%), and other (4.8%).

Dr. Mick then showed the number of counseling appointments by school for last academic year and the current academic year, with Engineering still being the highest. She further broke this down to percentages to show which colleges had the highest percentage of students receiving services. This year the College of Fine Arts students showed the highest percentage of students receiving services based on enrollment.

Dr. Mick also shared graphs/tables that broke down the ages and academic level for students, who received services. She also included information regarding the top reasons for visits with the top three being anxiety/depression, continuity of care, and supportive/coping/life management.

Dr. Mick concluded her presentation by informing the Board that the Counseling Center is currently fully staffed. She thanked trustees, the university, and the counseling team for recognizing the importance of mental health and supporting the counseling center's services, which helps the stigma go away and models for our students that it's okay to ask for help.

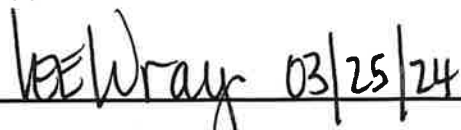
AGENDA ITEM 11 – OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

AGENDA ITEM 12 – ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Academic & Student Affairs Committee adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

Approved,



Lee Wray, Secretary