



ACADEMIC & STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

December 2, 2021

Roaden University Center, Room 282

MINUTES

AGENDA ITEM 1 – CALL TO ORDER

The Tennessee Tech Board of Trustees Academic & Student Affairs Committee met on December 2, 2021, in Roaden University Center Room 282. Chair Rhedona Rose called the meeting to order at 8:13 a.m.

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

- Dan Allcott
- Rhedona Rose
- Hannah Willis
- Trudy Harper

In Trustee Wilmore's absence, Trustee Harper, as Chair of the Board, served as an ex officio voting member of the Academic & Student Affairs committee.

Other board members also in attendance were Tom Jones, Fred Lowery, Thomas Lynn, and Johnny Stites. A quorum was physically present.

Tennessee Tech faculty, staff and members of the public were also in attendance.

AGENDA ITEM 2 – APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Rose asked if there were any recommendations or changes to the minutes. There being none, Trustee Allcott moved to approve the minutes of the October 7, 2021, Academic & Student Affairs Committee meeting. Trustee Harper seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Lee 03/17/22

AGENDA ITEM 3 – MENTAL HEALTH UPDATE

Dr. Cynthia Polk-Johnson, Vice President for Student Affairs, introduced Dr. Christina Mick, Interim Director of the Counseling Center, who provided an update on mental health services on campus.

Dr. Mick provided information about the number of students that received services at the counseling center and the number of counseling sessions per academic year from 2007-2020. She stated there was a steady increase until 2020, the year of the pandemic, in which a slight decrease in both these numbers occurred. She also shared information about the number of counseling appointments by academic school, by age, and by academic level.

Dr. Mick also stated that due to three recent staff retirements, the Counseling Center had only two full-time counselors and a couple clinical interns seeing clients; a ratio of 1 to 4,500 students. Per the International Association of Counseling Services Standards, the recommended ratio was 1 counselor per 1500 students. If the three recent retirees were replaced and an additional counselor was added, the ratio would be 1 to 1900, slightly under the recommended ratio.

AGENDA ITEM 4 – UPDATE ON RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Dr. Jennifer Taylor, Vice President for Research and Economic Development, provided an update on the Office of Research. She stated that through November, a total of 106 research projects were activated for a total of \$17,400,000, \$1,600,000 more than last year at this time. She stated that Tennessee Tech's goal is to reach \$40,000,000 by 2025. Dr. Taylor stated she would provide more detailed information at an upcoming information session.

AGENDA ITEM 5 – FACULTY WORKLOAD POLICY 208

Provost Lori Bruce stated that Policy 208 was a new university policy required as part of Tennessee Tech's SACSCOC accreditation. The policy was drafted by a task force of faculty members from various colleges and chaired by Senior Associate Provost, Dr. Mark Stephens. It was vetted by campus stakeholders, the Provost's Office, Human Resources, and Academic Council, Administrative Council, University Assembly, and Faculty Senate.

Dr. Bruce stated the policy helped ensure equity in workload assignments. It was typical for a workload policy across the state and nation, and established a framework based on a 15-credit hour per semester nominal load. The policy reflects practices already in place that have been used for many years to establish faculty workload norms across the university.

There being no additional questions, Trustee Harper moved to send Policy 208 to the Board for approval and to place it on the Board's consent agenda. Trustee Allcott seconded the motion. Following a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.



AGENDA ITEM 6 – STRATEGIC PLAN FOR ONLINE EDUCATION

Provost Bruce explained there were two primary motivators why Tennessee Tech had been working on the expansion of online education: first and foremost, to grow enrollment at the university, and second, to diversify that enrollment. Student enrollment declined over the last 10 years and that trend must be disrupted. While trying to disrupt that trend, we would also be faced with fewer high school graduates, due to a significant decline in birth rate beginning in 2007. For these reasons, we need to attract, recruit, and retain nontraditional students. Online education was a way to address these challenges anticipated in the next few years. Dr. Bedelia Russell, Interim Associate Provost for Online Education and Faculty Excellence, led the development of the strategic plan to include program gap analysis and student demographic data analysis.

AGENDA ITEM 7 – ONLINE AND DISTANCE EDUCATION POLICY 223

Provost Bruce stated that revisions to this policy were made to align with Tennessee Tech's current institutional practices and organizational structure coming out of COVID remote learning and, more importantly, to align Tennessee Tech with the best practices in online education. The revisions were also necessary for the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission (SACSCOC) recertification and the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) affiliation.

There being no additional questions, Trustee Allcott moved to send Policy 223 to the Board for approval and to place it on the Board's consent agenda. Trustee Harper seconded the motion. Following a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM 8 – B.S. IN ANIMAL SCIENCE

Provost Bruce explained this program modification was being presented as it had been indicated that animal science and pre-vet programs in the School of Agriculture would be more advantageous if the B.S. degree was in Animal Science, as opposed to a B.S. in Agriculture. The School of Agriculture currently provides one Bachelor of Science in Agriculture with 11 concentrations. This proposal was to pull two of those concentrations – animal science and pre-veterinary science – from that umbrella degree program and to create a standalone degree program in agriculture. The change was expected to improve recruiting efforts and enhance graduate career opportunities. The next step would be to seek approval from THEC.

Trustee Allcott moved to send this academic program modification for a B.S. in Animal Science to the Board for approval and to place it on the Board's regular agenda. Trustee Harper seconded the motion. Following a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Lee 03/17/22

AGENDA ITEM 9 – EXPEDITED LETTER OF NOTIFICATION FOR THE B.S. IN INTERDISCIPLINARY COMPUTING AND INNOVATION

Provost Bruce stated that she was excited to share information about the new B.S. program in Interdisciplinary Computing and Innovation. She also stated that in recent years THEC developed an expedited process to support universities in new academic areas of high demand. She stated this program was eligible for the expedited process and she wanted to share the information with the Board as an informational item.

The program was designed to address the growing need to create a workforce that can apply computing solutions across multiple disciplines. Students will study three core areas: computing, innovation and entrepreneurship, and then choose a cognate area, an area of expertise such as biology, animal science, or nursing. This would be a degree program for students who want careers where they could apply state of the art computing solutions to a field of interest.

AGENDA ITEM 10 – QUALITY ASSURANCE FUNDING

Provost Bruce stated that during a May informational session, she provided an in-depth presentation about how success in Academic Affairs was defined and measured, how hundreds of metrics are tracked and rolled up into four primary metrics: degrees awarded, externally funded R&D expenditures, quality assurance, and gain. All of these metrics collapse into the quality assurance score. All data is submitted to THEC and we are provided a score. Tennessee Tech’s latest score was 95 out of 100, which was considered to be a very high score. This score would result in \$2,500,000 funding to the university.

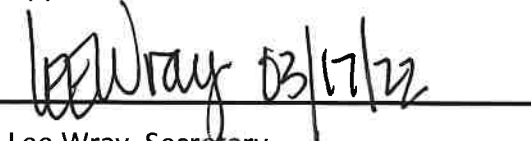
AGENDA ITEM 11 – OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

AGENDA ITEM 12 – ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Academic & Student Affairs Committee adjourned at 9:49 a.m.

Approved,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lee Wray", with the date "03/17/22" written to the right of the signature. The signature is written over a horizontal line.

Lee Wray, Secretary