

EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MINUTES

April 23, 2021
Johnson City, Tennessee

The quarterly meeting of the East Tennessee State University Board of Trustees was held at 1 p.m. on Friday, April 23 at the Model Mill, 602 Sevier Street, the new home of ETSU's Alumni Association and Advancement offices, and via teleconference. The meeting was livestreamed.

I. Call to Order

Chair Scott Niswonger called the meeting to order at 1 p.m.

In his opening remarks, Chair Niswonger spoke about upcoming commencement ceremonies that will include a special ceremony for members of the Class of 2020. The Chair also referenced the following milestones in his opening remarks:

- ETSU Health has administered over 1,700 COVID-19 vaccines to people across the region.
- The College of Public Health launched Center for Cardiovascular Risks Research.
- The Quillen College of Medicine was nationally ranked in U.S. News and World Report as one of the top schools in the country for preparing students to serve in rural medicine.
- The College of Nursing was recently named as one of the top RN-BSN programs in Tennessee.
- Dr. Cathy Galyon from the Clemmer College was named incoming chair of the American Council on Rural Special Education.
- Clemmer College also launched a new mentoring program that will pair students of color with upperclassmen in the college to provide guidance and support.
- The College of Business and Technology and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Tennessee announced the creation of the Blue Sky Tennessee Institute.
- The Gatton College of Pharmacy Generation RX earned its fourth national award.
- A unique Spring Homecoming included an opening celebration for University Commons, a new park in the center of campus

II. Roll Call

Secretary Green called the role.

The following Trustees were present:

Janet Ayers
Virginia Foley

Dorothy Grisham
Linda Latimer
Scott Niswonger
Austin Ramsey
Ron Ramsey
Melissa Steagall-Jones
Kelly Wolfe

Secretary Green said a physical quorum was present with Trustees Ayers and Wolfe participating in the meeting via Zoom. In accordance with Tennessee Code § 8-44-108 section (c) (3), Secretary Green asked Trustees two questions for the record – If each Trustee participating remotely could clearly hear and participate in the meeting, and second, if any other persons were present in the room of those participating remotely. Trustees Ayers and Wolfe indicated that they could clearly hear and participate, and that no other persons were present with them. Those Trustees participating in-person affirmed their abilities to hear those participating via teleconference. Secretary Green also noted that because Trustees were participating in the meeting remotely, all votes would be taken by roll call.

III. Public Comments

Because attendance to the meeting was limited to Trustees, presenters and support staff due to University COVID-19 protocols, Chairman Niswonger said public comments could not be received in the traditional manner. However, comments for the Board may be submitted via email to trustees@etsu.edu.

IV. Approval of Minutes from February 19, 2020

Trustee Ron Ramsey made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Trustee Steagall-Jones and unanimously approved by roll call vote.

V. Report from the Finance and Administration Committee

Trustee Ron Ramsey said the committee approved the spring estimated and July proposed budgets. The budgets were reviewed and discussed in detail at the called meeting on March 26. Additionally, the committee received a quarterly financial update, which compared operating expenses and revenue from the current year to the prior year. He said expenditures continue to be in alignment with October budget revisions. The committee reviewed the proposed tuition and fees for fiscal year 2022.

A. Tuition and Mandatory Fees

Dr. B.J. King presented the proposed increases for fiscal year (FY) 22 as explained in detail on page 13 of the agenda materials. She said state appropriations, and tuition and fees account for 92 percent of the revenue for the main campus budget (\$230 million). The Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) calculates that the state contributes 55 percent of the salary increase included in the governor's budget and the other 45 percent must be funded outside our appropriation, she said.

While ETSU did not raise tuition or fees in FY21, staff recommends that the Board adopt of a 1.98 percent tuition increase for undergraduates (\$150 for two terms; \$75 per term) and 1.69 percent increase for graduate-level for FY22. The Board approved the out-of-state tuition reset at the September 2021 meeting therefore the university is not seeking any additional changes to out-of-state tuition.

Dr. King said ETSU continues to be an affordable option and the proposed combined tuition and mandatory fee increase of 1.93% equates to \$91.50 increase per term for 15 credit hours of enrollment (undergraduate). A public comment period on the proposed increase was held April 1-16.

The tuition increase would fund the salary pool increase, a portion of employee benefits not covered by the state, and faculty tenure and promotion, Dr. King said. A 1.72 percent increase in mandatory fees would fund a wellness initiative proposed by the Student Government Association (SGA) and year four of a technology access fee increase.

THEC will approve a binding limit on tuition increase at its May meeting, however at this time

Trustee Grisham made a motion to approve the proposed tuition and mandatory fee increase that was seconded by Trustee Steagall-Jones and was unanimously approved following a roll call vote.

VI. Report from the Academic, Research & Student Success Committee

In her report, Chair Latimer said the committee approved two action items related to academic program proposals to establish a Master of Science in Orthotics and Prosthetics and a Master of Fine Arts in Digital Media. Additionally, Dr. Bishop presented promotion and tenure candidates and the academic calendars for 2023-24, 2024-25, and 2025-26. Both items were unanimously approved by roll call vote. Dr. Mike Hoff's presentation of 2019 Graduates Post-Graduation Outcomes and 2021 Outlook led to robust discussion about students pursuing rewarding career paths, Chair Latimer stated.

VII. Report from the Audit Committee

In her report, Chair Steagall-Jones said the committee conducted its annual review of audit policies: Internal Audit Policy, Preventing and Reporting Fraud, Waste and Abuse Policy, and Conflict of Interest Policy. The committee also reviewed revisions to the audit plan, which included three additions: Men's and Women's basketball programs, and state audit follow-up. She noted that athletic programs go through an audit anytime there is a change in leadership. The Audit Committee also reviewed one investigation that was completed during the period from February 1-March 31, 2021. Dr. BJ King provided an overview of the audited financial statements from the Comptroller of the Treasury before the committee went into executive session.

VIII. Consent Agenda

- A. Minutes from February 19, 2021 Finance and Administration Committee
- B. Minutes from March 26, 2021 Finance and Administration Committee
- C. Minutes from February 19, 2021 Academic, Research, and Student Success Committee.
- D. Minutes from February 19, 2021 Audit Committee
- E. President Emeritus Contract for Dr. Stanton
- F. Promotion and Tenure of Faculty Members
- G. New Academic Program Proposal for the Establishment of a Master of Science in Orthotics and Prosthetics
- H. New Academic Program Proposal for the Establishment of a Master of Fine Arts in Digital Media
- I. Academic Calendars for 2023-2024, 2024-2025, 2025-2026
- J. Spring Estimated and July Proposed Budgets

On behalf of the Audit Committee, Trustee Steagall-Jones requested to add the Revisions to the FY 2019-20 Audit Plan to the consent agenda.

Trustee Ron Ramsey made a motion to add the audit plan revisions to the consent agenda. Trustee Latimer seconded the motion and the plan was added to the consent agenda following a unanimous roll call vote.

Trustee Ron Ramsey made a motion to adopt the consent agenda as presented that was seconded by Trustee Steagall-Jones. The consent agenda was adopted following a unanimous roll call vote.

IX. Rule on Student Immunization Requirements

Dr. Mark Fulks said the Board of Trustees is required to endorse a rule on immunization requirements for students. A summary is provided in the agenda packet.

The proposed rule specifies:

- Immunizations students are required to obtain prior to enrollment at ETSU
- Immunizations required if a student elects to live in on-campus housing
- Acceptable forms of proof of immunization
- Exceptions to the immunization requirements
- Required notices and acknowledgments

Approval would allow other immunizations to be added without having to change the rule, additionally, there are some exceptions from the immunization requirement that are outlined in the rule. Students in Health Sciences clinical programs may have additional vaccination requirements as defined by the Centers for Disease Controls.

Dr. Fulks said there were currently no plans for ETSU to require the COVID-19 vaccine because it is under emergency use and there is no legislation in place to create exemptions for those who choose to opt-out.

Trustee Latimer made a motion to approve the Rule on Student Immunization Requirements that was seconded by Trustee Grisham and approved following a unanimous roll call vote.

X. Student Success, Support and Engagement Program Highlights

Dr. Joe Sherlin provided the Board with an overview of four ETSU programs focused on student success, support, and engagement including:

1. **Buccaneer Involvement Guides (BIGs)**—Third and fourth year students are selected to attend an ETSU 1020 class at least one day a week and lead the group in and out of class by mentoring new students. Dr. Sherlin said students who meet with their mentor are two to three times more likely to attend events and participate in activities.
2. **Supplemental Instruction (SI)**— Supplemental Instruction (SI) is a structured study group designed to help students achieve success in "historically difficult" courses: those with consistently high rates of D's, F's, and/or Withdrawals. SI sessions are FREE and open to all students enrolled in the supported courses. A trained SI leader facilitates three hour-long sessions per week, focusing on difficult course content. These sessions serve to reinforce course material, clarify confusing concepts, and approach the information from a fun and engaging perspective. Students who participate in these sessions reported achieving almost a letter grade higher.
3. **ETSU Votes**—This is a non-partisan effort to engage students in voter engagement and civic engagement. Nationally, we have seen a decline in voter participation among college-age. The program has received excellent outcomes, as ETSU's student voter participation rate increased from 16.2 percent in 2014 to 35.2 percent in 2018.
4. **ETSU Veterans Affairs**—The Office of Veteran Affairs provides outstanding academic and social support to student veterans including, but not limited to:
 - In-state tuition rate for GI BILL recipients
 - Priority registration for current students
 - MARC access with free printing, coffee, and snacks (reopening in fall 2021)
 - VA work study opportunities
 - Membership in the Student Veteran's AssociationAs of Fall 2020, ETSU has been named a Military Friendly School for 11 consecutive years, ranking No. 9 in the country.

XI. ETSU STRIVE Program Spotlight

Dr. Allen Gorman, Chair of the Department of Management of Marketing in the College of Business and Technology, provided an overview of the Startup Training Resources Inspiring Veteran Entrepreneurship (STRIVE) Program.

STRIVE is a free veteran entrepreneurship training program offered in partnership with Syracuse University's Institute for Veteran and Military Families (IVMF). Participants gain confidence as they take an early stage business or business idea through a structured process utilizing a combination of three learning practices – online assignments, face-to-face instruction and mentorship matching based on each business concept.

XII. College Spotlight: Honors College

Dr. Chris Keller, Dean of ETSU's Honors College, provided an overview of the College to the Board of Trustees. The Honors College houses five unique honors programs - Bert C. Bach Fine & Performing Arts, Changemaker, Global Citizen, Honors-In-Discipline and Midway Scholars Programs - each one developed to provide a strong balance of curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities and experiences, each one suited to serve the personal, academic, and professional needs of its students, and each one geared to transform lives and elevate communities in Northeast Tennessee and beyond.

The Honors College also oversees and promotes Educational Abroad opportunities for ETSU students and faculty and supports International Students at ETSU. Additionally, Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities connects students with faculty mentors who help students conduct original research or creative projects. Undergraduate research is increasingly important in helping students become more competitive for careers as well as graduate school and professional school admissions.

A new Center for Global Engagement will begin July 1, 2021. Dr. Keller said he hopes the Honors College can help students "create a remarkable story" through experiential learning opportunities so students can leave ETSU with more than a good GPA. Among the recent initiatives for the Honors College is a new study abroad partnership with Harlaxton College in Grantham, England, and the Global Year Program that focuses on a single country during a yearlong series of events and course enhancements infusing international perspectives into the teaching, research and service missions of ETSU.

XIII. President's Report

In his report, President Noland reflected on the how the institution has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic over the past year. As the campus navigated the complications of the pandemic, it placed its primary focus on the health and safety of students, faculty and staff.

President Noland reviewed selected initiatives from the 2021 Spring Semester, including national searches underway for the new Provost/Senior Vice President for

Academics and for a Dean of the College of Nursing—noting that both searches were in the final hiring stages.

In his Legislative Update, President Noland congratulated Trustees Ayers, DeCarlo and Steagall-Jones on their confirmation by the General Assembly to their respective appointments to the Board of Trustees. He indicated that conversations continue with ETSU's elected officials in hopes of securing funding for the proposed ETSU Academic Building.

President Noland provided an enrollment and budget update, reporting that traditional-aged students are delaying college-selection decisions due to lack of support that they would typically receive during their junior and senior year of high school. For those reasons, ETSU is offering enhanced personalized support to help students navigate the college going process.

The President next discussed the ETSU's new strategic visioning process for ETSU – the Committee for 125 Chapter II. The Committee for 125 Chapter II consists of local and national leaders and has its first meeting on April 28, 2021. Six taskforces, including: Academics, Equity and Inclusion, ETSU Health, Student Success and Experience, Research and Scholarship, and Fiscal Sustainability have been established and will begin meeting soon. President Noland says he hopes to have a draft vision to campus in October and present a final report to the Board of Trustees in November.

President Noland concluded his report by stating that the campus is planning for the return of students in August for a fall semester that will hopefully resemble the pace, flow, and activity during the 2019-20 academic year.

XIV. Resolution for Dr. Wilsie Bishop

Trustee Ron Ramsey made a motion to adopt the resolution extending heartfelt appreciation to Dr. Wilsie Bishop. The motion was seconded by Trustee Grisham and Trustees unanimously voted to adopt the resolution.

XV. Resolution for Mr. Austin Ramsey

Trustee Ron Ramsey made a motion to adopt the resolution extending heartfelt appreciation to Student Trustee Austin Ramsey that was seconded by Trustee Steagall-Jones. Trustees unanimously voted to adopt the resolution.

XVI. Selection of New Student Trustee

Trustee Latimer made a motion to accept President Noland's nomination of Ms. Kara Gilliam to the position of Student Trustee for 2021-22. Trustee Grisham seconded the motion. Trustees unanimously voted to select Ms. Gilliam as the 2021-22 Student Trustee.

XVII. Other Business

No other business was brought before the ETSU Board of Trustees.

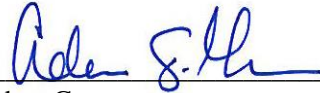
XVIII. Executive Session

The Board of Trustees determined it was not necessary to meet in Executive Session.

XIX. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Adam Green", written over a horizontal line.

Adam Green
Secretary of the Board of Trustees

Approved by the Board of Trustees at its September 17, 2021 meeting.