

**Meeting of the Tennessee State University Board of Trustees  
Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Committee Meeting  
March 16, 2023  
Tennessee State University – Hankal Hall**

**MINUTES**

**Committee Members Present:** Trustees Pam Martin, Andre Johnson, Bill Johnson, and Shaun Wimberly.

**Other Board Members Present:** Trustees Steve Corbeil, Obie McKenzie, Deborah Cole, Van Pinnock

**University Staff Present:** President Glenda Glover; Laurence Pendleton, General Counsel and Board Secretary; Dean Frank Stevenson, Assoc. Vice President of Student Affairs; Terrence Izzard, Assoc. Vice President of Enrollment Management; Dr. Robbie Melton, Graduate School Dean and Assoc. Vice President and Dr. Arlene Nicholas-Phillips, Liaison to the Board of Trustees.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Trustee Martin called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. on March 16, 2023.

**II. ROLL CALL/DECLARATION OF A QUORUM**

Board Secretary Pendleton called the roll at the Committee Chair's request. Trustees Pam Martin, Andre Johnson, Bill Jonson, and Shaun Wimberly were present. Secretary Pendleton announced the presence of a quorum. Chair Martin confirmed that there was a physical quorum present.

**III. APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 17, 2022, COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

Trustee Martin proceeded to the approval of the November 17, 2022, Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Committee meeting minutes.

Trustee Martin moved to recommend to the full Board the approval of the November 17, 2022 Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Committee meeting minutes, as contained in the Board materials for the March 16, 2023, Board meeting. Trustee Johnson seconded the motion, which carried by roll call vote with Trustees Martin, A. Johnson and B. Johnson voting in favor.

**IV. APPROVAL OF ACADEMIC PROGRAM MODIFICATION – CHANGE IN CREDIT HOURS FOR B.S. IN BIOLOGY**

Trustee Martin announced the next agenda item as the approval of an academic program modification to change the required credit hours for the Bachelor of Science in Biology. Trustee Martin asked President Glover or her designee to provide pertinent information related to this

agenda item. The material for this agenda item is contained in the Board materials for March 16, 2023.

President Glover designated Provost Melton to present on this agenda item. Dr. Melton provided a report. She made a request to approve a change to the number of credit hours for a B.S. in Biology. Dr. Melton noted that the B.S. in Biology was excepted from a 120-hour requirement applicable to most other undergraduate degrees. It required 122 hours. The additional hours became a burden to students in terms of the pathway to graduation. The Department of Biological Sciences identified way to align its B.S. program to meet the 120-hour norms. There would be a reduction in elective courses, not the Biology core requirements under the proposal.

Dr. Glover stated that this was a necessary motion and would better align the University's motion with other institutions.

Trustee Martin thanks Dr. Melton for her detailed report.

Trustee A. Johnson asked whether Dr. Melton could include information in future reports to let the Committee and Board know how, if at all, there is an impact on enrollment when there is a change request. Dr. Glover shared that students have asked why the University requires more credit hours than other institutions to which they've been granted admission.

Trustee Martin moved to recommend to the full Board the approval of an academic program modification to change the credit hours for the Bachelor of Science in Biology program, as contained in the Board materials for the March 16, 2023, Board meeting. The motion was seconded by Trustee B. Johnson. Having been put to vote, the motion carried by roll call vote, with votes in favor by Trustee Martin, A. Johnson, and B. Johnson.

## **V. REPORT ON SACSCOC ACCREDITATION REVIEW MATTERS**

Trustee Martin asked President Glover or her designee to provide pertinent information related to this agenda item. The material for this agenda item is contained in the Board materials for March 16, 2023. This is an informational discussion item only without a vote requirement.

Dr. Glover asked Dr. Charlise Anderson, who worked with the University, to provide a report. Dr. Anderson noted three SACSCOC matters in her report. First, Dr. Anderson reported on the University's reaffirmation of accreditation. At the December 2021 SACSCOC Board meeting, it reaffirmed the Institution's accreditation for 10 years, which is the maximum number of years. The next reaffirmation will be in 2030. In January 2022, the University received an SACSCOC action letter notifying the University of its reaffirmation and requesting a monitoring report.

Second, there was a SACSCOC verification visit. The verification visit will happen on April 18, 2023. Dr. Glover noted that the Department of Education required a virtual meeting during COVID, but now SACSCOC wants to meet in-person.

Third, Dr. Anderson reported that Avon Williams offerings were expanded with Board approval in March 2022. This was submitted as a substantive change request to the SACSCOC. The

SACSCOC Board of Trustees, in June 2022, approved the Substantive Change Prospectus to expand course offerings for the MBA program at Avon Williams. It authorized a Substantive Change Committee visit. The visit will happen on April 18-20, 2023. The University conducted a mock visit in preparation for that meeting.

There was a question regarding the monitoring report. Dr. Glover explained that this was to ensure that the University is in-fact meeting standards. The report will be due in September 2023.

## **VI. ACADEMIC AFFAIRS REPORT**

Trustee Martin announced the next agenda item as the Academic Affairs Report. Information regarding this Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Committee agenda item is included in the Board materials dated March 16, 2023. Trustee Martin asked President Glover or her designee to provide pertinent information related to this agenda item. This is an informational discussion item only, so no vote was required.

Dr. Glover designated Provost Melton to comment on this agenda item. Dr. Melton advised the Committee of a new system employed in the Spring 2023 through mid-term period to monitor student academic progress. The Office of Academic Affairs, deans, chairs, faculty, and staff implemented an EAB tool – an Early Academic Alert System – in an effort to provide academic support services and tutoring to students, beginning as early as the third week of the semester.

Also, a retention plan was developed, to include retention coordinators and two students from different majors, to help mentor students. Academic coaches are offered for upperclassmen. The Office of Academic Affairs provided visits to students living off-campus at hotels. Three of the major recommendations suggested by students were implemented immediately. Students requested academic support at the hotels. Academic coaches are scheduled to go to the students at the hotels. Academic support hours were extended to include evenings and weekend hours, 7 days a week. Moreover, it was discovered that online students needed additional support and mentoring, so they are being provided with those services.

Dr. Melton noted the need for freshmen to receive an introduction to majors upon first stepping onto campus. This is intended to help provide services to students from the beginning of their education through workforce entry.

Dr. Melton advised that the University is moving forward with increasing its impact. She noted a desire to move from R2 to R1.

Dr. Melton shared that over 800 honors students will be recognized at convocation.

Trustee Martin thanked Dr. Melton for her report.

Trustee McKenzie discussed other colleges and universities who are using hotels to assist with housing needs. He requested that the University reach out to some of those universities to gather good ideas that those institutions are employing. Dr. Melton stated that other universities, including those within the UT system and at the University of Memphis use hotels. She has been

in contact with those schools to discuss support services. Trustee Martin asked Dr. Melton to include that information in her next report.

A discussion took place regarding students with undeclared majors. There was a request to report data that captures and reports on the impact of the new pathway system. Dr. Melton shared that there are currently over 300 undeclared students. She will come back with additional data to gauge the impact of new program at later meetings.

Student trustee Wimberly congratulated and thanked President Glover for progress with respect to academics. He reported that many students were curious about academic performance and how that would be impacted by the placement of students in hotels. He was happy with the University's progress. He asked how information about available resources and plans can and are being shared with students. Dr. Melton discussed how the information was being pushed out to students and the frequency with which information is being pushed out to students. Trustee Wimberly suggested face-to-face communications with students, such as by using SGA, Tiger Pals, and other students as a means to communicate resources. He would like to see social media information highlighting University resources and accomplishments. He would like to see communications expanding beyond emails. Dr. Melton agreed and acknowledged her affection for using technology.

Trustee Wimberly made a recommendation to increase the number of student mentors for each major in the pathway program.

There was a discussion between academic performance of students on-campus vs. in hotels. Academic probation and academic suspension figures were measured. However, the numbers were not quite the same because there are more upperclassmen in hotels and freshmen on-campus. The number of students on academic probation was greater for those in residence halls than in hotels, but, again, the status of the students compared was not the same. A request was made for additional information comparing students by grade level.

## **VII. STUDENT AFFAIRS REPORT**

Trustee Martin announced the next agenda item as the Student Affairs Report. Information regarding this Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Committee agenda item is included in the Board materials dated March 16, 2023. Trustee Martin asked President Glover or her designee to provide pertinent information related to this agenda item. This is an informational discussion item only so no vote was required.

Dr. Glover designated Dean Stevenson to comment on this agenda item. Dean Stevenson reported that the TSU Band was not only nominated for two Grammy awards, but it won the awards. The TSU Marching Band is now known as "the Grammy Award Winning Aristocratic of Bands." The AOB made history as the first collegiate marching band to win the music industry's highest honor for best roots gospel album, titled "The Urban Hymnal," at the 65<sup>th</sup> Annual Grammy Awards ceremony. Dean Stevenson express pride in Dr. McDonald and the students who brought national recognition to the hard work of the Aristocratic of Bands. A round of applause was given in recognition of this accomplishment.

Dean Stevenston reported that the seventh cohort of a leadership training program, Leadership TSU, is underway.

Dean Stevenson talked about housing matters. All students who requested housing for the Spring semester were accommodated. The number of hotels was reduced from 3 to 2. Jefferson Flats was brought on as another property that can be utilized for housing purposes. It has been improved upon and is available for nontraditional and graduate students.

Dean Stevenson reviewed housing plans, including with and without hotel rooms available. The University is predicting that there will be 4,313 students who will need housing in the Fall 2023 semester. Of those students, 354 would be in hotels. They are planning to house 4,360 students in the Fall semester, and two hotels would be needed. Some students reported enjoyed being in the hotels. Housing applications were opened earlier this year, in February, and for returning students in March. This is helpful because it helps to plan for those students who want to live in the hotels. They have found that older students prefer the hotel experience. Dr. Glover added that some parents expressed that they would rather their students be placed in hotels, if on-campus housing is not available, rather than the student not being able to attend. The University is not allowing first-time students in hotels.

Dean Stevenson reported that there were 77 first-time freshmen in hotels previously. He pointed out that some students may did not have enough credits to be qualified as second year students (for example, a student with 27 credits but who has been enrolled at TSU for 2 semesters). Therefore, for some “freshmen,” is was not the student’s first year at TSU, wherein the student was coming to TSU for the first time directly from high school. He discussed administrative decisions that were made to best benefit students. Dean Stevenson said that a housing plan is underway. Dean Stevenson stated that there was never an intention to take beds off-line without first having other beds available, as was reported in the Comptroller’s report. Chair Cole asked Dr. Glover to make sure that any changes be put in writing. A recommendation was made to make sure that terms are adequately defined so that there is no confusion about how terms are defined and being used. Dr. Glover agreed that some clarity would be helpful with respect to terminology and definitions and that that would have helped to clarify the situation with the Comptroller’s Report.

Dean Stevenson stated that enrollment and housing are being differently and closely monitored.

A discussion ensued concerning available beds and enrollment data. Board materials at pp. 98-99 were considered. Dr. Glover reported that there are 3,922 total beds available with supplemental housing, and excluding hotels as an option. It is anticipated that the University will need 4,313 beds for the Fall 2023 semester, using current projections. Of those beds, 1,600 will be needed for first-time freshmen students.

Again, the need for more precise definitions and terms was considered. Trustee Martin suggested that after the precise criteria for hotel accommodations is determined, that no exceptions be made, even if a parent requests an exception.

Trustee Pinnick asked about the projections, percentages, and need to be accurate with data. Chair Cole stated that this is part of the charge of the Special Housing Committee and among the items that must be worked out.

Dr. Glover noted that admissions to the University does not guarantee housing and that efforts are being taken to communicate with prospective students regarding housing limitations. Dr. Glover also stated that admissions should not be tied to housing, because it is another barrier to educating students who are already facing barriers to higher education.

Trustee Johnson indicated that separating admissions and housing is beneficial because it is prudent.

Chair Cole requested that the Special Housing Committee work through these issues, including required disclosures, communications to students and prospective students, and ensuring that there are well-defined terms.

Trustee Johnson noted the need to identify, as a separate figure, the number of students that the University can educate, considering factors such as the number of faculty and other services. Dr. Melton stated that this is where Academic Affairs comes in to make sure that they are meeting academic needs. Dr. Melton stated that she is expecting 2,605 full-time new freshman coming in the Fall 2023. About 1-2 years ago, the number of total students that could be educated was about 10,000.

Chair Cole asked Dr. Glover to work with the Special Housing Committee to get them the data and other information they've requested and need. Trustee Corbeil asked for financial data to understand the financial impact of the different models that the Committee is reviewing.

VP Allen reported that for the prior year, 5 hotels cost a net \$7.2 million, which was \$5.2 million for the Fall and \$2 million for the Spring. For the fall 2023, the request would be for about \$2-\$2.5 million for hotels, depending on which hotels are selected. This figure includes related costs, such as security and transportation, and includes other supplemental housing like House of God housing. Chair Cole requested that the Special Housing Committee analyze TSU housing costs per bed versus other university's reported costs, including what the reported costs of other universities included, such as whether they included security costs in their calculations.

Chair Cole stated that any additional questions for the Special Housing Committee can be sent to Secretary Pendleton, who will make sure the questions are shared with Trustee Pinnick and the Special Housing Committee. Secretary Pendleton shared that Board members are all welcome to attend the Special Housing Committee meeting.

## **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Trustee Martin asked if there was any additional business. Seeing none, she moved to adjourn the meeting, and the motion was seconded by Trustee B. Johnson which carried unanimously by roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 10:39 a.m.