

**Meeting of the Tennessee State University Board of Trustees  
Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Committee Meeting  
June 17, 2021  
Tennessee State University – Electronic  
MINUTES**

**Committee Members Present:** Trustees Pam Martin, Andre Johnson, Ali Sekmen, and Non-voting Member: Tiara Thomas.

**Other Board Members Present:** Trustees Richard Lewis, Van Pinnock and Joseph Walker III

**University Staff Present:** President Glenda Glover; Laurence Pendleton, General Counsel and Board Secretary; Dr. Michael Harris, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; Dr. Curtis Johnson, Chief of Staff; Dean Frank Stevenson, Assoc. Vice President of Student Affairs; Douglas Allen, Vice President of Business and Finance; Dr. Frances Williams, Assoc. Vice President of Research & Sponsored Programs; 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 8:33 a.m. on June 17, 2021. Trustee Martin then moved to make certain findings on the record regarding the necessity for conducting the meeting electronically without a physical quorum present due to the coronavirus pandemic. The Committee is set to take up important matters. Participation by electronic means is necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic and accompanying guidance from the Center for Disease Control (“CDC”) and the State of Tennessee to limit face-to-face contact whenever possible. Electronic participation for the Committee meeting is necessary for the safety of Board members, staff, and guests.

Trustee Martin asked the committee members to state now if any of the committee members cannot hear or speak with each other. No committee members answered in the affirmative. Trustee Martin also asked the committee members to indicate if someone is present with them from the location in which they are calling. No committee members indicated there was anyone present.

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

Board Secretary Pendleton called the roll at the committee chair’s request. Trustees Pam Martin, Andre Johnson, Ali Sekmen, and Tiara Thomas were present. Secretary Pendleton announced the presence of a quorum.

**III. APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 11, 2021, COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

Trustee Martin proceeded to the approval of the March 11, 2021, Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Committee meeting minutes.

Trustee Martin moved to recommend to the full Board the approval of the March 11, 2021, Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Committee meeting minutes, as contained in the Board materials for the June 17, 2021, Board meeting. Trustee Sekmen seconded the motion, which carried unanimously by roll call.

#### **IV. APPROVAL OF 2020-2021 TENURE AND PROMOTION RECOMMENDATIONS**

Trustee Martin announced the next agenda item as the approval of 2020-2021 tenure and promotion recommendation. She 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 Meeting materials for June 17, 2021.

President Glover called on Provost Harris to present this item. Provost Harris reminded the committee of the rigorous process that was undertaken in order to achieve these tenure and promotion recommendations. He stressed even during a COVID year, the Academic Affairs department was still able to maintain their commitment to quality in achieving these results.

The list of recommended candidates for tenure and promotion could be found on pages #132 through #134 in the Board Meeting materials.

Trustee Martin moved to recommend to the full Board the approval of the 2020-2021 tenure and promotion recommendations, as contained in the Board materials for the June 17, 2021, Board meeting. Trustee Sekmen seconded and the motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

#### **V. APPROVAL OF ACADEMIC PROGRAM MODIFICATION – A CHANGE TO THE M.S. PSYCHOLOGY, COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY CONCENTRATION ADMISSION STANDARDS**

Trustee Martin announced the next item on the agenda is the approval of an academic program modification – a change to the MS Psychology, Counseling Psychology concentration admission standards. She asked President Glover or her designee to provide pertinent information related to this agenda item. The material is included in the June 17, 2021, Board meeting materials.

President Glover asked Provost Harris to respond to this agenda item. Provost Harris explained that the two modifications being proposed were, (1) the removal of the GRE and MAT as requirements for admission, and (2) to add both a statistics and a research methods course as pre-requisites. He stated that this was part of a continuing effort to attract students and ensure their success. He also stated that more similar changes will be proposed in the future.

Trustee Martin moved to recommend to the full Board the approval of an academic program modification – a change to the MS Psychology, Counseling Psychology concentration admission standards, as contained in the Board materials for the June 17, 2021, Board meeting. Trustee Johnson seconded and the motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

## **VI. APPROVAL OF ACADEMIC PROGRAM MODIFICATION – A CHANGE TO THE M.S. BIOLOGY ADMISSION STANDARDS**

Trustee Martin introduced the next item on the agenda as the approval of the academic program modification – a change to the MS Biology admission standards. She asked President Glover or her designee to provide pertinent information related to this agenda item. The material is included in the June 17, 2021, Board meeting materials.

President Glover asked Provost Harris to present on this item. Provost Harris explained that similarly to the previous agenda item, the modification proposed was the removal of the GRE requirement for admission. This was an effort to remain competitive to other MS in Biology programs and attract qualified students.

Trustee Martin moved to recommend to the full Board the approval of an academic program modification – a change to the MS Biology admission standards, as contained in the Board materials for the June 17, 2021, Board meeting. Trustee Sekmen seconded and the motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Trustee Sekmen commented that some other institutions were considering relaxing the requirements for ACT as well as the GRE and asked if we had intentions of doing the same. President Glover responded that we were in continuing discussions about this topic.

## **VII. APPROVAL OF ACADEMIC PROGRAM MODIFICATION – A MOVE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE FROM THE COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS TO THE COLLEGE OF PUBLIC SERVICE**

Trustee Martin introduced the next item on the agenda as the approval of the academic program modification – a move of the Department of Criminal Justice from the College of Liberal Arts to the College of Public Service. She shared that at this time, this item has been tabled for further internal discussion and consideration.

## **VIII. APPROVAL OF TSU INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY POLICY**

Trustee Martin announced the next agenda item as the approval of TSU intellectual property policy. She asked President Glover or her designee to provide pertinent information related to this agenda item. The material is included in the June 17, 2021, Board meeting packet.

President Glover asked Dr. Frances Williams to comment on this agenda item. Dr. Williams shared that following the implementation of the FOCUS Act, the policies held under the Tennessee Board of Regents automatically became TSU policies unless the Board of Trustees adopted a new policy in any specific area. The Division of Research and Sponsored Programs embarked on a review and revamping of the TBR policy to develop a new Intellectual Property policy. This was with the intention of tailoring a specific policy for TSU.

Dr. Williams added that the new Intellectual Property policy was developed by reviewing IP policies at other well-regarded research universities, inviting and receiving input from several campus constituents, and obtaining legal sufficiency review by staff in the Office of the General Counsel. The policy is outlined on pages #145 through #154 of the Board Meeting materials for the June 17, 2021, meeting.

Trustee Martin then moved to recommend to the full Board the approval of the TSU Intellectual Property policy, as contained in the Board materials for the June 17, 2021, Board meeting. Trustee Sekmen seconded and the motion carried unanimously by the roll call vote.

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

Trustee Martin introduced the next item on the agenda as the report on SACSCOC accreditation review matters. Trustee Martin asked President Glover or her designee to provide pertinent information related to this agenda item, as contained in the Board materials for the June 17, 2021, Board meeting. This is an informational discussion item only so no vote will be required.

President Glover called on the Executive Director for SACSCOC Accreditation, Dr. Charlise Anderson give information relating to this agenda item. Dr. Anderson stated that she was happy for the opportunity to share the SACSCOC reaffirmation of accreditation process with the committee. She stated that in July 2020 and under the leadership of Provost Harris, her team began a self-study to address the university's reaffirmation of accreditation. She stated that 83 programs were under review: 1 Associates, 39 Bachelors, 24 Masters, 7 Doctorates, 1 Ed. Specialist and 11 Graduate Certificates. Dr. Anderson stated that she and her term were able to successfully complete the task of preparing for the SACSCOC Visiting Committee due to the fact that everyone on campus came together and worked together. She shared that a total of 19 interviews were held over a two-day period. In the end the final reaffirmation of accreditation report showed that we were compliant in 72 of the 74 standards and that this was huge! The two remaining standards to be addressed referred to Institutional Audit.

President Glover then called on Provost Harris to discuss the next steps in the process. He outlined all the accomplishments and thanked President Glover for her leadership in helping us all achieve so much in a short time. Provost Harris stated that he and others were working with the auditors on a daily basis and making considerable progress. He reminded the committee that the SACSCOC Board of Trustees Reaffirmation decision will be voted on December 4<sup>th</sup> -7<sup>th</sup> and that he believed that TSU will be reaffirmed for another 10 years.

President Glover assured the committee that the audit report will be completed and submitted timely and that we will meet all the requirements. Trustee Cole clarified that 2019 and 2020 are the reports that will be completed and submitted. She also suggested that any additional information that can be beneficial to TSU, should be submitted along with the reports.

Trustee Martin then thanked President Glover and Provost Harris for the report.

## **X. 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 your board materials dated June 17, 2021. Trustee Martin asked President Glover and her designee to provide pertinent information related to this agenda item. This is an informational discussion item only so no vote will be required.

President Glover asked Provost Harris to comment on this agenda item. Provost Harris detailed the outline found on pages #159 through #162 in the June 17, 2021, Board meeting materials. He gave highlights of Spring 2021 and plans for Fall 2021. He shared some of the academic program planning as it related to the proposed Ph.D. in Agriculture, BS in Africana/Black Studies, Ph.D. in Higher Education, Online MBA and the redesigned BS in interdisciplinary Studies.

Provost Harris then went on to briefly mention the implementation of the strategic plan “The Pathway to Excellence 2025”, the quality enhancement plan “CADENCE” and professional development opportunities for faculty and staff.

Trustee McKenzie asked if we had any curriculum to expose our students to blockchain. Provost Harris promised to get back to him. Trustee Van Pinnock wanted to know if the Chair is occupied for Banking. President Glover promised to work with the Dean in moving that seating process up. Trustee Cole was excited to learn about this, since she reminded the committee that it was both her and Ms. Delois Lewis who worked to get that Chair funded through the TN Bankers Association.

Several other comments were made by Trustee Pinnock and Student Trustee Tiara Thomas regarding programs and enhanced resources. Trustee Martin then thanked President Glover, Provost Harris and all others for the report. She also thanked everyone for their comments.

## **XI. STUDENT AFFAIRS REPORT**

Trustee Martin introduced the next item on the agenda as a Student Affairs report. Trustee Martin asked President Glover or her designee to provide pertinent information related to this agenda item. Information pertaining to this agenda item is included in the June 17, 2021, Board materials.

President Glover asked Dean Frank Stevenson to provide pertinent information related to this agenda item. Since this was an informational discussion item, no vote was required. Dean Stevenson shared updates which are outlined on pages #164 and #166 in the Board materials for the June 17, 2021 Board meeting. Dean Stevenson shared with the committee that the Tennessee State University ended last academic year with SEC week. This produced new student leaders who are: SGA President, Derek Sanders (Cincinnati, OH); SGA Vice President, Jabari Jefferson (Memphis, TN); Ms. TSU, Mallory Moore (Huntsville, AL); and Mr. TSU, Mark Davis (Cincinnati, OH).

Dean Stevenson took time to thank all the ‘front line’ workers on his team, namely the housing staff and Residence Life; the TSU Police Department; the IQ Team and all the student leaders. He stated that even during a pandemic, these groups kept working the frontline to ensure student safety and to provide the necessary student services. He wanted all to salute this group and he thanked them for doing an amazing job. Special mention was made to the nurse who was responsible for testing the students in the IQ Zone each day, even after sustaining a fall with injuries, she returned immediately to the job at hand with testing the students.

Dean Stevenson shared with the committee the impact of one of the Men’s Initiatives where the ‘murky middle students’ (GPA 2.2-2.8) are the ones being supported. He said that TSU had approximately 110 students falling into this category. They tend to be left out of the top and bottom academic group. Special mentoring is done for these students as they are assigned one to one mentor and matched with careers and relevant information to assist with matriculation. These students also get dedicated staff members who

work with them on a daily basis to ensure their success. They get academic coaching using the 'gap program.' Dean Stevenson was very proud of this model and stated that it could be reviewed as a national model for these students' success. After this cohort, the outcomes will be measured and the data will be released.

Dean Stevenson closed off his report by stating that his Division was getting ready for the return of campus life. Everyone was anticipating an exciting year and were all happy to move on from the COVID year. He mentioned that Trustee Thomas was instrumental in organizing a TSU Time Capsule to be buried with memorabilia from the unprecedented pandemic year. Dr. Cole took the opportunity to thank Dean Stevenson and the Student Affairs staff for the fantastic job they did in keeping the students engaged during the pandemic year. Trustee Thomas made a point that the students felt very comfortable and safe during the semester. She commented that it was a vast improvement from the semester before, and when compared to other institutions, TSU was doing a much better job with the students than many others. She publicly thanked President Glover and the administration.

Trustee Martin added to the compliments that President Glover and her administration did an amazing job in keeping everyone safe and on track during the past pandemic year. Trustee Martin proceeded to thank Trustee Ali Sekmen for his service on the Board of Trustees from its inception. She stated that everyone has grown together in their roles and that he has given great insight to the Board from a faculty perspective and that he would be missed. As she again thanked President Glover and Dean Stevenson for the report, she went ahead and welcomed the new faculty trustee, Dr. William Johnson.

## **XII. 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 Johnson which carried unanimously by roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 9:37 a.m.