



THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE, KNOXVILLE
CAMPUS ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES
September 23, 2022
KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Advisory Board met at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, September 23, 2022.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair John Tickle called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Roll call of board members conducted with the following present:

Mr. John Tickle, Chair, Ms. Jordan Brown, Mr. Allen Carter, Ms. Joan Heminway, Ms. Alexia Poe, Ms. Tomi Robb, and Mr. Tom Smith

III. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Mr. Tom Smith made a motion to approve the May 13, 2022, minutes provided the Secretary is authorized to make any necessary edits to correct spelling, grammatical, or format errors or other technical errors subsequently identified. Ms. Alexia Poe seconded the motion.

The motion was unanimously approved.

IV. RECOGNITION OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Chancellor Plowman introduced Ms. Jordan Brown, Student Government President, and Ms. Joan Heminway, Faculty representative and welcomed them to the advisory board.

V. CHANCELLOR'S UPDATE
Dr. Donde Plowman, Chancellor

Chancellor Plowman shared her thoughts about the fact the University of Tennessee is a university on the rise. Chancellor Plowman spoke of the work conducted over the summer to prepare for the record enrollment we are experiencing this fall. She shared information on the lease with the Holiday Inn and the incredible work completed by Dr. Frank Cuevas' team to make it resemble a residence hall. We continue to explore options to address the housing needs for the campus. Two new residence halls have been approved and one is in the design phase.

At the last meeting we emphasized the Office of Research, Innovation, and Economic Development. As a follow up, we are moving away from several grant proposals for small dollar amounts to applying for larger grants. The dollar amount on proposals submitted this year is double from last year and the dollar amount of awards we have received is up 64%. Submitting more big grants and getting more big grants is a sign of a university on the rise.

We have several initiatives around viewpoint diversity work. We are learning to listen and how to engage respectfully. Mr. Tyvi Small, Dr. Frank Cuevas, and Dr. Marianne Wanamaker have taken the lead on this project.

Chancellor Plowman shared information on the podcast hosted by Gov. Bill Haslam and Gov. Phil Bredesen – You Might Be Right. The Governors selected controversial issues and invited guests with opposite views to sit down for a discussion. Chancellor Plowman encouraged the group to listen to the podcast series. The video announcing the podcast was shared with the group.

The Institute for American Civics was funded by Governor Bill Lee with bipartisan support from the state legislature to focus on civil discourse and lack of civic engagement. Chancellor Plowman thinks we have a chance to be a leader in this space. Dr. Marianne Wanamaker is doing a fantastic job. Chancellor Plowman worked with Dr. Wanamaker and President Randy Boyd to establish the Board of Fellows.

Chancellor Plowman discussed the email she shared with the group regarding academic restructuring. Chancellor Plowman reviewed the process to reach the outcome of restructuring the College of Arts and Sciences. Three new units will be developed because of the change. The three units are a College of Music, the Howard Baker Center for Public Policy, and a third unit, which is currently unnamed, a school of interdisciplinary studies. The internal restructuring of the College of Arts and Sciences created three new units: arts and humanities, social and behavioral sciences, and natural sciences. Each will have a divisional dean which reports to an executive dean. Work on the implementation of the new plans has begun.

Ms. Poe asked about the leadership transition. Chancellor Plowman stated she feels good about the plan and stated it will be a two-year pilot.

Mr. Tickle asked about the retention of sophomores. Chancellor Plowman shared she did not have that number on hand, but the retention number they focus on the most is freshman to sophomore, which is 89%. It is hard to move that percentage, but work is being done to make an impact.

Mr. Tickle asked how that number impacts our national rankings. Chancellor Plowman spoke to the US News and World Report survey, the use of the information, and how the rankings are calculated.

Mr. Tickle requested information on how the university is handling student debt. Chancellor Plowman shared three key factors that influence student debt. The first is tuition and fees, which we have not raised the last few years. The second is help students graduate in four years. The third is help students and families understand what a loan encompasses. Ms. Alldredge shared hold of our students graduate debt free. The other half graduate with debt of \$20,000 or less, which is below the national average. Ms. Alldredge reminded the group of the Center for Financial Wellness that helps students make informed decisions regarding financial aid and loans.

Chancellor Plowman shared the It Takes a Volunteer video that will be shared during the football game on Saturday with the group.

VI. ENROLLMENT UPDATE

Ms. Kari Alldredge, Vice Provost, Enrollment Management

Ms. Kari Alldredge provided an update on the strategic enrollment plan. Ms. Alldredge reported the implementation of the strategic enrollment plan a few years ago transformed the way we recruit, retain, and graduate students. We changed the way we serve students through our One Stop Shop and our Center for Financial Wellness. The current strategic enrollment plan was intentionally broad to include how we grow head count, our contribution to the state's initiatives, create graduates that serve our state and the talent pipeline, and establish fiscal stability to reinvest in student success, faculty and building initiatives.

Increasing applications is a key component of the strategic enrollment plan. Enrollment will not increase without an increase in applications. Ms. Alldredge spoke to the importance of increasing the number of in-state applications and the challenges associated with recruiting those students. Growth is also occurring in transfer applications. This is encouraging as the number of students attending community college across the state has decreased. We established a Transfer Center to assist students in the complex navigation from community college to UTK.

Ms. Alldredge shared the Fall 2022 enrollment numbers. Chancellor Plowman commented on the 15.1% change from 2021 to 2022 for first-year student enrollment. Since the 2016 launch of this strategic enrollment plan, the Enrollment Management office expanded their regional recruitment model. Recruitment teams are in all three of the Tennessee regions along with 18 out of state locations. Ms. Alldredge commented on the collaboration between her office, the Office of the Chancellor, and the Office of Communication and Marketing has helped achieve an excitement about our campus nationwide.

Since the inception of this plan, we have graduated nearly 30,000 additional students with many remaining in Tennessee following graduation to help meet the talent pipeline demands.

Ms. Alldredge reported our campus is the fastest growing university in the SEC in undergraduate enrollment. The launching of Big Orange Fridays has been an important part



of the culture on campus. We host the largest numbers of tours on Fridays and our visitors see how our campus is connected. We have transformed the way we communicate with students through our customer service areas to set the experience at UT apart from other campuses.

Alumni recruitment has been an important part of the recruitment program. Alumni are present at all recruitment events. Our alums tell our story best. Every confirmed student gets a handwritten note from an alum, which provides a personal touch at a large university.

The future for the university is bright and we will be working to align our new strategic enrollment plan with the vision for the university. Capacity constraints are real and ripple across housing, parking, dining, and instruction. Demographic trends include the steep decline in high school graduates in 2025 and 2026 due to the recession in 2008. Work is in progress to determine how best to sustain our enrollment given this change. We have all seen the national decline in university enrollment over the last two years across the nation. We have identified an area of opportunity in the students who opted out of pursuing higher education during the pandemic. We are looking for ways to pull those students back into the pipeline. In Tennessee, 9.2% of high school graduates are less likely to seek post-high school education of any kind. We will not meet the needs of our state if we do not improve this metric. The two key areas impacting a student's decision to seek additional education are access and affordability.

A new scholarship was added this academic year. The Distinguished Tennessean Award is given to one student in each of the 95 counties in Tennessee. The award has created excitement and pride in those communities. Enrollment Management is partnering with 4-H to connect with young people through 4-H and Extension to provide college entry readiness curriculum beginning in 8th grade.

Out of state efforts have assisted with our enrollment success. Approximately 38% of out of state graduates remain in Tennessee.

Ms. Alldredge expressed her appreciation to the advisory board members and their efforts to recruit as they wear their orange and speak of the good things happening on our campus.

Ms. Robb asked if they knew what students were doing instead of advancing their education. Ms. Alldredge stated they do not know, but have theories related to financial concerns, entering the workforce with higher wages out of high school, and the questioning of the value of a college degree.

Mr. Smith asked about the increase of out of state students in the new class. Ms. Alldredge reported the birthrates and population in the state of Tennessee mean we are graduating fewer students. We do enroll more Tennessee high school graduates than any other institution in the state.

Mr. Carter asked if there has been any impact on recruitment based on the political nature of our state. Ms. Alldredge stated they have not experienced political based conversations. The families get a sense of what our community and culture when they visit, and we think that draws them in. Mr. Carter shared the positive conversations with families that participated in a recent tour. Ms. Alldredge stated our student ambassadors do a fantastic job at providing one of the best tours in the country.

VII. VETERAN'S SUCCESS CENTER

Dr. Amber Williams, Vice Provost, Student Success

Dr. Amber Williams shared how the network of student success departments work as a team based on students' strengths to help all our students accomplish their goals by providing the resources they need. The volunteer experience is key in setting our campus apart from other universities.

The Veteran's Success Center was created to provide a sense of community, access to computers, and provide resources to help them succeed. In speaking with the veterans, we learned they wanted to improve the sense of community and they felt as if they were invisible in some situations. We worked to provide customized services to make them more comfortable to engage and take advantage of services to support their success. The Veteran's Resource Center was renamed the Veteran's Success Center to highlight the work focusing on their success. One step to elevate their voices began two years ago when changed the Torch Night agenda to allow our SGA President to pass the torch to a student veteran. This helped to make our first-year students aware veterans are members of their class. At each Torch Night the students rise to provide the veterans a standing ovation.

The number of veterans attending UTK has increased. One reason for the growth in the number of veterans attending occurred due to the state allowing out of state veterans and their dependents to attend at in state rates.

The Veteran Boot Camp was created to provide a more applicable orientation session. The program also provides a way for veterans to create community as they begin their time at UT. Green Zone Training was created to make faculty and staff aware of the unique needs of veterans. Upper class veteran students were hired to serve as study coaches along with customized career coaches.

The Veteran Impact Program began this year with funding from donors and a lead gift from the Pilot Foundation. The first cohort has 35 members. The veterans take courses together, have peer mentors, an academic coach was hired only for the cohort, academic plans were developed, mental, physical, and financial wellness is addressed as well. Each member of the cohort receives \$1,000.00 if they complete the course. We anticipate the program will grow with each new cohort.

Ms. Williams reported the Veteran’s Success Center has a director, assistant director, academic coach, a part-time staff member, and peer mentors. Chancellor Plowman asked if all first-year veterans were invited to participate in the program and Dr. Williams responded yes.

VIII. RECENT EXCITING INITIATIVES IN EDUCATION IN THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND HUMAN SCIENCES

Dr. Ellen McIntyre, Dean

Dr. Ellen McIntyre provided an overview of five areas of leadership in Education. Dr. Joshua Kenna is leading the charge to develop new programs and multiple pathways to receiving a teaching degree. Dr. Josh Rosenberg started a new certificate program in data science with hopes to develop it into a master’s program. Dr. Rosenberg recently served on a National Academy of Sciences panel on data science in education. Dean McIntyre predicted this is an area we could lead nationally in the future.

Dean McIntyre shared news of six grant awards recently received by faculty in the Education area.

- Josh Rosenberg – National Science Foundation - \$346,688
- Melinda Gibbons – National Institutes of Health - \$520,000
- Lynne Hodge – National Science Foundation - \$561,000
- Kimberly Wolbers – US Department of Education - \$819,689
- Tara Moore – US Department of Education and TN Department of Education - \$1.4M
- Francis Harper – National Science Foundation - \$1M

Chancellor Plowman commented on how these types of awards is one step in gaining a national reputation as a top university.

Dean McIntyre highlighted Dr. Robert Kelchen as a leader in the area of higher education finance. He is contacted on a regular basis to share insight on high profile news items related to topics such as the college loan forgiveness program. Dr. Kelchen, along with a team of individuals, is also working with Knoxville College to regain their accreditation.

Kimberly Hill, PhD student in higher education, is serving as the coordinator for Community Engagement Activities with schools in east Knoxville. Ms. Hill also began Project Excellence, which serves juniors and seniors in the local flagship schools to prepare them to enter college post-graduation.

In the area of teacher preparation, Dr. Joshua Kenna is working on quality teacher preparation programs to produce quality educators versus a high number of educators.



Dr. McIntyre shared information on two leaders in literacy in Tennessee as well as on the way to becoming national leaders. Dr. Deborah Reed was recently hired to serve as the Tennessee Reading Research Center. The Center will evaluate all the literacy initiatives in Tennessee and conduct high quality research. Dr. Zoi Philippakos developed modules to help teacher educators get better at teaching teachers how to teach students to read. Teachers across the state are using these modules. She developed a literacy specialist master's degree and worked with the Knox County schools to enroll students in the program. Knox County covered the cost for 26 students to participate in the first cohort and have agreed to cover the costs for two additional cohorts of 25 each.

Chancellor Plowman complimented Dean McIntyre of her ability to bring energy to the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences and looks forward to the amazing work to come. Ms. Jordan Brown expressed her appreciation on the work being done to build a new generation of teachers. Ms. Robb remarked on the work to obtain data to assist in work with the legislature on issues effecting residents across the state. Dean McIntyre commented on the need for good data and research methodology performed by educators to make an impact on the education being conducted on the state and national level. Chancellor Plowman expressed her appreciation to Dean McIntyre for her willingness to lead and move the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences forward.

IX. CLOSING REMARKS

Chancellor Plowman thanked the advisory board members for their attendance.

X. ADJOURN

With no further business to come before the advisory board, the chair adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan E. England

Susan E. England, Secretary