



THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE, KNOXVILLE
CAMPUS ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES
November 3, 2023
KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Advisory Board met at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, November 3, 2023.

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. Jessica Barfield, 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 12, 2023, minutes provided the Secretary is authorized to make any necessary edits to correct spelling, grammatical, or format errors or other technical errors subsequently identified. Mr. Allen Carter seconded the motion.

The motion was unanimously approved.

IV. CHANCELLOR'S UPDATE

Dr. Donde Plowman

Chancellor Plowman expressed her appreciation to Dean Lonnie Brown for hosting the advisory board meeting at the College of Law. Chancellor Plowman introduced Ms. Jessica Barfield as the new student representative member. Ms. Barfield is a PhD student at the College of Communication and Information.

Chancellor Plowman provided a recap of her fifth flagship address, which took place in September. The theme for the address was moving this university from good to great. She discussed her belief that the University Tennessee is a university on the rise. Chancellor Plowman reported she hears from key stakeholders and alums that feel a contagious energy being created at the university.

Chancellor Plowman addressed the increase in enrollment over the last six years. The undergraduate enrollment has increased by 27%, the graduate enrollment has increased by 24%, resulting in the total enrollment increasing by 25%. The increased enrollment is good for the state of Tennessee. The state has a large demand for employees in the sector that requires a four-year degree. The university is working to help meet that need.

Chancellor Plowman noted the increase in applications last year. We reached a total of more than 50,000 at the end of the last application cycle. As of yesterday, 48,000 applications have been received for next fall. Our returning freshman retention number for this fall is 91.1%. This is a direct reflection of our Division of Student Success and our faculty. Degrees awarded have increased 10% and our positive career outcomes increased by 8 points. The mean starting salary has improved by 22%, but the metric still needs to improve.

Chancellor Plowman shared research proposals submitted increased to \$1.2 billion. Chancellor Plowman recognized Dr. Crawford's work to help establish the model on how to move in this direction. The research awards have increased to \$428 million. The metrics reflect the amazing work our faculty are performing.

Mr. Smith asked the origin of the grants and how the money is spent. Dr. Crawford stated they are largely from agencies within the federal government such as the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy, and others. The funds are used to cover faculty summer salaries, graduate stipends, and research instruments.

Ms. Poe asked how we are balancing campus resources against the demands of higher enrollment numbers and the anticipated enrollment cliff. Chancellor Plowman stated the enrollment cliff in Tennessee does not appear to be as steep as once thought. The alarming statistic is the decline in the rate high school students are attending college. Ms. Alldredge agreed the pipeline for students is smaller, but they are putting forth a concerted effort to attract graduating high school students. Chancellor Plowman shared information on the guaranteed admission program approved by the UT Board of Trustees. The UT Promise minimum household income was increased to \$75,000.

Prof. Heminway asked if there is a concern related to overbuilding residence halls and how parking will be addressed. Chancellor Plowman responded there is no concern due to half of our residence hall inventory being over 60 years old. There is a need to replace three additional residence halls once the current two approved residence halls are completed. Mr. Bolton shared we are working with a consultant to address our parking constraints. A change of culture is needed around parking on campus. We are encouraging students to park in our perimeter lots and make use of our reliable transit system.

Chancellor Plowman reviewed a list of accolades. Forbes named the campus a best employer for the third straight year, 2023 best place for working parents, and 2023 best employer for new graduates. We were named a top Fulbright scholar producer for the fifth straight year.



This reflects the quality of our students and faculty. We had faculty members named to national academies and the Royal Society, which assists in elevating our stature as an R1 university.

Mr. Smith asked about the level of unfilled positions on campus. Mr. Bolton reported there is always a certain percentage of staff vacancies. We work to maintain our pay scale a little above market. Enthusiasm on campus is attractive to employees. Ms. Poe stated the reputation of the campus encourages the best and brightest want to be here. Mr. Matthew Scoggins shared the biggest challenge is the housing market. It can be difficult to find affordable housing and office space for faculty, staff, and students.

Chancellor Plowman spoke about the trip she, President Randy Boyd, and UT Chattanooga Chancellor Steve Angle made to Wolfsburg, Germany to visit the Volkswagen Innovation Group headquarters to learn more about their innovation approach. Volkswagen placed their first North American innovation hub at our Cherokee Farm. The TN MADE building in Hardin Valley is gaining momentum in the manufacturing industry. The National Science Foundation Director visited campus to launch TEAM TN and announce a new \$18 million grant for the Center for Advanced Materials and Manufacturing. Innovation South just broke ground at UT Research Park.

Additional campus updates include the launch of three new colleges and schools as well as new divisions in the College of Arts and Sciences. The UT Board of Trustees approved the appointment of Dr. Keith Carver as the Senior Vice Chancellor / Senior Vice President of the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture. We received approval for two new residence halls that will add 1,900 new beds to our housing inventory in 2025. The new budget model implementation is moving forward. New information systems are being implemented.

Chancellor Plowman asked Dr. Danny White to share some of the recent athletic accomplishments. Dr. White shared how proud he is of the success our teams have accomplished over the last year. We finished 6th in the Learfield Director's Cup standings, which is the highest in our history. We are the only school to ever win a BCS New Year's six bowl, earn a berth to the men's and women's College World Series, and advance to the men's and women's Sweet 16 of the NCAA basketball tournament in the same athletics year. For the second year in a row, we earned the SEC All-Sports title in 2022-2023. CBS Sports ranked us first in their Best in College Sports ranking. We just completed the best academic semester ever for UT student-athletes with a collective 3.38 GPA. This is the fifth semester we have experienced improvement. Dr. White stated a community within the athletics department is forming as we strive to be the best in the country. Excellence is not a surprise when you have serious minded men and women who want to succeed in the classroom and within their sport.

Chancellor Plowman introduced Mr. Brian Broyles to the board members. Mr. Broyles is currently serving as the interim vice chancellor for advancement.

V. ENROLLMENT UPDATE

Ms. Kari Alldredge, Vice Provost, Enrollment Management

Chancellor Plowman welcomed Ms. Kari Alldredge and asked her to provide an enrollment update for the group.

Ms. Alldredge shared statistics related to the number of undergraduate and first-year students across the country, which increased by 2.1%. The increase was driven by community colleges, indicating they are on the rebound post-pandemic. Across the country universities saw a 3.6% decrease in first-year enrollment. Males are pursuing college at much lower rates than any other time in history. It has never been more important to talk about the value of why students should be pursuing a college education. Despite the national landscape, the University of Tennessee had a record year in total enrollment, both in undergraduate and graduate enrollment. Our growth was driven by gains in retention and persistence due to the work of the student success division and how the campus is delivering the volunteer experience.

Ms. Alldredge reported the University of Tennessee experienced a 39.2% increase in applications with a total of 50,488 applications received for the 2023-2024 academic year. Growth was seen in in-state, out-of-state, and international applications.

Ms. Alldredge provided an overview of the top counties across the state and the top states across the country for applications. There are enrollment management staff in all of the top locations working with students and high school counselors to encourage and assist students with the application process.

The enrollment management staff did an incredible job to reach a first-year enrollment of 6,694. The enrollment management team was able to reach an access rate of 95.2%. The access rate was impacted by two pathway programs. The Verto Vol Abroad program allows students to study abroad in the fall and arrive on campus in the spring. The Rocky Top Transfer program works in conjunction with Mississippi State Community College and the UT Access Collaborative.

Mr. Carter asked where the Verto Vol Abroad program takes place. Ms. Alldredge reported the locations are London, Spain, Prague, and Italy.

Ms. Poe asked if the goal of the Rocky Top Transfer and UT Access Collaborative was to transfer to Knoxville once the student completed the first year. Ms. Alldredge stated students have the option to transfer to the Knoxville campus if they have completed 24 credit hours and earn a 3.0 GPA. The students are not guaranteed their program of choice. Housing is not guaranteed for transfer students, but Vice Chancellor Frank Cuevas and his housing team are working on new housing options for those students.

Ms. Alldredge reviewed the key drivers of the enrollment growth. The use of the regional recruitment model, building the admissions funnel, marketing and communication strategies, brand recognition, and a scholarship and aid strategy. Ms. Alldredge reported we have received 49,000+ first-time applications for the 2024-2025 academic year, which is a 28% increase from this time last year. Currently we are seeing a 22% increase in Tennessee applications and a 38% increase in out-of-state applications.

Ms. Alldredge stated the Board of Trustees approved a guaranteed admission for the top 10% of each graduating class or if a student has a 4.0 UT core GPA. To date, we have received 4,218 applications that meet those requirements.

Ms. Smith asked for clarification on the rate of admission based on the size of class and the number of qualified applications. Ms. Alldredge stated all 4,218 students will be offered admission. The yield rate across the state is typically 50%. The anticipated yield will be approximately 2,100. Ms. Alldredge and her team monitor the number of applications and confirmations on a daily basis.

Ms. Robb asked if the increase in applications is due to the new guaranteed admission option. Ms. Alldredge stated it is feeding the increase. Ms. Alldredge also noted the university partners with the state of Tennessee to market a no application fee week. A huge increase was noted following that week. The regular early action admission application deadline is November 1, the regular admission application deadline is December 15 and May 1 is the confirmation deadline.

Ms. Alldredge provided a review of early projected fall enrollment numbers. The growth in total enrollment is a direct result of the work to increase the persistence and retention of our students.

Ms. Alldredge discussed the key initiatives going forward. The enrollment management team will be working with other units on campus to address the volunteer experience, capacity planning, scholarship and financial aid, expanded partnerships with UT Extension, community-based organizations, and distressed counties, and enhanced technology to transform the experience.

Mr. Smith spoke to the growth taking place in Nashville and the surrounding communities. Mr. Smith encouraged Ms. Alldredge and her admissions team to recognize the importance of the wholistic review of in-state students. Mr. Smith expressed his respect and appreciation for one of the hardest jobs on campus. Ms. Alldredge stated any student that does not meet the guaranteed admission criteria does go through a wholistic review.

Ms. Poe stated the number of Illinois students listed in the previous slide was the total number of applications, not the total number of students from Illinois admitted. Ms. Alldredge confirmed her statement.

Mr. Carter shared he met with Ms. Alldredge to gain a better understanding of the wholistic admissions process. Mr. Carter expressed his excitement about the opportunities through Verto Vols and Rocky Top Transfer.

Chancellor Plowman thanked Ms. Alldredge for the complex work she and her team do on a daily basis.

VI. VOL EDGE PROGRAM

Dr. Amber Williams, Vice Provost, Student Success

Chancellor Plowman introduced Dr. Amber Williams and asked her to share information on the Vol Edge program.

Dr. Williams stated one of the goals of the division of student success is to make sure students are thriving after they leave the University of Tennessee. Dr. Williams reported they began working on the Vol Edge program as a result of Chancellor Plowman asking what the university should look like five years from now. The division of student success began to discuss what the Volunteer experience looks like and what it means to students. It is the university's responsibility to prepare students to be amazing citizens across the country and around the world. The question became how we connect what the students are doing during their time on campus to their dreams and goals. One of the goals of the program is for students graduate to confident and feel they can articulate what they need to thrive in their careers, and they can speak to the value they bring to an organization.

Dr. Williams reported our positive career outcomes score is 90%, which is the highest on record. This number is based on the number of students that have a job or are enrolled in graduate school within six months of graduation. This past year the number jumped 8 percentage points to reach the new score.

Dr. Williams shared that she believes the program they are building is the most comprehensive in the country. The goal is to develop one of the most robust and highly skilled employment pipelines with scholars well-prepared to tackle the complexities of an interconnected global landscape.

The program is grounded in the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) competencies. Employers state the NACE competencies are the characteristics they are looking for in their employees. In the sophomore year, students will have an opportunity to engage in self-paced learning, at least one meaningful transformative experience, intentional and ongoing reflection, and receive meaningful feedback.

As part of a transformative experience the student will work with a career coach to reflect on what they hope to gain from the experience based on the NACE competencies. When the

student returns, they will meet with the career coach and discuss how they achieved their goals. The team is working to build a system for mock interviews for job and graduate school interviews to assist with decreasing the students' anxiety. Career coaches will work with the students, so they are able to articulate how their experiences address the NACE competencies.

Ms. Poe asked how students access the program. Dr. Williams shared the program details are made available during the first-year experience classes and the student success team will push out additional information during their second year. The student success team works with students to count activities the students have already completed or are in the process of completing to encourage participation. Dr. Cuevas' student life team assists with providing incentives to participate.

Dr. Williams reported the roll out of the program for all phases of the Vol Edge programs will be complete by 2027.

Chancellor Plowman stated the student success team has built this out with the help of faculty and campus partners.

VII. COLLEGE OF LAW UPDATE

Lonnie T. Brown, Jr., Dean and Elvin E. Overton Distinguished Professor of Law

Chancellor Plowman introduced Dean Lonnie Brown to the advisory board members. Dean Brown welcomed everyone and expressed his appreciation to the group for attending the meeting and providing an opportunity for him to share information about the College of Law.

Dean Brown provided an overview of his education and work journey prior to his appointment at the University of Tennessee. Dean Brown recognized Chancellor Plowman and Provost John Zomchick for the impact they had on his acceptance of the dean position.

Dean Brown shared that he spent his first year listening to staff, faculty, students, alums, and key stakeholders associated with the College of Law prior to beginning the strategic plan process. The strategic plan process has been completed and the implementation phase has begun. Dean Brown reviewed the five goals of the strategic plan: educate and prepare students at the highest level; conduct influential, collaborative, and innovative research; embody the Volunteer spirit by giving back to the community; recruit and retain a diverse and talented group of students, faculty, and staff; and increase the promotion and awareness of the College of Law.

Dean Brown provided an explanation of the new metrics US News and World Report are currently using related to law schools. The college has engaged a consultant to address any opportunities to assist in rising in the rankings.



Dean Brown reported the class of 2026 is the largest entering class since 2013. A key factor in attracting students is scholarship funds. The amount of scholarship funds available is significantly lower than our SEC competitors.

Dean Brown reviewed four of the top points of pride for the College of Law. The Legal Clinic is ranked #11 among public law schools by US News and World Report. Last year the clinic provided over \$4 million in service to the community. The Center for Advocacy and Dispute Resolution is designed to prepare students for the rigors of the practice of law. The Clayton Center for Entrepreneurial Law focuses on the area of business law. The Institute for Professional Leadership that focuses on preparing future lawyers through courses focusing on leadership, service, and professional development.

Dean Brown looks to increase collaboration and innovation with the colleges on campus and corporate partners, to increase student externships with local industry partners, and build a new state-of-the-art ceremonial courtroom.

Chancellor Plowman asked Dean Brown to reflect on the biggest surprise he experienced as he began his role as dean. Dean Brown stated the amount of work, and the love people have for the University of Tennessee. Throughout his career he has never experienced the level of loyalty of the alums, and how proud they are of the school. Dean Brown expressed his appreciation for the warm welcome he experienced when he arrived.

Ms. Poe asked that he reach out to Dean Mazer in the College of Communication and Information to discuss ways the two colleges could collaborate. Dean Brown stated he is already in discussions with Dean Mazer to explore opportunities. Dean Brown also reported he is working closely with Dean Matthew Mench in the Tickle College of Engineering to develop a certificate of entrepreneurship. Dean Brown will be teaching an undergraduate course at the Baker School of Public Policy beginning next fall.

VIII. CLOSING REMARKS

Chancellor Plowman thanked the advisory board members for their attendance.

IX. 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