



THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE, KNOXVILLE
CAMPUS ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES
August 13, 2021
KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Advisory Board met virtually at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, August 13, 2021.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair John Tickle called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

II. INTRODUCTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Chancellor Plowman provided an introduction of the two new members of the Advisory Board. Mr. Allen Carter and Mrs. Alexandra Szmuto. Chancellor Plowman shared she met with the new members prior to this meeting to provide an orientation to the Advisory Board and shared information related to the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

III. ROLL CALL

Roll call of board members conducted with the following present:

Mr. John Tickle, Chair, Mr. Allen Carter, Mr. Beauvais Lyons, Ms. Alexia Poe, Mr. Tom Smith, Ms. Syreeta Vaughn

Mrs. Alexandra Szmuto was unable to join the call.

IV. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Mr. Tom Smith made a motion to approve the April 30, 2021 minutes with the amendment requested by Mr. Beauvais Lyons and provided the Secretary is authorized to make any necessary edits to correct spelling, grammatical, or format errors or other technical errors subsequently identified. The motion was unanimously approved.

V. CHANCELLOR'S OPENING REMARKS
Dr. Donde Plowman, Chancellor

Chancellor Plowman expressed her excitement to have students back on campus to begin the fall semester. She reported undergraduate enrollment as of today is officially over 25,000.

Provost John Zomchick stated the number of first-time freshmen as of today is 5,980, which is approximately an 8% increase from last fall. The transfer count is flat for this year, which is



considered a positive due to the decrease in students last year at community colleges across the state.

Chancellor Plowman introduced Mr. Owen Driskill, Assistant Provost and Chief Operating Officer, for the Office of the Provost. Mr. Driskill brings a wealth of experience in administrative leadership to the new role. Mr. Driskill previously served in the Office of Communications.

Chancellor Plowman reported increased enrollment for graduate students, out of state students, and students of color in the first-year class. The increases are the result of the hard work conducted by our staff in the Enrollment Management office. They recently hired a new staff member, Mr. Redrick Taylor, who is responsible for putting a team together to recruit students of color to our campus. The student success teams for each new student will continue this year. Chancellor Plowman highlighted three new student success initiatives for this fall. The Big Orange Welcome will take place over six weeks to assist with the transition of students being on campus and in person for a full campus experience. Vols Start Back is designed for students that are not new, but spent a year, whether in college or high school, online. Every sophomore, junior, and senior are encouraged to participate in seminars and interactive sessions on learning, in class issues, and how to strengthen academic, leadership, and social skills. A portion of the HEERF funds will be used to provide a stipend for the students who participate in these sessions.

Student retention is always a concern and one of the areas with potential for the most improvement centers on our men of color. They perform as well as others, but tend to drop out or transfer more often than other students. Chancellor Plowman shared her experience at the Student Success Academy session. This fall 115 young men signed up to participate in the program. Two of the top issues for men of color centered around a sense of belonging and financial difficulties. This program will provide them with an immediate community and opportunities to learn how to deal with issues that may arise during their time on campus.

Chancellor Plowman expressed her commitment to delivering an in-person experience this fall. President Randy Boyd and the UT System chancellors worked together to develop a system-wide policy for the fall semester. The mask policy is limited to those indoor spaces where distancing is not possible, such as classrooms and labs. Faculty have requested masks in all spaces. Our team continues to monitor the situation daily and adjustments will be made as needed. Our students were notified prior to their arrival on campus this fall we will not coordinate isolation and quarantine space. Students were encouraged to arrive with a plan should it be necessary this fall.

VI. STRATEGIC VISION

Dr. Donde Plowman, Chancellor

Chancellor Plowman provided an overview of the revised strategic vision goals. Each goal is tied to one of the UT System strategic goals. A brief bullet point was added to each goal, such as Vol is verb for Goal 3. We are conducting a capacity study to determine the correct direction to

grow as a campus. We have a team working on the transformational and operational metrics for each goal and how best to implement and prioritize each goal.

Mr. Smith expressed his appreciation of the bullet points and wondered if they could be listed first as a concise way to display the information. Ms. Alexia Poe agreed with Mr. Smith.

Mr. Lyons shared his belief the strategic plan is one many faculty and staff can support. He commented Goal 2 has ambitious goals and noted progress has been made related to Goal 3, but challenges still exist. Mr. Lyons voiced concern related to the Dr. Anming Hu case and shared Provost Zomchick has committed to work together with the faculty to amend the faculty handbook to address concerns. Mr. Lyons asked Chancellor Plowman to address the item in Goal 4 regarding a revised academic structure.

Chancellor Plowman shared she and Provost Zomchick charged a working group this summer to review the academic structure in advance of implementing the new budget allocation model. Some of the tasks were to determine if we have the correct college make-ups and number of colleges, as well as a good size for a college. Also, the group will analyze whether our current structure allow faculty to collaborate easily, if faculty are being represented well due to the size of their college, if any improvements could be made by potentially moving departments to other colleges, and the potential impact the new budget model might have on a new structure. Chancellor Plowman stated the end goal of this review is to determine the best academic structure for faculty to succeed, disciplines to grow, and increase collaboration among faculty. Mr. Lyons shared one of the past restructurings focused on combining colleges, and he looks forward to the conversations going forward.

Mr. Smith moved for adoption of the following Resolution:

Resolved: The University of Tennessee, Knoxville Advisory Board recommends approval of the proposed strategic plan for the campus, attached as Attachment A hereto. The Advisory Board authorizes the Chancellor to present the Advisory Board's recommendation to the President as provided in Board of Trustees Policy BT0025 and authorizes the Chancellor to add information relating to goal metrics and alignment with the UT System Strategic Plan.

Ms. Poe seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

VII. CLOSING REMARKS

Mr. Tickle commented on the difficulties the university has faced over the past year and the challenges ahead. He stressed the importance to continue the push for individuals to get vaccinated. Chancellor Plowman shared information related to the vaccination clinic taking place today at the Student Union and efforts to encourage students to participate. Chancellor Plowman reported the SEC medical advisory committee has done a phenomenal job and has set vaccination goals for our athletic teams.



Mr. Lyons asked for the minutes to reflect he posted the letter sent to Chancellor Plowman in the chat and his concurrence with comments related to vaccinations.

Mr. Tickle acknowledged the work done by Chancellor Plowman and President Boyd to protect everyone during this time.

Chancellor Plowman thanked Mr. Tickle and the board members for their participation and support. She looks forward to sharing the strategic vision to the Board of Trustees in October.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 15th and it will be in-person if possible.

VIII. ADJOURN

With no further business to come before the advisory board, the chair adjourned the meeting at 9:50 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan E. England
Susan E. England, Secretary