

**Tennessee State University Board of Trustees  
Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Committee  
March 14, 2024  
Tennessee State University – Hankal Hall**

**MINUTES**

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

**Other Board Members Present:** Trustees Deborah Cole, Stephen Corbeil, Richard Lewis, Obie McKenzie, and Van Pinnock

**University Staff Present:** President Glenda Glover; Laurence Pendleton, General Counsel and Board Secretary; Dr. Robbie Melton, Acting Interim Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs; Douglas Allen, VP of Finance and Budget; Dr. Curtis Johnson, Chief of Staff; Dean Frank Stevenson, Assoc. Vice President of Student Affairs; Dr. Quincy Quick, Assoc. Vice President of Research & Sponsored Programs; Dr. Arlene Nicholas-Phillips, Liaison to the Board; Dean Ronald de Vera Barredo; Dean Janet Finch; Dr. Charlise Anderson, Managing Executive Director Institutional Effectiveness, Research, Planning and Assessment Accreditation Liaison

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Committee Chair Martin called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. on March 14, 2024.

Trustee Martin made certain findings on the record regarding the necessity for conducting the meeting by electronic participation without a physical quorum present, including the approval of a new academic program, a Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Language and a change in academic degree designation from Master of Arts in Education to Master of Science in Human Performance and Sports Sciences. She stated that the committee was also set to hear important reports on SACSCOC accreditation matters, Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and a report from the Student Trustee. Participation by electronic means was necessitated by members' in-person absence due to unavoidable travel issues. Trustee Martin moved that the committee find participation by a quorum of the committee members by electronic means of communication was necessary. Trustee B. Johnson and A. Johnson seconded the motion. Trustee Martin asked Secretary Pendleton to call the roll. Trustees Martin, B. Johnson, and A. Johnson voted in favor, and the motion carried.

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

Trustee Martin asked the Secretary of the Board to call the roll. Secretary Pendleton called the roll. Committee members present were Trustees Martin, A. Johnson, B. Johnson, and Shaun Wimberly. A quorum was established.

Trustee Martin asked any committee members who could not hear or speak to the other committee members or board members, to state so. None responded. She further asked committee members

participating electronically to identify any individuals who were present in the location from which the members were participating. No individuals were identified.

### **III. APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 16, 2023, ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

Trustee Martin moved to recommend to the full Board the approval of the minutes from the November 16, 2023, Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Committee meeting, as contained in the March 14, 2024, Board materials. Trustee B. Johnson seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

### **IV. APPROVAL OF A NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAM – COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, CERTIFICATE IN TEACHING ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES**

Trustee Martin introduced the next item on the agenda, the approval of a new academic program in the College of Education, a Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (“TESOL”). Trustee Martin asked President Glover to present this information, who, in turn, asked Provost Melton to provide the information. Dean Janet Finch was then invited to provide background information to the committee.

Dean Finch stated that this new certificate will meet a growing demand for qualified TESOL instructors, will assist with recruitment, will foster inter-cultural understanding, and will build on existing strengths within the Department of Education, and, therefore, additional resources were not required for the new program.

Dean Melton stated that the Office of Academic Affairs was in support of approving this program.

Trustee B. Johnson moved to recommend to the full Board the approval the new academic program, a certificate a Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages. A. Johnson seconded the motion. A discussion took place regarding the program requirements. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

### **V. APPROVAL OF ACADEMIC PROGRAM MODIFICATION – CHANGE IN ACADEMIC PROGRAM DEGREE DESIGNATION FROM THE MASTER OF ARTS IN EDUCATION (MAED) TO THE MASTER OF SCIENCE (MS) DEGREE IN HUMAN PERFORMANCE AND SPORTS SCIENCES**

Trustee Martin introduced the next item on the agenda, the recommended approval of a change in academic program degree designation from the Master of Arts in Education (MAED) to the Master of Science (MS) degree in Human Performance and Sports Sciences. Provost Melton and Dean Barredo provided information on this agenda item.

Dean Barredo discussed the desire to change the degree due to a change in focus and changing times. Board approval was requested.

Trustee Martin moved to recommend to the full Board the approval of a change in academic program degree designation from the Master of Arts in Education (MAED) to the Master of Science (MS) degree in Human Performance and Sports Sciences. B. Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

## **VI. SACSCOC ACCREDITATION UPDATE**

For the next agenda item, Trustee Martin asked President Glover or her designee to present a SACSCOC accreditation update. Dr. Glover asked Dr. Melton to provide this update.

Dr. Melton stated that the University is in good standing and being proactive with its five-year plan. Dr. Anderson has been leading the charge for the University, they have been meeting and preparing their report, and they are meeting with outside consultations. Dr. Melton asked Dr. Anderson to stand and be recognized.

Trustee Martin thanked Dr. Glover and her entire staff for their work on this. She noted the considerable effort that goes into this work.

## **VII. ACADEMIC AFFAIRS REPORT**

Trustee Martin asked Dr. Glover to provide information on the next agenda item, the Academic Affairs report. Dr. Glover, in turn, asked Dr. Melton to provide this report.

Dr. Melton referred the committee to the report in the Board materials. Some of the highlights included a grant from the Navy for the College of Engineering, the College of Health Sciences and a grant agreement for the Public Health and Administrative Services, the College of Liberal Arts hosting a Black Design Conference, the College of Physical Life Sciences' work with the Dr. Levi Watkins, Jr. Institute, and the graduate school doing innovative work.

Dr. Melton said that academic tutoring is offered 7 days per week. She noted the use of technology to provide better services. She stated that they can document increased retention and engagement.

The Honors College will celebrate 60 years of service. Dr. Melton discussed other notable achievements across the University.

Student Trustee Wimberly thanked Dr. Melton. He stated that he has used the University's Success Center and Writing Center, and these are amazing resources.

Trustee Wimberly asked about the Africana Studies Department. Dr. Melton stated that TSU will have a major in this. They are restructuring the entire program. President Glover said that the University has ironed out some details to move forward with this, and that they are very close now. Dean Morgan Curtis gave an update. She said that Dr. Mott is working with the committee on revising the Letter of Notification to THEC. A fantastic meeting was held during homecoming. They have gathered letters of support from alumni. They are going to announce shortly the hiring of a new faculty member.

Chair Cole recognized Dr. Melton for her work in the artificial intelligence space. Dr. Melton recognized 51 AI fellows, faculty, and others who support the work. A discussion took place regarding guardrails put in place around AI. Dr. Melton said that they are looking at guardrails. The technology is evolving, so it is a moving target. She said they have best practices and standards at TSU. A request was made for information for the Board to consider about AI in terms of guardrails. Dr. Melton said she can bring that information back to the Board. Further discussion took place regarding this topic.

## **VIII. STUDENT AFFAIRS REPORT**

Dean Stevenson provided information on the next agenda item, at the request of Dr. Glover and Trustee Martin. Dean Stevenson welcomed student leaders who were present at the meeting. Present student leaders were recognized by the Board, including SGA President Darrell Taylor, SGA Vice President Chrishonda O'Quinn, and Student Trustee Shaun Wimberly.

Dean Stevenson discussed the student experience. He noted improvements to the campus pool. He discussed the food pantry and actions to address food insecurity on campus, including donations to the Tiger Pantry Foundation. There is about \$40,000 in the Tiger Pantry Foundation now, including recent donations of \$10,000 from Publix and Krogers to take care of students.

Dean Stevenson discussed student engagement. Dean Stevenson asked SGA President Darrell Taylor to provide information about student services offered this semester. The students are working on efforts to recognize and show appreciation for the Band. Mr. Taylor reviewed various student-led initiatives. He thanked Student Housing for working with students, including on setting priorities in student housing. He further talked about specific on-campus experiences for students. Mr. Taylor reported on work in the Financial Aid space, as well.

SGA Vice President Chrishonda O'Quinn gave a report on the student General Assembly. Four organizations were re-activated, including the NAACP Chapter and American Society of Mechanical Engineering. An organizational fair was held on campus the day before, and 50 groups participated. She noted that organizational engagement has been great this semester.

Mr. Taylor discussed recently proposed state legislation concerning TSU and stated that students are uncomfortable with what has transpired. They have been working to educate students and serving as a liaison between the students and President Glover and the Board of Trustees. An emergency town hall was held to discuss proposed legislation. The SGA is being intentional in its response and actions. The students are feeling directionless in navigating the Board issue, the \$2.1 billion underfunding issue, and the \$250 million underfunding issue. Their goal is to inform students, and they are requesting additional information for students on what is being negotiated by the University, what is the plan, what they should tell students, and when the students will have a response. The students value representation on the Board of Trustees and the President's Cabinet. They want more updates and communication from the Board.

Trustee Wimberly added that more informational sessions need to occur. He thinks there should be more communication with student leaders, who can communicate with the student body. He stated that students are not reading newspapers. He said that information needs to be shared more

directly with students, and that student leaders can help to bring this information to the student body.

Dr. Glover shared that she has brought it to the attention of state legislators that students have two major issues: (1) that students do not want their Board torn apart, and (2) that students want the underfunding corrected. This is having an impact on students. Dr. Glover said TSU's student leaders are to be commended for their efforts.

Trustee A. Johnson apologized for not communicating as effectively with the students at times. He said that Board is working on these matters, including working on the integrity of the University.

A discussion took place regarding the student concerns raised.

Dean Stevenson then continued his Student Affairs report. He talked about housing considerations and ways to further support students. For example, the University kept housing open for students over breaks who needed it. They are exploring options for students who need year-round housing. They will offer graduate housing for the first time.

Dean Stevenson reported on Counseling Services. He is proud of the direction of this department. There is no waiting list for students needing services. Dean Stevenson noted improvements in medical record taking and other technology. He talked about using master and doctoral level students from the Psychology Department to further provide support services. The location for the Counseling Center is in flux, and they are working to move the center to a new space.

Trustee Wimberly stated that he conducted a survey of about 100 students and that students want to see improvements to the Game Room. He would like to discuss ideas for this space with Dean Stevenson.

Chair Cole thanked Dean Stevenson for his report. Trustee B. Johnson thanked Dean Stevenson for bringing student engagement data to the meeting.

## **IX. REPORT ON STUDENT TRUSTEE BOARD RESOLUTION**

The next agenda item was a proposed Student Trustee Board resolution item. Trustee Wimberly presented information related to this item.

Trustee A. Johnson said that there are some things he would like to see in the proposed resolution and commented that there is some language within the resolution that he would like to see changed. For example, he would like to see a trustee mentor work with the Student Trustee. Trustee A. Johnson proposed that he work with Trustee Wimberly to revise the proposed resolution. A discussion took place about how the resolution can be re-worked before the next Board meeting. Secretary Pendleton indicated that the Board could delegate authority to Trustee A. Johnson to finalize the resolution and work with the President to present it to the Board. This matter was set to be taken up by the full Board during its meeting.

Trustee Martin expressed her gratitude to the committee. Trustee B. Johnson thanked Trustee Martin for her leadership on the committee.

## **X. ADJOURNMENT**

There was no further discussion. Trustee Martin moved to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Trustee B. Johnson. The motion was unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 10:05 a.m.