

**Tennessee State University Board of Trustees
Student and Academic Affairs Committee Meeting
November 21, 2024
Tennessee State University – The Barn Agricultural Building**

MINUTES

Committee Members Present: Trustees Jeffery Norfleet (Committee Chair), Terica Smith, Artenzia Young-Seigler, and Tyler Vazquez (Student Trustee)

Other Board Members Present: Trustees Trevia Chatman, Marquita Qualls, Charles Traugher, Dwayne Tucker, and Dakasha Winton (Board Chair)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Trustee Norfleet called the meeting to order at 3:45 p.m. (CT) on November 21, 2024.

II. ROLL CALL/DECLARATION OF A QUORUM

Trustee Norfleet proceeded with the roll call vote. Board Secretary Pendleton called the roll at the Committee Chair's request. Trustees Norfleet, Smith, Young-Seigler, and Vazquez were present. Secretary Pendleton announced the presence of a quorum.

III. APPROVAL OF TSU POLICY GOVERNING INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION

Trustee Norfleet announced the next agenda item as an approval of TSU policy governing institutional accreditation. Trustee Norfleet asked Dr. Robbie Melton, TSU's Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, to provide pertinent information related to this agenda item. Dr. Melton asked for Dr. Charlise Anderson and Board Secretary Laurence Pendleton to provide information on the accreditation policy.

Secretary Pendleton discussed this policy, which is driven by recently enacted state law and codifies what the law requires of the University. He stated that the purpose is to have Boards identify their accrediting agencies, as well as to provide policies and resources for choosing a different accrediting agency, if desired.

Secretary Pendleton stated that this policy identifies SACSCOC as the current accrediting body. He also stated that SACSCOC is the accrediting body for most institutions in the south.

Trustee Norfleet asked if there was a motion to recommend full Board approval. Trustee Smith moved to recommend to the full Board the approval of TSU policy governing institutional accreditation. Trustee Young-Seigler seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

IV. REPORT ON SACSCOC AND OTHER ACCREDITATION MATTERS

Trustee Norfleet asked Dr. Anderson to present the next item on the agenda, the report on SACSCOC.

Dr. Anderson, who serves as the Institutional Accreditation Liaison, stated that the University's fifth-year interim report, which is inclusive of the QEP impact report, is due to SACSCOC in March 2026. She stated that TSU is currently on-track with the established timeline.

Dr. Anderson stated that the Steering Committee, which meets monthly, is currently working on the second draft of the report, based on feedback from our consultant, Silver & Associates. She stated that the final draft of the report is expected by December of 2025.

Trustee Norfleet asked Dr. Anderson to explain the QEP impact report. Dr. Anderson stated that the purpose of the report is to enhance and develop a holistic and integrative advising model for student success, which in turn is expected to help with retention.

Trustee Winton asked if the final draft comes to the Board. Dr. Anderson replied that the committee can provide a final draft or a copy of each draft, based on the Board's directive.

V. RETENTION AND ACADEMIC PROGRESS UPDATE

Trustee Norfleet announced the next agenda item as an update on retention and academic progress. Dr. Melton gave an update regarding the retention progression. A retention plan was included in the Board materials.

Dr. Melton stated that a survey was recently conducted of all first-time freshmen with less than 15 credit hours. She stated that 301 students were identified. Dr. Melton also discussed implementation of Extreme Winter and Extreme Spring one (1) week online courses to help get students back on track to achieve all credit hours.

Dr. Melton stated that we are going into a 2+2 advisement model. In this new model, students will stay with the same advisor until their junior year, which is in alignment with other institutions. Dr. Melton discussed a plan to work with colleges and departments to make sure that every freshman has a touchpoint with their majors. She also discussed implementing Student Success Specialists. These specialists will provide all-in-one support in coaching, advising, and mentoring to make sure that students are successful. Dr. Melton stated that there is a current plan to reach out to students over winter break to raise retention.

Trustee Qualls asked about cross-functional training. Dr. Melton said that this is the first tier, and that specific colleges and departments will be addressed in later tiers.

Trustee Norfleet asked about two (2) specific programs. Dr. Melton stated that the PhD in Public Health will kick off in Fall 2025 and the Masters of Science in College of Business will kick off in Spring 2025. She said that there should already be a market need for these new programs.

Dr. Melton presented information on low-producing programs, one of which is a new program. Discussion took place on programs with periods of inactivity, as well as terminated vs. inactive programs. Dr. Anderson spoke on the processes and requirements for both SACSCOC and THEC. Secretary Pendelton said that in order to terminate an academic program, it must come to the Board.

Dr. Melton said that she will have a full retention and academic process update by March of 2025, and will be working on a draft retention plan. Trustee Winton requested a decision tree so that the Board can have more information.

Trustee Smith asked about what is inactive right now. Dr. Melton stated that they found 293 students in good standing. She discussed reaching out to these students and talking to them about a plan to finish their degrees this spring. Dr. Melton emphasized that part of the retention plan is finding these students. She also stated that we have over 33 online programs, and that we have to go global. She stated that this is one of our goals for 2025.

VI. ACADEMIC AFFAIRS REPORT

Dr. Melton discussed the next agenda item, the Academic Affairs Report. Dr. Melton thanked everyone for promoting TSU. She said that the more we market TSU, the more people will want to come to our university. Dr. Melton said that we have \$55,485,000 in grant awards, with over 100 awards.

Trustee Norfleet discussed two (2) current Letters of Notification with THEC. He suggested that we remove these. Dr. Anderson confirmed that, following conversations with THEC, they have been put on hold, rather than retracted. Secretary Pendelton said that he will need to follow up with THEC regarding whether these need to be retracted.

VII. STUDENT AFFAIRS REPORT

Trustee Norfleet called up Dr. Bridgett Golman to present the next agenda item, the Student Affairs Report. Dr. Golman reviewed the different divisions of Student Affairs, which all offer programming. She discussed the importance of being intentional about programming, which should be done in accordance with the holistic S.T.U.D.E.N.T. development model. She discussed gaps in certain areas of programming and how working with intention can improve these areas.

Dr. Golman next discussed enrollment services. She stated that the University is prioritizing the mental and physical health of students. She discussed the initiative of TimelyCare, an app which provides 24/7 access to students for help with both mental and physical health concerns. She also discussed implementation of the Tiger Support Center for student support across numerous areas.

Dr. Golman opened the floor for discussion. Trustee Young-Siegler asked if there are fees for students to use the TimelyCare app. Dr. Golman said there are not. Further discussion took place on the general population of students and services offered through the Office of Student Life.

Trustees Winton and Smith asked about enrollment and recruitment plans. Dr. Golman stated that a recruitment plan is in progress. Further discussion took place regarding recruitment of students and enhancing the lives of current students.

Trustee Smith asked about the current Friday model. Dr. Golman deferred to Dr. Melton, who spoke about the current plan for classes to return on Fridays. Further discussion took place on expanding programming in certain areas, including the Men's and Women's Initiatives.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Norfleet asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Smith moved to adjourn the meeting, and the motion was seconded by Trustee Young-Seigler. A voice vote was taken, and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 6:17 p.m (CT).