

**MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**ACADEMIC AFFAIRS, STUDENT LIFE, AND ATHLETICS COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

The Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee met on Tuesday, February 24, 2026, in the Miller Education Center Meeting Room at Middle Tennessee State University.

Call to Order

Committee Chair Michael Wade called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Roll Call

Board Secretary James Floyd called the roll. The following Committee members were in attendance: J.B. Baker, Tom Boyd, Pete DeLay, Bill Jones, Kari Neely, Steve Smith, Christine Vanek, Michael Wade, Chad White, Michai Mosby, Keith Huber, and Chris Massaro. John Floyd and Jimmy Granbery were absent. A quorum was declared.

President Sidney A. McPhee; Joe Bales, Vice President for University Advancement; Yvette Clark, Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer; Drew Harpool, Interim Vice President for Business and Finance; Danny Kelley, Interim Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students; Andrew Oppmann, Vice President for Marketing and Communications; Brenda Burkhart, Acting Chief Audit Executive; and James Floyd, University Counsel and Board Secretary; and Kim Edgar, Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff, were also in attendance.

Approval of Minutes - Action

The first agenda item was approval of the minutes from the November 11, 2025, Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee meeting. Trustee DeLay moved to approve the November 11, 2025, meeting minutes, and Trustee Boyd seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion to approve the minutes passed unanimously.

Approval of New Academic Program - Action

Vice Provost for Academic Programs Amy Aldridge presented a proposal for a Master of Science in Mechatronics Systems Engineering. The curriculum will focus on robotics, automation, AI, and controls. The Department of Engineering Technology has a strong external advisory board and industry partners who are ready to employ M.S. graduates as advanced engineers and managers.

Trustee Neely asked how many faculty members will be involved in this program. Vice Provost Aldridge and Professor Lei Miao, program director, stated that four Engineering Technology faculty (three tenured and one tenure-track) will be offering the required courses, and elective courses will be taught by 15-20 faculty from Engineering Technology and other departments.

Trustee DeLay moved to approve the Master of Science in Mechatronics Systems Engineering, and Trustee Boyd seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion to approve the new degree program passed unanimously.

Annual Report of Academic Program Actions - Information

Vice Provost for Academic Programs Amy Aldridge presented academic program actions and center approvals for calendar year 2025. She recognized her staff, noting they are responsible for both the undergraduate and graduate catalogs, implementing more than 500 curriculum changes each year, and handling other processes involving student records, transcripts, badges, course scheduling, and commencement.

The Annual Report included five new graduate degrees and twenty new concentrations in cutting-edge areas such as e-sports, artificial intelligence, and cybersecurity. This year, faculty are working with administration on graduate programs in concrete and construction management, healthcare administration, and a Doctor of Business Administration (DBA). The DBA uses a unique funding model in which the College invests upfront in exchange for an eventual revenue share.

There are two dedicated degrees in cybersecurity management (bachelor's and master's) in the Jones College of Business. In the College of Basic and Applied Sciences, there are two concentrations under the bachelor's degree in Computer Science, and two graduate

concentrations in development under the Master of Science in Computer Science. Enrollment is healthy and growing in these programs.

Related, Jones College of Business is exploring a cybersecurity range with IBM. Only 10 universities chosen by IBM will offer applied training through cyberattack simulations. This will require space and resources. President McPhee has asked for appropriations specifically for next-generation computing and security to support cybersecurity and quantum initiatives.

Athletics Report - Information

Athletics Director Chris Massaro gave an update on construction projects. The west side of Floyd Stadium is in the design phase, with construction scheduled to begin in November 2026 to be ready for Fall 2027. This project will coincide with renovations to the Murphy Center.

The NCAA is passing legislation to create more revenue opportunities, such as jersey patches for corporate sponsorships. Each sport committee will develop standards for its uniform. Athletics is also exploring more naming opportunities for facilities. They are meeting with firms that specialize in this on March 6 and will report back.

Coach Derek Mason sees the need for outreach to the community and held an event in the new locker room of the Smith building to discuss the latest recruiting class and meet the new coaching staff. He will schedule monthly “Coffee with the Coach” sessions and lunches before games for scouting reports and informal discussions about MTSU football.

NIL (name, image, likeness) update: This year’s cap of revenue shares was \$20.5M. MTSU does about \$3M in NIL opportunities. Our sports excellence programs raise money, but the market goes up every year. We’ve been fortunate to retain our quarterbacks and avoid the open market.

Adjournment

Committee Chair Wade adjourned the meeting at 9:48 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee