

**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, May 24, 2022, in the Miller Education Center Meeting Room at Middle Tennessee State University.

Call to Order

Committee Chair Pam Wright called the meeting to order at 10:54 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, Darrell Freeman, Joey Jacobs, Steve Smith, Chris Karbowski, Pam Wright, and Rick Cottle. A quorum was declared.

Mark Byrnes, University Provost; Joe Bales, Vice President for University Advancement; Yvette Clark, Interim Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer; Deb Sells, Vice President for Student Affairs and Vice Provost for Enrollment and Academic Services; Alan Thomas, Vice President for Business and Finance; Brenda Burkhart, Chief Audit Executive; Jimmy Hart, Senior Director of News and Media Relations; Lee DeLeon, Deputy Athletic Director; and James Floyd, University Counsel and Board Secretary, were also in attendance.

Approval of Minutes - Action

The first agenda item was approval of the minutes from the March 15, 2022, Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee meeting. Trustee Freeman moved to approve the minutes from the March 15, 2022, meeting, and Trustee Delay seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and the motion to approve the minutes from the March 15, 2022, meeting of the Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee passed unanimously.

Approval of Tenure and Promotion - Action

Provost Byrnes presented twenty-eight tenure and forty-nine promotion candidates and reminded the committee that we present these annually at the Spring meeting.

Trustee Freeman moved to approve the candidates for tenure and promotion, and Trustee Karbowski seconded the motion.

Vice Chair Karbowski questioned the role of the Board of Trustees in the approval of tenure and promotion. Board Secretary Floyd explained that Tennessee Code Annotated 49-8-301 sets the Board's purview to approve. Before the FOCUS Act, Tennessee Board of Regents approved the list upon the recommendation of the president.

Chairman Smith inquired about the percentage of tenured faculty. Provost Byrnes responded that he was comfortable with the percentage of tenured faculty, which has been steady at 56-57%. Chairman Smith asked for trend information compared to our peers, and Provost Byrnes agreed to provide it. Committee Chair Wright added that the faculty labor market is competitive, and we do not want to suggest putting a cap on tenure.

Vice Chair Karbowski suggested that the Board may want more information, such as context and background, besides the names of the recommended. Committee Chair Wright reminded the Committee that its role is not to delve into the management of the University and suggested a detailed demonstration of the tenure process at the next meeting.

Trustee Cottle recused himself from the vote since he was on the list for promotion. A voice vote was taken and the motion to approve the candidates for tenure and promotion passed unanimously.

Approval of Chair of Excellence - Action

Provost Byrnes referred the Committee to Jarett Decker's resume in the materials and asked for approval of his appointment as chairholder of the Joey A. Jacobs Chair of Excellence in Accounting.

Trustee Smith moved to approve the appointment of Jarett Decker as chairholder of the Joey A. Jacobs Chair of Excellence in Accounting. Trustee Baker seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion to approve Jarett Decker as chairholder of the Joey A. Jacobs Chair of Excellence in Accounting passed unanimously.

Degree Under Consideration - Action

Provost Byrnes reminded the Committee that degree programs are brought before this Committee at the beginning of consideration and at the end of the proposal process for approval. As part of the background information presented, Provost Byrnes shared that labor statistics indicate high demand and salaries for information security positions.

Trustee Karbowski moved to approve consideration of a Bachelor of Science in Cybersecurity, and Trustee Freeman seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion to approve consideration of a Bachelor of Science in Cybersecurity passed unanimously.

Application and Enrollment Activity - Information

Vice President Deb Sells reported that there were more applications and more freshmen admitted than ever before in an environment where students are applying to more schools. In addition, orientation and housing reservations numbers are very strong as well. Retention projections are also up for undergraduates compared to last year. She noted that the students coming through orientation look happier, more connected, and more engaged. The university is feeling good about the projected incoming class.

Open Educational Resources Presentation - Information Item

Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs Cheryl Torsney introduced assistant professors Erica Stone, co-PI on the OER grant and Natalie Hoskins, member of the OER committee. Dr. Torsney reminded the committee that she presented OER in 2019 and gave a definition and brief history of the \$100,000 grant for OER, as well as next steps. In 2021-22, 2,450 students saved \$154,000 in textbook costs. Recently, we were awarded three new TBR grants to continue training faculty to use OERs. This is a national trend, and we are doing the hard work.

Athletics Update - Information Item

Deputy Athletic Director Lee De León spoke on behalf of Chris Massaro who was at Conference USA meetings. He noted that Athletics is having a historic year in fundraising and extended thanks to Joe Bales and Steve Smith for their assistance. The total athletics giving for this year is more than \$8.2M. The Build Blue is an Athletics priority, and we have surpassed the goal set in November with \$15.34M and continue to fundraise. On the construction front, he shared that the outdoor tennis facility begins in July and will be completed next summer. Also, the Student Athlete Performance Center construction begins in December and the Murphy Center windows will be complete in August.

With regards to competition, MTSU has won four C-USA championships. Men's and Women's Basketball went undefeated at home and Men's Tennis was ranked in the Top 20 nationally. Academic performance for the Spring semester revealed a 3.067 GPA for all student-athletes. Finally, graduating our student-athletes continues as our top priority.

Adjournment

Committee Chair Wright adjourned the meeting at 11:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee