

EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
ACADEMIC, RESEARCH, AND STUDENT SUCCESS COMMITTEE

MINUTES

May 21, 2026
Johnson City, Tennessee

The East Tennessee State University Board of Trustees' Academic, Research, and Student Success Committee met on Thursday, May 21, 2026, at 9:01 a.m. in the East Tennessee Room of the D.P. Culp Student Center.

I. Call to Order

Trustee Janet Ayers, chair of the committee, called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

II. Roll Call

Board Secretary Dr. Adam Green conducted the roll call. The following committee members were physically present:

Trustee Janet Ayers
Trustee Dr. Steph Frye-Clark
Trustee Jon Lundberg
Trustee Melissa Steagall-Jones
Trustee Tony Treadway

Other Trustees present were Charles Allen, Wade Farmer, Dorothy Grisham, Ron Ramsey, Grant Summers, and Aashi Vora.

III. Approval of the Committee Minutes from February 20, 2026

The minutes from the February 20, 2026, meeting of the Academic, Research, and Student Success Committee were approved as submitted with Trustee Jon Lundberg making the motion and Trustee Tony Treadway seconding the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS

IV. Promotion and Tenure of Faculty Members

Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Kimberly McCorkle summarized ETSU's comprehensive tenure and promotion processes and presented the

names of 56 faculty members recommended by President Noland for tenure and/or promotion.

Trustee Dr. Steph Frye-Clark moved that the list be approved, and Trustee Jon Lundberg seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

V. Approval of Tenure and Promotion Policy for Tenure-Track and Tenured Faculty

Provost McCorkle described the current policy, which was approved by the Board of Trustees on May 8, 2017. The policy specifies the processes for earning tenure and promotion and outlines the required reviews during, and beyond, the tenure and promotion processes. Provost McCorkle described the work that had taken place to update all policies related to tenure and promotion. She said the key areas of revision in the policy covering tenure-track and tenured faculty include more rigorous standards for tenure and promotion consideration that are closer in line with the university's peer institutions and with changes that have been taking place at ETSU as more emphasis is being placed on research and creative activities. The proposed policy was divided into two parts, one covering tenure-track and tenured faculty and one covering renewable term faculty. The proposed policy for tenure-track and tenured faculty adds a requirement for a mid-point review to make sure that faculty are on track to meet tenure and promotion standards. There is also a requirement for external reviews by qualified experts for faculty being considered for promotion to the rank of full professor.

Trustee Dr. Steph Frye-Clark made a motion that this policy be approved, and Trustee Tony Treadway seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

VI. Approval of Promotion Policy for Renewable Term Faculty

Provost McCorkle told the committee that this is a stand-alone policy specifying the process for earning promotion, as well as the required reviews during and beyond the promotion process. The proposed policy applies to faculty who are not in tenure-earning positions but who hold other full-time appointments related to teaching, research, clinical practice, and professional service.

Trustee Dr. Steph Frye-Clark made a motion that the policy be approved, and Trustee Jon Lundberg seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

VII. Approval of Termination of Tenure Policy

Provost McCorkle indicated that this policy, and the one following, are new for the institution. This policy specifies the times when tenure may be terminated. Provost McCorkle summarized for the committee the various categories that may lead to termination of tenure.

Trustee Jon Lundberg made a motion to approve this policy, and Trustee Tony Treadway seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

VIII. Approval of Faculty Misconduct Policy

Provost McCorkle explained that a new state law in Tennessee requires Boards of Trustees to adopt a new policy by July 1, 2026, that distinguishes between tenure decisions and disciplinary actions related to faculty members, tenured or non-tenured. Provost McCorkle summarized the elements included in the new law.

Trustee Dr. Steph Frye-Clark made a motion that this policy be approved, and Trustee Jon Lundberg seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

President Noland thanked Provost McCorkle for her leadership in accomplishing these policy revisions and additions.

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

IX. Research Update

Dr. Nick Hagemeyer, Vice Provost for Research, reported to the committee that in fiscal year 2025, ETSU brought in \$64.5 million in external awards, which was down slightly because of the uncertainties in the national funding landscape. Dr. Hagemeyer said ETSU is positioned well because of its diverse portfolio of sponsored programs in the general categories of service (27.3%), clinical service (35.2%), research (21.9%), and training (15.6%).

Dr. Hagemeyer shared notable examples in each of these categories, beginning with research by Distinguished Faculty Award winner Dr. Aaron Polichnowski and his work on hypertension and chronic kidney disease. In the service category, Dr. Hagemeyer praised the work of Dr. Amy Edwards in the Center for Community Outreach and Dr. Ronnie Gross, Executive Director of TRIO Programs. In clinical service, Dr. Hagemeyer recognized the Quillen College of Medicine (\$16.2 million) and the College of Nursing (\$6.6 million), whose externally funded work allows us to serve patients who might not otherwise receive care. In the training category, Dr. Hagemeyer highlighted the work of Drs. Dawn Rowe, Ginger Christian, and Pamela Mims in the Clemmer College of Education and Human Development, as they equip teachers to help students with special needs.

Dr. Hagemeyer mentioned that one measure of success in research and sponsored program activity is the number of proposals submitted. ETSU submitted 275 during the 2025 fiscal year, and the goal for this year is 300. He added that ETSU had four intellectual property disclosures in FY25, and that number is expected to rise. Further, in FY25, there were 13 new research funding program awards totaling \$214,000 across five colleges. Over \$300,000 was contributed to startup accounts for FY26. Dr. Hagemeyer

said there are now 32 active startup accounts, totaling almost \$1 million. He added that we have increased indirect cost recovery by some 80% on the main campus and 40% overall.

Dr. Hagemeyer told the committee that ETSU is on the cusp of becoming a top 10% regional public research university. The top five are the University of Alabama Birmingham, Wichita State, Wayne State, Montana State, and the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

Turning to the subject of visioning, Dr. Hagemeyer reported that there has been an increase of over 500% in research expenditures in the last decade at ETSU and that this year, ETSU is on the cusp of the R1—R2 threshold. In that decade, ETSU jumped by 120 positions in the National Science Foundation Higher Education Research and Development ranking.

This year, ETSU unveiled its first Research Strategic Plan. Dr. Hagemeyer outlined the pillars upon which the new plan is based:

- ETSU’s research vision and identity
- Strengthening infrastructure and processes
- Enhancing enrollment and student success through research
- External engagement, innovation, and partnerships

Dr. Hagemeyer reviewed ETSU’s research vision as articulated in the ETSU 125 Chapter 2 document: ETSU is recognized, through funding and program rankings, as one of the premier R2 research universities in the nation. The revised vision, as stated in the new strategic plan, is: ETSU is recognized, through funding, rankings, and impact, as one of the premier regional public research universities in the nation.

X. Provost’s Update

Provost McCorkle updated the committee on academic programs and curriculum. Recent investments from the strategic fund, established in October of 2024, have helped to establish the new Mechatronics program and have supported new programs in Occupational Therapy and Orthotics and Prosthetics. Money from the strategic fund has also been used to help house various programs in the Ashe Street Courthouse, including Art and Design studios and an art gallery, the BucHouse student advertising agency, and the Tennessee Climate Office.

Provost McCorkle reported that the Tennessee Higher Education Commission has granted final approval for the Hospitality and Tourism Management BBA and the Environment, Health, and Disaster Science MS. Both of these programs are enrolling students for fall 2026.

Provost McCorkle then presented an enrollment summary from the fall of 2025, showing an overall increase of 406 students. She noted the continued increases in enrollment for the College of Medicine and the College of Pharmacy. The top undergraduate majors campuswide are: Psychology, Nursing, Biology, Management, and Computer Science. The top graduate majors are: Educational Leadership, Business Administration (online), Public Health, Nursing, and Counseling. Dr. McCorkle reported that the College of Medicine's entering class has now been increased to 100 students.

Dr. McCorkle also reported on two dean-level leadership transitions, with the retirement of David Atkins, Dean of Libraries, and Dr. Randy Wykoff, Dean of the College of Public Health.

Provost McCorkle highlighted various recognitions and celebrations, including the creation of a new ETSU Leadership Academy, which will allow selected faculty and staff honorees to learn more about the workings of the university. She spotlighted Graham Mefford, a student at University School, who won the 2025 Congressional App Challenge from the First Congressional District for his app entitled MediClear. Dr. McCorkle then reiterated the significance of ETSU's January 2026 recognition as a Carnegie Community Engaged institution—one of only 277 in the country.

Provost McCorkle ended her presentation by reviewing the Division of Academic Affairs strategic alignment, noting that ETSU continues to explore new programs, including the expansion of engineering and a new nurse anesthetist program in the College of Nursing. Additional programs under consideration are one in construction management and a master's in athletic training. She added that the university, and particularly the College of Business and Technology, will be focusing more deeply on Artificial Intelligence. Dr. McCorkle underscored her division's partnership with the Office of Administration as illustrated by the future opening of the new Academic Building, the renovations of Brown Hall, and the prospect of a new Integrative Health Sciences building.

GENERAL INFORMATION ITEMS

XI. Committee Discussions

- General Discussion

No further discussion took place.

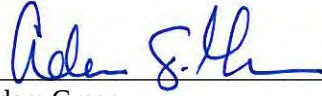
XII. Other Business

There was no other business to come before the committee.

XIII. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 10:02 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Adam Green
Secretary of the Board of Trustees

Approved by the Board of Trustees at its September 11, 2026 meeting.