

University Council
Monday, April 8, 2024
East Tennessee Room

1. Call to Order

Provost Dr. Kimberly D. McCorkle called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

2. Roll Call

Melissa Nipper led the roll call. Members present were: Dr. Ginni Blackhart, Dr. Joe Bidwell, Dr. Cheri Clavier, Dr. Joel Faidley, Ms. Christy Graham, Dr. Adam Green, Dr. Nick Hagemeyer, Mr. Steven Hendrix, Dr. Mike Hoff, Dr. Keith Johnson, Dr. Chris Keller, Dr. Karen King, Dr. Sam Mayhew, Dr. Kimberly D. McCorkle, Dr. Rob Pack, Dr. Tony Pittarese, Mr. Jeremy Ross, Dr. Joe Sherlin, Dr. Debbie Slawson, Mr. Mehmet Topyurek, Ms. Jess Vodden, Mr. Trent White, and Dr. Lynn Williams.

3. Standing Items

3.1 Approve Minutes of the February 12, 2024, Meeting

A motion was made to approve the minutes from the February 12, 2024, meeting. The motion was seconded; the minutes were approved.

3.2 Review Agenda

Provost McCorkle noted that there is not a President's Report on the agenda since President Dr. Brian Noland is traveling.

3.3 Consent Agenda Items

A motion was made and seconded to approve the item on the consent agenda (listed below). The motion was approved.

3.3.1 Identity Verification and Privacy Policy for Distance Education

3.3.2 Off-Cycle Paycheck Processing Policy

3.4 Call for Voluntary Reports of UC-Essential Action Items from Governance Organizations

Faculty Senate: Dr. Ginni Blackhart reported that Provost McCorkle and Dr. Rob Pack attended the March 18 Faculty Senate meeting to answer questions and discuss the academic structure, and President Noland and Provost McCorkle will meet again with Faculty Senate this afternoon to discuss the revised plan.

She also reported that the Faculty Senate continues to work with Dr. Karin Keith on updating policies, and there are Faculty Senate representatives in three important work groups exploring tenure and promotion, faculty definitions and workload, and policy. This year, the Faculty Senate has passed three resolutions, including one that concerns periodic and annual review of administrators and another concerning graduate tuition for spouses of employees. She also reported that ETSU hosted the Tennessee University Faculty Senates meeting.

Council of Academic Chairs: Dr. Debbie Slawson reported that the Council of Academic Chairs is continuing discussions about the proposed academic restructure and budgetary issues that are related to this.

SGA: Mr. Trent White reported that SGA has hosted several events over the last two weeks, including living room conversations that brought together representatives from student groups across campus. They are preparing to host an internship mapping summit with the Young Professionals of Johnson City and ETSU Career Services and to the SGA Spring Concert.

Last week, there was a record voter turnout for the SGA elections with 2,600 voters participating and 79 names on the ballot. Mr. White noted that the major focus of the SGA administration is working to transition in the new SGA leadership: Hunter Turgeon, President-elect; Finn Shirley, Executive Vice President; and Katricia Robinson, Vice President for Finance and Administration. The new leaders will be sworn in April 22.

Mr. Jeremy Ross and Provost McCorkle commended Mr. White for his exemplary service as SGA President for the 2023-2024 year. Members of the University Council applauded him for his work.

3.5 Sub-Council Reports

Quality and Effectiveness Sub-Council: Dr. Cheri Clavier reported that the sub-council has been meeting, but there are no updates to share at this time.

4. Action Items

4.1 Old Business

There was no old business to come before the council.

4.2 New Business

There was no new business to come before the council.

5. Information Items/Presentations

5.1 Parking and Infrastructure Update

Mr. Jeremy Ross provided the council with an update on parking and infrastructure, which included findings and recommendations from consultant Walker Consultants.

The consultants found that ETSU's parking and infrastructure revenue totals did not align with rising costs. It has been six years since ETSU has increased revenue opportunities for parking. In that same timeframe, the cost to maintain infrastructure has tripled and in many cases quadrupled.

He also reported their findings from a comparison of ETSU parking rates with other institutions, demonstrating that ETSU's parking rates are lower than its peers. One change he noted that could help ETSU align revenues with rising costs is to move to an "infrastructure fee" model for students.

After examining these factors, as well as projected revenues and expenditures and an overview of parking garage maintenance projections, Mr. Ross presented a list of 13 recommendations from the consultant that included the following three items pertaining to fees and parking permits that would help align revenue with rising costs:

- Existing parking student access fee change from \$70 to \$80 per semester.
- Optional parking permit for students at \$50 per semester.
- Optional parking permit for faculty/staff increase from \$80 to \$120 per year.

These changes will help align costs and revenue. Mr. Ross also briefly reviewed other considerations, including event parking, pedestrian experience, ADA parking, transit services, potential sites for new parking garage structures, and improvements in front of Burgin Dossett Hall.

Mr. Ross was asked if they had considered designated parking – perhaps toward the perimeter of campus – for residential students who leave their cars parked on campus all week to allow more parking space for faculty, staff, and commuter students. Mr. Ross noted that this was an excellent point and would be in Phase II of the parking plan.

He was also asked about adjusted parking rates for adjunct faculty who may only teach one or two days per week on campus. Mr. Ross said they are discussing this issue, as well.

5.2 Voyager Update

Dr. Karen King updated the council on the Voyager implementation. They are currently nearing the end of the last testing cycle of Voyager before they begin user acceptance testing later this month. End-user training will take place in April, May, and June. Operational readiness and configuration of the system are ongoing, and she anticipates that Voyager will go live in July.

She noted that Oracle Guided Learning will allow users to click on videos that include step-by-step instructions on how to complete tasks in the new system. Ms. Christy Graham discussed some of the complexities that are extending the training, including pieces tied to grants and projects.

5.3 Budget Advisory Group update

Ms. Christy Graham and Mr. Jim Harlan provided an update on the work of the Strategic Resource Alignment Advisory Committee (Budget Advisory Group).

Mr. Harlan discussed the work of the committee with consultant RPK to address the university's budget model, highlighting some of the changes to the new model. He noted that the first thing they wanted to do is establish at the leadership level a strategic fund that will be decided by the leadership team and informed by priorities of the deans, vice presidents, and academic and administrative units. This will be used as a strategic pool used to invest in things that are not necessarily aligned with a single college or administrative unit, but instead would benefit and grow the university. To fund this, they will begin the process of resetting the base budgets for all units and aligning those with the units' performance. They are putting together a strategy to initially set those base budgets and will use a data-based formula that will be used each year to adjust those budgets. This formula will be used as a starting point for budget discussions and considerations. They will incorporate fees in the revenue allocation and create new policies that will govern carry-forward monies. They also will implement policies and recommendations around vacancies. Finally, they will take capital projects and expenditures out of the units and centralize them. This will allow the university to prioritize those projects and perhaps get them done faster.

Ms. Graham followed up with additional information about the base budget resets, noting that there is no new money, but instead this will be a reallocation of resources. Therefore, some units will have a reduced base budget, while others will see an increase. She said this will likely occur over time, in phases. They know that carry-forwards that are more than the cap are currently allocated for specific purposes, so they will work with the units to get a plan in place for the use of the funds.

The timeline of the project is as follows:

- April: Meet with deans and vice presidents to arrive at draft base budget numbers. Draft an annual adjustment formula and process.
- May: Additional individual meetings with deans and vice presidents to share the conclusions and revise the base budget numbers based on feedback after the academic restructure results.
- June: Release base budget amounts to the advisory committee and finalize the bases and the annual adjustment formula process.
- July: Develop a roll-out plan for the budget modifications.

The budget model will not be implemented immediately but instead will run concurrently with the FY25 budget to see if adjustments need to be made. Then, the new model will be implemented in FY26 and reviewed on an annual basis.

6. Announcements

Dr. Nick Hagemeyer invited the council to the ETSU Research Day awards reception, which will be held today from 2-4 p.m. in Ross Hall.

Dr. Sam Mayhew reported that Admissions hosted its fourth successful open house of the academic year last weekend. He thanked those who participated and assisted.

8. Adjournment

Provost McCorkle adjourned the meeting at 9:41 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 13, 2024, at 8:30 a.m.