

**University Council
September 9, 2019
President's Conference Room**

1 Call to Order

Dr. Wilsie Bishop called the meeting to order.

2 Roll Call

Ms. Amanda Mowell called the roll. Those in attendance were:, Dr. Joseph Bidwell, Dr. Wilsie Bishop, Dr. Cheri Clavier, Dr. William Duncan, Dr. Susan Epps, Dr. Bill Flora, Dr. Mark Fulks, Dr. Adam Green, Dr. Mike Hoff, Dr. Keith Johnson, Dr. Karen King, Mr. Joseph Kusi, Ms. Candy Massey, Dr. Sam Mayhew, Ms. Stefanie Murphy, Dr. Brian Noland, Ms. Pamela Ritter, Dr. David Roane, Mr. Jeremy Ross, Dr. Don Samples, Mr. Aamir Shaikh, Dr. Joe Sherlin, Mr. Joe Smith, Ms. Alicia Williams, Dr. Randy Wykoff

Those absent were: Ms. Bridget Baird, Mr. Scott Carter, Dr. Dennis Depew, Dr. Karin Keith, Dr. B.J. King, Dr. Claudia Kozinetz, Dr. Janna Scarborough

Others in attendance: Ms. Mary Cradic, Ms. Ashley Leonard, Ms. Amanda Mowell

3 Standing Items

3.1 Approve minutes of July 8, 2019 meeting

Dr. Bishop requested two corrections, a misspelling and a date, on pages 3 and 5, respectively.

A motion to approve the July 8, 2019, minutes with the recommended changes was seconded and unanimously approved.

3.2 Review agenda

Dr. Bishop said there were no changes to the agenda.

3.3 Call for Voluntary Reports of UC

Ms. Stefanie Murphy said Staff Senate elected its executive committee for 2019-20. President: Candy Massey; Vice President: Andrew Worley; Secretary: Tim Dills; Treasurer: Crystal Maupin; and Member at Large: Lisa Booher. Murphy added that this would be her last meeting since she is no longer President of Staff Senate.

Dr. Bill Flora reported that the Faculty Senate's executive committee had a retreat in August. Turnover in Faculty Senate is low, so many members are returning. Ad hoc groups are beginning their work for the year.

Mr. Aamir Shaikh said there are many new senators in the Student Government Association; therefore, introduction of new legislation is off to a slow start this semester.

Dr. Joe Bidwell reported that the Council of Chairs recently met and heard presentations from Drs. Keith Johnson and Joe Sherlin.

Dr. Karen King provided a report on behalf of the Information Technology Council. She announced that Windows 7 has reached end of life, and ITS staff are available to assist any departments and units convert ETSU computers currently running Windows 7. She said concerns expressed by the Student Government Association regarding printing were addressed and, beginning this fall, the amount of printing funds available to students doubled. Preparations are underway to review the current contract with Banner, which expires December 2020. Dr. King said independent consultants from Strata will return to campus later this fall to finish their review of the university's use of Banner across departments and will issue a final report outlining how current processes align with best practices and help determine if a new ERP system is needed.

Dr. William Duncan said the Research Council is working to allow Research and Development Committee (RDC) Grants to extend beyond one year based on NIH best practices. RFP results for an electronic grant monitoring system are currently being reviewed and a selection will be made this fall. Amazon Web Services is being finalized for HIPAA-compliant long-term data storage for faculty and students.

Ms. Alicia Williams said the Graduate and Professional Student Association heard presentations from five of its members who received travel funding over the summer. Efforts to engage online graduate students have been successful, and a Canvas site is being used to record meetings so online students can participate.

3.4 President's Report

Dr. Noland began his report by thanking staff who worked diligently at the beginning of the semester to help students who were on the list to be dropped from their classes for nonpayment. He informed the council that enrollment is down 136 students overall, down 19 graduate students, and the freshman class is comprised of 1,786 students. The enrollment decrease was predicted and accounted for; therefore, the budget remains balanced, and \$2 million will be put into reserves. The budget included salary enhancements, which have been provided seven of the last eight years. This summer, the starting hourly wage for ETSU employees increased to \$9.25.

Although the higher education landscape is challenging, Dr. Noland said he feels good about where the university is in respect to enrollment. Dr. BJ King will present information on distribution of fallout dollars at the Board of Trustees meeting on Sept. 20. Dr. Noland said it is important for chairs and deans to be thinking about ways to strategically invest carryforward funds.

Dr. Noland addressed a question about the source of the \$2 million going to reserves by explaining that those funds are from a different pool of university resources separate from carryforward funds for the colleges. He said the goal is to build the reserves to prepare for a downturn.

Next, Dr. Noland provided a construction update. The Culp Center dining hall was renovated over the summer, and he thanked those who worked to ensure it was completed on time. He said feedback from students is very positive. The entire building will open in the spring semester, and the Martin Center for the Arts will be open this time next year. The Lamb Hall renovation project should be on the State Building Commission agenda before the end of the calendar year. The proposed Humanities Building, which was fifth on the THEC list last year, will be up for consideration again. Dr. Noland said the state budget outlook is positive for next year. As Chair of the Council of Presidents, he will be charged with presenting the budget to Gov. Lee on behalf of ETSU and universities across the state.

A number of projects occurred over the summer, including four fraternities moving into space on campus, as well as improvements to Gilbreath Hall and the creation of classrooms in the Millennium Center for the Department of Computing. Brown Hall laboratories and classroom will be the focus of future updates.

Dr. Noland summarized the announcement that occurred in July to establish a Center for Rural Health Research. Ballad Health promised \$15 million toward the center, the largest gift in the university's history, which was matched with \$7 million from the State of Tennessee, as announced by Gov. Lee. He congratulated Dr. Randy Wykoff, who will serve as founding director for the Center for Rural Health Research.

Dr. Nick Hagemeyer will provide a report to the Board of Trustees outlining a new vision for research at ETSU and potential restructuring of some areas to support research at the institution.

Dr. Mark Fulks, University Counsel, and Dr. Adam Green, Chief of Staff, have arrived on campus and are meeting with individuals to identify issues and opportunities. One of the needs they have identified is improved communication across campus. Dr. Noland said a renewed focus on improving communication by addressing gaps and expanding current efforts has begun.

Dr. Bishop continues to review operations and structure in the Office of the Provost. A review of operations and structure in the Office of Student Life and Enrollment is also underway, and consultants have reviewed Advising and Admissions. Dr. Noland acknowledged that a review of Advising and Admission is not taking place because anything is broken, but to ensure common focus and goals among staff. It is based on aligning resources and working together to meet enrollment objectives. Results and recommendations from the various consulting groups that visited campus over the summer will be shared in the coming months.

Dr. Noland also provided several updates: An announcement about leadership in the Office of Equity and Inclusion is forthcoming; Dr. Bob Plummer has taken a position at Northeast State Community College; an adjustment to leadership in Public Safety has occurred as Nicole Collins stepped down and Captain Mark Tipton has now assumed operational duties; an examination of college alignment to the strategic plan and goals to is also forthcoming.

Dr. Noland was asked to clarify the roll of chairs to improve student success. He said

if the university is going to hit enrollment targets, which are very aggressive, it will not happen if the only people focused on enrollment are those in undergraduate admissions. Chairs and deans need to be engaged in that process as well.

Dr. Noland said other institutions adopted ETSU's enrollment plans after seeing how successful they were, and now it is time to adjust the game plan. Advising needs to be coordinated just like student success in order to meet goals.

Dr. Susan Epps asked if discussions about recruitment would include streamlining and simplifying the process for curriculum and program development. Dr. Bishop responded that this is a very high priority, and Dr. Noland said it will also be important to review process and policies that may be cumbersome and impede new programs coming to fruition in a timely manner.

Dr. Noland spoke about the upcoming Southwest Virginia and Northeast Tennessee Regional Economic Forum aimed at generating discussion on the future of regionalism and what changes are needed in order to be competitive. Some of the conversation may be about the collective name of the region, but the bulk of discussion, he said, will be opportunities for business leaders to discuss challenges facing the region and issue a charge moving forward.

Dr. Noland said the Board of Trustees meeting on Friday, Sept. 20 will include updates on budget and research, among other items.

4 Action Items

4.1 Old Business

4.1.1 Election of 2019-20 University Council Vice Chair

Dr. Noland acknowledged the discussion held at the last meeting and referred to pages 2-3 of the meeting minutes, which says Dr. Bishop has served in the Vice Chair capacity to ensure that meetings occur even when Dr. Noland is unable to attend. He told University Council members that he asked Dr. Bishop to continue as Vice Chair for the next year and she asked that members of senior staff get the opportunity to volunteer to serve in the role if interested. Dr. Noland envisions a year from now that Dr. Adam Green could take on the role but needs time to acclimate to ETSU.

Dr. Noland made a motion for Dr. Bishop to continue as Vice Chair of University Council for the next year. It was seconded and unanimously approved.

4.2 New Business

4.2.1. Consensual Relationship Policy

Ashley Leonard, Compliance Counsel, presented the proposed revisions to the Consensual Relationship Policy ([attachment](#)). She stated the major changes are:

- Any relationship that an employee at the university has with an undergraduate student is prohibited and
- Any relationship between a university employee and graduate student is prohibited if the employee is an evaluative authority.

Definitions for *students* and *evaluative authority* are available in the policy, and relationships between university employees in an evaluative authority capacity are

prohibited. A procedure of self-disclosure was also added. If a university employee has an evaluative authority over a graduate student, that employee has the responsibility to self-disclose to a supervisor. The Conflict of Interest Committee will work with that employee to remove the conflict of interest, Leonard said.

Dr. Bill Flora made a motion to approve the Consensual Relationship Policy. It was seconded by Dr. Karen King

Discussion ensued about the revised policy's distinction between students and graduate students. Leonard said this draft of the policy was sent to stakeholders across campus - Human Resources, Student Life and Enrollment, Public Safety, and Internal Audit - for feedback. She then worked with Dr. Epps to ensure policy and procedures were listed accurately. The policy went through a public comment period in which a number of comments were submitted. Leonard said about half of the commenters expressed that the policy was much needed, and the other half questioned the university's right to preside over personal relationships. She said with a policy like this, support will likely be mixed, but it is in the university's best interest to have the policy in place. The Office of University Compliance will reach out to colleges and departments to hold trainings on the new policy and provide notice, in addition, the policy will be posted and shared in the weekly update email.

Several Council members expressed that the policy may need to be revised in the future but serves as a good starting point. Dr. Bishop asked Ms. Leonard to explain the reasoning behind the distinction between undergraduate and graduate student. She replied that graduate students have the capability of speaking out more than undergraduate students based on their position within the university.

Further discussion surrounded how students would be categorized as undergraduate or graduate based on the type of courses or programs they are enrolled in. When asked about the existence of a conflict of interest policy, Leonard said one does exist ([PPP-72](#)) and works in conjunction with the Consensual Relationship Policy. Additionally, council members also considered pre-existing relationships, the possible risk of faculty influence on graduate students, and possible exemptions.

Ms. Leonard confirmed that similar policies at other institutions were reviewed as part of this process, and most of them outright prohibit relationships between employees and students.

Dr. Noland said the policy presents a baseline of expectations for the academic community. Others, including student members, agreed that the policy is a good start.

Dr. Don Samples moved to close discussion on the Consensual Relationship Policy, which was seconded by Dr. Bill Flora. Dr. Bishop said a motion was on the table to approve the policy and called for a vote, which resulted in one abstention, two votes against, and the majority of University Council members voting to accept to the Consensual Relationship Policy. The policy was approved.

- 5 Information Items/Presentations
- 5.1 Update on Strategic Plan/KPIs

Dr. Hoff began his presentation ([attachment](#)) with a series of peer development questions used to help ETSU determine who it is and who it wants to be. He noted the importance of setting outcomes based on both aspirational and communal peers and said ETSU's peer group is balanced. He said a lot of institutions do not discuss the best time to set key performance indicators (KPIs). The KPIs for ETSU were established by RPK Group in 2014 and jumpstarted focused discussions on data.

Dr. Hoff said efforts are underway to recruit a Director of Institutional Research, and one of that employee's tasks will be to help get the university "in shape" because a lot of different variables, acronyms, and definitions are widely used to explain KPIs. He gave examples such as persistence and retention, success rates and graduation rates, and defining an undergraduate student. Additionally, a KPI does not mean you have an indicator for everything, Dr. Hoff said, it means you have some KPIs that in some way show that the culmination of those activities is achieving performance. He expects the current KPIs for Diversity and Inclusion to change as new strategies are developed.

The strategic plan was built on a 10-year time frame and recommended certain operational changes in order to realize the plan. The first set of strategies, Dr. Hoff continued, are the ones being implemented now.

Next, Dr. Hoff spoke about Excellence in Teaching. He said EAB is pulling data from ETSU's academic performance solutions and will create an opportunity assessment around workload and staffing that will be presented to deans. In January, there will be another sessions with chairs and deans to provide a broad training on how to use the opportunity assessment. Drs. Bishop and Scarborough will attend an upcoming EAB Summit to learn how other provosts and deans are using this tool. Dr. Hoff said ETSU is down 2,200 credit hours, but 71 course sections have been added.

Research and Grant Activity is another area where definitions are very important, Dr. Hoff noted. He said the Board of Trustees has expressed its desire to see research grow. Therefore, research KPIs allow Dr. Noland, members of the Board of Trustees, and others to ask important questions.

Dr. Hoff said he would update the strategic dashboard based on the enrollment numbers that came in just before the meeting. Testing of different types of live dashboard software is also underway to improve the user experience.

Dr. Noland asked Dr. Hoff to provide an estimate of the retention and graduation rate that will be available on the updated dashboard. He said retention will be around 75% and graduation rate around 50% with an increase in GPA and ACT scores for freshmen.

In a continued discussion about student success, Dr. Hoff said more attention was placed on these initiatives when Dr. Noland came to ETSU, and we are seeing the outcomes of "15 to Finish." Unfortunately, these efforts do not go far enough because often regional institutions struggle to move from an access to a recruiting standpoint, he noted.

KPIs in applications, enrollment, and the Great Colleges to Work For survey decreased. Dr. Hoff said the survey timing was not ideal, but the results are encouraging because changes are taking place across campus. While some KPIs do not have any positive movement, that does not mean we are out of touch or cannot change them, it just means we need to have more uncomfortable moments, Dr. Hoff explained. We have some problems, but we are recognizing them and developing plans.

5.2 Enrollment Update

5.2.1. Numbers, Trends, and Breakdown by College

Dr. Hoff transitioned to fall 2019 enrollment for the university and by college ([attachment](#)). He noted several trends, including a decrease in first-time freshmen, undergraduate enrollment (with the exception of dual enrollment). With undergraduate enrollment down, Dr. Hoff said the university must find a way to recruit more transfer students and see a higher conversion rate from dual enrollment.

Dr. Hoff was asked to explain the high number of applications received versus actual enrollment numbers. He said ETSU receives roughly 7,800 applications, accepts around 88% of applicants, and enrolls around 29%. The current trend is for students to apply to a higher number of schools.

Discussion ensued about the perceptions and effects of a decrease in faculty/student ratio as well as class sizes. The classes of recent graduates and current seniors are large, and it will take several years for the lower class sizes to ripple through the system, which is why changes in enrollment processes were necessary, Dr. Noland said. When asked why the number of freshmen is down in addition to first-time freshmen, Dr. Hoff explained it was because there are less students transferring to ETSU with less than 30 credit hours.

Highlights from each college were as follows:

- **College of Arts and Sciences** – down 3,753 undergraduate credits
- **College of Business and Technology** – down 1,400 undergraduate credits
- **Clemmer College** – up 422 undergraduate credits as a result of an increase in first-time freshmen
- **College of Clinical and Rehabilitative Health Sciences** – down 34 undergraduate credits and up 228 graduate credits
- **School of Continuing Studies and Academic Outreach** – down 78 undergraduate credits and up 25 graduate credits
- **School of Graduate Studies** – up 17 graduate credits
- **Medicine Biomedical Sciences** – up 39 graduate credits
- **No College Designated** – down 165 undergraduate credits
- **College of Nursing** – up 3,569 undergraduate credits
- **Gatton College of Pharmacy** – up 42 credits (program offers path to PharmD)
- **College of Public Health** – down 502 undergraduate credits

Dr. Hoff said part of the reason student success rates have increased is that we are doing well at recruiting students who want to go to college and know what they want to do, but we are missing others. This shifts the focus to advisement to move students into majors faster.

The College of Nursing took a broad approach to the statewide nursing shortage and expand their reach throughout the state. Dr. Noland commended the College of Nursing for the depth and breadth of work that has been done to increase enrollment. Recently, staff from Tennessee Higher Education Commission visited ETSU to learn more about what the College of Nursing is doing. ETSU will be the designated LPN-BSN provider for Vanderbilt University.

Dr. Hoff stressed the importance of academic performance solutions and said this year will focus on building the capabilities of the data office, as a new director of Institutional Research will come on board as well as a research analyst position that the new director will hire.

Dr. Noland asked when comps from other schools will be available. Dr. Hoff said he would receive comparative enrollment from LGIs in the next 24 hours.

5.2.2. Undergraduate Strategy

Drs. Joe Sherlin and Sam Mayhew presented the undergraduate enrollment strategy for the coming year and moving forward ([attachment](#)). AACRAO consultants (American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers) spent several days visiting campus to review operations. Their report is forthcoming and will include three month, six month, one year, and long-term recommendations, Dr. Sherlin said.

Early findings and results of the AACRAO visit:

- Structure and Staffing
 - Three leadership positions needed: VP, AVP, Director
 - Dr. Mayhew to lead enrollment management leadership team
 - Marketing and communications work was taking place in Admissions, University Relations, and at the college levels without collaboration; pulling team together
 - Strategies needed to recruit dual enrollment students
 - Bring together employees working with transfer student recruitment to start meeting regularly
 - Build tiers for Admissions Counselors to avoid turnover and utilize expertise
- Data and Strategy
 - Setting milestones and dashboards for territory management
 - More focused staffing approach in local markets to move students from application to orientation and enrollment
 - Data will help determine best used for time and resources
 - Increase applications from primary markets
 - Waive application fee in targeted markets during College Application Week

- Piloting program with community college partners to do on site admissions
- Engaging with local school systems: What can ETSU do for you? Offer faculty development, seminars, guest lectures, bringing students to campus for events, etc.
- Policies and Practices
 - Improve length of time to process applications
 - Consider implementation of self-reporting GPA
 - Consider making scholarship awards part of admissions process
 - Improve drop for non-payment process
- Technology Review
 - Work with ITS to utilize more functionality in Banner
 - More integration between Admissions and Financial Aid
 - Implement into CRM: inquiry info, communication flow, events
 - Undergraduate application already live in CRM
 - Enhanced tele-counseling over the summer resulted in significant gains
 - Focus on melt communication over the summer for new students, especially first generation
- Marketing and Communication
 - More integrated approach based on ROI – experience and outcomes
 - Tell story of academic distinctiveness
 - Work together to tell story and present it digitally/print
 - Specific transfer communication branded with community college partners
 - Personalizing campus experiences
 - Scheduling earlier orientations
- Recruitment and Retention
 - Look at how financial aid is awarded and pricing strategy
 - Delivering financial aid in a way that is efficient and supports student success and enrollment goals
 - This review will result in fall 2021 strategy change
 - Maximizing opportunities for advisors to support students
 - Improve first year experiences; create integrated experiences
 - Group working collaboratively on student success and retention

Dr. Sherlin said this initiative is bigger than undergraduate admissions because recruitment yield has been falling for 10 years. It will take more than a focus on freshmen. Planning for transfer, online growth, and international recruitment as well as a transformation of how ETSU is recruiting and retaining students is a long-term process, he added.

Drs. Sherlin and Mayhew were asked what types of issues/suggestions counselors have brought forward during collaborative meetings. Dr. Mayhew said they have stressed the need for clarity in pricing because students are not receiving their bill until later.

The presenters were also asked how much earlier orientations could be scheduled. Dr. Mayhew said they are targeting April and May, which is in line with the regular registration period.

The potential to reach out to people who have already been admitted somewhere else and its impact was also discussed among the group.

Dr. Bishop expressed her excitement about the activity take place in Student Life and Enrollment. She said the campus-wide approach is going to make a difference for years to come.

Dr. Noland said this is an opportunity for ETSU to adjust and do things a bit differently than they have been done in the past. There are a lot of good things happening, he added, but for those things to continue we must avoid becoming comfortable and complacent. Questions and reviews are happening to ensure that ETSU continues to move forward.

6 Focused discussion was postponed due to meeting time constraints.

7 Announcements

Dr. Bishop said the search for a Registrar is ongoing.

Dr. Keith Johnson said the Equity and Inclusion Conference is scheduled for Sept. 26-27. Registration is open.

Dr. Noland said the Board of Trustees meets Sept. 20, and the regional economic forum takes place Sept. 10; both events are livestreamed.

8 Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.