

University Council
May 10, 2021
Meeting conducted via Zoom

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: Mr. David Atkins, Ms. Bridget Baird, Dr. Wilsie Bishop, Dr. Bill Block, Mr. Scott Carter, Dr. Cheri Clavier, Dr. William Duncan, Dr. Susan Epps, Ms. Joy Fulkerson, Dr. Mark Fulks, Dr. Allen Gorman, Dr. Adam Green, Mr. Stephen Hendrix, Dr. Mike Hoff, Dr. Keith Johnson, Dr. Karin Keith, Dr. Chris Keller, Dr. B.J. King, Dr. Karen King, Ms. Candy Massey, Dr. Sam Mayhew, Dr. Brian Noland, Mr. Jeremy Ross, Dr. Don Samples, Dr. Janna Scarborough, Mr. Joe Smith, Dr. Jeff Snodgrass

Those absent: Dr. Myra Carew, Ms. Jennifer Judy, Mr. Mason Mosier, Ms. Pamela Ritter, Dr. Joe Sherlin

3. Standing Items

3.1 Approve minutes from April 13, 2021 meeting

Dr. Susan Epps made a motion to approve the minutes. Dr. Don Samples seconded the minutes, which were unanimously approved as presented.

3.2 Review agenda

Dr. Bishop reported no changes to the agenda.

3.3 Voluntary Reports of UC-Essential Action Items from Governance Organizations

On behalf of Faculty Senate, Dr. Susan Epps reported that officer elections concluded. Mr. Stephen Hendrix will continue to serve as President and Dr. Epps as Past-President (not elected). Dr. Ginni Blackhart was elected Vice President, Ashley Sergiadis is Secretary and Treasurer is COO, Dr. Ryan Nivens. At-large representatives on the Executive Committee will be elected at the retreat in August and the Parliamentarian will be appointed.

Dr. Allan Gorman reported that the Council of Chairs is close to finalizing an agreement with Academic Impressions to offer professional development for chairs. The process is underway to select the next Chair of Chairs. Dr. Bishop announced that Dr. Gorman has accepted a position at the University of Alabama Birmingham.

Ms. Candy Massey reported that Staff Senate had a successful Town Hall on April 20. The Staff Picnic has been scheduled for July 26. Staff and Career awards will open May 31 and close June 13.

In her report on behalf of the Information Technology Council, Dr. Karen King said

two-factor authentication will be rolled out across all the ETSU apps and while it is a change, should not cause a disruption.

Dr. William Duncan had no report on behalf of the Research Council.

Mr. Scott Carter congratulated Southern Conference Champions – Men’s Tennis, Women’s Golf and Men’s Golf. All ETSU Athletic teams competed during the spring, making for a very busy semester.

Dr. Bishop reported from Academic Council that three new academic programs will be on the THEC agenda on May 20 and have already gone through all the University and Board of Trustee required approvals. The programs are Doctor of Occupational Therapy, MS in Orthotics and Prosthetics and MFA in digital media.

4. Action Items

4.1 Old Business

4.1.1 – University Governance Organizations Sub-Council Committee Proposal – Dr. Susan Epps

The difference between standing and advisory in the titles was discussed in the April meeting and it was determined that committees reporting to the President were standing, others were advisory. However, the committees did not meet criteria for standing as outlined in Robert’s Rules of Order. Dr. Epps said “standing” was removed from the committee names in the proposed document included in the agenda materials. Additionally, Information Technology Council was moved to the highest level reporting bodies with Academic and University Council and some committees were recommended for sun setting. She explained that the proposed list would be a “living document.”

Discussion ensued as to whether “standing committee” would be appropriate in order to designate committees without an expiration date. It was recommended that “standing” be added to the heading. Providing definitions for the types of committees and functions on the website was also recommended.

A motion was not required. The University Governance Organizations Sub-Council Committee Proposal was approved following a vote.

4.2 New Business

4.2.1 – University Council Standing Rules – Dr. Wilsie Bishop

When University Council was created, Dr. Bishop said a group of representatives identified Standing Rules, which could now be called Standing Procedures, to operate the business of UC. It was identified that there would be a Vice Chair who would be elected, the President’s Office would be the location for agenda items to be submitted, and there would be three sub-councils – Budget/Strategic Planning, Quality and Effectiveness, and the newest, University Governance Organizations.

Dr. Bishop has been engaged in discussions about the Vice Chair role. It was intended to keep meetings running even when the President cannot attend, but having the Provost in the role has allowed for continuity and a “hand in glove”

relationship with the President's Office, she explained. Prior to each meeting, the agenda is reviewed by the President's Executive Leadership Team and then released to members.

The proposed changes to the Standing Rules were included in the agenda materials. Dr. Bishop addressed question about terms of appointments, as Faculty Senate officers do not begin their terms until August. She noted that membership to University Council would change accordingly.

Dr. Epps made a motion to approve the Standing Rules of Order. Dr. Janna Scarborough seconded the motion and it was approved following a vote.

4.2.2 – Policy on Risk Assessment and Management for Education Abroad Programs – Kay Lennon-McGrew and Dr. Chris Keller

Dr. Keller explained that the proposed policy included in the agenda materials was the product of an ad hoc committee convened last fall, as a risk assessment policy for education abroad did not exist. The policy establishes a defined process and a new International Travel Risk Assessment and Advisory Committee

President Noland made a motion to approve the policy that was seconded by Mr. David Atkins and the policy was approved by vote.

5. Information Items/Presentations

5.1 Presidential Fellow Reports

5.1.1 ETSU's Role in Regional Workforce Development – Dr. Jodi Polaha

Motivated by workforce shortages in her own field and work as a public servant on the Washington County Commission, Dr. Polaha interviewed various stakeholders and developed a rationale on workforce development issues:

1. Region has a workforce problem that is complicated and multi-faceted – lack of coordinated efforts
2. Perceptions that we do not have a diverse and healthy workforce, it is a drawback in bringing new opportunities
3. Big focus on community colleges and technical training – strong demand to show value of four-year degree
4. Everyone has a personal and professional stake in this work – it is at the heart of making ETSU a place where you want to live
5. What is Workforce Development? Individuals gave different, underdeveloped answers. Thought leaders explained that it was much more complex. A new definition is emerging and a growing sense that students should not have to choose either path – many on and off ramps to maintaining career readiness for lifelong learning.
6. Be responsive to regional opportunities and needs; reflect on importance of creative thinking, problem solving, civil engagement and lifelong learning

She provided several examples of what this looks like, noting several ETSU faculty members who tether together their teaching, research and service efforts. Discussion focused on ways to collaborate and join workforce development and community engagement efforts.

5.1.2 Interprofessional Insights: Understanding Adversity & Building a Culture of Resiliency – Dr. Megan Quinn

Dr. Quinn, a member of the Strong BRAIN Institute, sought to understand the current campus climate as it relates to ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) by conducting interviews and documenting levels of engagement, existing policies and resilience informed practices. The ultimate goal is to create a toolkit that other universities could use to develop and promote a resilience informed campus.

Three terms are often used – ACEs, Trauma-informed and Resilience-informed (preferred). Many respondents noted that increased awareness of ACEs and Resilience is needed as many did not fully understand. Sharing personalized stories of resilience was also suggested. Other feedback collected stated that ETSU policies are not person-centered, that a clear plan and infrastructure is needed to move toward becoming Resilience-informed, and there are currently no incentives or credits for participating in this work.

Dr. Quinn said the project supplements the work of the Strong BRAIN Institute and acts as a catalyst to get more people interested in ETSU becoming a resilience informed institution, which greatly benefits students and impacts recruitment and retention.

5.1.3 ETSU as a Thriving Campus: Realities and Visioning – Dr. Nick Hagemeyer

Dr. Hagemeyer explored wellness initiatives and how they impact resilience and engagement within institutions. Limited literature is available, and tends to be health specific or in siloes separating students and employees. ETSU's Be Well Bucs initiative lists eight domains of wellness.

Dr. Hagemeyer shared his own personal struggles with wellbeing and how he has become a champion for students in the Gatton College of Pharmacy. In higher education, wellbeing tends to be reactive rather than proactive – if a student has a problem, send them to counseling; if an employee has a problem, refer them to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Higher education institutions that are innovating in this area are using literature from corporate wellness programs to build wellness initiatives that are completely separate from the strategic plans and a central component of their mission and vision. They collect and use data to inform and adjust course as needed.

Taking a qualitative approach, Dr. Hagemeyer conducted interviews to explore key elements of wellbeing from various perspectives across the university in order to create a blueprint. To launch a successful wellness initiative that positively impacts student recruitment and retention, and employees, would require a paradigm shift, an identified champion, and intentional messaging as wellbeing is something you never really arrive at, he said. It is a lifelong journey. Furthermore, improving the quality of life, or wellbeing, is already part of ETSU's mission and could be weaved into the model.

5.2 ETSU 125 Chapter II Update – ETSU and Regional Profile – Dr. Mike Hoff

In his review of enrollment and regional population data, Dr. Hoff noted that even

though a demographic cliff is on the horizon, the region still has a high enough population to support enrollment numbers for 2016, if not higher. The issue is declining yield rates and interest in college, particularly among young men. Additionally, there are small changes in the enrollment of diverse populations, but those increases can create a snowball effect. Dr. Hoff also reviewed the distribution of students' home counties. New recruitment initiatives are focusing on increasing enrollment from local and border counties. There was also discussion on ETSU's student/faculty ratio and how to ensure the number reflects the quality and experience.

ETSU recently conducted the Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) survey and responses received were well over the goal and should provide actionable information, Dr. Hoff noted.

In terms of educational attainment data, higher education from this region falls behind other parts of the state, likely because people graduate and leave the region, which is why further developing community partnerships through the Committee for 125 Chapter 2 is so important, Dr. Hoff explained. The real challenge, he said, is to focus on lifelong learning by enrolling people with some college and no degree so the area is more attractive to businesses. Discussion ensued about data trends for ETSU's retention and yield rates.

5.3 Emergency Policy – Temporary Telecommuting Arrangement for Non-Faculty Employees – Ms. Lori Erickson

Ms. Kay Lennon-McGrew explained that the emergency policy is the best solution and temporarily solves issues related to remote work. Ms. Erickson said the policy will be effective for people who need to be out of their assigned workspace for five or more consecutive days, perhaps on a rotational schedule in situations when appropriate physical distancing is not possible. It also provides telecommuting flexibility for parents if children are quarantined as well as employees who are contact exposures and may need to quarantine. Direct supervisors may also recommend telecommuting for other reasons.

Requests may be submitted via dynamic form by the employee or direct supervisor and will be reviewed by Human Resources, discussed with supervisor and forwarded to appropriate Dean of Vice President. The employee is then notified if the request has been approved or denied. If approved, the employee will work with their supervisor and HR to complete a telecommuting agreement form that describes how remote work will be performed and measured.

The request form and FAQ list is available on the HR website and a series of Town Halls for employees and supervisors will be offered to answer questions. The emergency policy goes into effect July 1 and does not require approval by University Council.

6. President's Report

In his report, President Noland thanked those who were involved in the successful execution of commencement exercises extending four days.

It was recently announced that Ms. Kimberly McCorkle will assume the role of Provost in July. Dr. Noland noted that she is wrapping up her responsibilities at the University of West Florida and asked that people wait until she officially arrives to begin sending invitations to attend meetings and events.

The legislative session concluded recently and Dr. Noland said he would provide a full report during a called meeting of the Board of Trustees in June. The Board will take action on items related to budget and salary enhancements, including a one-time bonus and adjustments to starting adjunct pay.

Fall enrollment remains within budget confidence intervals and the university is stable from a budget and planning perspective, he said. ETSU received deferred maintenance funding and \$3 million in planning funds for the Academic Building to replace Campus Center Building. Dr. Noland will meet with colleges and faculty across campus to begin to frame and shape the new building. Additionally, a number of faculty and staff are moving into temporary locations in advance of the Lamb Hall renovations breaking ground this summer.

Dr. Noland said the Task Forces are actively meeting as part of the Committee for 125 Chapter 2 and will conduct their work over the summer.

In conjunction with the theme of resilience and wellbeing that had been referenced throughout the meeting, Dr. Noland acknowledged the excessive stress and hardship caused by the pandemic and announced that the University would close on Friday, May 14, so that employees could enjoy a three-day weekend. It was noted that clinical faculty and staff and other employees could float the holiday if necessary.

7. Announcements

No announcements were brought before University Council.

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.