

**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, November 14, 2023, 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 9:00 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, Bill Jones, Mary Martin, Steve Smith, Christine Vanek, Michael Wade, Pam Wright, Molly Mihm, Keith Huber, and Chris Massaro. A quorum was declared.

President Sidney A. McPhee; Joe Bales, Vice President for University Advancement; Mark Byrnes, Provost; Yvette Clark, Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer; Andrew Oppmann, Vice President for Marketing and Communications; Sarah Sudak, Interim Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students; Alan Thomas, Vice President for Business and Finance; Leah Ladley, Chief Audit Executive; James Floyd, University Counsel and Board Secretary; and Kim Edgar, Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff, were also in attendance.

Approval of Minutes - Action

The first agenda item was approval of the minutes from the August 15, 2023, Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee meeting. Trustee DeLay moved to approve the minutes from the August 15, 2023, meeting, and Trustee Vanek seconded the motion.

A voice vote was taken, and the motion to approve the minutes passed unanimously.

Rule Promulgation and Related Policy Revision - Action

312 Academic Misconduct

Rule 0240-07-04 Academic Misconduct

Policy 312 Academic Misconduct was amended to make clear that the improper use of artificial intelligence (AI) is a type of academic misconduct. Also, sanctions for graduate students were modified to allow the program to remove a student from the program in addition to sanctions applied from the academic misconduct committee.

Trustee DeLay moved to approve the revisions, and Trustee Vanek seconded the motion.

During discussion, Trustee Vanek agreed with the policy revisions, but had questions about process. She asked if 10 business days after the semester ends is long enough for a faculty member to report misconduct. Provost Byrnes explained that for the student to plan the next semester, the instructor must act within 10 days. Trustee Vanek also inquired about Section 12 which allows both the student and faculty member to appeal the decision. Provost Byrnes agreed to look at this issue to ensure a fair process. Trustee Vanek then expressed concern over possible retribution related to Section 13 which allows the faculty member to assign the grade after the determination by the academic misconduct committee. Provost Byrnes responded that faculty are usually lenient, especially for first time offenses, and students can appeal the grade assigned in a separate appeal process.

Chairman Smith asked whether 15 days is long enough for the student to prepare for the institutional hearing. Provost Byrnes stated that typically the Director of Academic Integrity works with the faculty member and student to educate the student, and few cases go to institutional hearing. Provost Byrnes agreed to add a minimum number of days for a student to prepare for the hearing but asked for time to further evaluate the policy.

A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Associate University Counsel Jeff Farrar explained that certain university policies have to be promulgated formally to be accepted by the legislature as an official State of Tennessee rule.

Chairman Smith suggested delaying the rule promulgation since more changes will be made to the policy. He then moved to rescind the vote to approve the policy so that more revisions could be made prior to the rule promulgation. Trustee Vanek seconded. A voice vote was taken, and the motion to rescind passed unanimously.

Rule Promulgation and Related Policy Revision - Action

501 Residency Classification

Provost Byrnes reported that the State of Tennessee provides a 25% discount on tuition to dependents of Tennessee Public School Teachers. The Residency Classification policy and rule were amended to add dependent children of Licensed Tennessee Public School Teachers because in a few cases, the teacher lived in a contiguous state. The revision ensures that the discount would be applied to the in-state tuition rate.

Trustee Jones moved to approve revisions to Policy 501 and amendments to the Rule as presented. Trustee Baker seconded the motion.

During discussion, Chairman Smith asked how many students were affected by this revision. Vice President Alan Thomas said two students received in-state residency because their parent was a Licensed Tennessee Public School Teacher.

A voice vote was taken, and the motion to approve revisions to Policy 501 and amendments to the Rule passed unanimously.

Approval of Expedited Tenure - Action

Provost Byrnes presented Dr. Sal Barbosa for expedited tenure in the Department of Computer Science. Trustee DeLay moved to approve expedited tenure for the candidate. Trustee Martin seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion to approve expedited tenure passed unanimously.

Performance Metrics - Information

Provost Byrnes presented the annual report on metrics highlighting an increase in enrollment, particularly for first-time freshmen. Trustee Boyd noted a decrease in debt for graduates. He suggested adding three-year performance data to the Application/Admission Activity section.

Trustee Wade asked what is driving freshman retention. President McPhee said a series of initiatives started 10 years ago with the Quest for Student Success and have culminated in increased retention and graduation rates.

Athletics Report - Information

Athletics Director Chris Massaro presented attendance data at MTSU athletics events and MTSU-hosted events in athletics facilities to demonstrate economic impact and exposure to the University.

Adjournment

Committee Chair Wright adjourned the meeting at 9:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee