

REPORT FROM THE ACADEMIC AFFAIRS, STUDENT LIFE, AND ATHLETICS COMMITTEE

The Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee met in regular session on Monday, May 15, 2017, at Middle Tennessee State University. Chairwoman Pam Wright called the first meeting of this Committee to order at 9:00 a.m. (CDT). A quorum was present with the following Committee members in attendance: J.B. Baker, Tony Johnston, Steve Smith, Pam Wright, and Lindsey Weaver. Also present were Mark Byrnes, Interim University Provost; Alan Thomas, Vice President for Business and Finance; Bruce Petryshak, Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer; Andrew Oppmann, Vice President for Marketing and Communications; Deb Sells, Vice President for Student Affairs and Vice Provost for Enrollment and Academic Services; Chris Massaro, Director of Athletics; and, Heidi Zimmerman, University Counsel and Board Secretary. President McPhee greeted the committee by telephone, but disconnected shortly afterwards due to a bad connection.

Chairwoman Wright thanked everyone for coming and stated the meeting would last two hours and the main objectives were the action items.

The first action item concerned review of proposed institutional policies. Prior to the meeting, Committee members had been provided a list of policies indicating ten recommended for approval by the Board of Trustees and those recommended for approval by the President. Chairman Wright requested that Dr. Byrnes provide brief explanations for the policies recommended for Board approval.

During Dr. Byrnes' explanations of the tenure and promotion policies, questions were asked about the tenure and promotion process, how many faculty hold tenure, percentages of faculty by rank, and how many faculty do not attain tenure. Dr. Byrnes will provide the information for the next meeting.

In his explanation of policy 206 Tenure and Promotion Appeals Process, Dr. Byrnes noted the final level of appeal is the Board of Trustees. He then raised the issue of who makes recommendations regarding appeals to the Board of Trustees. Under the Tennessee Board of Regents, their staff would prepare/investigate appeal materials and make a recommendation for the Board's consideration. Dr. Byrnes said there has been discussion of collaborating with other state universities when appeals arise.

Board Chairman Smith asked questions about community college transfer admissions. He also asked whether our admission process included a criminal background review. Dr. Sells discussed guaranteed and conditional admission standards, and stated that we do not include a question about criminal background on our application. Ms. Zimmerman will look at legal issues associated with adding this to our application for the next committee meeting.

Dr. Johnston made the Motion that the list of ten (10) proposed policies be recommended to the Board for approval with the remaining proposed policies recommended to be approved by the President. See Attachment 1. The Motion was seconded by Board Chairman Smith. A voice vote was taken and the Motion carried.

The next action item was the Recommendation for Approval of Tenure and Promotion Candidates. Dr. Byrnes explained the application process for tenure and promotion candidates and the seven levels of review prior to Board of Trustees approval. Board Chairman Smith asked how often the tenure policy is reviewed, and Trustee Baker added that considering the financial obligations associated with tenure, the policy should be reviewed annually. Dr. Johnston commented on the depth of review that has taken place on all MTSU and TBR policies since the FOCUS Act, and it was agreed that the University Provost will review the policies which require Board of Trustees approval annually and bring concerns to this committee.

Trustee Baker made the Motion that the list of thirty (30) Tenure and thirty-four (34) Promotion Candidates be recommended to the Board for approval. See Attachment 2. The

Motion was seconded by Board Chairman Smith. A voice vote was taken and the Motion carried.

The third action item concerned approval of one new degree program, the Bachelor of Science (BS) in Interactive Media. Department Chair Billy Pittard described Interactive Media and how moving this program from a concentration under the BS in Mass Communication to a stand-alone major provides more specificity for potential employers of our graduates.

Board Chairman Smith made the Motion that the Bachelor of Science (BS) in Interactive Media be recommended to the Board for approval. See Attachment 3. The Motion was seconded by Trustee Baker. A voice vote was taken and the Motion carried.

Director of Athletics Chris Massaro [presented an overview](#) of MTSU Athletics, Conference USA, and the NCAA. See Attachment 4. Board Chairman Smith asked for the graduation rate of student-athletes (86%, a higher rate than general student body). Trustee Baker asked about the list of facility needs. Mr. Massaro shared that an architect will be working on a master plan this summer for a formal report.

The next information item was Metrics for Academic Programs. Prior to the meeting, Committee members had been provided reports on Degrees Awarded, Enrollment, Retention, Persistence, and Completion Rates. See Attachment 5. Trustee Baker asked for the most current information and more context to the data presented. Board Chairman Smith would like to see this year's data compared to last year's related to admissions and employment information for our graduates. Dr. Byrnes will provide a report at the next meeting. Dr. Sells discussed trends in applications, yield rates, housing, and scholarship applications.

Regarding tracking the specific components that contribute to student success, Dr. Byrnes told the Committee that the President, Vice Presidents, and Deans just completed a series of student success/budget meetings which provided a narrative behind the student success statistics.

The Committee would like to review the THEC low-producing program report before it is sent to THEC.

Board Chairman Smith asked why degrees in nursing were trending down and how can we increase the maximum enrollment in nursing. Dr. Byrnes will provide a report at the next meeting.

Board Chairman Smith asked for a faculty-to-degree productivity report. Dr. Johnston said that some departments teach general education courses to all 20,000 students but may not have many majors.

Trustee Baker asked for a report on Greek Life for the next committee meeting.

Chairperson Wright asked if additional resources are needed to produce metrics.

Chairperson Wright asked for agenda items for the next committee meeting and noted that a meeting date has not been set yet.

The meeting adjourned at 10:58 a.m. (CDT).

Pam Wright, Chairwoman