

**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 15, 2022, 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 9:05 a.m.

Roll Call

Board Secretary James Floyd called the roll. The following Committee members were in attendance: J.B. Baker, Pete DeLay, Steve Smith, Pam Wright, Rick Cottle, Drew Carpenter, Keith Huber, and Chris Massaro. Trustees Chris Karbowskiak, Tom Boyd, and Joey Jacobs were absent. A quorum was declared.

President Sidney A. McPhee; Mark Byrnes, University Provost; Joe Bales, Vice President for University Advancement; Andrew Oppmann, Vice President for Marketing and Communications; Yvette Clark, Interim Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer; Deb Sells, Vice President for Student Affairs and Vice Provost for Enrollment and Academic Services; Alan Thomas, Vice President for Business and Finance; Diane Snodgrass, Interim 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 16, 2022, Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee meeting. Chairman Smith moved to approve the minutes from the August 16, 2022, meeting, and Trustee DeLay seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion to approve the minutes from the August 16, 2022, meeting of the Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee passed unanimously.

Approval of Appointment of Chair of Excellence and Expedited Tenure - Action

Provost Byrnes asked that the committee take no action as the expedited tenure process had not been completed as of that date. The item was placed as an action item on the Board of Trustees' December 13, 2022, agenda.

Approval of Degrees under Consideration - Action

Master of Science in Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness

Provost Byrnes reported interest in increasing the number of online master's degree programs, particularly those that have a clear workforce tie. The Master of Science in Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness is a 30-hour online program targeted to working professionals and allowing flexibility in courses.

Trustee Cottle moved to approve consideration of a Master of Science in Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness, and Trustee DeLay seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion to approve consideration of a Master of Science in Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness passed unanimously.

Master of Science in Legal Studies

A partnership with the Nashville School of Law. This is not a law degree; it is designed for people who have an interest in law and want to work in the legal field. In discussion with the Nashville School of Law Dean, we are convinced there is a market for this. This is an MTSU degree that will be taught at the Nashville School of Law.

Chairman Smith moved to approve consideration of a Master of Science in Legal Studies, and Trustee DeLay seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion to approve consideration of a Master of Science in Legal Studies passed unanimously.

MTSU Online - Information

Provost Byrnes shared a presentation outlining the number of fully online degree programs and enrollment data of students taking some or all online courses.

Chairman Smith asked how MTSU competes with other LGIs and the amount out-of-state students are paying. Fully online out-of-state students pay the e-rate, which is the midpoint between the in-state and out-of-state rate.

President McPhee added that quality and cost have to balance. Students would much rather earn their degree at a major university that is accredited.

Trustee Wright asked about the services available to online students. All academic services are available in an online environment as required by SACSCOC.

Metrics - Information

Provost Byrnes presented the annual report on metrics. He highlighted the six-year graduation rate, 59.8%, which is very close to the five-year goal of 60%. This is an institution-wide effort.

Chairman Smith noted the percentage of Pell-eligible students. President McPhee said educating these students is a pride point, as many Tennesseans are in this category.

Trustee Baker asked Athletics Director Chris Massaro to deliver a message from the Board of Trustees to student-athletes commending their academic performance.

Enrollment Report - Information

Vice President Deb Sells highlighted areas in Fall 2022 enrollment as compared to the past four years and noted that MTSU proudly educates more Pell-eligible, African American, Hispanic, and adult students than UTK. Community College and the overall statewide college-going rate is declining, as public high school graduates are losing confidence in higher education and are concerned about the cost of higher education. MTSU is responding by expanding guaranteed scholarship awards.

Bringing prospective students to campus for a tour or a Preview Day is effective, and campus visits have increased this fall. The data shows increased applications and admits. The job now is encouraging admitted students to enroll. Each college has faculty and staff corresponding with prospective students. President McPhee called on Dean Greg Van Patten to describe the contact and engagement the College of Basic and Applied Sciences is making with prospective students.

The College of Graduate Studies Associate Dean, Dawn McCormack, gave an overview of the admission process for graduate programs. Some programs have unlimited enrollment, and others are capped due to accreditation requirements or staffing limitations. Graduate student recruitment and enrollment depend on the economy and job market. Graduate enrollment in Tennessee is trending upward, and MTSU is in line with the trend.

Athletics Report - Information Item

Athletics Director Chris Massaro shared that Conference USA signed a new television contract for broadcasts with ESPN and CBS Sports. MTSU football games in October will be on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

Build Blue progress report: Fundraising has surpassed \$17M. Tennis Courts have been cleared, and new courts will be open Fall 2024. Massaro showed renderings of the Student-Athlete Performance Center which is at the end of the design stage.

Adjournment

Committee Chair Wright adjourned the meeting at 10:41 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee