

University Assembly

November 17, 2021

TEAMS Meeting

Members Present: Adams, Airhart, Allcott, M. Allen, Brachey, C. Brown, Bryant, Cherry, Craven, Comer, Crockett, Ding, Drexler, Edmonds, Garner, Gotcher, Hagarty, Hanna, Hasan, Honeycutt, Hutson, Isbell, Kruszka, Langford, Lay, Lelle, Liu, Loftis, Meadows, H. Mills, Null, O'Connor, Payne, Ramsey, Rand, Reames, C. Roberts, J. Roberts, Russell, Shank, Slater, Smith, Darron, Smith, Septt. Smith, Troy, Smith-Andrews, Stinson, Swartling, Swartzentrover, J. Taylor, A. Wells, Wilbanks, Wilson, Winkle, Zagumny, Zuraikat.

Members Absent: Alley, Bohannon, A. Brown, Canfield, Duncan, Fornehed, Griffin, Hajdik, Harris, Hermann-Turner, Howard, C. Johnson, Killman, Larimore, Lee, Luke, Manginelli, L. Maxwell, Nelson, Ojo, Pickering, Shipley, Sisk, Weathers, Westbrook, Witcher, Yelamarthi.

Others Present: Bleignier, Braswell, Bruce, Huo, B. Johnson, Keeton, Luna, Oldham, Owens, Polk-Johnson, Schrock, M. Smith, Diane Smith, Stephens, Vedder, Wray, Wright

Summary of Proceedings:

Approved agenda

Approved minutes from April 21, 2021

Received report of the Academic Council for Fall 2021

Received report of the Administrative Council for Fall 2021

Received remarks from President Oldham

Other such matters

Proceedings:

Lee Wray called the meeting to order at 3:42 p.m. due to the tardiness of President Oldham. Wray noted that President Oldham was in route and would be joining momentarily. Sandi Smith-Andrews motioned to approve the agenda and Douglas Airhart seconded. Motion APPROVED.

A motion to approve the minutes of April 21, 2021 was made by Mark Wilson and seconded by Holly Mills. Motion APPROVED.

Kim Winkle motioned to accept the report. Airhart seconded. Winkle presented the Academic Council report for Fall 2021. Winkle stated that everyone should have received the report in advance. In summary, Academic Council met three times virtually. During the semester meetings, the following were approved: eight policies, one new degree proposal, one College of Business admissions requirement amendment, two new minors, deletion of three concentrations, addition of seven new concentrations, one concentration name change, one minor name change, one degree name change, addition of two new certificates, one new degree proposal, and an procedure amendment. Winkle pointed out that Policy 223, Online and Distance Education, was approved in October after discussions in both Councils and Faculty Senate. Motion APPROVED.

Wilson motioned to accept the Administrative Council report. for Fall 2021. Mills seconded. Sandi Smith-Andrews presented the Administrative Council report for Fall 2021 stating that the Administrative Council met two times virtually. Smith-Andrews noted that the September 1st meeting was canceled due to lack of agenda items. Smith-Andrews summarized that Administrative Council approved: two new policies, one revised policy, reviewed one policy, received an update on the New Student Organization Recognition Process and discussed the Bereavement Leave Policy in a first reading. Smith-Andrews pointed out that Administrative Council voted on September 29 on a procedural amendment that any new policy or revised policy with substantive changes be brought forth as a first reading, discussion only item, prior to coming to vote at the second reading. Motion APPROVED.

President Oldham apologized for being late to the meeting and thanked everyone for their patience; he had been driving an electric vehicle as part of Dr. Chen's grant and had issues with charging the vehicle following his meeting in Nashville. The President provided remarks and reminded assembly that the Wednesday before Thanksgiving was an additional administrative closing day as a thank you to the campus for continuing to do such a great job on managing the issues around COVID.

President Oldham stated that the cupola was scheduled to be replaced on top of Derryberry Hall in the next few months also noting that the construction start of the new engineering building should begin very soon. The Innovation Residence Hall was in the final stages of design and he appreciated a lot of faculty input on the innovation center side. President Oldham added that street work on Peachtree and the surrounding streets should take place in the next couple months and it was expected that it would take approximately a year and a half to complete. The renovations of Derryberry and Wattenbarger Auditoriums were funded by the state this year and he thought the designers had been selected on both projects.

President Oldham stated that requests were submitted to the state for two new capital projects in next year's budget which included renovation of Johnson Hall and demolition of Foster Hall. Both projects had a good chance of getting funded in next year's budget. The state provided another opportunity in a second competition for new capital project funds due to availability of one-time funds and with the criteria provided, Tech submitted a second engineering building. President Oldham stated that the submission probably would not be funded in the next year's budget but it would be held for future projects. President Oldham added that at the last Board of Trustees' meeting, a parking garage project

was introduced along with a Football Stadium project. The board will decide whether to go forward with the projects at the December board meeting.

President Oldham stated that enrollment continued to be an important focus and a lot of work had been completed to reach the goal of increasing enrollment to 12,000 students in the next few years. President Oldham noted that all universities in the state except for two schools saw a downturn in enrollment. To address the downturn, efforts have been doubled in a number of areas. The scholarship program for incoming freshmen was completely changed providing more guaranteed scholarships. This has been well received and has been manifested in a higher rate of applications and admissions for next fall. Tennessee Tech's mission now was to turn those applications into enrollments. A lot of work has been accomplished in marketing. President Oldham stated that a student group called the Trailblazers was established to give personalized tours to prospective students. The Trailblazers follow up with personalized notes and phone calls. A lot of effort has been given to make recruitment a personal matter.

President Oldham pointed out that it was early in the budget season and there were a lot of unknowns. Oldham noted that the state was in a good financial position and he would not anticipate any reductions at this time. The biggest pressure point going forward continued to be enrollment. President Oldham indicated that Tennessee Tech would continue to act prudently and was in a very strong financial position.

President Oldham stated Tennessee Tech continued to be ranked very well as a national institution with a Carnegie Research II designation. President Oldham stated he continued to be very proud to be ranked as the institution that was the most affordable campus in the region with the highest starting salary for graduates. President Oldham attributed this to all of the assembly and others on campus and thanked everyone on campus who made this possible. Oldham reminded everyone that Lighting the Quad would be on Tuesday, following Thanksgiving.

Other Such Matters: Jeannette Luna thanked President Oldham on behalf of the faculty for giving the Wednesday before Thanksgiving off. Douglas Airhart added that the staff was happy to hear that also. Smith-Andrews asked if there was any progress establishing an ad hoc committee to establish procedures for University Assembly. President Oldham did not recall the request, however, Lee Wray added he would be in contact with Smith-Andrews to make sure it happened.

Meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.