

MINUTES
TENNESSEE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION
Winter Quarterly Meeting
January 29, 2015, 1:00 p.m. CST

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Evan Cope at 1:00 p.m.

Commission Members Present:

Mr. Evan Cope	Ms. Pam Koban
Mr. Robert Fisher	Treasurer David Lillard
Secretary of State Tre Hargett	Mr. Alex Martin
Ms. Sharon Hayes	Mr. Keith Wilson
Mr. Jon Kinsey	

Commission Members Absent:

Dr. Sara Heyburn	Mayor A C Wharton
Mr. Bill Lee	Comptroller Justin Wilson
Ms. Pam Martin	

Opening Remarks

Vice Chairman Evan Cope welcomed all and thanked them for their attendance. Mr. Cope announced since the Commission is currently without a chairman, the first item of business following the adoption of the agenda would be item I.A., selection of a new chairman, then follow the agenda, as presented.

Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Cope called for a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Keith Wilson made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Jon Kinsey seconded the motion; the motion was duly adopted.

Action Item I.A., Selection of New Chair

Mr. Cope then recognized Dr. Russ Deaton to present the item. Dr. Deaton commented on the productive worksession earlier in the day. He then reviewed the current officers, noting Mr. Randy Boyd’s position as chairman on the board is vacant due to Mr. Boyd becoming Commissioner of the Department of Economic and Community Development. Ms. Pam Koban made a motion to select Mr. Evan Cope to serve as chair; noting the appointment to chair vacated a vice chair position, Ms. Koban also recommended Mr. Keith Wilson serve as vice chair. Treasurer David Lillard seconded the motion; the motion was duly adopted.

Chairman’s Report

Chairman Cope then congratulated Dr. Deaton on his appointment as Interim Executive Director and commended Dr. Richard Rhoda on his past service. He also thanked the Commission for selecting him as chair and noted he looks forward to serving the Commission in this capacity. He then recognized Mr. Mike Krause, executive director of the Drive to 55 and Tennessee Promise initiatives, to provide an update on the Tennessee Promise program. Mr. Krause advised the Commission there have been over 58,000 applicants for the program. He then commented on the mandatory meetings each student must attend, thus far, 380 meetings have been held in the past few months with great participation. Mr. Krause then briefly discussed other initiatives including TN Reconnect, LEAP, SAILS, and the Veteran task force and commended THEC staff for the diligent work with each program.

Approval of Minutes, November 20, 2014, Meeting

Chairman Cope then called for a motion to approve the minutes of the November 20, 2014, Commission meeting. Mr. Kinsey made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Ms. Sharon Hayes seconded the motion; the motion was duly adopted.

Executive Director's Report

Dr. Russ Deaton, Interim Executive Director, was recognized. Dr. Deaton began by introducing new staff members: Mr. Curt Johnston, LEAP Program Director, and Ms. Sam Lamere, Adult Initiatives Office, PPR division. He then recognized Mr. Tim Phelps and Ms. Diane LeJeune to brief the Commission on TSAC's role supporting the Drive to 55 Initiative. Mr. Phelps stated TSAC assisted with the development of the Tennessee Promise application, provided data, and assisted students with the application.

Ms. LeJeune then briefed the Commission on the communication staff activity relating to the TN Promise program. She stated that over 200,000 push cards had been delivered to students and parents. Ms. LeJeune also stated that staff made financial aid presentations at all Tennessee high school guidance counselor trainings, held TN Promise application workshops at high schools that requested workshops, participated in Scholarship Saturday and handled over 12,000 additional calls and 9,000 live chat sessions in regard to the TN Promise program. She then stated that over 200 College Goal Tennessee and FAFSA events are scheduled between January 1 and February 15 to ensure all applicants have the assistance needed to complete the FAFSA. Dr. Deaton commended TSAC staff for their work with the TN Promise program. He then recognized Mr. David Wright to provide an update on the Master Plan. Mr. Wright stated at the moment degree projections data were being run and confirmed for accuracy, working with the systems for program analysis, and future goals.

Systems' Reports

University of Tennessee

Dr. Joe DiPietro, President, University of Tennessee System, was recognized. Dr. DiPietro began by commenting on the revision of the current UT business model. He stated the issue was passing tuition increases to cover additional costs due to the tough fiscal condition of the state and noted a Budget Advisory Group has been convened to assist developing a new two-year plan. Dr. DiPietro advised the Commission on the renewal of a partnership with Battell ORNL. He also advised that President Obama has selected UT to lead the Institute for Advanced Composites Manufacturing Innovation (IACMI) with a grant in the amount of \$259M from the US Department of Energy and IACMI's partners, the largest grant ever received by UTK.

He then commented on the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification of UTC, which received the classification for the first time in 2008 and again in 2015; UTK and the Institute of Agriculture also received this recognition for 2015. In closing, Dr. DiPietro commented on the final phase of the search for Vice President of Development and President of the UT Foundation; UTK being listed in the top 100 of Kiplinger report for cost; and the Summit for Prevention of Sexual Assault in partnership with TBR, TICUA, and local nonprofit organizations.

Tennessee Board of Regents

Mr. John Morgan, Chancellor, Tennessee Board of Regents was recognized. Chancellor Morgan began his report by congratulating Mr. Cope on his appointment as chair. He then commented on the Sexual Assault Prevention Summit held on all campuses in partnership with UT, TICUA, and other local nonprofit organizations. Chancellor Morgan also commented on President Obama visiting Pellissippi State Community College to discuss the Tennessee Promise program and how it can serve as a national model for community college access across the country. He also commented on the second White House Summit on higher education and noted that Tennessee continues to be recognized on a national level for promoting higher education attainment and college completion.

Chancellor Morgan announced the groundbreaking of the Smyrna Nissan/TBR state of the art training center on December 8 and noted that TCAT Murfreesboro would utilize half of the facility and Nissan would utilize the other half but both would have access to all training and educational material. He then commented on the TBR retreat held to identify necessary changes in the system and provide feedback and strategies to resolve issues.

Chancellor Morgan announced the following changes at institutions: Dr. James Catanzaro, president, Chattanooga State Community College, retired on December 31, 2014; Dr. Nathan Essex, president of Southwest Tennessee Community College will retire on June 30, 2015 and Dr. Mary Lou Apple, president of Motlow State Community College will retire on June 30, 2015. He stated the first search committee meeting was held two weeks ago for Southwest; the Chattanooga search committee meeting will begin in the next two weeks, and the Motlow search committee meeting shortly thereafter. He noted that for the first time in a community college setting, a search firm was being used to fill Chattanooga and Southwest openings.

He advised the Commission that two faculty members at Roane State had recently set a world record for living under water, noting the purpose was to educate the public on ocean conservation and to inspire young people's interest in science. Professor Bruce Cantrell and adjunct Professor Jessica Fain spent 73 days, 2 hours, and 43 minutes living in the Jules Undersea Lodge off Key Largo.

He then commented on the development of an experimental breast cancer treatment with Dr. Venk Tiriveedhi, assistant professor of biological science at TSU, and a group of researchers from Washington University School of Medicine and noted the trials have proven to be successful and safe and after a year, fifty percent of patients showed no signs of the cancer returning.

In closing, Chancellor Morgan commented on the ratemyprofessors.com site, noting Vol State ranks 21 out of 8000 community colleges across the country for educational satisfaction, faculty, and campus environment. He noted that Tennessee Tech junior chemistry major Kelsey Richards, of Gallatin, was one of sixteen students across the country to receive the leadership award from the American Chemical Society. He then noted that at the University of Memphis, the RN to BSN program was named one of the best online class experiences by RNtoBSN.org which is based on a wide range of sources, and at ETSU, Melinda Gaines and Mark Stevens were recently selected by SREB to the Doctoral Scholars Program, a program to increase production of minority student Ph.D's having the intent to teach on a college campus.

Action Items (continued)

Approval of New Academic Degree Program, MTSU, Finance, MS

Ms. Betty Dandridge Johnson, Associate Executive Director for Academic Affairs, presented the recommendation for the new academic program. Ms. Dandridge Johnson stated the program will provide students with instruction in financial theory and practice that will prepare them for careers as financial analysts, managers, planners and consultants. She also stated the Finance MS program is the only one in the State at a public university.

Ms. Dandridge Johnson noted the program is in full compliance with MTSU 2007-2017 Academic Master Plan, particularly the priority area of expanding programs with a focus on regional demand and financial viability and is in alignment with the goals outlined in the THEC *2010-15 Public Agenda for Higher Education*, specifically the focus on strengthening Tennessee's Knowledge Economy and increasing the number of graduate degrees awarded to the state's residents. Ms. Sharon Hayes made a motion to approve the Finance MS at MTSU. Ms. Koban seconded the motion; the motion was duly adopted.

Policy Revision: A1.0 – New Academic Programs: Approval Process

Ms. Dandridge Johnson also presented the recommendation for policy revision A1.0. She stated the new academic program proposals follow the approval process outlined in Policy A1.0, which has minor updates to reflect current practices. Ms. Dandridge Johnson noted the minor changes include granting the Executive Director of THEC approval authority for proposals of new academic units (divisions, colleges and schools), and a name change from the "letter of intent" to the "letter of application" regarding the notification of an academic program proposal. Mr. Kinsey made a motion to approve staff recommendations for policy revision A1.0. Secretary Hargett seconded the motion; the motion was duly adopted.

Policy Revision: A1.1- New and Modified Academic Programs: Evaluation Criteria

Ms. Dandridge Johnson then presented the recommendation for policy revisions A1.1. She stated the proposed policy revisions for Policy A1.1 consist of minor changes to the evaluation criteria that are to be included in the letter of application for new and modified academic programs. It also provides a more efficient approval process for modified academic program proposals by granting power of approval to the THEC Executive Director and stated that proposed language exists in Policy A1.1 for the THEC Executive Director to elevate a program modification to a new program so that it may be considered by the Commission for approval. Ms. Hayes made a motion to approve staff recommendations for policy revision A1.1. Ms. Koban seconded the motion; the motion was duly adopted.

Temporary Authorization of New Institutions and Approval of New Programs Under the Postsecondary Education Authorization Act

Dr. Stephanie Bellard Chase, Associate Executive Director for the Division of Postsecondary School Authorization, was recognized. Dr. Chase presented the recommendations of staff and the Committee on Postsecondary Educational Institutions to grant temporary authorization to 11 new institutions and 43 new programs. A motion was made by Treasurer Lillard to adopt the recommendations, as presented. Secretary Tre Hargett seconded the motion; the motion was duly adopted.

October 31 Revised Budgets, 2014-15

Ms. Crystal Collins, Director of Fiscal Policy and Facilities Analysis, was recognized. Ms. Collins stated that the General Appropriations Act requires the operating budgets of all higher education units be submitted by the respective governing boards to the Higher Education Commission. She noted that each higher education system submits operating budget estimates twice a year and the proposed and revised estimates are referred to as the July 1 and October 31 operating budgets, respectively. She stated that campuses have again directed the majority of their resources to the teaching functions.

Ms. Collins stated that overall, 54.2 percent of all revenue was generated from tuition and fees compared to 35.9 percent ten years prior in 2004-05 and State appropriations accounted for 35.5 percent of revenue, compared to 52.1 percent in 2004-05. Ms. Hayes made a recommendation that the Commission approve the revised 2014-15 October 31 budgets, authorize the Executive Director to make technical adjustments to the budgets if necessary and transmit the approval of the referenced budgets, along with the appropriate commentary, to the Commissioner of Finance and Administration. Secretary Hargett seconded the motion; the motion was duly adopted.

Information Items

Drive to 55 Support and Capacity Building

Mr. Troy Grant, Director, College Access Initiatives, and Ms. Jessica Gibson, Assistant Executive Director of Policy, Planning, & Research, were recognized to provide a status report. Mr. Grant stated that as part of the Governor's Drive to 55 Initiative, the Tennessee Board of Regents, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, and the Tennessee College Access and Success Network collaborated to produce an online course designed to equip high school students with the skills and information needed to enroll and succeed in higher education. He noted that course content includes information on choosing a college, applying for admission and financial aid, taking steps to enroll in classes and successfully navigate the college campus, and strategies for college success. He also noted the course is being piloted out of the Office of P-16 Initiatives with 14 Tennessee high schools during the spring of 2015 and is scheduled to be available for statewide implementation in the fall of 2015.

Ms. Gibson commented that in the coming weeks, THEC will initiate a competitive grant program called Ready to Reconnect grants, that will be available to TCATs, public two- and four-year institutions, and TICUA institutions to improve practices, policies and internal operations that support adult learner success. She stated that in order to be eligible for this grant, institution must first complete the Adult Learning Focused Institution (ALFI) assessment through the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL). Ready to Reconnect grants will be awarded for the purpose of providing services and support to adult learners to increase their success on the basis of the challenges revealed through the ALFI assessment results.

Ms. Gibson noted THEC will also release a call for proposals for small competitive grants focused on increasing the matriculation and retention of Tennessee Promise students at public two-year institutions. She noted the program will be funded using College Access Challenge Grant funds, and the grants aim to build institutions' capacity to serve Tennessee Promise students with particular emphasis placed on associate degree completion and, if applicable, transfer to a four-year institution.

THEC will award grants to institutions that identify scalable, promising practices that support degree completion among Tennessee Promise students.

LEAP Program Update

Mr. Curt Johnston, Director of Education & Workforce Alignment, was recognized. Mr. Johnston stated the Labor Education Alignment Program (LEAP) is a state funded grant program for community colleges and colleges of applied technology in the state. He noted the grants, administered by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, are designed to provide resources for regional collaborations consisting of partners across education, economic development, and workforce sectors so that they may address skills gaps throughout the state. Mr. Johnston then noted that in December, the Workforce Subcabinet announced twelve awards to regional collaboratives from all across the state. He also noted that funds for these proposals are eligible to be used to enhance, expand, or create new academic programs that fill a critical and demonstrable workforce need; to acquire equipment demonstrated to be crucial to the development of new workforce-essential competencies; and to build employer-driven career pathways bridging K-12 and higher education.

Academic Program Review

Ms. Dandridge Johnson commented that as Tennessee's institutions of higher education continue to focus on the goals of completion and student success, there is a clear need for an ongoing evaluation of the state's academic programs. She stated that in recent years, higher education has seen a period of extensive growth in the current academic program inventory coupled with the concerns that a significant number of programs are failing to meet productivity thresholds. Ms. Dandridge Johnson also stated in January 2014, THEC notified the Tennessee Board of Regents and the University of Tennessee of a 12-month moratorium on new academic programs beginning July 2014, which allowed the governing boards to submit program proposals that were currently being developed by faculty and administrators to the THEC staff for evaluation.

She commented that the moratorium allowed THEC to work jointly with each system to assess the health of academic offerings, make necessary adjustments to academic program policy, and ensure that all programs are fully aligned for student success. Ms. Dandridge Johnson noted that as the state continues to move toward 55 percent of Tennesseans obtaining a college degree or certificate by 2025, it is vital that our institutions of higher education provide students with high quality academic programs.

She stated the academic program review provides a holistic view of the status of degree programs throughout the state, and includes these components: Program activity, which depicts new programs added to the state inventory in 2014, as well as programs that have been terminated; post approval monitoring, which assesses success of new programs approved within the last five years against projected enrollment and graduation benchmarks; performance funding qualitative reviews, showing results of accreditation reviews and program evaluation of established programs; and program productivity review, an on-going monitoring of all programs in operation for more than five years.

Spring Commission Meeting

Dr. Deaton advised the Commission that the next scheduled meeting would be April 23, 2015, in the THEC board room.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

Approved:

Evan Cope, Chair