

## TENNESSEE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

Minutes of the Spring Quarterly Meeting

Room 282, Roaden University Center

Tennessee Technological University

Cookeville, TN

May 19, 2022

Link to recording: [THEC Spring 2022 Commission Meeting 5/19/2022 \(tn.gov\)](#)

Chairman Evan Cope called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

Member	PRESENT	ABSENT
Chairman Evan Cope	X	
Commissioner Nancy Dishner	X	
Secretary Tre Hargett	X	
Commissioner Tara Scarlett	X	
Commissioner Pam Koban	X	
Treasurer David Lillard	X	
Commissioner Sara Morrison		X
Commissioner Jay Moser		X
Commissioner Vernon Stafford	X	
Commissioner AC Wharton	X	
Comptroller Jason Mumpower	X	
Commissioner Dakasha Winton	X	
Commissioner Ethan Galloway	X	
Commissioner Whitney Allmon	X	

At the start of the meeting there were eleven (11) voting members physically present constituting a quorum. Commissioner Winton arrived at 10:41 a.m. and Comptroller Mumpower left the meeting at 11:40 a.m., still leaving a quorum present.

### ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Commissioner Wharton made a motion to adopt the agenda. Commissioner Scarlett seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

### APPROVAL OF JANUARY 28, 2022, MINUTES

Commissioner Koban made a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Stafford seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:**

Chairman Cope provided his report. Chairman Cope ceded his remaining time to Dr. Phil Oldham, President of Tennessee Technological University, to welcome the Commission to the campus for its spring meeting and speak about current events at the campus.

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT:**

Executive Director Dr. Emily House provided her report. Director House then introduced Lou Hanemann, Chief of Staff, to give a legislative report on the 112<sup>th</sup> General Assembly. Mr. Hanemann presented information about the legislative session that just ended.

### **AGENDA ITEMS**

Chairman Cope stated that there were two (2) items on the consent calendar. Commissioner Scarlett made a motion to move the second agenda item on the consent calendar to the first item on the regular calendar. This motion was seconded by Secretary Hargett. A voice vote was taken, the motion passed unanimously.

With one (1) remaining item on the consent calendar, Chairman Cope stated he would entertain a motion and second to approve the consent calendar. Commissioner Wharton made a motion, and Commissioner Scarlett seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

#### **I. Quality Assurance Funding – TN Job Market Placement Definition Change**

Dr. Julie Roberts, Associate Chief Academic Officer, presented the staff's recommendation to make a change to the TN Job Market Placement definition. The current methodology for calculation of the TN Job Market Placement rate utilizes the P20 Connect data system and its focus on non-University Parallel associate degree graduates focusing on initial employment. A review of the data using the continuously employed methodology indicates employment rates associated with years prior to and during the COVID-19 pandemic are more stable and insulated from dramatic shifts in graduates seeking government assistance. Under the recommended change, scoring of the TN Job Market Placement standard will mirror the Student Access and Success standard which focuses on continuous improvement. The scoring table remains the same as approved in May 2020, only the definition of success and rate calculation will be updated.

Commission members asked questions and a discussion was held. Treasurer Lillard made a motion to approve the definitional change. Commissioner Koban seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, the motion passed with eight (8) ayes, and three (3) nays from Commissioners Scarlett, Wharton, and Secretary Hargett.

## **II. Tennessee Technological University Campus Master Plan**

Dr. Oldham introduced Gary Askew who presented information on Tennessee Technological University's updated Master Plan. The 2022 Master Plan update is a comprehensive 10-year plan with analysis of space needs, building development and placements, infrastructure, parking, and student housing.

Commissioner Scarlett made a motion to approve the updated Master Plan. Secretary Hargett seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, the motion passed unanimously.

## **III. 2020-2025 Outcomes-Based Funding Formula Recommendations**

Crystal L. Collins, THEC Senior Director of Fiscal Policy, presented information in accordance with § 49-7-202(g), which states that the Commission is statutorily required to establish and annually convene a review committee to aid in the development or revision of the Outcomes-Based Funding formula. After consulting the Formula Review Committee, staff then make a formal recommendation to amend or revise the formula to the Commission. Recommended changes to the 2020-2025 outcome formula metrics include a definitional change to the workforce training/contact hours metric included in the community college model. This definitional change would remove secondary activities from the contact hours report and better align it with state workforce needs. Staff also recommended changes to the focus populations portion of the 2020-2025 formula, including the implementation of a new workforce investment premium for students completing an undergraduate award in a high-need academic program and a data source refinement to include out-of-state low-income students. These changes will apply to both the university and community college models. Finally, staff recommended streamlining the fixed costs component in the 2020-2025 formula by focusing on square footage and equipment replacement values and reducing the overall influence of fixed costs on the formula from 22% to 15%.

Commission members asked questions and a discussion was held. Secretary Hargett made a motion to approve the recommended changes to the formula. Commissioner Stafford seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, the motion passed unanimously.

## **IV. 2022-23 Binding Tuition and Fees Range**

Russell VanZomeran, THEC Director of Fiscal Policy, presented information on the 2022-23 binding tuition and tuition and fees ranges. On April 21, 2022, both chambers of the 112<sup>th</sup> General Assembly passed the 2022-23 General Appropriations Act, which included new recurring funding to academic formula units of \$137.3 million for operating and salary increases. Based on these state appropriation increases, THEC staff recommended a tuition binding range of zero percent (0%) to zero percent (0%) at universities, community colleges and TCATS, and a combined total tuition and

mandatory fees binding range of zero percent (0%) to zero percent (0%) at universities, community colleges, and TCATS.

Commission members held a discussion. Secretary Hargett made a motion to approve the recommendation. Comptroller Mumpower seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, the motion passed unanimously.

## **V. New Academic Programs**

### **A. East Tennessee State University, Applied Data Science, Master of Science**

President Brian Noland introduced Dr. Kimberly McCorkle. Dr. McCorkle presented information on the Master of Science program which will promote data literacy across many of the campus's disciplines, while providing students in the major with comprehensive, in-depth training in data science. The program will include both in-person and online options and will be delivered in two (2) tracks, a practicum track with a six (6) credit applied practicum where students engage in detailed industry projects, and a thesis track, pairing a three-credit (3) internship with a six (6) credit thesis. Graduates will have developed expertise in applying state-of-the-art mathematical, statistical, and computational science-based approaches to large scale and complicated industry datasets.

Treasurer Lillard made a motion to approve the program. Secretary Hargett seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, the motion passed unanimously.

### **B. Middle Tennessee State University, Public Writing and Rhetoric, Bachelor of Science**

Dr. Amy Aldridge Sanford presented information on the Bachelor of Science program. The program will be an interdisciplinary degree designed to strengthen written communication skills and was developed in response to feedback from industry partners indicating a desire for graduates to have more developed writing and rhetorical skills. The program will be housed in the Department of English in the College of Liberal Arts and comprised of public writing and rhetoric courses and complemented by courses offered in several disciplines including English, communication studies, and journalism departments. The proposed program is designed to be a viable second major for students in other fields that require strong communication skills.

Commission members held a discussion. Comptroller Mumpower made the motion to approve the program. Commissioner Galloway seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, the motion passed unanimously.

**C. University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Marketing, Master of Science**

Dr. John Zomchick presented information on the Master of Science program. This program is designed to meet a rapidly increasing industry need for graduates with advanced training in marketing. This program will be housed in the Haslam College of Business and will complement existing graduate programs in accounting, management and human resources, business administration, business analytics, and supply chain management. The program will initially be offered in-person, but another parallel online program will be developed utilizing simulcasted courses in year three (3) after the residential portion of the program is fully established.

Commission members asked questions and a discussion was held.

Commissioner Scarlett made a motion to approve the program. Commissioner Stafford seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, the motion passed unanimously.

**VI. Division of Postsecondary State Authorization – Emergency Rules**

Julie Woodruff, DPSA Assistant Executive Director, presented information on House Bill 2606 and Senate Bill 2843, which passed the House and Senate and is awaiting Governor Lee’s signature. The bill refines how Tennessee regulates postsecondary education institutions as defined in Title 49, Chapter 7, Part 20. The legislation streamlines the state authorization process, reduces the regulatory burden on institutions, and codifies current practices, while maintaining important consumer protections and institution accountability. The Emergency Rules to amend the March 2017 version of Rule Chapter 1540-01-02 and 1540-01-10 were written with the intention to make only those changes necessary to effectuate the purposes of HB2606/SB2843, 2018 Public Chapter 790, 2019 Public Chapter 82, and rule waivers issued by the Executive Director in May 2018 and October 2020. The Secretary of State’s Emergency Rule Filing Forms require that a roll call vote of the Commission be taken. The form also requires that the Attorney General and Reporter of the State of Tennessee examine and approve the rules prior to filing the form.

Commissioner Koban made a motion to adopt the proposed emergency rules with an effective date of July 1, 2022, for filing with the Secretary of the State’s office and authorize the Executive Director to make any revisions recommended by the Office of the Attorney General that are technical or necessary to ensure the legality of the rules. Commissioner Wharton seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed with twelve (12) ayes.

**VII. Navigate Reconnect Overview** *(Informational Only)*

Jessica Gibson, Senior Director for Adult Learner Initiatives, presented information on the Navigate Reconnect Model. This model is supported and organized around four (4) pillars: Impact Services, Partnerships, Messaging, and Sustainability. Information presented included how Reconnect Navigators work with adult learners through the college processes, how Re-Entry Reconnect Navigators work with those incarcerated in Tennessee prisons to have the opportunity to complete a high school credential all the way through the completion of a postsecondary credential. The presentation also presented the various ways in which Tennesseans are matched with the Reconnect program through Reconnect Ambassadors, Tennessee Reconnect Success Collaborative, partnerships with other state agencies, and the TN Quick Screener tool to provide adults with the ability to see all services for which they may have eligibility, so they are supported while obtaining their postsecondary credential.

Commission members asked questions and a discussion was held.

**VII. Committees**

Scott Sloan, General Counsel, presented information on the Commission’s existing statutory and standing committees as well as their ability to form committees by appointment of the Chair. Mr. Sloan also presented statutory requirements that would apply to the meetings. Commission members held a discussion. The Chair requested that General Counsel Scott Sloan and Chief of Staff Lou Hanemann, have individual discussions with Commission members regarding their desire and ability to serve on committees for the Commission, the results of which will inform a discussion to be held at the next Commission meeting.

Chairman Cope adjourned the meeting at 12:23 p.m.

**NEXT THEC COMMISSION MEETING:**

Thursday, July 28, 2022 in Nashville

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**THEC Chairman Evan Cope**

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**THEC Secretary AC Wharton, Jr.**