

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE AT MARTIN

ADVISORY BOARD

The summer meeting of The University of Tennessee at Martin Advisory Board was held at 1:00 pm (CDT) on Friday, May 17, 2024, in the Boling University Center, Room 206AB, on the campus of The University of Tennessee at Martin.

AGENDA

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was open to the public and streamed via the campus website. A recording of the meeting will be posted on the Advisory Board website following the meeting. All votes were taken by roll call in compliance with the Advisory Board Bylaws.

Attendance:

Hal Bynum, Taylor Cantrell, Tonya Reynoldson, Art Sparks (Chair), Clinton Smith (via zoom), Dan Strasser, and Johnny Woolfolk. Others in attendance included UT Martin administrative and leadership staff. A quorum was established. The meeting was called to order by Chair Sparks.

II. Opening Remarks (*Art Sparks and Yancy Freeman*)

Chair Sparks welcomed everyone, including Clinton Smith, who was calling in from his study-abroad trip in Germany, where it was 8:00 pm. All Board members were present.

Chancellor Freeman remarked about a great year with new faces and new updates.

III. Approval of Minutes

Motion #1: To approve the minutes (Bynum/Woolfolk) of the Advisory Board meeting for the January 26, 2024, meeting as presented with no corrections or modification. The motion carried unanimously.

IV. Election of New Secretary – Mr. Jake Bynum (*Yancy Freeman*)

Advisory Board Secretary is recommended by the Chancellor and elected by the Advisory Board. The Secretary serves at the pleasure of the Advisory Board and without a definite term. This position

assists in preparing the agenda and materials, prepares and maintains minutes; maintains a current set of bylaws, amendments, and records pertaining to the Advisory Board.

Motion #2: To elect Jake Bynum (Strasser/Reynoldson) as Secretary of the Advisory Board, beginning at the next meeting. Mr. Bynum is UTM's Chief of Staff. The motion carried unanimously.

V. Appointment of Faculty Representative – Dr. Dan McDonough (***Yancy Freeman***)

The UT Martin Faculty Senate selects the faculty representative for the Advisory Board. This is a two-year term and will officially begin with the start of the new academic year. The Faculty Senate has determined that this position will be filled by the most recent Faculty Senate President whose term began in an odd-numbered year. That means our faculty representative is Dr. Dan McDonough. History professor, American Revolution is the focus.

Motion #3: To select Dr. Dan McDonough (Bynum/Strasser) as the new Faculty Representative, beginning at the next meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

VI. Appointment of Student Representative – Chayil Watkins (***Yancy Freeman***)

The student representative for the Advisory Board goes through the SGA election process and must meet the SGA's qualifications for election. The qualifications listed in the Board member packets. The top three vote recipients are submitted to the Chancellor, and the Chancellor makes the appointment. Mr. Chayil Watkins was selected. Chayil is a 2023 graduate of Fayette-Ware High School in Somerville and is majoring in Agribusiness.

Motion #4: To select Mr. Chayil Watkins (Cantrell/Woolfolk) as the new Student Representative, beginning at the next meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

Chancellor Freeman expressed gratitude for Taylor Cantrell (Student Representative) and Jamie Mantooth (Board Secretary) for their service this past year.

VII. Update on Vice Chancellor for Advancement search (***Yancy Freeman***)

Jeanna Curtis-Swofford, who was serving in the role on an interim basis, was selected through a competitive, national search. She has 32 years of service with UTM. She has been the Interim Vice Chancellor twice and now has the role on a permanent basis. Jeanna Curtis-Swofford was present at the meeting and expressed her gratitude for the opportunity saying what an honor it is to be selected.

VIII. 2025-2030 Strategic Planning Process (*Yancy Freeman*)

Chancellor Freeman expressed his excitement about the beginning phases of the new strategic plan. This plan will start in 2025 and carry us through 2030. The plan will have four main areas of focus – People (faculty, staff, students, community), Places (Martin, Centers, online), Achievement (scholastic, achievement), and Partnerships (corporate, higher ed colleagues, elected officials). This planning process will be campus-wide and community-wide and will include the Advisory Board. Dr. Andy Lewter, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, and Dr. Phil Cavalier, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Provost, are co-chairing the process. The steering committee has been named and given its initial charge. Chancellor Freeman will present the five goals and 25 strategies to the campus on August 15, 2024. Work will continue until the final plan is submitted to the UT Board of Trustees in February 2025 at its winter meeting held at UTM.

Chair Sparks asked if capital projects were included. He cited that UTK has partnered with for-profits for construction of dorms, and asked if UTM is doing that. Chancellor Freeman said Vice Chancellor Lewter is looking at long-term housing plans and a five-year strategy but those plans not include for-profits at this time. We are working with housing developers in the community because additional housing in the community will be needed as enrollment grows toward 10,000 by 2030.

Chair Sparks asked if the process was different if UTM had cash-in-hand? Senior Vice Chancellor McPhearson answered that there are fewer steps with cash in-hand, but there are still processes and structures to follow.

Johnny Woolfolk asked about the status of the Test Hub. Chancellor Freeman said we're moving forward with it. The original scope and cost were ~\$4M. We reduced the scope and are still partnering with DSCC and local TCATs. We will be breaking ground soon.

Hal Bynum asked about the goal of 10,000 student specifically pertaining to the Martin campus, Centers, and online. Chancellor Freeman said the plan is being developed and will include all of those plus graduate, international (5%) enrollment. There will be a more definitive response of the approximate mix as we continue to plan.

Johnny Woolfolk asked about the pending demographic cliff and its effect on enrollment. Chancellor Freeman said Tennessee has not seen the steep decline other states have seen. However, this

demographic cliff is causing stiffer competition. That's why we have to diversify our student pool (online, adults, Centers, partnerships like the one we recently signed with JSCC).

Dan Strasser asked about the 22-25 strategic plan highlights and if the plan was successful or not. Chancellor Freeman said we would do that at an upcoming meeting. The 2025-2030 strategic plan will drive many things including our investment strategy.

IX. Enrollment Update (*Brad Baumgardner and Mykaela Waterfield*)

Mykaela Waterfield, Assistant Director of Admissions Communication and Operations, started the presentation stating that Admissions attempts to “put themselves in students’ shoes” to better understand their journey. She shared a story of when she was an Admissions Counselor and a special relationship she had with a student. That student graduated and is now teaching in Memphis. This job is more than numbers; however, numbers are important. The Fall 2024 goals are: 7,105 for total enrollment; 1,157 for FY (first-year) students; 292 for Transfers; 190 for Graduate Students. Those are all increases over Fall 2023, and we are currently seeing positive trends toward those Fall 2024 goals.

Mykaela Waterfield shared a brief history of the FAFSA simplification. The Department of Education's rollout of the FAFSA simplification has not gone well, and almost all of the colleges and universities in the country are behind in their FAFSA filer rates. UTM's numbers are gaining due to the hard work of the Financial Aid Office staff, but we are behind where we were last year. As of today, 82% of intended to enroll freshmen have submitted a FAFSA, and 51% of transfers and readmits have submitted. We will continue to close that gap. Additionally, the Common App will go live in August 2024.

Dr. Brad Baumgardner, Director of Retention, shared retention updates. The week-to-week retention tracker gives real-time data and trends. Currently UTM is ahead on retention on every metric. The Engagement and Enrollment Campaign has re-enrolled 248 students so far. This specific effort, and others, will continue throughout the summer. The slides attached to the original agenda contain more specific data.

Dan Strasser asked about the 5% international student goal and what our current rates are. Mykaela will research that exact number and share it, but it's really low.

Tonya Reynoldson asked about UTM's retention programs. Dr. Baumgardner stated there are campus-wide efforts and the Student Success Center coordinates those. Examples include: Student Success Counselors, re-enrollment campaigns, tutoring, supplemental instruction, HOPE scholarship awareness campaign, and retention grants. He is grateful for support from Chancellor Freeman and the Faculty Senate for placing importance on retention work.

Chair Sparks asked about persistence rate vs retention rate. Dr. Baumgardner answered that persistence is the percentage of students who return from the Fall to the Spring semester, and retention is the percentage of students who start in a Fall and return for the following Fall semester. An increased persistence rate is important to predicting retention.

Johnny Woolfolk asked about accepted students vs. enrolled students. Mykaela explained that accepted students are students who were admitted into UTM. Students with "intent to enroll" have responded positively to a survey that asks if they actually intend to enroll at UTM.

Chair Sparks recognized that Chancellor Freeman's experience in enrollment management is helpful. Chancellor Freeman acknowledged the good work that all enrollment folks are doing.

Chair Sparks asked what the Advisory Board can do to help, beyond money? Dr. Baumgardner shared the culture is important. UTM is student-friendly and that really matters. Students are important to us and each student matters.

X. Budget Overview and Approval of Proposed Annual Budget (*Petra McPhearson*)

Senior Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration, Petra McPhearson, began with an overview of unrestricted educational and general expenses and revenue. The total for both in FY 2024 is \$120.9 million. The slides attached to the original agenda contain more specific data.

There is a 3% across-the-board (ATB) scheduled to begin July 1, 2024. This is not a normal approach for raises in the UT System, but with accounting system changes coming, this was the best option.

UTM is proposing the following: 3% in-state tuition increase; new Dual Enrollment rate to mirror changes in community college rates and the Dual Enrollment grant; Student Media fee, Academic Support fee. These proposed increases will keep us competitive with our peers. If these fees and increases are passed at the June 2024 UT Board of Trustees meeting, the new budget for UTM will be \$174,046,637.

Dan Strasser asked what students are undergraduate are non-degree seeking? VC McPhearson cited dual enrollment and others who take classes with no plan to graduate or get a degree.

Chair Sparks asked a series of questions:

- Is the state appropriations going up or down? VC McPhearson replied they are going up.
- Is the Dual Enrollment grant real cash that comes into UTM? VC McPhearson replied yes.
- Is the Academic Support fee for all students even if they are not degree-seeking? VC McPhearson replied yes. The Student Media fee is for all full-time undergraduate students

Chair Sparks clarified that once the Advisory Board approves this, a more detailed version goes to the UT Board of Trustees for final approval.

Motion #5: To approve the recommended budget (Reynolds/Bynum). The motion carried unanimously.

XI. Comments by the Chancellor

- Chancellor Freeman acknowledged and thanked Clinton Smith for his term on the Advisory Board.
- On April 4, 2024, the ROTC Building was renamed in honor of LT. General Dennis D. Cavin (ret.), a 1970 UTM Alumnus.
- The Captain's Challenge raised \$428,267.
 - There were 1,400 donors from 40 different states.
 - Students were encouraged to give this year. If a student donor goal was met, then Chancellor Freeman agreed to take a pie in the face. That goal was met so Austin Dunagan and Camille Freeman, both UTM students, pied him.
- The UTM's women's basketball team advanced to the NCAA tournament. Congratulations to both the men's and women's teams and their coaches on outstanding seasons.

- Spring commencement had 700+ graduates over two ceremonies. Likely ~5000 guests at each ceremony. Great time to celebrate the graduates.
- The Skyhawk Regional Retention Summit is scheduled for May 22-23 and Provost Cavalier is leading. Registration numbers are solid and we are expecting a good crowd.
- UTM recently signed a Dual Enrollment/Dual Admissions agreement with JSCC. The goal is to make the transfer from JSCC to UTM as seamless as possible, while creating a visible pathway for students to see. We are looking for more similar opportunities.
- Experiential learning is done very well here.
 - TVA Investment Challenge and UTM students won 1st place at conference in Florida.
 - Political Science students got a grant with Blue Oval City focusing on equitable growth.
 - Alumni testify to how prepared they were from their experiences at UTM.
- Chairs Sparks noted that at the last meeting, the problem of transfer credit came up. What are we doing on that? Chancellor Freeman said we have some articulation agreements in place, the strategic plan will focus on this, and we're launching the Common App in August. Provost Cavalier added that we have a CPoS (Course Program of Study) project going on, and we are going through a catalog refresh focusing on general education courses and ease of transferring credits.
- Tonya Reynoldson asked if we use Transferology. Since we do not there were problems accurately applying all transfer credit for some transfer students. UTM is investigating Transferology.
- Johnny Woolfolk said that he received a phone call from a student thanking him for his gift. He was grateful for such an effort.

XII. Closing remarks by the Chair

- Chair Sparks also thanked Clinton Smith for his service.
- He cited the hiring of the new men's basketball coach, Jeremy Shulman. He's recruiting new students and has a successful track record. Looking forward to his tenure here.

XIII. Adjournment

Motion #6: To adjourn (Bynum/Woolfolk). The motion carried unanimously.