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Faculty Senate Agendas and Minutes

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11-8-2021

### 2021 November 8 - Faculty Senate Agenda and Minutes

Faculty Senate, East Tennessee State University

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# EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

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## Faculty Senate

*November 08, 2021, 2:45 p.m. | Virtual Zoom Meeting*

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### **Faculty Senate Meeting Agenda**

1. Celebrations
2. Introductions of Guests
3. Announcements
4. Guest Speaker
  - a. Dr. Mike Hoff, Vice Provost for Decision Support and Chief Planning Officer – QEP and ETSU  
125 – Chapter II
5. Approval of Minutes from October 25, 2021
6. Action Items
  - a. Senate Resolution concerning Sars-CoV-2 – Dr. Trogen
7. Information Items
  - a. Handbook Committee Update – Dr. Epps
  - b. Board of Trustees Report – Dr. Foley
    - Board of Trustees has a regularly scheduled quarterly meeting scheduled for November  
19. Materials will be posted on the Board website as soon as they are available.
  - c. Standing Committee Need – Dr. Epps
  - d. Notes from Meetings with the Provost and President – Mr. Hendrix
  - e. Reports from University Committees
8. Old Business
9. New Business
10. Comments from Guests
11. Final Comments/Announcements from Senators
12. Adjourn



## FACULTY SENATE MINUTES

<b>Meeting Date:</b>	11/08/2021	<b>Time:</b>	14:45 – 16:30	<b>Location:</b>	Zoom
<b>Next Meeting:</b>	11/22/2021	<b>Scribe:</b>			Ashley Sergiadis
<b>Present:</b>	Beatty, Kate; Blackhart, Ginni; Blackwell, Roger; Bray, Sheree; Burns, Bracken; Byington, Randy; Chakraborty, Kanishka; Cherry, Donna; Daniels, Jean; De Oliveira Fiuza, Felipe; Digavalli, Siva; Dowling-McClay, Karilynn; Ecay, Thomas ; Elangovan, Saravanan; Ellis, Jon; Epps, Susan; Evanshen, Pam; Fisher, Stacey; Frye, Stephanie; Funk, Bobby; Garris, Bill; Gentry, Retha; Gomez Sobrino, Isabel; Hauldren, Kacie; Hawthorne, Sean; Hemphill, Bill; Hemphill, Jean; Hendrix, Stephen; Herrmann, Andrew; Hounshell, Jonathan; Johnson, Michelle; Kruppa, Michael; Landis, Ryan; Lyons, Renee; Mackara, Fred; Mamudu, Hadii; McGarry, Theresa; Mitchell, Holly; Nivens, Ryan; Ramsey, Priscilla; Schroder, Laurie; Sergiadis, Ashley; Stevens, Alan; Tai, Chih-Che; Thigpen, Jim; Thompson, Beth Ann; Trogen, Paul; Uddin, Mohammad; Walden, Rachel; Waters, Susan; Youngberg, George; Zahner, Matt				
<b>Absent:</b>	Foley, Virginia; Gray, Jeffrey; Khan, Shoeb; Kim, Sookhyun; O'Neil, Kason; Park, Esther; Weyant, Emily;				

### Agenda Items

Meeting called to order

1. Celebrations

2. Introductions of Guests

3. Announcements

4. Guest Speaker

5. Approval of Minutes

6. Action Items

7. Information Items

8. Old Business

9. New Business

10. Comments from Guests

11. Final Comments/Announcements from Senators

11. Adjourn

### DISCUSSIONS

1. Celebrations

1.1 **Epps** announced that Student Life and Enrollment and Athletics did a phenomenal job with all the homecoming events.

1.2 **Lyons** announced that the College of Education was just fully CAEP accredited.

2. Introductions of Guests

None.

3. Announcements

None.



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### 4. Guest Speaker -- Dr. Mike Hoff, Vice Provost for Decision Support and Chief Planning Officer – QEP and ETSU 125 – Chapter II

#### 4.1 Mike Hoff presented on ETSU 125 Chapter II

##### ETSU 125 Chapter II Overview and Process

- The focus of ETSU 125 Chapter II aligns with ETSU's four general principles: (1) support goal of regional service, (2) scholarship, (3) the study of education as a science, practice in teaching, and (4) a knowledge of the conditions and needs of the State. Based on listening sessions across the community, the health of this region is dependent on the health of ETSU. Increasing enrollment means increasing educational attainment for the region, which creates a healthier community and attracts businesses and industry.
- This is a good time to implement ETSU 125 Chapter II. It is five years since Chapter I and it aligns with SACSCOC. In addition, the landscape of higher education has changed significantly (e.g. affordability/student debt, public perceptions and lack of trust, immigration policy, COVID-19, etc.).
- The ETSU 125 Chapter II committee comprises current and former university presidents, local community leaders, national representatives from AASCU and the alumni foundation, and the SHEEO president. This group stays up to date on current activity in higher education. From their perspective, ETSU is a very different institution than it was a decade ago. They think ETSU is doing better than the institution gives itself credit for. It has influenced ETSU to set goals differently than we would if we were worried about performance issues.
- The committee has completed an external environmental scan. Each task force chair worked with our consultant to create a narrative. The Board of Trustees has reviewed these broad focused areas. The committee is in the process of getting input from internal stakeholders like Faculty Senate. If you have any feedback or ideas, contact Mike Hoff. After all the reports and feedback, the committee will create a single, seamless strategic vision that will be presented to the Board of Trustees in February. Then, ETSU will build the plan, track and manage performance, and close the loop (i.e. identify what did or did not work). The Vice Presidents will lead operationalizing the strategic plan from February to May. Provost McCorkle has talked about a Deans' retreat to discuss the academic plan. According to the SCUP (Society for College and University Planners), an institution should have a broad institutional plan, then divisional plans, and unit plans. Within the next 18 months, ETSU hopes to have enough high-quality information to see more action from the department level.

##### Committee-Level Goals

- The expectation of ETSU 125 Chapter II committee was to examine “what if” opportunities rather than plan from a pain perspective.
- The committee came up with institutional aspirations over the next ten years: (1) “signature programs” ranked in the top ten nationally, (2) proactive in regional cooperation/development, (3) obtain national grant funding for specific programs, (4) signature scholarship programs and facilities, (5) a high percentage of traditional students participating in extracurricular activities, (6) diversify the enrollment portfolio and faculty profile, and (7) remove barriers to student success.
- The committee defined a culture of excellence: student focused, continuous improvement, meeting university-level benchmarks, letting go of the status quo to achieve the exceptional, innovation, accountability, communication, results focused, and action oriented.
- The committee defined a quality university, which is where ETSU is headed. These characteristics are (1) students come first, (2) outstanding faculty and administrative staff (requiring investment in professional development), (3) producing scholars in competitive programs, (4) high graduation rate and licensure pass rates, (5) broad and deep program portfolio, (6) competitive research portfolio, (7) high degree of alumni support and engagement, (8) strong offerings in the arts and sciences, (9) strong professional programs, (10) inclusive community of learning, and (11) demonstrated economic value to the university service area and state.

##### Taskforce-Level Goals

- The task forces mainly comprised internal people. There were a couple of community members, some elected representatives, business professionals in the region, and community organization leaders. There were 95 people across all the task forces.
- The goal of the student success and experience task force is for ETSU to lead all TN universities in



## DISCUSSIONS

making progress towards the Complete College Tennessee Act outcomes-based funding objectives. These objectives are tied to high rates of student success. The outcomes include experiential learning, creating a residential campus to develop a community of learners, creating a Center of Purposeful Work by leveraging what students are learning in the classroom in a practical way, and integrating a software platform that tracks the quantity and quality of student engagement activities.

- The goal of the equity and inclusion task force is for diversity, equity and inclusion to be embedded in the work of the university throughout teaching, research, service, and training. This means that everyone in the university community knows the definition of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Some of the outcomes include leading and collaborating with partners in the region to embed cultural competence in our workplaces, systems, programs, scholarship, and service. Survey data shows that institutionally we need to improve our inclusivity. Most students and faculty viewed ETSU as being an inclusive place, but the external community is not often connected in that way.
- The goal of the academics task force is for ETSU to become an academic destination university, meaning that ETSU has programs that impact the lives of those participating in the program and improve the life of the people in the region. Our students should leave the institution having identified a problem, found a solution, and celebrated their success with the people who benefited from that solution. It also means building better partnerships with K12 schools and other higher education institutions.
- The goal of the health task force is for ETSU Health to transform the health of the region through education, research, and team-based care. The outcomes include the Health Science Hub on the Innovation Park property, taking a larger role in providing healthcare, and collaborating with others such as Ballad Health.
- The goal of the research and scholarship taskforce is for ETSU annually to produce \$60 million in externally sponsored activity. The outcomes include hiring faculty with the consideration of multiple departments and colleges to help break down our silos.
- The goal of fiscal sustainability taskforce is for ETSU to become renowned for its transparency, planning, and decision support. One outcome that ETSU is currently working on is coming up with data for department chairs so that they can access their needs and advocate for resources they need.

### 4.2 Mike Hoff listened to comments and questions from Senators on ETSU 125 Chapter II.

**Garris:** Cross department and college hires would be so practical in some instances.

**McGarry:** They would need to have a tenure process.

**Walden:** I am interested in whether a commitment to library budgets to support all of this came up.

**Fiuzza:** Concerning the results for the Equity and Inclusion section of 125, I think there are changes that we can make, culture wise that will have immediate results in recruitment and retention of Latinx students. For instance, DACA students cannot receive state scholarships nor financial aid, but they are eligible for scholarships that come from endowments, privately funded. However, if the MOU of such endowment says the students must show "financial need" the way ETSU determines it, internally, to check if the student meet those criteria is to ask the student to fill a FAFSA application. And here is where DACA and Undocumented students are disqualified. They cannot provide information about their parents' taxes, they cannot file for FAFSA. This does not make sense. Here is why: No student has bigger financial needs than a student that has to work in order to contribute to the family income. That has to help to pay for their parents' medical bills. That have limited perspectives to grow, financially and personally. I understand this policy was in place before DACA and undocumented students were barred from receiving aid, but I move that it is time for us to review this policy to better serve our students.

**Epps:** I wish our thinking big could change the rules re: aid so students could take courses to explore without being penalized for taking something outside of their program of study. Students on federal aid are the ones penalized. If they are not on federal aid, they can take those exploratory courses. Seems like the students who might need those most are the ones not able to take them. [**McGarry** and **Blackhart** agreed.]



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### 4.2 Mike Hoff presented on the QEP.

#### QEP Definition and Timeline

- SACSCOC requires all accredited institutions to have a quality enhancement plan. For a QEP, you take something that is central to your institution and has broad-based support with impact on student success or learning outcomes and you devote resources to it over a defined 5-year period with assessment plans. The hope is that it becomes integrated into the normal activity of your institution.
- The timeline is to prepare the QESC in Fall 2021, draft and initiate in Spring 2022-Summer 2022, pilot in Fall 2022, and submit in February 2023. This allows us to create primary data around the topic to bolster what we are going to say.
- Currently, Mike Hoff is presenting on this idea to get feedback. He will present it to University Council in December. Then, a formal proposal will be created in Spring 2022. This started from a presentation to the Quality and Effectiveness sub-council of University Council.

#### Six Pillars of ETSU Strategic Plan

- In order to come up with the QEP concept, the six pillars of the ETSU strategic plan were examined to see what had been accomplished.
- For submitting a growth agenda that maximizes the student experience, ETSU restructured Admissions and Student Life and Enrollment, implemented a CRM, combined graduate and continuing education, restructured advising, and made facility improvements.
- For diversity and inclusion, ETSU created a VP level position, strategic plan for diversity and inclusion, and multicultural center as well as conducted a HED survey.
- For empowering employees, ETSU restructured HR and aligned them with administration rather than finance as well as implemented changes by adding staff and training.
- For excellence in teaching, ETSU created the Center for Teaching Excellence and created the Provost Scholars as a way for faculty to receive professional development.
- For research and scholarly activity, ETSU created a VP level position for Clinical Affairs, reorganized the ETSU Research Foundation, changed policies that impacted research protocols and process, and changed the way IRB functions.
- However, we do not have the same growth for community engagement and service.

#### New QEP Proposal

- There is an idea for the new QEP: community engaged learning. Community engaged learning denotes academically based community engaged courses that may integrate a range of teaching and learning strategies including, but not limited to service-learning, co-op, externship, internship, practicum, clinical, capstone, research project, public service, practice-based learning, experiential education, and experiential learning. The goal would be to ingrain community engagement in regional stewardship as a cultural activity at ETSU. Other institutions (e.g. University of Texas at San Antonio) have chosen this as their QEP and this type of learning is already happening at ETSU (e.g. nursing clinics, accounting opportunities during tax seasons).
- [Research shows that civic engagement works](#) to yield greater learning and increase graduation rates. [Gent \(2007\)](#) argued that civic engagement is one way to ensure that no student is left behind. It also allows ETSU to leverage some new initiatives at ETSU such as the Strong Brain Institute. For example, first-generation students are in a perpetual state of imposter syndrome. ETSU could have training from the SBI for first-generation students to understand ACES and trauma-informed care. They could use that training to be better at anything they do and then given the opportunity to leverage their classroom learning in a practical way.
- The QEP vision is for ETSU undergraduate students to build on their (formal) classroom education through participation in (structured) experiential learning beyond the classroom, which will help them to develop a significant and sophisticated understanding of the ways in which the context of the world community intersects with disciplinary knowledge.
- The QEP goals are (1) to expand experiential learning opportunities (by developing an infrastructure to support a more diverse offering of experiential learning opportunities, including internships, undergraduate research, and community engaged learning), (2) to develop experiential learning culture (by creating a model of enhanced, strategic, and structured professional development to



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support faculty in developing experiential learning opportunities that intentionally address academic connections, career development, and transferability of knowledge and skills), and (3) to provide support for students engaged in experiential learning (by providing resources and services to help students understand and articulate the skills and knowledge they develop as they engage in experiential learning, thereby increasing their career readiness).

- The QEP learning outcomes are each student who completes an approved QEP Engaged Learning activity will demonstrate (1) the ability to identify a problem, issue, question, or project relevant to a specific learning community and an approach to address it, (2) the ability to apply intellectual tools acquired in the classroom to the proposed problem that exists beyond the classroom, and (3) the ability to evaluate and communicate the success and impact of a personal effort to address that problem.
- While this aligns well what we already do, the real issue is being able to catalog it, organize it, provide leadership for it, and then find a way to expand it.

4.3 Mike Hoff answered questions from Senators on the QEP.

**Epps:** For the QEP, do you already have the group that will be writing the QEP?

**Hoff:** No, that will come after we decide on a topic.

**McGarry:** Everybody is strict about not letting students take one extra course that might not be in their program of study. Is the QEP going to add credits to every program of study? Or, will it replace what we were already requiring?

**Hoff:** I do not expect many changes other than some nuance on how we talk about it and student reports with post-participation outcomes. For example, students would have the same clinical experience, but the narrative they write would be different to demonstrate certain learning outcomes. For the areas that are not doing it, part of the process will be to find out why not. If it is because they cannot find a community partner, we can help identify one. We do not expect the credit total to go up. The main thing is defining that community impact.

**McGarry:** It does not seem that an English Bachelor's degree would apply. I do not want our students to be put in a position where they have to take one less literature course because they are required to complete an experiential thing.

**Stevens:** In several of the music concentrations, we do not have electives. How would this fit into concentrations like that?

**Hoff:** Do they have performance requirements?

**Stevens:** Everybody has a performance requirement as part of their ensembles.

**Hoff:** I think we have missed an opportunity if at some point the students are not at least thinking about how this applies to the larger cultural context of the community. There is nothing that changes other than at some point they may need to write about something they are already doing.

**Stevens:** For no credit?

**Hoff:** They are already earning the credit. I am not sure we are doing what we should be if students are not required to think about the context or if they are only producing music for music's sake.

**Stevens:** I think we are doing that, but if you are adding that to the faculty member's class then you are messing with the academic integrity of the class, which only the faculty should be doing.

**Hoff:** This is not part of a class. It is an enhanced activity around what you are already doing. We have a graduation requirement now that everyone has to take the CCTST. That test is outside the faculty's purview.



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**Hendrix:** Is this similar to the previous QEP where faculty learn something then apply it to their curriculum? In the previous QEPs, we participated in workshops and maybe modified our classes based upon what we learned.

**Hoff:** We did not want anybody to have to do that this time. We wanted to take the burden off faculty. I did not want to change faculty's classes. It will require that students at some point participate in some kind of an activity that would allow them to demonstrate those three learning outcomes.

**Byington:** Is this a good example? I work in rural health at Little Milligan School with medical students. We are working on enhancing factors for success for underserved students. If there was a social work student who had an interest in underserved schools, then they could come as part of an existing social work class. There are some communities around the area where we already have some framework in place, but we have not connected the students with that framework yet.

**Hoff:** Yes. I do not think we have imagined all the ways that this could work. The QEP topic is broad. You then work with people to create a project that emphasizes the outcomes of the QEP. You have an application process and then those projects get additional resources in order to implement. Not everyone will have a project. The idea is that students have the opportunity. I know some programs do not leave anytime for outside the classroom. Many do though and that is where I think ETSU can put the resources into place.

**Herrmann:** We do a lot of this in communication studies. My communication class used to do a semester long group project. Pre-COVID, they had to volunteer in the community, so this would be a place where I would not have to do anything necessarily different. Also, I run the internship program for communication studies. I do not know how the administration will be able to assist us in finding places for students to volunteer. We live in such a small area that often times a lot of organizations are inundated with students from ETSU and other neighboring universities.

**Hoff:** That is not the response we got in the employer roundtable. Overwhelmingly, they said they did not understand how to get more ETSU students involved in the organization. In communication, that may not be true. We have a problem getting enough clinical experience, so I know it is not across the board. Finding organizations for students to intern, volunteer, etc. would be the responsibility of the QEP director. They would help be a liaison between faculty and businesses. In addition, the pandemic has created an opportunity for more remote interaction that can be high quality and impactful. Engaging with organizations throughout central Appalachia with some remote capabilities can also provide a unique opportunity for students.

**Uddin:** We embedded experiential learning in engineering and it is working. Based on conversations with administration, there is interest in the engineering and computing community for partnering opportunities. I am looking forward to those connections so I can better match our students.

**Hoff:** The last QEP was developed to build an infrastructure to support faculty development. The change inside the classroom was the big emphasis. It was burdensome. This one is expected to be largely an administrative activity that starts to coordinate and catalog the activities that are already happening and expand those where possible. Faculty could take advantage of that infrastructure and resources to create partnership.

**Waters:** I have done experiential learning at three different universities and have 4-5 articles on it. It certainly works. It is a mindset. It does not necessarily have to be integrated in every class. The students become engaged and enjoy their classes more. Sometimes community partners do not work. When that happens, I say to students that you learn as much from something that did not work as from something that did work. After their experience, I ask them to write a paper about what did (not) work and why. It can be as simple as accounting students helping seniors with their taxes.

**Hoff:** Judging by the conversation, we would make sure to limit the impact on faculty if we move forward with this as a QEP topic. We wanted to move away from a QEP that required a lot of faculty development





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and implementation. We wanted to create an administrative infrastructure around this activity of community engagement for students.

**Blackhart:** Is it possible that this could introduce additional barriers to student success in terms of degree completion?

**Hoff:** That is a concern that I have. I am looking at how other institutions are handling it. More requirements often lead to less success and we do not want that to happen.

**Blackwell:** Our MPH students do a 3-semester experiential learning component for their Trilogy Projects. We are challenged to find organizations that are willing to work with us over this time period. These partnerships are rather specific and specialized depending upon the interest of the student and the needs of the community organizations. Currently students are jockeying for a small number of available spaces in organizations and to produce quality relationships and products and enhance their coursework and implementation of programming that has value for the organizations.

**Lyons:** I think we should celebrate what is learned by students from community partners, to enhance community buy-in and participation.

**Funk:** One of the problems we have with students in our area is to think beyond the mountains to achieve success in their field. The jobs are out there, but to get them they have to be willing to move on from here.

### 5. Approval of Minutes

**Hendrix** questioned whether there was an objection to approving the minutes from the 10/25/2021 meeting. **Sergiadis** stated that Senator Epps and McGarry had minor corrections to the minutes.

**No Objection: Minutes Approved**

### 6. Action Items

#### 6.1 Senate Resolution concerning Sars-CoV-2 – Dr. Trogen

**Trogen:** In Spring 2020, we were aware that droplets spread COVID. We started with 6-foot distancing, because cough droplets tended to fall within 6 feet. In Spring 2021, we discovered that it was also spread through aerosol particles that could remain in the air for over an hour. Therefore, there are two prongs of exposure. Part of this resolution asks that chairs be placed 6 feet apart from each other in classrooms to aid faculty in making that 6-foot social distancing. We could control 95% of aerosol transmission by moving everything outside but that is not going to be practical in December and January. What we can do is increase ventilation to at least four air exchanges per hour. We could also start by fixing those buildings with classes that cannot be done online such as labs. The final part of the resolution is transparency by letting people know what the air exchanges and the filtration level in the buildings are so people can make rational decisions on how to provide their classes safely to their students. If people come first, our first priority should be keeping students, faculty, and staff safe.

**McGarry motioned to approve the resolution. Funk seconded.**

**Beatty:** One comment from a CPH faculty (with a focus on infectious disease): I am reading this resolution on indoor air quality at ETSU, this seems a stretch of feasibility and unrealistic in my mind in regards to COVID-19 mitigation on campus. In my mind, this describes an epic university overhaul that could take years and an inclusion of multiple staff positions just to monitor airflow in hundreds of indoor spaces on campus. A simpler solution is to just uphold mask wearing on campus. Even under the new resolution passed by the state legislature, public universities can keep mask wearing in place if there is a strong case that they will lose federal government funding. Perhaps the senate could resolve that airflow must meet a minimum standard for safety for all new construction and remodels on campus?



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**Epps:** A faculty member sent me a message asking why we were considering this motion considering we have a COVID response team with medical and public health expertise and they have not recommended such action. Another faculty member suggested this sounded like we would be shutting down all of our buildings.

**Herrmann:** Some CAS faculty want to know the status of large lecture halls like Brown and Ball. Others have put in harsher limits regarding class sizes to try to accommodate social distancing.

**Funk:** Those faculty I heard from were 100% in favor of this resolution. Art for example, felt it was important that this must happen and have been doing this on their own to keep students safe. They were forced to do this out of their operating budget, as the University was not doing it. They really support the university doing much more.

**Lyons:** I think this is just a resolution. So, I think perhaps what would happen from this is just an emphasis on making our buildings healthier. Perhaps this health could be part of a major maintenance oriented 5 or 10 year plan that is immediately considered and instituted. So, I would be in favor of the resolution to raise attention on the fact that this is a futuristic need and vision for all stakeholders.

**Blackhart:** I definitely had some people who were in support, but others had many concerns surrounding the details. People were asking what is the cost, how many classrooms on campus would be affected, what sort of sort of ventilation system (e.g. centralized, individual units) are we talking about, what would be sufficient. Can you share more details regarding each of the points in your proposed resolution? My constituents and I worry about if we pass this without details and pass it on to administration it is unlikely that they will be able to do much of anything with it

**Trogen:** Leaving a lot of the details open gives administration the opportunity to prioritize which classrooms should be brought up to standards. They have classrooms with MERV 8 filters that they are trying to upgrade to MERV 11 filters. None of those really filters out aerosols. They are also trying a Casper system that should reduce mold, bacteria, and viruses by 50% in the treated place. I asked Jeremy Ross to re-interpret this in terms of air changes per hour and he said they were looking at using room A92 and A102 in the Culp center auditorium for classrooms. They have a capacity to change air 1.5 times air changes hour, which fall short of what it needs to be safe. We can say do we need safe or do we need cheap? If we want safe we should look at the activities that need to be face-to-face and upgrade those areas such as labs or theatres.

**Blackhart:** Is that what you meant by top priority? That statement in #1 was confusing to me and other people. It almost sounds like you are potentially changing the resolution to focus on teaching spaces where there might be more exchange of air particles. Do we want to target all classrooms or specific types of classrooms?

**Trogen:** #1 says that the top priority is increasing the ventilation in teaching and research buildings until they meet the minimum for exchanges with outdoor air per hour. #2 is no new classes will be scheduled in buildings that do not meet the benchmarks. That means they should upgrade buildings where they definitely want face-to-face instructions as we put together our fall schedule. #3 is faculty members scheduled to teach classes in the buildings that do not meet the standards have the option to teach the classes remotely. #4 is that the steps to prevent aerosol transmission do not mean that we can stop using 6-foot social distances. #5 is that we are encouraging faculty to use masks. #6 is that we should be transparent and tell faculty and students what steps we are taking.

**Hemphill (J.):** I am [linking to the CDC recommendations on facemasks](#). I think the university does a good job in keeping us safe, separated, and masked. This is my biggest question and concern, because we have guidelines. If we follow them, I think we will stay safe. If you have two layers of fabric that completely cover your nose and mouth, you are protecting other people as they are protecting you. I do not know anything about filters, but Jeremy Ross did talk about putting HEPA filters into the buildings.

**Trogen:** MERV 8s and MERV 11s are less than 20% effective with the particle size being .3 microns to 1 micron where the aerosol virus can be .1 micron. A HEPA filter would be at a higher level but I did not



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suggest that because that would probably be much more expensive than just increasing the airflow.

**Hemphill (B.):** On number 6, the last date of the HVAC filter change needs to be done room by room. I do not think that is specific to a building.

**Nivens:** On #5, N95 masks cost about \$2 apiece. I do not want to ask for a \$2 reimbursement. I used to work at a university changing filters. The signage is just going to become a sign on the door in every building that says whether somebody went through and changed filters like when you go to a restaurant and it says when the bathroom was last checked.

**Ellis:** I get tired of hearing about cost all the time. Back in 2018, nobody raised the question about cost when we spent millions of dollars on the Culp Center, the football stadium, or the football locker rooms after football was bleeding \$1,000,000 a year. ETSU has done a good and a bad job of keeping us safe. They have required masks, which may not be a requirement too much longer. However, they have done a terrible job on social distancing. We started social distancing but we needed to keep enrollment from dropping so we filled up the classrooms again. It is impossible to social distance. We have a long history of not doing things when we should be doing them.

**Stevens:** I appreciate the sentiment behind this, but we have to be thinking about realistic expectations too. We schedule classes for the fall in late January/early February. The university cannot possibly install all of this equipment and meet the demand of #1 in time to meet the demand of #2. We burn some capital with the administration when we send something up the chain that is not realistic. If you do not feel safe change your class online like we stated in the last resolution.

**Hemphill (J.):** I have put links to CDC and [then OSHA](#). The two major things that we must do in order to prevent COVID is mask indoors and vaccinations. There are issues in the state of Tennessee with both of those things. If you are immunocompromised or have underlying health conditions then you need to take more precautions such as separating yourself, doing online classes, etc.

**Beatty:** Wearing masks and encouraging vaccination is a much more cost-effective solution than engineering/re-engineering environments on campus and withholding classroom space until each classroom is upgraded. It seems like a non-starter considering our want to increase enrollment.

**Blackwell:** From a faculty member in the College of Public Health - This resolution is off the mark. Vaccination is the key to returning to normalcy: vaccination for COVID, for the Flu, and of course for meningitis, polio, measles and the host of other contagions that could threaten life and limb. I see no reason to allocate our spare resources to retrofitting all instructional spaces when the key issue is prevention of disease, not limiting transmission after infection. I hope that we get back to a time with no masks.

**McGarry:** All the talk about vaccination is impractical. We cannot make people get vaccinated or even ask them if they are vaccinated. It is off the table for me because it is out of our control. The data is clear in showing that masks help but are not enough. I only got response from one faculty, and he was of the opinion that we need many more measures than we currently have. If it turns out changing the filter in every building is impractical, then maybe they will acknowledge that faculty have the option to take their class online. That has not been easy in our college. We should not censor ourselves. Let them tell us they cannot do it.

**Nivens:** Theresa, here is an article that [points to the relationship of vaccination and infection](#).

**Hemphill:** You do not need an N95 mask unless you are in an area of high concentrated transmission like in the hospital with patients with active disease. I would recommend everyone double masks.

**Garris:** CDC advises explicitly against N95 masks and says they should be reserved for health care providers.

**Blackhart:** I would love to see something like this in an ideal world. I agree with Senator Ellis that we do



## DISCUSSIONS

not want to just focus on money because we want to do what is right. The most common comment that I got from the people who responded is that #2 and #3 are very prescriptive. I worry the administration says that it is completely impossible and we are just not going to even consider it. More so than the money, it does not give the university any time to do this. I worry that we are saying as of Fall of 2022 if these classrooms do not meet the benchmark we are simply not going to teach in them, so either give us a classroom that has the appropriate air exchange and is large enough to social distance or let me teach online. I am not saying that we put our own health at risk for the students. I do not see that as realistic or serving the student.

**Motion fails. 29 in opposition, 14 in favor, and 4 in abstention.**

### 7. Information Items

7.1 Handbook Committee Update – Dr. Epps  
No update.

7.2 Board of Trustees Report – Dr. Foley  
The Board of Trustees has a regularly scheduled quarterly meeting for November 19<sup>th</sup>. Materials will be posted on the trustees' website as soon as they are available. If you have any questions or comments, please let Dr. Foley know.

7.4 Standing Committee Need – Dr. Epps  
No requests at this time.

#### 7.6 Reports from University Committees

7.6.1 COVID Legislation – Mr. Hendrix  
I had a chance to meet with administration and Joy Fulkerson (President of Staff Senate) on Friday to discuss the impact of the legislation at the federal and the state level. Administration assured us that they are working as hard as they can to meet the federal requirements for compliance with federal contracts and vaccinations. They are trying to be mindful of the state law. There is a waiver so institutions can still require masks and comply with the federal vaccine. East Tennessee State University and the University of Tennessee system worked together to have the legislature recognize that UT would lose their partnership with Oak Ridge National Laboratories and ETSU would no longer be able to serve veterans if we were unable to comply with the federal executive orders. ETSU will apply for the exemptions so that we can continue to have the mask mandates and start the vaccination process requirements for those that are impacted by federal contracts.

7.6.1 Quality and Effectiveness Sub-Council – Dr. Byington  
QESC met and the presentation we saw from Dr. Hoff is summative of our meeting.

7.6.2 University Research Advisory Council – Dr. Herrmann  
Nothing to report.

#### 7.7 Adjustments to Standard Course Meeting Times – Mr. Hendrix

**Hendrix:** Provost McCorkle emailed me on Friday about adjusting the time between classes from 10 to 15 minutes. This would not change the amount of time that we meet in each class. It would just extend the time between courses. I will be glad to take feedback on this proposal and provide them to the Provost.

**Funk:** Do we have large numbers of students not being able to make classes? In my classes those unable to make class on time is rare.

**Nivens:** When my daughter was a freshman here, she had a computer science class in the Digital Media Center and then she had another general education class across the street. I am sure she complained to no one but me. The large number of students sometimes is based on what level they are. By the time they are juniors or seniors you may hear from them. That is maybe why you do not always hear from students.



**DISCUSSIONS**

**Epps:** Classes that were in Lamb Hall are at the VA during the construction so that is a major issue. This seems like a reasonable request considering the distance many of our buildings are now. When everything was centered on campus, 10 minutes was reasonable. It is not reasonable when students have to go to the VA or Millennium Center.

**Herrmann:** One of my CAS faculty has a disability and cannot get to class on time himself.

**Nivens:** I have let students go early from my class because they are just over in Arts and Sciences but between here and there you have to run. 15 minutes just seems more reasonable. 10 minutes is like in a high school. You cannot even get from one side of Science Hill to the other in 10 minutes and we are bigger than that. Students do not always have all their classes in the same building so I am super excited to see it.

**Blackwell:** How would this affect classes that only meet once a week?

**Hendrix:** This was in reference to the traditional standard course times of 55 minutes and 80-minute time slots. It did not necessarily address Monday or Tuesday only courses.

**Epps:** I believe that was part of the list where it would be the same time period for any class. It would just allow for 15 minutes between the next standard class time.

**Stevens:** This proposal came from Music and Digital Media. It really is the classes that are across State of Franklin in the Martin Center and Millennium Center that have been a problem. Anybody that teaches classes over there knows we basically lose 5 minutes of class waiting for everybody to get there. Hopefully, this will alleviate that problem.

**Ellis:** I agree. I am wondering what made the administration all of a sudden realize this was a good idea.

**Stevens:** We have complained about this for years, but we have never submitted a formal proposal. We submitted a proposal this time.

**Gentry:** I am in favor. From a learning standpoint, you can only absorb what your butt can stand. Even if their classes are in the same building, having a 15-minute break to let them have time to relax for a minute, get a drink, and move on could mean so much more for their learning abilities in the next class.

8. Old Business  
None.

9. New Business  
None.

10. Comments from Guests  
None.

11. Final Comments/Announcements from Senators

11.1 **Sergiadis** announced that Sherrod Library's Faculty Bookplate Event will be on Wednesday, November 17<sup>th</sup> from 1:00-3:00. Faculty who recently earned tenure and/or promotion were asked to pick a book in the library or request the library purchase a book. Sherrod Library then puts their name in the book and dedicates it to them. Sherrod Library has all the book selections [available online to browse](#).

11.2 **Funk** announced that the Department of Theater and Dance is having their first production in the Bach Theater. *Men on Boats* will be on November 18, 19, and 20 at 7:30 pm and 21 at 2:00 pm. It is following COVID protocols. The actors will perform in masks. There will be limited seating so people can spread out. The performance on the 19th will be live and cast so people can watch it from home.

12. Adjourn



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**Motion to Adjourn: Epps**  
**Second:**  
**Meeting Adjourned**

*Please notify Senator Ashley Sergiadis ([sergiadis@etsu.edu](mailto:sergiadis@etsu.edu), Faculty Senate Secretary, 2020-2021) of any changes or corrections to the minutes.*

*Note: Meeting minutes are not a word-for-word transcript. Statements and questions by Senators may be edited and summarized for clarity.*

Whereas Sars-CoV-2 is spread both by droplets and aerosols,

Whereas 6-foot social distancing can reduce the inhalation of droplets, distancing alone is not effective for aerosols, which can remain suspended in the air for over an hour and can float farther than 6 feet;

Whereas to reduce the concentration of viruses like Sars-CoV-2 in indoor areas, indoor air should be replaced four to six times per hour by either outdoor air or by air passed through an air filter with at least a Minimum Efficiency Rating Value 13 (MERV 13);

Whereas ETSU teaching facilities do not meet these minimum benchmarks;

Whereas ETSU has a responsibility to protect employees and students from unnecessary hazards;

And whereas ETSU has already called faculty and students onto campus, therefore be it

Resolved, that the Faculty Senate Recommends that

- 1) That ETSU makes it the top priority to increase ventilation in teaching and research buildings until those buildings reach the minimum benchmark of four exchanges with outdoor air per hour.
- 2) That no new classes be scheduled in buildings that do not meet the benchmark.
- 3) Those faculty members scheduled to teach classes in buildings that do not meet the benchmark have the option to teach these classes remotely.
- 4) Those steps to prevent aerosol transmission of Sars-CoV-2 do not eliminate the need to protect faculty and students from droplet transmission, including the need to schedule no more people in a classroom or lab than can remain six feet apart.
- 5) The cost of N95 masks for face-to-face teaching assignments should be reimbursed.
- 6) That ETSU increase transparency by displaying in each building that building's outdoor and indoor air exchange rates, current MERV filtration levels, and the date of last HVAC filter change.

Moved by \_\_\_\_\_

Seconded by \_\_\_\_\_

Endorsed by

\_\_\_\_\_ on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2021

Mr. Stephen Hendrix, MBA

President, ETSU Faculty Senate

Joseph G. Allen, DSc, MPH; Andrew M. Ibrahim, MD, MSc. Indoor Air Changes and Potential Implications for SARS-CoV-2 Transmission *JAMA*. 2021;325(20):2112-2113.  
doi:10.1001/jama.2021.5053