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Faculty Senate Agendas and Minutes

Agendas and Minutes

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9-27-2021

### 2021 September 27 - Faculty Senate Agenda and Minutes

Faculty Senate, East Tennessee State University

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# EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

## Faculty Senate

*September 27, 2021, 2:45 p.m. | Virtual Zoom Meeting*

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### **Faculty Senate Meeting Agenda**

1. Celebrations
2. Introductions of Guests
3. Announcements
  - a. Request for Public Comment on Policies
  - b. Reminder – Next Full Meeting of the Senate is Oct 25th
4. Guest Speaker
  - a. Dr. Jeremy Smith – Provost’s Task Force on Digital Creation, Preservation, and Access
5. Approval of Minutes from September 13, 2021
6. Action Items
  - a. Motion to Approve COVID-19 Resolution – Mr. Funk
7. Information Items
  - a. Handbook Committee Update – Dr. Epps
  - b. Board of Trustees Report – Dr. Foley
  - c. Standing Committee Need – Dr. Epps
  - d. Notes from Meetings with the Provost and President – Mr. Hendrix
  - e. Spring 2022 Meetings of the Faculty Senate – Mr. Hendrix
  - f. Reports from University Committees
    - Academic Council – Dr. Blackhart, Dr. Epps, and Mr. Hendrix
8. Old Business
9. New Business
10. Comments from Guests
11. Final Comments/Announcements from Senators
12. Adjourn

## **Spring 22 Faculty Senate Meeting Dates**

- January 24<sup>th</sup> – Virtual
- February 7<sup>th</sup> – Virtual
- February 21<sup>st</sup> – Virtual
- March 7<sup>th</sup> – Virtual
- March 21<sup>st</sup> – Hybrid
- April 4<sup>th</sup> – Hybrid
- April 18<sup>th</sup> - Hybrid



## FACULTY SENATE MINUTES

<b>Meeting Date:</b>	09/27/2021	<b>Time:</b>	14:45 – 16:30	<b>Location:</b>	Zoom
<b>Next Meeting:</b>	10/25/2021	<b>Scribe:</b>			Ashley Sergiadis
<b>Present:</b>	Beatty, Kate; Blackhart, Ginni; Blackwell, Roger; Bray, Sheree; Chakraborty, Kanishka; Cherry, Donna; Daniels, Jean; De Oliveira Fiuza, Felipe; Ecay, Thomas ; Elangovan, Saravanan; Ellis, Jon; Epps, Susan; Evanshen, Pam; Fisher, Stacey; Foley, Virginia; Frye, Stephanie; Funk, Bobby; Garris, Bill; Gentry, Retha; Gomez Sobrino, Isabel; Gray, Jeffrey; Hauldren, Kacie; Hawthorne, Sean; Hemphill, Bill; Hemphill, Jean; Hendrix, Stephen; Hounshell, Jonathan; Johnson, Michelle; Khan, Shoeb; Kim, Sookhyun; Kruppa, Michael; Landis, Ryan; Lyons, Renee; Mackara, Fred; Mamudu, Hadii; McGarry, Theresa; Mitchell, Holly; Nivens, Ryan; O'Neil, Kason; Park, Esther; Ramsey, Priscilla; Schroder, Laurie; Sergiadis, Ashley; Stevens, Alan; Tai, Chih-Che; Thigpen, Jim; Thompson, Beth Ann; Trogen, Paul; Uddin, Mohammad; Walden, Rachel; Waters, Susan; Weyant, Emily; Youngberg, George; Zahner, Matt				
<b>Absent:</b>	Byington, Randy; Digavalli, Siva; Dowling-McClay, Karilynn; Herrmann, Andrew				
<b>Excused:</b>	Burns, Bracken				

### 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 **Hendrix** celebrated that ETSU football is 4-0 this year.

2. Introductions of Guests

2.1 Amy Johnson, Associate Provost for Faculty & Director of Center for Teaching Excellence

2.2 Jeremy Smith, Director of Archives of Appalachia

2.3 Joy Fulkerson, President of Staff Senate and Director of Leadership and Civic Engagement

3. Announcements

3.1 Request for Public Comment on Policies

**Hendrix** encouraged everyone to check out the [policies out for public comment](#).



## DISCUSSIONS

### 3.2 Next Full Meeting of the Senate is October 25

**Hendrix** reminded Senators that the next Faculty Senate meeting is on October 25<sup>th</sup>. The October 11<sup>th</sup> meeting was canceled.

### 4. Guest Speaker -- Dr. Jeremy Smith – Provost's Task Force on Digital Creation, Preservation, and Access

#### 4.1 Smith presented on the Task Force on Digital Creation, Preservation, and Access.

- Smith is chair of the task force that started in March 2021. The task force consisted of 13 members representing different colleges/departments. The task force was created because ETSU is producing more digital content than we can sustainably manage. This has increased over the past 18 months as we move to a digital environment. The task force had three charges from the provost: (1) Quantify the needs across ETSU for digital creation, preservation, and storage. (2) Identify relevant current practices. (3) Provide practical recommendations for potential centrally coordinated university-wide action.
- Currently, ETSU has 1.3 petabytes of known data on ETSU supported infrastructure. The more data we have, the more difficult it becomes to organize to store it, back it up, and make it retrievable in the future.
- The task force developed two surveys.
  - Survey to learn how other institutions are responding to digital stewardship needs. Appalachian State University, East Carolina University, Old Dominion University, and Marshall University conversed with the task force.
  - Survey at ETSU to examine what the digital stewardship needs are on campus and at the department level. The task force sent the survey to 64 department chairs and 7 service center directors. 21 responded. It asked what digital content their faculty and staff are creating and their needs in relation to preserving that information. 80% indicated that they currently have enough digital storage to meet their department needs. 80% also indicated that their faculty used a combination of non-ETSU cloud storage (e.g. personal account, PC or external drives not issued by ETSU). 30% indicated that their department does not actively use OneDrive for file storage. This indicated a need for education and outreach about the benefits of ETSU data management services or the need to implement systems that are more convenient for users. 90% indicated that they do not have departmental policies guiding the retention or storage of digital content. 80% indicated that they do not know what content they should be saving as part of ETSU official institutional records. 45% indicated that the greatest digital stewardship need is enhanced policies about digital stewardship and/or education about existing policies. 70% indicated that they have content that would benefit from enhanced digital preservation processes.
- Based on the surveys and data on ETSU's current practices, the task force came up with four recommendations. Provost McCorkle has asked how to begin to implement these recommendations, so he is presenting to groups to get input.
  - Create a standing digital stewardship committee that would coordinate and advise on ETSU digital storage and preservation needs across campus. It would consist of members who represent the breadth of data being produced (e.g. records, scholarly output, research data, special collections, student data, etc.), including faculty representation. It would provide a framework for policy development, determine/communicate best practices about file management, and serve as a communication hub for digital stewardship.
  - Develop and implement targeted training that highlights the benefits of ETSU supported resources, workflows, and best practices.
  - Provide funding for a full-time university archivist who could support the university's transition from paper to electronic records, implement a records retention policy for official institutional electronic records, be responsible for preserving the digital content, and promote the university and its history. All four institutions the task force surveyed have one to two full-time people devoted to this work. They also have implemented a centrally funded network or cloud-based infrastructure for unlimited preservation of large department-specific data sets or project files.
- The solutions to these problems will cost money, but the cost of inaction will be greater. Digital content continues to grow, so the problem is only going to get bigger. Data and files will be lost or deleted as ETSU continues to have a lack of backups, file migration strategies, and system to support storage. Without a centralized system of communication and infrastructure of training, there will be duplication of efforts across campus and a loss of potential economies of scale in relation to acquiring preservation infrastructure. If we can coordinate efforts and evolve resources for this issue, then the outcome is that ETSU will be better equipped and positioned to succeed at its mission.



## DISCUSSIONS

### 4.2 Smith answered questions and comments from Senators.

**Hemphill:** Once you start consolidating, it seems like you will need to double or triple the amount you would expect to have, which would be about 3.9 petabytes. Have you addressed that idea? Also, is this part of ITS reaching out and starting to archive desktop and laptop machines on a more automatic basis?

**Smith:** We do not have any proposals. No one will start anything without the input and buy-in from a broad swath of campus. The provost asked for recommendations, specifically how we could start a committee to develop more robust policies around data retention issues. In terms of archiving individual PCs, the goal would be to have a robust system whereby the content that you are producing is being preserved in a way that is in line with professional standards across the country and the globe. How we get there depends on the money and infrastructure we are able to get.

**Blackhart:** Do we have a good understanding of the accuracy of the survey data? When these surveys were sent, the chairs did not really know what the faculty in their department were doing based on my communications with them. It was a very difficult questionnaire to complete. How accurate is the data that we have? Could the problem be even bigger than what we think it is?

**Smith:** My hunch is the problem is worse: more data, more problems with file retention, file migration, digital stewardship. As for the survey, it had to be much more focused on specific recipients than would have been ideal, but we had limited time to get data to Provost Bishop.

**Kruppa:** Those smaller hard drives are not conducive for many biomedical researchers that generate terabytes of data. On our lab computers, we have maybe 6-8-terabyte drives on them. The cloud storage space that we are offering is minimal for the amount and depth of data that we are generating. It would be nice to see some sort of organization, where we can have an expanding storage system.

**Smith:** That is in line with what we have heard through these surveys. In archives, we generate terabytes of data. We have had to patch a preservation system on our own and I know others on campus do that as well.

Comments from the chat:

**Tai:** I like these four approaches: committee, training, specialist, and ?. If we can develop several best practices at ETSU, that would be helpful too. For example, pilot or established examples in a research practice, in an instructional practice.

**Kim:** Hope we could get a new computer/laptop with larger storage within shorter time period (maybe update every 3 years rather than 4 years?) Storing to OneDrive takes time.

### 5. Approval of Minutes

**Hendrix** questioned whether there was an objection to approving the minutes from the 09/13/2021 meeting.

**No Objection: Minutes Approved**

### 6. Action Items

#### 6.1 Motion to Approve COVID-19 Resolution – Mr. Funk

**Hendrix:** The format that came from Executive Committee initially was not an actionable item. The Senate has the ability to take action on resolutions and matters of the Senate. The Executive Committee took the previous motion submitted by Senator Funk and constructed it to be a formalized resolution. There were no changes to the actual resolution.

**Funk:** This region is in rough shape when it comes to COVID. The TN Department of Health reported 437 new COVID-19 cases and 4 deaths on Friday. The number of cases are up in every county in this region. All 7 counties are experiencing high levels of community transmission and that is based on the CDC



## DISCUSSIONS

Community transmission indicators. Since I first submitted the motion, it has gotten worse. There have been 43 new deaths in the last 7 days. In the previous 7 days prior to that, there were 56 deaths. I just got word today that we have lost a member of the ETSU faculty to COVID. Only 44% of the local population in this region is vaccinated. Vaccinations have dropped 15% since a month ago. ETSU is about people, we say people come first. The whole idea behind this is that we want to show to the region that people do come first and that ETSU is a bastion of science and health, not the superstition that seems to surround us about COVID-19. We need to make our campus safer and some people think maybe this would be going too far, but as old Ben Franklin said, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. I would rather err on the side of safety and see us get out of this in a much better shape than we are currently doing.

**McGarry made a motion to adopt the resolution. Trogen seconded.**

**Kruppa:** The College of Medicine for the most part supports this. Having the university make the vaccine mandatory is outside of the university's governing purview. Mandating vaccines for state schools falls to the TN Board of Health.

**Kruppa motioned to amend the resolution by striking the fourth recommendation and adding the fourth recommendation *encourage COVID vaccination of all ETSU students, faculty, and staff*. Nivens seconded.**

**McGarry:** ETSU is already encouraging the vaccination. It sounds like we are not paying attention to what is going on. The feedback from our college is make the resolution stronger. Just because we cannot make it mandatory right now, doesn't mean we shouldn't be trying.

**Chakraborty:** I have received many emails from my colleagues supporting the motion. We can keep the language the same, but the problem is that the Tennessee law by Governor Lee makes mandatory vaccines not feasible. University of Memphis even sent a letter to Governor Lee that has not been addressed. If we are trying to make a positioning statement, then a stronger line is necessary. However, I am skeptical that anything could be implemented on an administrative scale given the TN law.

**Beatty:** That is what I have heard and discussed with colleagues as well.

**Funk:** Could we indicate that we want the Board of Trustees to strive to make it mandatory?

**Lyons:** Striving is a much stronger word.

**Hendrix:** Once we vote on this amendment, we can choose to add or change the language on the fourth recommendation.

**Daniels:** I thought what we are trying to say is that we want them to advocate for mandatory vaccines. There is an existing law, but there are still reasons why we want them to advocate for that change.

**Walden:** We could change the language to indicate that we encourage the President and Board of Trustees to advocate to the legislature to change the law on this matter. Two more thoughts: Should we have stronger incentives for vaccinations? Should we have mandatory testing for the unvaccinated? I am not sure if the state law covers mandatory testing.

**Hendrix:** State law does prohibit mandatory testing.

**Fiuza:** Would it be possible to say something among the lines of "encourage our Tennessee representatives to make vaccination mandatory for colleges and universities"?

**Ellis:** I am tired of hearing the word encourage. I do not see anything wrong with using words like mandatory. We are not saying that we want ETSU to make vaccines mandatory. Senator Funk has worded it to where we want to encourage that we think more about mandatory vaccines. We might be able to say something to the TN legislature to change their mind rather than continuing to do nothing. I am against changing anything that Senator Funk added.



## DISCUSSIONS

**Uddin:** The last sentence does not add value. Our President and administration say that that they strongly encourage everybody to take the vaccine so that is saying the same thing.

**Chakraborty:** I am in favor of making the fourth recommendation stronger. We could add something like we strongly advocate to university administration or Board of Trustees to consider making the vaccines mandatory for students, faculty, and staff.

**Landis:** We could say that we can continue to advocate for the mandatory vaccination of all ETSU students, faculty, and staff. That would leave us in the middle of the road.

**Youngberg:** Since we cannot have the vaccine mandated by the university and it is a bit of an empty gesture, is there anything more realistic that the university can be proactive in? For example, educating students about getting the vaccine, setting up mechanisms to address people's concerns for the vaccine, or having more robust/active initiatives to encourage students directly to get the vaccine. I am sure some of that's been done.

**Motion to amend the resolution by striking the fourth recommendation and adding the fourth recommendation *encourage COVID vaccination of all ETSU students, faculty, and staff* passed.**

**Trogen:** On the second recommendation, we often hear that we are to encourage social distancing, but there are so many chairs in the classroom that students cannot get much more than two feet away from each other. Changing "encourage" to "facilitate" social distancing would be a bit stronger. The institution has some responsibility in social distancing.

**Trogen motioned to amend the resolution by striking *encourage* in the second recommendation and adding the word *facilitate*. McGarry seconded. Motion passed.**

**McGarry:** Some feedback from the College of Arts and Sciences mentioned that we should clarify if we mean permanently or temporarily in the third recommendation.

**Mackara:** How are we going to enforce the first recommendation (i.e. require masks at all university events)?

**Hendrix:** These are recommendations from the Faculty Senate. Ultimately, the administration determines if they wish to adapt these recommendations and what actions will be taken.

**Epps:** For the first recommendation (require masks at all university events), would this include having to wear a mask for any event outside even having a class outside?

**Funk:** Yes, it would. The CDC is now recommending that if you cannot social distance, you should wear a mask even if you are outdoors and especially if you unvaccinated.

**Epps:** If you can go to a soccer game and sit away from the crowd, you do not need to wear a mask but anybody who is sitting close to people would have to wear one. So, there would be some people with masks and some without?

**Funk:** I think that is hard to define what social distancing needs to be that is why the language read at all events.

**McGarry:** In the last Notepads, there were three pictures of students, in some cases literally with their arms around each other, not wearing masks. I do not think we need to be so worried about one person who is six feet away and forced to wear a mask. We need to get it through to people that when there is an event just wear a mask. People are dying of this virus.

**Nivens:** Is it known that those people in the photo were unvaccinated?





## DISCUSSIONS

**McGarry:** I do not care if they were vaccinated.

**Nivens:** The CDC says that there is a set of rules for people who are vaccinated and it does not agree with what you just said.

**O'Neil:** I agree with Senator Nivens. Sometime athletics gets a bad reputation. I wanted to point out that there are more events than just athletics right now (band and music lessons, outdoor classes) that do not social distance.

**Funk:** This includes more than just sporting events. Until people are vaccinated, we have to try to protect as many people as possible because we care about our students and the community.

**Funk motioned to amend the first recommendation to remove *including sports events* and add *both inside and out*. Trogen seconded.**

**Khan:** Would teaching a class constitute as an event?

**Funk:** I would take it that way.

**Khan:** In that case, we should add something along the lines of requiring masks on all university property rather than making it an event.

**Fiuza:** We would not need to define what an event is if we made masks mandatory at ETSU period.

**Mackara:** Would an event include sporting practice? If so, do the athletes have to wear masks?

**Epps:** Student athletes have to follow the NCAA guidelines on what has been mandated for student athletes for practice and competition. They are already more fully vaccinated than probably most groups on campus. Some of our teams are already 100% vaccinated in student athletes and they have to be tested on a regular basis. I think we are going down a slippery slope if we start picking on any one group. For example, how does the band play their instruments with a mask on?

**Chakraborty:** We are getting overly confusing in defining events. Last week, there was an email from the Office of the President with recommendations from CTE how to handle students not willing to wear a mask. Rather, we should focus on recreational and sports events.

**Funk:** In theatre, you cannot go to a Broadway theatre unless you are vaccinated and they still require masks. When we do plays on campus, we will have actors in masks to follow university guidelines and keep our students safe. If it is a university-sponsored event, then the right thing to do is to say you need to wear masks. For some performers like band, they can be placed so they are not right on top of one another.

**Hounshell:** I would like to suggest differentiating between meetings in a parking lot versus an organized event where ETSU is somewhat responsible for the people in attendance.

**O'Neil:** A few faculty I spoke with suggested to vote no as they agreed with some of the points, but not others such as the first recommendation.

**Thompson:** I have had some of the same conversations with faculty. They support parts of the resolution, but not all.

**Hemphill:** Most updated CDC recommendations: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/colleges-universities/considerations.html>

**Motion to amend the first recommendation to remove *including sports events* and add *both inside and out* passed.**



## DISCUSSIONS

**Thompson:** My faculty were looking for guidance on determining when the third recommendation was appropriate.

**Hendrix:** This resolution does not offer any guidance for any metric. It is just a recommendation to provide the faculty the freedom of flexibility.

**McGarry:** We should consider acknowledging the tremendous work being done by the ETSU COVID-19 response team.

**Fiuza:** At Eastman they openly say how many employees have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and how many have passed. It is on their website. Someone who works there asked me about our numbers, after educating me about what they do, and I did not know. Shouldn't we be more open about our numbers? I do not think it is smart to give the people in the region the idea that we are hiding something.

**Walden:** Our numbers on the COVID dashboard are fundamentally undercounts, as there is no routine testing. The student numbers are only those caught at student health or if the student is tested elsewhere and voluntarily reports it.

**Motion to amend to strike the first whereas and add *Whereas the number of cases of COVID-19 in Northeast Tennessee is now 83,136, and 1,341 have died as of September 24th***  
[<https://www.wjhl.com/local-coronavirus-coverage/tdh-reports-437-new-covid-19-cases-4-new-deaths-in-ne-tennessee-on-friday/>] Elangovan seconded. Motioned passed.

The date 24<sup>th</sup> was changed to 27<sup>th</sup> as an editorial comment.

**Johnson motion to amend the first whereas to add *including members of our own ETSU family.***  
[Seconded.] Motion passed.

**Sobrino:** There was some concern in the Literature and Language Department about the third recommendation. How will it be determined? Is it permanent or temporary?

**McGarry:** There has been a situation in College of Arts and Sciences. It does not sound to us like the way the Dean permits faculty to decide the format of their class is the way that the President laid it out for us at the retreat.

**Funk:** It was the lack of clarity from College of Arts and Sciences that made me want to put that in there.

**Sergiadis:** Would adding "temporarily" in the motion address this?

**McGarry:** If we are going to change it, I hope we would specify that it could be permanent.

**Fiuza:** The recommendation needs to indicate that the teaching faculty need to be able to decide for how long they are moving to online.

**Schroder motioned to amend the third recommendation to add the word *unilateral* before the word *decision*.** Trogen seconded.

**Foley:** Part of the reason we have so many of our classes online right now is in response to the concern about students' mental health. In this amendment, it says that a faculty member could decide to go remote for the rest of the semester even if things improved, which concerns me.

**Stevens:** Unilateral implies that we can do whatever we want without consulting our department chair. I do not think we have that kind of control.

**Sergiadis:** When Dr. Noland spoke about faculty moving to online, it sounded like a temporary situation (e.g. three weeks) because of the COVID numbers not a permanent one.



## DISCUSSIONS

**McGarry:** There can be situations that would make it necessary to go online until the end of the semester.

**Motion to amend the third recommendation to add the word *unilateral* before the word *decision* failed.**

**Daniels motioned to amend the fourth recommendation to remove the word *encourage* and add the words *advocate for*. Funk seconded. Motion approved.**

**Mamudu motioned to amend the fourth recommendation to add the words *and patrons*. Fiuza seconded.**

**Funk:** Does the university refer to people who visit the campus as guests or patrons? In theatre, patron is somebody that is giving money.

**Mamudu:** In the context of law, patrons also involve people who are working for ETSU.

**Motion to amend the fourth recommendation to add the words *and patrons*. Motion passed.**

**Kim:** How about requiring a two-week quarantine requirement? I'm not sure if it is already required in school policy?

**Hendrix:** ETSU is following all CDC recommendations related to quarantine and isolation based upon vaccination versus unvaccinated status.

**Gentry:** This are the quarantine recommendations currently used:  
<https://www.etsu.edu/coronavirus/documents/etsu-covid-19-return-to-work-or-class-protocol.pdf>

**Kim:** If students took the vaccine then caught COVID, is there a two-week quarantine requirement?

**Hendrix:** Whatever the CDC recommends, the university has adopted.

**Chakraborty:** The email from the Office of Dr. Noland sent last Monday goes over this in a diagram.

**Kim:** Is there anyone tracking if students are following the two-week quarantine?

**Hendrix:** I know we have tracers, but I do not know the answer to that question.

**Motion to adopt the resolution passed.**

## 7. Information Items

7.1 Handbook Committee Update – Dr. Epps  
None.

7.2 Board of Trustees Report – Dr. Foley  
The only action items we took as a board were (1) approved the minutes, (2) approved Dean Horsley tenure upon her appointment as Dean of the College of Nursing, (3) approved the mission profile and mission statement, and (4) formally selected our committees and chairs. All this information is on the Board of Trustees site.

7.3 Standing Committee Need – Dr. Epps  
Andrew Herrmann agreed to serve search on the University Research Advisory Council. We still need someone for the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee.

7.4 Notes from Meetings with the Provost and President – Mr. Hendrix  
None.



## DISCUSSIONS

### 7.5 Spring 2022 Meetings of the Faculty Senate – Mr. Hendrix

The dates of Spring 2022 meetings of the faculty senate were provided on the second page of the agenda. The plan is to do a series of virtual meetings at the beginning of the spring semester at least through Spring Break with the potential of moving to a hybrid meeting schedule towards the end of March and April. There has been a desire to have a hybrid opportunity, so we would like to use these meetings to try and make that happen.

### 7.6 Reports from University Committees

#### 7.6.1 Academic Council – Dr. Blackhart, Dr. Epps, and Mr. Hendrix

The most significant action was that certificate programs can now have a minimum of 9 credit hours. Previously, it was a minimum of 12 credit hours.

#### 7.6.2 Information Technology Governance Committee – Mr. Hemphill

Hemphill decided to wait to share items from the last committee.

### 8. Old Business

None.

### 9. New Business

None.

### 10. Comments from Guests

None.

### 11. Final Comments/Announcements from Senators

11.1 **Nivens** advised Senators to prepare amendments ahead of time and copy/paste them into the chat box in order to save time during the next discussion.

### 12. Adjourn

**Motion to Adjourn: Nivens**

**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 the number of cases of COVID-19 have risen from one case on August 16<sup>th</sup> to 81 cases on September 3rd;

Whereas vaccination rates in Washington County are below 50%;

Whereas ETSU requires masks in classes, but not at either university sponsored events or not while the students are outside a building;

Whereas the CDC has recommended masks, even for vaccinated people, at "crowded outdoor events, such as concerts or sporting events, attending full-capacity indoor religious services, and working out in indoor gyms.";

Whereas faculty need the option to change the format of a class when the changing situation on campus dictates a needed change;

Whereas our faculty want to teach and most of the faculty want their classes to be live and in person;

Whereas it is time to take action to help curtail a further spread of this disease which, if not slowed down, will force the university to cancel classes and/or move to campus wide full-time online learning; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Faculty Senate recommends the University to

1. require masks at all university events, including sports events;
2. encourage social distancing;
3. support a faculty member's decisions to change the format of a class from in person to online when Covid-19 infections dictate such a change; and
4. keep striving to make the Covid-19 vaccine mandatory for all ETSU students, faculty and staff.

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

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

Endorsed by

\_\_\_\_\_ on the 27<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2021

Mr. Stephen Hendrix, MBA  
President, ETSU Faculty Senate



# EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

## Faculty Senate

Resolution on COVID-19 Response  
September 27, 2021

Whereas the number of cases of COVID-19 in Northeast Tennessee is now 83,136, and 1,341 have died as of September 24<sup>th</sup>, including members of our own ETSU family;<sup>1</sup>

Whereas vaccination rates in Washington County are below 50%;

Whereas ETSU requires masks in classes, but not at either university sponsored events or not while the students are outside a building;

Whereas the CDC has recommended masks, even for vaccinated people, at "crowded outdoor events, such as concerts or sporting events, attending full-capacity indoor religious services, and working out in indoor gyms.";

Whereas faculty need the option to change the format of a class when the changing situation on campus dictates a needed change;

Whereas our faculty want to teach and most of the faculty want their classes to be live and in person;

Whereas it is time to take action to help curtail a further spread of this disease which, if not slowed down, will force the university to cancel classes and/or move to campus wide full-time online learning; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Faculty Senate recommends the University to

1. require masks at all university events both inside and out;
2. facilitate social distancing;
3. support a faculty member's decisions to change the format of a class from in person to online when Covid-19 infections dictate such a change; and
4. strongly advocate for COVID-19 vaccination of all ETSU students, faculty, staff, and patrons.

Moved by Senator Theresa McGarry

Seconded by Senator Paul Trogen

Endorsed by

on the 27<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2021

Mr. Stephen Hendrix, MBA  
President, ETSU Faculty Senate

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.wjhl.com/local-coronavirus-coverage/tdh-reports-437-new-covid-19-cases-4-new-deaths-in-ne-tennessee-on-friday/>

## Meeting with Provost McCorkle

09/21/2021

### Questions submitted by Senators

- Having served in your role now for a couple of months, what do you see as your priorities?  
Answer: Provost McCorkle is currently on her tour of all the colleges. She has met with four colleges (CAS, CCRHS, Clemmer, CPH) and the rest are scheduled. She should finish mid to late October. Her priorities remain similar to what she discussed at the Faculty Senate retreat. However, there has been a stronger focus on COVID preparation than anticipated, so that affected her ability to tackle some of her priorities.
  - Chapter 125 Part 2: Task forces have submitted their initial drafts. Board of Trustees have given their input. Now, administration will be gathering feedback from the campus community beginning sometime between now and November. Some of this was delayed due to COVID. Open forums will mainly be virtual now.
  - SACSCOC: Our 10-year reaffirmation report is due December 2022. Work teams will be created with specific assignments. If anyone is interested in serving, contact Provost McCorkle. Part of the report will be developing a QEP (an institutional initiative over five years). Currently, the main idea is to create a QEP around student success and community engagement.
  - Faculty Development Support and Recognition: She would like to expand recognition of faculty.
  - Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice: She wants to continue the work of our DEI efforts. For faculty, one idea would be to incorporate DEI into the tenure and promotion policy (e.g. requesting a DEI statement in dossiers or demonstrating one's work in DEI).
  - Curriculum Review Development: There are new programs that we need and existing programs that we need to help increase enrollment.
  - Tenure and Promotion: Revisions to the tenure and promotion policy will probably start next year. Senators suggested either the spring or fall, but not the summer. Senators suggested creating a committee to address immediate concerns (e.g. separating policy from procedure) and a committee to address more complicated concerns.
- ETSU CON has a joint DNP program with TTU that is online. Faculty members in ETSU graduate programs in the college of nursing have been told by faculty at TTU that it is mandatory that we use the lockdown browser and the webcam in two of our shared courses (the same courses are taught by different faculty from each institution in different semesters). However, the graduate faculty at ETSU voted not to use the webcam because of privacy concerns. Plus, the educational research suggests lockdown browsers with webcams do not reduce incidences of cheating. Our CON ETSU faculty are confused because the TTU faculty demand ETSU faculty use the webcam. These actions include more than privacy, such as academic freedom and intellectual property. However, for now, I need clarification on the ETSU policy or position about the use of webcams during online exams.  
Answer: Provost McCorkle has emailed the TTU provost to address this concern. She has reviewed the MOU and has not found anything to permit the mandatory use of webcams. Senator Hemphill provided more information on other concerns regarding the partnership with TTU. Specifically, TTU is dictating that ETSU faculty turn in their instructional materials to them.
- First, a warm welcome to Dr. McCorkle! Dr. McCorkle, the ETSU general education (GE) curriculum has existed in its current form for many years. Someone with institutional memory or

the records can be precise, but I am thinking the current GE structure has served the institution for around two decades. GE may have roots in TBR policy (see addendum below) and it is certainly connected to other systems (such as community college transfers, reaffirmation of accreditation timelines); I do not know what latitude we have to make changes. I wondered if you might speak to GE:

- a philosophy of GE
- any GE programs you're aware of that are innovative, that spark your admiration
- GE that might be tailored to and fitting for ETSU given its mission and whom we serve.
- the circumstances that might, in your view, warrant a review or a renewal effort.

I know faculty embarked on a discussion of a GE renewal effort about 3+ years ago, and I also know that these conversations are very difficult. Maintaining the current GE structure may be our best path at present, and I was just curious as to your thoughts about GE, general or specific, musings or prescriptions, depending upon how much time you may have spent thinking through general education matters. Thanks!

The General Education Core at each TBR college comprises 41 hours (out of 60 for the associate's degree) from 6 categories:

- Communication 9
- Humanities/Fine Arts 9
- Social/Behavioral Sciences 6
- History 6
- Natural Sciences 8
- Mathematics 3

Answer: Provost McCorkle understands that general education renewal can take a long time because of philosophical differences. She believes that general education should be a broad-based foundational focus that teaches students how to make a life not just a living. One interesting [general education program is James Madison University](#), which has faculty teach in clusters. Senators and Provost McCorkle brainstormed ideas with respect to general education. Below are some of the ideas and comments that came from that discussion.

- There may be limitations to how much we can revise the general education curriculum due to other state programs and institutions. TSU and UT, Knoxville recently made some changes.
- Students feel that general education is a continuation of high school, so why come to ETSU when they get the same courses at a community college. General education renewal should tackle this problem.
- We could create a four-year degree that is not a baccalaureate like a professional degree. Companies like Blue Cross Blue Shield of Tennessee have expressed value in a baccalaureate.
- General education should be considered as adding value to the degree.
- Students may be more excited about general education if every class practiced active learning.
- Admissions is getting the students here, but we are having issues with retention.
- When asking students why they are at ETSU, the answer used to be to have a college experience and now it is a checkbox to get a job.
- We could give students extra free hours to explore different courses.
- We could organize courses so students can take a mixture of general education and major courses during their first two years rather than waiting to take their major classes during the junior/senior year.



- Open Educational Resources are usually available for general education courses. Faculty can be more creative with these resources and students wouldn't have to pay for textbooks. This would be good marketing to students.
- Why is American Sign Language as world language requirement is not recognized by ETSU Yet? There is a bill HB 1533 passed for undergraduate courses that approves ASL as a world language requirement.  
Answer: HB 1533 was for high school. There was a proposal in CAS regarding ASL but there was dissent to it.
- What are the plans concerning Dean searches for CAS and CBAT?  
Answer: Searches for the dean will commence in the fall. Provost McCorkle is currently determining the timelines for the searches and the composition of the committees. Senators suggested having faculty in and outside of the college for the CAS dean search since they have such an impact outside of the college with their general education courses.
- What are the plans for an update to the T&P policy at ETSU?  
Revisions to the tenure and promotion policy will probably start sometime next year.

## Meeting with Dr. Noland

09/10/2021

### Questions submitted by Senators

- I am a Paramedic (TN state license 40220) and have had numerous courses on domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, elderly abuse, spouse abuse, etc. I am legally required to say something or intervene in a responsible way so as to not make any situation worse and have received extensive instruction on how to properly intervene so as to not put the threatened or abused party in further harm. I have also already completed your sexual assault courses for the past two semesters. Might I be allowed to be excused from these courses?

Answer: HR is aware of this type of issue. For example, employees who move positions within ETSU also have to take the training again. HR and administration are reviewing onboarding, training, and professional development as part of Chapter 125.

- A faculty colleague has asked if it would be possible for the University to have a policy that if instructors have a negative rapid test before class, they can teach without a mask. This might help address some of the challenges of teaching with a mask on.

Answer: It is important to remain strong on the no opt-out policy for masks. If ETSU were to open the policy for this situation, then the policy would have to be open for other situations. Enforcement would also become an issue. It was discussed what faculty may need to help them teach with a mask (e.g. microphone). It was mentioned that Disability Services provides clear masks.

- While I am glad ETSU decided to promote coronavirus vaccination with an event in the Culp on 8/19, I was disappointed to see the incentive was a Chik-Fil-A voucher. I understand they are a campus food vendor, but I have concerns about this as well. While it may be difficult to vet all corporate partners for their social responsibility, Chik-Fil-A is well-known for funding anti-LGBTQ causes. This would seem contrary to our institutional values of inclusiveness and could make LGBTQ+ students, faculty, and staff feel these value statements are not backed by action or true commitment. I understand CFA is extremely popular in this area, but frankly so are homophobia and transphobia. Has ETSU leadership ever considered these issues when deciding what corporations to promote on campus?

Answer: Dr. Noland expressed gratitude for this perspective. ETSU will take this into consideration when making decisions regarding food vendors.

- I was asked by a faculty member why parking costs went up. Can you explain what the increase is being used for?

Answer: ETSU has not increased our parking costs since 2019-2020. Faculty were not required to purchase a parking pass last year. Over the summer, ETSU enhanced parking lots with new lighting, paving, and charging stations. In addition, ETSU installed parking counters in which you can see the spots left in parking lots through the app. On the topic of parking, students are also talking about a desire for another parking garage behind the Culp Center. Something very narrow and tall. For now, ETSU administration has no plans to do that.

- The traffic congestion created by parents picking up their students at University School is worse than ever this year. The cars block all cross walks making it impossible for students with disabilities to get through campus. There is complete traffic gridlock that makes it impossible for

faculty to exit any of the parking lots in that area of campus (lots 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31) This is a huge safety hazard in terms of fire access and anyone that needs to leave immediately. Additionally, traffic is backing up from Sherrod Dr and Gilbreath Dr onto State of Franklin. There have been several "near-miss" accidents as people driving on State of Franklin were unaware there was a long line of STOPPED and backed up traffic in the right lane. Is there a plan to address this? It is a major safety hazard for both pedestrians and drivers, and it is a huge headache for those parked on campus. Can there be a staggered plan for parents to pick up students? Can University School use bus transportation instead of hundreds of cars each day? This is not just an inconvenience, it is becoming a major safety concern for many faculty and staff that work in the buildings around University School.

**Answer: University School is a partner institution with Washington County schools, but ETSU subsidizes the cost of University School. It does not have bus transportation available except for the times buses are rented for activities such as field trips. Dr. Noland will ask Jeremy Ross to review the flow of traffic. There has been a decrease of volume of cars near the Alexander building since 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders have been parking near Warf Pickel to attend their classes in that building.**

- What is the status of ETSU moving forward with requiring the vaccine for students, staff, and faculty?

**Answer: Since the Tennessee General Assembly has stated that you cannot require vaccines, ETSU will not submit a rule because it would be shut down. Some places will require vaccines due to the new federal vaccine mandate. Specifically, everyone who works at Ballard will need to be vaccinated. We are waiting for OSHA to make an emergency rule.**

- Will we be doing a student, staff, and faculty well-being survey similar to those conducted during remote teaching? Those surveys provided the campus with a better understanding of the campus's overall health and well-being and helped to direct additional support to those who indicated a need.

**Answer: There will be another wellness survey later during the Fall 2021 semester.**

## Other Notes

- Dr. Noland asked Senators about their semester. Senators expressed that students were glad to be back on campus, but the logistics have been stressful due to their students' needs to quarantine, take care of family, stay home with quarantined children, etc. Students have also asked instructors to be more accommodating (e.g. virtual option). Senators discussed the balance of strongly communicating the need for vaccines/masks and treating everyone with kindness who may not agree with that messaging.
- There is a plan to replace Banner. UT will be making a selection for their new system, which means we can piggy back on their RFP. The state supports this move because the LGIs are on different systems. ETSU will have a chance to provide UT feedback on their purchase.
- We currently have 3 staff members dedicated to contact tracing. Contact tracers gather the name of instructors associated with students who contracted COVID. Many of our sister institutions have no contact tracers. Additionally, our COVID protocols are the most substantial among our peer institutions in TN. Throughout the state, those institutions are looking at how well we are managing the return to campus.

- ETSU is the "talk of the town" in Knoxville and elsewhere for students of color. ETSU has built a strong reputation for being inclusive and welcoming beyond what students perceive at other state institutions.
- Enrollment in every public higher education school in the state is down (except for TN State and UTK). However, enrollment is still good at ETSU. We have ~1,900 freshman. Our housing is filled at 90%. Our retention rate is at 60%, which is a 10% drop. Other higher education schools in the state have a higher retention rate this year. This is to be expected because they did more onground last year, while we were the most aggressive in the state in terms of remaining online. From a budgeting perspective, we are in solid shape for this and next year.
- ETSU finished the project proposal submission for Brown Hall renovations. This would be phase 1 of 2. Phase 1 would cost an estimated \$45 million and would focus on renovating labs. (Both phases would cost a total of \$90 million). In addition, the state gave three weeks for new capital project submissions. ETSU submitted a proposal for a facility for clinics and teaching in the health sciences. Ballard would help with a match.
- The next Board of Trustees meeting is September 17, 2021. The day prior is the retreat, which will give the board to review all the draft reports from Chapter 125 and give feedback. Dr. Noland plans to take to the board in November a salary increase in the estimated 3-3.5% range.

Whereas the number of cases of COVID-19 have risen from one case on August 16<sup>th</sup> to 81 cases on September 3rd;

Whereas vaccination rates in Washington County are below 50%;

Whereas ETSU requires masks in classes, but not at either university sponsored events or not while the students are outside a building;

Whereas the CDC has recommended masks, even for vaccinated people, at "crowded outdoor events, such as concerts or sporting events, attending full-capacity indoor religious services, and working out in indoor gyms.";

Whereas faculty need the option to change the format of a class when the changing situation on campus dictates a needed change;

Whereas our faculty want to teach and most of the faculty want their classes to be live and in person;

Whereas it is time to take action to help curtail a further spread of this disease which, if not slowed down, will force the university to cancel classes and/or move to campus wide full-time online learning; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Faculty Senate recommends the University to

1. require masks at all university events, including sports events;
2. encourage social distancing;
3. support a faculty member's decisions to change the format of a class from in person to online when Covid-19 infections dictate such a change; and
4. keep striving to make the Covid-19 vaccine mandatory for all ETSU students, faculty and staff.

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

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

Endorsed by

\_\_\_\_\_ on the 27<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2021

Mr. Stephen Hendrix, MBA  
President, ETSU Faculty Senate