

# THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE AT MARTIN ADVISORY BOARD

## Minutes of the Fall Meeting

The fall meeting of The University of Tennessee at Martin Advisory Board was held at 1:00 p.m. (CDT), on Friday, September 20, 2019, in the Boling University Center, Room 206, on the campus of The University of Tennessee at Martin.

### **I. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Advisory Board Chair Art Sparks welcomed the Advisory Board members and guests to the regular fall meeting of the UT Martin Advisory Board and requested a roll call to bring the meeting to order.

The roll was called by Edie Gibson, Secretary to the Board, with the following members present:

Katie Ashley  
Hal Bynum  
Chris Caldwell  
Lauren Carter  
Monice Hagler  
Art Sparks  
Julia Wells

The full seven members of the Advisory Board were present on site and a quorum was announced. Administrative staff, faculty, members of the public, and media representatives were present. The meeting was recorded via Zoom for uploading to the UT Martin Advisory Board website following the meeting.

### **II. Approval of Minutes**

Chair Sparks directed the Advisory Board to a copy of the minutes from the regular scheduled meeting of the Advisory Board on April 24, 2019. The Advisory Board considered the minutes for approval.

**Motion: Monice Hagler moved to adopt the UT Martin Advisory Board meeting minutes for the April 24, 2019, meeting, as presented in the meeting materials, and Julia Wells seconded the motion. An oral vote on the motion was taken, and the motion carried unanimously.**

### **III. Opening Remarks**

Chair Sparks began the meeting by welcoming Lauren Carter from Olive Branch, Mississippi, as the new Advisory Board Student Representative for 2019-2020. Before turning the meeting over to Chancellor Carver, Chair Sparks expressed his pride in Chancellor Carver serving as UTM's Chancellor and for the recognition that he and his accomplishments reflect on UTM including his recent recognition with a UT Alumni Professional Achievement Award from the University of Tennessee. Chancellor Carver thanked Chair Sparks for his comments and further expressed his honor at the opportunity to serve as UTM's Chancellor.

#### **IV. Campus Strategic Enrollment Planning (SEP) Report**

At the request of Chair Sparks, Chancellor Carver recognized Dr. Philip Acree Cavalier, Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, to present a summary of UTM's Strategic Enrollment Plan (SEP) process. The primary focus of this planning is to determine future recruitment and retention strategies and corresponding budget resources/needs. Provost Cavalier began his presentation by explaining that UTM has engaged Ruffalo Noel Levitz, experienced consultants often acknowledged as the gold standard with enrollment management and recruiting strategy, to guide us through this process. The 12-month tightly structured schedule is designed to formulate a comprehensive action task plan aligned with responsible individuals and clear measurement/matrix to define our successes in the areas of marketing, recruitment, matriculation, retention and persistence to graduation.

During the initial stage of his presentation, Dr. Cavalier shared an overview of the SEP process, during which the campus will utilize RNL market research to examine academic program demand along with existing UTM data to develop situation analyses. This comprehensive analysis provides the basis for identifying strategies and priorities defined by the campus mission, a return on our investment, and likelihood of success. Ultimately, the campus will create an action plan supported by a business plan with quantifiable goals for each strategy and key performance indicators. As with any successful continuous improvement plan, Provost Cavalier noted our campus will implement, then annually evaluate/assess, and modify the plan, as needed. The outcome needs to be an outline of a living practice not a stagnant five-year document.

Looking ahead to the SEP objectives, the intent is to develop a detailed enrollment plan with clear action steps for the next three to five years based on real-time enrollment parameters/data. The deliverables will provide a more comprehensive understanding of academic and co-curricular program needs, improve understanding of our projected student demographic mix and correlated infrastructure needs, foster a stronger culture of data-informed decision-making and create a map for student success involving advising and retention initiatives.

At the conclusion of this process, the university will have a new, stronger culture of planning, a centralized repository for data storage, streamlined processes, enhanced tools to serve a higher number of adult learners, increased student retention rates, and a revitalized summer school program. Enhancing our planning processes will enable our institution to be a stronger university that better serves students and that has the needed resources to ensure sustainable programming. Tracking enrollment, retention and other matrices will allow us to better monitor our resources.

In support of these efforts, UTM created five working groups represented by 10-12 members each with two co-chair leads, respectively for Undergraduate Academic Programs, Graduate Programs and Others, Marketing and Recruiting, Finance and Financial Aid, and Student Success. These teams received corresponding reports of market research, market share, academic program demand, and other data provided by RNL. These resources and other data will provide the foundation for the teams to create action tasks in support of the development of a larger plan. Guided by an aggressive timeline, the kick-off meeting held on July 9-10 followed by a campus-wide launch on September 10-11, have laid the groundwork for the next step involving situation analyses to include initial strategy discussions scheduled for October 22-23. The finalized reports are due by December 5-6. Additionally, a review of business plans with initial vetting, culminating with the development of a full plan will occur in February 2020 as the campus looks to a strategy/business plan prioritization summit in April 2020. Final prioritization and plan implementation will occur in June 2020. By fall 2020, we will be implementing our plans as we transition into a strategic enrollment management phase with annual monitoring, evaluating, and updating processes.

The final part of the SEP presentation highlighted a five-year enrollment model, which was developed in collaboration with UTM's Institutional Research office. The model correlates undergraduate, graduate,

and transfer retention trend data with corresponding new student headcount by category to calculate five possible Five-Year Enrollment Model Scenarios (Best, Likely High, Likely Low, Zero Growth, and Worst) projections. The enrollment model projections will flow into a business model as a major component of our strategic enrollment management process, providing the tools and projecting funding resources available to address enrollment challenges predicted in the regional and national demographic markets.

In response to the biggest hurdle to achieving this work, Provost Cavalier stated that with buy-in from institutional leadership and involvement with the Faculty Senate, he acknowledged the challenges involve taking the data and building on it. Chancellor Carver concurred and commented that this requires a real culture change for our campus, but he has already noticed, during his conversations with faculty and staff, a growing understanding for a new approach to address the future and better align campus resource management.

Chair Sparks remarked on the Transfer student enrollment assumption held as a constant in the prediction model, then challenging the campus leadership to focus on solutions aimed at removing transfer student enrollment barriers. Furthermore, he applauded President Boyd's appointment of Chancellor Carver and Provost Cavalier to a UT System transfer task force. On a different note, a member asked if there was any concern of UTM being folded or merged under UT as a campus, similar to the Institute of Ag's merger with UT Knoxville. Chancellor Carver responded that he does not have any concerns, nor has he heard any discussions, of additional mergers. It was pointed out that UTM is serving well the West Tennessee region, and that under current statutes, any campus consolidation or merger would require a statutory change.

Chancellor Carver provided preliminary fall enrollment numbers which indicate an increase of 233 students for a 3.5% increase in headcount. Additionally, he reported an increase in first-time freshmen of 1,131, for a 2.6% increase, leading to a total headcount of 7,294 students, inclusive of the main campus and Centers. Fulltime Equivalent (FTE) enrollment is also up, despite a small drop of 14 transfer students. Fall enrollment represents students from 44 states and 21 countries. First generation numbers remain around 37% with Pell eligible students up around 52%. Ensuring student success takes many forms, including programming like PEP (Peer Enabling Program), FYI (First Year Initiative), and student success counselors. This year, UTM piloted a Transfer Boot Camp aimed at better integrating and supporting our entering transfer students. Sponsored with a THEC grant, the camp introduced students to faculty and peer students and incorporated a unique Legends Tour highlighting campus traditions with stops at the Friends Statue featuring Phil Watkins, at the Dunagan Alumni Center featuring Nick and Cathy Dunagan, and at the Student Life Center with a former teammate of Pat Head Summitt.

Fall student demographics remain similar to previous trends with approximately 95% of students enrolling from Tennessee, but this statistic could be changing as we prepare for a new and even more competitive out-of-state tuition proposal. Comparing enrollment growth across the region, UTM ranks among the top regionals in Tennessee in terms of total growth this fall, although University of Memphis and Murray State are both reporting increases. Transfer markets do not show much growth with community colleges reporting enrollment declines around 5%, primarily attributed to the current job market and workforce. These realities make our strategic enrollment efforts more vital as we look at varying our markets including out-of-state and adult learners, especially the areas near our five Centers to counteract these changing demographics. We applaud our faculty and staff team who have worked this summer with our entering students to ensure that they registered with fees paid.

Chancellor Carver promised additional data on the impact of the Tennessee Promise and to share the fall 2019 enrollment report.

## V. Campus Master Plan Refinement 2015 Presentation

Chancellor Carver recognized Ms. Petra McPhearson, Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration, to make a few comments and give an introduction of the Campus Master Plan. Ms. Phearson summarized that our Master Plan is an outlook of our physical space, the condition of our buildings and property, and speaks to how we develop our property. The planning process involves a 10-year cycle with the current plan developed in 2010, followed by a mid-cycle review and updated, referred to as the 2015 Refinement. She introduced Dr. Tim Nipp to take the Board through the process and describe the engagement of a diverse group of individuals in these projects. She concluded her remarks by emphasizing that UTM's Physical Plant team takes ownership and great pride in their work and the appearance of our grounds.

Dr. Nipp remarked, that during his nearly 25 years of service at UTM, he has had the opportunity to see numerous spaces renovated, built and some torn down. Both of the Campus Master Plans processes, the 2010 Update and the 2015 Refinement, were led by Marion Fowlkes of Centric Architecture and are available for review on the UTM website at [www.utm.edu/masterplan/](http://www.utm.edu/masterplan/). The 2010 Master Plan provides the basis for the 2015 Refinement and each in support of the campus academic component and social experience of our students.

The Master Plan follows specific THEC guidelines and timeline to “address physical needs in the context of student retention and success, as well as statewide higher education goals and policies.” Dr. Nipp explained that all capital improvement requests must be reviewed for conformity with the Master Plan. Feedback gathered from intentional conversations and interviews with numerous stakeholders and guided by a steering team, comprised of a broad team of 26 members/representatives from the UT System, UTM leadership, Stakeholders and Alumni and City of Martin, who spent more than a year collaborating, resulted in the 2015 Refinement plan.

The 2015 Master Plan outcomes supported four goals:

- 1) Create a robust on-campus community of students.
  - a. Student Housing – A comprehensive housing plan completed in July 2015, recommended a reduction in housing inventory and enhancement of facilities and activities to better engage students in a campus and residential life experience. Grove Apartments were decommissioned and awaiting plans to raze the buildings.
  - b. Student Life Facilities – In support of recruitment and growth of an engaged living learning environment, spaces are recommended to incorporate a commons building with extended hours for food services and gaming areas and provide outdoor venues/pavilions at several campus locations.
- 2) Improve the campus visual experience.
  - a. Historic Quad Enhancement – Adding to the atmosphere of the campus, special and comfortable places are recommended for students to relax and engage, i.e.: Gooch and Crisp Halls.
  - b. New Quadrangle – Removing parking lots from the heart of the campus to create a new green space joined to the Historic Quad. A new STEM courtyard recommended in conjunction with the Latimer Engineering and Science Building.
- 3) Reinforce “Town and Gown” relationships.
  - a. Sororities and Fraternities – Continue to plan and construct future housing and/or meeting facilities adjacent to University Courts in support of student activities and for a more robust weekend experience for the students.
  - b. Ceremonial Gateway Entrances – Designated locations designed to strengthen and define campus boundaries and project a sense of arrival for both pedestrians and vehicles entering the campus with column-type and grander wall-type constructions.
- 4) Brand and communicate the UT Martin experience.

- a. Land Acquisitions – Parcels have been identified that would accommodate future building footprints, enhanced edges, and offer strategic locations for new and displaced parking and in support of the agricultural programming.
- b. Elam Center Pool – Original to the 1976 building and last renovated in 2004, the pool is in need of another renovation or relocation possibly adjacent to the Student Rec Center to allow the space to be repurposed for athletic and recreational use.
- c. New Classroom/Laboratory Buildings – Deficiencies in facility space needs required to meet current needs as well as future growth. Our first building will be the Latimer Engineering and Science Building, which will also help to establish the new quadrangle.
- d. EPS Building – With the completion of the new Latimer Building, revitalize EPS to house Agriculture and Applied Sciences programs to relieve growth needs in those areas. Currently listed as UTM's top priority on the capitals list, EPS is awaiting funds to begin design work.

In 2010, UTM's student population was 8,469 students with an eye toward a headcount goal of ~10,000 as a campus capacity marker; in 2019, with a preliminary headcount of 7,296 and in response to changes in housing capacity, we are looking toward ~8,000 as a more realistic capacity marker based on the current physical plant. Chancellor Carver remarked that the support of RNL consultants, UTM will utilize national trend data as well as consider an aggressive out-of-state recruitment plan before announcing an appropriate student enrollment goal.

It was noted that housing occupancy rates increased this fall by 150 residents, representing both new and an increase in returning students, but has greater capacity available. Historically, data supports that students living on-campus have a better retention and persistency rate. UTM anticipates additional enrollment growth associated with the new Latimer Building coming online. Quality of life remains an important influencer for students; Chancellor Carver bragged on the Student Rec Center and its significance to our students, but noted that the competition continues to expand and enhance their facilities. Currently, Student Affairs is evaluating plans for recreation field improvements and interest by UTM's SGA in a new pool.

## **VI. Closing Remarks**

Chair Sparks commented that he appreciated the recognitions that UTM, his alma mater, receives and asked Chancellor Carver to summarize UTM's accolades. RN Nursing ranked UTM as tied for #1 in the nation, making us the top program in Tennessee. UTM also ranked in three top spots with US News & World rankings as the top public university in Tennessee among regionals in the South, as the top university for Veterans in the state and among the top in the nation, and is most proud of the Best Value for Social Mobility in the state for attracting and graduating economically-disadvantaged students. We continue to look at ways to do better. Chair Sparks noted that he continues to be proud and amazed by our college's finishing among the top schools in a worldwide aerospace engineering competition, without having an aerospace curriculum.

In response to a final question, Chancellor Carver reported that it is easy for a student to complete a master's degree online. We have a Strategic Communication degree online with a cohort in Nashville, and we also offer an MBA and Ag masters degree online. We anticipate adding more online programs as we complete our analysis of community needs. The Garage is moving ahead in conjunction with UTM, TCAT, and DSCC to be situated on Hannings Lane, adjacent to Skyhawk Parkway. An update with THEC is planned this afternoon.

The next regular meeting of the Advisory Board is January 10, 2020.

## **VIII. Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn by Hal Bynum and seconded by Katie Ashley. The meeting adjourned at 2:23 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Eddie Gibson, Secretary