

University Council
July 14, 2025
East Tennessee Room

1. Call to Order

Provost Dr. Kimberly D. McCorkle called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

2. Roll Call

Melissa Nipper led the roll call. Members present were: Ms. Bridget Baird, Dr. Ginni Blackhart, Dr. Bill Block, Dr. Cheri Clavier, Dr. Joel Faidley, Ms. Christy Graham, Dr. Adam Green, Dr. Mike Hoff, Dr. Chris Keller, Dr. Karen King, Dr. Sam Mayhew, Dr. Kimberly D. McCorkle, Dr. Brian Noland, Dr. Rob Pack, Mr. Jeremy Ross, Dr. Richard Sander, Dr. Joe Sherlin, and Dr. Alan Stevens.

3. Standing Items

3.1 Approve Minutes of the June 9, 2025, meeting

A motion was made to approve the minutes from the June 9, 2025, meeting. The motion was seconded; the minutes were approved.

3.2 Review Agenda

3.3 Consent Agenda Items

A motion was made to approve the policies on the consent agenda (noted below). The motion was seconded and approved.

- 3.3.1 Information Security
- 3.3.2 Remote Access
- 3.3.3 Cybersecurity Awareness Training Program

3.4 Call for Voluntary Reports of UC-Essential Action Items from Governance Organizations

Faculty Senate: Dr. Alan Stevens reported that the Faculty Senate is preparing for the fall semester and is looking forward to meeting with President Noland and Provost McCorkle this week.

Athletics: Dr. Richard Sander reported that since the judge approved the House Settlement about a month ago, there has been confusion as to what that means in college athletics. He also

reported that the football, men's, and women's basketball teams are now on campus. Sales of football season tickets are going well.

ITS: Dr. Karen King reported that Cybersecurity Awareness Training is starting in September, one month earlier this year. This is to give the campus more time to complete the training before the end of the semester. Those who do not complete training will receive emails (as will their supervisors) to warn them that their ETSU account will be limited until they take the training.

ITS will conduct a university-wide tabletop exercise in October. This is a security awareness exercise that simulates a cyber event. Individuals from every division across the institution will participate. Dr. King also reminded the council that Windows 10 is nearing end-of-life, and they are currently transitioning everyone to Windows 11.

3.5 Sub-Council Reports: Quality and Effectiveness Sub-Council (QESC)

Dr. Cheri Clavier reported that the QESC does not have an update at this time.

4. Action Items

4.1 Old Business

There was no old business to come before the council.

4.2 New Business

There was no new business to come before the council.

5. Information Items/Presentations

5.1 Impact of Recent Federal Legislation on Financial Aid

Ms. Catherine Morgan and Dr. Heather Levesque provided an update on the impact of recent federal legislation on financial aid. They provided a handout, which was emailed to all members of the University Council. These changes, most of which will be implemented July 1, 2026, will have implications for students, families, and institutional planning.

Key updates include:

- **Pell Grants:** While the maximum grant amount remains unchanged, new Student Aid Index (SAI) calculations may reduce student eligibility or grant amounts, potentially affecting both current and future students.

- **Grad PLUS Loans:** The program will be discontinued for new borrowers beginning July 1, 2026. Existing borrowers (termed “legacy”) will have three years post-implementation to complete their programs while retaining access.
- **Grad Student Loan Caps:** Graduate student unsubsidized loans will be capped annually at \$20,500, and lifetime totals reduced to \$100,000 (\$200,000 for professional programs).
- **Parent PLUS loans:** These loans will be capped at \$20,000 annually per dependent, with a \$65,000 lifetime cap. This also has a legacy program.
- **Accountability (Earnings):** Federal funding may be denied to academic programs where graduates earn less than the median high school graduate. Institutions await further federal guidance to determine which programs will be affected.
- **Program Level Loan Limits:** The institution can now put in place program-level loan limits.
- **Repayment Plan Options:** Students will now be required to pick one of two options: Standard Option or Income-Based Option. Zero-payment options will no longer be available.
- **Loan Proration:** Federal loans will now be prorated based on enrollment status, similar to Pell Grants. Full-time enrollment (12 credits) is required for full loan amounts.

Dr. Levesque said more information is to come as staff continue to receive updates and changes, and they will continue to update the University Council.

5.2 Voyager Update

Mr. Dave Smith provided an update on the Voyager system, which officially went live two weeks ago. All core modules are functional and today marks the first major post-go-live milestone: running the first bi-weekly payroll. All non-exempt employees must have submitted and approved timecards today to ensure successful processing. Ms. Lori Erickson and Human Resources staff are actively working with consultants to support this.

Key highlights include:

- As of one week ago, over 1,700 transactions were processed, with many more added since.
- Most system areas are functioning well (green status), with student refunds (via Financial Accounting Hub) recently improved after minor issues.
- Oracle has responded quickly to four open service requests, two of which affect payroll.
- The Budget-to-Actuals dashboard is available, with actuals for FY26 pending until “create accounting” is complete.
- High system usage: 678 purchase requisitions, 253 expense reports, 89 employees hired, 25 job postings, 186 applications received.
- Over 1,500 timecards and 3,000 absences submitted through employee self-service.
- Help desk support has been strong: 524 total tickets, 333 closed, 100 awaiting user response, and 91 in progress.

He emphasized the importance of verifying manager assignments in Voyager to avoid delays in timecard approval. Overall, the go-live phase has been successful, with strong campus engagement and effective support systems in place.

6. President's Report

President Noland provided a strategic-level update, addressing the ongoing state of flux across the broader higher education landscape. He highlighted both national and institutional shifts affecting financial planning, academic structure, and operational readiness.

Nationally, President Noland noted changing dynamics in federal funding. He also cited widespread budget tightening at peer institutions, contrasting that with ETSU's relatively strong financial position, due in part to stable state support and healthy enrollment.

Internally, ETSU is navigating several significant transitions:

- **ERP System Transition:** The Voyager system go-live has gone comparatively well, but with expected learning curves for staff and faculty.
- **Academic Restructuring:** The university continues to finalize school-level leadership under the new structure.
- **Salary Enhancements and Compensation Overhaul:** The administration continues to work through this process.
- **International Enrollment:** A decline in visa approvals may impact specific academic programs.
- **Board Governance:** Four new trustees are expected to join.
- **Capital Projects:** Ongoing construction and planning efforts include the Integrated Health Sciences Building and decisions about future projects.

Despite these variables, the university remains committed to its goals, some of which include:

- 2,100 first-year students annually
- 60% graduation rate
- 80% retention rate
- \$70M in externally sponsored research
- Increase alumni giving rate
- Growth to 16,000 students by decade's end
- Exploration of new programs
- Expansion of Quillen College of Medicine

President Noland concluded by urging leaders to remain fiscally cautious without implementing formal restrictions. He emphasized the importance of leadership, communication, and teamwork as ETSU continues to adapt and grow during this transitional period.

7. Announcements

No announcements were brought before the council.

8. Adjournment

Provost McCorkle adjourned the meeting at 9:40 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for August 11, 2025, at 8:30 a.m.