

Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees
University of Kentucky
Friday, October 21, 2022

The Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees of the University of Kentucky met on Friday, October 21, 2022, in the Gatton Student Center, Harris Ballroom.

A. Meeting Opened

Chair Vance called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m. and asked Secretary Webb to report the attendance.

B. Roll Call

The following members of the Executive Committee were present: Claude A. “Skip” Berry, III, Cathy A. Black, Kimberly McCann, Derrick K. Ramsey and Robert Vance. Secretary Webb announced that a quorum was present.

C. Approval of Minutes

Chair Vance stated that the minutes of the September 15, 2022, Executive Committee meeting had been distributed. Trustee Berry moved approval of the minutes, and Trustee Ramsey seconded the motion. The motion carried without dissent.

D. Presidential Evaluation Process 2021-22

Chair Vance presented the results of the 2021-22 Presidential Evaluation which was circulated to university constituent groups. Within each subject area, participants were asked to reflect on several questions and to rank the president’s performance on a scale of one to seven – with one being strongly disagreeing, and seven being strongly agreed.

Strategies and Priorities.

Chair Vance reported favorable rankings in response to every question and provided open-ended feedback from the survey; areas of praise in each subject area as well as opportunities for growth. “Respondents believe the president’s priorities are the right ones for UK and always puts students first. One respondent noted sharing university priorities with alumni and engaging the Alumni Association in support of those goals as an opportunity.”

Leadership

President Capilouto received excellent marks across the board. Respondents cited his transparency, accountability and leading by example.

Organization and Team

Chair Vance shared that the president was praised for building a solid team and fostering a highly inclusive environment; while pointing out the timely replacement of vacant positions and more external hires as an opportunity for improvement.

Relationships with Constituents

Respondents described the president as very engaged with his constituents and using his relationships to better the community. In this category, a constituent suggested increasing communication with Board members on issues that are being reported by the news media.

Financial Management

Financial Management continues to be a strength as reflected in the survey. The president is viewed as an exemplary steward of UK's financial resources.

Fundraising

Chair Vance reported the president also received strong marks in the area of fundraising and building trusting relationships with donors and potential donors.

Future Consideration

Respondents believe the president is positioning the university to make meaningful progress on important strategic initiatives and has a clear vision and deep understanding of postsecondary education's academic, physical and technological trajectory.

Chair Vance explained, with this information, the Board will be asked to submit their own evaluations to the Executive Committee. After the final trustee evaluations are returned, the Executive Committee will review the results and provide a report at the December Board of Trustees meeting.

E. President's Senate Council Evaluation 2021-22

Chair Vance introduced Senate Council Chair DeShana Collett to present the faculty evaluation of the president.

Dr. Collette thanked the Board for having her and explained the survey of the president is annually distributed to all full-time faculty, adding that this year's evaluation was distributed from April through May 2022.

Dr. Collett explained there were a little over 2,900 faculty members that were surveyed with 723 respondents, which yielded approximately a 25 percent response rate and the results were summarized and compared across 2013 – 2022. She explained that respondents ranked the president on a five-point Likert scale with an option of not responding, with one being strongly disagreeing, and five being strongly agreed.

Dr. Collett reported that the faculty perceived the president as being effective in communicating his plans for the future and considered this as a strength for the president. Additionally, faculty perceived the president's effectiveness in generating resources to implement the university mission successfully as a strength and pointed out that the response is consistent with previous years.

Dr. Collett reported a dip in the numbers concerning the president's effectiveness in listening to faculty concerns and offered this could correspond to many different things. "As you see, in 2019-20 this was rated fairly high, but remember we did have a pandemic, and this was at the very end of the pandemic. I suspect that the lowering of the score, may be due to faculty's perceptions of having some feelings of disconnect, particularly related to shared governance, and this I will come to a little bit later."

The president's effectiveness at involving faculty in decision-making slightly increased from the following year and engaging faculty in shared governance slightly increased but was close to averaging.

The faculty felt the president was effective at building campus infrastructure with a fairly high score which has been consistent over the years, though there was a decline in the score on building faculty morale.

Dr. Collett reported that effectiveness and fostering confidence in the future of UK was a strength and had been consistent. "If you look across the board and the trends, this has been pretty consistent."

Fostering a campus environment that is diverse and inclusive is perceived by the faculty as a strength as well as maintaining productive relationships with external constituencies.

Dr. Collett continued, "The next several slides focus on education. The faculty again perceive a strength that the president was effective in supporting undergraduate education, graduate education and professional education. Supporting the research and service mission is similarly the same."

Dr. Collett reported that restructuring the administration to be cost effective appears to be a negative perception, but she suggested this could be a question that does not need to be included in the survey every year. "My thoughts on this question are, how many years does it take to make the administration cost effective? If you are asking this question every year, it may be difficult for faculty to actually gauge that question."

Responding to unusual or crisis situations continues to be a strength of the president and overall, the faculty agree that the president is effective and continues to build the institution and support the mission.

In conclusion, Dr. Collette pointed out some general areas where there were lower ratings, "The faculty may have some perceptions that are related more to them, in general, and more to maybe faculty morale and disconnect."

Chair Vance thanked Dr. Collette and reminded the Board that the faculty survey was an important part of the Presidential Evaluation and asked for any questions.

Trustee Swanson shared her concern about the issue with faculty morale, especially with the retreat discussion about trying to enhance the university's research capacity and asked if there were any underlying factors concerning faculty morale.

Dr. Collett stated that while reviewing the qualitative portion of the survey the perceptions around faculty voices being valued and not having a good relationship or shared governance relationship, "A lot of the feedback produced in the qualitative piece really related to not being heard and perceptions of once they communicate with their constituents or senate, or those from different constituency groups, that their concerns were not taken seriously."

Trustee Cramer asked if Dr. Collett could comment on the response rate and if the qualitative portion offered additional information about why the response rates were falling. Dr. Collett stated that she did not think that the decrease in response rate should signal to anybody that the faculty do not care, "I think it really revolves around the disconnect. There were several comments related to shared governance and faculty governance, and I can only say that they feel like their voice is not valued as much."

Trustee Abell asked if the pandemic had an impact on the results of the survey and if the decrease was due to post-pandemic malaise. Dr. Collett stated that she believed that when the survey was administered it was when the university was sending everyone home, and they were taking control of the campus and making sure that safety was the number one priority. "So, responding to the crisis and such, I think the faculty appreciated and respected that. I believe we had a great turnout, people wanted to let others know how they felt about the president taking those swift strategies for us. But I think the years after, last year particularly, we had some internal concerns filling a vacancy for the graduate school dean, we had some dean turnovers, and we were still trying to fill those vacancies, so, I think that is where you are seeing a dip where some faculty again, feeling like they were not heard and (filling dean vacancies) has been a slower process, but we are on the upswing of that, I can tell you we have filled several of those vacancies, and there are several ongoing interviews actually taking place next week."

Seeing no further questions, Chair Vance thanked Dr. Collett and continued to the next agenda item.

F. Board of Trustees Self-Evaluation 2021-22

Chair Vance explained that the annual Board of Trustees Self-Evaluation is an obligation of the Board pursuant to Governing Regulation II.F.12 and Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), Standard 4.2.g. The Executive Committee serves as the self-evaluation review committee and involves the entire Board of Trustees. Chair Vance added that the process is intended to gather information and guide self-reflection for the Board as a mechanism for improvement.

Chair Vance continued by presenting a summary of the survey results.

Mission and Strategy

The Board feels the institution operates under a strategic plan that defines the institution's mission, goals and priorities. Chair Vance remarked, "After yesterday's Retreat, I think we should be gratified that we are engaged deeply in the life of the university and substantively supporting the development and implementation of a strong strategic direction for Kentucky's university."

Leadership and Governance

Under leadership and governance, the Board feels they delegate the day-to-day administration of the university to the president and his executive administrators. They also feel the Board appropriately engages in the governance and policy-making roles designed for the body, delegating to the administration and faculty its operating duties and responsibilities.

Functions and Duties

Under functions and duties, the Board feels adequately informed and understands the fiscal condition of the university, the auditing process and appropriate actions that flow from that. The Board also believes it understands and respects its roles, responsibility and appropriate scope of authority.

Institutional Effectiveness

Under Institutional Effectiveness, the Board feels they review the institution's performance concerning student success, research, service and health. The Board also believes the institution plays a positive economic and social role in the communities it serves across the Commonwealth.

Board Culture

Under Board Culture, Board members believe they establish a culture of engagement built upon trust, respect and a commitment to inquiry and inclusion. They also feel they are committed to diversity, equity and inclusivity throughout the campus community.

Chair Vance thanked the Board for participating in the self-evaluation survey.

G. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:53 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Rachel Watts Webb,
Secretary