

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Tuesday December 3, 2024 | 1:30pm
K.E. White Building

Call to Order

Chair Stephanie Johnson called the December 3, 2024, Board of Trustees Special meeting to order at 1:30p.m.

Roll Call

Natalie Jones led the roll call. The Trustees present included James Copland, James Gailliard, Christine Evans, Dr. Stephanie Johnson, Patricia Norman, Johnny Tillett (Via Zoom), Paul Tine, Justin Waddell, and Kayla Dixon, Stephen Friedrich, Tiffany Jones (via zoom), Kathryn Holding (via zoom).

Remarks from Board Chair

Chair Johnson first acknowledged and thanked the board members for their hard work and dedication, Chair Johnson thanked Interim Chancellor Edmonds and her leadership team for their continued service, she also acknowledged that this will be her last year as Chair of the Board of Trustees after being Chair for 8 years.

State Government Ethics Act

Chair Stephanie Johnson reminded the Board that the meeting will be conducted pursuant to the amendments to the Open Meetings Act related to virtual meetings. She then read the State Government Ethics Act. No one mentioned a conflict of interest based on the materials received.

Approval of Minutes

Motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of September 10, 2024, motion passed.

Approval of Consent Agenda, Motion was made to approve the agenda. Motion passed.

Committee on Academic Excellence and Strategic Growth

Taffany Jones, (Chair).

Education Advancement Update:

As a reminder, we have a valuable partnership with Education Advancement, an organization that has provided us with over \$5.5 million in services for specific initiatives. While the funding is not given directly to us, Education Advancement works through third-party vendors who collaborate with us on various projects. Each year, Education Advancement consults with us to identify our needs, and for this year, we focused on marketing.

One of the key developments is a new partnership with Anthology, a company that owns the Blackboard learning management system and offers added services beyond just learning platforms. Through Education Advancement, Anthology is investing \$670,000 into our initiatives. They will directly help us with two principal areas:

1. Marketing Research and Analysis – Anthology will help us understand how to better develop marketing strategies for our programs by conducting research on where and how we should target our marketing efforts, particularly in the online space.
2. Marketing and Media Strategy – Anthology will also help us craft a targeted marketing strategy specifically for our online programs, including the new Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) program. As the BSW program has been approved, it will be added to Anthology's scope of work. We had our kickoff meeting yesterday, and we are on track to submit the internal analysis to them by December 16th.

In addition to this, Education Advancement has helped our partnership with Enrollment Fuel, a company that will assist us with several strategic initiatives:

1. Strategic Enrollment Plan – As part of our goal to reach 2,300 students by fall 2025, Enrollment Fuel will help us develop a long-term strategy for the next 5 to 10 years.
2. Recruitment Plan – This plan will focus on keeping our current students, which is a core institutional priority. The goal is to refine our approach to student retention and improve engagement with our existing student body.
3. Admissions Consulting – Enrollment Fuel will help us formalize and enhance the training for our admissions counselors. This includes creating a structured training program and implementing strategies to support the professional development of our admissions team, ensuring they are well-equipped to be and promote the university to prospective students.

These initiatives, along with the marketing support from Anthology, will play a critical role in boosting our recruitment efforts, improving student retention, and enhancing our university's visibility, particularly for adult learners—a key demographic for us.

Gradfest

This fall, the Admissions Office hosted a new event specifically designed for our graduating students, called Grad Fest. In collaboration with several offices across the university, including Dean of Students Services, the Alumni Association, Accessibility Services, Student Services, the Bookstore, and Landing Gear, Grad Fest provided a comprehensive, one-stop-shop experience for students as they prepare for graduation.

Recognizing that the final semester can be busy and overwhelming for students, our goal was to offer an efficient and convenient opportunity for them to take care of all those last-minute details before they leave. Whether it was picking up their cap and gown, addressing final academic requirements, or connecting with alumni networks, Grad Fest served as a centralized event to help ease the transition from student to graduate.

Fall 2024 Chancellor's Expectation and Special Considerations

Under the current undergraduate admissions regulations, we must report annually to the Board of Trustees on students admitted through Chancellor's exceptions. This report provides an overview of students who were admitted with exceptions to the standard admissions requirements.

Fall 2023 Report:

- A total of 70 students were admitted under the Chancellor's exceptions. Out of these, 10 students have enrolled.
- Since the first report, 5 additional students from the exception group have enrolled for Spring 2024, bringing the total enrollment to 15.
- Among the students admitted, all except one are still currently enrolled.

Demographics and Majors:

- Out-of-state students: Only one student came from out of state, and the rest were from within North Carolina.
- Athletes: There were 3 athletes admitted under the exceptions: one football player and two basketball players.
- Majors: The students admitted with exceptions are pursuing a wide range of majors, including:
 - Criminal Justice (2 students)
 - Theology
 - Chemistry
 - Sports Management
 - Social Work
 - Elementary Education
 - Biology

Special Considerations: The policy also allows us to admit students under special consideration if they have superior academic records but lack one or more required courses (such as math or social sciences). For instance, students from out of state do not have to meet the 4th math course requirement in North Carolina, which makes them eligible for special consideration.

- A total of 38 students were admitted under special consideration.
- 5 students from this group have enrolled at ECSU.
- All admitted students had a GPA above 3.2, which aligns with our average GPA requirement.

Out-of-State Admissions:

- Out-of-state students from California, Virginia, and Florida were also admitted, and none were needed to meet the North Carolina 4th math requirement. Despite this, all these students had strong academic backgrounds, with GPAs exceeding the minimum threshold for admission.

Enrollment Update

- Last year, we enrolled 18 freshmen for Spring 2024. This year, we are aiming to enroll 30 freshmen.
- The admissions team and financial aid office worked diligently to admit and package students for Fall 2024, which has led to fewer students being admitted for Spring 2024. Historically, we would roll students from the Fall semester to Spring due to slow processing. However, with the automation of many processes, we were able to hasten decisions and enroll students more quickly this year.

Transfer Enrollment:

- Miss Sherry Franks, our new Student Services representative, started in July and has done a fantastic job with outreach to students, ensuring quicker completion of their files and faster decision-making.
- Our transfer students have a higher rate compared to first-year students, and we are confident in our ability to increase transfer enrollment. Last year, we enrolled 70 transfer students, and our stretch goal for this year is 100 students.
- We continue to strengthen our partnership with the College of the Albemarle and will be hosting a signing ceremony later this month to celebrate transfer articulation agreements in criminal justice and graphic design, making the transfer process as smooth as possible.

Readmit Students:

- Our readmit students are progressing well so far. Last year, we brought in 34 readmit students, and we are aiming for similar numbers this year.
- Orientation has been an essential partner in this effort. Last year, we held one orientation for Spring students, but this year we have expanded to three orientations. As of early this week, 60 students have attended across the three orientations. We held one in early November, another in-person session this Saturday, and a final one just before classes begin in January 2024.

Convenience and Accessibility:

- We are becoming an institution where there are no barriers to students choosing us. We've made the process more convenient and ensured financial aid is available to make the institution more affordable.
- We are confident in our ability to bring in a strong Spring class.

Fall Biking Showcase:

- We hosted a successful Fall Biking Showcase on November 2, which saw participation like last year.
 - 19 students completed applications at the event.
 - 5 students were admitted on the spot.
 - 7 students completed their FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid),

although the FAFSA submission date was delayed this year. Instead of opening on October 1, it opened on December 1, so we assisted students in preparing for that delay.

- 73 surveys were submitted, with overwhelmingly positive feedback.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE, AUDIT AND UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT

James Copland, (Chair)

FINANCIAL UPDATE(S):

VC Thibeault gave a summary of informational items. The General Fund report as to date was: Total Budget: \$53,738,807, Total Expenditures: \$13,501,212 (25.1%), Total Revenues: \$13,501,212(25.1%) Detailed information is included in Board Materials. Trust & Auxiliary fund balance to date: \$27.5M and \$15.7M unrestricted. An All-Funds Budget Report and an Endowment Report, both as of 9/30/24, were also provided. The Endowment had an overall fiscal year-to-date net earnings of 2.46%.

UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT UPDATE(S):

Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs and Interim Vice-Chancellor for University Advancement Dr. Kevin Wade presented University Advancement informational items only. He provided updates on FY25 Leadership Giving, progress on FY25 fundraising, Pipeline Funding, New Giving Initiatives to include the Arts & Athletics Campaign titled “Sound & Spirit”, the upcoming Giving Tuesday solicitation with a goal of \$20K, as well as other engagement solicitations. He also gave Advancement staff updates to include the AVC for Corporate & Foundation Relations position and the Director for Alumni Relations and Engagement position. Finally, he announced the presentation of a special \$50K gift.

INTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE(S):

Internal Auditor Cheryl Sauls presented informational items only. She gave a summary of the audit reviews performed last quarter. There was one audit completed last quarter; and that was a financial review for Vending Commissions. Ms. Sauls provided the outcome for the audit and indicated that a follow-up review will be completed in the future.

Committee on Student Excellence

Johnny Tillett (Chair).

Mr. James DuBose, Jr.: Provided updates new staffing to include, new Sports Information Director, Head Cheerleading Coach and the Assistant AD for Compliance, Head Golf Coach and the Head Bowling coach. AD announced Darius Satterfield (Football) as being selected to the NCAA Student Athletic Leadership Forum. AD also indicated that they have 68 applicants for the head football coach.

Questions: Trustee Tillett: Asked about progress toward the \$500K fundraising goal? \$50K raised thus far; and AD is ensuring that they stay under budget as it relates to operation. He also indicated that they should have a surplus at the end of the year. Additional question concerning Upgrades? Where are we? In the process of hiring a football coach, have lots of upgrades

planned? VC Lewin will address the response concerning upgrades; Trustee Tillett also asked for more details in the next BOT report for Athletics.

Ms. Kalya Dixon: Provided an update on the 2024 Presidential Debate in addition to the Vice President debate watch events; Voters Day Party, and Town Hall meeting; Kayla also highlighted a variety of events held during the SGA Week, such as Vote Coming, Politics and Pizza, presidential countdown, ECSU Clothes Drive, SGA's Final touch, and Vikings Feud games.

COMMITTEE OF OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Justin Waddell, (Chair).

William Lewin reported INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATES:

VC Chip Lewin provided an update on the ECSU 6-year Capital Plan that included a request to the UNC System office on October 4, 2024. The request was made for SCIF funds for renovations and repair projects throughout the campus for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. These renovations and repairs included mechanical, electrical and plumbing repairs as well as comprehensive renovations to academic buildings. VC Lewin updated the committee on the progress of the Electrical and Water Distribution Infrastructure Projects saying the current phase is almost complete. The Board was updated on the construction progress of the new dining and residence hall. In addition, construction of the new Flight School and hanger space will begin in February and March of 2025. Lastly it was reported that ECSU implemented a Space Committee, and the meeting established the relocation of the post office to HL Trigg as the current location will be demolished and Campus Police will move to EV Wilkins.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY UPDATES:

Mr. Jamar Jones, CIO, reported that the Division of Information Technology was upgrading the outdoor campus-wide WIFI. This new upgrade will increase routes and access points for increased signal strength campus wide. It was also reported that a new VoIP phone system will be implemented in early 2025. Currently the analog phone system causes some security risks, however, with the migration of the system, the opportunity for virtual labs will increase the student class experience particularly in the STEM fields.

COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PAUL TINE (Chair).

During the meeting of the **Committee on Regional Development**, Deputy Chief of Staff/AVC William Lewin updated the committee on ECSU's partnerships with Elizabeth City Pasquotank County Public Schools in providing an aviation academy micro school at the two local high schools. This aviation academy micro school will allow students to take flying lessons while earning their four-year degree in addition to creating a pathway for these students to take additional aviation courses as part of their curriculum. Upon completion of the program, students will have the opportunity to obtain their pilots license upon graduation. The Committee also received information on the MOU signed by TCOM, a local blimp manufacturer and ECSU in supporting opportunities for workplace experiences, by providing internship, job shadowing and career mentoring. In exchange ECSU would support students in completing requirements by providing access to

resources, facilities and training to ensure students are successful and are ready for real work life experiences. AVC Lewin also reported that the SBTDC team has been exceeding their client base growth, by providing services and resources to small business clientele. Lastly, Interim Chancellor Edmonds has been leading the way in community experiences and involvement during the months of September to November. These efforts have enhanced objective 6.3 of the strategic plan.

COMMITTEE ON UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

Stephanie Johnson (Chair),

Regina Rudisill provided: INFORMATIONAL UPDATES

General Counsel Regina Rudisill provided the committee with an update on ECSU's Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) Top 10 Risks. She reminded the committee that the UNC System Office requires each of its institutions to annually identify its top 5 risks and any efforts used to mitigate those risks, and she then advised that ECSU's top 5 risks were timely submitted to the UNC System Office earlier this year. However, while only 5 risks must be reported to the System Office, ECSU has identified its top 10 risks for the 2024-2025 Academic Year. Attorney Rudisill provided a consolidated list of the 10 risk names, with the first 5 being the top 5 risks that were submitted to the System Office. She identified the risk owner, each risk title, and how each risk is mitigated through application of the Strategic Plan. ECSU's 10 risks are listed as follows, with the top 5 being indicated/followed with an asterisk:

1. Low student enrollment adversely impacting financial stability and retention.*
2. Increase employee recruitment and retention.*
3. Promote help seeking behaviors and emotional well-being practices to combat student and employee mental health concerns.*
4. Cyber Security.*
5. Create a campus environment and culture that ensures student, faculty, staff, and visitors feel safe and included.*
6. Maximize the use of state funds with business efficiencies and technology.
7. Implement succession planning to preserve institutional knowledge and business continuity.
8. Reputational uncertainty with regard to branding, perceived value, organizational status, public perception, and trust.
9. Insufficient state resources and donor support, which impacts the university's financial viability and solvency.
10. Implementation of a campus master plan to identify facility deferred maintenance and opportunities for campus growth to support enrollment growth.

Following the ERM update, Attorney Rudisill advised the committee the HR updates were provided in the Board meeting materials and that she had no additional updates on University Governance.

Chancellor's Report

Interim Chancellor Catherine Edmonds provided updates on Fostering Collaboration and Engagement.

Elizabeth City State Universities Event Updates and Highlights

Fall Open House (Viking Showcase):

- 146 students and family members, 19 students applied onsite, and 5 students admitted.
- Participation included staff, cheerleaders, band, and counselors.

Homecoming 2024:

- Theme: "There's No Place Like Home."
- Over \$100,000 raised by Union classes.
- ANA campaign launched to support non-revenue areas.

Recognition and Achievements

- Recognized as a Most Engaged Campus by the All-In Campus Democracy Challenge.
- Strengthened alumni ties during the Atlanta Metro Area visit.
- Thanksgiving outreach event, *Mike's Giving*, supported local families.

Student and Faculty Engagement

- Hosted events include karaoke night, veterans' recognition, and campus tours.
- Emphasized academic and internship opportunities.

Infrastructure and Strategic Developments

- Celebrated progress on the new residence hall with a topping-off ceremony.
- Established a Space Committee to optimize resource use.
- Reintroduced a Greyhound bus stop for community convenience.
- Collaborated with RTI for the development of Strategic Plan 2025–2030.

Upcoming Initiatives

- Viking Excellence Campaign: Defining core values for students, faculty, and staff.
- All-Hands Meeting: Updates on strategic planning and campus developments.
- Enhanced Homecoming and Viking Fest are planning to boost alumni engagement.
- 4th Annual HBCU Aviation Directors' Summit hosted at ECSU
- Brought together aviation leaders from HBCUs, industry representatives, nonprofits, and federal and state agencies
- Focused on improving access, funding and pathways for students in aviation

Announcements

- Winter Senior Pinning: December 13th 6pm -7pm
- Winter Commencement: December 14th at 9:00am

- CIAA: Baltimore, MD: February 25th – March 1st, 2025
- Founder's Day: March 14th, 2025
- Founder's Day Gala: March 15th, 2025
- Viking Fest 2025: April 23rd – 27th, 2025
- Spring Senior Pinning: May 9th, 2025
- Spring Commencement: May 10th, 2025
- Homecoming 2025: November 8th, 2025
- Guest speaker: Dr. Jackie Walter.
- Encouraged increased trustee engagement.

Open Discussion and Q&A

- Concerns raised about event marketing and alumni engagement.
- Suggestions included improved branding, partnerships, and sponsorships.

Closing Remarks

Interim Chancellor Catherine Edmonds expressed gratitude to all participants, emphasizing teamwork to enhance ECSU's growth.

There being no other business, Chair Johnson adjourned the meeting at 2:32 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Natalie Jones