Section 2 Academic Governance

2.1 Definition of Academic Governance

Academic governance is the system through which the Board, the University administrators, and the University faculties participate in developing policy on academic matters.

Because the University is an academic institution, any and all policies adopted by the University to guide and control its activities may be broadly interpreted to constitute policies on academic matters. For the purpose of this UTHSC Faculty Handbook, however, the term “academic policies” shall generally refer to those policies that either (a) guide and control the education, research, clinical care and public service functions of the University faculty or (b) deal with the rights and responsibilities of the individual faculty member. Thus University policies that direct alumni affairs, non-faculty personnel issues, financial matters, hospital management, etc. are not considered “academic policies” except in those cases, such as the planning function, where their partial inclusion is required by their close relationship to the academic governance process.

2.2 Academic Governance of the University

2.2.1 The Role of the Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is the final institutional authority on academic policy. The Board may establish or revise University policy on any academic matter other than the planning and development of the curricula. The University Bylaws specifically reserve to the Board certain authority, including:

1. Establish policies controlling the scope of the educational opportunities to be offered by the University and also policies determining its operation in general; however, the planning and development of curricula shall be the function of the faculties;

2. To determine and control the activities and policies of all organizations and activities that bear, or that may be carried under, the name of the University;

3. Grant tenure to eligible members of the faculty upon the positive recommendation of the President;

4. Prescribe admission, progression, and retention requirements for the University and particular programs of instruction;

5. Approve mission statements for the system and each campus or institute;

6. Approve strategic and long-range academic plans;

7. Approve proposals concerning the development of new academic programs and the significant revision of existing programs relating to instruction, research, and service;
8. Establish new academic organizations, such as major campuses, institutes, colleges or schools, and academic departments;

9. Evaluate existing academic programs and their administrative structures;

10. Terminate programs and structures that no longer are needed;

11. Approve admission, progression, retention, and graduation standards;

12. Approve the University’s Policies Governing Academic Freedom, Responsibility, and Tenure, campus implementing procedures, and any other faculty personnel policy requiring Board approval;

13. Approve proposals and any necessary policies concerning information technology;

14. Approve proposals and any necessary policies concerning system-wide use of academic services including libraries and computer labs;

15. Approve University rules concerning student conduct, rights, and responsibilities to be promulgated under the Tennessee Administrative Procedures Act;

16. Approve proposals and any necessary policies related to the non-academic aspects of student life, including student services and student conduct; and

17. Approve proposals and any necessary policies related to campus enrollment and facilities capacity.

(The University of Tennessee Bylaws Art. I, § 2 and Art III., § 7, as amended through Oct. 9, 2009.) For a complete and up-to-date description of the Board’s responsibilities, please refer directly to the Bylaws (see http://bot.tennessee.edu/bylaws.html).

2.2.2 The Role of the President

The President is the chief executive officer of The University of Tennessee System and exercises complete executive authority over all component parts of the University, subject to the discretion and control of the Board of Trustees. The President has ultimate responsibility for leading the University academically, administratively, and financially. The President is the principal spokesperson for the University. The President is responsible for:

1. Identifying and recommending to the Board of Trustees individuals for election as Vice Presidents, Chancellors, and other officers of the University as defined in the bylaws;

2. Promoting the general welfare and development of the University in its several parts and as a whole. The President decides all questions of jurisdiction not otherwise defined among the several parts of the University;
3. Presentation of policies, recommendations, and other matters to the Board of Trustees, the Governor, the General Assembly, and other state and federal offices;

4. Prompt and effective execution of all laws relating to the University and of all resolutions, policies, rules, and regulations adopted by the Board of Trustees;

5. Preparation of the University budget and its presentation to the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, the Governor and the Department of Finance and Administration, the General Assembly, and the Board of Trustees;

6. Exercising ultimate control over the budgets of all parts of the University and must approve major budgetary revisions;

7. Development and execution of fundraising and alumni programs for the University;

8. The University’s intercollegiate athletics programs at the Knoxville campus and, through the Chancellors, at the Chattanooga and Martin campuses.

The President performs such other duties as may be delegated to that office by the Board of Trustees or by any standing or special committee of the Board. In the execution of the President’s duties and responsibilities, the President may delegate powers and duties to subordinate officers. In accordance with applicable University policies and procedures, the President delegates to Chancellors and Vice Presidents powers and duties to supervise and administer academic and budgetary units reporting to them, under the general direction and control of the President. These delegations do not reduce the President’s ultimate responsibility as chief executive officer of the University. (The University of Tennessee Bylaws, Art. IV, § 3, as amended through Oct. 9, 2009.)

2.2.3 The Role of the University Faculties

The faculties of the various University campuses and institutes have, for their respective units, the specifically reserved and sole authority to plan and develop the curricula (The University of Tennessee Bylaws, Art. I. § 2 as amended through Oct. 9, 2009.) Furthermore, the faculties must authorize the University to award academic degrees. The faculty are represented on the Board of Trustees as set out in Tennessee Code Annotated § 49-9-202.

2.3 Academic Governance of UTHSC

2.3.1 General Policy

Effective academic governance is a hallmark of a mature educational institution. Therefore, all participants have the duty to strive to make academic governance:

1. A cooperative process that demands a joint effort between the Chancellor and the faculty of UTHSC with appropriate participation by students, alumni, and staff;
2. An open process that is characterized by a courteous, free-flowing exchange of information and opinions between all interested parties;

3. A respectful process that gives increased weight to the opinions of participants who are accountable for the matters under consideration;

4. A comprehensive process that assumes that any issue may be relevant to the academic enterprise;

5. A bilateral process that produces policies that apply to UTHSC as a whole, and policies that apply only to one college or non-collegiate academic unit; and

6. A responsible process that is subordinate to governmental authority, the final institutional authority of the Board, and the delegated authority of the President.

The level of participation by the faculty in the academic governance process varies.

1. Consultation – A body of faculty members who discuss with and inform the administrator with authority and responsibility for the decision. Such a committee is not a deliberative body; there is no vote. Rather the members express their views to inform an administrator’s decision.

2. Advice or Recommendation – A deliberative body of faculty members who recommend policies or actions to an administrator who is authorized to make decisions. There is a vote. The administrator is not bound by the recommendation and accepts responsibility for the decision.

3. Shared Responsibility – A deliberative body of faculty members who make recommendations concerning policies or actions to an administrator who is authorized to make decisions. There is a vote. If the administrative and the deliberative body cannot agree and a decision is needed, the recommendation of the administrator and the deliberative body will be submitted in writing to the next higher administrative level for resolution.

4. Delegated Authority – A deliberative body of faculty is authorized to make decisions on specified matters. There is a vote. Such decisions are subject to administrative review, but will be altered only in rare circumstances.

2.3.2 Campus-Wide Academic Policies — Definition

Campus-wide academic policies apply to two or more colleges and/or non-collegiate academic units at UTHSC. These include, but are not limited to, campus-wide academic policies that are contained in this *UTHSC Faculty Handbook*, the UTHSC Strategic Plan, and the *UTHSC Administrative Manual*. 
2.3.3 Collegiate Academic Policies — Definition

Collegiate academic policies are policies that apply to only one college or non-collegiate academic unit. Hereinafter, unless otherwise noted, the terms college and collegiate refer to the non-collegiate academic units as well as to the colleges.

Collegiate academic policies include, but are not limited to, policies contained in the collegiate sections of the UTHSC Catalog, the various collegiate strategic plans, and the academic policy statements and bylaws developed by the colleges to govern their internal academic matters.

2.3.4 Organization of the Faculty for Academic Governance

2.3.4.1 General

On both the campus-wide and the collegiate levels, the UTHSC faculty is represented in academic governance by faculty leaders who are either elected by faculty members or appointed by, or with the approval of, the Chancellor.

2.3.4.2 Elected Campus-Wide Faculty Leadership: The Faculty Senate

On the campus-wide level, the UTHSC Faculty Senate represents the faculty as its sole elected body. The Faculty Senate operates under bylaws that are approved by the Board, is made up of voting Senators who are elected by faculty members and nonvoting Senators who serve ex officio, and is led by Faculty Senate officers who are elected by the voting Senators. Appendix C contains the Bylaws of the Faculty Senate.

2.3.4.3 Appointed Campus-Wide Faculty Leadership: Chief Officers and Campus-Wide Committees

There are a number of chief officers and campus-wide committees, appointed by the Chancellor, to provide advice and recommendations on activities and services. A complete listing of these chief officers and campus-wide committees, including committee functions and memberships, is contained in the UTHSC Administrative Manual. The membership of campus-wide committees may include faculty members, students, and staff members, with most non-ex-officio faculty committee seats being held by faculty members who are nominated for appointment by the Faculty Senate leadership.

2.3.4.4 Elected Collegiate Organization: Faculty Organizations

The faculty of each college has its own faculty organization. The bylaws of each college must (a) provide an effective mechanism for participation by the collegiate faculty in the academic governance of the college, (b) provide for faculty organization officers who are elected by the collegiate faculty members, and (c) be approved by the Chancellor. The structure of the collegiate faculty organizations varies, depending on the size and complexity of the college. The purposes of a collegiate faculty organization include, but are not limited to, the following:
1. Promote and facilitate communication among the members of the faculty, the elected faculty leadership, and the appointed faculty leadership of the college;

2. Afford faculty members opportunities to propose, review, and discuss policies and programs of the college; and

3. Foster development of an environment that will enhance faculty participation in academic governance of the college.

2.3.4.5 Appointed Collegiate Faculty Leadership

The Chancellor, with the approval of the President, appoints one member of the faculty of each college and non-collegiate academic unit to serve as the Executive Dean, Dean, or Director of that college or unit. Hereinafter, unless otherwise noted, the term Dean refers to the Executive Dean and Director as well as to the Deans. The process for selection of a Dean is described in Section 2.3.7.5. The Dean or Director is the academic, as well as administrative leader, of the college or unit. The colleges of all three College of Medicine Units are headed by Deans. The Library and Biocommunications Center is headed by a Director.

The Deans, with the approval of the Chancellor, appoint faculty members to serve as Chairs of the collegiate departments. The process for selection of a Chair is described in Section 2.3.7.6. The Chairs are the academic, as well as the administrative, leaders of their respective academic units.

The Deans, with the approval of the Chancellor, also may appoint faculty members of their colleges to serve as assistants to the Dean. These positions have titles such as Assistant or Associate Dean. The roles of these individuals vary according to the needs of the colleges.1

The Deans and Chairs may also appoint standing or ad hoc faculty committees to advise on academic matters. At the collegiate level, Deans are encouraged to include faculty members nominated by collegiate faculty organizations as committee members.

2.3.5 The Campus-Wide Academic Governance Process

2.3.5.1 Proposals for Campus-Wide Academic Policies

New or revised campus-wide academic policies may be proposed by the Faculty Senate or the Chancellor. Also, any individual faculty member may request a new or revised campus-wide academic policy by presenting the request to the Faculty Senate, to the Chief Academic Officer, or to the Chancellor.

1 Certain positions in this category, for example Assistant Dean for Administration, may be held by non-faculty staff members.
2.3.5.2 Review and Recommendations Concerning Campus-Wide Academic Policies

Proposals for new and revised campus-wide academic policies must be reviewed by the Faculty Senate. If a proposal for a new or revised policy originates in the Faculty Senate, the Senate will review the proposal and either approve or not approve. If the policy is not approved, no further action will be taken; if it is approved, however, the Senate will recommend its acceptance to the Chancellor. If the Chancellor initiates a new or revised academic policy, the Chancellor will forward it to the Faculty Senate for review and recommendation. The President of the Senate is responsible for ensuring that the appropriate Senate procedures are followed to review new or revised academic policies.

2.3.5.3 Decision by the Chancellor on Campus-Wide Academic Policies

After review and recommendation by the Faculty Senate, the Chancellor decides to either accept or reject the proposed new or revised academic policy. If the Chancellor's decision is not in agreement with the recommendation of the Faculty Senate, and the decision is to reject the proposal, the Chancellor will make every effort to reach consensus before making the final decision. However, if the Chancellor’s decision is to accept the policy and the policy requires approval by the President or the Board, the usual UTHSC policies and procedures will be followed.

2.3.6 The UTHSC Collegiate Academic Governance Process

Each college has its own process for developing new or revised collegiate academic policies (Section 2.3.4.4). However, the curriculum cannot be changed without the approval of the collegiate faculty. The Dean has the authority, delegated by the President and Chancellor, to make decisions on other collegiate academic matters in consultation with the collegiate faculty. The process used by the individual college depends on the size and complexity of that college; however, the process used by any college must:

1. Provide that new or revised academic policies may be proposed by the collegiate faculty organization, the appointed collegiate faculty leadership, or any individual faculty member;

2. Provide for review and recommendations of proposed academic policies by the collegiate faculty organization and the appointed faculty leadership; and

3. Provide that the Dean must accept or reject proposed academic policies in a timely manner.

However, in the event of a disagreement between the Dean and the faculty, the Dean will make every effort to reach consensus before making a final decision. If the Dean’s decision is to accept the policy and the policy requires further approval (i.e., at the UTHSC, UT System, and/or Board levels), the usual UTHSC policies and procedures will be followed.
2.3.7 Special Issues in Academic Governance of UTHSC

2.3.7.1 Planning and Development of the Curricula

The Board determines the instructional programs to be offered at UTHSC. Proposals for such programs may be originated through the academic governance process described in Sections 2.3.5 and 2.3.6 above; however, the Board retains the right of final approval. The UTHSC faculty has the specifically reserved and sole authority to plan and develop the curricula for instructional programs. For the purpose of this Faculty Handbook, the terms *curricula* and *curricular* refer to the subject matter, method of instruction, and grading policy in all courses offered by UTHSC; the sets of courses required for degrees offered by UTHSC; and the aspects of student life that relate to the instructional process.

Curricular matters that involve the faculty of only one college are decided by the faculty of that college, under the leadership of the Dean. Curricular matters that involve the Faculties of more than one college are decided collectively by the Faculties of the affected colleges. In these cases, the UTHSC Chief Academic Officer, in consultation with the appropriate Faculty Senate standing committee, will establish a process to be followed.

2.3.7.2 Additional Responsibilities of the Chancellor in Academic Governance

In addition to the responsibilities of the Chancellor in academic governance otherwise described in Section 2.3, the Chancellor is responsible for:

1. Establishing and maintaining lines of communication among all parties participating in academic governance;

2. Implementing and enforcing the academic policies of the Board and the President; and

3. Monitoring both the campus-wide and the collegiate academic governance policies and processes described in this Section 2.3 for the purposes of (a) assuring adherence to such policies and processes, and (b) providing *ad hoc* procedures to resolve academic governance issues not covered by the policies and processes of this Section 2.3.

2.3.7.3 The Critical Nature of the Planning Process

The University’s Bylaws provide that the faculty must actively participate in the determination of the strategic directions of the campuses. UTHSC has a comprehensive planning process to identify and prioritize campus-wide and collegiate goals and objectives, determine strategies to accomplish the goals and objectives, and recommend allocation of resources to implement the strategies. Each college maintains a collegiate planning process in harmony with the campus-wide plan. The planning process provides for extensive participation by the UTHSC faculty. Faculty members are routinely invited and encouraged to provide comments on the plans and to suggest improvements.
2.3.7.4 Selection of the Chancellor

The Chancellor is elected by the Board upon the recommendation of the President. In the event of a vacancy or notice of an impending vacancy in the Office of the Chancellor, the President must appoint an advisory committee that includes UTHSC faculty representation to assist in identifying and screening candidates for the position.

2.3.7.5 Selection of Vice Chancellors and Deans

Vice Chancellors and Deans are appointed by the Chancellor. In the event of a vacancy or notice of impending vacancy in the Office of a Vice Chancellor or Dean, the Chancellor must appoint an advisory committee that includes Faculty Senate Executive Committee representation to assist in identifying and screening candidates for the position. If the vacancy is a Dean, the advisory committee must also include faculty representation from the college that has the vacancy.

2.3.7.6 Selection of Department Chairs

Department Chairs are appointed by the responsible Dean. In the event of a vacancy or notice of impending vacancy in the Office of a Department Chair, the Dean must appoint an advisory committee that ordinarily should include faculty representation from the department with the vacancy. The Dean should also consult with the faculty members who hold regular appointments in the affected department prior to the selection. The faculty members who hold regular appointments in the affected department should have the opportunity to meet and evaluate the candidates.

2.3.7.7 Selection of Other Appointed Faculty Leaders and Campus and Collegiate Administrators

If advisory committees are appointed to assist in identifying appointed faculty leaders other than Deans and Chairs or administrators other than the Chancellor and the Vice Chancellors, such advisory committees must include Faculty Senate representation. In any case, consultation with appropriate faculty representatives must occur prior to the selection.

2.3.7.8 Evaluation of Campus Administrators and Appointed Collegiate Faculty Leaders

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee is responsible for the establishment and implementation of a process to provide for faculty evaluation of the performance of the Chancellor, Vice Chancellors, Deans, Chairs, and Associate and Assistant Deans. The evaluation process should be developed in consultation with the Chancellor.

2.3.7.9 General Faculty Meetings

At least once annually, all individuals holding faculty appointments at UTHSC are invited to a general faculty meeting called the Annual Faculty Meeting. Usually this meeting precedes the annual business meeting of the Faculty Senate. The Faculty Senate President presides over the Annual Faculty Meeting and presents the annual report of the Faculty Senate to the faculty. Additional general faculty meetings may be called by the Chancellor or the Faculty Senate President.