

3.7.5

Faculty: Faculty role in governance

The institution publishes policies on the responsibility and authority of faculty in academic and governance matters.

Judgment

Compliance Partial Compliance Non-Compliance Not Applicable

Narrative

The faculty of Tennessee Technological University (TTU) have clearly defined responsibility and authority in academic matters and in the governance of the University on a variety of administrative levels. The University publishes its policy on the responsibility and authority of the faculty in academic and governance matters on Policy Central [1] [2] [3] and in the Faculty Handbook [4]. These roles and responsibilities were developed through faculty discussion and approval in meetings of the Academic Council, the Administrative Council, and the Faculty Senate. The Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) endorses the concept of shared authority and responsibility in governance of the institution.

Role and Responsibilities of the Faculty in Academic Matters

The faculty have primary responsibility for the curriculum at TTU. The creation, change, and approval of curricula and new programs begin with the faculty. This process is outlined in Section CS 3.4.1. Additions, deletions, and modifications to the undergraduate and graduate programs are initiated by faculty in the appropriate departments or schools and are approved by department/school curriculum committees and a college-level curriculum committee before they are forwarded to the University Curriculum Committee for approval. Graduate curriculum proposals move from the college curriculum committees to the Graduate Studies Executive Committee for approval. Curricular revisions of more than 18 semester credit hours at the undergraduate level or more than nine semester credit hours at the graduate level must be approved by the TBR. The membership of all these curriculum committees, as well as the Graduate Studies Executive Committee, includes faculty. For a more complete description, see Section CS 3.4.10. In addition, each school, department, or interdisciplinary major designates individual faculty to oversee the integrity and development of its majors and/or concentrations. An explanation can be found in Section CS 3.4.11.

Role and Responsibilities of the Faculty in Governance Matters

TTU faculty serve on three major governing bodies: the Academic Council, the Administrative Council, and the University Assembly. They also serve on several standing and advisory committees.

The Academic Council assists the President in matters which relate to the total field of instruction, proposes actions to be taken, and reports and approves actions that originate from the committees reporting to it. The Academic Council meets three times per semester. The procedures of the Academic Council [5] and minutes of recent meetings [6] are available online.

The Administrative Council assists the President in matters relevant to University administration, proposes actions to be taken, and reports and approves actions that originate from the committees reporting to it. The Administrative Council meets three times per semester. The procedures of the Administrative Council [7] and recent meeting minutes [8] may be found online.

The University Assembly consists of the Academic Council and the Administrative Council meeting together as one body. The chairperson of the University Assembly is the President of the University. There are no formal procedures for the University Assembly. The minutes of recent meetings of the University Assembly are available online [9].

Each standing committee reports to the Academic Council, the Administrative Council, or the University Assembly.

The Faculty Senate serves as a representative voice of the teaching and research faculty by providing a forum for the free discussion of any issue of interest or of concern to members of the faculty. It conveys the results of such discussions to the administrative officers of the University and, when appropriate, requests that the President of the University convey the results of such discussions to the TBR chancellor. It also serves to convey information to the faculty. The procedures of the Faculty Senate [10] and minutes of recent meetings [11] are available online.

The Faculty Senate meets three times per semester in business session. These sessions are open meetings where motions can be made, discussed, and voted upon. The Faculty Senate also meets three times per semester with the president of the University. These sessions are closed to others except by invitation of the president of the Senate. No motions are made.

TTU has long utilized committees with significant faculty representation to provide guidance on all aspects of its mission. Any interested university party may make recommendations to the President of the University in his or her authority to establish, continue, or abolish University standing committees and to appoint their members. These committees might be standing or ad hoc, with care to include women and minority representation including, as needed, special exceptions to committee guidelines.

Faculty serve on a large number of these committees that deal with all aspects of the University. A faculty member, typically the President of the Faculty Senate, serves on the Executive Advisory Committee to the President [12], the Academic Affairs Executive Council [13], and the Academic Affairs Cabinet [14]. Faculty members also serve on the University's Budget Advisory Committee. This committee serves as a review group of the current budget model for improvements and also for further development of the implementation process [15]. In addition, TTU faculty provide guidance on matters of tenure and promotion. Committees have been formed on an ad hoc basis to address issues dealing with tenure and promotion. Faculty have been actively involved in the area of strategic planning. In Fall 2012, a taskforce was convened to do a Gap Analysis working with an outside consulting firm. Several faculty members were part of this task force, which resulted in a Strategic Plan called Flight Plan, currently being implemented [16]. There are several other standing and special purpose committees at the University. For a list of committees, see the University Standing Committees website [17].

Conclusion

The University's published policies on Faculty Roles and Responsibilities and on University Committees indicate the central role of the faculty in curricular matters and in shared governance. Faculty representation is required on all of the standing committees that advise and make recommendations to the President. Proposals involving curriculum and therefore student learning and academic outcomes arise from the faculty. The University, therefore, is in compliance with Comprehensive Standard 3.7.5.

Sources

-  [01] Faculty Roles and Responsibilities_Policy 203
-  [02] Policy Central on University Committees_Policy 102
-  [03] Academic Freedom and Responsibility
-  [04] Academic Freedom and Responsibility
-  [05] Academic Council Procedures
-  [06] Academic Council Minutes

-  [07] Administrative Council Procedures 2014 Final
-  [08] Administrative Council Minutes
-  [09] University Assembly
-  [10] Faculty Senate Procedures
-  [11] Faculty Senate Minutes
-  [12] Executive Advisory Committee Members
-  [13] Academic Affairs Executive Council
-  [14] Academic Affairs Cabinet
-  [15] Budget Advisory Committee
-  [16] Flight Plan Publication
-  [17] University Standing Committees