Graduate Deans' Group
Thursday, January 9, 2014, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.
Multipurpose Room, Black Cultural Center

Attending:

Jim Boyle, Sherry Cummings, Joy DeSensi (Chair), George Dodds, Mary Gunther, Carolyn Hodges, Donald Hodges, Stephen Kania, Yvonne Kilpatrick, Tom Ladd, Sandy Leach, Catherine Luther, Brent Mallinckrodt, Stefanie Ohnesorg, Masood Parang, Annette Ranft, Cynthia Rocha, Melissa Shivers, John Stier, Dixie Thompson, and Greg Tipps

The Graduate Deans' Group meeting was called to order by Joy DeSensi, on Thursday, January 9, 2014, at 2:00 p.m. in the Multipurpose Room, Black Cultural Center.

1. The minutes of the Graduate Deans' Group meeting from October 10, 2013 were approved.

2. Updates from the Graduate School/Top 25 Progress and Plans Moving Forward – Carolyn Hodges (Attachments 1, 2, and 3)

   Carolyn Hodges reviewed the status of the Top 25 goals for 2013-14. She then led a preview and discussion of the draft of the proposed Top 25 Newsletter and potential updates for the Top 25 website, offered by Assistant Vice Chancellor Melissa Shivers (in attendance). The graduate deans indicated that for the newsletter they would like to see more about UT activities and achievements rather than news about other Top 25 schools. They also agreed that the newsletter and web site should place more emphasis on professional development initiatives coordinated by the Graduate School.

3. Health Insurance for Graduate Students – Jim Boyle
   Jim Boyle presented the following information and then answered questions about Graduate Student Health Insurance. (Attachment 4)

   - The Health Center is separate from the Health Insurance. All full time (9 hours) graduate students pay a health fee to use the health facilities. The students are only charged for lab, x-rays, therapy, pharmacy and supplies used at the time of their appointment.

   - The Health Center Pharmacy is run by Keystone Pharmacies.

   - The Health Center staff specializes in college age student issues, illness, and injuries.

   - The Health Center will bill the University health insurance, but not private insurance companies. The center will provide the student with the information they need to file themselves.

   - The Health Center has an advisory panel that meets the last Thursday of each month at noon. A couple of associate deans who wish to serve on the panel are welcomed, and, as well as, all associate deans are welcome to attend the meeting.

4. Graduate Student Leave of Absence Policy – Stefanie Ohnesorg
   The Academic Policy Committee has been working on a leave of absence policy that will encompass all graduate students and replace the leave of absence for 600. The proposed policy will be presented at the next Graduate Council meeting. After the leave of absence policy has been established, a graduate student family medical leave policy will be considered. Funding will be an obstacle to creating the graduate student family medical leave policy.

5. Demonstration of ADMIN – Yvonne Kilpatrick
   Yvonne Kilpatrick and Greg Tipps demonstrated ways the ADMIN Collegenet program can be used. A presentation of the ADMIN program demonstrated how to query for unsubmitted applications and utilize the information as a recruiting tool for identifying possible candidates. Yvonne and Greg want to make this available to departments desiring to use the tool in time to recruit for the Fall 2015 application period. Yvonne will contact graduate deans late in the Spring semester to see if they would like to schedule an ADMIN demonstration within their colleges.

6. Graduate School Fellowships for 2014 – 2015 – Joy DeSensi
   Joy DeSensi announced the Graduate Fellowships are due to the Graduate School on Tuesday, March 5 by 5:00 p.m. Graduate Directors are to submit all materials to the Graduate School. The J. Wallace & Katie Dean Graduate Fellowships and the Herman E. Spivey Humanities Graduate Fellowships are to be initiated by the departments and the other fellowships are to be initiated by the students.

7. Other
   No other business was discussed.

The next Graduate Deans' Group meeting will be on Thursday, February 13, 2014, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. in the Multipurpose Room, Black Cultural Center.

Other last meeting date for 2013 - 2014: March 27, 2014

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Gay Henegar
Secretary to Graduate Deans' Group

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KNOXVILLE
Big Orange. Big Ideas.

Top 25 Action Plan Report

Area of Focus	Graduate Education
Reporting Month	October 2013
Submitted by	Carolyn R. Hodges

Priority Actions Status Summary

Priority Action	Status
Recruitment/Diversity	Long-term , ongoing actions are in progress
Graduate Admissions	Initial action plan completed; enhancements added August 2013
Graduate Stipends/Graduate School Fellowships	Actions initiated; dependent upon funding stream; deans will possibly receive some stipend funding for new applicants (2014)
Graduate School Website	Action steps in progress; have meet with Office of Communications and with OIT to determine project assignment
Professional Development and Engagement	Long-term, ongoing action steps are in progress
Graduate Student Data and Tracking	Action steps in progress; dependent on funding stream; tied to other Top 25 areas

Summary of all active actions:

Recruitment/Diversity

- Oak Ridge, TN-Score support for the GEM Grad Lab (2nd) – completed
- GEO mapping – tool for aggressive recruitment based on strategic planning – completed and ongoing
- Visitation – pilot program with McNair programs – planning stage
- Website overhaul – planning stage
- Signed MOU with the Univ. of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras (lead college is the College of Communication and Information Science) completed;

- China Scholarship Council and China Agricultural University, Nanjing University, Institute of Applied Ecology, Chinese Academy for a joint Chinese/UT master's and EcoPartnership Scholar Program" – in progress
- Maximize Degree Offerings – Certificates (policy and structure review by Graduate Council) – in progress
- Launch of two new master's degree programs, MFA and MPPA – completed and available for 2014 applicants

Increase Graduate Student Financial Support

- New funding for graduate student recruitment – recurring (?) funding for new stipends (pending official notification)
- Review of assistantship structure – in progress
- Benefits – Leave of absence, FAML (proposed by GSS and to be reviewed by Graduate Council) – in progress

Admissions – ADMIT enhancements

- Applicant Status Portal Form – completed and launched
- Applicant Decision Portal Form – completed and launched

Professional Development/Student Engagement and Success

- New Student Orientation – GSS leadership; follow-up assessment – completed
- International Teaching Assistant (ITA) Testing Program (formerly the SPEAK® Testing Program) – completed and ongoing
- Continue to present and build workshop series, focus on mentoring – ongoing
- Guide for directors of graduate studies – in progress
- External Fellowship information (Office of Research and Engagement) – completed

Student Data and Tracking

- Enhancements to Banner processes, e.g., dissertation defense workflow, graduate degree audit – planning stage
- Creation of efficiencies – Graduate School staff changes, reorganization of processes
    - Search for business manager in progress (featured in Top 25 action plan) – in progress

Journey *to the* Top 25

January/February 2014

Welcome!

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the Top 25 Newsletter! Our goal is to provide you with the latest news about the University of Tennessee's Journey to the Top 25. This month's edition focuses on the work our Implementation Teams have been doing, the Leaver's Survey, information on graduation, retention and diversity, updates from UT and a news roundup for the other Top 25 schools designed to inform you about what other premier public research universities around the country are doing. Thanks for reading, and if you have comments or suggestions feel free to email Melissa Shivers at mshivers@utk.edu. Go Vols!

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The Leaver's Survey p. 3

USNWR Methodology p. 4

Graduation, Retention and Diversity p. 5

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Updates from the Implementation Teams

What are the Implementation Teams?
When our journey to the Top 25 began, five teams were tasked with leading the University of Tennessee to excellence in each the following five key areas. This is a brief summary of their most recent accomplishments.

Undergraduate Education
Recently, the Undergraduate Education team launched both One Stop Student Services and uTrack. They are also on track to reach their Fall 2014 enrollment goal of 21,450 students. Looking forward, they will continue to track their progress to their enrollment goal and implement new student success programs.

Graduate Education
The Graduate School is continuing to make major changes to their website that will make it easier for students to locate information. Additionally, the Graduate School is upgrading their technologies used for recruitment, making it easier for the University to find and track future scholars.

Faculty and Staff
In addition to the ongoing improvement in faculty and staff compensation, the Faculty team has divided into five subcommittees – the Salary, Endowed Professorship, Productivity, Diversity, and Campus Climate Subcommittees. Each subcommittee will be reporting to the full committee soon.

Research
Research dollars at UT continue to increase dramatically, but there is more room for improvement. The Research team is looking for ways to encourage more cross-disciplinary research as well as undergraduate research. Additionally, an Assistant Vice Chancellor for Compliance has been hired and will begin next month.

Infrastructure
Pat Summit Plaza had its ribbon cutting ceremony in November! Additionally, the University's first new residence hall in decades and the new Student Union Building continue to make progress, with the residence hall on track to be opened to students for the Fall 2014 semester.

The Leaver's Survey

In order to retain more students, you have to know the reasons some of them leave! Earlier this year, the University of Tennessee's College of Social Work conducted an exhaustive survey of former UT students to determine **who was leaving and why**. Use these results as a guide when you think about ways to help us improve student retention. If you'd like more information about this survey, Dr. Ruth Darling at rdarling@utk.edu.

Reason	Overall	Temporary	Permanent
Pressure of school/stress	21.60%	23.80%	19.80%
UT is too large	20.30%	12.70%	26.70%
Distance from home	18.30%	11.10%	24.40%
Academic adjustment problems	15.70%	22.20%	11.60%
Didn't fit in at UT	15.70%	9.50%	20.90%

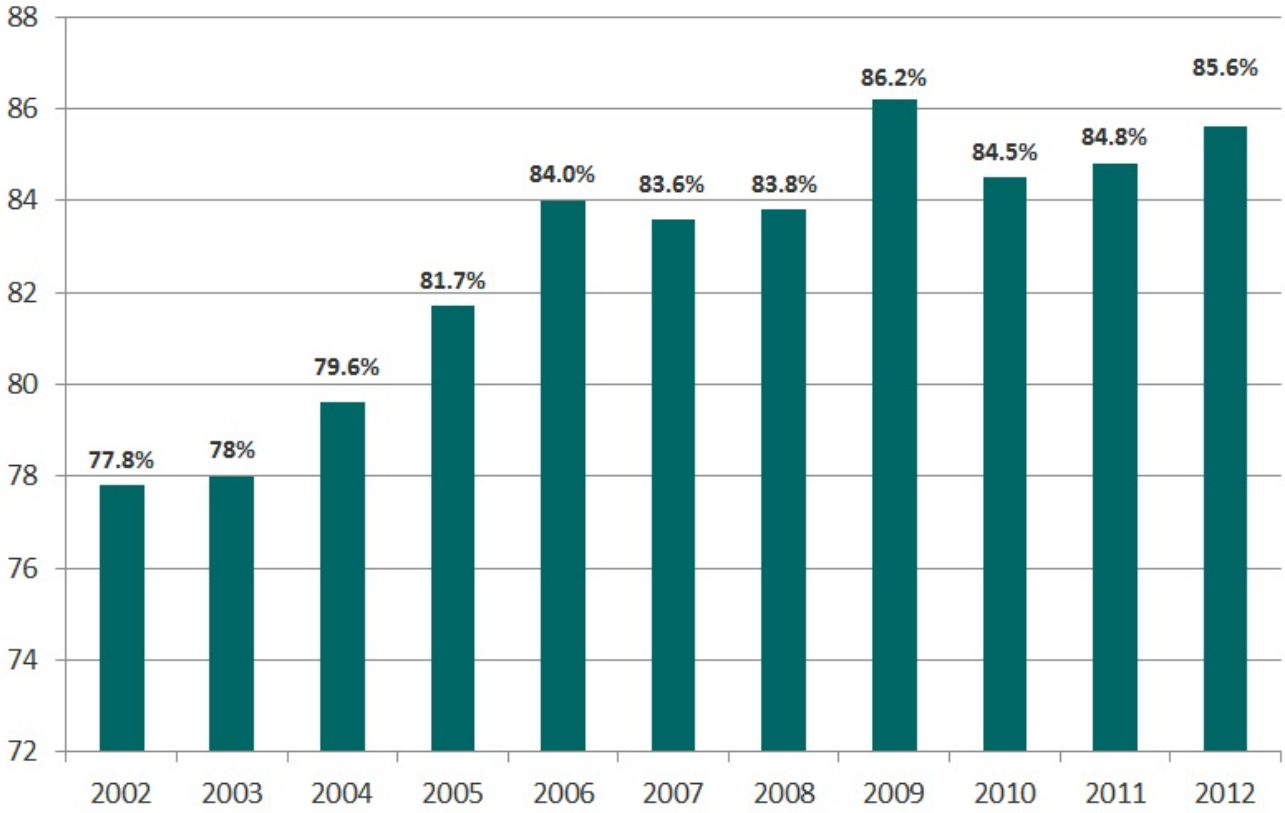
USNWR Methodology

We frequently receive questions regarding how U.S. News and World Reports (USNWR) calculates their rankings. The chart below shows each category scored and its weight in the rankings. You can see more details about the rankings at the US News website.

Category	Category Weight	Criteria	Criteria Weight
Undergraduate academic reputation	*22.5%*	*Academic peer assessment*	*15.0%*
		High school counselor assessments	*7.5%*
Retention	*22.5%*	*Six year graduation rate (percentage)*	*18.0%*
		Freshman retention rate	*4.5%*
Faculty resources	*20.0%*	*Proportion of classes with fewer than 20 students*	*6.0%*
		Proportion of classes with more than 50 students	*2.0%*
		Faculty salary	*7.0%*
		Proportion of professors with highest attainable degrees in the fields	*3.0%*
		Student-faculty ratio	*1.0%*
		Proportion of faculty who are full-time	*1.0%*
Student selectivity	*12.5%*	*ACT/SAT Scores*	*8.125%*
		High school class ranking	*3.125%*
		Acceptance rate	*1.25%*
Financial resources	*10.0%*	*Per-student spending*	*10.0%*
Graduation rate	*7.5%*	*Predicted graduation rate vs. actual graduation rate*	*7.5%*
Alumni giving	*5.0%*	*Percentage of alumni givers over last two years*	*5.0%*

Graduation, Retention and Diversity

Data is central to the Top 25 Initiative, and we use it to target areas of improvement, plan our strategies and track our progress. Most of the data we use is collected by our in-house research gurus, the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA). You can find these numbers and more at their website, oira.utk.edu.

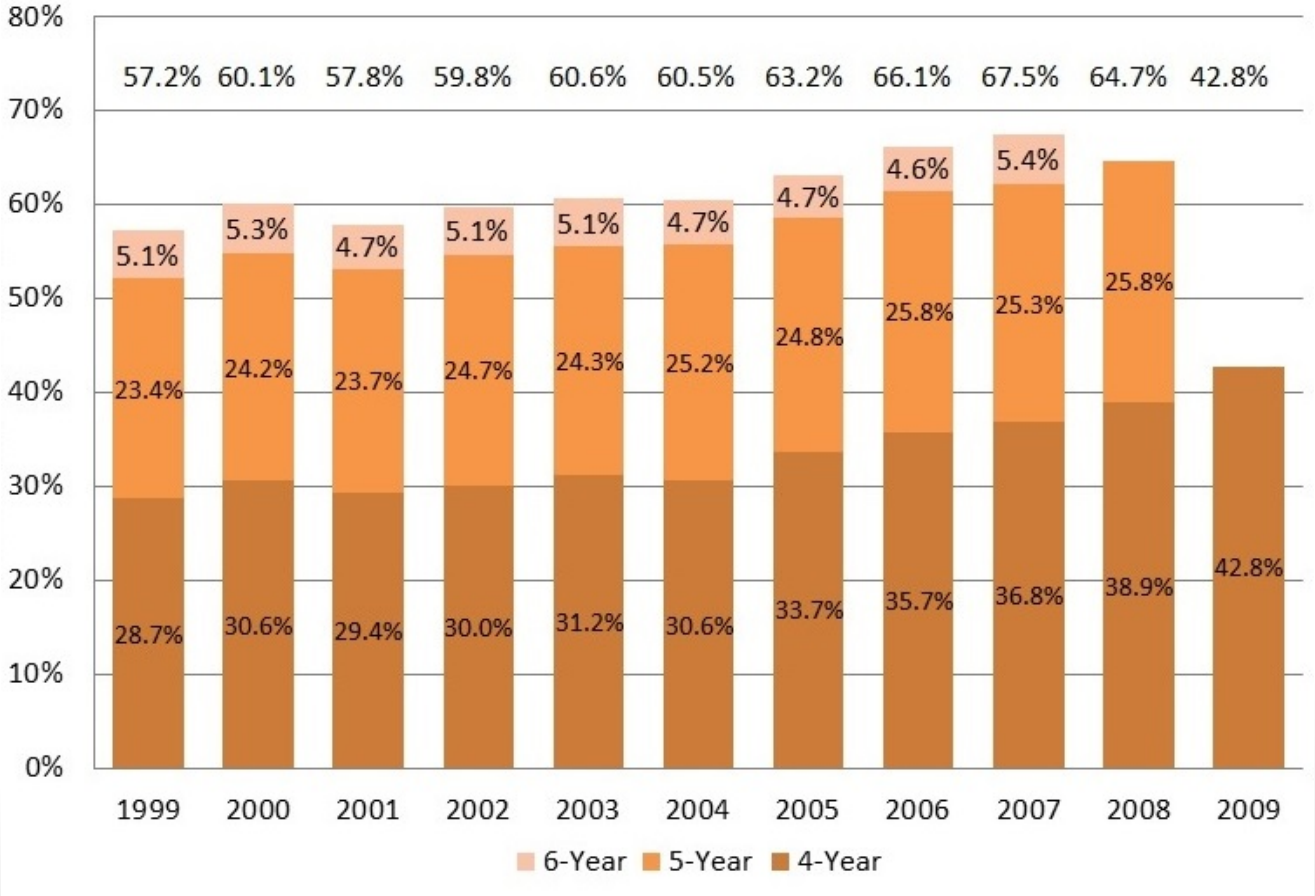


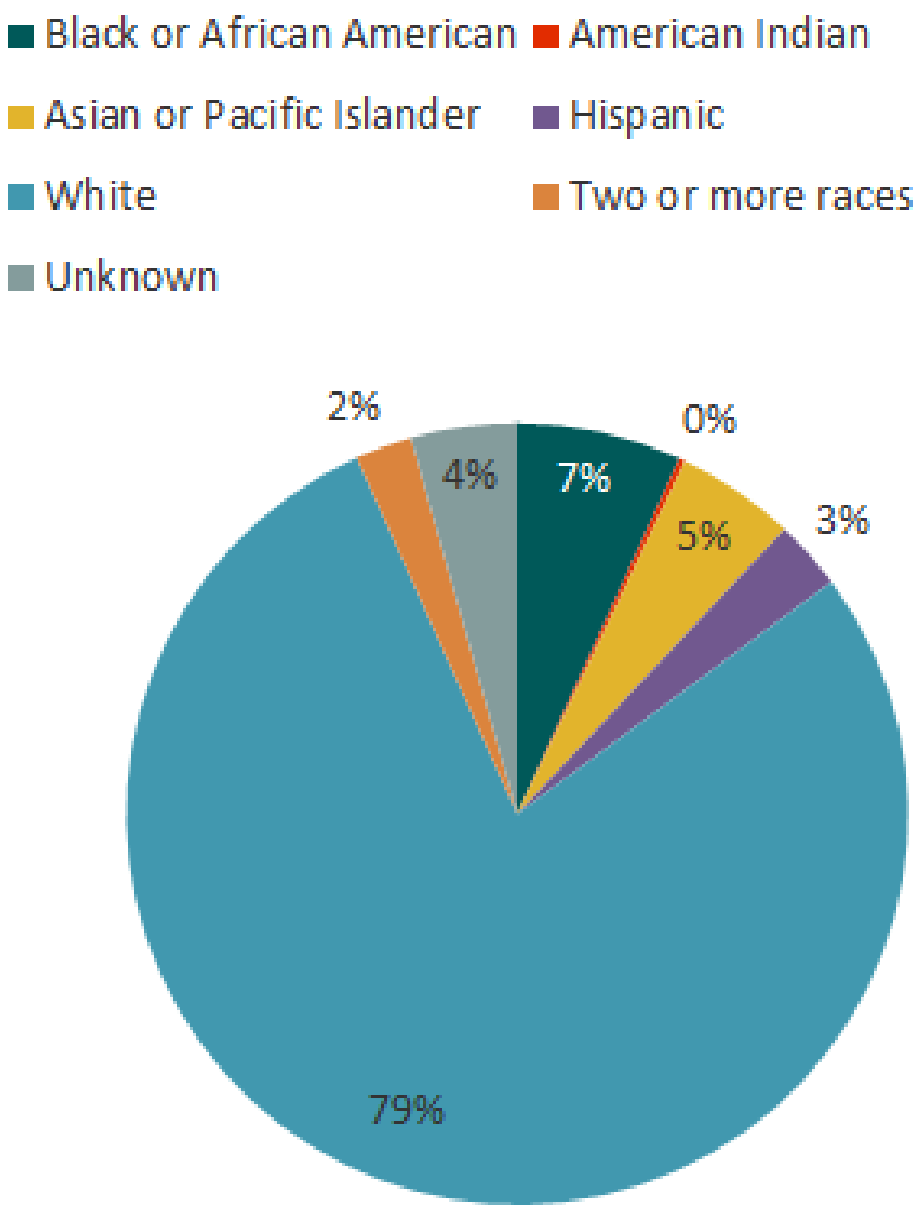
Freshman Retention

The University has made big gains in retention over the last several years. Although we hit a high point with the 2009 cohort and then fell back to the norm the following year, we have made steady progress every year since the Top 25 Initiative began in 2010.

Graduation Rates

The 2006 cohort was the first group of students to attend the University during the Top 25 Initiative, and they and each following cohort has shown improvement in graduation rates. Importantly, the four-year graduation rate has gone up dramatically, with the 2009 cohort sitting at a record 42.8% - a sign that big gains in our six-year graduation rates may be coming.





Diversity

The University of Tennessee strives to maintain diversity on campus. For your reference, here's a look at the diversity breakdown at UT.

University of Tennessee News

The Institutional Transformation Award

The American Council on Education (ACE) recently announced a new award for Institutional Transformation. Given the enormous positive changes over the last few years because of the Top 25 Initiative, the University of Tennessee officially applied for consideration for this prestigious award.

According to ACE, "The American Council on Education/Fidelity Investments Award for Institutional Transformation recognizes a college or university which, in a period of great change in higher education, has responded to challenges in innovative and creative ways that allows the institution to thrive."

Stay tuned as we wait for ACE's announcement of the finalists! You can also learn more about ACE and the Institutional Transformation award at their website, www.acenet.edu.

Website updates ahead!

The Top 25/VolVision website is due for some changes! Over the next few months, we will be designing and implementing changes to the website to make it easier for the University of Tennessee family to keep up with the enormous progress we have made through the Top 25 initiative. If you have things you would like to see on the website, feel free to send your ideas to Christian at clund1@utk.edu. You can view the website at utk.edu/volvision-top25.

Around the Top 25

University of Minnesota honored with two 2013 AAAS Fellows

Two faculty members at the University of Minnesota have been named a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). Election as a Fellow is an honor bestowed upon AAAS members by their peers, and recognizes scientifically or socially distinguished efforts to advance science or its applications.

Governor Christie Leads Groundbreaking Ceremony for New Rutgers Nursing and Science Building in Camden

New Jersey Governor Chris Christie joined Rutgers President Robert Barchi, Rutgers–Camden Chancellor Wendell Pritchett, and Camden Mayor Dana Redd at a ceremonial groundbreaking for the construction of the new Nursing and Science Building at Rutgers University–Camden.

Pilot Online Coursework Program at University of California System Begins

Students at seven UC campuses now can enroll in online courses offered at campuses other than their own through a pilot project launched this week.

Four Illinois Professors named fellows of American Association for the Advancement of Science

Among the four Illinois professors named fellows of the Amercian Association for the Advancement of Science is Stephen A. Boppart, an Abel Bliss professor of engineering, who was cited for “distinguished contributions to optical coherence tomography and its applications to biomedical imaging.”

University of Maryland Praised for Women in Engineering Program

The A. James Clark School of Engineering's Women in Engineering (WIE) Program at UMD has been featured as one of NerdScholar's Favorite Women in Engineering Programs, a list of programs that provide unique resources and opportunities for female engineers.

Goals for Top 25 Website

- **Undergraduate**
  - First-year retention
  - Expect graduation in four years
  - Student quality
  - Provide adequate core student support
  - Engage students based on changing profile
  - Efficiency and effectiveness
- **Graduate**
  - Ph. D. Degrees awarded*
  - Master's and Professional degrees awarded*
  - Increase graduate student financial support
  - Improve graduate student admissions and recruitment
  - Expand services for graduate student engagement and success
  - Maximize degree offerings through academic collaboration
- **Research**
  - Total research expenditures growth
  - Federal research expenditures growth
  - Engaged outreach
  - Faculty support
  - Student support
  - Research infrastructure support
- **Faculty**
  - Closer salary gap with top 25 peers
  - Enable faculty productivity
  - Focus on faculty retention
  - Improve faculty hiring
  - Improved climate and culture for faculty
- **Infrastructure and resources**
  - Teach/support expenditures per student*
  - Endowment per student*
  - Improve physical infrastructure
  - Prioritize information technology needs
  - Support implementation of campus staff plan
  - Identify opportunities for operational effectiveness
  - Develop resource model

*These weren't on the original document, but I added them here since they've traditionally been included in T25 updates. -CL

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Health Care Reform, Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), Affordable Care Act (ACA), and Obama Care- These terms all refer to the same thing –Government mandated Health Care Reform.

The Health Care Reform mandate is being enacted in stages over several years but some very major sections will be enacted on January 1, 2014. The rapidly approaching January 1, 2014 deadline, along with an increasing amount of inaccurate information being released about the Act, is causing many questions and much anxiety among our students. There is a tremendous amount of information available to you by contacting the health insurance marketplace at https://www.healthcare.gov/ or by searching on-line for PPACA, ACA, or Obama Care.

The following information is targeted to University of Tennessee/Knoxville students:

DO I NEED TO BUY INSURANCE?

If you do not have health insurance and are not covered by your parent's insurance policy, you will need to purchase health insurance or be fined by the government. Although you may pay the per semester health fee to utilize the Student Health Center, it is not health insurance and will not exempt you from the requirement to have insurance.

IF I UTILIZE THE STUDENT HEALTH SERVICE, DO I STILL NEED HEALTH INSURANCE?

Yes. Even though you are eligible to use the Student Health Center, you still need health insurance.
The Student Health Center is not an alternative to health insurance. It provides more affordable, accessible, student centered health care than is generally available in the medical community.

WHERE CAN I BUY HEALTH INSURANCE?

Although you can purchase health insurance through the government's health insurance marketplace (https://www.healthcare.gov/), the University sponsored health insurance plan, administered by UnitedHealthcare Student Resources, meets ACA requirements and **may be much less expensive**. Information about this health insurance plan is available

under "Student Health Insurance" on our web site at: http://studenthealth.utk.edu/insrec_studentinsurance.php).

I RECEIVED A LETTER FROM THE UNIVERSITY WHICH SAID I WASN'T COVERED AND WOULD NEED TO PURCHASE HEALTH INSURANCE BY THE END OF OCTOBER.

All University of Tennessee employees who were not eligible for insurance provided by the University received a letter advising them they would need to purchase health insurance from the Health Insurance Marketplace or elsewhere to avoid being fined for not having insurance. This notice does not apply to graduate students with a 25% or greater work appointment as Graduate Assistant or Research Assistant. These students have an ACA qualified insurance plan provided to them as a benefit. If you are a graduate student and are unsure of your appointment status as a Graduate Assistant or Research Assistant, please check with your department or with University Payroll at 974-5251.

The October deadline only pertains to University employees choosing insurance coverage available to them. The deadline for uninsured students needing to obtain insurance to meet ACA requirements is December 31, 2013.

WILL THE UNIVERSITY SPONSORED HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN ADEQUATELY PROVIDE COVERAGE FOR ME? THERE IS A NOTICE IN THE BROCHURE STATING IT MAY NOT MEET MINIMUM STANDARDS REQUIRED BY HEALTH CARE REFORM LAW.

The effective date of the University sponsored health insurance plan was August 1, 2013, and the plan fully met existing ACA requirements. New ACA requirements begin January 1, 2014 but plans in effect prior to this date are exempt from meeting these requirements until the next plan year (August 1, 2014). An example of two areas of the existing plan that will not meet the next plan year 2014 requirements: pre-existing conditions and plan year dollar maximums.

Pre-existing Conditions -The existing (2013-2014) plan provides pre-existing coverage for insured persons under the age of 19 or those who had continuous health insurance coverage for the previous 12 months. Other insured persons would fall under the pre-existing condition exclusions as outlined in the brochure.

Major Medical Maximum – The existing (2013-2014) plan has a plan year maximum of $500,000 per year. In the future, there will be no plan year dollar limit.

WHAT DO I DO IF I HAVE OTHER QUESTIONS YOU HAVEN'T LISTED?

For questions regarding insurance required by The Affordable Care Act, please visit https://www.healthcare.gov/. For questions regarding the University sponsored health insurance offered through UnitedHealthcare Student Resources, please call the Student Health Center Insurance Office at (865) 974-2337.