THE UNIVERSITY of TENNESSEE
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VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND STUDENT SUCCESS

March 27, 2012

Belle S. Wheelan, Ph.D.
President
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
Commission on Colleges
1866 Southern Lane
Decatur, GA 30033-4097

Dear Dr. Wheelan:

The University of Tennessee (UT) has been accredited as a single unit since 2000. After consultation with UT Knoxville Chancellor Jimmy Cheek, UT Health Science Center Chancellor Steve Schwab, UT Institute of Agriculture Chancellor Larry Arrington, and the UT Board of Trustees, and in anticipation of UT's scheduled 2015 Reaffirmation, we have determined that it is most appropriate to request a realignment of the institutions that are currently accredited within The University of Tennessee. Specifically, we request the following:

1. UT Knoxville will seek reaffirmation as a single unit, named "The University of Tennessee, Knoxville" to include the academic programs offered in the UT Institute of Agriculture (UTIA) on behalf of UT Knoxville.
2. UT Health Science Center will seek separate accreditation as a unit of a member institution.

Background and Rationale

Prior to 2000, The University of Tennessee System was composed of four, separately SACS-accredited institutions: The University of Tennessee, Knoxville [UTK, including the UT Space Institute (UTSI) and the UTIA]; The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (UTC); The University of Tennessee at Martin (UTM); and The University of Tennessee, Memphis [now the UT Health Science Center (UTHSC)]. The UT Institute for Public Service (UTIPS) was not accredited since there is no delivery of academic programs in that unit. The 1999 UT Organizational Structure is depicted below in Figure 1.

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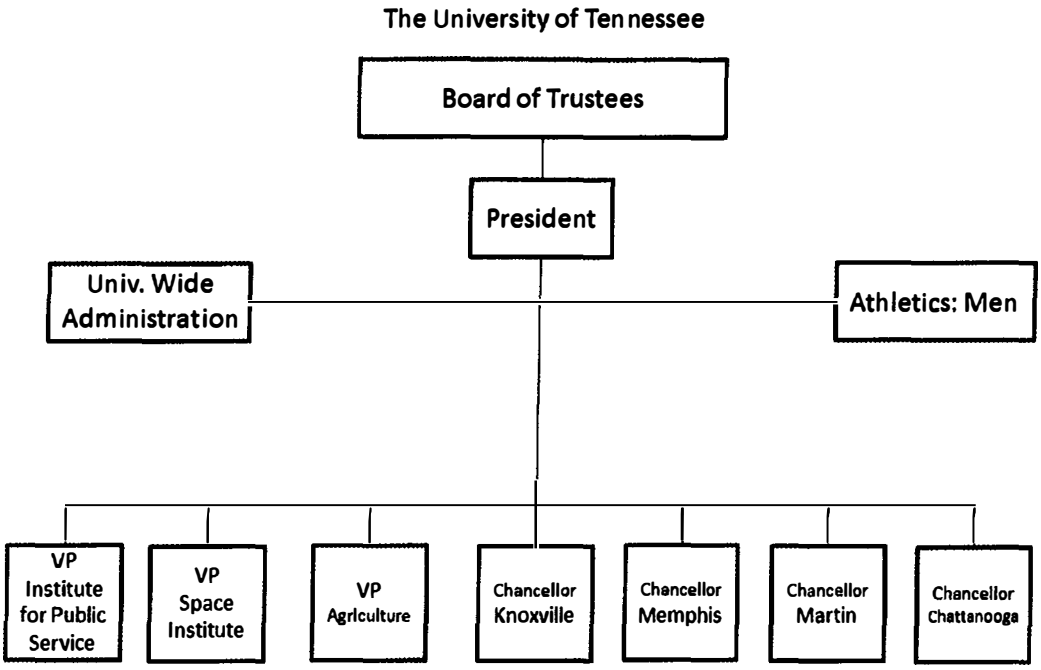


Figure 1: UT System Organization, 1999

On October 28, 1999, UT President J. Wade Gilley appointed an Administrative Streamlining Committee and charged it to review the entire University of Tennessee structure to identify new opportunities to make the university administration more efficient. The Administrative Streamlining Committee recommended a reconfiguration of the UT System into three separately accredited universities: UTM, UTC, and The University of Tennessee, composed of UTK, UTIA, UTHSC, UTSI, and UTIPS. On February 3, 2000, the recommendation to reconfigure the UT System was approved by the UT Board of Trustees. One significant change in the 2000 reorganization involved the elimination of the position of chancellor in Knoxville with the UT System President assuming the role of CEO for the Knoxville campus. Several Vice Presidents held dual System, Memphis, and Knoxville campus responsibilities in their functional areas. The 2000 UT Organizational Structure is depicted below in Figure 2.

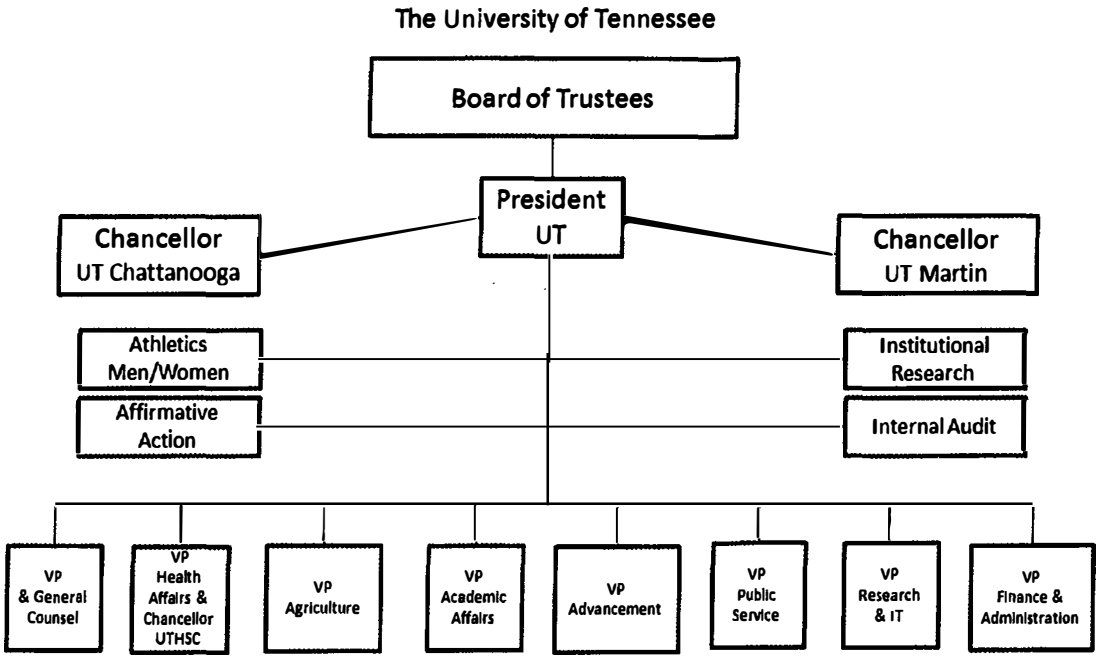


Figure 2: UT System Organization, 2000

In 2003, the position of Chancellor at UT Knoxville was re-instated. In 2011, several other changes were made within the UT structure conveyed to SACS via a substantive change letter on May 6, 2011 (Attached as Appendix A). Those changes include:

- Title change of the UTIA CEO from Vice President to Chancellor
- Restructuring of UTSI to eliminate a dual reporting relationship to UT System and UTK College of Engineering, resulting in a single reporting relationship to UTK Chancellor
- Reorganization of UT Men's and Women's Athletics at Knoxville and a change in reporting from UT President to UTK Chancellor

The 2011 UT Organizational chart is depicted below as Figure 3.

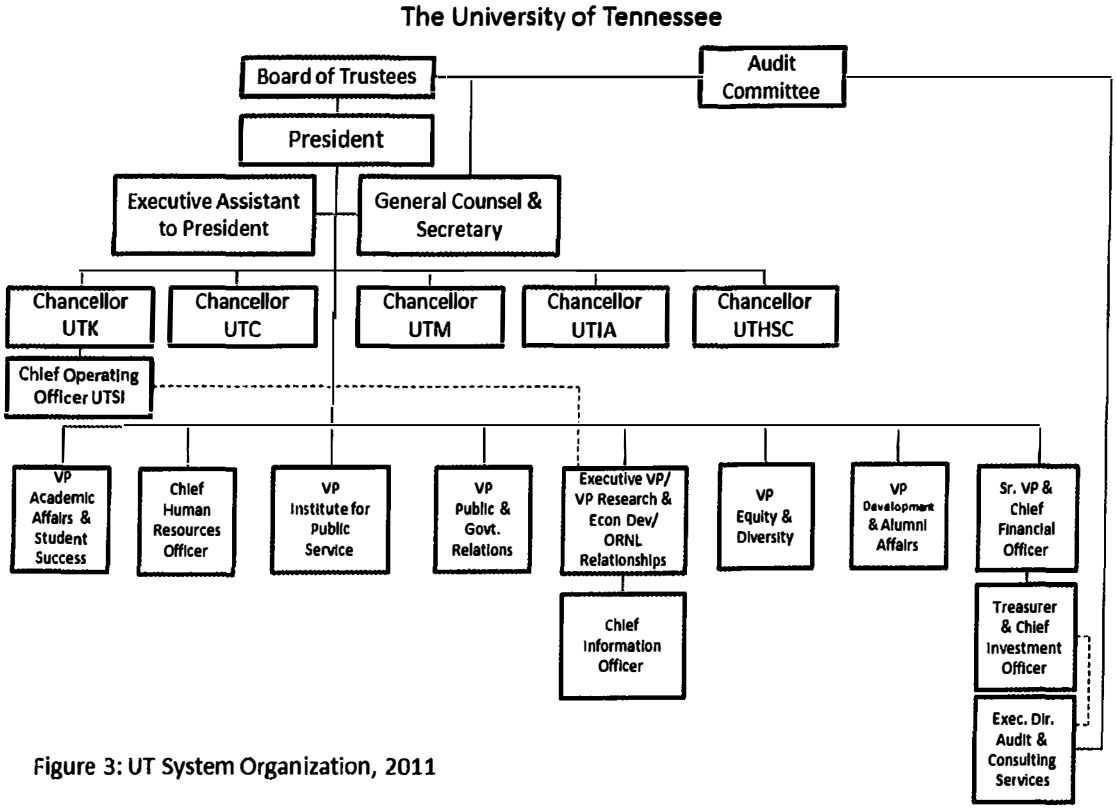


Figure 3: UT System Organization, 2011

Description of the Proposed Changes

UT Knoxville

UTK would consist of the following: UTK, UTSI and the academic programs offered by the faculty in the UTIA. UTSI's academic programs have always been part of UTK. UTSI, while geographically situated 189 miles from Knoxville in Tullahoma, Tennessee, provides graduate coursework primarily in engineering and physics. The UTSI faculty are members of appropriate academic departments based in Knoxville and work under the auspices of the Knoxville Faculty Senate and Faculty Handbook. UTSI students are admitted by the UTK Graduate School and adhere to all policies and procedures as outlined in the UTK Graduate Catalog. The UTSI Executive Director reports to the UTK Chancellor.

The UTIA is a state-wide entity and has three separately budgeted components: 1) UT Extension (University budget entity E12), providing outreach and assistance to citizens in the 95 counties of Tennessee in the areas of agriculture, natural resources, family and consumer science, and 4-H youth development; 2) the UT Agricultural Experiment Station (University budget entity E11), responsible for basic and applied research from Biofuels to Forestry to Wildlife; and 3) the UT College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM, University budget entity E18), Tennessee's only veterinary college, offering graduate and professional degrees. The fourth unit, the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR), is budgeted through UTK (University budget entity E01) and offers undergraduate and

graduate degrees to students who are admitted through and receive their degrees from UTK. The CVM and the CASNR are both located on the grounds of the UTIA in Knoxville.

The **faculty** in CASNR receive partial salaries from UT Knoxville (E01) and UT Agricultural Experiment Station (E11). The faculty in CVM are fully funded through the separate budget for CVM (E18). Both CVM and CASNR faculty are elected to seats in the UTK Faculty Senate and are subject to the provisions of the UTK Faculty Handbook.

The **Deans** of CVM and CASNR have a reporting line to the UTK Provost with regards to student academic matters; additionally, the CASNR dean is accountable to the UTK Provost for the budget (E01) and other financial matters.

The undergraduate and graduate **students** are admitted to CASNR through the UTK Admissions Office or the UTK Graduate School. CVM professional students are admitted through the college; similar to how the UTK College of Law handles admissions. CVM graduate students are admitted through the UTK Graduate School. UTK reviews any transfer credits the students may present during the admission process. All student services CASNR and CVM students receive are provided through UTK (i.e., student financial aid, campus housing, student health center, student recreational facilities). All CVM and CASNR undergraduate, graduate, and professional students are subject to the provisions of the UTK student handbook, *Hilltopics*, the policies of the UTK Graduate School, and the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs, and their degrees are awarded by UTK, not the UTIA. The proposed structure for UT Knoxville is represented below in Figures 4 through 6.

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

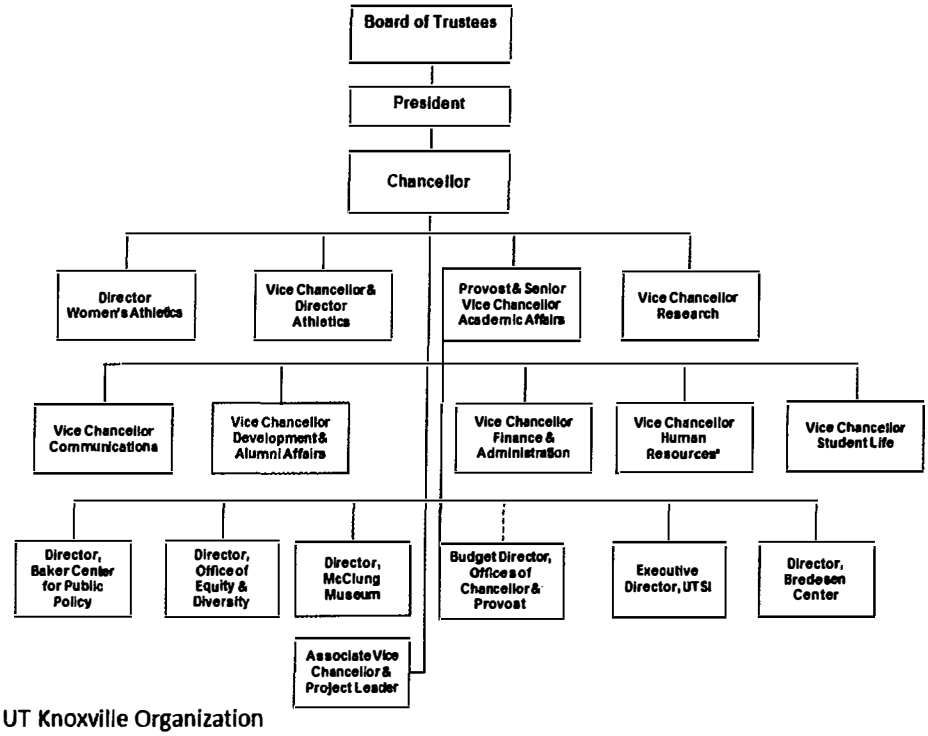


Figure 4: UT Knoxville Organization

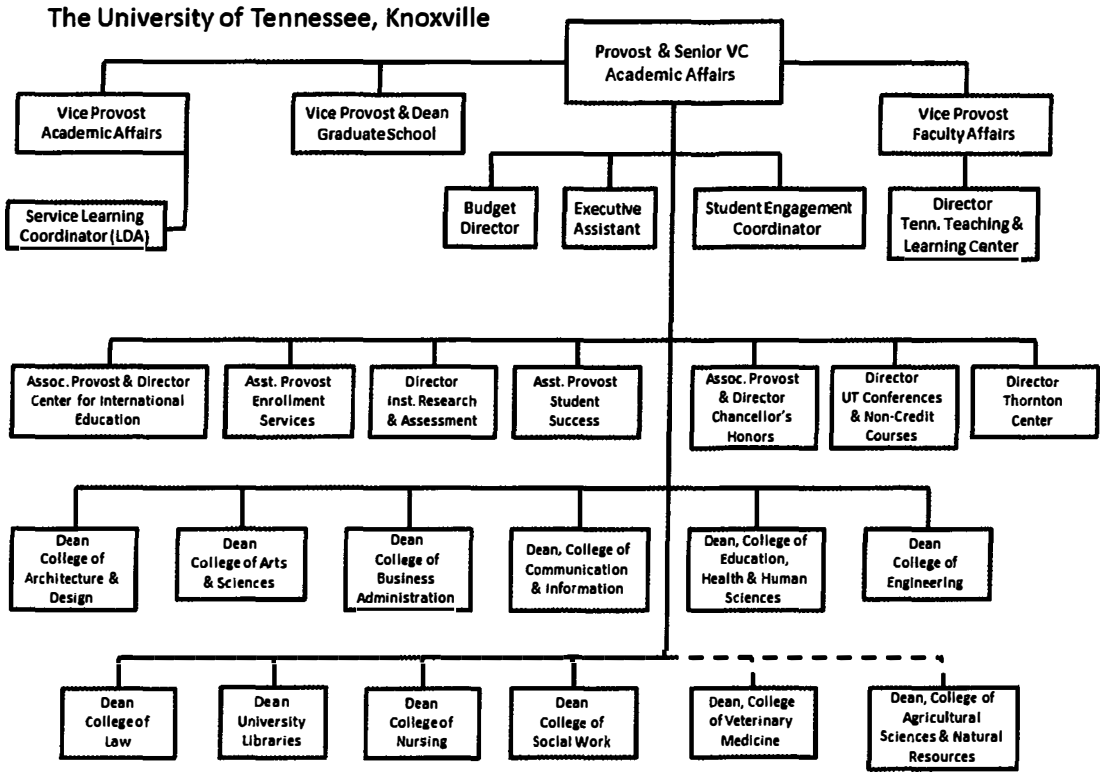


Figure 5: UT, Knoxville Organization, Office of the Provost

The University of Tennessee
Institute of Agriculture

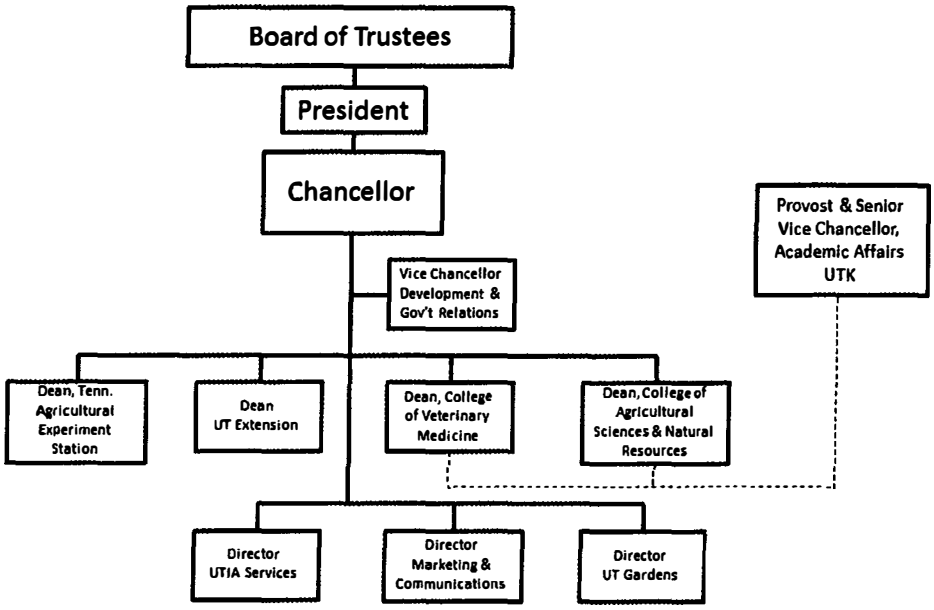
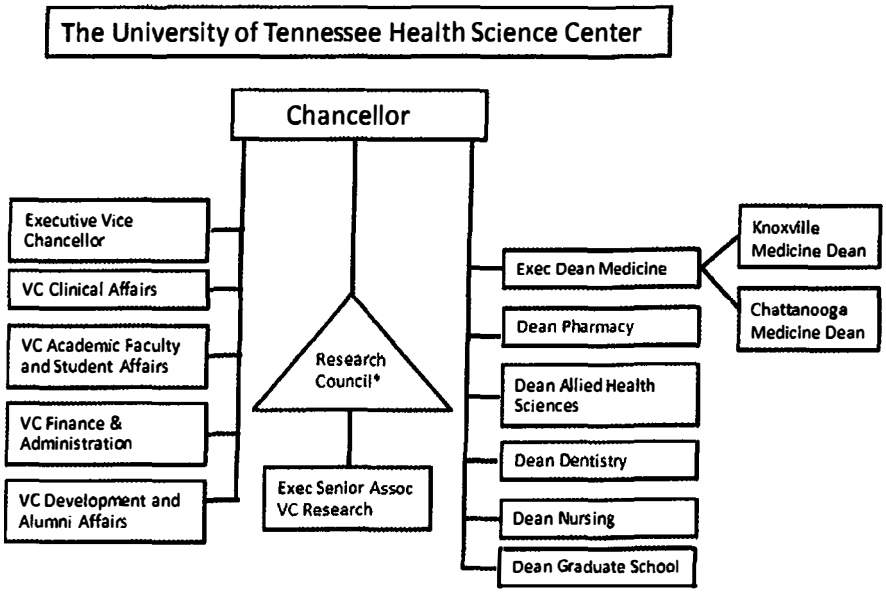


Figure 6: UT, Institute of Agriculture Organization

UT Health Science Center

The UTHSC in Memphis is composed of six colleges: the College of Medicine, the College of Pharmacy, the College of Dentistry, the College of Allied Health Sciences, the College of Nursing and the College of Graduate Health Sciences. These elements, in which didactic instruction of students occurs, would constitute UTHSC as a separately accredited unit. All student recruitment and admissions processes for these colleges occur at the UTHSC. Students operate under provisions of *CenterScope*, the UTHSC student handbook, and the UTHSC Catalog. The deans of the colleges at UTHSC report to the UTHSC Chancellor. Faculty are governed by procedures and campus policies outlined in the UTHSC Faculty Handbook.

All UTHSC colleges are administratively located on the Memphis campus. The College of Pharmacy is located in Memphis with an off-campus instructional site in Knoxville. Likewise, the College of Allied Health Sciences is located in Memphis with an off-campus instructional site for programs in Audiology and Speech Pathology in Knoxville. The College of Medicine, also located in Memphis, has off-campus instructional sites in both Chattanooga and Knoxville. UTHSC professional students rotate through clinical sites throughout the state during their respective programs. The UTHSC organizational chart is shown below as Figure 7.



*Research Council includes Chancellor, EVC, Dean COM and Dean Pharmacy

Figure 7: UT Health Science Center Organization

Structure and Responsibilities of University-wide Administration

Although The University of Tennessee is considered a single legal entity within the state of Tennessee, it operates as a system of higher education. As such, the System Administration, headed by the President, provides centralized services for all UT campuses and units. These services include a single financial system, including personnel records, payroll, accounts receivable, accounts payable, and contract review. The General Counsel's office is located within the System Administration and the office provides legal services to all campuses and units. The UT Foundation (the development/alumni affairs foundation) and the UT Research Foundation are separate 501(c)(3) entities. Development and alumni affairs officers work for the UT Foundation but are assigned to perform development and alumni affairs services for each campus. The System Information Technology office sets the direction for IT on all campuses, and is involved in the planning and purchasing of enterprise systems, although each campus handles its day to day IT operations. For the purposes of U.S. Department of Education requirements, written student complaints against institutional policy are managed by the System Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Success; however, each campus has its own procedures for internal complaints, as described in the respective student handbooks and on the campus websites. Academic programs are proposed by the faculty on each campus and approved by the campus administration, prior to approval by the Board of Trustees and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC). Tenure and promotion are handled by the campus academic departments, deans, provost/vice chancellor and chancellor, prior to recommendation by the system President to the Board of Trustees for approval.

The System Administration is the primary interface between the campuses and the General Assembly as well as the THEC. Budget requests for all campuses, including capital projects and improvements, are reviewed centrally, then consolidated and forwarded to THEC for consideration in the budget request to the governor and legislature. State and federal legislation activities are coordinated at the System level, through consultation and communication with the campuses and units. The President's staff is composed of vice presidents, all of whom work with their campus counterparts to ensure coordination and efficiency. The President reports to the UT Board of Trustees, chaired by the Governor.

Legal and Operational Decisions

Very few legal and operational changes are required as the proposed changes in accreditation occur. Authority to operate and grant degrees is afforded by the state to the University of Tennessee system and its governing Board of Trustees, and not to the campuses directly. Both UTK and UTHSC fall under the same governing board with UTC and UTM, with oversight of the institutional missions, fiscal stability, and institutional policy, although operational decisions are delegated to the campus chancellors and campus administration. Both UTK and UTHSC have a mission statement approved by the Board of Trustees and the THEC. The Board of Trustees sets policy for all UT campuses and units, and each campus develops procedures for implementing the policy (Research Administration, Tenure and Promotion, Human Resources, Conflict of Interest, etc.). State funding is currently appropriated separately to UTK, UT Agricultural Experiment Station, UT Extension, CVM, and the UTHSC. No change is required for funding purposes. The Board of Trustees delegates the authority to confer degrees to the chancellors at UTK, UTC, UTM, and UTHSC. All diplomas are issued from The University of Tennessee, but each is currently signed by the respective campus Chancellor. No changes are required. UTK and UTHSC handle admissions, financial aid, and the registrar functions separately.

The University System structure would require no revision. As mentioned previously, although many services are delivered centrally, both UTK and UTHSC currently have the staff and the resources in place to deliver all necessary administrative and student services. The 2011 organizational structure is shown below as Figure 8.

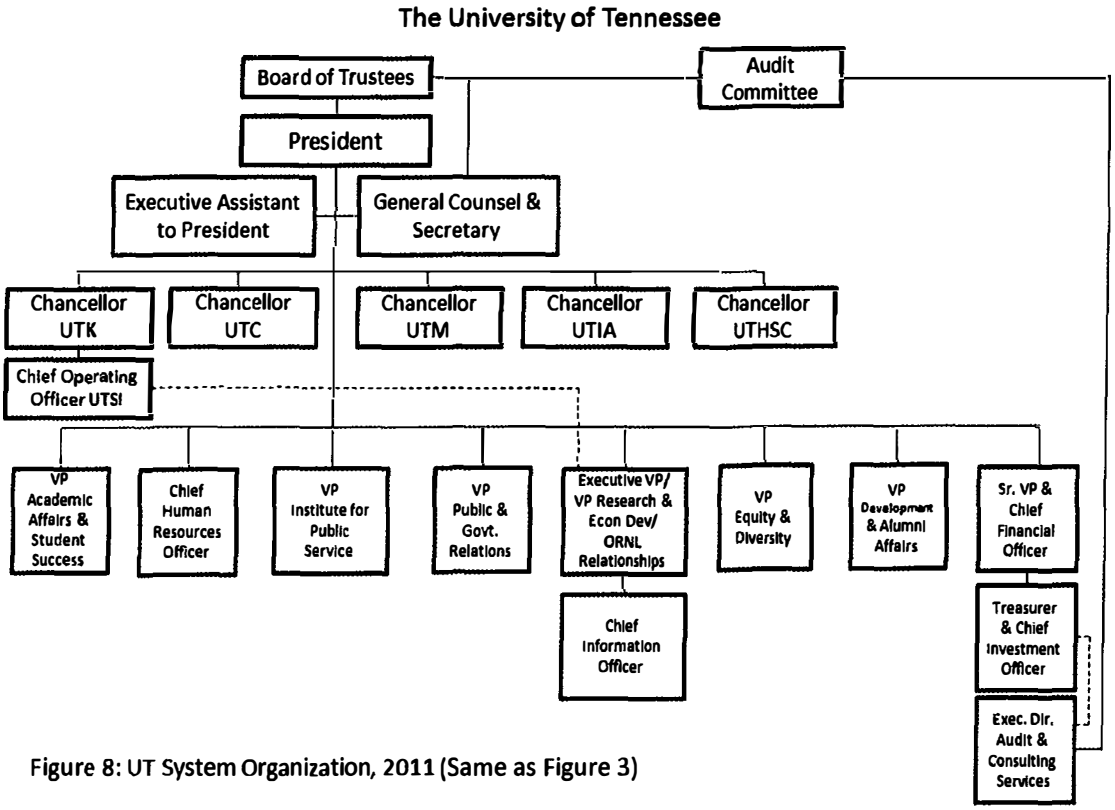


Figure 8: UT System Organization, 2011 (Same as Figure 3)

Changes Necessary

Currently, UT has a single United States Treasury number for purposes of financial aid for students at both UTK and UTHSC. The combined entity is responsible for managing funds and federal reporting functions, but each entity currently employs financial aid administrators and counselors on the respective campuses. If SACS approves the proposed changes, steps will be taken immediately to effect separate financial aid functions for UTK and UTHSC.

UT currently collects data for IPEDS and other entities as a single institution. Steps will be taken as soon as feasible to separate the data collection and reporting. Staff is in place to handle these changes.

Proposed Timeline

As two separate requests are proposed, two timelines are depicted:

1. Timeline for UT Knoxville reaffirmation as a single unit

SACS approves reorganization	SACS on-site visit	SACS reaffirmation
June 2012	Spring 2015	December 2015

2. Timeline for UTHSC initial accreditation as a separate institution

SACS approval to seek separate accreditation	UTHSC submits application for candidacy	SACS review of application	SACS Review Committee authorization	UTHSC submits compliance report	SACS on-site visit	SACS affirmation
June 2012	Feb 2013	Spring 2013	June 2013	Fall 2014	Jan - Feb or Apr - May 2015	Dec 2015

The UT Board of Trustees has been informed of the request for the proposed changes in accreditation and is prepared to take any action required at the appropriate time.

I would appreciate your consideration of this request. Please feel free to contact me should you have questions or need additional information.

Most sincerely,

Joseph A. DiPietro
President

C: Chancellor Jimmy G. Cheek
Chancellor Steve Schwab
Chancellor Larry Arrington
Dr. Susan D. Martin
Dr. Mary Lewnes Albrecht
Dr. Cheryl Scheid
Dr. Alicia Dorsey
Dr. Katie High