

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
ARTICLES OF SHARED GOVERNANCE

Rev. 7.0
03/27/16

Preamble:

There is widespread recognition that shared governance is the fundamental ingredient of a healthy academic institution and foster student, faculty and staff success. The concept is supported by the Tennessee Board of Regents policy and is a guiding principle for the nation's leading universities. Shared governance allows the university to benefit from accumulated wisdom and knowledge of its faculty, provides a venue for faculty and administrators to work together to solve increasingly complex problems facing higher education, and creates opportunities for the university to address its core mission with more effectiveness and unity of purpose.

Shared governance is not a single or a simple concept. It is an intricate tapestry of rules and relationships, practice and policy. The faculty's sense of participation in governance of the institution creates a collective responsibility of ownership among the faculty. Through shared governance, the faculty becomes a partner with the administration in working out common ground from which to face the challenges of the times. Standing together on that common ground, it becomes difficult for either group to act unilaterally.

Mutual understanding, built through shared governance, based on community of interest, and producing joint effort through consultation, is essential for at least three reasons. First, the academic institution has become less autonomous. Buildings, research, and student tuition are supported by funds over which the college or university exercises diminishing control. Legislative and executive governmental authorities, at all levels, play a part in the making of important decisions in academic policy. If these voices and forces are to be successfully heard and integrated, the academic institution must be in a position to meet them with its own generally unified view. Second, regard for the welfare of the institution remains important despite the mobility and interchange of its constituents. Third, a college or university in which all the components are aware of their interdependence, of the usefulness of communication among themselves and of the force of joint action will enjoy increased capacity to solve educational problems and produce, if not agreement, policies that better reflect the university mission.

Clearly the consultation inherent in shared governance is a difficult and time consuming process for all participants. The time devoted to consultation undoubtedly delays implementation of what proponents always believe is a good idea. However, the filter of other minds and the tests of experience broader than that of a few people more often than not add value to the formulation of a proposal. Because shared governance is both policy and practice, the specific mechanisms for participation as well as the rights and responsibilities of faculty members and administrators are outlined below.

Article I: Civility:

- A. All administrators, faculty members, students, and staff members have the right to be treated with respect and to conduct business in a professional manner.
- B. All administrators, faculty members, students, and staff members have the right to due process.
- C. All faculty members, students, and staff members will have the opportunity to have their concerns heard by the appropriate administrative official.
- D. All administrators will have the opportunity to communicate their concerns to faculty members, students, and/or staff.
- E. All administrators and faculty members have the responsibility to acknowledge the interdependent roles of faculty and administration in the fulfillment of the institutional mission.

Article II: Individual Faculty Rights:

- A. All faculty members have the right to academic freedom as defined in Tennessee Board of Regents and MTSU policy. (See Addendum)
- B. All faculty members have the right to determine their research pursuits, creative endeavors, and/or other scholarly activities within the mission of their academic unit and area of expertise.
- C. All faculty members have the right to be involved in determining their professional and public service activities.
- D. All faculty members will have a reasonable period of time to review and respond to proposed policy changes impacting the professional and academic duties of faculty.
- E. All faculty members will have easy access to a complete and current set of policies and procedures.
- F. All faculty members have the right to consistent implementation of institutional policies and procedures at all levels.

Article III: Collective Faculty Rights:

- A. Faculty members have a collective right to participate in the shared governance of the institution as defined by Tennessee Board of Regents Policy Number 1:03:10:00 and other TBR policies. (See Addendum)
- B. Faculty members have a collective right to participate in shared governance at the university, college, school, and departmental levels as defined by this document and other institutional policies.
- C. Faculty members have the collective opportunity to propose new academic programs and curriculum.
- D. Faculty members have the collective opportunity to initiate, review, revise, and approve changes to academic programs and curriculum.
- E. Faculty members have the collective opportunity to have a role in making recommendations in the hiring, evaluation, renewal, tenure, and promotion of all

faculty members as defined by university, college and departmental policies and procedures.

- F. Faculty members have the collective opportunity to have a voice in the hiring and evaluation of administrators who can influence academics or faculty welfare, and academic staff.
- G. Faculty members have the collective right to determine the operations of the Faculty Senate and other areas of faculty governance.
- H. Faculty members have the collective opportunity to influence institutional priorities.
- I. Faculty members have the collective opportunity to have a voice in making the major decisions regarding academic affairs, and student affairs where appropriate.
- J. Faculty members will be collectively involved at all stages of the formation, review, revision, and approval of institutional policies and procedures pertaining to academic affairs, student affairs where appropriate, faculty welfare and other areas that impact faculty. This includes a timely review of the final version of the document before the vetting and approval process begins.
- K. Faculty members have the collective opportunity to propose new institutional policies and procedures.
- L. Faculty members have the collective opportunity to call for the review of policy and procedures.
- M. The Faculty Senate will have a reasonable period of time to review and respond to any proposed policy changes.
- N. Faculty members have the collective opportunity to be consulted in recommending academic priorities of the budget. This includes having opportunities to be included in deliberation on major budget priorities.

Article IV: Individual Faculty Responsibilities:

- A. All faculty members have the responsibility to actively participate in the governance of the university.
- B. Faculty members will be given the opportunity to be engaged in and provide feedback on major issues that impact the academic mission of the university.
- C. All faculty members have the responsibility to adhere to institutional policies and procedures.
- D. All faculty members have the responsibility to follow appropriate protocols and due process.
- E. Faculty members have the responsibility to clearly articulate issues and concerns in a timely, accurate, informed, and consistent manner.

Article V: Collective Faculty Responsibilities:

- A. Faculty members have the collective responsibility to review, revise, and approve changes to academic programs and curriculum as necessary.
- B. Faculty members have the collective responsibility to participate in the hiring, evaluation, renewal, tenure, and promotion of faculty members as defined in university, college and departmental policies.

- C. Faculty members have the collective responsibility to participate in making recommendations regarding the hiring and evaluation of administrators who can influence academics or faculty welfare, and academic staff.
- D. Faculty members have the collective responsibility to adhere to institutional policies and procedures.
- E. Faculty members have the collective responsibility to follow appropriate protocols and due process.
- F. Faculty members have the collective responsibility to clearly articulate issues and concerns in a timely, accurate, informed, and consistent manner.
- G. The Faculty Senate has the responsibility to become fully apprised of the available information regarding an issue before taking action on that issue.

Article VI: Administrator Rights:

- A. Members of the administration have the right to expect adherence to protocol and due process by faculty members.
- B. Members of the administration have the ability to request the development of new academic programs and curriculum.
- C. Members of the administration have the ability to initiate, review, revise, and approve changes to academic programs and curriculum.
- D. Members of the administration have the right to determine matters pertaining to administrative structure and operations.
- E. Members of the administration have the right to determine institutional priorities in cooperation with the faculty.
- F. Members of the administration have the right to make the major decisions regarding academic affairs and institutional operations.
- G. Members of the administration have the right to be involved at all stages of the formation, review, revision, and approval of institutional policies and procedures. This includes a timely review of the final version of the document before the vetting and approval process begins.
- H. Members of the administration have the right to propose new institutional policies and procedures.
- I. Members of the administration have the right to call for review of policies and procedures.
- J. Members of the administration have the right to a reasonable period of time to review and respond to any proposed policy changes.

Article VII: Administrator Responsibilities:

- A. Members of the administration have the responsibility to facilitate the academic mission of the institution.
- B. Members of the administration have the responsibility for the care, upkeep, operations, and advancement of the institution and its programs.
- C. Members of the administration have the responsibility to adhere to institutional policies and procedures.

- D. Members of the administration have the responsibility for the formation, review, revision, and approval of institutional policy and procedures.
- E. Members of the administration have the responsibility for the enforcement of institutional policies and procedures.
- F. Members of the administration have the responsibility to follow appropriate protocols and due process.
- G. Members of the administration have the responsibility for making the major decisions regarding institutional operations, as well as the consequences of those decisions.
- H. Members of the administration have the responsibility to assure that the processes for hiring, evaluating, renewal, tenure, and promotion of faculty members are followed in compliance with the current policies and procedures.
- I. Members of the administration have the responsibility to assure that the processes for hiring, evaluating, and promotion of administrators and institutional staff are followed in compliance with the current policies and procedures.
- J. Members of the administration have the responsibility for the development and maintenance of a complete, clear, and unambiguous set of current institutional policies and procedures.
- K. Members of the administration have the responsibility to facilitate easy access to current institutional policies and procedures.
- L. Members of the administration have the responsibility for timely dissemination of accurate, complete, and consistent information regarding the academic affairs, student affairs, faculty welfare, and other matters pertinent to institutional operations.
- M. Members of the administration have the responsibility to solicit, consider, and respond to faculty concerns in a timely manner.
- N. Members of the administration have the responsibility for institutional finances and budgetary processes.

Addendum:

TRB Policy No. 1:03:10:00

SUBJECT: Student and Faculty Participation in Development of Campus Policies and Programs

The Tennessee Board of Regents recognizes that students and faculty are vital components of the campus community, which must effectively contribute to the progress and general welfare of the institutions and technology centers governed by the Board. Students should have a primary interest in matters of student life, including discipline and housing, and faculty should have a primary interest in academic affairs, including curriculum, program changes and development, and admission and graduation requirements. Furthermore, both students and faculty have a direct interest in both student and academic affairs. Therefore, it is the policy of the Board that each institution and center shall establish effective means whereby students and faculty can participate in and make recommendations concerning the formation of policies and programs relating to student and academic affairs.

Due to differences in sizes of the various institutions and centers, and existing methods at some institutions and centers which may effectively provide for faculty and student participation, each institution and center shall determine and make known the method and degree of student and faculty involvement in specific areas of institutional and center decision-making, subject to the approval of the Chancellor.

Source: TBR Meetings, June 20, 1975; September 30, 1983; June 19, 1998

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

POLICY NO: _____ DATED: _____

SUPERSEDES POLICY NO: II:01:05A:I DATED: August 1, 1999

SUBJECT: ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY

I. Introduction

This policy is in compliance with Tennessee Board of Regents Policy No. 5:02:03:30 and in the case of any conflict later discovered is subordinate to that particular policy.

II. Academic Freedom and Responsibility

- A. Faculty members are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, being careful to avoid the persistent intrusion of matter, controversial or not, that has no bearing on the subject of instruction.
- B. Faculty members are entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to the adequate performance of their other academic duties. Research for financial gain must be based upon an understanding with the authorities of the university, which is documented in writing and signed by the faculty member and the appropriate academic officer(s).
- C. Faculty are members of a civic community, a learned profession, and an educational institution. When faculty members speak or write as members of a civic community, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations. Faculty should remember that the public may judge the profession and the institution by their utterances. Hence, they should be accurate, exercise appropriate restraint, show respect for the opinions of others, and make every effort to indicate that they do not represent the university when speaking as members of a civic community.
- D. Academic freedom is essential to fulfill the ultimate objectives of an educational institution – the free search for and exposition of truth – and applies to both teaching and research. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of truth, and academic freedom in teaching is fundamental for the protection of the rights of the faculty member in teaching and of the student to freedom in learning. Implicit in the principle of academic freedom are the corollary responsibilities of the faculty who enjoy that freedom. Incompetence, indolence, intellectual dishonesty, failure to carry out assigned duties, serious moral dereliction, arbitrary and capricious disregard of standard of professional conduct – these and other grounds as set forth in TBR Policy, “Policy on Academic Tenure at Tennessee Board of Regents’ Universities,” Section P., may constitute adequate cause for dismissal or other disciplinary sanctions against faculty members subject to the Provisions of Article III.
- E. Academic freedom and academic responsibility are interdependent, and academic tenure is adopted as a means to protect the former while promoting the latter. The right to academic freedom imposes upon the faculty an equal responsibility to be involved in the process of review and recommendation in matters that pertain to tenure and promotion as specified in university policy. The right to academic freedom also imposes upon the faculty an equal responsibility to take appropriate professional action against faculty members who are derelict in discharging their professional responsibilities.
- F. While academic tenure is essential for the protection of academic freedom, all faculty members, tenured or non-tenured, have an equal right to academic freedom and bear the same academic responsibilities implicit in that freedom.