

THE UNIVERSITY of TENNESSEE CHATTANOOGA

Provost's Page

November 3, 2008

It is said that “Life is what happens while you are making other plans.” There always seems to be a natural tension between the truly important issues (*like those in our Strategic Plan*) and the urgent ones that demand immediate attention. The current economic situation is testing us all on many fronts in both our personal and professional lives. However, I am proud to say that although UTC is under considerable financial stress because of the loss of approximately \$4 million of state support already in this current fiscal year, it remains a fundamentally strong institution committed to its core mission.

Thanks to the additional revenue from recent enrollment increases and some prudent fiscal management practices, we have been able to absorb these budget cuts to this point without eliminating any programs or faculty positions. Unfortunately, the economic outlook remains unclear. UTC has been charged with planning for an additional reduction of 3%-5% for FY10. Therefore, we are aggressively evaluating all of our programs and operations at UTC in order to strategically accommodate these further reductions.

Every division of the university is looking strategically at its operations. In academic affairs, we have established an 11 member *ad hoc* committee with broad representation from every college, school, and governance body within academic affairs. The committee has been charged with developing and drafting recommendations for possible efficiency improvements or operational reductions. I want to assure everyone that the committee is taking this task very seriously and that the entire campus community will have an opportunity to comment on the draft recommendations before they are considered by the Chancellor for final approval. Every program and operation is on the table for evaluation and discussion, and every division of the University is being evaluated strategically. Feel free to address any questions or comments directly to me or anyone on the committee. Although this is certainly a challenging task for us, I encourage us all to work together to get the best possible solutions on the table for consideration.

Below are listed the committee membership, principles, timeline, and processes for the strategic review of academic programs and operations. Also included are brief annotations of other current initiatives from this office. As always, please feel free to contact me directly at phil-oldham@utc.edu with any suggestions, questions, and/or concerns you may have regarding any university-related issues.

Principles and Process of the Strategic Review of Academic Programs and Operations

- Ad hoc Committee to Define Principles and Process
 - Provost- Phil Oldham
 - Rep from Deans Council- Dean Mary Tanner
 - Rep from Faculty Senate- Dr. Pedro Campa
 - Rep from Graduate Faculty Council- Dr. Vicki Petzko
 - Rep from Dept Heads Council- Dr. John Freeman
 - Rep from SGA- Scott Stuart
 - SACS Chair- Dr. Karen Adsit
 - Associate Provost- Dr. Jocelyn Sanders
 - Staff Member in AA- Yvonne Kilpatrick
 - At-Large Rep from College of Business- Dr. Stan Davis
 - At-Large Rep from College of Engineering and Computer Science- Dr. Nesli Alp
- Principles
 - Centrality to Mission
 - Quality/Performance
 - Impact Value/State Need
 - Fiscal Viability
 - Added Value Contributions (i.e. gen. ed., research \$, etc.)
- Process
 - Identification of Academic Programs and Operations for Review
 - Thorough Review of Programs and Operations
 - Recommendation for Continuation/Closure
- Time-line
 - Nov. 14- Draft Recommendations
 - Nov. 17- Solicit Campus Response
 - Dec. 5- Final Recommendations to Chancellor

Current Initiatives

- FAST- English faculty teaching freshman composition and general education courses at the freshman level have reported students who have missed at least two classes by midterm. We're collecting data on midterm grades, final grades, and absences, which we'll analyze at semester's end. Again, we appreciate the English Department faculty for their cooperation and support of this initiative.
- Articulation- The Tennessee State Legislature has grown increasingly interested in facilitating statewide student articulation and transfer among all higher education institutions. Recently a group representing the UT campuses, THEC, and the TBR system met in Nashville to discuss needed improvements and related issues. A committee across the UT system, including UTC representatives will begin working on this issue.
- Faculty Honors Day- After consultation with the leadership of the Faculty Senate, we have decided to move the annual Faculty Honors Day from early December to after spring break. This seems to be a more appropriate and convenient time to recognize and celebrate faculty accomplishments for the academic year.

- International Programs- A significant number of faculty have responded to my earlier invitation to participate in a discussion regarding the future direction and structure for international programs at UTC. I have directed Hugh Prevost to arrange a meeting for this group before the Thanksgiving holiday. The appropriate strategic planning action committee will also be included in this conversation.