



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
TENNESSEE  
KNOXVILLE

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# Continuing Our Journey to the Top: Past Progress and Future Opportunities

A Five-Year Assessment of *Vol Vision*

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September 2015

A working draft for review and feedback

## The Journey Continues

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, is on a journey to become a top public research university. Our journey began in 2010 when UT accepted an ambitious Top 25 challenge from then-governor Phil Bredesen. In response, UT developed *Vol Vision*, our strategic plan that set priorities to guide campus advancement and resource decisions from 2010 through 2015.

Over the past five years, the journey has come to represent a long-term commitment to continuous improvement and the pursuit of excellence. To observe this important five-year mark and set the course for the future, UT seeks to review its accomplishments and make necessary adjustments in strategic direction. To this end, Provost Susan Martin has convened a Milestone Review Committee to lead a campus conversation on opportunities to refresh *Vol Vision* for the next five-year phase of the journey.

As the first step in a yearlong process, the committee has assessed progress related to *Vol Vision*'s original strategic priorities and identified challenges that may have an impact on UT's future. This document outlines the committee's observations and recommendations to start a productive campus conversation regarding UT's future. Starting in fall 2015, the committee will seek feedback from campus stakeholders on the directions and opportunities included in this assessment. See Appendix A for the committee's membership and its process.

## The Goal

UT's goal is to be a Top 25 public research university. Our overarching objective is to be a stronger flagship university for the state of Tennessee and make a distinctive contribution to higher education. Therefore, our strategic priorities include attributes that we consider common to leading public research universities, while also honoring the characteristics that distinguish UT from other schools. This goal requires a long-term view and vigilant attention to progress, challenges, and opportunities.

Our aspirations are broader than any single ranking index. In 2010, Chancellor Jimmy G. Cheek appointed a task force to define what becoming a Top 25 research university meant for UT. The task force evaluated major rankings systems and determined that a hybrid approach was necessary. Aligning to a single ranking methodology would limit UT to a narrow focus.

While UT's previous peer set had consisted of regional schools, the task force selected new peer groups that included some of the nation's best public research universities. The task force then evaluated various ranking frameworks and recommended twelve metrics that reflected a balanced commitment to undergraduate education, graduate education, and research. The task force also attempted to align metrics with the state's outcomes-based funding model. A gap analysis followed that compared UT's performance against national peers based on those twelve metrics in order to identify areas for improvement.

*Vol Vision* builds upon this work. The plan frames five strategic priorities that reflect characteristics of leading public universities and cultivate UT's distinctive identity. As UT makes progress toward these *Vol Vision* priorities, we predict that our ranking in major national lists will also improve. The most important outcome, however, will be a stronger flagship university in service to Tennessee, the nation, and the world. Background information on *Vol Vision* is included in Appendix B.

The Top 25 ranking associated with our goal is intended to inspire the campus to compete on a national level. Accordingly, it is important to comment on UT's position across the different national rankings. The Center for University Measurement and Performance designated UT as a Top 25 institution in its most recent rankings. UT is now ranked in 50<sup>th</sup> position in the 2015 *U.S. News and World Report's* Top Public Universities, two spaces better than our rank as of the beginning of our journey in June 2010. UT is also ranked as a "value in higher education" in *Kiplinger's Personal Finance* and *Princeton Review* rankings.

Furthermore, many of UT's colleges, programs, and units rank in or near the top 25 of public universities in their disciplines. Four of UT's colleges compare favorably among public universities in their respective *U.S. News and World Report's* graduate school rankings: the College of Social Work (No. 23), the College of Engineering (No. 36), the Haslam College of Business (No. 32), and the College of Law (No. 27). *U.S. News* ranks two undergraduate colleges among the top publics: the Haslam College of Business (No. 31) and the College of Engineering (No. 32).

Several academic programs rank in the top 25 of public universities in their fields: nuclear engineering, supply chain and logistics, sports management, clinical law training, biosystems engineering, information sciences, art, printmaking, geography, microbiology, and modern foreign languages (Spanish and Portuguese). In addition, the UT Libraries consistently ranks in or near the top 25 of public universities in the annual rankings of the Association of Research

Libraries. *Working Draft Note: This section will change to include additional and updated rankings for Colleges, Divisions, and Departments.*

## Volunteer Values

The committee notes that a shift in culture has contributed to UT's increased success over the past five years. *Vol Vision* raised institutional aspirations and motivated action. Progress has been the collective result of individual students, faculty, and staff contributing daily to the pursuit of excellence.

Building on this culture and institutional will to change is essential to the next phase in the journey. The committee presents a new articulation of the Volunteer Values first established in *Vol Vision* to set the stage for the future. The committee recommends that the campus use these values to guide, encourage, and recognize individual contributions as we move forward.

Promoting an institutional culture of continuous improvement is the key to pursuing and achieving institutional excellence. This culture is guided by adherence to core values that define the Volunteer spirit and permeate who we are, what we do, and our approach to living and learning at UT and beyond. Though our strategic focus may change over time, at UT we always foster and support the following values:

- **Seeking enlightenment.** The Volunteer spirit is intelligent, curious, and honors the free exchange of ideas. This type of inquiry encourages intellectual growth, a lifelong pursuit of knowledge, and a sharing of this knowledge, as embodied by the Torchbearer.
- **Leading with innovation and integrity.** Volunteers know that solutions to modern problems arise through an understanding and application of existing data, but also through creative thinking. Teamwork is vital to this process, and the best leaders foster ethical and professional behavior such as open dialogue, transparency, and accountability within their groups.
- **Advancing diversity.** The Volunteer family encompasses faculty, staff, students, and alumni of different races, creeds, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions,

physical abilities, and socioeconomic statuses. Respecting the contributions and strengths of each individual is vital to teamwork and social justice, and to fostering a culture of inclusive excellence.

- **Engaging locally and globally.** Volunteers get involved. Whether within our local and extended communities or embracing global challenges, the UT family strives to make a difference.
- **Practicing responsible stewardship.** Sustainability of resources, whether in terms of finances, infrastructure, or the environment, is key to a healthy institution. Practicing these values at UT builds a lifelong respect for managing resources responsibly in all aspects of Volunteer life.

## Strategic Considerations for 2020

UT must acknowledge and adapt to a changing external environment in order to prepare for 2020. The committee consulted with experts to identify trends and challenges that may impact UT's future. Dr. William Fox of the UT Center for Business and Economic Research contributed a perspective on Tennessee's economic, demographic, and policy trends. Dr. David Attis of the Education Advisory Board, a leading consulting firm, provided an assessment of trends in higher education. Based on these presentations, the committee has identified four considerations for the near future:

- **Changing resource base.** Like those of many other public universities, UT's resource base has changed in recent years. In the past, state appropriations accounted for the highest percentage of total revenue. Tuition and fees are now the largest source. While UT has experienced strong support from the State of Tennessee, funding levels are unlikely to increase significantly. Federal funding for research is also expected to increase modestly or remain flat. As a result, UT will be more dependent on enrollment, philanthropy, new partnerships, and new revenue streams to fund future advancement.
- **Increasing competition for students.** In the next five years recruiting students will become even more competitive than it is today. As universities across the country become more dependent on tuition, peers

are likely to adopt aggressive recruitment and tuition discounting strategies even as the number of college-bound students is expected to decrease. In this climate, undergraduate students and parents are increasingly concerned with affordability and career outcomes. Interest in graduate education typically fluctuates and has experienced a recent national decline. This may heighten competition for graduate students.

- **Shifting demographics.** Tennessee is less racially and internationally diverse than the United States as a whole. However, demographics of both the nation and the state are projected to become more diverse. This trend underscores the importance of diversity and inclusion to position the campus for future competitiveness.
- **Progress in an environment of resource constraints.** UT began this journey in the face of economic challenges in 2010. At that time, UT demonstrated comparatively lower funding levels than peers. However, UT's experience over the past five years demonstrates that substantive progress, even compared to better-funded peers, can be made despite lower funding levels. Funding challenges are projected to continue in the future. Thus, UT will need to become increasingly resourceful, pursuing new revenue streams and reallocation opportunities. We will need to align resource decisions against campus-defined strategic priorities with discipline in order to continue our journey to the top.

## The Volunteer Difference

As our journey continues, the committee recommends that UT emphasize the Volunteer difference over the next five years. While we must maintain our pursuit of excellence, it will be necessary to take this opportunity to define our value proposition to position UT for long-term success.

Several attributes combine to make UT distinct:

- UT is one of the few universities in the country that serve as both the state flagship and land-grant institution.
- Our faculty expertise, academic programs, and research centers represent broad excellence across a multitude of disciplines.
- We are more affordable and accessible than peers, maintaining lower student debt loads than national averages.

- Our partnership with Oak Ridge National Laboratories, in addition to those with other government, corporate, and nonprofit entities, provides unique opportunities for research and academic collaborations.
- Knoxville provides UT with a dynamic environment—culturally rich with a healthy economic base and a location near the foot of the Great Smoky Mountains.
- We have a legacy of competing at the highest levels in athletics; this tradition of excellence in competition continues.
- We are known for our Volunteer spirit, which is supported by a strong alumni base.

The committee recommends that UT articulate and leverage these distinct strengths to deepen our sense of community and improve our ability to succeed in the future by differentiating ourselves from other schools.

Over the course of the stakeholder engagement period, the committee will engage the campus community on a discussion regarding the Volunteer difference. These perspectives will help shape this recommendation.

## **Strategic Priorities**

*Vol Vision* set five strategic priorities and related goals to address a five-year period from 2010 to 2015. In this section, we evaluate our accomplishments against these priorities and goals. For each area, we provide an assessment of progress, challenges, recommended future directions, and suggested opportunities for focus over the next five years. We further propose a new priority for 2020 in diversity and inclusion.

The committee will seek feedback from campus stakeholders on recommendations for future directions and opportunities in fall 2015.

In many areas, the review compares UT's performance to that of a target peer group. This group includes the University of Georgia, Clemson University, the University of Minnesota, Texas A&M University, Michigan State University, Indiana University, and Purdue University.

Due to the availability of benchmarking information, the data presented may not reflect the most recent year performance. Unless otherwise noted, the baseline year reflects 2009, and the current year presents 2014 data.

## **VOL VISION STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND GOALS 2010 to 2015**

### **PRIORITY 1: UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION**

Recruit, develop, and graduate a diverse body of undergraduate students who, through engagement in academic, social, and cultural experiences, embrace the Volunteer Spirit as lifelong learners committed to the principles of ethical and professional leadership.

- Continue to attract first-year students with ACT scores equivalent to Top 25
- Raise first-to-second year retention rates from 84 percent to 90 percent in 2015
- Raise six-year graduation rate from 60 percent in 2010 to 75 percent in 2015

### **PRIORITY 2: GRADUATE EDUCATION**

Educate and graduate increasing numbers of diverse graduate and professional students who are equipped to address the pressing concerns of their fields, to extend the frontiers of knowledge, and to contribute to the public good through service to the academy or their professions.

- Increase the number of PhDs awarded by 30 percent, from 277 in 2010 to 360 in 2015, with the goal of 486 in 2020
- Increase the number of professional and master's degrees awarded from 1,845 in 2010 to 2,000 in 2015, with the goal of 2,130 in 2020

### **PRIORITY 3: RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP & CREATIVE ACTIVITY**

Strengthen our capacity and productivity in research, scholarship, and creative activity to better educate our students; enhance economic, social, and environmental development; support outreach to our various constituencies; and extend the reputation and recognition of our campus.

- Increase federal research expenditures by 50 percent, from \$70 million in 2010 to \$105 million in 2015, with the aim of \$182 million in 2020
- Increase total research expenditures by 50 percent, from \$165 million in 2010 to \$247.5 million in 2015, with the aim of \$427 million in 2020

### **PRIORITY 4: FACULTY AND STAFF**

Attract and retain stellar diverse faculty and staff who will proudly represent our campus, execute our mission, embrace our vision, exemplify our values, and collaborate to realize our strategic priorities.

- Increase average tenure-line salary range to meet the mean for our peers
- Increase the number of faculty awards from 10 in 2010 to 32 in 2020

### **PRIORITY 5: INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES**

Continually improve the resource base to achieve campus priorities by carefully balancing state revenues, tuition, and private funding, and by embracing stewardship of our campus infrastructure and a culture that values sustainability.

- Increase operating expenditures/student by an additional \$8,200 by 2020
- Increase endowments/student by an additional \$24,000 by 2020



## Priority 1: Undergraduate Education

### Progress

Consistent with *Vol Vision* goals, incoming student quality, as measured by ACT scores, has remained equivalent to the target peer group. However, peers improved while UT held constant. UT posted impressive increases of 3 and 9 percentage points, respectively, in first-to-second-year retention and six-year graduation rates. This improvement surpassed target peers, and the gaps narrowed in both measures.

While we did not meet the ambitious goals of 90 percent first-to-second-year retention and 75 percent six-year graduation set by *Vol Vision*, progress in undergraduate education can be considered a resounding success. As an indicator, UT was recognized as a national leader in graduation and retention improvement with the 2014 “Most Visible Progress” Trailblazer award from the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities.

### UT Performance

Metric	Baseline	Current	Change
ACT Equivalent 75th/25th Percentile	29 / 24	29 / 24	No Change
First-to-Second Year Retention	84%	87%	+3%
Six-Year Graduation	60%	69%	+9%

### Target Peer Performance

Metric	Baseline	Current	Change
ACT Equivalent 75th/25th Percentile	28.5 / 23.5	29 / 24	+ .5 / + .5
First-to-Second Year Retention	90%	92%	+2%
Six-Year Graduation	75%	79%	+4%

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS

An action plan developed in 2011 emphasized the importance of graduation in four years. To support this direction, UT adopted a new 15/4 tuition model, expanded sections in high-demand courses, and implemented uTrack. The

uTrack system, supported by eight-semester graduation plans for each major, provides students with a tool to help to stay on track for graduation. In addition, UT added professional advisors and increased access to other core support services such as tutoring. An integrated one-stop center for student service was established. UT expanded effective programs aimed at raising first-year retention rates with additional sections of the Ignite Summit, new living and learning communities, and broader first-year studies programs. Finally, UT improved the use of data and analysis to identify reasons for attrition and develop more effective retention strategies.

Over the past five years, campus leadership has worked diligently to develop a culture that values “on-time” graduation. UT’s four-year graduation rate improved 8 percentage points over the past five years, demonstrating that this direction is driving improvement. Our on-time graduation strategy should be noted for its contribution to affordability, institutional effectiveness, and degree production. This direction also supports governor Haslam’s Drive to 55 initiative to increase the number of Tennesseans equipped with a college degree.

## **Challenges**

Several issues present UT with a new set of challenges in undergraduate education. As identified in strategic considerations for 2020, a pressing challenge is the increasingly competitive environment for recruiting students.

Another challenge is the growing public emphasis on career outcomes. Our students need to be prepared to succeed in an increasingly complex workforce regardless of the major and occupation they choose. This underscores the importance of academic excellence, supplemented by experiential learning and an engaging student experience.

Success in today’s global workforce requires exposure to different cultures and an appreciation of different backgrounds. However, our undergraduate enrollment mix is less ethnically diverse than peers’. UT is also less geographically diverse, with a much higher percentage of in-state students than peers. See the *Diversity and Inclusion* section for additional discussion.

We have maintained a commitment to access and affordability over the past five years. Today, nearly half of UT students graduate with no student debt. Average debt loads for UT students fall well below national averages. As an indicator of access, roughly 30 percent of UT’s undergraduate students are eligible for Pell

grants, much higher than target peer averages of 22 percent. Our future challenge will be to continue this commitment in light of a changing resource base.

Finally, Tennessee is the first state in the nation to provide access to free community college for graduating high school seniors. The Tennessee Promise program is likely to have an impact on UT's transfer student enrollment patterns in the future, but the full impact remains unknown at this point.

## **Committee Recommendations**

*Direction: Continue with Retention and Graduation Progress; Experience Learning and Global Awareness*

The committee recommends that UT continue with the strategic direction set in *Vol Vision*. The campus must continue to improve retention and graduation rates over the next five years. While UT's improvement has been significant, the committee notes that target peers improved across all three measures, raising the competitive bar.

With stronger competition for students expected in the near future, retention will be just as important as recruitment in managing enrollment. It will also be necessary to improve the student experience, emphasize experience learning, and demonstrate the lifelong value of a UT degree.

### *Opportunities*

The committee recommends the following opportunities for consideration:

- *Continue with Retention and Graduation Progress* – Continue to build on the current plan to support graduation and retention goals for all students. Continue to develop a “student first” culture. Ensure that adequate resources are in place to provide an excellent educational experience. Support effective first-year transitions. Evaluate opportunities to change general education requirements to better reflect institutional values and support graduation goals.
- *Prepare Graduates to Succeed in Careers and Lead in Communities* – Increase opportunities to engage and challenge students both academically and with experiential learning. Changes to general education requirements also apply to this area. Provide students with opportunities to gain exposure to different cultures and backgrounds while at UT. Move to a more geographical and culturally diverse enrollment mix to support this

direction. Continue to support study abroad and other global awareness opportunities. Evaluate opportunities to link career counseling with academic advising. Improve emphasis and support of career outcomes and data collection.

- *Enhance the Volunteer Student Experience* – Improve student engagement and experience to forge a strong connection to the university. Leverage the Volunteer difference to reinforce a strong culture of student support. Engage students to be lifelong university citizens, contributing service and support to UT beyond graduation.
- *Support New Alternatives for Enrollment* – Evaluate strategies to grow enrollment, which may include overall growth and a new student mix (for example, out-of-state, transfer, and international students). Continue our primary mission of service to Tennessee students.

## Priority 2: Graduate Education

### Progress

UT's progress in graduate education over the past five years has been mixed. PhD degrees conferred increased by 14 percent, from 277 to 317. Target peers also increased degree production at a slightly higher rate. As a result, the gap to peers increased in this metric. UT decreased its master's and professional degree production by 2 percent. In contrast, target peers increased production in this category. Both graduate education metrics fell short of the goals established in *Vol Vision*: a 30 percent increase in PhD degrees awarded and a 15 percent increase in master's and professional degrees awarded.

#### UT Performance

Metric	Baseline	Current	Change
PhD Degrees	277	317	+40 (14%)
Master's/Professional Degrees	1,845	1,811	-34 (-2%)

#### Target Peer Performance

Metric	Baseline	Current	Change
PhD Degrees	486	574	+88 (18%)
Master's/Professional Degrees	2,130	2,672	+542 (25%)

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS

Since 2010, UT has taken action to improve the state of graduate education. UT raised its commitment to graduate student funding to improve competitiveness in recruitment and retention. UT's investment in assistantships grew by nearly 24 percent, from \$31.8 million in 2010 to \$39.3 million in 2014. The median value of assistantships steadily increased during this time.

Highlights of accomplishments include growth in PhD and master's degree production in STEM-related areas and the expansion of professional offerings through new online programs. The number of graduate students receiving National Science Foundation research awards more than doubled between 2010 and 2014. UT added new interdisciplinary and dual degree programs, including

an innovative doctoral program aligned with the Bredesen Center for Interdisciplinary Research and Graduate Education.

Finally, UT expanded services to graduate students, including streamlined admissions processes, additional advising and mentoring programs, new leave-of-absence policies, new teaching certifications, and increased funds for travel. The Graduate School has worked with colleges, departments, and programs to increase efforts in diversity recruitment by initiating new visitation programs and facilitating stronger links to historically black colleges and universities and the McNair Scholars Program.

## **Challenges**

Several issues present challenges in graduate education. On a national scale, there has been modest growth in master's degree applications, but a recent decline in PhD applications. National trends show changing patterns of student demand with a growing interest in fields related to STEM and health sciences fields. Trends further demonstrate that doctorate recipients are more likely to pursue nonacademic careers than in the past.

Recent UT graduate enrollment fluctuations reveal further challenges. Over the past five years, UT has experienced an overall decline in total graduate enrollment, driven by decreases in master's and professional degree candidates. The number of both master's and PhD applications remained flat. However, certain programs experienced growth despite the trend. As a related challenge, the costs associated with PhD degrees are typically much higher than those of master's and professional degree programs.

Finally, the graduate financial support and tuition model continues to be a challenge for many academic programs. While investment in graduate student funding has increased, the majority of disciplines continue to fall below peer levels. Some departments report that the number of available tuition waivers for students limits opportunities for growth. The current out-of-state tuition structure poses challenges, particularly for online programs. Due to the lower pricing strategies of online competitors, many UT programs find it difficult to compete for students outside of Tennessee and grow to scale.

## **Committee Recommendations**

### *Direction: Emphasis on Excellence and Student Success*

The current strategic priority and related metric encourages degree production volume. The committee notes that the strategic priority does not sufficiently highlight excellence and student success both at UT and after graduation. Excellent graduate programs and high-achieving graduate students are hallmarks of leading public research universities. Accordingly, the committee recommends that UT emphasize excellence and student success in graduate education over the next five years.

This direction is essential for PhD programs due to the level of financial support required (e.g., waivers, stipends, and research support). However, attention to excellence and success should not constrain aspirations to increase degree production. Many of UT's PhD programs are competitive in their fields. Programs that meet self-defined measures of excellence may be encouraged to expand. Programs with lower performance may be supported in making improvements.

This recommendation is a significant supplement to strategic direction, but one that will ultimately make UT more nationally competitive. The committee suggests further campus discussion on this issue.

### *Opportunities*

The committee recommends the following opportunities for consideration:

- *Define and Track Metrics in Graduate Student Excellence and Success* – Define metrics of excellence at the college or academic department level. Improve data regarding enrollment; degree completion rates and time to degree; graduate student accomplishments in research, scholarship, and creative achievement; and career placement.
- *Improve Graduate Student Recruitment* – Improve recruitment of outstanding candidates by targeting well-qualified students. Improve recruiting support for academic units.
- *Improve Graduate Student Financial Support and Tuition Model* – Develop a more competitive and sustainable model for graduate financial support. Evaluate the current approach to investment in stipends, waiver allocation, and tuition models. Provide tuition support for applicants with

prestigious externally funded fellowships. Evaluate tuition alternatives for online programs.

- *Improve Graduate Student Success* – Ensure that graduate students complete degrees in a timely manner. Support graduate students with improved career coaching, training in teaching, and placement support.
- *Diversify Graduate Enrollment Mix* – Increase the number of qualified graduate students from international markets and diverse populations.
- *Increase Professional Degrees* – Identify opportunities to increase professional degrees, including new professional master's programs.



## Priority 3: Research, Scholarship, Creative Activity, & Engagement

### Progress

This priority represents the only area in which UT has exceeded both goals set in *Vol Vision*, of 50 percent growth in federal and total research expenditures. UT increased federal research expenditures by 93 percent, from \$70 million to \$135 million. Total research expenditures increased by 58 percent, from \$165 million to \$261 million. Most notably, UT outpaced growth patterns of the target peer group both in percentage and total dollars.

We note that for the purposes of this analysis the research expenditures below reflect the Knoxville area, to include the UT Institute of Agriculture. Since this area is integrated into the main campus organization at most target peers, the definition allows for a closer comparison. We also note that due to the availability of benchmark data, the current values presented below represent FY 2013 information.

#### UT Performance

Metric	Baseline	Current	Change
Federal Research Expenditures	\$70 M	\$135 M	+\$65 M (93%)
Total Research Expenditures	\$165 M	\$261 M	+\$96 M (58%)

#### Target Peer Performance

Metric	Baseline	Current	Change
Federal Research Expenditures	\$182 M	\$238 M	+\$56 M (31%)
Total Research Expenditures	\$427 M	\$498 M	+\$71 M (17%)

Source: National Science Foundation's Higher Education Research and Development Survey. Baseline is FY2008. Current is FY 2013. Values presented above include UT Knoxville and the UT Institute of Agriculture.

Several actions contributed to the impressive increase in funded research. UT established new partnerships on multiple fronts. At the federal level, UT expanded its relationship with Oak Ridge National Laboratory, involving Governor's Chairs, joint faculty appointments, and joint institutes. UT added seven Governor's Chairs since 2010. These efforts also included the strengthening

of the Cherokee Farm Innovation Campus. In addition, UT improved services to support faculty pursuing large grants and expanded outreach efforts between faculty and federal stakeholders in DC, including program managers. UT expanded support of faculty in pursuit of funded research from corporate and foundation sponsors.

UT faculty earned several prestigious awards from federal agencies and national foundations. Discussion in *Priority 4: Faculty and Staff* section expands on this point. In addition, faculty engaged increasing numbers of undergraduate and graduate students in research opportunities.

UT earned the Community Engagement designation from the Carnegie Foundation in 2015. With this classification, UT reinforces the institutional importance of its engagement and outreach mission.

## **Challenges**

The committee discussed the challenge of measuring the full impact of faculty contribution related to research, scholarship, creative activity, and engagement. *Vol Vision* metrics focus on research expenditures. These data points are regularly tracked by government agencies and viewed as important national comparative research metrics. However, funded research alone does not capture the full scope of faculty contributions. Measures of scholarship, creative activity, and engagement tend to be less standardized and more discipline-specific. Comparative data may not be readily available. Yet without a reasonable attempt to recognize our full breadth of accomplishments, we are unable to display our portfolio of achievements and recognize excellence across the campus.

Projected federal funding levels present a separate future challenge. Funded research remains critical to UT's ability to raise its national profile. However, federal funding levels tend to fluctuate. Growth in federal funding is expected to be modest at best in the near future. UT has outperformed peers in funded research gains over the past five years. Maintaining this level of performance will be challenging with lowered federal funding expectations and may require UT to explore new partnerships. Growth in corporate and foundation partnerships in both domestic and international markets may be more important over the next five years.

Aligning campus with anticipated changes in strategic priorities of major sponsors will be another challenge. Sponsors are expected to increase their focus on transdisciplinary and big-team research. Attention to the responsible conduct

of research is expected to continue, emphasizing attention to compliance. The importance of commercialization is another emerging trend with both government and other external sponsors.

Quality research space and start-up packages are important to attracting and retaining research talent. While UT has made progress in both areas over the past five years, peers are also investing in these areas despite projections for modest to flat growth in federal funding.

### **Committee Recommendations**

#### *Direction: Total Portfolio Approach to Research, Scholarship, Creative Activity, and Engagement*

The committee recommends that UT track our total research portfolio to include funded research, scholarship, creative activity, and engagement. The committee acknowledges that data may not be available to make national comparisons, but all UT contributions should be tracked.

Leading public research universities are known for excellence across a diverse scope of research, scholarship, creative activity, and engagement. Presenting this full picture to the public will acknowledge all contributions and better leverage the full potential of our faculty talent.

This direction is supplemental to the current strategic priority. UT should continue to pursue growth in funded research and continue with the recent action plan.

#### *Opportunities*

The committee recommends the following opportunities for consideration:

- *Track Full Portfolio of Research, Scholarship, Creative Activity, and Engagement* – Engage colleges, academic departments, and research centers to identify measures of excellence. Track these metrics and regularly report on progress. Recognize the contributions and important roles of tenure-line faculty, non-tenure-track faculty, adjunct faculty, research faculty, joint faculty, and postdoctoral students.
- *Recognize Excellence* – Recognize excellence in research, scholarship, creative activity, and engagement across different disciplines and in trans-disciplinary efforts. Continue to promote accomplishments to the public through outreach efforts.

- *Continue with Plan for Growth* – Continue implementation of the current action plan for growth in funded research. Continue to leverage regional assets and explore new alternatives for growth, including nonfederal sponsors. Continue to support transdisciplinary research and commercialization efforts.
- *Improve Faculty Engagement and Support* – Engage faculty in the action plan for growth. Continue to improve professional support levels for faculty to facilitate grant submissions and compliance. Improve faculty support toward securing prestigious awards across disciplines.

## Priority 4: Faculty and Staff

### Progress

UT has increased faculty salary and remained constant on faculty awards. Over the past four years, UT has invested \$56 million in market and merit increases to address both faculty and staff salary gaps. At the high end, the full professor average salary has increased by 20 percent since the baseline study. At the lower end, the assistant professor average salary has increased by 13 percent. Since UT has increased salaries at a higher rate than peers, gaps at both ends of the range have decreased. Both UT and peers have increased faculty awards since 2010. Although UT did not meet the five-year goals established in *Vol Vision*, the campus is better positioned to attract and retain stellar talent as a result of progress.

The ratio of undergraduate students to tenure-line faculty was included in the initial gap analysis as an indicator of faculty size. Since the baseline year, UT has improved from 20 to 19 in this metric.

### UT Performance

Metric	Baseline	Current	Change
Faculty Salary Range (Full to Assistant)	\$108K to \$67K	\$130K to \$76K	+\$22K to \$9K
Faculty Awards	10	12	+2
Undergraduate Student to Tenure-Line Faculty	20	19	-1*

### Target Peer Performance

Metric	Baseline	Current	Change
Faculty Salary Range (Full to Assistant)	\$120K to \$73K	\$134K to \$82K	+\$14K to \$9K
Faculty Awards	32	36	+4
Undergraduate Student to Tenure-Line Faculty	19	20	+1*

\* A lower ratio is typically considered more favorable in this metric

Source: American Association of University Professors (Faculty Salary Range), Center for Measuring University Performance (Faculty Awards), National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS (Undergraduate Student to Tenure-Line Faculty). Faculty Awards current year reflects 2013.

UT has made strides in improving faculty support. In addition to the progress in faculty salary, the Chancellor's Faculty Support Challenge resulted in \$21 million in new commitments and contributed to sixty-six new funded professorships. Today, more than 170 faculty members, representing nearly 16 percent of faculty, are supported through professorships.

The total number of full-time tenure-line faculty increased by 4 percent since 2010, adding more than forty new faculty lines. These gains included an increase in the number of Governor's Chairs by 7, to a total of 14. UT also increased the number and percentage representation of female faculty and faculty from diverse backgrounds (further discussed in the *Diversity and Inclusion* section).

UT increased support for faculty in pursuit of national awards. Four members of our faculty were admitted to the National Academy of Engineering and the National Academy of Sciences since 2010. UT faculty have received more than sixty prestigious national awards over the past five years, including National Science Foundation Career Awards, Fulbright awards, National Endowment for the Humanities awards, and American Council of Learned Societies awards. Our faculty members were recognized with thirteen NEH fellowships over the past decade, ranking fourth in the country among public universities.

UT expanded programs and services to improve our work culture and climate. The Stride and Future Faculty programs were established to encourage diversity and inclusion. UT implemented Elements, a faculty workload tracking system, to better measure faculty productivity. New career pathways were structured for non-tenure-track faculty. UT also began new programs to encourage collegiality, including Faculty Pub, Faculty Appreciation Week, and Mic Nite.

To support a broad culture of dialogue and transparency, an Employee Engagement Survey was launched in 2011, and again in 2014, to understand what the campus can do to become a better place to work. The campus also took a step forward by hiring a Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Inclusion.

With regard to staff compensation, UT has been able to offer market, merit, and equity increases over the past five years, which has been instrumental in closing some market gaps. Campus leadership has also increased the starting salaries of its lowest paid workers. Five career paths have been added, in the following areas: Police Department, Audit and Consulting Services, Creative Services, Advising, and Accounts Payable.

## **Challenges**

Sustaining the narrowing of the faculty salary gap will be a challenge over the next five years. While substantial improvements have been made, UT will need to continue to address this issue with merit and market adjustments to remain competitive for faculty talent on a national scale. Merit increases are important to reward productive faculty and help with retention. Significant market gaps also remain within staff compensation, and currently the campus is undergoing a market study which will provide critical data.

Strategic direction and metrics in the original *Vol Vision* priority emphasize faculty excellence. The committee notes a gap in engaging non-tenure-track faculty and staff in a similar commitment to excellence.

As a national trend, non-tenure-track and part-time faculty positions grew at a much more robust rate than tenure-line positions. At UT, non-tenure-track faculty as a percentage of total full-time faculty increased from 22 percent in 2010 to 27 percent in 2014. The committee acknowledges the important contributions of this segment in teaching, research, and engagement. While progress has been made, more attention is needed in career paths, compensation, and professional development.

The committee views staff as essential partners in faculty and campus productivity. Following national trends, UT's future workforce needs are expected to evolve and grow in complexity. Professionals will be in higher demand to support UT's expanding needs in areas such as advising, compliance, data analysis, and information technology, as examples. UT's faces several workforce development challenges. We will need to provide adequate levels of staff support, but also acknowledge changing needs and keep pace with these new capabilities. We will need to attract and retain top talent through competitive compensation, career paths and professional development support. We will also need to create an engaging workplace through more transparent dialogue and a stronger commitment to employee onboarding and supervisor training.

## **Committee Recommendations**

### *Direction: Workplace of Choice, Culture of Excellence*

The committee believes that recruitment, retention, and professional development of tenure-line faculty, non-tenure-track faculty, and staff are matters of substantial importance. A broader goal, such as becoming a workplace

of choice in higher education, should be established in this priority to reinforce a commitment to excellence for all.

This recommendation is supplemental to a continued emphasis on faculty excellence, as originally outlined in *Vol Vision*. An important attribute of leading public research universities is an accomplished and nationally respected faculty. We must continue with efforts to recruit, support, and retain exceptional faculty talent.

### *Opportunities*

The committee recommends the following areas for consideration:

- *Become a Workplace of Choice* – Continue efforts to improve recruitment, retention, and employee satisfaction. Develop a regular system of market and merit increases to manage salary gaps. Evaluate benefits and other programs to support recruitment and retention in order to become a workplace of choice in higher education.
- *Continue to Support Faculty Excellence* – Continue to address the faculty salary gap to peers. Evaluate the competitiveness of the total package for faculty hires, including both salary and start-up. Improve coaching and incentives to support faculty in pursuit of national awards. Improve professional development for midcareer faculty, including mentoring to support advancement. Continue work to improve faculty recruitment, including improved faculty diversity opportunities and spousal hire programs. Continue to support a climate of collegiality. Evaluate opportunities to diversify workloads to accommodate different teaching and research needs and choices.
- *Support Non-tenure-track Faculty Excellence and Expand Professional Development* – Develop consistent institutional guidelines for non-tenure-track faculty involved in research, teaching, and engagement to align with specific roles. Improve professional development and better integrate non-tenure-track faculty into campus culture.
- *Support Staff Excellence and Build Capabilities for the Future* – Evaluate needs for the future and develop a strategy to build new staff capabilities. Improve professional development to help current staff grow into evolving roles. Conduct national searches for essential professional roles.



## Priority 5: Infrastructure and Resources

### Progress

UT has increased both metrics associated with financial resources over the past five years. Teaching and support expenditures per student increased by 21 percent. UT's increase in investment in teaching and support per student outpaced peers, and the gap has decreased. However, UT remains in a lower comparative position than peers. While UT made strong gains in endowment per student, comparative peers started at a much higher position due to longer-term endowment strength. Despite a significant increase in this metric, the total dollar gap to peers has widened.

*Vol Vision* outlines 2020 goals to increase teaching and support expenditures by \$8,200 (50 percent from baseline) and endowment per student by \$24,000 (nearly 170 percent from baseline). Even with substantial five-year progress, we are not on pace to meet these goals. However, UT is in a stronger position today as a result of the gains over the past five years.

### UT Performance

Metric	Baseline	Current	Change
Teaching and Support Expenditures/Student	\$16,100	\$19,487	+\$3,387 (21%)
Endowment/ Student	\$14,380	\$24,058	+\$9,678 (67%)

### Target Peer Performance

Metric	Baseline	Current	Change
Teaching and Support Expenditures/Student	\$24,300	\$27,200	+\$2,900 (12%)
Endowment/ Student	\$38,400	\$55,580	+17,180 (45%)

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS and Audited Financial Reports (Teaching and Support Expenditures); Council for Advancement and Support for Higher Education (Endowment)

Progress in development and alumni giving has allowed UT to more expeditiously move forward with our strategic priorities. Our alumni and friends are excited about the journey and are investing their philanthropic resources at rates greater than we have ever seen, in both total gifts received and a growing donor base. UT received nearly \$235 million in private and corporate gifts last fiscal year, making

it the most successful fundraising year in campus history. In fiscal year 2015, more than 39,000 donors boosted private support by 79 percent over the previous year. As compared to peers, the five-year average of philanthropic gifts received ranks ahead of two target schools. UT's rate of alumni participation places ahead of three schools in the target group.

The recent physical transformation of campus is a visible indicator of progress. UT has initiated nearly \$1 billion in construction projects since 2010. As an important part of this transformation, UT has also incorporated new campus beautification and landscaping efforts to improve campus appearance. This physical transformation represents a much-needed upgrade of physical infrastructure to include research space as well as residence hall modernization, which is expected to have a positive impact on recruitment and the student experience.

Sustainability remains a priority. UT's carbon emissions per gross square footage have decreased over the past five years, indicating gains from environmentally sound initiatives. The Make Orange Green initiative contributed to success.

Advancement in information technology has allowed UT to improve instructional technology and systems to support data-driven decisions. To improve support for faculty, UT increased professional support for online and hybrid course development and delivery. The state of technology in the classroom has also improved through a series of upgrades. UT improved systems and reporting to support access to quality data. Progress includes the implementation of a new student system, development of an institutional data set to improve student data reporting, and implementation of several new systems to increase productivity. Based on a recent survey, IT services met or exceeded campus expectations in connectivity and access, collaborative technology, and IT support.

UT has routinely implemented administrative cost savings measures to gain resources for reallocation. Sample actions include nearly \$4 million in implemented recurring savings associated with facilities, information technology, auxiliary services, and transportation, among other areas.

## **Challenges**

As noted earlier, several challenges relate to UT's financial resources. We have identified implications of a changing resource base and challenges to continue progress in an environment of resource constraints. In this context, we continue to fall behind target peers in comparative funding levels. This combination will be one of UT's most pressing challenges over the next five years.

UT will have a sustained challenge in managing an aging physical infrastructure. Over 50 percent of UT's campus was constructed during a low-quality period prior to 1990 and requires continued renovation. UT faces a large deferred maintenance backlog requiring higher levels of reinvestment.

While our physical transformation reflects our aspiration to upgrade campus facilities, the utilization of existing space is a challenge. UT's instructional space utilization is moderate compared to higher education peers during a standard week. As a result, UT has an opportunity to improve the effectiveness of class scheduling to better utilize existing capacity.

While advancements have been made in information technology, rapidly growing demands eclipse funding available to accommodate needs. Keeping pace with increasingly complex technology requirements is a continued challenge, as is maintaining high levels of IT security. UT will need to balance growing requests for increased bandwidth, data system integration, instructional technology, and reporting capabilities with limited staff and funding to deliver projects. However, IT continues to be an area of competitive importance. Peers continue to invest in infrastructure, enterprise systems, instructional, and research technology.

## **Committee Recommendations**

### *Direction: Ensure a Sustainable Resource Base for the Future, Instill Pride in Campus*

A strategic imperative for the next five years will be a strong and sustainable resource base. UT will need to explore new alternatives for revenue and better engage the campus community in resource stewardship. The physical transformation and advancement in technology must continue for UT to compete for students, faculty, and staff.

### *Opportunities*

The committee recommends the following areas for consideration:

- *Develop a Resource Base for the Future* – Develop a sustainable resource model for the future. Engage the campus in an emphasis on revenue generation, student retention, cost management, and reallocation opportunities. Evaluate new opportunities for revenue growth aligned with our mission, including new enrollment strategies.

- *Continue with Physical Transformation and Instill Pride in Campus* – Continue with physical transformation of campus as a competitive strategy. Instill pride and sense of responsibility for physical environment among faculty, staff, and students. Ensure campus is accessible for all faculty, students, and staff. Continue efforts in sustainability.
- *Continue to Improve Technology Capabilities* – Continue improvement of data systems, reporting capabilities, technology infrastructure, research technology, and academic technology.
- *Improve Space Utilization* – Engage campus to improve utilization of classroom and other space. Evaluate opportunities and incentives to better align class times and locations to maximize the use of quality space throughout the day.
- *Continue Effectiveness Measures* – Continue to engage campus in institutional effectiveness efforts. Continue to prioritize investments, requiring strong linkage to strategic direction. Continue to evaluate current allocations to be more strategically aligned with priorities and reallocate those resources as identified.

## **New Priority for 2020: Diversity & Inclusion**

The importance of diversity and inclusion is included in multiple areas of *Vol Vision*. During the course of this review, the committee observed a need to raise the profile of this area due to its growing strategic importance to our future. Accordingly, the committee recommends that a sixth strategic priority for diversity and inclusion be adopted for 2020.

In this assessment, we highlight gender and racial diversity. We primarily comment on the change in the demographic makeup of students, faculty, and staff since 2010. Where possible, we comment on socioeconomic diversity. The campus definition of diversity is much broader, but we lack readily available data to fully evaluate progress in all areas.

### **Progress**

**Undergraduate Students.** Over the past five years, UT has increased the number and percentage of female students. Females now represent 49 percent of the undergraduate population, compared to 48 percent in 2010. This percentage is slightly higher than target peer averages.

UT's undergraduate student body remains predominately white. However, the number and percentage of students from diverse populations have increased over the past five years. White students represent 79 percent of the undergraduate student body, a decrease from 84 percent in 2010. While UT is making progress, the total number of students from diverse populations remains small. Hispanic and Asian student representation increased in number and now stand at 3 percent each. Students identifying as two or more races also increased in number, now representing 3 percent of the student body. Black student representation remained flat at 7 percent, with a net decrease in the number of students over the past five years. Finally, international students make up 2 percent of the population. UT's undergraduate population is less racially diverse and less international than populations at target peers. In particular, peers tend to have more representation of Hispanic, Asian, and international students.

Approximately 30 percent of UT's undergraduate students are eligible for the federal Pell grant program, much higher than the 22 percent average at target peer groups. This demonstrates that compared to peers, UT has a higher percentage of students from socioeconomically challenged backgrounds.

**Graduate Students.** The total number of female graduate students decreased between 2010 and 2014. However, due to a total decline in enrollment, female students increased as a percentage of total students—from 52 percent to 53 percent, which is slightly higher than target peer averages.

Since 2010, the number and percentage of both white and black graduate students have declined. White students as a percentage of all graduate students decreased from 73 percent to 68 percent. Black students decreased from 6 percent to 5 percent, representing a decline of more than sixty students. However, the number and percentage of Hispanic students and those identifying as two or more races increased. UT's graduate population is less diverse than peers'. A notable gap is in international students, which represent 13 percent of UT's graduate student population compared to an average of 26 percent at peer schools.

**Faculty and Staff.** UT has made strong progress in the number and percentage of female tenure-line faculty. The number of female tenure-line faculty grew by 9 percent, or 38 members. Increasing from 33 percent in 2010, women now make up 35 percent of all tenure-line faculty. UT compares favorably to target peers in this area.

UT has experienced an increase in representation from diverse populations, driven by the growth in faculty members identifying as Asian. This group increased by twenty-two faculty members, now representing 10 percent of all tenure-line faculty. The number of black faculty remained flat at 4 percent, with a gain of four faculty members for a total of fifty-one. Hispanic faculty members stayed constant at 2 percent. The percentage of tenure-line faculty identifying as white declined from 81 percent in 2010 to 79 percent in 2014. UT is less racially diverse than peers in tenure-line faculty.

UT compares favorably to peers in the diverse make up of its executive team. UT's executive leadership is 47 percent women, which is higher than peer averages. Individuals who identify as black hold 10 percent of leadership roles, also higher than peer averages.

With respect to staff demographics, UT has a less diverse gender balance and racial mix than peers. A total of 46 percent of staff members are women, which is lower than target peers. In addition, 86 percent of staff identify as white. This percentage is influenced by Knoxville area demographics.

## **Challenges**

State demographics may present challenges in achieving a diverse campus population. Tennessee's population is largely white at 75 percent, which is higher than the national average of 63 percent. The Knoxville area has an even more concentrated white population. The state has a higher percentage of individuals identifying as black—17 percent compared to the national average of 13 percent. However, Tennessee has less Hispanic and Asian representation than the country as a whole. Tennessee also has lower percentages than the nation of foreign-born persons and persons speaking a language other than English in the home. With 18 percent of persons below poverty compared to a national average of 15 percent, Tennessee has more people facing socioeconomic challenges.

The committee notes that today's students must be more prepared to engage in a global workforce than in the past. This emphasizes the need to be more culturally aware with an earnest appreciation for individuals with different backgrounds. Our aspiration to prepare students to lead on national and global levels requires that they be exposed to different cultures and backgrounds during their experience at UT. Since students and parents are increasingly concerned with career outcomes tied to higher education, progress in diversity and inclusion is imperative for future competitiveness.

Furthermore, demographic trends show that both Tennessee and the nation are likely to experience growth in diverse populations in the near future. This projected change will have an impact on the future pool of prospective students and candidates for UT's workforce. Our current challenge is to develop a more inclusive culture now in order to position the university to compete for the best and brightest in the future.

The committee notes that the campus definition of diversity and inclusion extends beyond race and gender. We support this broader view established by our *Volunteer Values*. It will necessitate that we focus in part on the climate of inclusion since there are limits to what we can track at present.

## **Committee Recommendations**

### *Direction: Diversity and Inclusion for Future Competitiveness*

The committee recommends that UT adopt a sixth strategic priority for 2020 to improve diversity and inclusion.

## *Opportunities*

The committee recommends the following opportunities for consideration:

- *Build an Enrollment Mix for the Future* – Improve recruiting and retention efforts to increase enrollment of undergraduate and graduate students from diverse backgrounds. Increase the number of international students. Continue progress with female representation. Continue efforts with student success for students from diverse backgrounds to improve retention and graduation outcomes.
- *Develop a UT Workforce for the Future* – Continue efforts to attract and retain executives, faculty, and staff from diverse backgrounds. Continue progress with female representation in executives, faculty, and staff.
- *Continue to Improve Climate* – Develop an inclusive climate to support students, faculty, and staff from diverse backgrounds. Engage colleges and units to identify innovative ways to promote inclusion and understanding. Engage the Knoxville community to help with climate and inclusion. Complete a formal student climate survey to identify opportunities for the future.



## NEXT STEPS

In the next phase of the process, the committee will organize opportunities for campus feedback on the directions and opportunities included in this report. We seek substantive discussion on ideas, challenges, and opportunities for the future.

Our stakeholder engagement plan includes presentations to different colleges and divisions over the course of fall 2015. We will also engage major stakeholder organizations, including the Faculty and Student Senates. In addition, we will provide opportunities for students, faculty, staff, and alumni to engage through various meetings and web-based feedback alternatives.

We will sponsor open forums for the UT community to discuss *Vol Vision 2020*. The committee may add additional sessions based on demand and participation. Sessions will be held on:

- September 22, 2015 at noon to 1:00 pm (Hodges Library Auditorium)
- September 24, 2015 at noon to 1:00 pm (Hodges Library Auditorium)

Subsequent to this feedback period, UT will summarize themes from campus engagement and develop its final recommendations. By the end of the year, the committee will provide UT's campus leadership team with its final report and summary of campus feedback. At that point, the UT leadership team will evaluate the input and adapt *Vol Vision* to guide the campus through 2020.

## APPENDIX A: MILESTONE REVIEW COMMITTEE AND PROCESS

### Committee Membership

Provost Martin appointed Milestone Review Committee members who represent campus stakeholders, including faculty, staff and students. A list of committee members is provided below:

Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Dean Steven Smith, Libraries</li> </ul>
Academic Representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Susan Benner, Associate Dean and Director, College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences</li> <li>▪ Chris Cox, Professor and Associate Head, Civil and Environmental Engineering</li> <li>▪ Mark Dean, Professor, Electrical Engineering and Computer Sciences</li> <li>▪ David Golden, Professor, Food Science and Technology</li> <li>▪ Catherine Luther, Professor and Associate Dean, College of Communication and Information</li> <li>▪ Larry McKay, Professor, Earth and Planetary Sciences</li> <li>▪ Annette Ranft, Professor and Senior Associate Dean, Haslam College of Business</li> <li>▪ Beth Schussler, Associate Professor, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology</li> <li>▪ Tina Shepardson, Associate Professor, Religious Studies</li> </ul>
Divisional and Staff Representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student Life: Frank Cuevas, Assistant Vice Chancellor and Executive Director, University Housing</li> <li>▪ University Advancement: Lee Patouillet, Associate Vice Chancellor, Alumni Affairs</li> <li>▪ Marketing and Communications: Erik Bledsoe, Creative Services Director</li> <li>▪ Diversity and Inclusion: Rickey Hall, Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Inclusion</li> <li>▪ Research: Janet Nelson, Associate Vice Chancellor, Office of Research and Engagement</li> <li>▪ Finance and Administration: Jonee Lindstrom, Associate Vice Chancellor, Finance and Administration</li> <li>▪ Athletics: Jon Gilbert, Senior Associate Athletic Director</li> <li>▪ Human Resources: Mary Lucal, Interim Assistant Vice Chancellor for Human Resources</li> </ul>
Student Representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Undergraduate Students: Beverly Banks, Loren Lee</li> <li>▪ Graduate Students: Jeremy Auerbach, Nathan Meek</li> </ul>
Committee Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provost's Office: Serena Matsunaga</li> <li>▪ Institutional Research: Denise Gardner</li> </ul>

## **Objective**

The role of the Milestone Review Committee is to complete a high-level strategic assessment of campus progress from 2010 to 2015, the period of time addressed by the *Vol Vision* strategic plan. The committee is also charged to lead community engagement discussions to gather feedback from campus on strategic direction for 2020.

## **Process**

The committee established a three-phase process to refresh the strategic plan. Work began in February 2015 with a goal of completion by December 2015.

The first phase is designed to provide campus with a fact-based assessment of progress against goals established in *Vol Vision*. In addition, the chancellor and provost proposed the following big-picture questions for consideration during the strategic assessment process:

- How do we increase academic rigor and improve graduation rates in undergraduate education?
- How do we elevate and increase research, scholarship, and creative activity among our faculty and graduate students?
- How do we increase the diversity of our faculty, staff, and students?
- How do we minimize costs, manage resource trade-offs, and increase efficiency of the university?
- How do we utilize technology to enhance student learning and student achievement?
- How do we increase emphasis on globalization and sustainability?

The committee met from February to June 2015 to evaluate accomplishments in the five priorities included in *Vol Vision*, consider the big-picture questions, and evaluate external trends that may have implications for UT in the future. The committee then summarized its observations in a report to serve as a foundation for campus engagement.

The second phase of the process, scheduled for fall 2015, will focus on stakeholder engagement as the committee seeks input from the campus community on its recommendations. The committee will outline a series of meetings and points for stakeholder input and feedback.

In the final phase, the committee will provide UT leadership with its observations and recommendations to help the executive team adopt strategic direction for 2020. The final advisory package will include the committee's assessment and summary of stakeholder feedback.

## **APPENDIX B: VOL VISION BACKGROUND**

*Vol Vision: Journey to the Top 25* is the strategic plan for the University of Tennessee. The plan was developed in 2010 to establish the vision, values, strategic priorities, and goals to guide the university through 2015.

The *Vol Vision* process engaged hundreds of campus stakeholders in focus groups and discussions regarding the future of the university. During this process, the university accepted then-governor Phil Bredesen's Top 25 challenge. To supplement the *Vol Vision* campus engagement work, a separate task force was appointed to develop an approach to the Top 25 goal.

The Top 25 effort contributed a set of recommendations related to a new peer set, areas of focus, and metrics to *Vol Vision*. The task force selected peers based on rankings, AAU membership, research performance, and institutional characteristics similar to UT's. Three peer groups were established. The "Top 25 target" peer group more closely reflected UT's institutional characteristics and served as a reasonable comparison set. A broader "aspiration" group reflected high-end performance thresholds. The "current" peer group consisted of three universities with performance levels similar to UT's during the time of the task force evaluation.

The task force then adopted a set of twelve metrics that extended beyond undergraduate education to reflect research university aspirations. Areas of focus included undergraduate education, graduate education, research, faculty, and infrastructure and resources. The task force evaluated frameworks associated with the different national rankings (e.g., U.S. News and the Center for Measuring University Performance) and criteria for membership in the Association of American Universities. Since the objective of the task force was to evaluate UT's position to peers over time, it was necessary for metrics to be regularly reported by UT and for comparative peer data also to be regularly reported by reliable sources. The final gap analysis provided a comparative assessment of UT's relative standing to the Top 25 target group across the five dimensions.

The work of the task force was incorporated into *Vol Vision*. The strategic plan outlines five strategic priorities, which align with the five dimensions and metrics identified by the task force. The strategic plan also makes use of the task force recommendations on peer groups.

## “Top 25” Peer Groups

<i>Schools by Grouping</i>	
<b>Top 20 US News Rank (Count – 16)</b> University of California – Berkeley University of California – Los Angeles University of Virginia University of Michigan – Ann Arbor University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill University of Illinois – Urbana-Champaign University of Wisconsin – Madison University of California – Davis University of California – Santa Barbara University of Washington – Seattle Pennsylvania State University University of Florida University of Texas – Austin The Ohio State University University of Maryland – College Park University of Pittsburgh	▶ <b>Aspiration Group</b>
<b>#21 – #30 US News Rank (Count – 8)</b> University of Georgia Clemson University Purdue University Texas A&M – College Station University of Minnesota Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey Indiana University Michigan State University	▶ <b>“Top 25” Target Group</b>
<b>#31 – #39 US News Rank (Count – 3)</b> Auburn University Iowa State University North Carolina State University – Raleigh	▶ <b>Current Peer Group</b>

## Gap Analysis, 2010 Baseline

Areas of Focus	Metrics	UTK	Top 25 Target Group	UTK vs. Top 25 Target Group
Undergraduate Education	ACT Equivalent (75 <sup>th</sup> /25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile)	29/24	28.5/23.5	+ .5/ 5
	Retention Rate (1 <sup>st</sup> to 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year)	84%	90%	-6 pts
	Six-Year Graduation Rate	60%	75%	-15 pts
Graduate Education	Number of Ph.D. Degrees	277	486	-209
	Number of Master's and Professional Degrees	1,845	2,130	-285
Research	Federal Research Expenditures	\$70 M	\$182 M	-\$112 M
	Total Research Expenditures	\$165 M	\$427 M	-\$262 M
Faculty	Avg. Tenure-Line Salary Range	\$67 to \$108 K	\$73 to \$120 K	-\$6 to \$12 K
	Undergraduate Student/Tenure-Line Faculty	20	19	+1
	Faculty Awards	10	32	-22
Financial Resources and Infrastructure	Teaching and Support Expenditures/ Student	\$16,100	\$24,300	-\$8,200
	Endowment/ Student	\$14,380	\$38,400	-\$24,020