



THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

Meeting Date: June 21, 2019

Committee: Education, Research, and Service

Item: **Unifying the UT Institute of Agriculture with UT Knoxville and Creating the Oak Ridge Institute at the University of Tennessee**

Type: Action

Presenter: Randy Boyd, Interim President

BACKGROUND

At the Executive Committee meeting on May 1, 2019, Chair Compton challenged the administration to explore and propose how to dramatically increase the University's national reputation, impact and research rankings. In response, the administration proposes two action items that capitalize on the talent, resources, and relationships within the University of Tennessee System combined with the University's partnership with Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL).

UNIFYING UTIA AND UT KNOXVILLE

The University of Tennessee must find opportunities to better capitalize on its strengths across the state to develop distinction nationally. The President proposes that the UT Institute of Agriculture (UTIA), which is headquartered in Knoxville, be unified with UT Knoxville, the flagship campus, to elevate the impact and reputation of UTIA and UT Knoxville in relation to other leading and globally competitive research institutions. This change will serve as a catalyst to increase collaborative opportunities between UT Knoxville and UTIA, to more fully deliver on the University's three-part mission of education, research, and outreach to better serve the state of Tennessee.

To capture the benefits described above, the Chancellor of the Institute of Agriculture will become Senior Vice Chancellor and Senior Vice President for Agriculture. As Senior Vice Chancellor, the position will report to the Chancellor of UT Knoxville. As Senior Vice President, the position will report to the University of Tennessee System President serving on the President's Leadership Council. Serving in both cabinets uniquely positions the UTIA head to provide the leadership and support for both UTIA and agriculture across the state.

CREATION OF THE OAK RIDGE INSTITUTE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE

Over the past two decades, the University of Tennessee and Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) have built joint facilities, hired prominent research teams, developed a first-of-its-kind joint graduate program, and developed interdisciplinary research initiatives that have helped to



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attract and retain top talent to both the state of Tennessee and to the Department of Energy's national laboratory system.

To best coordinate and administer the joint activities of UT and ORNL, the Administration proposes establishment of the Oak Ridge Institute (ORI). The institute will serve as UT's administrative umbrella for all joint activities and will allow coordinated expansion of graduate education programs to prepare the next generation of scientists and engineers for a global economy that demands interdisciplinary problem-solving, teamwork, and rapid innovation.

ORI will build on the track record of success established by partnerships between ORNL's world-leading staff and facilities and UT's academic enterprise. Coordination of joint efforts through ORI will promote greater focus, efficiency, and accountability; ensure innovative education, training, and workforce development; and provide flexibility to rapidly respond to emerging research challenges and the potential of disruptive technologies.

Committee Action

1. **The Committee Chair will call for a motion to recommend adoption of the following Resolution by the Board of Trustees:**

WHEREAS the Board of Trustees is confident that the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture and the University of Tennessee, Knoxville would both be greatly strengthened through expanded collaboration and coordination, enhanced national reputation, and consolidation of reporting for all academic and research enterprises as a single institution;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

1. **The Board of Trustees directs Interim President Boyd to unify the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture with the University of Tennessee, Knoxville as described in the meeting materials;**
2. **The Board directs Interim President Boyd to solicit faculty, staff, and stakeholder input to ensure that implementation of the unification will result in the intended benefits to both UTIA and UTK; and**
3. **At the November 8, 2019 meeting of the Board, Interim President Boyd shall report on a detailed plan on the unification including any additional necessary structural and reporting changes, as well as fiscal implications, and implementation timelines.**

2. **After discussion and action on the previous motion, the Committee Chair will call for a motion to adopt the following Resolution by the Board of Trustees:**



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WHEREAS the Board of Trustees recognizes that The University of Tennessee, Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL), and the State of Tennessee would benefit from a stronger and more coordinated relationship; and

WHEREAS Interim President Boyd has proposed the creation of a new institute to foster a stronger and more coordinated relationship;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

- 1. The Board of Trustees approves creation of the Oak Ridge Institute at the University of Tennessee (ORI) to organize established joint UT/ORNL programs under a single administrative umbrella and provide a platform for strategic growth opportunities and global impact;**
- 2. ORI shall be led by an Executive Director charged with pursuing leading-edge interdisciplinary research and workforce development in emerging fields;**
- 3. The Board directs Interim President Boyd to solicit faculty, staff, and stakeholder input to ensure the success of ORI; and**
- 4. At the November 8, 2019 meeting of the Board, Interim President Boyd shall submit, for Board approval, a detailed business plan for ORI including necessary structural and reporting framework, fiscal implications, and implementation timelines.**