Bylaws of the University of Tennessee Space Institute

PREAMBLE

The University of Tennessee Space Institute (UTSI) is an interdisciplinary unit of The University of Tennessee Knoxville (UTK) specializing in graduate education and research in engineering and natural science. All academic programs at UTSI are under the purview of their respective programs at UTK. While being an integral part of the UTK programs, UTSI is financially independent.

ARTICLE I: PURPOSE

The purpose of the UTSI bylaws is to promote the orderly conduct of business of the Institute. These bylaws supplement University of Tennessee Board of Trustees Policy and the UTK Faculty Handbook. Should there be any conflict with University policies, University policies prevail.

ARTICLE II: INSTITUTE ADMINISTRATOR

UTSI has a chief administrator appointed by The University of Tennessee President according to a search process established by the President. The term “Administrator” in the remainder of this document refers to this chief administrator.

ARTICLE III: INSTITUTE ADMINISTRATION

Section 1. Senior Administrators

In addition to the Administrator, the senior administrators include the following (either in a full-time or part-time role):

1. The Dean for Academic Affairs reports to the Administrator and provides leadership for academic programs. The Dean works with the offices of the Dean of the College of Engineering and the Dean of the College of Arts and Science as well as the UTSI faculty on matters related to the academic programs and student affairs.

2. The Assistant Vice President for Research is responsible for all research activities at UTSI and reports to the UTSI Administrator. The Assistant Vice President works with the office of research at the system level and the UT Research Foundation to ensure the proper administration and coordination of all externally and internally funded research activities.

3. The Assistant Vice President for Administration and Finance is responsible for all of the financial matters at UTSI including budget accounting and proposed future budgets. The holder of this position reports to the UTSI Administrator.
Section 2. Search for Full-Time Senior Administrators

Guidelines as established by the Office of Equity and Diversity and the Faculty Handbook (Chapter 1, Section 1.4.1) shall be followed. In addition, the Administrator selects the chair of the search committee and appoints members of the committee including at least two persons nominated by the faculty. Interim appointments may be made at the discretion of the UTSI administrator.

ARTICLE IV: INSTITUTE FACULTY

All faculty members at the UT Space Institute hold appointments in their respective academic departments at the UTK campus with the exception of the Aviation Systems Department, which is uniquely located at the Space Institute.

ARTICLE V: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Faculty.

Membership for the purposes of these bylaws is inclusive of all tenured, tenure-track, and non-tenure-track faculty as defined in Chapters 3 and 4 of the UT Faculty Handbook, with the exception of the adjunct faculty. This definition applies to all mentions of “Faculty” in these bylaws, unless otherwise stated.

Adjunct and Emeritus Faculty are appointed in accordance with the procedures in the UTK Faculty Handbook.

ARTICLE VI: ADMINISTRATOR-CONVENED FACULTY MEETINGS

Section 1. Frequency and Authorization

The Administrator shall convene meetings of the faculty at least twice in each of the fall and spring semesters. Additional meetings may be called by the Administrator or designate, or by petition to the Administrator of one-third of the faculty. The Administrator or designate prepares and distributes an agenda in advance of the scheduled meeting. The Administrator or designate presides at all meetings.

Section 2. Quorum and Rules

A quorum for voting consists of eligible faculty physically in attendance at the meeting. Faculty who submit physically or electronically signed proxies will also count toward the quorum. Meetings will be conducted according to Roberts Rules of Order. The Administrator or designate may appoint a parliamentarian at his/her discretion.
Section 3. Voting

The Voting Members of the Institute comprise the Senior Administrators and the Faculty.

Voting is normally by voice vote. However, any voting member in attendance may ask for a show of hands or a secret paper ballot.

Section 4. Reporting

Minutes are recorded by a designate of the Administrator, transcribed and distributed to the Faculty.

ARTICLE VII: APPOINTMENT AND RETENTION OF FACULTY

Section 1. Appointment of Tenure-Track Faculty

The appointment of tenure-track faculty follows the procedure outlined in the bylaws of the respective departments as well as the procedure detailed in the Faculty Handbook. In addition, all UTSI faculty of equal or higher rank than that of the appointee will conduct an advisory UTSI-wide vote on the appointment.

Section 2. Retention of Tenure Track Faculty

In addition to the faculty annual evaluation, the Dean for Academic Affairs shall conduct an annual retention review of each tenure-track UTSI faculty member, consistent with department bylaws.

Section 3. Appointment of Tenured Faculty

Faculty can be appointed with tenure only in accordance with the guidelines of the department and college of the appointment and the UTK Faculty Handbook.

Section 4. Appointment and Retention of Research Faculty

A committee comprised of all UTSI tenured or tenure track faculty of equal or higher rank to that of the research faculty member seeking appointment or renewal shall review the individual's credentials (to include previous annual retention reviews, if applicable) and provide a recommendation and yes/no vote to the Administrator. In addition, the Dean for Academic Affairs shall seek input from the corresponding UTK department and/or school, as might be required to meet the bylaws or procedures of that unit.
ARTICLE VIII: TENURE

The tenure of tenure-track faculty members is considered according to bylaws of the department in which the faculty member is appointed. All tenured faculty members at UTSI conduct Institute-wide advisory votes on tenure.

The Promotion and Tenure Committee of the Faculty Assembly is responsible for assisting faculty in preparing their applications and for conducting the Institute-wide vote.

ARTICLE IX: PROMOTION OF FACULTY

Section 1. Promotion of Tenure Track Faculty

Promotion of tenure-track faculty is considered according to bylaws of the department in which the faculty member is appointed. The tenured UTSI faculty members conduct Institute-wide advisory votes on tenure-track promotion.

Section 2. Promotion of Tenured Faculty

Promotion of tenured faculty is considered according to bylaws of the department in which the faculty member is appointed. Tenured UTSI faculty members of rank equal to or higher than the rank to be granted conduct Institute-wide advisory votes on tenured faculty promotions.

Section 3. Promotion of Research Faculty

Promotion of research faculty is considered according to bylaws of the department in which the faculty member is appointed. UTSI faculty members of rank equal to or higher than the rank to be granted conduct an Institute-wide advisory vote on the promotion.

ARTICLE X: ANNUAL REVIEWS AND MERIT RAISES

Section 1. Annual Review of Faculty

The Administrator shall conduct annual faculty reviews consistent with the UTK Manual for Faculty Evaluation, with the Administrator acting in the role of Department Head for the purpose of conducting the annual review. The Administrator coordinates with Department heads in formal academic decisions.

Section 2: Annual Review of Senior Administrators

The Faculty shall review the performance of the UTSI Administrator each year, using a process similar to the one adopted for department heads at UTK.
Responsibility for conducting this review lies with the UTSI Faculty. The Administrator shall seek input from the Faculty for the purpose of the evaluation of Senior Administrators.

Section 3: Merit Raises

Whenever merit salary raises are possible, the Administrator shall communicate to the UTSI Faculty a quantitative procedure for the allocation of increases based on the results of all annual evaluations conducted since the last effective merit raise. The procedure shall ensure 1) that available funds in the merit pool are fully utilized, and 2) that evenly distributed cost-of-living raises, up to the level of the increase in the consumer price index (CPI-U, available from US Department of Labor\(^1\)), are first awarded to all who have consistently scored “meets expectations” or higher in their annual evaluations, before any remaining funds are used to award an effective (unevenly distributed) merit raise.

ARTICLE XI: DEVELOPMENTAL LEAVE

UTSI faculty may apply for developmental leave as specified in the Faculty Handbook. A proposal shall be submitted to the Administrator detailing the proposed time period, location, activities, and benefits. The Administrator will render a decision based on the needs of the Institute and the recognition of the benefits of professional development leave.

ARTICLE XII: COMMITTEES

Section 1. Planning Committee

The Administrator is but one voice in the renewal of the UTSI Strategic Plan, with the added responsibility of guiding the faculty toward a clear articulation of their vision. Faculty members are responsible for participating constructively in the renewal of the UTSI Strategic Plan. The Planning Committee provides a vehicle for faculty involvement in this process.

Four members of the UTSI faculty are elected annually to serve on the Planning Committee. The Administrator and up to three senior Administrators shall also serve as Ex-Officio members. The Administrator or designate shall be responsible for maintaining a record of the UTSI Strategic Plan that is accessible to UTSI faculty members. At least once each semester, the Planning Committee shall meet to review the plan, the UTSI budget, and the progress towards accomplishing the specific goals of the plan, and also to discuss new research funding opportunities, as well as new opportunities in education and service, and the priority areas for new faculty hires. The Planning Committee shall report their findings and shall make recommendations to the UTSI faculty regarding (i) budget priorities, (ii)...

priority areas for new faculty hires, and (iii) any proposed new steps towards effective implementation, adjustments, or changes to the UTSI Strategic Plan. The faculty shall discuss and vote on these recommendations before they are formally presented to the Administrator. Within one month of receiving the recommendations, the Administrator shall either initiate action upon these recommendations or provide justification to the faculty for not accepting the recommendations. The UTSI Strategic Plan shall be consistent with the UT System Strategic Plan. Should the UTSI Administrator decide to seek clarification or authorization from the UT Administration before deciding on a recommendation, he/she shall likewise notify the faculty. The UTSI Administrator and faculty shall aim to reach a consensus on budget priorities, priority areas for new faculty hires, and the steps to implementation and the renewal of the UTSI Strategic Plan. The UTSI Administrator shall provide timely communication to the faculty, consistent with section 1.5 of the UTK Faculty Handbook, whenever changes in the UTSI Strategic Plan are to be made.

Section 2. Bylaws Committee

This committee reviews and makes appropriate recommendations regarding these bylaws. Three members are elected annually by the Faculty. The committee elects from among its members an individual to serve as chair.

Section 3. The Faculty Assembly

The Faculty Assembly shares responsibilities in the governance of the Institute.

ARTICLE XIII: AMENDMENTS

The Administrator may propose amendments to the Bylaws. Also, the Faculty, in a petition endorsed by at least one fourth of its members, may direct the Bylaws Committee to consider a specified amendment to the Bylaws. The Bylaws Committee must then report to the Faculty the suggested amendments, their recommendations, and prepare in printed or electronic form the present Bylaws with the proposed changes indicated. The Administrator is then required to convene a faculty meeting to consider the amendment(s). This meeting may not convene less than five business days subsequent to distribution of the proposed amendment. A two-thirds majority vote of the full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty is required to incorporate any such amendment into these Bylaws.

These bylaws and any amendments must be approved at the UT System level.