

UT Graduate Council Ad-hoc Committee on OIT@UTK Proposal
Revised Questions
10-22-19

Questions, notes, and concerns...

There is an open question about the number of tenure-track faculty that might be hired under the OIT@UTK proposal.

Here's an interesting bit of math to contemplate. Based on this set of assumptions and facts...

1. The intention is to raise the number of ORI@UT doctoral students to 500
2. The increase in doctoral students will be $500-120^*=380$.
3. Let's assume sixty new, tenure-track faculty will be hired
4. Each new doctoral student will require two tenure track faculty members on their committee
5. Let's assume the dissertation committee workload in the departments associated with ORI@UT will remain constant for current faculty.
6. Then the annual dissertation committee workload for the 60 new tenure track faculty will be
 $(500-120^*) * 2/60 = \underline{12.66 \text{ per year}}$. This figure does not include the extra work associated with chairing a dissertation.
*(current Bredesen Center students)

Revised questions...

The ad-hoc committee expressed concern that doctoral education be the priority for UTK students at the proposed ORI. What will be done to ensure that doctoral education be the priority for UTK students working with researchers at ORI?

What will be the vetting process for ORI faculty regarding their ability to direct dissertations?

Will or should the UT Graduate Council revisit the credentialing process for non-departmental dissertation chairs?

Should dissertation chairs have primary affiliations within UTK departments?

Will the proposed ORI create more demands on UTK department faculty members?

Might the potentially larger stipends available at the proposed ORI lure away doctoral students in UTK departments? (One call participant says that students in his department are not currently migrating to the Bredesen Center in search of more money.)

Does the ORI proposal envision where new faculty will be housed? Is there available space?

How will the distance between the Oak Ridge National Lab and UTK affect the graduate education of doctoral students affiliated with the proposed ORI?

What will be the impact on international students?

Should the standards for chairing dissertations be revisited?

Is the Bredesen Center organizationally located under the control and supervision of UTK, ORNL, or the UT System? (Their website suggest they are part of UTK.)

Where will the primary appointment of the new, proposed faculty be? With UTK, ORNL, or the proposed ORI.

If there is no current UTK college affiliation, what will be the implications of that non-affiliation for Bredesen Center graduates if the center is absorbed in the proposed ORI@UTK?

What is the root cause for the high PhD attrition rate in the Bredesen Center (BC) graduate program? We understanding is that UTK has conferred 67 PhDs through the BC, while 56 students left the program. That's a very high attrition rate!