New Faculty Orientation

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Provost
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MTSU Office of the Provost

Welcome to MTSU!

- **You** are key to the work of the University.
- We prioritize student success.
- We support a caring, vibrant campus culture.

Office of the Provost

What is a Provost?



One definition:

The keeper of a prison.

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Provost Responsibilities

- The academic mission
- Deans, chairs, faculty, and staff
- High-quality academic programs and instruction
- Enrollment management
- Student records
- Academic Affairs budget
- Student success
- Accreditation
- Assessment
- Research support
- International education
- Tenure & Promotion (T&P)

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Who Am I?

Education

- Riverdale High School
- MTSU
- London School of Economics
- Vanderbilt University



Career Path

- Professor
- Internship Coordinator
- Chair
- Associate Dean
- Dean
- Provost

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Who Am I?

- Three children, four grandchildren (with one on the way)
- Hobbies:
  - Traveling
  - Cycling
  - Photography
  - Lego
  - Gardening









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Priority Initiatives for AY 26-27

- Enrollment management
- Student success
- Faculty and staff professional development
- Shared governance

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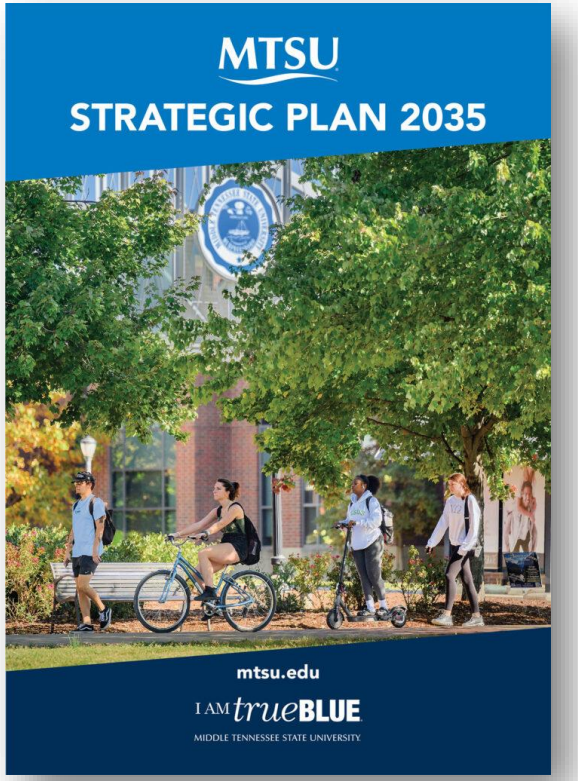
Priority Initiatives for AY 26-27

- Expanding the academic inventory:
  - Innovative academic programs
  - Focused bachelor's degrees
  - Job-embedded opportunities
- Optimizing course scheduling
- Community engagement

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Strategic Plan 2035

- Priority 1: Increase creative and research profile and be a top choice for students.
- Priority 2: Strengthen the community so all learners and workers thrive.
- Priority 3: Cultivate sustainable partnerships.
- Implementation updates online.
  - Website: mtsu.edu/strategicplan



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Lecturers & Instructor-Track Faculty



- High-quality instruction
- Professional development, support
- Know your responsibilities
- Engage your students

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Tenure-Track Faculty

- Core responsibilities
  - High-quality teaching
  - Research/creative activities
  - Service, governance
- Get to know tenure and promotion standards



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Academic Freedom

- Academic freedom applies to all MTSU faculty.
- Freedom to pursue, discuss, and communicate ideas in teaching, research, creative activities, and institutional governance.
- Faculty positions impose special obligations.

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Academic Freedom & Tenure

What They Protect

- Course content, discussion, methods within your discipline
- Research, publication, and presentation
- Scholarly debate and critique within your field
- Professional speech in your area(s) of expertise

What They Do Not

- Non-academic, personal speech
- Misconduct, unprofessional conduct, ethical violations
- Unsatisfactory performance
- Violation of university policies
- Conduct adversely affecting university operations

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Recent Tennessee Legislation

2026 Public Acts, Chapter 761

"Academic tenure is an important safeguard for academic freedom, the advancement of knowledge, and protection of intellectual independence…."

-Tennessee Code Annotated (T.C.A.) § 49-8-302

"The safeguarding of tenure must be balanced with the responsibility of institutional leadership to ensure accountability, integrity, and appropriate professional conduct…."

-Tennessee Code Annotated (T.C.A.) § 49-8-302
(also codified at § 49-9-108 for the University of Tennessee System)

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What This Means for Faculty

- The public will judge the profession and university according your speech and conduct.
- Academic freedom and tenure have specific boundaries.
- Suggested reading:
  - MTSU Policies 201, 204
  - Tennessee Code Annotated (T.C.A.) § 49-8-302
  - Paulson's article

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New Faculty Tips

- Get to know your students.
- Build your campus networks.
- Be an active member of the campus community.
- Review the Faculty Handbook.
- Devote time to professional development.
- Plan now for tenure and/or promotion.

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Center for Teaching & Mentoring

- Mentorship, professional development, support
  - Website: ctm.mtsu.edu

- Canvas implementation, training hub

- Comprehensive programming for faculty, student-facing staff, and graduate students

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Fall Faculty Meeting

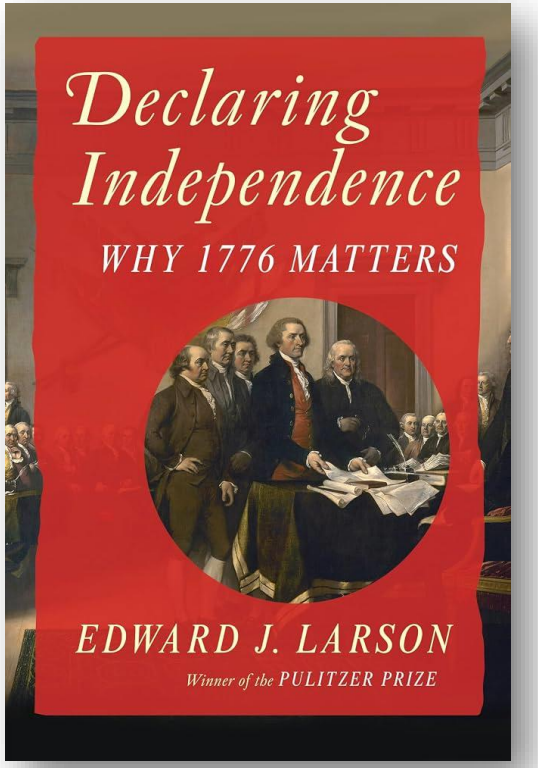
- August 20, Tucker Theatre, 10:00 AM
  - Program:
    - Opening Remarks
    - State of the University
    - Introduction of new faculty
    - Faculty awards and recognition
    - Free lunch!



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Convocation





- August 22, Murphy Center, 4:00 PM
- Keynote Speaker: Edward J. Larson

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The Academic Affairs Team



Cope Administrative Building (CAB)

Rooms 110 and 111

8:00 AM- 4:30 PM

Website: provost.mtsu.edu

(615) 898-2880

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Featured Links

Faculty Handbook



Strategic Plan



Canvas Info



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