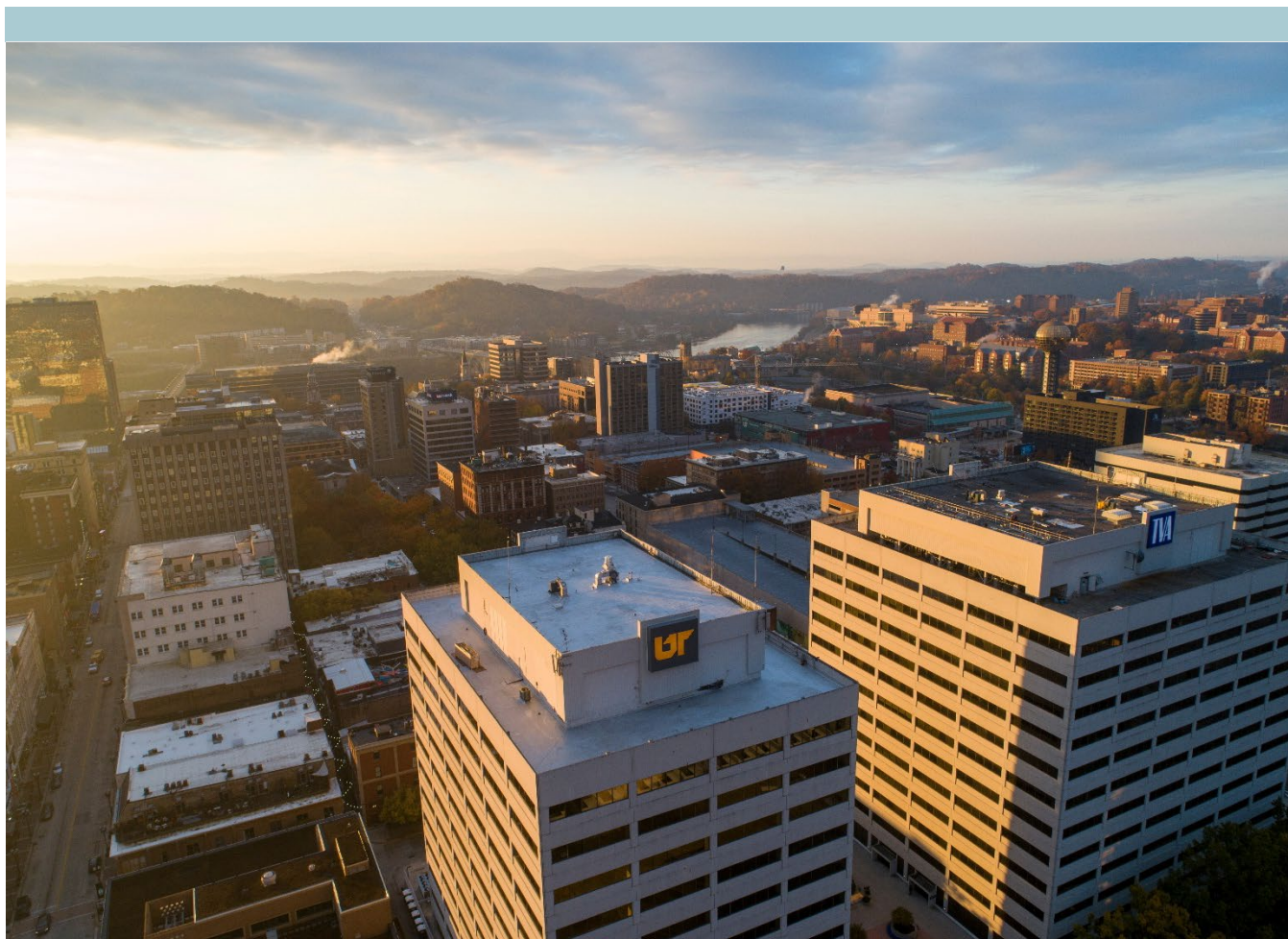




AVP for Institutional Research & Analysis

Leadership Profile

July 2026



Executive Summary

The University of Tennessee System (UT) seeks an Assistant/Associate Vice President for Institutional Research & Analysis (AVP-IRA) to provide strategic leadership for enterprise-wide institutional research, analytics, data governance, and decision support. Reporting to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, Research, and Student Success (VPAARSS), the AVP-IRA serves as a trusted advisor to senior leaders, the President's Cabinet, and the Board of Trustees, ensuring that reliable data and evidence-based insights inform policy, planning, and resource allocation across the system. The role also serves as a key partner to peers within the Division of Academic Affairs, Research, and Student Success and to institutional research and technology leaders across UT's campuses and institutes, promoting consistency, collaboration, and excellence in institutional reporting and analysis.

A central priority of the role is developing collaborative relationships and building organizational capacity across the UT System. The AVP-IRA will foster a culture of data-informed decision-making, support the professional development of staff, and work closely with campuses, institutes, and system offices to advance shared goals. The position also leads research and policy analyses on critical issues such as enrollment, student outcomes, workforce trends, budgeting, resource allocation, and institutional effectiveness while staying abreast of emerging practices in higher education. The AVP-IRA is expected to translate complex data into clear recommendations that support student success, academic excellence, research growth, operational effectiveness, and long-term institutional strategy.

As Tennessee's land-grant university system, UT serves more than 64,000 students across multiple campuses and statewide institutes, generates over \$525 million in annual research expenditures, and contributes more than \$4 billion annually to the state's economy. The AVP-IRA will join a system committed to the goals of the Be One UT 2025–2030 Strategic Plan and its values of innovation, collaboration, transparency, and excellence, helping university leaders leverage data and research to expand opportunity, strengthen impact, and advance the university's mission across Tennessee.

For information regarding how to apply, submit nominations, or inquire about the role, please see the section "Procedure for Candidacy" at the end of this document.

Role of the AVP for Institutional Research & Analysis

The AVP for Institutional Research & Analysis leads a team of talented individuals at the University of Tennessee System in efforts to equip executive leaders and key stakeholders with insightful and reliable data that propels thoughtful planning and evidence-based decision making to advance the university's mission. The AVP-IRA reports to and supports the Vice President for Academic Affairs, Research, and Student Success and works closely with the president's office, the president's cabinet, the UT Board of Trustees, peers within the UT System, and other university leaders on a regular basis. In addition to ensuring the data used for reporting and analysis are valid and reliable, the AVP-IRA provides evidence-based recommendations, decision support, and expert counsel on all topics related to the university's mission and goals. The AVP-IRA is pivotal in convening and collaborating with institutional research (IR) and analysis colleagues across the UT campuses to coordinate and align IR efforts while promoting consistency and clarity in all institutional reporting.

The role touches all aspects of the University from a functional standpoint—including student data (admissions, enrollment, retention, graduation, and financial aid), academic/curriculum, human resources, financial, research, facilities, and advancement/development. The AVP-IRA is focused on enterprise data stewardship, analytics, institutional research, and survey and analytics consulting projects that leverage existing data resources, encourage the integration of multiple data sets across traditional organizational boundaries, and involve rigorous and robust statistical methods.

The AVP-IRA directs a portfolio of strategic projects through their leadership of a team that includes a Director of Institutional Research, a Director of Business Intelligence, an Assessment Coordinator, Data Developers, Data Analysts, Data Visualization personnel, and graduate assistants.

Job Duties

- **Data Stewardship & Quality Assurance** — Oversees data governance, quality control, and the integrity of institutional data assets to support reliable decision-making across the System.
- **Official Reporting & Dashboards** — Develops, maintains, and enhances current, as well as new, official reports, dashboards, and data products for the System, ensuring accuracy, timeliness, and relevance to audiences internal to UT and to public audiences.
- **Strategic & Institutional Planning Support** — Provides insightful and analytical support, translating data into actionable insights that inform short- and long-term institutional priorities and planning.
- **Ad Hoc Analytical Studies** — In response to system priorities and strategic planning, initiates, designs, and conducts ad hoc research and analytical studies using sound and appropriate quantitative and qualitative methodologies and communicates findings clearly to a wide variety of audiences.
- **Program Assessment** — In partnership with colleagues at the UT campuses & institutes, proactively assesses the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of academic and administrative programs, including peer benchmarking and trend analysis.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership and Executive Support

- Serves as a senior advisor to the VP-AARSS and the UT executive leadership team on matters of institutional data, research, and analytics.
- Fosters a data-informed culture across the UT System and within the AARSS team, upholding the System's values of integrity, innovation, transparency, collaboration, and excellence.
- Provides presentations, reports, and briefings to the Board of Trustees, President's Cabinet, President/Chancellors group meetings, Faculty Senate, Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC), and other bodies as needed.
- Monitors the broader higher education and accreditation environments at the system, state, and national levels and uses that knowledge, along with in-depth research and analysis, to make recommendations that inform policy decisions and institutional strategy.

Develops and Leads Collaborative Teams

- Supervises and provides leadership to the institutional research and analytics team, including professional staff responsible for data warehousing, data quality, reporting, and ad hoc analyses.
- Fosters collaborative relationships between the Institutional Research & Analysis team and other units within the Division of Academic Affairs, Research, and Student Success and across the UT System.
- Focuses on ongoing professional development of staff, with the goal of increasing and improving the team's capacity to conduct analyses in a timely and accurate manner, initiate insights, and to build tools that support leadership decision-making.
- Manages direct reports and allocates work to drive team performance, ensuring alignment of process and priorities.
- Provides oversight of the administrative operations of the office, including budget and accounts.
- Using accepted frameworks and national networks, equips campus and institute personnel with knowledge and skills to expand their organizational impact and maximize their resources.
- Creates internal capacity by streamlining processes and prioritizing resources.

Data Collection, Reporting, and Compliance

- Works with campuses and institutes to develop and maintain common data definitions and standards for report elements, ensuring that data are standard, meaningful, and consistently interpreted.
- Oversees the timely and accurate submission of required federal reports (e.g., IPEDS) and state reports (e.g., THEC submissions) and other legal requirements.
- Represents the University at state and federal meetings, task groups, and professional associations related to institutional research and data reporting.

Analytics, Business Intelligence, and Data Infrastructure

- Collaborates with campuses and the Office of Information Technology (OIT) to maintain and enhance the enterprise data warehouse/consolidated data repository for real-time data retrieval and access, serving campuses, system-wide staff, the Board of Trustees, and other constituencies.
- Provides guidance on data governance, predictive analytics, machine learning, data visualization, and business intelligence best practices.
- Oversees the development and maintenance of dashboards, data products, and self-service analytics tools that reduce the reporting burden on campuses and streamline data requests.
- Translates available data and analysis into relevant and timely information for use in internal and external communications, including regular and special reports.

Research and Policy Analysis

- Leverages collaborative relationships with the UT Government Relations team, the AVP of Research in AARSS, and other campus colleagues.
- Designs and develops research approaches utilizing sound methodologies—both inferential and descriptive—for specific research questions facing the System and its institutions.
- Conducts and oversees studies on enrollment, budgeting, resource allocation, workforce trends, student outcomes, faculty productivity, and other critical higher education issues.
- Stays current with the literature and industry best practices in higher education, data science, and institutional research to identify topics for new research and to align research project goals with broader System initiatives.

Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

Required Qualifications

- Master's degree in a social science discipline, educational research, higher education administration, data science, statistics, or a closely related field. A doctoral degree is preferred.
- Seven years of progressively responsible experience in institutional/organizational research, data management, analytics, and/or policy analysis in higher education or an equivalent setting (10 years preferred).
- Five years of experience conducting analytical and policy studies that support decision-making and planning.
- Experience analyzing data from national and state database systems (e.g., IPEDS, state longitudinal data systems).

Knowledge, Skills & Abilities

- **Data & Analytics Expertise:** Advanced skills in data management, quantitative and qualitative analysis, statistical methods, and data visualization. Familiarity with ELT processes, data warehousing concepts, and business intelligence platforms.
- **Higher Education Knowledge:** Deep knowledge of higher education topics such as enrollment management, student outcomes, faculty productivity, research expenditures, institutional productivity and efficiency, and applicable laws and regulations.
- **Strategic Communication:** Excellent oral, written, and presentation skills with demonstrated ability to analyze, integrate, and clearly communicate complex information at the conceptual, strategic, and tactical levels to diverse audiences.
- **Leadership & Collaboration:** Demonstrated leadership skills and the ability to lead cross-functional research and business intelligence teams. Strong facilitation and organizational skills and the ability to foster teamwork and build collaborative relationships across campuses and administrative units.
- **Project Management:** Knowledge of project management principles and the ability to manage multiple concurrent initiatives.
- **Data Governance & Integrity:** Commitment to quality, accuracy, and integrity in all data and reporting activities. Knowledge of data governance frameworks and best practices.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Ability to effectively navigate and maintain a consistent and effective presence in the larger community of internal and external stakeholders, including state and federal agencies.



About the University of Tennessee System

Overview

The University of Tennessee (UT) is the state's land-grant university system, enrolling over 64,000 students through its campuses in Knoxville (R1), Chattanooga, Pulaski, and Martin; the UT Health Science Center in Memphis (R1), and the statewide Institute of Agriculture and Institute for Public Service. The UT System awards over 12,500 degrees annually, has an endowment of over \$1.3 billion, generates more than \$525 million in annual research expenditures, and has an economic impact of over \$4 billion annually on the state of Tennessee.

Through its campuses and statewide institutes, the University of Tennessee System is improving the lives of Tennesseans today and for future generations by tackling Tennessee's most pressing challenges. The [Be One UT 2025–2030 Strategic Plan](#) provides a clear roadmap for advancing the university's mission of education, discovery and outreach, and guides how UT will expand opportunity, strengthen impact and deliver meaningful results for the people of Tennessee.

United by Shared Values

Our values define how we work — as teammates, leaders and public servants. The [Be One UT Values](#) are a call to action that aligns more than 20,000 employees around shared goals, strengthens our culture, and fosters a deep sense of purpose and commitment.

- **Bold and Impactful**
- **Embrace Difference**
- **Optimistic and Visionary**
- **Nimble and Innovative**
- **Excel in All We Do**
- **United and Connected**
- **Transparent and Trusted**

Leadership

President Boyd

Randy Boyd has served as UT's 26th president since November 2018 and serves as the chief executive officer of the statewide UT System.

The UT System includes campuses in Chattanooga, Pulaski and Martin; the Health Science Center in Memphis; and the Institute of Public Service. Additionally, it includes the flagship campus in Knoxville, which is also comprised of the Space Institute in Tullahoma and the statewide Institute of Agriculture. The UT System also manages Oak Ridge National Laboratory through its UT-Battelle partnership, where Boyd serves as chairman.

In 1991, Boyd founded Knoxville-based Radio Systems Corporation (now PetSafe Brands), a company that produces over 4,000 pet-related products under the brand names PetSafe, Invisible Fence, ScoopFree and SportDOG. The company employs more than 1,400 people with offices in six countries around the world. Boyd also owns Boyd Sports, LLC, which owns six minor league baseball teams, including the Tennessee Smokies.

In 2007, Boyd began a journey transitioning from entrepreneur and businessman to full-time public servant. Boyd is a founder and chairman of tnAchieves, a nonprofit which has helped send more than 133,000 students to community college free of tuition and fees. This success led then-Governor Bill Haslam to invite him to serve as special advisor on higher education in 2013. During his tenure, he is credited with being the architect of the Drive to 55 and the Tennessee Promise. In 2015, Gov. Haslam recruited him back to serve as commissioner of economic and community development. During his tenure, his team recruited 52,000 new jobs and \$9 billion in new investment for the state. He also founded and co-chaired the governor's Rural Task Force and chaired the Governor's Workforce Sub-Cabinet. Randy and his wife Jenny have dedicated their lives to giving back. In 2018, the couple formed the Boyd Foundation to further promote youth education, mental health, the arts and animal welfare. Among the Foundation's many philanthropic commitments is the Boyd Center for Business and Economic Research and the Boyd Venture Challenge seed grant program for student entrepreneurs, both through the Haslam College of Business at UT Knoxville.

Boyd is the first in his family to graduate from college. He earned a bachelor's degree in business with an emphasis on industrial management from UT Knoxville. He also earned a master's degree in liberal studies with a focus on foreign policy from the University of Oklahoma.

When not working for UT, Boyd enjoys running and has run 100 half marathons and 57 full marathons, including one in Antarctica. But his favorite time is spent as Jenny's husband of 40 years, father to his two sons, and being Poppi to his two granddaughters.

Vice President Savarese

Dr. Bernie Savarese, vice president for academic affairs, research and student success, joined the University of Tennessee System in October of 2021. As a member of the president's executive leadership team, he works in conjunction with the Chancellors of the university's five campuses and leaders of the multiple statewide institutes to advance and promote high-quality academic and student experiences. At the UT System, Bernie leads the offices of academic affairs, research and national laboratories, learner success and workforce pathways, institutional research and analysis, access and engagement, and the office of the chief wellness officer, while serving as the staff liaison to the Education, Research and Service Committee of the UT Board of Trustees. Bernie also represents the UT System in state, regional, and national initiatives linked to the university's mission and his team serves as the university's primary liaisons to the Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) leadership team, the U.S. Department of Energy, and Battelle Memorial Institute on matters that relate to the UT-Battelle management and operations contract for ORNL.

Prior to joining the University of Tennessee, Bernie served as the Assistant Vice President for Student Success and the Student Experience at New York University (NYU) from 2017 to 2021. In this role, he oversaw the creation of the Office of Student Success and its numerous departments, worked collaboratively with faculty and student leaders, led NYU's Student Success Steering Committee, and served as a subject matter expert and resource to university leadership. Prior to joining NYU, Bernie worked at The Ohio State University for almost two decades, most recently serving as the director of the university's nationally recognized First Year Experience (FYE) program while also leading teams in Undergraduate Admissions and working closely with student and faculty leaders. Before his time in FYE and Enrollment Management, Bernie held various leadership roles spanning the academic and student experience in Ohio State's Division of Student Life.

Born in Wheeling, West Virginia, and raised in Belmont County, Ohio, Bernie went on to receive a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and an MBA from The Ohio State University, a Master of Arts in College Student Personnel from Bowling Green State University, and his Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in Leadership and Innovation from New York University where his dissertation focused on the early college experiences that support the success of Black men at research universities. He also actively serves as an adjunct assistant professor in UT Knoxville's higher education administration graduate program, teaching courses in higher education policy and students in post-secondary education.

Bernie has been recognized with honors such as Bowling Green State University's President's Award for Distinguished Service, New York University's Making a Difference Award, and he was inducted into the 2016 Class of "Forty Under 40" by Columbus Business First. Bernie currently serves on multiple boards including serving as Chair of the Board of Directors for the Ohio State University's Alumni Association. Bernie speaks nationally and internationally on topics ranging from academic and student success, access and affordability, and leadership development.



Procedure for Candidacy

WittKieffer is assisting the University of Tennessee System in this search. Applications can be submitted through the [WittKieffer Candidate Portal](#). Applicants should submit, as separate documents, a CV or résumé and a letter of interest that addresses the themes outlined in this profile. For full consideration, candidate materials should be received by **August 26, 2026**.

Nominations and inquiries can be directed to Ryan Crawford and Maya Holt-Brockenbrough at UTS-AVPIRA@wittkieffer.com.

EEO/AA Statement / Non-Discrimination Statement

The University of Tennessee is an EEO/AA/Title VI/Title IX/Section 504/ADA/ADEA institution in the provision of its education and employment programs and services. All qualified applicants will receive equal consideration for employment without regard to, and will not be discriminated against on the basis of, race, color, national origin, religion, sex, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, physical or mental disability, or covered veteran status.

Inquiries and charges of violation of Title VI (race, color, national origin), Title IX (sex), Section 504 (disability), ADA (disability), ADEA (age), sexual orientation, or veteran status should be directed to the (EEO). Requests for accommodation of a disability should be directed to the ADA Coordinator at the [EEO office](#).