



OFFICE of
HUMAN RESOURCES

EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

University Organizational Structure

A university's organizational structure can be complicated because of the nature of higher education. Understanding an individual department's core approval chain requires an understanding of that department's placement inside the university as a whole.

ETSU's general structure can be represented by the following:

University			
Division			
College/Office		College/Office	
Dept/ Center	Dept/ Center	Dept/ Center	Dept/ Center

The whole University can be divided into divisions, then into colleges or administrative offices, then departments or centers within those colleges.

The President has authority over the entire University, Vice Presidents have authority over divisions, Deans/Executives have authority over colleges or administrative units, and Department Chairs/Directors have authority over departments/centers. **Academic matters fall under the purview of the Provost before going to the President.**

Operational/administrative functions also function on one of the above levels. Departments can have internal staff that are responsible for specific tasks, while a college/division may have a centralized office that oversees specific areas for an entire college/division. Administrative offices such as Business and Finance or Human Resources serve the whole University.

A typical approval chain would consist of the approvers at each level of the organization.

Dept. Chair/Director → Dean/Executive → Vice President → President

Different processes may require different approvals. For example:

1. A hire with a salary funded by a grant would need approval from Grant Accounting.
2. A graduate assistant hire would need approval from Graduate Studies.
3. The Vice President of a division is the final approval for a temporary hire.

For assistance with organizational structure and approval chains, please contact your HR Business Partner.

[University Org Charts](#)