Memorandum of Understanding- Shared Governance

The University of Akron ("University") and the American Association of University Professors, University of Akron Chapter ("Akron-AAUP") (Collectively referred to as the "Parties") agree to the following measures designed to improve shared governance procedures and ensure such procedures are followed.

A. Financial Transparency

The labor-management Bargaining Unit Composition Policy Committee ("Policy Committee" aka "LMPC") will meet quarterly to discuss current finances and budget modeling data. These meetings will occur soon after the regular briefings of the Board of Trustees by the University Administration. The Administration will share with the Akron-AAUP the same data that are used to brief the Board of Trustees so that both parties are well informed on the financial health of the University.

The financial data will be summarized in a way that will be understandable to those without expertise in accounting (similar or identical to how it is presented to the Board of Trustees). The Akron-AAUP will be provided with supporting data upon request, but it is understood that these requests will not be unnecessarily voluminous or burdensome to fulfill.

B. Investment in Academic Programs

Pursuant to 3359-10-01.1(C)(1) the Parties recognize that University Council is the primary shared governance body of the University that makes recommendations to the President on financial and budgetary matters. More specifically, pursuant to 3359-10-01.1(I)(2)(c), the University Council Budget and Finance Committee ("UCBF") is primarily responsible for studying, monitoring and making recommendations to the University Council on the development of all University budget, finance and purchasing policies and resource allocations in collaboration with staff, contract professionals and faculty in appropriate departments. This MOU supports that mission, particularly in collaborating with faculty.

It is recognized that the Faculty Senate – specifically the Academic Investment Committee ("AIC") - shall have input into academic budget and strategy matters and shall act as an advisory body to the UCBF. As part of AIC's normal process in providing input in assisting in the development of the annual budget, it shall share its input and recommendations regarding academic programs and academic program investments at the University. This input shall be limited to academic budgetary matters such as suggested investment in faculty positions and departmental resource allocations. The Faculty Senate AIC's role shall at all times remain advisory in nature and subordinate to that of the UCBF. The following process has been developed for the purpose of achieving a transparent, data-informed mechanism through which faculty, subject to 3359-10-01.1, may participate in the process of the annual allocation of academic investment via the university budgeting process.

The annual AIC review and recommendation process shall be as follows:

In the first year, the Academic Investment Committee (AIC) will review and suggest adjustments to the quantitative, qualitative, and benchmarking data sets recommended by the Ad-hoc Investment Criteria Committee. By September 1 of each year, the AIC will send their recommended data sets to the Provost for use by the administration in developing the following year's budget. The Provost will forward the recommended data sets to the Faculty Senate and to academic units for feedback and questions.

Over the course of the academic year, the Provost will develop a draft budget allocation for each college for the following fiscal year and share a rationale for the allocation with the Deans and the AIC. The Provost will consider the AIC-recommended data as well as other pertinent information in the formulation of this budget allocation. Following any discussions with the AIC, the Provost may adjust the budget allocations. Such changes may be based on input and suggestions provided by the AIC, the UCBF, or other individuals or entities or on other new information not originally considered (e.g. modified estimates for revenues or emergency expenses).

Within an overall process guided by the Provost, the Deans will develop the college budget within the assigned allocation for the following year. The Dean and/or chair will meet with each department's faculty to describe the process and provide a means for faculty to provide input and feedback. (References to "chair" and "department" include school directors and schools, respectively. The Dean of University Libraries will meet with the faculty and contract professionals from University Libraries.) The chair of each department will work with their faculty to respond to the Dean's request for information. The Dean will allow faculty within those departments to propose ideas for investment early in the process.

The recommended allocations to departments within the College will be informed by information from the departments, AIC data, information provided by the UCBF, as well as other pertinent information. As the constraints of the total College budget become clear, the Dean will prioritize the use of allocated funding to meet ongoing and new investment strategies and ideas.

The Deans will produce a summary that includes the allocation for each of the departments with accompanying rationale and an appendix of the proposed faculty ideas for investment. This summary will be forwarded to the Provost for final review and eventually shared with the AIC. The Provost will include the Provost's final recommendations and attach this summary for the AIC.

The AIC will review the Provost's recommendations, including the collegiate budgets. The AIC will provide any final feedback on the process or final recommendations in its annual report to the Faculty Senate. Prior to sharing with the full Faculty Senate, the AIC will provide their report to the Provost and with the UCBF for clarification and correction of factual errors or misunderstandings. After the consultation between the Provost and UCBF, the report will be shared with the Faculty Senate and discussed during a Faculty Senate meeting. The discussion will be recorded in the meeting minutes and will be forwarded to the AIC for consideration in the next year's investment process. Per 3359-10-01.1, the UCBF may always make its own recommendations to UC, which in turn shall make its final recommendations to the President on the overall budget process.

Following the completion of each cycle, the AIC will consider the discussion in Faculty Senate, assess the process and data sets, and propose ongoing modifications and refinements for the administration's consideration in the next fiscal year.

C. Program Viability Review Process

A program may be identified by the Office of Academic Affairs (OAA), the program faculty, chair or dean as having significant challenges that could affect its viability (i.e., be considered “at risk”). Challenges to viability could include but are not limited to the following:

1. Loss or potential loss of accreditation;
2. Too few bargaining unit faculty to effectively deliver the curriculum and/or administer the program;
3. A sustained decline in enrollment in the program;
4. Redundancy of the program with others at the university; and
5. Outperformance of the program (as indicated by relevant metrics) by competitor programs to such an extent that future viability is in question.

The identifying body will communicate their concerns with a rationale in writing to the dean of the college that houses the program. The dean will meet to consult with the program faculty and department chair or school director within fourteen (14) calendar days of receiving the communication of concerns to discuss the viability of the program.

If the faculty agree that the program is no longer viable, admissions to the program will be suspended immediately.

If the faculty or department chair is not in agreement that the program is no longer viable, they must submit to the dean evidence countering the concerns expressed in the written rationale within thirty (30) calendar days of their consultation meeting.

In that event, the dean will notify the OAA and the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC) that evidence for continuation of the program has been submitted. In consultation with OAA, FSEC will form an *ad hoc* committee consisting of the following:

1. Two program faculty members;
2. The department chair or school director; and
3. A representative of
    a. The Dean’s Office;
    b. The OAA;
    c. The Program Review Committee (PRC);
    d. The Academic Investment Committee (AIC); and
    e. The FSEC.

This committee shall review the status and viability of the program and make a written recommendation to the Faculty Senate regarding the continuation or termination of the program within thirty (30) calendar days of the submission of evidence.

In the case of recommendation for termination, the recommendation shall include a rationale for the decision. The program faculty may accept the recommendation, in which case admissions to the program will be suspended. If the faculty do not accept the recommendation, they may provide a final rebuttal to the Faculty Senate for consideration at the next scheduled full Faculty Senate meeting. The Faculty Senate shall make a final recommendation to the President.

If the recommendation is for continuation of the program, the recommendation to the

Faculty Senate should include specific instructions for improvement with a recommended timeframe for re-evaluation. The Faculty Senate shall make a recommendation to the President at its next regular meeting. The President shall act on the recommendation and determine whether to continue or terminate the program. If the President chooses to continue the program but still considers it at risk, the program faculty will follow the specific instructions for improvement provided by the *ad hoc* committee. If resources requiring financial investment are recommended, the *ad hoc* committee shall coordinate with the AIC to attempt to secure funding. The program faculty will report to the FSEC and OAA annually on their progress, with the goal of reaching viability as outlined by the *ad hoc* committee within the timeframe prescribed by the *ad hoc* committee, which shall not exceed three (3) academic years. If OAA determines that expected progress has not been made within the recommended timeframe, the *ad hoc* committee will reconvene to review and either provide further instructions for improvement with a new timeframe for re-evaluation, not to exceed the same three (3) academic years, or make a final recommendation to the Faculty Senate for termination of the program. The Faculty Senate will then consider this recommendation and make its own recommendation to the President of the University.

In the case of either a recommendation for termination or a recommendation for continuation of a program, the President will act on the Faculty Senate's recommendation. The President's decision shall be final and not subject to further review, except that nothing herein shall preclude the filing of a grievance claiming a violation of either this Memorandum of Understanding or the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Throughout this process, best efforts will be made to have all consultations with the program faculty occur during the nine-month academic year and include all bargaining unit faculty affiliated with the program.

It is agreed that no program will be terminated without having been identified as at risk and reviewed by the *ad hoc* committee at least once as described above, unless the program faculty are in agreement that termination is warranted. Enrollment in a program shall not be suspended before the program is reviewed at least once by the *ad hoc* committee and a recommendation is made to the President by the Faculty Senate, unless the program faculty agree.

It is understood by the Parties that, subject to the terms of this Memorandum of Understanding and the Collective Bargaining Agreement, the decision to close or suspend admission to any program at the University shall remain a management right pursuant to Ohio Law and Article 3 of the collective bargaining agreement.

D. Reorganization of Academic Units

When reorganizing or renaming academic units, input will be secured as follows:

1. The faculties of the affected units vote on the proposed reorganization or renaming.

    a. If the proposed reorganization involves the merger of two or more departments or schools within the same college, the faculty of each such department or school vote on it, as does the faculty of the college as a whole.
    b. If the proposed reorganization involves the merger of departments or schools in two or more colleges, the faculty of each such department or school and the

faculty of each such college votes on it.

c. If the proposed reorganization involves the transfer of one or more departments or schools from one college to another, the faculty of each such department or school and each such college vote on it.
d. If the proposed reorganization involves the merger of two or more colleges, the faculty of each such college votes on it.
e. If the renaming of a department or school is proposed, the faculty of that department or school votes on the proposal, as does the college in which the department or school is located.
f. If the renaming of a college is proposed, the faculty of that college votes on the proposal.

2. After the faculties of the affected units have voted on a proposed reorganization or renaming, the proposal is submitted to the Academic Policies Committee of the Faculty Senate.

3. The Academic Policies Committee, after confirming that the faculties of the affected units have voted on the proposal, evaluates the proposal from a University-wide perspective and makes a recommendation to the Faculty Senate about whether to approve the proposal.

4. The Faculty Senate acts on the proposal, making its own recommendation to the President of the University.

E. Workload

In accordance with University Rule 20-03.2:

1. Deans will establish and clearly communicate the proportion of teaching, research and service expected of each department within their college (determined in accordance with the unit's mission as set forth in rule 20-03.2). Should that proportion need to change, the department will be given reasonable time to accommodate the change.

2. Each department will submit a workload assignment policy to its Dean for approval by the Dean and OAA in accordance with section (B)2 of Rule 20-03.2. New policies, or revisions to policies will be accepted for review by week 4 of the Fall semester, and approved by week 4 of the Spring semester.

Agreed to by:

The University of Akron	American Association of University Professors The University of Akron Chapter
By: Gwyneth Price	By: Toni Bisconti
Date: 4/22/2025	Date: 4/21/25