

Dr. Ghorashi's Biography

Dr. Ghorashi is a professor of chemical engineering. He served as Tennessee Tech University's Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs from 2013 to 2017. Prior to that he served as the Executive Director of Fenn Academy and Fenn Research & Development Institute and Dean of the College of Engineering at Cleveland State University. He has served in increasingly responsible leadership roles and has substantive and successful experience developing and executing strategic plans. He has experience working with governing boards as a member, as Dean, and as Provost and Vice President. Dr. Ghorashi's vitae demonstrates a record of accomplishments as an agent of constructive change and for making difficult decisions with integrity and outmost respect for the principles of shared governance. He has over twenty-five years of higher education administrative experience in both traditional and collective bargaining environments, rural and urban settings, individual board and system-board governance, traditional and RCM budget models, STEM and comprehensive institutions.

As Provost, Dr. Ghorashi was second-in-charge of the university, managed a \$92 million budget and oversaw 8 colleges, plus the School of Nursing, University Library, and Army ROTC as well as 27 centers and a multitude of programs and business offices, including the division of distance education, institutional research, international education, extended sites, continuing education, registrar, admissions, enrollment management and veteran's affairs. As Chief Academic Officer, he oversaw and guided the creation of 40 new academic programs in line with the state and regional needs, ranging from Ph.D. and Master's programs to PSM and new concentrations as well as hybrid on-site and on-line degrees, such as a Doctor of Nursing Practice and a Master of Accountancy.

Also, as Provost, under his leadership, the freshman applications to the University increased by 25% in Fall 2017 corresponding to a high double-digit surge in enrollment, in spite of two years of free community college program implementation in Tennessee. In addition to increasing freshman enrollment, he led the creation of over 25 new initiatives to improve student success which resulted in a significant increase in student retention rate including a 10% increase in freshman retention over a two-year period and an 18% increase in graduation rate over a five-year period, starting in 2013, while simultaneously placing emphasis on recruitment and retention of non-traditional/adult students. He also was actively involved with the team responsible for the design and construction of a new \$90 million science facility.

Under Dr. Ghorashi's guidance, the university implemented new international student orientation programs and entered into articulation agreements with many domestic and international institutions which resulted in a peak in international student enrollment. He also placed emphasis on graduate recruitment and witnessed significant increases in graduate enrollment and the number of graduate degrees granted. Additionally, he initiated and led the establishment of a new Division of Digital and Distance Education, a new Honors College, formed the College of Graduate Studies and oversaw the formation of a new College of Fine Arts. He also established a new Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence, a Rural Development Institute, Campus Compass (a one-stop-shop for students), a Learning Assistance & Central Tutoring Center, a Center for Creative Inquiry, a Math Emporium, a Writing Studio, and oversaw the establishment of an Innovation & Discovery Institute and a "Makers' Space".

Many academic programs (including Engineering, Business, Nursing, Biology and Chemistry) underwent national accreditation reviews under his tenure and received highly successful outcomes while at the same time he oversaw the successful accreditation and the state academic audit of many graduate and undergraduate programs. Also, during his tenure, Tennessee Tech received the highest "Performance-

Funding” Score, highest among all Tennessee Board of Regents and University of Tennessee System institutions. Additionally, the entire University underwent its ten-year SACSCOC accreditation review and received a flawless SACSCOC reaffirmation of the institution’s accreditation (2016) with no recommendations, the highest possible outcome by the Commission on Colleges, for which he was praised for his leadership by the University President.

He also conducted an academic capacity assessment, and in line with the increase in enrollment, authorized the hiring of over 100 tenure-track faculty, and an additional 45 lecturers. Faculty salaries were increased every consecutive year during his tenure (2013-2017), with market adjustments for underpaid individuals. He also substantially increased the funding for graduate assistants which in turn increased the number of doctoral students. Additionally, more highly qualified students were recruited, increasing the average ACT score to 24.4 for first-time freshmen, with a large number and percentage of students with an ACT composite score of 28 or greater, and simultaneously increased the number of women in STEM disciplines. As well, the number of women appointed to high academic leadership positions increased.

In 2016, Tennessee Tech’s Carnegie ranking advanced from a “Master’s Colleges and Universities” category to a nationally ranked “Doctoral/Research” (currently renamed R2) institution and he took crucial steps to sustain the new classification for future years. As a result of the change in the institution’s classification, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and legislators approved extra funding to be added to the TTU’s budget appropriation. Also, in 2016, for the first time, US News recognized Tennessee Tech as a nationally ranked institution while only one other public institution in Tennessee was nationally ranked in that year.

Dr. Ghorashi also worked closely with his Dean of Engineering to submit the initial proposal to the State of Tennessee to receive an additional budget allocation, in millions of dollars, in support of TTU’s College of Engineering for student and faculty support. A revised version of the proposal was later approved and the annual funds were allocated to the University.

Recognizing “the greatest assets of the University”, Dr. Ghorashi initiated several faculty and staff development and leadership programs, formed Diversity and Inclusion committees within each College and established a new Quality Enhancement Plan program to enhance the undergraduate student experience. As Tennessee Tech transitioned from the Tennessee Board of Regents to an independent Board of Trustees, Dr. Ghorashi was charged by the University President to lead the transition taskforce. As such, in working with faculty leaders, he oversaw the updating process of over 100 academic affairs policies which ultimately received faculty support and approval. He also supported the establishment of a Journal of Undergraduate Research, stimulated the construction of a new academic budget model together with representatives of faculty, staff and college deans, oversaw the construction of continuity of operations plans for each academic unit, worked with the faculty to form an on-line education strategy and proposed and received approval for construction and renovation of major new facilities, including the design approval for an International House, a new Army ROTC facility, construction of an interactive wall designed for career awareness and recruitment purposes, and the renovation of an iconic campus building to house the Enrollment Management Division.

As Dean of Engineering and prior to that as Associate Dean, Dr. Ghorashi worked closely with K-12 schools and major private sector employers in Cleveland, Ohio to establish the Fenn Academy consortium in order to construct pre-college programs in area high schools and support the students both academically and financially from high school through college via special courses, scholarships and co-op opportunities. He started with one school district and one major corporation that funded the

project and developed a consortium that grew to encompass 42 school districts throughout Northeast Ohio, 14 satellite offices located at partner schools within a five-county region and ten major corporations and non-profit organizations that supported the Academy. As a result, an increasing number of students decided to pursue their college education at CSU. Fenn Academy has been featured in numerous print and electronic media articles as well as television and radio programs and has been suggested by Utah educators as a model for the Utah System of Higher Education.

Dr. Ghorashi's fundraising activities resulted in 116% increase in endowment growth while he was the Dean of the CSU College of Engineering. During his service as Dean of Engineering, new undergraduate enrollment increased by 119%, new freshman enrollment increased by 146%, new transfer enrollment increased by 92% and new graduate enrollment was increased by 51%. Also, while at Cleveland State University, Dr. Ghorashi was a key participant in the establishment of the Ohio Aerospace Institute and the Center for Diagnostics, Imaging and Visualization., as Engineering Dean, established the Fenn Research and Development Institute and worked with other deans to establish a STEM(M) Center.

As a faculty member, Dr. Ghorashi has a very productive record of research accomplishments in form of peer-reviewed publications at the national and international levels and large research grants from various funding agencies. He has received numerous awards and recognitions in the areas of teaching, research and service from universities, National Aeronautics and Space Administration as well as community leaders and legislators, including a certificate of commendation from the Ohio House of Representatives, congratulating him for his contributions and saluting him as "one of Ohio's finest citizens". Dr. Ghorashi has also been recognized for his scientific contributions in the fields of fluid mechanics, jet engine design, combustion, agile manufacturing, agile organizations and higher education.

He is one of the few academics invited to contribute to Vision 2020, a report stimulated by a request from the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy for industry advice on how the U.S. government could better allocate R&D funding to advance the manufacturing base of the U.S. economy. Dr. Ghorashi is the coeditor of three volumes of Laser Anemometry, published by the Society of Mechanical Engineers, a contributor to many technical books, and the author of the book: "How to Become an Exceptionally Successful Young Person - A Guide to Early Planning and A Roadmap to Success".

Dr. Ghorashi has received a B.S. degree in Chemical Engineering from Wayne State University, M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Chemical Engineering from the Ohio State University and Management and Leadership in Education certificate (MLE) form Harvard University. He has received full-professorship with tenure from two nationally-ranked research universities, has served as a visiting lecturer in the European Union Erasmus program, has taught at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and has been invited to give lectures and presentations at world-renowned universities nationally and internationally.