

Special Projects UNT Federal Investigation

UNT head abruptly put on administrative leave

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By Matthew Zabel / Staff Writer

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A University of North Texas vice president remains on paid administrative leave and is banned from the campus until further notice from the university, and university officials are investigating his conduct.



Dr. T. Lloyd Chesnut, UNT's vice president for research and technology transfer, requested and received paid administrative leave July 27, university records show.

Chesnut, 63, said he could not discuss why he is on leave or why police escorted him from his office, but he said he is not accused of any wrongdoing. He also said he did not know when he would return to work.

Dr. T. Loyd
Chesnet

In a July 27 letter responding to Chesnut's request on that same day for paid leave, UNT President Dr. Norval F. Pohl warned Chesnut "not to interfere with any investigations," "not to remove or destroy relevant documents or electronic information" and "not to

attempt to influence witnesses."

"Continued payment of your salary during your leave will be dependent on your cooperation as discussed above," the letter said. "The length of your paid leave and your status with the University upon the conclusion of the leave are dependent on a number of factors and will be addressed at a later time."

Deborah Leliaert, a university spokeswoman, said "the university is investigating Dr. Lloyd Chesnut's conduct during his employment at UNT," but she would not say what the nature of the investigation is or which department of the university is conducting it.

"For the duration of his leave, Dr. Chesnut is relieved from all the duties of his position and is expected to fully cooperate with the university's investigation," Leliaert said.

She also confirmed that university police escorted Chesnut from his office on the second floor of the Hurley Administration Building on July 27.

Leliaert said she did not know why the police escort was necessary, but she presumed it was "the standard approach the institution takes when people are placed on administrative leave."

Chesnut earns a base salary of \$197,513 annually, Leliaert said.

He has been at UNT since July 2003. He is the first person at UNT to hold that position in which he serves as the university's chief research officer.

He is also a tenured biology professor.

In its annual evaluation of administrators last spring, UNT's faculty rated Chesnut with a 1.69 on a scale of zero to 4 for overall effectiveness, a rating below what the survey considered satisfactory.

Before accepting the job at UNT, Chesnut served in a similar administrative role at the University of Montana-Missoula. He also has held administrative positions at Ohio University, Louisiana State University in Shreveport and Georgia College and State University.

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