

DATE: January 31, 2013**SUBJECT:** Academic Program Review**ACTION RECOMMENDED:** Information

Tennessee's commitment to the completion agenda in higher education necessitates an ongoing evaluation of the health, productivity, and quality of the state's academic programs. As the state continues to pursue the goal of attaining the national average of adults with at least an associate degree by 2025, these programs will provide the vehicle for not only awarding more credentials, but also directly contributing to the state's economic and workforce development resources.

THEC is the approving authority for all new academic programs at public institutions of higher education, with approval of new programs at community colleges delegated to the Tennessee Board of Regents. The approval process for new programs was revised in January 2011, with significant emphasis added to require that the Letter of Intent include consideration of mission distinctiveness, labor supply/demand data and program duplication.

These Letters of Intent undergo a rigorous review process at the governing boards and then proceed to THEC for final review. THEC staff members then make a determination if the Letter of Intent is approved or if further information is required. In those cases where the Letter is approved, the institution then proceeds with development of a full program proposal. Graduate level degree programs require a site visit with THEC staff and external consultants.

This Academic Program Review provides a holistic view of the status of degree programs throughout the state, and includes the following components:

Program Activity: Depicts new programs added to the state inventory in the previous year, as well as programs that have been terminated.

Post Approval Monitoring: Assesses success of new programs approved within the last five years against projected enrollment, graduation and financial goals.

Program Productivity Review: On-going monitoring of all programs in operation for more than five years is conducted to identify those that are not graduating a sufficient number of students as well as those that are thriving. A schedule for future program productivity review is presented and discussed.

Performance Funding Qualitative Reviews: Results of accreditation reviews, consultant evaluations, or academic audits of established programs as a Performance Funding qualitative measure.

1) Program Activity

The Commission has the statutory responsibility to review and approve new academic programs, while responsibility for program termination lies with the two governing boards. However, Commission staff may recommend termination to the TBR and UT systems. During 2012, the Commission approved three programs and the Board of Regents approved 45 sub-baccalaureate programs. The governing boards terminated 22 programs. A complete listing of program approvals and terminations can be found in Appendix A.

Table 1: New Programs and Terminations, 2012

	New Programs	Terminations	Net Change
TBR Universities	1	2	-1
UT System	2	1	1
TBR Community Colleges	45	19	26
Total Actions	48	22	26

- Of the 48 new programs, just under half (22 programs) were certificate programs approved by the Board of Regents.
- The program activity for 2012 represents a significant decrease from 2011 program actions. During 2011, a total of 92 new programs were approved with 84 programs at the certificate level.
- THEC approved two graduate programs and a single program at the baccalaureate level. Each of these programs was approved under the more rigorous program approval process instituted in 2011 and is congruent with the institutional mission profile.
- The programs terminated by the governing boards during the previous year were also predominantly at the certificate level, with 9 of 22 terminations being certificates.
- Termination activity at the public universities was very low, with one baccalaureate and two Master's programs being terminated.

2) Post Approval Monitoring

Newly approved programs are evaluated under the Post Approval Monitoring cycle for five years at the baccalaureate level and above and three years for pre-baccalaureate programs. This review evaluates programs against enrollment and graduate projections, program cost, program progress toward accreditation, and other goals agreed upon by the governing boards and THEC through program authorization.

THEC can recommend termination for those programs that do not, over the monitoring period, show improvement. The full summary of Post Approval Monitoring can be found in Appendix B.

Table 2: Summary of Post Approval Monitoring

	Programs Meeting Benchmarks	Programs Not Meeting Benchmarks
TBR Universities	16	12
UT System	1	17
TBR Community Colleges	1	5
Total	18	34

Of the 52 programs reviewed during the 2012 Post Approval Monitoring cycle, 18 or 35 percent met the projections listed in the program proposal or exceeded productivity benchmarks.

This is a decrease from the percentage of programs that achieved benchmarks during 2011, and means that fully two-thirds of new programs under monitoring are failing to meet enrollment or graduation benchmarks. These under-performing programs are, in some cases, meeting at least one of the benchmarks in either enrollment or graduation. This was the case in 18 of the 34 monitored programs that failed to meet benchmarks.

However, in the remaining 17 under-performing programs, both enrollment and graduation benchmarks are not being met, indicating that the program is in true peril of failing to reach the institutionally developed projections that indicate success. This is particularly true for programs that failed to meet both benchmarks and are in the final year of post-approval monitoring. These programs are included below in Table 3.

Table 3: Under-Performing Programs Completing Monitoring Cycle

Institution	Program	Average Graduates during PAM Cycle
East Tennessee	Theatre, BA	3.0
East Tennessee	Woman's Studies, BA	3.0
UT Knoxville	Reliability Engineering, MS	2.2

3) Program Productivity Review

Once a program completes the Post Approval Monitoring cycle, it is considered “mature” and is then evaluated through THEC’s Program Productivity review. The purpose of this review is to ensure that demand for the programs continues as is evidenced by the number of graduates produced.

This process identifies programs that are not meeting nationally-used graduate production benchmarks:

- An average of ten graduates per year over a five-year period for baccalaureate and pre-baccalaureate programs
- An average of five graduates for master’s programs over five-years, and
- An average of three graduates for doctorates over this same period of time.

Using these reports as tools, the systems work with institutions in determining whether to terminate or commit necessary resources to strengthen low-producing programs. In so doing, institutions may retain programs that may not produce a desired number of graduates but may otherwise contribute to the general education curriculum in providing service courses or complementing other degree offerings.

To ensure that the most accurate data is available regarding productivity of academic programs, THEC, in partnership with UT and TBR, approved a new low producing program review schedule. The proposal would result in all academic programs being monitored on a three-year cycle. This three-year evaluation cycle acknowledges that annual reviews do not allow sufficient time for the data picture to meaningfully change, while a five year review may be too infrequent.

The specific annual schedule of events for the upcoming program productivity review would be as follows:

- **November 2013:** THEC distributes preliminary report, encompassing graduate data from 2008-2013, for Board/institution review. System staff will work with institutions to verify numbers, review institutional recommendations, and document justified exceptions prior to submitting the report to THEC.
- **March 2014:** Report due to THEC
- **April - June 2014:** Report available for usage by UT/TBR
- **July 2014:** Final Report presented at THEC Quarterly meeting

4) Performance Funding Qualitative Reviews

Within the state's Performance Funding accountability program, institutions are required to evaluate undergraduate and graduate programs. These reviews call for institutions to first develop self-evaluations of programs under review. The accreditation peer review process satisfies the Performance Funding requirements for programs that are eligible for accreditation. Other programs must undergo evaluation by external consultants or trained teams of auditors.

The purpose of academic program review is to ensure that standards of the discipline are being met and that adequate financial support is evident. Each program is reviewed according to accreditation review cycles or at least once every five to seven years by THEC program evaluation criteria.

Table 4: Academic Program Evaluation by Type

	Accreditable Programs	Traditional Program Review	Academic Audit
TBR Universities	287	7	8
UT System	127	18	0
TBR Community Colleges	152	1	45
Total	566	26	53

- During 2011-12, close to 80 academic programs were evaluated using the traditional program review or academic audit. Effective with the 2010-15 performance funding cycle, associate degree programs that contain embedded certificates are evaluated as part of the respective associate degree program. Embedded certificates are programs whose curriculum, content and requirements are contained within the greater requirements of a related associate degree program. For example, the Criminal Justice AAS degree would be responsible for evaluating the Homeland Security technical certificate degree program.
- Currently 566 programs are eligible for accreditation. Eligibility is determined when all Tennessee institutions agree on a specific accreditor as best representing qualitative standards for each discipline.
- All programs are accredited except for newly approved programs (46) and six programs in which accreditation has been rescinded or institutions elected not to seek accreditation. In these instances where accreditation was not achieved, institutions' performance funding scores were negatively impacted.
- It is projected that by the end of the 2010-15 performance funding cycle, all mature eligible programs will be accredited. Annually, institutions are now required to provide status reports for all programs that are seeking accreditation.

Appendix A

2012 Program Activity Report: New Programs Approved

Institution	Academic Program	Degree Level
Middle Tennessee	1. Assessment, Learning, School Improvement	Doctorate
UT Chattanooga	2. Integrative Studies	Bachelors
UT Chattanooga	3. Occupational Therapy	Doctorate
Chattanooga	4. Health Sciences	Associate
Chattanooga	5. Fine Arts	Associate
Chattanooga	6. Criminal Justice	Associate
Chattanooga	7. International Business (24 hrs)	Certificate
Cleveland	8. Health Sciences	Associate
Cleveland	9. Fine Arts	Associate
Cleveland	10. Criminal Justice	Associate
Cleveland	11. Early Childhood Education (23 hrs)	Certificate
Columbia	12. Advanced Integrated Industrial Technology	Associate
Columbia	13. Health Sciences	Associate
Columbia	14. Fine Arts	Associate
Columbia	15. Advanced Integrated Industrial Tech (19 hrs)	Certificate
Dyersburg	16. Fine Arts	Associate
Dyersburg	17. Certified Production Technician (12 hrs)	Certificate
Jackson	18. Criminal Justice	Associate
Motlow	19. Criminal Justice	Associate
Motlow	20. Emergency Medical Services (32 hrs)	Associate
Motlow	21. Early Childhood Education (23 hrs)	Certificate
Nashville	22. Health Sciences	Associate
Nashville	23. Fine Arts	Associate
Northeast	24. Industrial Operations (12 hrs)	Certificate
Pellissippi	25. Health Sciences	Associate
Pellissippi	26. Fine Arts	Associate
Pellissippi	27. Criminal Justice	Associate
Pellissippi	28. Interactive Web Design (12 hrs)	Certificate
Pellissippi	29. Visual Communication for Graphic Design (12 hrs)	Certificate
Pellissippi	30. Producing for Video & Media Arts (12 hrs)	Certificate
Pellissippi	31. Studio Photography (16 hrs)	Certificate
Pellissippi	32. Electrical Systems Technology (12 hrs)	Certificate
Pellissippi	33. Construction Business Principles (15 hrs)	Certificate
Pellissippi	34. Industrial Automation (16 hrs)	Certificate
Pellissippi	35. 3D Parametric Modeling (15 hrs)	Certificate
Pellissippi	36. Early Childhood Education (23 hrs)	Certificate
Roane	37. Fine Arts	Associate
Roane	38. Mechatronics	Certificate
Roane	39. Early Childhood Education (23 hrs)	Certificate
Southwest	40. Tax Preparer (19 hrs)	Certificate
Volunteer	41. Fine Arts	Associate
Volunteer	42. Medical Informatics	Associate
Volunteer	43. Entertainment Media Production	Associate
Volunteer	44. Video Production (18 hrs)	Certificate
Volunteer	45. Music Production (18 hrs)	Certificate
Volunteer	46. Multi-Media Web Design (18 hrs)	Certificate
Walters	47. Fine Arts	Associate
Walters	48. Early Childhood Education (23 hrs)	Certificate

Appendix A

2012 Program Activity Report: Programs Terminated

Institution	Academic Program	Degree Level
Austin Peay	1. Spanish	Bachelors
Tennessee Tech	2. Industrial Engineering	Masters
UT Health Science Center	3. Forensic Toxicology	Masters
Columbia	4. Stage Crew	Certificate
Dyersburg	5. Manufacturing Systems Tech	Associate
Dyersburg	6. Programmable Logic Controller	Certificate
Dyersburg	7. Industrial Electricity	Certificate
Dyersburg	8. Industrial Mechanical Concepts	Certificate
Dyersburg	9. Industrial Pneumatics and Hydraulics	Certificate
Motlow	10. Computer Programming	Certificate
Motlow	11. General Business	Certificate
Motlow	12. Business Information Systems	Certificate
Nashville	13. Logistics Technology	Associate
Nashville	14. Entrepreneurship	Certificate
Nashville	15. Surgical Assisting	Certificate
Pellissippi	16. Game and Simulation Design	Certificate
Pellissippi	17. Medical Transcription	Certificate
Roane	18. Homeland Security	Certificate
Southwest	19. Electric Utility	Certificate
Southwest	20. Utility Technology - Electric	Certificate
Southwest	21. Utility Technology - Gas	Certificate
Walters	22. Industrial Technology	Certificate

Appendix B

2011-12 Post Approval Monitoring

Institution	Academic Program	Met Enrollment Benchmark	Met Graduation Benchmark	Met No Benchmarks
Austin Peay	1. Teaching, MAT	X	X	
Austin Peay	2. Chemical Engineering Technology, AAS			X
East Tennessee	3. Clinical Psychology, PhD	X		
East Tennessee	4. Women's Studies, BA			X
East Tennessee	5. Theatre, BA			X
East Tennessee	6. Anthropology, BA	X	X	
East Tennessee	7. Early Childhood Education, PhD	X		
East Tennessee	8. International Affairs, BA	X	X	
East Tennessee	9. Bluegrass, Old Time and Country Music Studies, BA	X	X	
East Tennessee	10. Sports Physiology and Performance, PhD	X	X	
East Tennessee	11. Geosciences, MS	X	X	
Middle Tennessee	12. Literacy Studies, PhD	X		
Middle Tennessee	13. Exercise Science, BS	X	X	
Middle Tennessee	14. Forensic Science, BS	X		
Middle Tennessee	15. Math & Science Education, PhD	X	X	
Middle Tennessee	16. Molecular Biosciences, PhD	X	X	
Middle Tennessee	17. Computational Science, PhD	X	X	
Middle Tennessee	18. Horse Science, MS	X		
Middle Tennessee	19. Information Systems, MS	X	X	
Middle Tennessee	20. Leisure and Sport Management, MS		X	
Tennessee State	21. Urban Studies, BS			X
Tennessee State	22. Public Health, MPH			X
Univ of Memphis	23. Public Health, MPH	X	X	
Univ of Memphis	24. Architecture, MS	X	X	
Univ of Memphis	25. Interior Design, BFA	X	X	
Univ of Memphis	26. Social and Behavioral Science PhD	X	X	
Univ of Memphis	27. Social Work, MSW	X	X	
Univ of Memphis	28. Epidemiology, PhD	X	X	
UT Chattanooga	29. Doctor of Nursing Practice, DNP			X
UT Chattanooga	30. Early Childhood Education, BS	X		
UT Chattanooga	31. Athletic Training, MS			X

Institution	Academic Program	Met Enrollment Benchmark	Met Graduation Benchmark	Met No Benchmarks
UT Chattanooga	32. Mathematics, MS		X	
UT Knoxville	33. Nutritional Sciences, PhD	X		
UT Knoxville	34. Child & Family Studies, PhD		X	
UT Knoxville	35. Landscape Architecture, MLA, MA, MS		X	
UT Knoxville	36. Higher Education Administration, PhD			X
UT Knoxville	37. School Psychology, PhD	X		
UT Knoxville	38. Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism Management, PhD			X
UT Knoxville	39. Kinesiology & Sport Studies, PhD	X		
UT Knoxville	40. Educational Psychology and Research, PhD	X	X	
UT Knoxville	41. Reliability and Maintability, MS Engineering			X
UT Knoxville	42. Biomedical Engineering, PhD	X		
UT Knoxville	43. Biomedical Engineering, MS			X
UT Knoxville	44. Energy Science and Engineering, PhD	X		
UT Knoxville	45. Doctor of Nursing, DNP	X		
UT Knoxville	46. Counselor Education, PhD			X
Dyersburg	47. Emergency Services, AAS	X		
Dyersburg	48. Paramedic, Certificate			X
Roane	49. Allied Health Sciences, AAS	X	X	
Southwest	50. Emergency Medical Services- Paramedic, AAS	X		
Volunteer	51. Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement, AAS	X		
Walters	52. Clean Energy Technology, AAS			X