Undergraduate Council Minutes of Meeting September 10, 2013

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MEMBERS PRESENT: Katherine Ambroziak, Austin Arrowood, Greg Baker, Richard Bennett, Kirsten Benson, Kevin Brown, Jacob Clark, Marl Beth Coleman, Jochen Denzler, George Drinnon, Dave Dupper, Jean Gauger, David Golden, Jim Hall, Robin Hardin, R.J. Hinde, Timothy Hulsey, Lauren Leath, Jon Levin (Chair), Catherine Luther, Norman Magden, Taylor Odle, Michael Palenchar (Vice Chair), David Palmer, Jonathan Pettigrew, Randal Pierce, Lois Presser, Gary Ramsey, Amber Roessner, Harold Roth, Richard Strange, Eric Sundstrom, Wendy Tate, Matthew Theriot (Past Chair), Dixie Thompson, Teresa Walker

OTHER ATTENDEES: Mary Albrecht, Monique Anderson, Alison Connor, Ruth Darling, Betsy Gullet, Amanda Luallen, Sally McMillan, Cheryl Norris, Rebekah Page, Joe Scogin

The meeting was called to order at 3:40pm by Jon Levin, Chair.

David Golden, Faculty Senate President, thanked the Undergraduate Council for its work and encouraged members to contact him with any questions or concerns.

Ruth Darling discussed the upcoming advising summit in Nashville. It is a system-wide meeting to share best practices in academic advising and to prioritize action plans arising from the UT advising audit. Various representatives from UTK’s Undergraduate Council, Faculty Senate, advising centers, Tennessee Teaching and Learning Center, and first-year studies will attend.

The Academic Policy Committee held its first meeting of the academic year on September 4th and will submit its report for the next Council meeting. Sally McMillan reviewed recent topics of discussion in the Associate Deans Group, including service learning (new coordinator—Kelly Ellenburg), distance education (new director—Jennifer Gramling), the AIM coaching program, new course scheduling guidelines, the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) for SACS, and various assessment activities for more data-driven decision making. Proposals from the Curriculum Committee were approved. The General Education Committee will hold its first meeting on September 11th.

Mary Albrecht explained SACS’ new substantive change policy and how it will impact the curricular change process. We are required to notify the Commission on Colleges of “any proposed modification of the essential characteristics of UTK as an educational institution.” Therefore, it is
imperative that academic units contact Albrecht very early in the planning process in order to implement a new program or a significant program modification within their desired timeframe. Page 11 of the 2013-14 Curricular Submission Guidelines manual outlines which curricular changes may require SACS notification.

Sally McMillan briefly discussed the Online Learning Taskforce report and the work of the Undergraduate Strategic Planning Team. Due to time constraints, reports from the Student Learning Outcomes Taskforce and the Curriculum Procedures Taskforce will be discussed at the next Council meeting.

Catalog corrections implemented over the summer were noted for documentation purposes.

R.J. Hinde asked that the next Council meeting include discussion of the procedures for updating uTrack plans in the catalog.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00pm.

Committee Reports
- Academic Policy (NO REPORT)
- Advising (NO REPORT)
- Appeals (NO REPORT)
- Associate Deans Group (McMillan) – see pages U2760-U2773
- Curriculum (Wright) – see pages U2774-U2778
- General Education (NO REPORT)
## 2013-2014
### UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULAR APPROVAL CALENDAR

#### Undergraduate Curriculum Committee Meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curriculum Due</th>
<th>Curriculum Committee Meeting</th>
<th>Time - Location</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, August 13, 2013</td>
<td>Tuesday, August 27, 2013</td>
<td>3:45 pm – 4th floor conf room, AHT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, September 24, 2013</td>
<td>Tuesday, October 8, 2013</td>
<td>3:45 pm – 4th floor conf room, AHT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, December 2, 2013 (last opportunity to submit changes for 2014-2015 UG Catalog)</td>
<td>Tuesday, January 14, 2014</td>
<td>2:00 pm – 4th floor conf room, AHT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, March 11, 2014</td>
<td>Tuesday, March 25, 2014</td>
<td>3:45 pm – 4th floor conf room, AHT</td>
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#### Undergraduate Council Meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time – Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, September 10, 2013</td>
<td>3:40 pm – Black Cultural Center, Multipurpose Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, October 22, 2013</td>
<td>3:40 pm – Black Cultural Center, Multipurpose Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, January 28, 2014</td>
<td>3:40 pm – Black Cultural Center, Multipurpose Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, February 25, 2014</td>
<td>3:40 pm – Black Cultural Center, Multipurpose Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, April 8, 2014</td>
<td>3:40 pm – Black Cultural Center, Multipurpose Room</td>
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#### Faculty Senate Meeting Dates

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time – Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, September 16, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, October 21, 2013</td>
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<td>Monday, November 18, 2013</td>
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<td>Monday, February 3, 2014</td>
<td>- approval of January 28, 2014 UG Council Minutes</td>
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<td>Monday, April 7, 2014</td>
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<td>Monday, May 5, 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name</td>
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<tr>
<td>Katherine Ambroziak</td>
<td>Architecture &amp; Design</td>
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<tr>
<td>Austin Arrowood</td>
<td>Student</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greg Baker</td>
<td>Arts &amp; Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Richard Bayer</td>
<td>Enrollment Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Richard Bennett</td>
<td>Engineering</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kirsten Benson</td>
<td>General Education Committee Chair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kevin Brown</td>
<td>Student</td>
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<td>Jacob Clark</td>
<td>Student</td>
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<td>Mari Beth Coleman</td>
<td>Education, Health, &amp; Human Sciences</td>
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<td>Dave Dupper</td>
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<td>Timothy Hulsey</td>
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<td>LTC Danny Kelley</td>
<td>Army ROTC</td>
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<td>Jon Levin</td>
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<td>Catherine Luther</td>
<td>Communication &amp; Information</td>
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<td>Norman Magden</td>
<td>Academic Policy Committee Chair</td>
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<td>Taylor Odle</td>
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<td>Masood Parang</td>
<td>Engineering</td>
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<td>Missy Parker</td>
<td>Advising Committee Chair</td>
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<td>Jonathan Pettigrew</td>
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<td>Randal Pierce</td>
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<td>Lisi Schoenbach</td>
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<td>Dave Schumann</td>
<td>TN Teaching &amp; Learning Center</td>
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<td>Rachelle Scott</td>
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<td>John Stier</td>
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<td>Richard Strange</td>
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<td>Wendy Tate</td>
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<td>Matthew Theriot</td>
<td>Past Chair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dixie Thompson</td>
<td>Education, Health, &amp; Human Sciences</td>
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<td>Teresa Walker</td>
<td>University Libraries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scott Wall</td>
<td>Architecture &amp; Design</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pia Wood</td>
<td>Center for International Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suzanne Wright</td>
<td>Curriculum Committee Chair</td>
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</tbody>
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ASSOCIATE DEANS GROUP

Minutes for Meeting 20 March 2013

Present: Sally McMillan (chair), RJ Hinde, Catherine Luther, Masood Parang, Annette Ranft, Gary Ramsey (on behalf of Jan Lee), Jason Smethers, John Stier, Dixie Thompson, and Teresa Walker (on behalf of Rita Smith)

Guests: Betsy Adams, Donald Cunningham, Ruth Darling, Jennifer Hardy, Harrison Pang, and Kent Wagoner

Absent: George Dodds, Jan Lee, Rita Smith, and Matthew Theriot

Notes taken by: Mindy Koon

Review and Approve Minutes
Masood Parang moved, John Stier second. Minutes approved.

Agenda: Advising Update
Ruth Darling joined this group today to talk about assessment that will be occurring across all advising services on campus, including both professional and faculty advising for undergraduate students. Assessment efforts are vital for our upcoming SACS accreditation and strategic plan. Faculty and staff advisors will be given surveys to complete in addition to all undergraduate students. Darling talked about the importance of assessment and how they plan to determine if the assessments have been successful, how they will report the results, and how they will use the results. Handouts were given to the group that included an advising assessment overview, letter to faculty and staff about the surveys, and the undergraduate student advising assessment. Ramsey pointed out that the student assessments should capture those who complete the survey who are majors in a college versus those who are not (e.g. nursing). It was also noted that advisors should help students learn how to use DARS since only the very basics are covered during orientation.

Actions:
- Darling to implement advising assessments campus-wide.
- All colleges will assess advising outcomes.

Agenda: Proposed Timetable Scheduling Guidelines
Jennifer Hardy joined the group to discuss some proposed scheduling guidelines. The Office of the Registrar is proposing three new scheduling policies as a result of the under-utilization of classroom spaces. These policies are to help with small enrollment sections taking space in larger capacity rooms, e.g. a 6 student class in a 40 student capacity classroom. These scheduling policies are for nationalized classrooms, not department controlled classrooms. The group believes the guidelines are reasonable and McMillan said that they will be implemented. Below are the three new policies along with comments.

1. **If sections with enrollments less than 20 are to be taught one day a week with an extended meeting time, there is no guarantee that a nationalized classroom will be assigned unless the class begins 3pm or later.**
Small enrollment classes in large classrooms are a capacity problem. In 2012, 23% of classes assigned to classrooms had 15 or fewer students; of these there were more undergraduate courses than graduate courses. There are only 3 nationalized classrooms with a capacity of less than 20 students; most of these smaller classrooms are departmentally controlled, although many small enrollment classes are seeking help from the registrar for scheduling spaces. Sections with extended meeting times are those sections using two or more consecutive standard time periods on the same day.

2. **Two weeks prior to the first day of classes, if a section’s enrollment is less than 50% of the capacity of the classroom assigned, the Office of the University Registrar reserves the right to remove that section’s classroom assignment.**

   This policy will not absolutely take a space from a class, but it is possible it could happen if the space is needed for another class with a higher enrollment. The Office of the Registrar will work with any displaced sections to try to find a new space for them to meet. The schedulers in each respective department will be notified about this guideline as it arises.

3. **Sections listed with meeting times and days as “TBA” must be assigned a meeting time at least two weeks prior to the first day of classes in order to have a nationalized classroom assignment.**

   The meeting times and days need to be listed in the timetable at least two weeks in advance of the start of classes. The Office of the Registrar cannot guarantee space after this deadline.

**Action:** The Office of the Registrar will implement these guidelines.

**Agenda: Section Cancellations**

Jennifer Hardy briefly discussed the section cancellations with this group. Summer and fall registration have begun and there have been 8 summer sections cancelled that impacted 39 students and 12 fall sections cancelled that impacted 29 students. Some cancelled sections did not have any enrolled students. This is a problem because students are expecting to take these courses and may become more of a problem in the upcoming years due to courses that are needed for the Take 15 Graduate in 4 initiative and milestone courses for uTrack. These cancellations could also impact athletic eligibility, international students, and students who need to have priority registration. When a department changes a course to cancelled, a workflow is created that gets sent to the Office of the Registrar to process and notify students of the cancellation.

**Actions:**
- Hardy to email selected associate deans if a class with enrolled students is cancelled in their college.
- Koon to work with associate deans to have someone in their college selected as point person for Hardy to contact.
- For consideration: Should there be some type of approval process for section cancellations?

**Agenda: Dual Credit Consortium**

McMillan reviewed this invitation letter with the group. The state would like faculty from UT in selected areas (e.g. calculus) to serve as a part of a taskforce to create challenge exams that AP high school students can take to test out of selected college
courses. McMillan reviewed the needed subject areas with the group and asked for help in determining a faculty member to send to this taskforce that will meet in Nashville. Ranft asked if accounting could be added to the test out subjects.

**Action:** Applicable colleges and/or departments to nominate staff for this taskforce as soon as possible; send names of representatives to McMillan.

**Agenda: Fall 2013 Enrollment Confirmations**
Smthers is collecting enrollment confirmation data to provide to colleges in hopes to help with planning. The information is for freshman and transfer students. The group noted that just figures are fine for freshman, but that they will need more detail for transfer students (e.g. pathway students vs. other). Hinde also noted that he would like to have the figures for all of the colleges.

**Action:** Smthers to work with admissions to get more data on transfers and to provide data on both transfers and freshmen to each college via the associate deans.

**Agenda: Academic Unit Statistics**
Harrison Pang, Betsy Adams, Donald Cunningham, and Kent Wagoner joined the group to discuss Academic Unit Statistics and the new way to access information. Adams told the group that this data is provided yearly to colleges for academic planning meetings. In the past, this data has often been met with resistance from colleges because they do not believe it is accurate. This data has consistently been based off of the 14-day static file. Pang walked this group through how this information can now be accessed online. At this point, the information is only meant for internal audiences and only a limited number of people will have access to the site which is: [https://oira.utk.edu/onlineReporting](https://oira.utk.edu/onlineReporting). After the meeting today, associate deans will be permitted to access this site. This new online reporting is much more interactive and informative than past reports and should be helpful for each college/department in the future. The data can be shown for each college or by a selected department. Adams asked this group to review their information and provide her with any feedback, such as information that may be wrong and/or suggestions for anything that could be added. The data for this report is also pulled from IRIS, so if items are entered incorrectly in IRIS, then it can cause discrepancies in this report. Pang noted that these statistics can be saved as a CSV or PDF and that they are available to print.

**Actions:**
- Contact Betsy Adams for access to this site and/or with any questions, suggestions, or concerns.
- Please review your college and departmental information by the middle of May and provide feedback to Adams.

**Agenda: Reports/Announcements**
McMillan noted the minutes from various committees that are available for the associate deans to review. This includes minutes from the Technology Advisory Board, Strategic Instruction Fund, and Academic Space Committee. Hinde then noted that the Division of Biology is making some changes to the core curriculum and wanted to provide this group with advance notice that this change is coming.
Minutes for Meeting 17 April 2013

Present: Sally McMillan (chair), RJ Hinde, Jan Lee, Catherine Luther, Annette Ranft, Jason Smethers, John Stier, Matthew Theriot, Dixie Thompson, and Scott Wall (on behalf of George Dodds)

Guests: Kelly Ellenburg and Pia Wood

Absent: George Dodds, Masood Parang, and Rita Smith

Notes taken by: Mindy Koon

Review and Approve Minutes
John Stier moved, Dixie Thompson second. Minutes approved.

Agenda: Service Learning
Kelly Ellenburg joined the group to provide an update on course-based service learning. She presented to the group about the successes, challenges, opportunities, and future of service learning on campus. Ellenburg noted that many of the successes are due to faculty who had already been incorporating service learning into their courses. She noted that 20 departments had courses with a service learning component, although she is not sure if this is accurate because her position is new and this is the first time there has been any type of central coordination. Ellenburg also talked about the importance of adopting a university-wide definition for service learning. She plans to focus her time on reaching out to faculty and community partners to establish and strengthen course-based service learning; at this point she does have a list of contacts for service learning in each college. Dixie Thompson suggested that Ellenburg use the Undergraduate Council to help identify courses with service learning components and to approve a university-wide definition; although Ellenburg will first need to determine expectations for courses that are designated with a service learning component and what definition of service learning she would like to use.

Actions:
- Associate Deans to send Ellenburg (kellenb@utk.edu) any ideas for the Carnegie Application and/or for the future of course-based service learning.
- Ellenburg would like this group to verify the contact person in their college to make sure the information is correct. Please email her to make any changes and let her know if you are okay with this information being posted online.
- Ellenburg to form an advisory group with faculty, staff, and community partners.

Agenda: Joint Degree Programs
Pia Wood joined the group to discuss the process of establishing joint degree programs with international institutions. She is currently working with a few institutions in China and other countries to try to establish 1 plus 3 and 2 plus 2
programs where international students could start their degrees in their home country and come to UT Knoxville to finish. Two institutions she mentioned specifically are the Shanghai University of Finance & Economics and the Shanghai Institute of Technology; students at these schools are looking to be admitted into very specific majors, such as Sports Management. She needs to figure out the most efficient way to get courses/credits from these international institutions approved for credit here. Wood noted that the students would be admitted to our school upon completing high school and that the admission would be pending the student completing specific coursework at the agreed upon colleges in their home countries. The group determined if the courses are in a specific major, then the department/college can review to determine if the credits could transfer. The group agreed that Wood could send each of them the related course syllabi so that they can shepherd the process in their colleges. She was also referred to talk with Kathy Warden in the registrar’s office about articulation agreements and course equivalencies.

Action: Wood to distribute international syllabi and gather information from each college about courses that could transfer here; she will then send this information to the registrar’s office for approval.

Agenda: Small Enrollment Sections
McMillan provided two documents to the group. The first document is a small enrollment report that shows small enrollment sections (15 or less students) that are scheduled in nationalized classrooms. This report is meant for reference, although it should be considered by the relevant department/college to determine how to proceed. This report does list both undergraduate and graduate courses. The group noted that some of these low numbers may be due to some of the courses being scheduled at unpopular times, such as 8:00am. The second report is a capacity study that is unofficial and just a draft list of classes where enrollment could be increased to reduce the amount of sections offered. This report reflects both in-person and online courses. The group had an interest in the capacity study report for their own colleges and Smethers will work with any associate deans that would like to generate this information for their specific college.

Agenda: Announcements & Brief Discussions
Scheduling. This group is scheduled to meet through July and McMillan inquired about any scheduling preferences for next year. The group said it will depend on some faculty/departmental meetings, but that the middle of the day on Wednesdays has worked well for this year. Koon will work to schedule meetings for the next academic year soon.

Summer School Enrollments. Smethers updated the group with a chart showing the current enrollment for summer school courses based on credit hours. He cautioned the group that the numbers will change as there are likely to be 4,000 or more credit hours scheduled by the time summer term begins.

Enrollment Confirmations. There were a few errors in the first draft of this report that have been corrected. An updated draft will be sent to this group on Monday April 22. For clarification, these are confirmations; students may still decide to not attend our university even after confirming.

Director of Online Programs. Jennifer Gramling has been hired for this position and will start on Monday, May 6.
Agenda: Reports
McMillan referenced the reports she included for the group to review on their own time. Any questions about these reports can be directed to her.

Distributed Information
Ellenburg’s PowerPoint
Small Enrollment Sections in Classrooms
Capacity Study
Summer School Enrollment
EMC SWAT Team Report
Drop Analysis
Summer Term Taskforce Report

Minutes for Meeting 22 May 2013

Present: Sally McMillan (chair), George Dodds, Dave Dupper, RJ Hinde, Jan Lee, Catherine Luther, Masood Parang, Annette Ranft, Jason Smethers, Rita Smith, John Stier, Matthew Theriot, and Dixie Thompson
Guests: Jennifer Gramling
Notes taken by: Mindy Koon

Review and Approve Minutes
John Stier moved, Masood Parang second. Minutes approved.

Agenda: Online Programs
Jennifer Gramling has been hired as the Director of Online Programs and joined the group today to talk about online programs. There has been a lot of talk about Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) on our campus and across the UT systems. Randy Boyd, the founder of PetSafe, has taken a year off to volunteer for the governor around making higher education more accessible to Tennesseans. He helped establish TN Achieves which helps make college more accessible for disadvantaged Tennesseans through education and mentoring. Boyd is interested in MOOCs and online programs and has had many meetings with folks on our campus and the Tennessee Board of Regents around these ideas. This coming academic year, the TBR is testing a MOOC platform called Coursera. This platform can be used for courses that are not MOOCs and would accommodate a variety of teaching platforms, including hybrid courses. Gramling noted that two faculty members have submitted proposals to have a course be taught on Coursera, these classes are Math 119 and Nursing 305. These classes, if accepted, will not be massive or open, they will only be available to UT Knoxville students and registration for these courses will be the same as registration for any other course. This will be a pilot to look at the Coursera platform and determine if it is a product that we may want to use. The group discussed how MOOCs have a negative connotation with faculty and are curious about how faculty will be informed about this pilot. Gramling is a faculty advocate and noted that she can help with that discussion as needed.

Agenda: Orientation
Smethers took the group on a tour of his orientation sites on SharePoint. Smethers noted that the Fall 13 Data tab will likely be the most helpful section to this group.
He reviewed the enrollment graphs with the group and the FTF analysis chart which tracks freshman course selection during orientation. An orientation overview is also available on SharePoint which provides the dates of each orientation session along with the breakdown of students based on major. With the discussion about orientation, uTrack was mentioned. McMillan noted that uTrack and the Take 15, Graduate in 4 programs are being implemented to help students stay on track for graduation. They will be presented to incoming students during orientation as the “new normal.” Smethers then showed the group where they could find fall term waitlist data; this is the first semester where students are only able to waitlist one section of a course.

**Actions:**
- This group should consider how we can better manage the seats in courses for freshman for fall term; it may require having seats released throughout the summer.
- RJ Hinde asked the group to share the following with their advising staff: Biology 130 never has enough seats in the fall semester and he would like for advisors to not recommend this class for the fall term unless a student is also required to take Biology 140 in the spring.

**Agenda: Summer School**
Smethers updated the group on enrollment for summer school and shared some charts on SharePoint that compared enrollment for this summer to enrollment for summer terms in 2011 and 2012. There will not be any big jumps in enrollment this summer and we may have fewer students enrolled because many low enrollment classes were dropped for the summer terms. It was noted that uTrack may drive the need for summer courses. The 30% summer tuition model was then discussed and McMillan said that this model will be used for the next three years and that if colleges are struggling with this model, they can talk to her about the problem but she cannot guarantee further funding.

**Action:** McMillan to talk with Chris Cimino about how to handle summer term courses that lose students after they begin and drop into the red zone.

**Agenda: QEP**
McMillan shared with the group that Matthew Theriot is the chair of the QEP committee that will help select and develop a new QEP. The QEP Charge was also shared with the group. Theriot noted that he will seek out faculty and student input as that is an important part of this process; he will contact each college to get access to their students and faculty for this purpose. It was also noted that the steps from SACS are now more focused and will encourage a precise plan for the next QEP.

**Agenda: Reports**
McMillan referenced the reports she included for the group to review on their own time. Any questions about these reports can be directed to her.

**Distributed Information**
Orientation Data SharePoint Site
Summer School SharePoint Site
QEP Charge
Minutes for Meeting 19 June 2013

Present: Sally McMillan (chair), George Dodds, Mary Gunther, Lane Morris,
Masood Parang, Annette Ranft, Jason Smethers, Rita Smith,
Matthew Theriot, and Dixie Thompson

Guests: Monique Anderson and Tony Schubert

Absent: Dave Dupper, RJ Hinde, Catherine Luther, and John Stier

Notes taken by: Mindy Koon

Review and Approve Minutes
Dixie Thompson moved, Matthew Theriot second. Minutes approved.

Agenda: uTrack
Tony Schubert and Monique Anderson joined the group today. Schubert updated the
group and noted that uTrack has now passed its first two phases and is entering the
third phase which is testing and report writing. Schubert noted that he has spoken
with academic advisors and is now speaking to this group to get an understanding of
possible data needs for uTrack. Identified possible needs include:

1. Data specific to colleges/majors about any milestones where students are
   struggling.
2. Data that is course or major specific.
3. Percentage of students who are “off-track” due to failure as compared to not
   being able to register for the course.
4. Data about students who are “on-track” but unable to graduate.

Schubert noted that his team will work to provide data in a timely fashion. McMillan
pointed out that this is the beta year for uTrack and that changes can be made as we
experience the program in action. Anderson pointed out that students sometimes
think they are changing their major when using DARS and that DARS does not
change majors or catalog years. DARS is able to run “what-if” analyses and it should
be communicated with students that these “what-if” scenarios do not change
anything, catalog years and majors can only be changed in Banner. In the future,
DARS will be able to pull student information from Banner.

Action: Associate Deans to contact Tony Schubert or Monique Anderson with any
additional uTrack data requests.

Agenda: Readmission Letters for Returning Dismissal and Probation Students
Dixie Thompson noted that in the readmission dismissal and probation letters, the
students were instructed to take 13 credit hours. This number is a recommendation
for these students as they return to campus to try to help them succeed. The group
discussed how the wording could be improved for this sentence and determined that
the original sentence should be removed and replaced with the updated wording
shown below. McMillan also noted that the EMC SWAT Team is currently working on
clarifying the difference between university probation and financial aid SAP
(satisfactory academic progress) probation.

Current Wording:
Because your present academic performance is critical-unless otherwise
instructed by your academic advisor-a limit of 13 hours is advisable for your
first term back.
Proposed Wording Revision:

Because your present academic performance is critical, please consult with your academic advisor to determine an appropriate course load for your first term back. In order to increase the likelihood of your academic success it may be wise for you to limit the number of hours you attempt.

Action: Associate Deans to approve readmission letters and verify if they want the updated credit hour wording by the close of business on Monday, June 24, 2013. Please email this information to Mindy Koon at mkoon1@utk.edu.

Agenda: Top UG Priorities

McMillan talked to the group about updates to top undergraduate priorities for the upcoming year. The UG planning team focuses on 5 “top” priorities each year and below is the updated list.

Top 5 UG Priorities
1. Enrollment Management
2. Recruiting, Retaining, and Graduating At-Risk Populations
3. Online
4. Summer School
5. General Education

uTrack and One-Stop are both being moved to monitoring because both of these items have been implemented. The two new top priorities are at-risk populations and general education. During the discussion about at-risk students, McMillan noted that we will need to become more intentional on how we identify students. She also noted that two Economics professors are working to develop a retention index that will help us to identify at-risk students. As noted on the agenda for this meeting, several at-risk populations are shown below. As a part of this discussion, McMillan noted that the EMC SWAT Team began as a temporary committee for the Chancellor to address enrollment. This team met weekly during the academic year and has worked tactically to address enrollment and retention. This group and the UG Strategic Planning Committee have overlapping membership and goals, thus the groups will be combined to have weekly meetings with once a month “big picture” meetings. She mentioned that Mark Moon from the College of Business Administration has agreed to be the faculty voice for this group.

At-Risk Student Populations
- Transfer Students
- Exploratory/Undecided Students
- Sophomores
- Male Students
- Veterans
- Students from Non-Majority Racial Groups
- First Generation Students
- Students from Families with Low Socioeconomic Status
- International Students

Agenda: Summer School - Low Enrollment Discussion

McMillan shared with the group that enrollment is down by about 500 students for summer school this year. She provided a list of possible reasons for this drop in numbers:
- The small 2009 cohort.
Undergraduate Council Minutes U2769 September 10, 2013

- Overall student body number is lower which contributes to this lower number.
- Fewer bottlenecks reduce the need for summer courses.
- The focus on 15 hour course loads reduces the need for summer school
- The 120 hour limit on HOPE reduces the total number of hours students take.
- Departments cancelled courses that they could not afford to teach.
- The number of transient students is much lower – for unknown reasons.
- The number of master’s students is much lower – also reasons not known.

The group believes this is a comprehensive list, but also noted that the poor economy and bad press about the cost of higher education may be a cause. Also, since UT Knoxville has become more selective with admissions, fewer students may need to retake classes to achieve a higher grade. Other ideas from this discussion include that the drop in enrollment should be separated by college and that we may want to focus on obtaining non-UT “transient” students for summer school (e.g. a Vanderbilt student who lives in Knoxville during the summer).

Action: Lisa Yamagata-Lynch will be invited to the next associate deans meeting to discuss her new role as the Chancellor’s Administrative Intern for the Implementation of the Summer Term Taskforce Recommendations.

Agenda: Reports
McMillan referenced the reports she included for the group to review on their own time. Any questions about these reports can be directed to her.

Distributed Information
EMC SWAT Team – June Report
UG Strategic Planning Committee – June Meeting Minutes
Ready for the World – May Meeting Notes and June Meeting Notes

Minutes for Meeting 17 July 2013

Present: Sally McMillan (chair), George Dodds, Dave Dupper, Mary Gunther,
- Catherine Luther, Lane Morris, Masood Parang, John Stier, Dixie Thompson
Guests: Ruth Darling, Lisa Yamagata-Lynch, Jason Smethers
Absent: R.J. Hinde, Rita Smith
Notes taken by: Mindy Koon and Tachia Gay

Review and Approve Minutes
George Dodds moved, Lane Morris second. Minutes approved.

Agenda: AIM Coaching
McMillan reviewed the history of our regression data that Economics Professor, Scott Gilpatric, helped to compile. Gilpatric is currently working to develop a retention index that will help us be able to identify first-year students who are at-risk. This information will be run against the incoming class to identify students who are not involved with a support program (e.g. UTLead). Ruth Darling then talked about a new proposal for AIM Coaching. This program aims to assist first-year students who are at-risk and are not being aided by any other specific programming. Darling
pointed out that research indicates at-risk students are better retained when early interventions occur. It was noted that Florida State has had success with their academic coaching program and increased their retention from 85% to 91-92% over a few year period (this was in addition to some other interventions used). Florida State will be coming to our campus to help train selected campus staff to serve as academic coaches.

Specifics about AIM coaching for our campus:
- Academic coaches will be assigned before the first day of classes and will include staff from across campus.
- Coaches will meet with students 1-2 times per month and take a holistic approach with their students.
- Students will not be mandated to participate, but will be encouraged to participate as this is a program to help them reach graduation.
- This program is only for first-year students and will avoid duplication of services with other programs that target at-risk students.
- This program will begin at the start of fall term and will also be assessed for effectiveness.

**Agenda: Summer Term**
Lisa Yamagata-Lynch joined the group to talk about Summer Term. She was recently appointed by the Chancellor as the Administrative Intern for the Implementation of the Summer Term Taskforce Recommendations. She noted that she is meeting a variety of staff across campus to gage their view of the summer term. She is focused on a holistic view of summer term and just not curricular items. This fall a Summer Term Coordinator will be hired who will focus on the academic side of things for summer term. The Chancellor would like a 10-15% increase in summer term enrollment over the next three years. Various ideas originated in the Summer Term Taskforce to help increase enrollment, an example would be to implement a 12-month housing option for students. Yamagata-Lynch will be looking into the practicality of these ideas.

**Action:** Smathers to pull summer enrollment numbers by college that will include the amount the college will receive from the 30% shared tuition model (this data is pulled after the add/drop period).

**Agenda: Orientation**
The group briefly discussed orientation. Overall, the group believes that orientation is going well, with the exception of students not being able to register for Spanish 111 (capacity issue). RJ Hinde has a document that helps provide alternative courses for students unable to register for this course (encouraging alternate languages).

**Agenda: Transfer Students**
A transfer taskforce met this past year and it was determined that the group should continue to meet and become a subcommittee for the Enrollment Management Committee. Kathy Warden will chair this group. McMillan asked the group for any pivotal issues that this subcommittee should consider. It was noted that there should be an easily accessible tool for students to use to see which of their credits will transfer into our university to help improve our upfront communications with potential students. There are 50 transfer students coming to campus this fall from the Transfer Pathways program, McMillan will share information about the majors for these transfer students with the group. Transfer students are considered to be at-
risk and we may want to consider possible interventions for this group that may be similar to our first-year interventions.

**Action:** Smethers to verify if Transfer Pathways students are being coded in Banner; he will ask for them to be coded if it is not already happening.

**Agenda: Reports**
McMillan referenced the reports she included for the group to review on their own time. Any questions about these reports can be directed to her.

**Distributed Information**
AIM Coaching Proposal
UG Strategic Planning Committee – June 28th Meeting Minutes
Readmission Protocols

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**Minutes for Meeting 21 August 2013**

**Present:** Sally McMillan (chair), George Dodds, Mary Gunther, R.J. Hinde, Catherine Luther, Lane Morris, Masood Parang, Rita Smith, John Stier, Dixie Thompson

**Guests:** Mary Albrecht, Denise Gardner, Tami Olson, Jason Smethers

**Absent:** Dave Dupper

**Notes taken by:** Tachia Gay

**Review and Approve Minutes**
Lane Morris moved, Dixie Thompson second. Minutes approved.

**Agenda: SACS Monitoring Report – Albrecht and Garner**
Albrecht joined the group to raise concerns with upcoming SACS Monitoring Reports that will be due in the spring of 2014. Albrecht presented some information that highlighted troublesome areas with Academic Department assessment measures; particularly with program-level student learning outcomes and assessment measures.

Specifics about the findings of the First Monitoring Report from the presentation:

- “The limited sample of assessment reports provided included reports that vary in rigor and completeness. While assessment of graduate programs in the health sciences appears adequate, many graduate programs at UTK continue to rely on proxy and/or indirect measures of student learning. Several assessment reports do not yet describe use of results. Furthermore, the sample includes programs too new to assess and does not include any undergraduate humanities programs.”
- Second Monitoring Report: required response is due April 15, 2014. The group discussed the difficulty of gathering Spring data before the Spring semester is over.

Gardner suggested a team approach in getting direct feedback. SACS assessments have a hard time differentiating between Graduate and Undergraduate information. Gardner also mentioned the importance of changing the curriculum based on the assessments that are done.
The group also discussed that all levels of faculty need to be engaged in the entire process of assessment, then make sure to communicate the assessment plan with lecturers. This will aid in the implementation of the Learning Enhancement Cycle. Albrecht noted that workshops on assessment will be held at the department level. These workshops will be mandatory and will be implemented in the fall.

**Agenda: uTrack**

McMillan announced that uTrack successfully launched last week, and we are awaiting the 14th day for the first report. Also, OneStop was also very successful in easing up lines for payment day.

The group discussed what would be a good way to assess both uTrack and OneStop. Possible student surveys were mentioned.

**Agenda: Summer School**

Smethers discussed the email sent to associate deans that reported on credit hour totals in their colleges. Several indicated that a breakdown by academic units would be helpful.

**Action:** Smethers will breakdown the data of the individual academic units.

McMillan also opened the floor for the group to give recommendations on the qualifications of the new summer school director/coordinator position. Recommendations of the job description of the new position were also discussed.

**Agenda: Readmission Protocols**

Hinde brought several concerns related to readmitted students. Hinde noted that current practice would readmit some students as university exploratory with more than 45 hours. This may be necessary in some cases, but it is a violation of policy. Also, there was concern that readmitted students need to be treated the same way that continuing students would be if they were in the same status (e.g., GPA requirements should not be different for continuing and returning students).

**Action:**
- McMillan to take possible policy change to Undergraduate Policy Committee regarding allowing readmitted students who are admitted with more than 45 hours completed to spend a limited time Exploratory.
- Gunther and Thompson to check with their faculty and advisors about whether rules for readmission are consistent with rules for continuing students.

**Agenda: Classroom Utilization**

McMillan brought concerns to the group about efficient use of resources, particularly classroom utilization. In general, enrollment capacities and room capacities should match. If they do not, there should be a clear reason for the discrepancy. Pedagogical limits, such as public speaking classes were identified as one example of a discrepancy. Unavailability of ideally sized rooms was also discussed.
Agenda: Retention Efforts
McMillan briefly reviewed documents that were requested by the UT System about retention efforts. They highlight the fact that we have already done significant work on working to improve retention. She also briefly discussed a new program.

This fall about 600 students have been selected for a new program: AIM Coaching. Approximately 100 + AIM coaches who are Advising staff, hall directors, academic coaches from Student Success Center and student life staff members, are being trained to coach first-year students. Coaching begins August 22, 2013.

McMillan asked the group how we could get faculty more involved in retention efforts.

Thompson noted that it would be beneficial if faculty had more data on how their students start and finish. It would be helpful to connect with students in the same program and same department if possible.

Smith also highlighted the fact that the library offers high academic support for students in the Commons which is centrally located on campus.

Agenda: New Catalog Software
The group discussed the appropriate role of major guides, which are not in the catalog, and degree requirements, which are. The combination of uTrack and new catalog software has led to some problems and concerns. Problematic factors include:
- Catalog restrictions
- The need for flexibility in presentation
- The need to make some changes that do not require undergraduate council action

Action:
- Invite Registrar’s office to the next Associate Deans meeting.
- Hinde to submit additional questions in regards to the New Catalog and uTrack

Distributed Information
SACS Monitoring Report
Retention summary submitted to UT System Office
AIM Cohort Coaching
Top 25 Report presented to Deans in July
Top 25 strategic directions presented to Academic Affairs group in early August
CURRICULUM COMMITTEE REPORT

The Curriculum Committee met on Tuesday, August 27, 2013, at 3:45pm.

Attendees: Katherine Ambroziak, Greg Baker, Mari Beth Coleman, Betsy Gullet, R.J. Hinde, Sungkyu Lee, Amanda Luallen, Catherine Luther, Cheryl Norris, David Palmer, Jonathan Pettigrew, Chris Pionke, Gary Ramsey, Dixie Thompson, Suzanne Wright

Wright welcomed new and returning members and provided an overview of the committee and its responsibilities.

Curricular proposals from the College of Education, Health and Human Sciences and the First-Year Studies program were approved.

R.J. Hinde asked when the committee might discuss potential changes to the curricular review process (in light of SACS requirements to incorporate student learning outcomes into the evaluation process). The issue will be discussed at the upcoming Council meeting where reports from the Student Learning Outcomes Taskforce and the Curriculum Procedures Taskforce will be submitted.

Suzanne Wright was elected Curriculum Committee Chair for 2013-14.

2013-14 Curriculum Committee Membership

Elected UG Council Members
- Greg Baker, College of Arts & Sciences
- Mari Beth Coleman, College of Education, Health & Human Sciences
- Sungkyu Lee, College of Social Work
- David Palmer, College of Arts & Sciences
- Jonathan Pettigrew, College of Communication & Information
- Chris Pionke, College of Engineering
- Gary Ramsey, College of Nursing
- Richard Strange, College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources
- Suzanne Wright, College of Arts & Sciences, Chair

Ex-Officio Members
- George Drinnon, College of Business Administration
- R.J. Hinde, College of Arts & Sciences
- Catherine Luther, College of Communication & Information
- Masood Parang, College of Engineering
- Dixie Thompson, College of Education, Health & Human Sciences

Student Member
________________________
Operating Guidelines

The role of the Curriculum Committee of the Undergraduate Council is to ensure consistency and quality of undergraduate curricula at the University of Tennessee. In this role, the Curriculum Committee makes recommendations to the council regarding the approval or denial of curricular changes submitted to the council for consideration.

The Curriculum Committee has 16 members, 15 of whom are named to one-year terms by the Chair of the Undergraduate Council in consultation with the Council’s membership.

- Nine committee members are elected faculty members of the Undergraduate Council.
- Five committee members are ex-officio members of the Undergraduate Council.
- One committee member is a student member of the Undergraduate Council.
- The Chair of the Undergraduate Council serves as an ex-officio member of the committee.

The members of the committee will be selected by the Chair of the Undergraduate Council in a manner that ensures broad representation of colleges and collegiate divisions on the committee. All 16 members of the committee may vote.

The Chair of the Curriculum Committee is selected from among the nine elected faculty members at the last committee meeting of the spring semester of each year. The chair serves in this capacity for one year, beginning on July 1.

Each committee member may, in consultation with the Chair of the Undergraduate Council, name a proxy who has all of the privileges and responsibilities of the committee member, except that the Committee Chair’s proxy may not chair committee meetings. If the Committee Chair is unable to attend a committee meeting, the Chair of the Undergraduate Council will chair that meeting. A quorum of the committee consists of nine members (including proxies).

The Curriculum Committee typically meets two weeks before each meeting of the Undergraduate Council. Committee meetings are open to the entire university community. The agenda for each meeting will be posted on the Undergraduate Council Web site and will consist of proposals and informational items submitted by and approved by the various colleges. These should be submitted to the committee by the deadlines listed on the Undergraduate Council Web site and should be submitted in the format outlined there. Material not submitted in this format may be returned for revision prior to consideration by the Committee.

Proposals submitted to the committee may be approved and submitted to the Undergraduate Council for final approval or may be returned for revision. Proposals returned for revision must be resubmitted to the Curriculum Committee before they will be forwarded to the Undergraduate Council.
I. COURSE CHANGES

DEPARTMENT OF THEORY & PRACTICE IN TEACHER EDUCATION

(MEDU) Math Education

ADD

445 Teaching Algebra in the Middle Grades (3) Examines the algebraic content and teaching strategies associated with the teaching of algebra in the middle grades; the study of how adolescents learn algebra, various representations for algebraic concepts, and strategies to support the development of mathematical habits of mind that are essential for success in more advanced mathematics courses.
Registration Restriction(s): Admission to Teacher Education or consent of instructor.

446 Teaching Geometry in the Middle Grades (3) Examines the geometric content and teaching strategies associated with the teaching of geometry in the middle grades; the study of how adolescents learn geometry, geometric transformations, informal proof and reasoning, and strategies to support the development of mathematical habits of mind that are essential for success in more advanced mathematics courses.
Registration Restriction(s): Admission to Teacher Education or consent of instructor.

Rationale: The state of Tennessee has issued a new teaching license certification area, STEM 5-9, for middle grades teachers. The rationale for this new certification is to produce middle grades teachers who not only understand the pedagogical needs of adolescents, but also have the content knowledge required to teach in STEM fields. While students will earn an undergraduate degree in Arts and Sciences, it is important that they also understand appropriate teaching strategies for adolescents. In the push to teach Algebra 1 in the middle grades, geometry is often overlooked in the middle grades, yet, a good foundation in geometry in the middle grades will help students be successful in high school. However, students in the middle grades require teaching methods that are different than the methods used in the high school. Therefore, this course will expose teachers to ways to integrate geometry throughout their middle school curriculum and provide appropriate strategies for teaching geometry in the middle grades. Impact on other units: This course will be taken after admission to the teacher education program minor. It is intended to link mathematical content, knowledge of how adolescents learn, various representations for geometric concepts, and strategies to support the development of mathematical habits of mind that are essential for success in more advanced mathematics courses. Financial Impact: Currently, TPTE is shifting faculty from its elementary program to the middle grades where the need for STEM teachers is crucial. In addition, the Track 2 initial licensure program has been replaced by the VolsTeach program which is housed in Arts and Sciences. The replacement of the Track 2 initial licensure graduate program will reduce number of sections of courses for the professional internship year, allowing for faculty to teach these new courses. Therefore, current faculty can handle the anticipated number of students. Replacement of the Track 2 program also forces us to consider current course offerings for a different population of graduate students in mathematics education. Listing this course as at the 400 level will also enable graduate students who are seeking a masters or alternate certification to enroll in the course, thus serving a dual purpose and allowing for efficient use of faculty.

(SCED) Science Education

ADD

445 Teaching Physical/Earth Science in the Middle Grades (3) Examines the physical science and earth science content and teaching strategies associated with the teaching of those topics in the middle grades; the study of how adolescents learn physical science and earth science; typical misconceptions associated with physical and earth science; and strategies to support the development of scientific habits of mind that are essential for success in more advanced science courses.
Registration Restriction(s): Admission to Teacher Education or consent of instructor.

446 Teaching Life Science in the Middle Grades (3) Examines the life science content and teaching strategies associated with the teaching of life science in the middle grades; the study of common misconceptions associated with life science topics such as heredity, life processes, and biological change; and strategies to support the development of scientific habits of mind that are essential for success in more advanced science courses.
Registration Restriction(s): Admission to Teacher Education or consent of instructor.

Rationale: The state of Tennessee has issued a new teaching license certification area, STEM 5-9, for middle grades teachers. The rationale for this new certification is to produce middle grades teachers who not only understand the pedagogical needs of adolescents, but also have the content knowledge required to teach in STEM fields. While students will earn an undergraduate degree in Arts and Sciences, it is important that they also understand appropriate teaching strategies for adolescents. Students in the middle grades require teaching methods that are different than the methods used in the high school. Therefore, this course will expose
teachers to ways to support students in their understanding of life science (biology-related) topics throughout their middle school curriculum and provide appropriate strategies for teaching life science in the middle grades. Impact on other units: This course will be taken after admission to the teacher education program minor. It is intended to link science content, knowledge of how adolescents learn, various misconceptions related to life science, and strategies to support the development of scientific habits of mind that are essential for success in more advanced science courses. Financial Impact: Currently, TPTE is shifting faculty from its elementary program to the middle grades where the need for STEM teachers is crucial. In addition, the Track 2 initial licensure program has been replaced by the VolsTeach program which is housed in Arts & Sciences. The replacement of the Track 2 initial licensure graduate program will reduce number of sections of courses for the professional internship year, allowing for faculty to teach these new courses. Therefore, current faculty can handle the anticipated number of students. Replacement of the Track 2 program also forces us to consider current course offerings for a different population of graduate students in science education. Listing this course as at the 400 level will also enable graduate students who are seeking a masters or alternate certification to enroll in the course, thus serving a dual purpose and allowing for efficient use of faculty.

II. PROGRAM CHANGES

DROP PARTICIPATION IN GERONTOLOGY MINOR

An intercollegiate/interdisciplinary undergraduate gerontology minor is coordinated through the Interdisciplinary Gerontology Colloquy Group members from the College of Nursing; College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences; and College of Social Work. Courses from these colleges are available under the gerontology minor.

Minor Requirements

Complete:*
 ARCH 425 - Special Topics in Architecture
 CFS 312 - Families in Middle and Later Adulthood
 NURS 400 - Aging and Society

Select 3 hours:**
 NURS 402 - Gerontology Practicum
 or a practicum experience within the home department

Notes:
* Other courses may be approved through petition by the Interdisciplinary Gerontology Colloquy member coordinating the minor.
** Nursing students may use NURS 461 (4) to satisfy this requirement.

REVISE COLLEGE TEXT

Minors

The academic departments within the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences offer minors in child and family studies, elementary education (for Arts and Sciences students only), middle grades education (for Arts and Sciences students only), nutrition, restaurant and food service management, retail and consumer sciences, retail technology, secondary education (for Arts and Sciences students only), and tourism and hospitality management.

Students pursuing a minor must complete at least one-half of the required classes at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and all courses must be taken for a letter grade unless otherwise specified.

Intercollegiate/Interdisciplinary Gerontology Minor

An intercollegiate/interdisciplinary undergraduate gerontology minor is coordinated through the interdisciplinary Gerontology Colloquy Group members from the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences; the College of Nursing; and the College of Social Work. Courses from the colleges are available under the gerontology minor. Please refer to the College of Nursing for specific requirements.

Rationale: The College of Nursing informed us of their intent to relinquish their participation in the gerontology minor. Upon review for restructuring, we discovered that through the years our college has significantly reduced courses that are related to aging. We no longer have faculty with a strong research agenda in this field, and none of our departments have an interest in continued involvement. It is no longer practical for our college to be involved in the gerontology programs.

Impact on other units: This certificate program is currently an intercollegiate/interdisciplinary endeavor shared by the College of Nursing, the College of Social Work, and the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences. All three colleges are submitting materials to drop the minor. Financial Impact: None.
FIRST-YEAR STUDIES PROGRAM

All changes effective Fall 2014

FIRST-YEAR STUDIES PROGRAM
(FYS) First-Year Studies

REVISE TITLE

101 The UT Experience (1)

Formerly: First-Year Studies.
Rationale: Request for more specific title from Assistant Director of First-Year Studies. Impact on other units: None. Financial impact: None.

129 First-Year Seminar (1)

Formerly: Freshman Seminar.
Rationale: Request for more specific title from Assistant Director of First-Year Studies. Impact on other units: None. Financial impact: None.
SUMMER CATALOG EDITS/CORRECTIONS

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Environmental and Soil Sciences Major, Conservation Agriculture and Environmental Sustainability
- Added GEOG 415 to technical electives footnote (copy/paste error)

Environmental and Soil Sciences Major, Construction Science
- Replaced BSET 474, ESS 492, and IE 423 with technical electives (There was a misunderstanding over the footnote: “Note that some electives have required prerequisites. See individual course descriptions in the catalog for specific information. BSET 474; ESS 492; IE 423.” We thought the three courses were the specified technical electives, but they were instead examples of some electives with prerequisites. They intended a much broader list of course options for the technical electives.)

Wildlife and Fisheries Science Major, Wildlife and Fisheries Management, Terms 5 and 8
- Changed EEB 443 to EEB 433 and FORS 320 to FORS 321 (typos)

COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

- Revised computer requirement text

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Anthropology Major, Term 5
- Changed ANTH 350 to ANTH 357 or ANTH 450 (ANTH 350 doesn’t exist)

Arts and Sciences Exploratory and Pre-Professional Exploratory Majors
- Added BCPP 102 to first-year seminar options (new course)
- Corrected prereq for MATH 141 or MATH 151 (MATH 130 or math ACT of 28)

Geology and Environmental Studies Major, Environmental Studies, Term 7
- Changed EEB 481 or EEB 484 or GEOL 436 to CBE 481 or EEB 484 or GEOG 436 (typo)

Graphic Design Major, Terms 7 and 8
- Changed ARTD 491 to ART 491 (typo)

Interdisciplinary Programs Major, Africana Studies
- Deleted AFST 431 from Term 6 and changed “Africana Studies (300-400 level major courses)” in the same term from 6 hours to 9 hours and changed “Unrestricted Electives” in Term 8 to “Africana Studies (200-400 level major courses)” (to resolve discrepancy between uTrack and traditional program)

Interdisciplinary Programs Major, Asian Studies
- Changed General Elective in Term 5 to 3 hours of Arts and Humanities (List A, B, or C) and 3 hours of Unrestricted Electives
Undergraduate Council Minutes U2780 September 10, 2013

Interdisciplinary Programs Major, Comparative Literature
- Changed General Elective in Term 5 to 3 hours of Arts and Humanities (List A, B, or C) and 3 hours of Natural Science

Interdisciplinary Programs Major, Global Studies
- Changed SOCI 250 to GLBS 250 in term 3 and term 4 milestone (cross-lists)

Interdisciplinary Programs Major, Neuroscience
- Adjusted parenthetical comment for INPG 200 and INPG 400
- Added missing COSC 420 to Computational and Materials Neuroscience course list

Interdisciplinary Programs Major, Sustainability (uTrack Requirements), Term 1
- Changed GEOL 137 to GEOG 137 (typo)
- Changed SOCI 250 to GLBS 250 in term 3 and term 5 milestone (cross-lists)

Interdisciplinary Programs Major, Women's Studies (uTrack Requirements), Term 5
- Changed WOST 202 to WOST 220 (typo)

Music Major, Theory/Composition Concentration, Composition and Theory Tracks
- Removed MUTH 120 and MUTH 140 as milestones in term 4 (already in term 5)

Physics Major, Applied
- Changed the social science requirement in Term 6 to 3 hours of Unrestricted Electives

Psychology Major, footnote
- BCMB 306 removed (course dropped last year)

Pre-Professional Programs Major, Pre-Dentistry
- MICR 319 added to term 6

Pre-Professional Programs Major, Pre-Pharmacy
- Terms 1 and 6 discrepancy—The uTrack plan does not limit the List A social science course options while the traditional plan narrows the list to six course options (see footnote).
  This is an error; the UT College of Pharmacy only allows those six courses to satisfy *their* social science requirement. Please add a second footnote with the original text for both references to Social Science.

Pre-Professional Programs Major, Pre-Veterinary Medicine
- Change Social Science (List A) from 3 hours to 6 hours in Term 5.

Theatre Major
- Changed Term 7 to read “Theatre (200-level or above major courses)” and Term 8 to read “Theatre (300-400 level major courses)”

University Exploratory Major
- Corrected prereq for MATH 141 or MATH 151 (MATH 130 or math ACT of 28)

College Page
- Updated text under Majors heading (2nd and 3rd paragraphs) as listed below:
  - All first-time, first-year UT Knoxville students who are admitted to an exploratory program must declare a major no later than the end of their fourth tracking semester. Transfer students with less than 45 hours of transferrable work must declare a major no later than the end of their second full semester at UT.
  - Transfer students with 45 hours or more of transferrable work must be admitted
Students may declare a major as soon as they have met required standards; however, they must officially declare a major by the time they have earned 75 credit hours. Transfer students who have earned more than 75 hours before entering UT must declare a major upon completing 15 hours of UT credit. The requirements for declaring a specific major are stated under the department or program listing. To declare a major, students should go to the academic department which houses the major. To declare an interdisciplinary major and for more information, contact Arts and Sciences Advising Services.

- Inserted new introductory text just above each Arts and Sciences uTrack plan
  - Universal Tracking (uTrack) is an academic monitoring system designed to help students stay on track for timely graduation. In order to remain on track, students must complete the minimum requirements for each tracking semester, known as milestones. Milestones may include successful completion of specified courses and/or attainment of a minimum GPA. uTrack requirements only affect first-time, first-year, full-time, degree-seeking students entering Fall 2013.

  Following the sample academic plan and its uTrack milestones will help students stay on track to graduate in four years. For specific course requirements, refer to the description of the major and the Arts and Sciences requirements listed in the Catalog, and consult an academic advisor.

**Progression-Related Text on Traditional Programs**
- Revised introductory, progression-related program text for the following programs—“Continuing, returning, and transfer students must meet progression requirements before declaring a major in ______.”
  - Anthropology
  - Anthropology, Disasters, Displacement and Human Rights conc.
  - Art (BA)
  - Biological Sciences, Biochemistry and Cellular and Molecular Biology conc.
  - Biological Sciences, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology conc.
  - Biological Sciences, Microbiology conc.
  - Graphic Design
  - History
  - Modern Foreign Languages and Literatures, Language and World Business conc.
    - Chinese
    - French and Francophone Studies
    - German
    - Hispanic Studies
    - Italian
    - Japanese
    - Portuguese
    - Russian Studies
  - Political Science
  - Political Science, Honors conc.
  - Political Science, Public Administration conc.
  - Psychology
  - Sociology
  - Sociology, Criminology and Criminal Justice conc.
  - Sociology, Environmental Issues conc.
Undergraduate Council Minutes U2782 September 10, 2013

- Studio Art
  - Two-Dimensional Arts conc.
  - Three-Dimensional Arts conc.
  - Four-Dimensional Arts conc.

- Updated introductory program text for all Language and World Business concentrations
  - Students pursuing a major in Modern Foreign Languages and Literatures who wish to prepare for careers in international business may complete a special concentration in Chinese, French and Francophone Studies, German, Hispanic Studies, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese or Russian Studies. The concentration offers a professional emphasis in international business, international retail merchandising, or international agricultural economics, and some form of practical experience related to the concentration. Admission is by permission of the program director.

Due to extensive and multidisciplinary coursework required by the language and world business concentration/major, students are permitted to use three courses from the concentration/major to fulfill College of Arts and Sciences Basic Skills and Distribution requirements. These courses include STAT 201* (toward fulfilling the quantitative reasoning requirement), ECON 201* (toward fulfilling the Social Science requirement), and one course toward fulfilling the Humanities List A--Literature requirement or the Upper Level Distribution List B--Foreign Studies requirement.

Students interested in the language and world business program should contact the department of Modern Foreign Languages and Literatures as early as possible in their college careers. The academic record presented will be assessed by the Director of Language and World Business.

Continuing, returning, and transfer students must meet progression requirements before declaring a concentration in language and world business.

Minimum requirements for entrance and progression to the major are a 2.7 cumulative average in all courses and a 3.0 average in language courses. Students must meet these requirements for progression prior to the completion of 75 hours. MFLL 199 is a requirement for the program. Program standards are adjusted periodically, and current requirements are available from the Director of the Language and World Business Program. For further information, inquire at 701 McClung Tower.

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Business Analytics, IB Dual Concentration
- Added IB 469 to IB electives list

COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

College Page
- Updated Progression Requirements text to match GPA milestones

Journalism and Electronic Media Major, Term 5
- Change JREM 230 or JREM 250 milestone to JREM 230 and JREM 250
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, HEALTH AND HUMAN SCIENCES

Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Major
- Removed reference to WC course in footnote 2 since HRT 390 is a required course and meets the WC requirement

KNS 332
- Updated registration restriction (rationale included original intent of allowing sophomores to take the course instead of juniors and higher)

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering Major, Biomolecular Engineering
- Changed Bio Option I total to 3-5 hours in Term 8 and updated total to 129 hours (mathematical error)

GENERAL EDUCATION

ASL 211-212
- The ASL 211-212 sequence (Intermediate American Sign Language I and II) was originally placed under the broad Cultures and Civilizations heading in the 2013-14 Undergraduate Catalog. However, the courses have since been moved to the foreign language section of the Cultures and Civilizations list since the original proposal that was approved by the General Education Committee and the UG Council specifically requested foreign language status. To avoid impacting other units, a note was also added to the foreign language section reminding students that some Colleges may require specific foreign language courses: “Some Colleges, such as Arts and Sciences and Business Administration, may require specific foreign language courses to fulfill this requirement. Students should consult their academic advisor before selecting language courses.”

ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ABC/NC Grading
- The English department sent a memo reiterating that a transfer grade of C or better is required to fulfill the English Composition requirement (even though the Council voted to accept transfer work with grades of D- or better). When we discussed the D- issue in the Academic Policy Committee meeting, ENGL 101-102 was cited as an exception. Since UTK students can’t earn a D grade in English Comp (courses are graded ABC/NC only), transfer students shouldn’t be allowed to either. Transcript evaluators will bring in the credit hours for ENGL 101-102 with grades of D or D-, but DARS won’t pick them up as meeting the English Composition requirement until students repeat the courses and earn a C or better. Following this logic, the minimum acceptable grade for any ABC/NC graded course is a C or better. To avoid any confusion, we added a note to the ABC/NC grading system description: “Transfer students are held to the same program requirements and policies as UT Knoxville students. For ABC/NC graded coursework, only those courses in which at least a grade of C was earned will be eligible to meet program requirements.”
SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE FOR ACCREDITED INSTITUTIONS
OF THE COMMISSION ON COLLEGES

- Policy Statement –

Institutional Obligations:

1. Member institutions are required to notify the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) of changes in accordance with the substantive change policy and, when required, seek approval prior to the initiation of changes.

2. Member institutions are required to have a policy and procedure to ensure that all substantive changes are reported to the Commission in a timely fashion.

Definition: Substantive change is a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution. Under federal regulations, substantive change includes

- Any change in the established mission or objectives of the institution
- Any change in legal status, form of control, or ownership of the institution
- The addition of courses or programs that represent a significant departure, either in content or method of delivery, from those that were offered when the institution was last evaluated
- The addition of courses or programs of study at a degree or credential level different from that which is included in the institution’s current accreditation or reaffirmation.
- A change from clock hours to credit hours
- A substantial increase in the number of clock or credit hours awarded for successful completion of a program
- The establishment of an additional location geographically apart from the main campus at which the institution offers at least 50% of an educational program.
- The establishment of a branch campus
- Closing a program, off-campus site, branch campus or institution
- Entering into a collaborative academic arrangement that includes only the initiation of a dual or joint academic program with another institution
- Acquiring another institution or a program or location of another institution
- Adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out program for a closed institution
- Entering into a contract by which an entity not eligible for Title IV funding offers 25% or more of one or more of the accredited institution’s programs

The SACSCOC Board of Trustees has approved additional substantive changes that require notification and, in some cases, approval prior to implementation. This policy and its procedures address substantive changes identified through Federal regulations and Board approval.
Table of Contents

Glossary of Terms .......................................................... 3

The Policy .................................................................. 5

  Commission Responsibilities ...................................... 5
  Institutional Responsibilities ...................................... 5
  Procedures for Reporting Substantive Changes: An Overview ...... 5
  Reporting the Various Types of Substantive Change ............... 6
  Required Committee Visits ........................................ 10
  Policy Statements .................................................. 11
  Fees and Expenses ................................................ 13

Procedure One: ............................................................ 14
  The Review of Substantive Changes Requiring Notification
  and Approval Prior to Implementation

Procedure Two: ............................................................ 19
  The Review of Substantive Changes Requiring Only Notification
  Prior to Implementation

Procedure Three: ........................................................... 21
  Closing a Program, Site, Branch Campus or Institution

Appendix

  Appendix A: Current Standards and Policy Statements Addressing
               Unreported Substantive Change ............................ 23

  Appendix B: The Content of the Prospectus ........................ 25

  Appendix C: Application for Member Institutions ................. 28
               Seeking Accreditation at a Higher or Lower Degree Level
               (Hyperlink access only)
Glossary of Terms

**Branch campus** - a location of an institution that is geographically apart and independent of the main campus of the institution. A location is independent of the main campus if the location is:

- permanent in nature
- offers courses in educational programs leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential
- has its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization and
- has its own budgetary and hiring authority

**Contractual Agreement** – typically is one in which an institution enters an agreement for receipt of courses/programs or portions of courses or programs (i.e., clinical training internships, etc.) delivered by another institution or service provider.

**Consortial Relationship**: A consortial relationship typically is one in which two or more institutions share in the responsibility of developing and delivering courses and programs that meet mutually agreed upon standards of academic quality.

**Correspondence education** - a formal educational process under which the institution provides instructional materials, by mail or electronic transmission, including examinations on the materials, to students who are separated from the instructor. Interaction between the instructor and the student is limited, is not regular and substantive, and is primarily initiated by the student; courses are typically self-paced.

**Degree completion program** – a program typically designed for a non-traditional undergraduate population such as working adults who have completed some college-level course work but have not achieved a baccalaureate degree. Students in such programs may transfer in credit from courses taken previously and may receive credit for experiential learning. Courses in degree completion programs are often offered in an accelerated format or meet during evening and weekend hours, or may be offered via distance learning technologies.

**Distance education** - a formal educational process in which the majority of the instruction (interaction between students and instructors and among students) in a course occurs when students and instructors are not in the same place. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous. A distance education course may use the internet; one-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices; audio conferencing; or video cassettes, DVD’s, and CD-ROMs if used as part of the distance learning course or program.

**Dual degree** – separate program completion credentials each of which bears only the name, seal, and signature of the institution awarding the degree to the student.

**Educational program** – a coherent course of study leading to the awarding of a credential (i.e., a degree, diploma or certificate).

**Geographically separate** - an instructional site or branch campus that is located physically apart from the main campus of the institution.

**Joint degree** - a single program completion credential bearing the names, seals, and signatures of each of the two or more institutions awarding the degree to the student.
Modified prospectus - a prospectus submitted in lieu of a full prospectus for certain designated substantive changes. When a modified prospectus is acceptable, the Commission specifies requested information from the institution.

Notification - a letter from an institution’s chief executive officer, or his/her designated representative, to SACSCOC President summarizing a proposed change, providing the intended implementation date, and listing the complete physical address if the change involves the initiation of an off-campus site or branch campus. The policy and procedures for reporting and review of institutional substantive change are outlined in the document “Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions of the Commission on Colleges.”

Significant departure – a program that is not closely related to previously approved programs at the institution or site or for the mode of delivery in question. To determine whether a new program is a “significant departure,” it is helpful to consider the following questions:

- What previously approved programs does the institution offer that are closely related to the new program and how are they related?
- Will significant additional equipment or facilities be needed?
- Will significant additional financial resources be needed?
- Will a significant number of new courses will be required?
- Will a significant number of new faculty members will be required?
- Will significant additional library/learning resources be needed?

Teach-out agreement - a written agreement between institutions that provides for the equitable treatment of students and a reasonable opportunity for students to complete their program of study if an institution, or an institutional location that provides 50% or more of at least one program offered, ceases to operate before all enrolled students have completed their program of study. This applies to the closure of an institution, a site, or a program. Such a teach-out agreement requires SACSCOC approval in advance of implementation.

Teach-out plan - a written plan developed by an institution that provides for the equitable treatment of students if an institution, or an institutional location that provides 50% or more of at least one program, ceases to operate before all students have completed their program of study, and may include, if required by the institution's accrediting agency, a teach-out agreement between institutions. This applies to the closure of an institution, a site, or a program. Teach-out plans must be approved by SACSCOC in advance of implementation.
The Policy

Commission Responsibilities

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) accredits an entire institution and its programs and services, wherever they are located or however they are delivered. It is responsible for reviewing all substantive changes that occur between an institution’s decennial reviews, determining whether the changes have affected the quality of the total institution, and assuring the public that all aspects of the institution continue to meet defined standards.

SACSCOC is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as an agency whose accreditation enables its member institutions to seek eligibility to participate in Title IV programs. To maintain its recognition with the U.S. Department of Education, SACSCOC has incorporated federal requirements into its substantive change policy and procedures. Some of those requirements specify that an institution seek and receive approval prior to the initiation of a substantive change so that the change can be included in the institution’s scope of accreditation.

Institutional Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of an institution to follow SACSCOC substantive change procedures and inform SACSCOC of substantive changes as specified in those procedures. If an institution is unclear as to whether a change is substantive in nature, it should contact SACSCOC staff for consultation. SACSCOC accredits institutions, not systems. While a system may provide SACSCOC with important information regarding changes planned or underway at its institutions, it is expected that each institution will follow the reporting requirements of the substantive change policy.

Procedures for Reporting: An Overview

There are three procedures for addressing the different types of substantive changes included in this document:

- **Procedure One** for the Review of Substantive Changes Requiring Notification and Approval Prior to Implementation
- **Procedure Two** for the Review of Substantive Changes Requiring Only Notification Prior to Implementation
- **Procedure Three** for Closing a Program, Site, Branch Campus or Institution.

Procedures for the following types of changes are included in a separate document, "Mergers, Consolidations, Change of Ownership, Acquisitions, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status."

- initiating mergers or consolidations
- acquiring any program or site from another institution
- adding as a permanent location any site where the institution is conducting a teach-out for students of another institution that is closing
- changes in governance, ownership, means of control or legal status

The initiation or revision of programs not offered for academic credit and that are not eligible for federal financial aid does not require reporting; however, such programs are subject to review at the time of reaffirmation.
### Reporting the Various Types of Substantive Change

The different types of substantive change, the specific procedure to be used for each, their respective approval/notification requirements, and their reporting time lines are included in the table that follows. Please read the full text under the appropriate procedure for details regarding reporting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Change</th>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Prior Notification Required</th>
<th>Time Frame for Contacting COC</th>
<th>Prior Approval Required</th>
<th>Documentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initiating coursework or programs at a different level than currently approved</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Application for Level Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Due dates: April 15 or September 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanding at current degree level <em>(significant departure from current programs)</em></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Prospectus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating a branch campus <em>(See definition of “branch campus” on p. 3 of this document.)</em></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Prospectus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating a certificate program at employer’s request and on short notice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…using existing approved courses</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…at a new off-campus site <em>(previously approved program)</em></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Modified prospectus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…that is a significant departure from previously approved programs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Approval required prior to implementation</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Modified prospectus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating other certificate programs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>… using existing approved courses</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>… at a new off-campus site <em>(previously approved program)</em></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Prospectus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…that is a significant departure from previously approved programs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Prospectus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of Change</td>
<td>Procedure</td>
<td>Prior Notification Required</td>
<td>Time Frame for Contacting COC</td>
<td>Prior Approval Required</td>
<td>Documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altering significantly the educational mission of the institution</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Contact Commission Staff (Also, see page 16, item 9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating joint or dual degrees with another institution: (See: &quot;Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards.&quot;)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint programs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Prior to implementation</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Copy of signed agreement and contact information for each institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>………with another SACSCOC accredited institution</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>………with an institution not accredited by SACSCOC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Prospectus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual programs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Prior to implementation</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Copy of signed agreement and contact information for each institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating off-campus sites (including Early College High School and dual enrollment programs offered at the high school)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…Student can obtain 50% or more credits toward program</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Prospectus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…Student can obtain 25-49% of credit</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Prior to implementation</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Letter of notification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…Student can obtain 24% less</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus sites</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…Adding programs that are significantly different from current programs at the site</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…Adding programs that are NOT significantly different from current programs at the site</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of Change</td>
<td>Procedure</td>
<td>Prior Notification Required</td>
<td>Time Frame for Contacting COC</td>
<td>Prior Approval Required</td>
<td>Documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altering significantly the length of a program</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Prospectus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating distance learning…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…Offering 50 % or more of a program for the first time</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Prospectus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…Offering 25-49 %</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Prior to implementation</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Letter of notification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…Offering 24 % or less</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating programs or courses offered through contractual agreement or consortium</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Prior to implementation</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Letter of notification and copy of signed agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entering into a contract with an entity not certified to participate in USDOE Title IV programs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>… if the entity provides 25% or more of an educational program offered by the COC accredited institution</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Prospectus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>… if the entity provides less than 25% of an educational program offered by the accredited institution</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Prior to implementation</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Copy of the signed agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating a merger/consolidation with another institution</td>
<td>See SACSCOC policy “Mergers, Consolidations and Change of Ownership: Review and Approval.”</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Prospectus Due dates: April 15 or September 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of Change</td>
<td>Procedure</td>
<td>Prior Notification Required</td>
<td>Time Frame for Contacting COC</td>
<td>Prior Approval Required</td>
<td>Documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing governance, ownership, control, or legal status of an institution</td>
<td>See SACSCOC policy “Mergers, Consolidations and Change of Ownership: Review and Approval.”</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Prospectus Due dates: April 15 or September 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relocating a main or branch campus</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Prospectus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moving an off-campus instructional site (serving the same geographic area)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Prior to implementation</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Letter of notification with new address and starting date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing from clock hours to credit hours</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Justify reasons for change, indicate calculation of equivalency, and other pertinent information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altering significantly the length of a program</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Prospectus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating degree completion programs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Prospectus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing a program, approved off-campus site, branch campus, or institution</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Immediately following decision to close</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Description of teach-out plan included with letter of notification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…Institution to teach out its own students</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Immediately following decision to close</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Description of teach-out plan, copy of signed teach-out agreement detailing terms included with notification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…Institution contracts with another institution to teach-out students (Teach-out Agreement)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Immediately following decision to close</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Description of teach-out plan, copy of signed teach-out agreement detailing terms included with notification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquiring any program or site from another institution</td>
<td>See SACSCOC policy “Mergers, Consolidations and Change of Ownership: Review and Approval.”</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Prospectus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out for students from another institution that is closing</td>
<td>See SACSCOC policy “Mergers, Consolidations and Change of Ownership: Review and Approval.”</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Prospectus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Required Committee Visits

The following five types of substantive changes require on-site committee reviews within six months after implementation:

1. The initiation of an additional off-campus site/location at which a student can earn at least 50% of the credit toward an educational program, if any of the following applies: (a) the institution has a total of three or fewer additional locations, or (b) the institution has not demonstrated, to the satisfaction of SACSCOC, that it has a proven record of effective educational oversight of additional locations, or (c) the institution has been placed on sanction by SACSCOC or is subject to some limitation on its accreditation, or (d) the institution has been accredited by SACSCOC for less than ten years.

SACSCOC will conduct visits to the first three off-campus locations initiated by an institution that offer 50% or more of the credit for at least one program.

When an institution initiates its fourth off-campus site/location where 50% or more of a program’s credits are offered, SACSCOC may, at its discretion, choose not to conduct visits to any of these additional sites at the times of their initiation if the institution has previously demonstrated a record of effective oversight of its off-campus educational locations and has not been placed on sanction. However, SACSCOC will require visits to a representative sample of sites at the fifth-year interval between scheduled reaffirmations if (1) the additional sites have been initiated since the last scheduled reaffirmation and (2) the sites have not been visited.

At any time, SACSCOC may choose to authorize visits to new sites developed between the fifth-year review and the next scheduled reaffirmation of accreditation.

At the time of reaffirmation, SACSCOC will conduct a thorough review of a representative sample of additional locations/sites where a student can obtain 50% or more of course work toward an educational program. The extent of the review will depend, in part, on whether there has been a recent review of the site(s).

2. The initiation of a branch campus. A branch campus is defined as a location of an institution that is geographically apart and independent of the main campus of the institution. A location is independent of the main campus if the location is

- permanent in nature
- offers courses in educational programs leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential
- has its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization and
- has its own budgetary and hiring authority

If it is determined that a branch campus has sufficient autonomy, the institution may be directed to seek separate accreditation for the unit. (See SACSCOC policy “Separate Accreditation for Units of a Member Institution.”)

3. The initiation of a change in governance/ownership with a change in control. (See SACSCOC policy “Mergers, Consolidations, Change of Ownership, Acquisitions, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status.”)

4. The initiation of mergers/consolidations. (See SACSCOC policy “Mergers, Consolidations, Change of Ownership, Acquisitions, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status.”)

5. The initiation of coursework, credit certificates, or degree programs at a different level than currently approved by SACSCOC. (Depending on the existing related programs offered by an
institution, a committee visit may not be required for institutions moving from Levels III to IV or from Levels V to VI. See level classifications on page 14 of this document.)

The President of SACSCOC also is authorized to appoint a Substantive Change Committee to review an institution for any change requiring a more in-depth evaluation beyond the prospectus submitted by the institution. The report of the Substantive Change Committee will be used by the Board of Trustees of SACSCOC to determine the ongoing accreditation of an institution.

Policy Statements Regarding Substantive Change

1. The *Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement* applies to all programs and services of SACSCOC-accredited institutions wherever they are located or however they are delivered. Failure to comply with the Principles or with procedures referred to in this policy could result in the institution being placed on sanction or being removed from membership.

2. Denial of approval of substantive change is not appealable. An institution that fails to gain approval of the substantive change may resubmit a revised prospectus or application following the guidelines and time frames described in the Table on pages 6-9 of this document.

3. An accredited institution in the appeals process or in litigation with SACSCOC is not eligible for consideration of substantive change.

4. The SACSCOC substantive change policy applies only to SACSCOC-accredited institutions. Applicant and candidate institutions may not initiate substantive change.

5. Procedures One, Two, and Three may not address all substantive changes that SACSCOC will review in the interim between an institution's reaffirmation cycles. Therefore, the SACSCOC reserves the right to classify significant changes other than those described above as substantive in nature and to follow up accordingly. The follow-up procedure may include a committee visit.

6. An institution may withdraw its prospectus/application or may discontinue substantive change at any time during the review process by submitting a formal letter of withdrawal to the President of SACSCOC.

7. Once an institution submits its prospectus or application and the document is reviewed by either the Committee on Compliance and Reports or by SACSCOC staff, any information included therein that indicates possible non-compliance with any of the Core Requirements or Comprehensive Standards may lead SACSCOC to further review the institution, even if the prospectus is withdrawn or approval of the change is denied.

8. SACSCOC staff review all substantive changes requiring notification prior to implementation and conduct a preliminary review of all changes requiring final approval by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees. All substantive changes described in Procedure One are referred to the Board of Trustees for approval as are the following cases:

   • a proposed substantive change requiring prior approval submitted by an institution currently on sanction. Proposals by an institution on sanction to close a program or an off-site instructional site will be reviewed and, if appropriate, approved by Commission staff.

   • a proposed substantive change submitted by an institution recently removed from sanction with particular attention to those involving non-compliance with Core Requirement 2.11.1 or Comprehensive Standard 3.10.1, both dealing with financial health
• a proposed substantive change submitted by an institution currently on reimbursement for Title IV federal funding

• the prospectus of an institution planning a merger/consolidation, change of legal status, governance, ownership or form of control. (See SACSCOC "Mergers, Consolidations, Change of Ownership, Acquisitions, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status.")

9. If an institution fails to report or to gain approval of a substantive change prior to its implementation and the nature of that change is not described in the list in item 8 above or those listed under Procedure One, the substantive change will be reviewed and, if possible, acted upon by staff. The issue of late submission, however, will be referred to the SACSCOC Board of Trustees for action. If an institution fails to report or to gain approval of a substantive change prior to its implementation and the proposed change is among those included in the list in item 8 above or those listed under Procedure One, both the prospectus/application and the issue of late submission will be referred to the SACSCOC Board of Trustees for action.

10. All final decisions regarding the accreditation status of an institution are made by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees. Denial of substantive change and the imposition of sanctions are not appealable actions.

11. Substantive changes of the types described in Procedures One and Two normally will not affect an institution’s cycle of reaffirmation of accreditation.

12. Following the approval of a degree level change by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees, an institution may not initiate additional programs at the new degree level until after the Board takes positive action on its continued accreditation following the Substantive Change Committee visit authorized at the time of approval.

13. The date of the letter of approval of a substantive change is considered the date on which the change is included as part of the institution’s accreditation.

14. Extensive substantive changes by an institution may accelerate the date for the institution’s next reaffirmation. Examples of triggers for an accelerated reaffirmation include the following changes: proliferation of branches or off-campus sites, frequent mergers or consolidations with other institutions, significant increases in enrollments, or rapid proliferation of new educational programs.

15. If an institution fails to follow SACSCOC substantive change policy and procedures, it may lose its Title IV funding or be required by the U.S. Department of Education to reimburse it for money received by the institution for programs related to the unreported substantive change. In addition, the institution’s case may be referred to SACSCOC Board of Trustees for the imposition of a sanction or for removal from membership. (See also Appendix A regarding standards and policies addressing unreported substantive change.)
Fees and Expenses

1. Denial of approval of substantive change is not appealable. An institution that fails to gain approval of the substantive change may resubmit a revised prospectus or application following the guidelines and time frames described in Procedures One and Two.

The following fees will be assessed to institutions for the review of an application or prospectus:

- $300 For an institution seeking review of a substantive change prospectus or application for level change
- $150 Per institution for a collaborative effort between two member institutions seeking review of a single prospectus
- $100 Per institution for a collaborative effort among three or more member institutions seeking review of a single prospectus
- $300 Per institution for review of a Category Three collaborative academic arrangement. The SACSCOC accredited institution(s) are responsible for ensuring payment.

2. Fees related to Substantive Change Committee visits

In addition to the fee assessed for reviewing the substantive change prospectus, the following total cost will be assessed to an institution hosting a Substantive Change Committee visit:

- The actual cost of the committee (Includes travel, lodging, food, and related expenses), and
- $2,000 administrative fee

Document history:
Revised for the Principles of Accreditation: February 2004
Adopted: Commission on Colleges, June 2008
Revised: Board of Trustees, Commission on Colleges, June 2009, June 2011, December 2011
Revised: Executive Council, March 2012 and Board of Trustees, June 2012
Revised: Board of Trustees, December 2012
PROCEDURE ONE

The Review of Substantive Changes Requiring Approval Prior to Implementation

Changes Requiring Approval

Substantive changes requiring submission of an application or a prospectus, and approval by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees prior to implementation by the institution are as follows:

1. **Initiating coursework, certificates, or programs of study at a different level than those previously approved by SACSCOC.** Institutions may not offer individual credit courses or programs beyond the level of current accreditation. Examples include: an associate degree-granting college initiating bachelor's degrees or a four-year institution initiating degrees at the master's level; a graduate institution initiating degrees at the undergraduate level, a baccalaureate degree-granting institution initiating occupational and technical degrees at the associate degree level. An institution requesting a level change should complete an Application for Members Seeking Accreditation at a Higher or Lower Degree Level.

   **Note:** Repackaging of an existing approved curriculum to create a new degree level, such as an institution that offers a full 120-hour baccalaureate program creating an associate degree from its lower-division offerings, usually requires only advance notification, not approval.

   SACSCOC classifies institutions according to the highest degree level offered by an institution. Those classifications are as follows:

   - **Level I** Offers the associate degree as the highest degree
   - **Level II** Offers the baccalaureate degree as the highest degree
   - **Level III** Offers the master’s degree as the highest degree
   - **Level IV** Offers the master’s and specialist degree as the highest degrees
   - **Level V** Offers three or fewer doctorate degrees as highest degrees
   - **Level VI** Offers four or more doctorate degrees

   An institution adding a fourth doctorate degree, causing it to be reclassified from Level V to Level VI, is required to request the level change in writing in order for SACSCOC to reclassify the institution within its data base.

   Applications for a change from Level III to Level IV and Level V to Level VI will be reviewed and, if possible, approved by staff.

2. **Initiating certificate programs for workforce development.** These are typically offered at the request of an employer, either on campus or at the workplace. Offering previously approved certificate programs at an unapproved off-campus site requires approval of the site prior to implementation. Similarly, offering a certificate program that is a significant departure from existing approved certificate programs, either on or off campus, requires approval of the program prior to implementation. SACSCOC will waive the six-month notification requirement and accept a modified prospectus consisting of the name of the certificate, date of implementation, the complete physical address of the off-campus site (if applicable), a faculty roster, a discipline-specific description of library/learning resources, a description of physical facilities, and descriptions of courses to be offered at the site.

3. **Initiating other certificate programs.** Certificate programs consisting of courses drawn from the existing approved curriculum for a degree or diploma program do not require separate approval; they are considered to be included in the institution’s current accreditation. However, to offer
such a certificate at a new site requires approval of the site. A certificate that is a significant
departure from previously approved programs must be approved in advance—the same as any
other new educational program.

4. **Initiating an off-campus (additional) site** *(site-based/classroom group instruction)* **at which students can earn at least 50% of the credits toward an educational program.** Locations at
which instruction is offered by distance delivery, but students must be present on-site to access
such instruction, are considered off-campus instructional sites and must be approved in advance.

Approval of an off-campus site is effective for a maximum of five years and will be reviewed again
in the context of the fifth-year or decennial review.

For an institution replicating an approved educational program that is already offered at three or
more approved sites, a modified prospectus consisting of a faculty roster, descriptions of the
courses to be offered at the site, a description of discipline-specific library resources, a description
of student support services, and a description of physical resources will suffice in lieu of
responding to the requirements of a full prospectus.

5. **Initiating degree completion programs.** Degree completion programs usually include a
compressed format with classes offered evenings or weekends to accommodate working adults, a
requirement to transfer in some amount of previous college credit, and may include offering credit
for career or life experience. The prospectus should include a discussion of how the degree
completion program differs from the same program offered in traditional form, and how the
institution will ensure that student learning outcomes are the same for both offerings. An example
of such a change is adult or accelerated programs in management or organizational leadership.

6. **Initiating a branch campus.** A branch campus is defined as a location of an institution that is
geographically apart and independent of the main campus of the institution. A location is
independent of the main campus if the location is (1) permanent in nature, (2) offers courses in
educational programs leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential,
(3) has its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization, and (4) has its own
budgetary and hiring authority. The prospectus for a proposed branch campus must include a
business plan for the branch campus that describes:

- The educational program(s) to be offered at the branch campus;
- The projected revenues and expenditures and cash flow at the branch campus; and
- The operation, management, and physical resources at the branch campus.

7. **Initiating distance learning or correspondence courses and programs by which students
can earn at least 50% of a program’s credits through delivery in a format other than face-to-
face.** Institutions must demonstrate that a student who registers for a distance or correspondence
course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program
and receives academic credit. Means of verification might include a secure login and pass code,
proctored examinations, or other technologies and practices that are effective in verifying student
identification. Processes used to verify student identity must also protect student privacy. Please
see also the SACSCOC policy “Distance and Correspondence Education.”

8. **Expanding at the institution’s current degree level** *(significant departure from current
programs).* What constitutes a “significant departure” from existing programs depends on what
related programs are currently in place at a given institution. Refer to the Glossary of Terms for
more specificity. Examples include the following: developing a new general education program,
adding a master’s degree in nursing when the institution is accredited at Level III but currently
offers only a master’s degree in education; an institution accredited at Level II (bachelor’s
degrees), offering only a bachelor’s degree with a major in religion, adding three new bachelor’s
degrees with majors in biology, business administration, and computer science.
9. **Initiating a significant change in the established mission of the institution.** Significant changes in mission are those that lead to a fundamental shift in the nature of the institution. Examples include the following: the transformation of a technical college into a comprehensive community college, the initiation by a seminary of significant liberal arts offerings, the addition by a medical college of general education offerings, the initiation of an engineering school at a liberal arts institution. Editorial changes in the language of a mission statement are **not** substantive and need not be reported. See Commission staff regarding the prospectus. The change in mission may dictate a mix of required documentation.

10. **Changing from clock hours to credit hours.** The prospectus must include a clear explanation of the formula used to calculate equivalency of credit awarded. Please see also the SACSCOC policy “Credit Hours.”

11. **Changing significantly the length of a program, substantially increasing the number of clock or credit hours awarded for successful completion of a program.** Significant changes in program length are those with noticeable impact on the program's completion time. Examples include the following: expanding a certificate program from 250 contact hours to 450 contact hours, increasing a baccalaureate degree from 124 hours to 150 hours.

12. **Relocating a main or branch campus.** The prospectus should demonstrate that the new facilities maintain the institution’s compliance with Comprehensive Standard 3.11.

13. **Initiating a collaborative academic program with another institution not accredited by SACSCOC.** The prospectus should demonstrate compliance with the SACSCOC policy “Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards: Policy and Procedures.” Examples include joint degree or dual degree programs.

14. **Entering into a contract with an entity not certified to participate in USDOE Title IV programs.** This applies if the entity provides 25% or more of an educational program offered by the accredited institution. The prospectus must include a copy of the signed agreement.

**The Procedure for Approval**

**Time of Notification**

An institution undergoing substantive change requiring prior approval must provide written notification of the change to the President of SACSCOC in accord with the designated times outlined in the table on pages 6-9 of this document. In some cases, prior notification is not required.

*If an institution is unclear as to whether a change is substantive in nature, it should contact SACSCOC staff for consultation.*

**Submission of a Prospectus or an Application**

*Prospectus:* Prospectuses may be submitted in print form or on flash drive, CD or DVD (submit one copy). Once the prospectus has been submitted, the institution may advertise and recruit students to a new program or site as long as all materials clearly state that the program or site is pending approval by SACSCOC.

*Application for Member Institutions Seeking Accreditation at a Higher or Lower Degree Level:* The application for change of degree level must be submitted by April 15 for consideration at the June meeting of the SACSCOC Board of Trustees, or by September 15 for consideration at the December meeting of the SACSCOC Board of Trustees to allow ample time for review and approval. Four copies of the completed application should be submitted to the President of SACSCOC as a print document or on flash drive, CD or DVD.
Staff Options

Upon receipt of a substantive change prospectus, a SACSCOC staff member will review the prospectus and any supporting material submitted by the institution and will recommend to the SACSCOC Board of Trustees one of the actions listed below:

1. approve the substantive change or
2. refer the substantive change to the SACSCOC Committee on Compliance and Reports for review and a final recommendation to the Board of Trustees.

Upon receipt of an application for initiating coursework or programs at a level different from that for which it is approved, the application will be forwarded automatically to the SACSCOC Board of Trustees for review and approval at its next scheduled meeting: June or December.

Options of the Committees on Compliance and Reports
Following Review of the Prospectus or of the Application

Prospectus: The Committee will review the prospectus and any additional material submitted, and will recommend one of the following actions:

1. accept the prospectus and recommend approval of the program, with or without a site visit. A site visit is required within six months after the initiation of the following approved substantive changes:
   (a) consolidation/merger; a change of ownership resulting in a change of control; change of governance, ownership, legal status
   (b) a branch campus
   (c) an off-campus site at which a student can earn at least 50% of the credit toward an educational program, if any of the following applies: the institution
      • has a total of three or fewer additional locations at which 50% or more of a programs credits are offered, or
      • has not demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the SACSCOC Board of Trustees, that it has a proven record of effective educational oversight of additional locations, or
      • has been placed on sanction by SACSCOC or is subject to some limitation on its accreditation
2. defer action and seek additional information
3. recommend denial of approval of the substantive change and continue the institution's accreditation. The reason for denial of approval may have been caused by an institution’s current non-compliance with a standard or requirement. Consequently, denial may be accompanied by monitoring or imposition of a sanction.

Application for Member Institutions Seeking Accreditation at a Higher or Lower Degree Level
An application for offering programs at a level different from that for which the institution is approved is automatically referred to the Committees on Compliance and Reports, except for a change in degree levels from III to IV and from V to VI which are reviewed by staff. The Committee will review the application and any additional material submitted, and will recommend one of the following actions:

1. accept the application and approve the program, with a site visit within six months after initiation of the substantive change
2. defer action and seek additional information
3. deny approval of the substantive change and continue the institution’s accreditation. The reason for denial of approval may have been caused by an institution’s current non-compliance with a standard or requirement. Consequently, denial may be accompanied by monitoring or imposition of a sanction.

Preparation for a Substantive Change Committee Visit

When a Substantive Change Committee is authorized, it is charged with determining the institution’s continued compliance with the Principles of Accreditation following the initiation of the change. The visit will occur within six months after initiation of the change. In preparation for this visit, the institution will complete the appropriate substantive change documentation template, which cites relevant Core Requirements, Comprehensive Standards and Federal Requirements, and the roster of faculty members who will be teaching in the program or at the site. Both the template and the Faculty Roster form are available on the SACSCOC Web site (www.sacscoc.org) under “Substantive Changes”. The institution’s SACSCOC staff representative will inform the institution of the composition and schedule for the Committee.

Options of the Committees on Compliance and Reports Following Review by a Substantive Change Committee

The report of the Substantive Change Committee, together with the response of the institution to the recommendations contained in that report (due within five months of the Committee visit), will be reviewed by the Committee on Compliance and Reports. The Committee on Compliance and Reports may recommend one of the following actions:

1. continue the institution in accreditation, with or without a monitoring report

2. continue the institution in accreditation, impose a sanction, and request a monitoring report, with/without a special committee visit (mandatory visit if placed on Probation)

3. discontinue accreditation
PROCEDURE TWO

The Review of Substantive Changes
Requiring Only Notification Prior to Implementation

Changes Requiring Notification Only

Substantive changes requiring an institution to notify the President of SACSCOC prior to implementation by the institution are as follows:

1. For site-based/classroom group instruction (where the instructor is present)
   a. Initiating an off-campus site at which a student may earn at least 25% but less than 50% of credits toward a program. The letter of notification must include the starting date and complete physical address of the new site.
   b. Moving an approved off-campus instructional site within the same geographic area to serve essentially the same pool of students. The letter of notification must include the complete physical address of the old site, the complete physical address of the new site, and the starting date of the new site.

2. For distance learning/technology-based group or individual instruction (where the instructor and student are geographically separated), offering for the first time credit courses via distance learning/technology-based instruction by which students can obtain at least 25% but less than 50% of their credits toward an educational program.

3. Initiating program/courses delivered through contractual agreement or a consortium. This provision does not apply to articulation agreements with other institutions, clinical agreements, or internship agreements. The notification must include (1) a letter with the starting date of the agreement and the names of the institutions and programs involved and (2) a copy of the signed agreement.

4. Entering into a contract with an entity not certified to participate in USDOE Title IV programs if the entity provides less than 25% of an educational program offered by the accredited institution. A copy of the signed agreement must be provided.

5. Repackaging of an existing approved curriculum to create a new degree level, such as an institution that offers a full 120-hour baccalaureate program creating an associate degree from its lower-division offerings, usually requires only advance notification, not approval.

Review Procedure

Time of Notification

An institution undergoing substantive change must provide written notification of the change to the President of SACSCOC prior to implementation. The letter must include the date of implementation of the proposed change, and for an off-campus site, the complete physical address of the location. If an institution is unclear as to whether a change is substantive in nature, it should contact SACSCOC staff for consultation.
Staff Options

Upon receipt and review of the substantive change notification, SACSCOC staff will recommend one of the following options to the President of SACSCOC:

1. acknowledge receipt of the notification and indicate that the change will be included in the scope of the institution’s accreditation
2. acknowledge receipt of the notification and request additional information.

Upon receipt and review of additional information, if requested, SACSCOC staff may recommend one of the following options to the SACSCOC President:

1. acknowledge receipt of the additional information and include the change in the scope of the institution’s accreditation,
2. refer the substantive change to the Board of Trustees of SACSCOC for review,
3. authorize a substantive change visit,
4. take other action as may be appropriate.
PROCEDURE THREE

Closing a Program, Instructional Site, Branch Campus or an Institution:
Teach-Out Plans and Teach-Out Agreements

In accordance with Federal regulations, an institution is required to submit a teach-out plan to SACSCOC for approval if any of the following occurs:

1. The USDOE notifies the Commission that it has initiated an emergency action against an institution or an action to limit, suspend, or terminate an institution participating in any Title IV, HEA program.

2. The Commission terminates accreditation or candidacy.

3. The institution notifies the Commission that it intends to cease operations entirely or close a location that provides at least 50% of at least one program.

4. A State Licensing or authorizing agency notifies the Commission that an institution’s license or legal authorization to provide an educational program has been or will be revoked.

If an institution decides to close an educational program, approved instructional site, branch campus, or the entire institution, it must choose one of the following options:

1. The institution teaches out currently enrolled students; no longer admits students to programs; and terminates the program, the operations of an approved instructional site or a branch campus, or the operations of an institution after students have graduated. (Teach-out plan)

2. The institution enters into a contract for another institution or organization to teach out the educational programs or program. (Teach-out agreement)

Teach-out plans and teach-out agreements must be approved by SACSCOC prior to implementation. See also the SACSCOC Good Practices document “Closing a Program, Site, Branch or Institution”

Teach-out Plans

A teach-out plan is a written plan developed by an institution that provides for the equitable treatment of students if an institution, or an institutional location that provides fifty percent or more of at least one program, ceases to operate before all students have completed their program of study, and may include, if required by the institution's accrediting agency, a teach-out agreement between institutions. Teach-out plans must be approved by SACSCOC in advance of implementation.

To be approved, a teach-out plan must include the following information:

1. Date of closure (date when new students will no longer be admitted)

2. An explanation of how affected parties (students, faculty, staff) will be informed of the impending closure

3. An explanation of how all affected students will be helped to complete their programs of study with minimal disruption

4. An indication as to whether the teach-out plan will incur additional charges/expenses to the students and, if so, how the students will be notified

5. Signed copies of teach-out agreements with other institutions, if any
6. How faculty and staff will be redeployed or helped to find new employment

7. If closing an institution, arrangement for the storing of student records, disposition of final financial resources and other assets

Following review and approval of a teach-out plan that includes a program that is accredited by another accrediting agency, the Commission will notify that accreditor of its approval.

Teach-out Agreements

A teach-out agreement is a written agreement between institutions that provides for the equitable treatment of students and a reasonable opportunity for students to complete their program of study if an institution, or an institutional location that provides fifty percent or more of at least one program offered, ceases to operate before all enrolled students have completed their program of study. Such a teach-out agreement requires SACSCOC approval in advance of implementation.

For approval by SACSCOC, the agreement must be between institutions that are accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency, be consistent with applicable standards in the *Principles of Accreditation* and with SACSCOC policies, and provide for the equitable treatment of students by ensuring that:

1. the teach-out institution has the necessary experience, resources, and support services to provide an educational program that is of acceptable quality and reasonably similar in content, structure, and scheduling to that provided by the closed institution; and

2. the teach-out institution demonstrates that it can provide students access to the program(s) and services without requiring them to move or travel substantial distances.

Please see the SACSCOC Good Practices document "*Closing a Program, Site, Branch or Institution*" for additional discussion of issues regarding closing of programs, sites, branch campuses or institutions.

Closing an institution without an agreement

If an institution accredited by SACSCOC closes and is no longer accredited, SACSCOC will seek assistance from the United States Department of Education and appropriate state agencies to help its students find reasonable opportunities to complete their education without additional expense.

Approval Process

Time of Notification

As soon as the decision to close is made, the institution should provide to SACSCOC at the same time the following two pieces of information: (1) notification of the intended closing of a program, site, branch campus, or institution and (2) a teach-out plan for approval (including any teach-out agreements with other institutions).

Staff Options

Upon receipt and review of the notification of impending closure, SACSCOC staff will recommend that the President of SACSCOC acknowledge receipt of the notification and request the teach-out plan if was not included with the notification. Upon receipt and review of the teach-out plan, SACSCOC staff may recommend one of the following options to the SACSCOC President:

1. request additional information for the teach-out plan

2. approve the teach-out plan
Appendix A:  
Current Standards and Policy Statements Addressing 
Unreported Substantive Change 


The institution notifies the Commission of changes in accordance with the substantive change policy 
and, when required, seeks approval prior to the initiation of changes.

2. “Reaffirmation of Accreditation and Subsequent Reports” – Policy Statement”

If an institution fails to report a substantive change that requires prior approval or prior notification, the 
committee will take the following actions:

a) If discovered during the off-site review. The Off-Site Review Committee will mark CS 3.12.1 
out of compliance. The institution will be able to address the omission in its Focused Report 
and before the on-site review.

b) If discovered during the on-site review. The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee will mark CS 
3.12.1 out of compliance and write a recommendation. The institution will address the 
recommendation in its response to the Commission.

3. Policy Statement on Unreported Substantive Change

Unreported substantive changes requiring prior notification or prior approval come to the attention of 
the Commission through two means: (1) information discovered by the institution or by the 
Commission between periods of formal review by the Commission and (2) information discovered 
during an off-site or an on-site review by the Commission. The procedure for handling such unreported 
substantive changes is as follows:

a) Upon discovery, the institution formally notifies the SACSCOC President of the unreported 
substantive change. The letter of notification must include the date of the original 
implementation of the change. A completed prospectus or application should accompany the 
letter for cases outlined in Procedure One of this document.

b) Commission staff will review the substantive change prospectus, if required; and any 
additional information that may have been requested. Following analysis, Commission staff 
will recommend to the SACSCOC Board of Trustees one of the following actions:

1. approve the program, with or without a site visit; 
2. refer the prospectus to the Committee on Compliance and Reports for review at its next 
meeting (June or December); or 
3. acknowledge receipt of the notification and indicate that the change will be included in the 
scope of the institution’s accreditation (an option only if prior notification is required).

c) The issue of failure to comply with Comprehensive Standard 3.12.1 of the *Principles of 
Accreditation* (Substantive change) will be forwarded automatically to the Commission’s Board 
of Trustees for action at its next meeting, if the change required prior approval. If the change 
required prior notification only, the issue of failure to report will be addressed in 
correspondence from the SACSCOC President.
d) If the unreported substantive change requiring prior notification or prior approval is discovered during the institution’s off-site or on-site review for reaffirmation, SACSCOC will follow its policy as described on page 1 of “Reaffirmation of Accreditation and Subsequent Reports”. If it is discovered during review by another type of SACSCOC committee, the review committee will write a recommendation. The recommendation will ask the institution to report the change in writing to SACSCOC and to provide in its response to the Committee Report a statement describing internal procedures established that would ensure future substantive change reporting and evidence that the procedures have been implemented. The institution’s response will be forwarded to the Board of Trustees of SACSCOC for action on failure to report a substantive change.

Failure to Comply with Reporting Requirements

If an institution fails to follow SACSCOC substantive change policy and procedures, it may lose its Title IV funding or be required by the U.S. Department of Education to reimburse it for money received by the institution for programs related to the unreported substantive change. In addition, the institution’s case may be referred to SACSCOC Board of Trustees for the imposition of a sanction or for removal from membership.
Appendix B: The Content of the Substantive Change Prospectus

One copy of a prospectus should be submitted to the SACSCOC President on paper or on CD or DVD (please see “Guidelines for Communicating Information Electronically” for guidance on electronic media) and include all applicable information below regarding the change. Documents will not be accepted via e-mail. The document should include a concisely worded narrative with the information specified in this appendix. A prospectus normally does not exceed 25 pages plus appendices. Please note that SACSCOC reserves the right to make amendments to the requirements outlined below for certain types of changes.

In lieu of a prospectus, SACSCOC will accept documentation submitted for approval to a system office or to a state coordinating or governing board, provided such documentation includes all the information required in a prospectus and includes an index correlating the submitted materials with the corresponding information required in a prospectus. Faculty qualifications, however, must be documented using the faculty roster form. Curriculum vitae in lieu of a faculty roster will not be accepted.

Reminder: An institution initiating a level change must complete an Application for Member Institutions Seeking Accreditation at a Higher or Lower Degree Level and submit it in quadruplicate in lieu of completing a prospectus.

The following guidelines are generic; each prospectus should be tailored to focus on the specific change being proposed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cover Pages for a Substantive Change Prospectus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Include name, phone number, and e-mail address of person to be contacted with questions regarding the prospectus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- List degrees that the institution is authorized to grant. As a subset of each degree, list majors available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Photocopy from catalog is acceptable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- List certificate, diploma and degree programs which are related to the proposed program(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- List institutional strengths that facilitate the offering of the proposed program(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- List of existing approved off-campus sites and their addresses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **ABSTRACT** (limit to one page or less)

   Describe the proposed change; list the initial date of implementation; projected number of students, if applicable; description of primary target audience; projected life of the program (single cohort or ongoing); instructional delivery methods and, if the change involves the initiation of an off-campus site, its complete physical address,

2. **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

   Provide a clear statement of the nature and purpose of the change in the context of the institution’s mission and goals; evidence of the legal authority for the change (if authorization is required by the governing board or the state); and whether the proposed degree program or similar program is offered on the main campus or at other approved off-campus sites.

3. **ASSESSMENT OF NEED AND PROGRAM PLANNING/APPROVAL**

   Briefly discuss the rationale for the change, including an assessment of need; evidence of inclusion of the change in the institution’s ongoing planning and evaluation processes; and documentation that faculty and other groups were involved in the review and approval of the new site or program.
4. **DESCRIPTION OF THE CHANGE**

Provide a description of the proposed change, including the specific outcomes and learning objectives of the program and a schedule of proposed course offerings. In the case of a change involving the initiation of a branch campus or an off-campus site, indicate the educational program(s) to be offered.

Describe any differences in admission, curriculum, or graduation requirements for students enrolled at new site(s), or any special arrangements for grading, transcripts, or transfer policies. Demonstrate compliance with FR 4.9 (Definition of Credit Hours) of the Principles. Describe administrative oversight to ensure the quality of the program or services to be offered. A prospectus for approval of distance learning should describe the infrastructure supporting the delivery method (training of faculty, development of courses for distance delivery, technical support for student and faculty).

5. **FACULTY**

Provide a complete roster (using the Faculty Roster form) of those faculty employed to teach in the program(s) referred to in the prospectus, including a description of those faculty members’ academic qualifications and other experiences relevant to the courses to be taught in the program in question, course load in the new program, and course work taught in other programs currently offered. Please consult the “Faculty Roster Instructions” for guidance in completing the Roster for current faculty who will be supporting the change. Provide a narrative with supporting evidence that the number of full-time faculty members is adequate to support the program; and describe the impact of the new initiative on faculty workload.

For distance learning programs, describe processes in place to ensure that students have structured access to faculty. For graduate programs, document scholarship and research capability of faculty; for doctoral programs, document faculty experience in directing student research.

6. **LIBRARY AND LEARNING RESOURCES**

Describe library and information resources—general as well as specific to the program—and staffing and services that are in place to support the initiative. If reliant upon other libraries, describe those collections and their relevance to the proposed program(s) and include a copy of formal agreements in the appendix. Relative to electronic resources, describe how students and faculty will access information, training for faculty and students in the use of online resources, and staffing and services available to students and faculty. If you are citing electronic databases accessed through consortial or statewide groups, please describe the discipline-specific suites of resources and not just the name of the consortium (such as Viva, Tex-Share, Galileo, Louis, etc.). For doctoral programs, document discipline-specific refereed journals and primary source materials.

7. **STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

Provide a description of student support programs, services, and activities—general as well as specific to the change—in place to support this initiative.

8. **PHYSICAL RESOURCES**

Provide a description of physical facilities and equipment to support this initiative. Assess the impact that the proposed change will have on existing programs and services.
9. **FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

   The institution must disclose if it is currently on reimbursement for Title IV funding.

   Provide a business plan that includes all of the following:

   a. a description of financial resources to support the change, including a budget for the first year of the proposed change (a three-year budget is requested for a new branch campus). The budget must be specific to the proposed change. Do not send a copy of the institutional budget.

   b. projected revenues and expenditures and cash flow

   c. the amount of resources going to institutions or organizations for contractual or support services

   d. the operational, management, and physical resources available for the change.

   Provide contingency plans in case required resources do not materialize.

   For institutions currently on sanction with SACSCOC for financial reasons, provide a copy of the most recent audit.

10. **EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT**

    Describe how the institution assesses overall institutional effectiveness as well as the means used to monitor and ensure the quality of the degree program(s), off-campus site(s), or other changes. Summarize procedures for systematic evaluation of instructional results, including the process for monitoring and evaluating programs at the new site, as well as using the results of evaluation to improve institutional programs, services, and operations. For compressed time frames describe the methodology for determining that levels of knowledge and competencies comparable to those required in traditional formats have been achieved.

11. **APPENDICES**

    Appendices may include items such as copies of library and other cooperative or contractual agreements. All appendices should be referenced in the text.
Appendix C:
Application for Member Institutions Seeking Accreditation at a Higher or Lower Degree Level

(Follow the above link to access the Application template.)
UTK Substantive Change Policy

The Chancellor of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville is required to notify Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) of any proposed modification of the essential characteristics of UTK as an educational institution. We, the faculty and staff, are obliged to assist with recognizing and reporting such substantive changes.  

SACS is mandated by the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) to “maintain adequate substantive change policies that ensure that any substantive change to the educational mission, program or programs of an institution after the agency has accredited ... the institution does not adversely affect the capacity of the institution to continue to meet the agency’s standards.”

Failure of the Chancellor to report these and other planned substantive changes (described in the table below) can result in loss of our accreditation. For that reason, and to preclude the possibility of the quality of our programs being called into question, the following procedures for recognizing and reporting substantive change are hereby established.

The administrative heads of both academic and non-academic units are responsible for being attentive to what SACS considers a "significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution" and for being aware of related information resources concerning accreditation (see http://www.sacscoc.org).

It is the duty of the provost, vice chancellors, deans, heads, directors, and like administrators to ensure that the university's SACS liaison is notified of planning for a modification that may prove substantive and that the Chancellor be informed of the determination of its status as soon as possible. Implementation of a change that clearly is or may be substantive cannot occur until the university notifies SACS of its intention and receives approval.

Substantive changes can be addressed in several ways. In the SACS substantive change policy, the approach is based on reporting requirements, i.e., notification and approval required before implementation of a substantive change, just notification required, or something else required. While this is convenient for a regulatory entity, a university is more likely to consider such changes from an organizational level approach such as (1) Program/Course Level, (2) School/College/Department Level, and (3) Institutional Level.

Program/Course Level:

1. Initiating coursework or programs at a different level than currently approved;

---

1 Comprehensive Standard (CS) 3.12 Responsibility for compliance with the Commission’s substantive change procedures and policy and CS 3.12.1 The institution notifies the Commission of changes in accordance with the Commission’s substantive change policy, and, when required, seeks approval prior to the initiation of changes.

2. Expanding at current degree level or developing a new general education program *(significant departure from current programs)*;
3. Initiating a certificate program at employer’s request and on short notice;
4. Initiating other certificate programs;
5. Initiating joint or dual degrees 3 with another institution;
6. Altering significantly the length of a program;
7. Initiating degree completion programs;
8. Closing an academic program (requires a teach-out plan);
9. Closing a program approved off-campus site, branch campus, or institution

**School/College/Department Level:**

10. Initiating off-campus sites (including Early College High School programs offered at the high school);
11. Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus sites;
12. Initiating distance learning;
13. Initiating programs or courses offered through contractual agreement or consortium;
14. Entering into a contract with an entity not certified to participate in USDOE Title IV programs;

**Institutional Level:**

15. Initiating a branch campus;
16. Altering significantly the educational mission of the institution;
17. Initiating a merger/consolidation with another institution;
18. Changing governance, ownership, control, or legal status of an institution;
19. Relocating a main or branch campus;
20. Moving an off-campus instructional site (serving the same geographical area);
21. Changing from clock hours to credit hours;
22. Acquiring any program or site from another institution;
23. Adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out for students from another institution that is closing;

Some substantial changes may never occur; however, we are required to be aware of them and address them in policy.

---

3 SACS defines a **Dual Degree Program** as separate program completion credentials each of which bears only the name, seal, and signature of the institution awarding the degree to the student; and a **Joint Degree Program** as a single program completion credential bearing the names, seals, and signatures of each of the two or more institutions awarding the degree to the student.
Substantial changes that relate to current and proposed academic programs are included in the guidelines for curricular submissions prepared by the Undergraduate and Graduate Councils for units to follow (guidelines are available at the Councils’ websites). Units must consult these documents when considering significant changes to academic programs.

SACS’s specifications of time lines for notification and means of requesting approval appear in the table below.

From time to time, SACS will review their policy. This university policy, following review after SACS releases updates in January of each year, will be distributed electronically by the university’s SACS liaison to all vice chancellors, deans, and heads.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Change (as specified by the SACS Substantive Change Policy)</th>
<th>Notification of SACS prior to implementation is required</th>
<th>Approval by SACS prior to implementation is required</th>
<th>Office requiring notification prior to initiating the change</th>
<th>Mode of notification of SACS and timeline for submission of notification prior to planned implementation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initiating coursework or programs at a more advanced level than currently approved</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanding at current degree level (significant departure from current program, e.g., number of faculty, new courses, learning resources, equipment and facilities, and other funded requirements)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating joint degrees with another institution, not SACS accredited</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating joint degrees with another institution, SACS accredited</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating dual degree programs</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Change (as specified by the SACS Substantive Change Policy)</td>
<td>Notification of SACS prior to implementation is required</td>
<td>Approval by SACS prior to implementation is required</td>
<td>Documentation prepared by</td>
<td>Office requiring notification prior to initiating the change</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initiating a certificate program (typically for workforce development):</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>using existing approved courses</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at a new off-campus site (previously approved program)</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Dean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that is a significant departure from previously approved programs</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Dean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating off-campus sites (including Early College High School programs offered at the high school) where...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student can obtain 50 percent or more credits toward program</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Department Head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student can obtain 25-49 percent of credit</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Department Head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student can obtain 24 percent or less</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus sites</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adding programs that are significantly different from current programs at the site</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Change (as specified by the SACS Substantive Change Policy)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adding programs that are NOT significantly different from current programs at the site</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altering significantly the length of a program</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altering significantly the educational mission of the institution (see the UTK mission statement)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>SACS Liaison</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating distance learning...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offering 50 percent or more of a program for the first time</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offering 25-49 percent</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Dean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offering 24 percent or less</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating programs/courses offered through contractual agreement or consortium</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Dean of the Graduate School or Vice Provost for Academic Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating a merger/consolidation with another institution</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>SACS Liaison</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating a branch campus</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>SACS Liaison</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Change (as specified by the SACS Substantive Change Policy)</td>
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<td>Documentation prepared by</td>
<td>Office requiring notification prior to initiating the change</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relocating a main or branch campus</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>SACS Liaison</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moving an off-campus instructional site (serving the same geographic area)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>SACS Liaison</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing governance, ownership, control, or legal status of an institution</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>SACS Liaison</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing from clock hours to credit hours</td>
<td>NA for UTK</td>
<td>NA for UTK</td>
<td>NA for UTK</td>
<td>NA for UTK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altering significantly the length of a program</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating degree completion programs</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing program, approved off-campus location, branch campus, or institution</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution to teach out its own students</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution contracts with another institution to teach-out students (Teach-out Agreement)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head or Program Director</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Change (as specified by the SACS Substantive Change Policy)</td>
<td>Notification of SACS prior to implementation is required</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquiring any program or site from another institution⁴</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>SACS Liaison</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out for students from another institution that is closing⁴</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>SACS Liaison</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Policy Notes:**

Additional substantive change information is provided to academic departments in the curricular submission guidelines provided by the Undergraduate Council (http://web.utk.edu/~ugcouncl/) and Graduate Curriculum Committee (http://gradschool.utk.edu/GraduateCouncil/CurrComm.shtml).

This policy is reviewed by the SACS Liaison annually to make sure it conforms to the SACS Substantial Change Policy. SACS Substantive Change Policy is available at http://www.sacscoc.org/policies.asp.

Policy version: December 19, 2012
Revised: March 1, 2013

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⁴ See SACSCOC policy *Mergers, consolidations and change of ownership; review and approval*
Preparing for the Future

Assuring Student Learning

John Koontz, convener
Mary Albrecht
Chuck Collins
Joy DeSensi
Regina Mays
Michael McFall
Taimi Olsen
Gary Skolits
Matthew Theriot
Executive Summary

UTK needs to create a healthy culture of assessment, one which centers on student learning and which includes a clear system of capturing assessment for decision-making in academic units as well as for reporting assessment results to our constituents. We need to know how our students learn; we need to know what and when they learn; and, we need to know this to make informed curricular revisions. Our decisions and actions will then be grounded in evidence, in what is actually happening in our curriculum.

This report is not a review of the literature on student learning and program assessment as they relate to institutional effectiveness. It is a blueprint of an approach to developing a culture of assessment at UTK based upon the research literature and best practices at other universities and those used by units at UTK.

Contents

Executive Summary ................................................................................................................................................ 1
Current environment: challenges in higher education ............................................................................................ 2
  What has changed? .............................................................................................................................................. 4
  What is required? ................................................................................................................................................ 4
Overview of Proposed Project ................................................................................................................................ 6
Project Activities and Timeline .............................................................................................................................. 7
Timeline: ................................................................................................................................................................. 9
Outcomes .............................................................................................................................................................. 10
  Measurable Project Outcomes: .......................................................................................................................... 10
  Operational Outcomes: ...................................................................................................................................... 10
  Outcomes Defined in Terms of the Impact on the Various Constituencies ...................................................... 10
    For the external components: ......................................................................................................................... 10
    For the internal components: ......................................................................................................................... 10
Evaluation ............................................................................................................................................................. 11
Preliminary Budget ............................................................................................................................................... 13
In an age of growing economic uncertainty, rapid changes in the domestic job markets, and unparalleled competition around the globe, higher education institutions in the United States find themselves at the very center of the most current and pressing national public policy issues:

- States defunding higher education
- Institutional increases in tuition in response to the defunding of higher education
- Federal call for increasing college completion for more Americans
- The call to stimulate graduation from science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) areas

While the expectations for higher education continue to grow in terms of meeting these challenges, there are also increasing demands that higher education demonstrate its own effectiveness and accountability\(^1\). As the costs of a college education increase each year, many external constituencies are beginning to be more vocal in questioning the value of post-secondary education. Recent Congressional testimony by Mike Rowe of the Discovery Channel on the need for people prepared in the skilled-trades (i.e., plumbers, electricians, HVAC technicians) highlights the disconnect between the national debate on K-16 education and national needs.\(^2\)

Increasingly, public and private investment in higher education by funders, parents, and students will be contingent upon the demonstration of the value of a college degree. The era of accountability in education that was previously focused on public P-12 schools has now fully entered the halls of institutions of higher education.

These ongoing and expanding demands for accountability will not likely abate given the central role higher education plays with regard to the economy, job preparation, economic development, knowledge creation and dissemination addressing technical and social problems, as well as its many other major contributions towards social, cultural, and personal development. Both internal and external constituencies can be expected to continue the demand for evidence that higher education is accountable and that a college degree is of value. Some of the more pressing expectations of the various higher education constituencies can be briefly summarized as follows:

**Expectations of External Constituencies**

- **US Department of Education.** National policy makers and the US Department of Education (US DOE) expect higher education institutions to demonstrate the value of educational programs given the tremendous federal role and support for student financial aid. Moreover, national policy makers have also expressed growing concern about the ability of institutional accrediting bodies to regulate and formally sanction member institutions who cannot demonstrate the value of the college education they offer.

- **Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and other programmatic accrediting agencies.** Regional and academic program accrediting agencies promulgate standards for accreditation that require evidence that academic programs (and services) are effective in providing students with needed levels of knowledge and skill. These accrediting agencies continue to strengthen the requirements (standards) by which they judge the educational effectiveness of an institution and/or its academic programs, and thus
the demonstrated achievement of specified student learning outcomes within courses and degree programs is central to their concerns. SACS requires documentation that specifically addresses institutional effectiveness.iii

- **Tennessee legislature and THEC.** State leaders and funding agencies want assurances that the resources given to public institutions are leading to more graduates and that these graduates have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions suitable for a global market place. They also expect that we be stewards of state resources, being effective and efficient with state funding, student tuition, and utilization of campus facilities.

- **Employers and Chambers of Commerce.** Employers want assurances that graduates have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are consistent with their educational credential. They want graduates to have marketable skills as well as the ability to think critically, communicate well, and work in a team setting. A degree has to signify something of value, and employers expect institutions issuing degrees to be able to demonstrate that a college credential signifies an appropriate level of academic accomplishment. Local Chambers of Commerce are interested in having an educated and skilled workforce to stimulate economic development and lure new businesses and industries to Tennessee communities.

- **The general public.** The general public seeks assurances that tax dollars spent on higher education and family resources spent on tuition costs are appropriate and justified, especially in terms of the final degree product. Various agencies and organizations offer competitive quality rankings to help the public make informed choices and decisions regarding higher education institutions and programs, and these rating systems can be expected to become more specialized and detailed.

**Expectations of Internal Constituencies**

- **Students.** Students want to know the comparative value from each higher education course and academic program option available to them.iv During their college career, students want to make informed educational decisions about programs of study and course options. They also want their degree credential to be recognized as signifying a level of quality and accomplishment of interest to future employers.

- **Parents.** Parents want to know that their child is receiving a quality education that will be valued, especially by potential employers. They want to be able to contribute to informed choices for their children regarding various higher education options and the available programs and courses offered. They want to see evidence of a worthy return on their increasingly more substantial higher education investment.

- **Faculty.** Faculty want to know that the students they educate and send out as graduates of their program have attained a requisite level of learning. They want to know that their teaching is effective, and they want to know how their teaching and student learning can be improved. Further, they want to ensure that all course options for their academic programs are effectively providing students with the desired program skills and competencies. They also want to be able to demonstrate and share the value of the academic programs they offer to attract talented students.
• **University Administration.** Universities want to know to what extent each program offered is effective in providing students desired levels of knowledge and skill. Administrators also want a viable method for determining and sharing the value of their degree programs, and using this information to attract more talented students as well as more external resources for supporting programs and services. At the University of Tennessee, the establishment and commitment underlying the top 25 initiative as well as the creation of the Teaching and Learning Center are two examples of a long-term institutional commitment to provide evidence of institutional accountability as well as enhance faculty teaching effectiveness and the promotion of student learning.

**What has changed?**

While some level of accountability expectations from internal and external constituencies has been active for years, the context in which higher education now operates has changed substantially, and higher education will have to rise to the occasion and effectively respond. The federal government appears to be ready to intervene if regional and program accreditors are not able to ensure academic program quality. National and state policy makers are increasingly expected to justify decisions on how to spend very limited public resources, and as such future investments in higher education will increasingly have to compete with major national priorities and needs such as health, national defense, transportation, etc., as well as national debt repayment.

Accrediting agencies are under notably increasing pressure to prove that the awarding of accreditation is based on solid evidence that institutions are effectively measuring and demonstrating their educational value. Should they be unsuccessful, member institutions can expect to lose their ability to engage in self-regulation, as national policy makers will most likely intervene. Tennessee, similar to all states, also has limited public resources and growing priorities. In some aspects, Tennessee has been a leader in promoting the effectiveness of public higher education institutions, beginning with the renowned performance-funding program. However, state policy makers also appear to be more than ready to set educational expectations and tie them to funding as embodied in the Complete College Tennessee Act of 2010 (HB7008).

In the past, it was possible for higher education institutions to selectively respond to various accountability pressures from internal and external constituencies on a piecemeal basis. However, it may no longer be wise or prudent to respond to accountability demands in the short term only to back off on the commitment until then next accreditation cycle or ad hoc requests from various constituencies. Those days are over. The federal and state involvement in public education through No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) suggests that if higher education does not meet the challenge of defining and demonstrating the value of college degrees, public policy makers at the state and federal level will feel compelled do it for them, and public higher education may forever lose its strong and proud tradition of institutional autonomy and self-governance.

**What is required?**

For higher education, there are two critical and inherent challenges in responding to these multiple demands for accountability. First, unlike private sector organizations, there is no single set of basic metrics (e.g., profit/net worth) that quickly demonstrates success or its lack thereof in higher education. Second, institutions of higher education are expected to take the lead on defining and demonstrating their effectiveness. These two challenges are substantial, but not insurmountable. While there are many potential indicators of higher education
accountability and effectiveness, most calls for accountability have a central focus on student learning. At this
time, the key challenge for educational institutions appears to be the need to demonstrate for each course and
program (and institution) that student-learning outcomes are defined, assessed, and that assessment results are
used to improve the educational process. Each constituency presenting demands for greater accountability
would find this focus (i.e., the value of a degree in terms of student outcomes) to be responsive to their
accountability concerns.

Fortunately, the elements of a process for ensuring and documenting student learning accountability are not
mysterious, overly complex, or particularly innovative. Every public P-12 school in the country has been under
a mandate to measure and report on student academic outcomes under NCLB. For higher education, accrediting
agencies and scholars have long suggested the criteria for accountability related to student learning, and these
can be summarized as follows:

1. Student learning objectives and outcomes (SLOs) must be explicitly and effectively stated for each
course and degree program.
2. Teaching and other learning experiences must ensure opportunities for students to be made aware of
expected learning outcomes and to achieve them.
3. Learning assessments must be in place that aligns with stated student learning objectives, and these
assessments must provide an accurate measure of the extent to which intended student outcomes have
been achieved.
4. Assessment results need be used responsively to gauge and further enhance the effectiveness of the
teaching and learning process.
5. A process is needed for summarizing course, program, and institutional student learning outcomes
processes (learning objectives, student achievement of the outcomes, and faculty use of assessment for
improvements in the teaching and learning process). Moreover, a process needs to be in place for
disseminating a summary of these results to intended internal and external constituencies.

Processes for consolidating and disseminating results at the institutional level will certainly require substantial,
if not unprecedented, effort and collaboration among faculty, academic leaders, and administrators.

Many academic programs, especially those programs that are separately accredited by academic program
accrediting agencies, have been required to develop and implement a process for student learning
accountability. Other programs have aspects of these processes in place, but they may need to make
enhancements to strengthen the process:

1. Expected course and program student learning outcomes need to be formally stated, stated in a
measurable manner, and/or be available for students’ review and consideration for course selection.
2. Learning opportunities need to be explicitly or tightly aligned with stated SLOs.
3. SLOs assessments need to adequately cover or effectively align with all student-learning objectives.
4. SLOs need to be used to support teaching and learning improvement.
5. SLOs results need to be formally consolidated, documented, and/or disseminated.
6. The SLOs process needs consistency across courses and academic programs allowing for effective
summarization and dissemination of SLO progress across the university.
Higher education accountability in its current form is one challenge that cannot be avoided, endlessly debated, or shirked off until the next round of renewed external pressure. Higher education institutions who fail to address the accountability needs of internal and external constituencies can expect to lose their long-held and valued autonomy. Simply stated, institutions must discipline themselves now or someone else will in the very near future.

The time for action is now; failure to act is not an option for the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. We need to create a culture of assessment with a commitment to measuring and demonstrating the achievement and use of SLOs as an ongoing, standard institutional practice.

**Overview of Proposed Project**

The ideal culture of assessment is considered to be that

1. Every course/class has a set of e-searchable, achievable student learning outcomes (SLOs) that are linked to the SLOs of the academic program and relate to SLOs of other courses in the program.
2. SLOs are assessed in course and out of course.
3. The assessments are tied back to the course, instructor and unit with accountability for improvement.

To get to this fully integrated assessment model, we need buy-in from each academic program to go through the process of

1. revisiting their SLOs established during preparation of the SACS 5th year interim report
2. ensuring that courses address SLOs by creating the program’s curriculum map
3. implementing a systematic plan of assessing SLOs (connecting SLOs to specific student assessments)
4. making curricular changes based on the assessment findings

Concurrent with this, as an institution,

1. charge the Undergraduate and Graduate Curriculum Committees to examine the curricular revision process to ensure that approved changes are based on assessment findings (i.e., Rationale statements include data derived from assessment)
2. work with IT to identify appropriate technology to use for
   a. assessment plans approvals and findings review
   b. public-facing, searchable database of course syllabi (which contain the SLOs for the course) linked to the instructor (i.e. Is there a Banner module or add-on or some other system that can pull data from Banner?)
3. work with the Tennessee Teaching and Learning Center (TN TLC) to create guidelines for forming measureable SLOs
4. once each course and every program has SLOs that build the educational experience for the students, develop a system that utilizes assessment plan findings in unit strategic planning, academic and program review, and rewards system of the university (i.e., rewards for faculty and the units) by incorporating appropriate language into policies and procedures
The long-term goal is to improve the learning process by developing a continual process of change built upon sound assessment (Figure 1), the accepted norm endorsed by the regional and programmatic accrediting organizations and the US DOE.

**Project Activities and Timeline**

The timeline will be dictated by the next round of SACS accreditation. The mid-cycle report for UT was submitted March 21, 2011. We recommend that work progress at a rate to meet the next submission to SACS. The task is to implement a more formalized learning outcomes assessment process that is in place for at least the two academic years prior to the next reaffirmation documentation to SACS. This would allow the outcomes from the first year to be used to inform changes to programs leading to improvements the second year. These results demonstrate a more formalized university process in making steps toward best practices in achieving optimal student learning.

Efforts to implement use of learning outcomes or how to encourage use:

- Submission to curriculum committee of the learning outcomes with revised/new courses and with assessment data supporting the requested changes to courses and curricula
- Development of syllabi standards with the inclusion of SLOs in syllabi for all courses
- Linked syllabi to timetable entries for courses
- Through peer evaluation of teaching, assess how well learning outcomes are made apparent in the course itself and the use of SLOs in the assessments of courses and programs

![Figure 1: The cycle of assessment used to ensure student learning](image-url)
• With SAIS and other forms of classroom evaluation, including asking students about whether the learning outcomes were met
• In the various reviews conducted on campus of personnel and programs
  o Faculty reviews: retention review of tenure-track faculty and non-tenure track faculty (lecturers and clinical faculty), promotion and tenure review process and annual review process of tenured and tenure-track faculty
  o GTAs reviews
  o Department heads and deans (i.e., heads need to hold faculty accountable and deans need to hold heads accountable)
  o Academic program and unit reviews

By making the effective use of SLOs and the assessment process part of faculty and academic program review processes, faculty and academic units will be held accountable for building a culture of assessment.

Implementation should include:

• Top down directives with adoption as essential - buy-in by Chancellor and Provost
• Bottom up from tenure, tenure-track, and non-tenure-track faculty and other instructional staff; need to seek out early adopters and begin to change the culture
• Provide funding for faculty development to kick-start the process
  o Training in writing SLOs
  o Training in creating assessments to evaluate SLOs
  o Training in how to use the assessment results to make appropriate changes that result in the desired changes in learning
  o Training on how to include in faculty (tenure, tenure-track, and non-tenure track faculty) annual reviews and academic program reviews
• Adoption of above suggested changes to the curriculum process by the Undergraduate and Graduate Councils' procedures for course and curriculum changes.
• Adoption of new language in Faculty Handbook and the Manual for Faculty Evaluation, where appropriate, to build in the use of SLOs, academic assessment, and accountability into the various review processes.
• Provide incentives during a phase-in period such as
  o waiving the 30/70 room (use of 8 am courses),
  o departmental bonuses for early implementation
• Provide summer salary stipends (for 12-month faculty, extra-service pay) for faculty serving on college-level or university-level assessment review teams that provide constructive feedback to departments on how to improve their processes (review teams are not intended to be overseers who approve or reject assessment plans and application of results)
**Timeline:**

A timeline is proposed, however, there are more details to be fleshed out such as process to identify faculty to participate on committees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deadline</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Responsible Unit/Person</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 2012</td>
<td>A year of training and revision of policies and procedures:</td>
<td>1. All</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1. Identify Early Adopters</td>
<td>2. TN TLC: Schumann</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Training faculty on how to write SLOs and how to assess</td>
<td>3. Undergraduate Council and Office of the Provost/ McMillan; Graduate Council and Graduate School/ Hodges</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Undergraduate and Graduate Councils: revise curricular submission guidelines documents</td>
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<td>4. Faculty Affairs of Faculty Senate: annual review, promotion and tenure documentation</td>
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<td>5. Office of the Provost/ McMillan</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 2013</td>
<td>SLOs should be written, incorporated into course syllabi with assessment plans in place</td>
<td>Office of the Provost: McMillan and Graduate School/ Hodges</td>
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<td>TN TLC: Schumann</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 2014</td>
<td>First assessments due to each college’s Office of the Dean</td>
<td>Department heads</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 2014</td>
<td>Establish college-level and/or university-level, faculty-led committees to review assessment plans and use of results; train members to be able to do the work for the first time during summer 2014</td>
<td>Office of the Provost: McMillan and Graduate School/ Hodges</td>
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<td>TN TLC: Schumann</td>
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<td>August 2015</td>
<td>Website with links to a searchable database of syllabi—syllabus repository/searchable catalog/even possible “pull down” of potential learning outcomes, educational objectives, department objectives, instructor objectives</td>
<td>Office of the Provost with OIT OIT will need to be a partner in either a home-grown database system or evaluating commercial assessment products that can interface with the current academic catalog management system (ACALOG) on-line catalog and, possibly, Banner</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 2015</td>
<td>Assessment results database, for</td>
<td>Office of the Provost with OIT OIT will need to be a partner in either a home-grown database system or evaluating commercial assessment products that can interface with the current academic catalog management system (ACALOG) on-line catalog and, possibly, Banner</td>
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<td>• THEC and SACS reporting needs;</td>
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<td>• linking to unit responsibility; the information should be used to inform course changes,</td>
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<td>• creating reports by the unit for program and faculty reviews;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• availability for academic advisors in guiding students to understand the curriculum and rationales for taking courses</td>
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Outcomes

Measurable Project Outcomes:

1. Every course/class has a set of e-searchable, achievable SLOs that are linked to the SLOs of the academic program and relate to SLOs of other courses in the program.
2. SLOs are well written according to common practice in higher education, and to disciplinary practices specifically.
3. SLOs are assessed in course and out of course (i.e., major field test, licensure exams, portfolio review).
4. The assessment results are tied back to the course, instructor and unit with accountability for improvement action plans.
5. End-of-course assessment is tied explicitly to the SLOs.

Operational Outcomes:

1. Increased student satisfaction in terms of empowerment in choosing courses, ability to make better choice decisions, and clearer timelines to graduation through choices of majors through access to syllabi and outcomes.
2. Timeliness in SACS and other accreditation reports creation and compliance.
3. Improved better program evaluation in university departments.

Outcomes Defined in Terms of the Impact on the Various Constituencies

For the external components:

*For the US DOE, accrediting agencies and the state government*

We would have documentation showing what we are delivering and the process we are using to access and update the way we deliver it. We will be able to easily report on our actions and to respond to new demands and opportunities.

*For the state government, employers of our students, and the general public*

We could provide detailed and assessed sets of desired student attributes from the university level on down to the individual student. We will be able to match our outcomes with longer term success of our students.

For the internal components:

*For students*

We would provide more clarity of the value of their degree and degree components to larger scale outcomes. Students will be able to make more appropriate decisions as they complete their education and they will be able to express to future employers the specific contributions of their coursework to their preparedness as an employee. Students would better understand the importance of course sequence, which should facilitate staying on track towards degree completion.
For faculty

We would provide data and a process for assessing individual courses and entire majors in terms of their contribution to the overall education and quality of their programs’ graduates. This will allow faculty to make better decisions in designing and teaching individual courses and entire programs. It also allows the faculty to more easily recognize quality components that can be used to recruit new students. For interdisciplinary courses or service courses, faculty can better communicate with colleagues in other departments about expected student learning in prerequisites. For new faculty, we would be able to provide a foundation for their entry into teaching courses at UTK, since course and program SLOs will have been established.

For the administration

We would have a transparent way of reviewing and impacting the academic performance of students, faculty and entire programs. The information produced will allow us to identify areas of strength and weakness, assess the impact of actions taken and decisions made in these areas, and to measure our progress against university-wide goals (e.g. Top 25 Initiative). The process we will have in place, provides a natural way of implementing new goals.

Implementation - Evaluation

A number of suggestions have been made for routes to implementation. They represent two separate initiatives and each of these then serve as a path to be evaluated:

Incorporation of SLOs into Syllabi

- Submission to curriculum committee of the learning outcomes with revised/new courses. Is there evidence that all curricular revisions submitted to the Undergraduate and Graduate Councils include learning outcomes for the courses submitted? As submissions are received, approval could be contingent upon inclusion of the learning outcomes. This could be tracked to determine success or failure at this level.

- Inclusion in all syllabi for existing courses. Evaluation would be tied to the question of whether a central repository of course syllabi with learning outcomes included in the syllabi has been established. A web accessible repository is ideal and would facilitate a review of syllabi for the inclusion of SLOs. An assessment could be made of how many course syllabi provide learning outcomes and which departments are early completers. The repository could be monitored for use and by whom. Data can be used for evaluation.

- Linked to timetable entries for courses. When students go into the timetable or into Banner (My UTK) to register, they should be able to link to course syllabi and read the learning outcome expectations. If built properly, we can track the number of hits, thus generating data used for evaluation.

Assessment of Faculty Adoption, Implementation and Continued Practice
- **Use peer evaluation of teaching / assess how well learning outcomes are made apparent in the course itself / link in the use of assessments in courses.** Guidelines for peer evaluation of teaching can be written to include the expectation that explicit learning outcome expectations are apparent in the materials provided to students. The evaluation from the peers should include a determination of the effectiveness of this effort.

- **P and T review process.** The instructions for preparation of the dossier to be considered for promotion and tenure should include an expectation that learning outcome expectations are an integral component of the teaching requirements. P and T dossiers can be assessed for quality of SLO presentation and discussion and results used to improve faculty training. This form of assessment would not be part of the promotion and tenure review decision.

- **Annual Retention, retaining non-tenure-track faculty and GTAs.** The above would hold for the annual retention evaluations of performance as well.

- **Departmental review:** an assessment report would become an integral part of the academic program and unit review process and other types of departmental reviews (i.e., assessment of low-producing programs as required by THEC).

- **SAIS / classroom evaluation—ask students about whether the learning outcomes were met.** This should be integrated into the student evaluations and this item should become one which peers who are reviewing teaching evaluate. This information would then be in the annual retention reports and the P and T portfolios.
## Preliminary Budget

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<td>Faculty development:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Workshops on writing and assessing SLOs</td>
<td>Professional staff member for the TN TLC with expertise in SLO construction and assessment (salary $60K plus 25% fringes)</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
<td>Meeting supplies and possibly food/snacks for workshops; monthly workshops for one year, length of workshop TBD</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$80,000</td>
<td>$80,000</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
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<td>Campus-wide lecture series on SLOs and assessment</td>
<td>Administrative support staff to help schedule speakers, make accommodations, prepare materials, etc. (Level 40, salary @ mid-point plus 30% fringes)</td>
<td>$60,107</td>
<td>Outside speakers used for lecture series (travel, housing, meals, honoraria); speakers could also conduct workshops; one each semester</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$65,107</td>
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<td>$60,107</td>
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<tr>
<td>Train faculty assessment review committees</td>
<td>Persons from lines 4 &amp; 5 can also work on this No additional</td>
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<td>Meeting supplies and possibly food/snacks for workshops; monthly workshops for one year, length of workshop TBD</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
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<td>Faculty assessment review committees stipends</td>
<td>Summer salaries and/or extra service pay for 3 to 5 faculty per college (used avg. 4 per college, 11 colleges, $5,000 stipend plus 20% fringes)</td>
<td>$264,000</td>
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*Undergraduate Council Minutes*

*U2832*

*September 10, 2013*
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<td>Implementation incentives for a phase in period of 3 to 4 years</td>
<td>Rewards for faculty and departments for meeting deadlines in preparing SLOs, incorporating SLOs in syllabi, developing assessment plans, and implementing assessment (63 depts / colleges; @ $5,000 per unit spread over implementation period of 3 years)</td>
<td>$315,000</td>
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<td>Assessment coordination across the university</td>
<td>Assessment professional coordinator in appropriate campus unit (salary $60K plus 25% fringes) Provide coordination and collection of unit reporting; support for college-level/ university-level committees; provides the feedback to the units</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
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<td><strong>Technology Needs</strong></td>
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<td>Development of a searchable database of course syllabi link to timetable</td>
<td>IT personnel</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Enterprise software or build-your-own</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>SLO and assessment plan database with reporting capability</td>
<td>IT personnel</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Enterprise software or build-your-own</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Annual Totals</strong></td>
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<td>$804,107</td>
<td>$804,107</td>
<td>$789,107</td>
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At the national level, increasing attention had been paid to accountability in higher education. The Commission on the Future of Higher Education, established in 2005 by the Department of Education, identified some key areas of needed higher education reform, including quality and accountability, and called for “mechanisms to ensure that colleges succeed in educating students” (US Department of Education, 2006). With the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) and the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU) also calling for learning outcomes assessment, developing the Voluntary System of Accountability which would allow for comparisons across institutions (Liu, 2011a), it seems only a matter of time before outcomes assessments are mandated.


3.3.1 The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results in each of the following areas: (Institutional Effectiveness)
   3.3.1.1 educational programs, to include student learning outcomes
   3.3.1.2 administrative support services
   3.3.1.3 academic and student support services
   3.3.1.4 research within its mission, if appropriate
   3.3.1.5 community/public service within its mission, if appropriate

3.5.1 The institution identifies college-level general education competencies and the extent to which students have attained them.
   (General education competencies)

Student Forum on Learning: Curriculum Regulations and Expectations

Issue:
The general education curriculum, academic advising, course selection process, and grading

Stance:
Based on our experiences with general education, academic advising, course selection, and the grading process, we feel that the below recommendations would allow students to take greater ownership of their learning.

Rationales/Solutions:

Syllabus Database
Rationale:
- A syllabus database would:
  - give students insight into the required readings, grading scale, course expectations, and teaching method of each course
  - help students plan their schedules to match their preferred learning styles or to create variation of instructional method
  - prevent students from taking courses with significant overlap, allowing them to broaden the range of classes they take

Solutions:
- We would like to see a database where instructors submit their most recent syllabi. This database could be streamlined to work with the existing TN101 system, allowing students to also see evaluative data alongside the syllabus, course objectives, etc.

Restructuring General Education
Rationale:
- The current general education curriculum, we feel, is very limiting. Students must sacrifice exploring courses of interest in order to fulfill gen. ed. requirements.
By increasing options and general education flexibility, students will feel:
  o more ownership for their academic career
  o as though the gen. ed. curriculum is valuable, rather than a waste of time and class space.

Solutions:
  • Create a simple way for students to petition to replace courses of interest with a general education requirement
    o This process should be guided by academic advising and
    o should occur before the student takes the course
  • Increase the available course options for required gen. ed. fields

Improvements in Academic Advising
Rationale:
  • Advising often feels impersonal and indifferent to the individuality of each student’s experience.
  • Students are often not fully informed on the requirements needed to stay on track to graduate, study abroad, and/or seek an internship
  • This issue is compounded when a student changes colleges

Solutions:
  • Uniformity of advising format across colleges
  • Online sign-up for appointments
    o Lengthened and individual appointment time
  • Quality assessment after the session

Selected references regarding SLOs and assessment

   This would be the place to start if you want more information. It is written in very clear and understandable terms. Walvoord discusses why assessment is important in terms of the students and the faculty. She takes assessment beyond accreditation.

   This is another good reference for how to develop your plan. More detailed that Walvoord. Dr. Allen is a frequent presenter about assessment at regional accrediting commissions’ annual meetings.

   This book covers the history of assessment and covers the process much more in depth than Walvoord. It would be good for a person who has experience with assessment and wants to begin to use the assessment process as a basis for research into student learning.

   Detailed discussion of assessment along with examples of rubrics, assessment plans, and implementation schemes from other institutions.

   If you’re ready to move beyond the basics as discussed in Walvoord, this would be the next place to look. Parts three and four provide more detailed discussion and “how to’s” of assessment tools and discussion of how to use assessment results to improve instruction and the learning environment.
Student Ownership, and
The College Experience

A White Paper by the
Student Forum on Learning
University of Tennessee, Knoxville
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With gratitude to the  
Tennessee Teaching and Learning Center &  
University of Tennessee Learning Consortium
Preface

The Student Forum on Learning (SFL) is a group of undergraduates dedicated to positively impacting the culture of teaching and learning on UT’s campus. We aim to offer feedback on experiences, motivations, expectations, cultural implications, and challenges related to student learning and the college experience. The SFL is sponsored by the Tennessee Teaching and Learning Center (Tenn TLC), and we work closely with their faculty and staff, as well as with the members of the University of Tennessee Learning Consortium (UTLC). Together we aim to identify challenges related to student learning and development, provide a student perspective, and propose creative solutions to be integrated into targeted university initiatives. The group was initiated Spring of 2011, and is currently in its third semester of operation.

While originally intended to simply offer perspectives on learning relevant to the activities of the Tenn TLC, very early into the group’s operation it became apparent that members wanted to take on a more active role in advancing student learning. At the first meeting, members expressed a desire to affect university policy and operation in order to more effectively meet student needs. One student recommended we approach group meetings as inquiry discussions about student needs and experiences and, as appropriate, make a formal recommendation to the University regarding the results of these inquiries. Thus, it is with this goal in mind that we present the results of our past two semesters of discussion.

This paper is designed to assist faculty, staff, and administrators in decision-making processes related to the VOL VISION initiative and others having to do with undergraduate student learning. We have been intentional in identifying and describing student experiences in seven key areas related to our learning and development, so that these experiences can help guide strategies for enhancement. We recognize that many at the University of Tennessee have a vision for what they want students to become. However, we feel this vision is not really made explicit so that students can act upon it. Therefore in the concluding section of the paper, we have tried to provide a template with examples that could help facilitate objective setting and identify associated student actions. This tool is intended to help further the process of employing creative solutions to improve student learning and development.

Finally, we want to thank the Tenn TLC and the UTLC for supporting the authorship of this paper. We recognize the hard work they and all other leaders are putting into making the University an even more meaningful and enriching place for us, and we appreciate the opportunity to be a part of this process. We hope that this document makes you proud, and that it prompts ongoing dialogue between students, staff, faculty, and administrators.
Introduction

Through our exposure to the Tenn TLC and the UTLC, it has come to our realization that many faculty and administrators are concerned about students not taking ownership over their learning and college experiences. We have heard faculty express disappointment with the widespread lack of engagement many students exhibit, and have witnessed it ourselves both inside and outside of the classroom. Many students appear to expect to be spoon-fed their course material, and appear resistant to hard work or self-sufficiency. However unlike many faculty and administrators, we, as students, understand many of the experiences that contribute to these behaviors. We are similarly concerned about student apathy and feel there are a number of ways the University could help encourage and facilitate students taking responsibility for, and ownership over, their learning and development. This paper informs seven of these areas, describing the student perspective (as represented by the SFL) on each, and offering ideas for enhancements. The areas of focus are as follows: campus advising, service-learning and community engagement, general education, the classroom experience, empowering ownership over learning, diversity and interculturalism, and facilities and physical spaces.

1. Campus Advising

Throughout the past two semesters, the SFL discussed academic advising extensively. In these discussions, we recognized that the University had put substantial effort into enhancing the advising process. We are grateful for the improvements that have come out of this effort. We hope that advising remains an institutional priority, and that student appointments continue to become more tailored to each individual’s experiences and needs. This includes employing intentional and strategic efforts to help us take advantage of valuable opportunities and stay on track to graduate.

Despite that advising appears to have increased as a University priority, the experiences expressed by our members signaled that the quality of sessions is inconsistent. Some students explained that while they were very happy with advising in their departments, the quality of advising at the campus level was irregular. For example, one student stated, “I had a good experience because my advisor had been in the same major as me and she was able to inform me of experiences she had concerning her classes. My schedule was always well thought out and well guided by my advisor.” However, another student relayed an experience in which she, as a political science major and an Asian studies minor, was paired with an engineering graduate. She explained that her advisor had a lot of trouble assisting her and wasn’t even aware that her minor existed. A third student expressed having a positive experience with a

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1 By “college experience”, we refer to the collective set of experiences, both curricular and co-curricular, that a student engages in throughout his or her time at the university.
peer advisor through the University Honors program, because this student was able to offer guidance relevant to her program of study. These experiences led us to believe that students had more meaningful experiences when their advisors, whether they were faculty advisors, professional advisors, or peer advisors, were knowledgeable about their programs of study.

Our experiences also reflected inconstancy in the quality of processes related to advising sessions. For instance, students who were able to access major-related information (major requirements, departmental policies, etc.) and schedule appointments online expressed greater satisfaction than those who were not. (When trying to schedule an appointment via phone, one student described waiting on hold for 90 minutes, feeling this was “not a very good way to make an appointment.”) Some suggested that they might benefit from being able to schedule an optional extended session as well. One student who had planned her schedule prior to her meeting was able to spend time going through her DARS report with her advisor. She felt that this was extremely helpful, and suggested that these experiences might be available to others if they knew how to prepare, and had the option of an extended appointment.

Given the enhancements to advising that have already been made, we propose that this impact could be maximized if the best practices discussed above could be employed by the entire advising community. We feel that by establishing consistency of good process, making necessary information available, and creating clear expectations for students, the University could both accommodate those changing majors, and help all students understand and fulfill their roles in the student-advisor partnership. Therefore we propose:

- All advisors be expected to have a strong knowledge base about their students’ programs of study, or that all student-advisor partnerships be coordinated based on major, if applicable.
- All major requirements, departmental policies, and other important information become available to students online.
- All appointment scheduling be moved to a centralized, online system such as Banner or the system used by the business school.
- An optional extended appointment length be offered to students.
- Quality assessment surveys be integrated into the advising processes.
- The University employs an optional peer advising program, available to all students.

2. Service-Learning and Community Engagement

Service-learning and community engagement has been an area of significant focus from the SFL’s initiation, and remains a concern to us. In the first meeting, an SFL member expressed, “A person can come and go from UT and never know what it means to be a good citizen.” We see this as a problem. While some of us have engaged in service experiences through the University, many students have not.
We suspect that is because the opportunities and experiences are not integrated into most student’s academic curricula, and there is little encouragement for students to become engaged. If there were more emphasis from the University on the value of service, these experiences would be more heavily integrated into the curriculum, and students would be encouraged to seek them out. Without this emphasis, not only are students missing out on the benefits of serving the community, but the University is missing out on a great opportunity to engage us as learners.

These missed opportunities are deeply concerning to us, as we observe among many students a severe lack of engagement in the learning process and the college experience in general. As one student reflected, “My service learning class had the largest impact of any single class on my education. Being a political science major, I have sat through numerous lectures on just how much public policy influences lives. None of that hit home until I spent a semester studying education policy and working in an inner-city school program. The correlation between what I learned in the classroom and how it applied to the outside world that I experienced in that class has changed the way I approach any classroom subject. The class finally allowed me to learn and not just be educated.” Just as this student was enlightened and empowered through her service experience, we want all students to be. Through having a greater awareness of community issues, we want all students to have the ability and desire to apply reason and problem solving skills to community issues. In short, we want, for ourselves and our fellow students, more real-world engagement with our subject matter. Service-learning provides opportunities for all of these things.

While we are aware that there has been a proposal put forth to enhance the University’s community engagement and service-learning capacities through the creation of a campus-wide center, we hope that our own advocacy can help advance these efforts. Therefore we suggest the following measures:

- Create a center for service-learning and community engagement on campus, through which students can easily seek opportunities to serve.
- Promote a culture of service and volunteerism across campus by strategically integrating service experiences across the academic curricula.
- Increase institutional priority on civic and community engagement by offering multiple and varied service-learning courses in each academic college.
- Initiate a curriculum requirement (with an opt-out opportunity for select students) of one 1-3 hour service learning course.
- Institute a graduation pledge similar to that used by Appalachian State: "I pledge to explore and take into account the social and environmental consequences, and the civic and community responsibilities, of any job or career I consider and will try to improve these aspects of any organizations for which I work." (http://act.appstate.edu/graduationpledge).
3. General Education

While recognizing that certain courses in the current curriculum can be critical to our
development, the SFL’s perceptions about general education held that the rigid structure limits their
abilities to explore new areas of learning. As one student expressed, “The current structure seems to help
those who are not as self-motivated or proactive about building an enriching and personally relevant
course of study, but it seems to greatly impede those who are.” We realize that petitioning is occasionally
an option for expanding our learning opportunities, but this process can be difficult and problematic, and
sometimes requires students to complete the course first. One student described being informed that she
would need to complete a course before petitioning. She reflected that “With little flexibility in my 4-year
plan, this option was simply not possible for me and I ended up taking a course with which I had little
engagement.” Another student expressed being limited by a “rigid, major-intensive schedule,” in which
“being able to substitute courses more easily or having a more clear and streamlined process to do so”
would have greatly benefitted her.

The students also expressed that the rigidity of the general education curriculum can inhibit
student ownership over the college experience by requiring very little thought or consideration to one’s
course planning. Some described their course curriculum as being almost entirely prescribed by the
majors. For these students and others like them, it is possible, and even likely, to graduate having taken
few or no courses out of sheer interest, and having exercised little independence over their academic
careers. We feel that this situation can contribute to students feeling complacent about their courses, and
not perceiving a need to take responsibility. Since we understand the need to take ownership and
responsibility, we want to see both students and the University reap the benefits of this ownership.
Therefore, we propose the following measures regarding general education:

- The number of course options available through the general education curriculum be increased.
- Students have the ability to petition for a course replacement before completing the course they
  wish to petition.
- The course petition process be converted to the web so that students can easily—under the
  guidance of their advisors—initiate and follow through with course replacements.

4. The Classroom Experience

Since our primary focus as an organization is student learning, we devoted a significant amount of
our meeting discussions to the student learning experience. Regarding this experience, we perceive—as
mentioned above—a general lack of engagement, ownership, and motivation among many students. While
this is not characteristic of all students, we have some ideas as to why many act this way. First, much of
our class time is spent listening to instructors lecture. While many students do not see this as a
problem, we feel it can inhibit motivation and willingness to work hard. One student expressed that “lectures can provide a good foundation for experiential learning… [but] a hands-on portion makes students more receptive to the lecture.” Another student shared that while her physical presence is often a requirement of the course, she does not often feel as though she must be mentally present for the class. Some SLF members felt that the standard lecture format can also keep students from getting to know others in the class, something they expressed as being important to them. In fact, one student explained that he “would like to see minimum lecturing and more individual and group study.” In line with these statements, we propose that by implementing creative means and ways for students to engage each other and the material, many of them will participate more actively and enthusiastically in class.

Through our conversations, we also noticed that lack of access to instructors could impede our ownership over and progress toward learning. A number of students spoke of experiences in which they went days or weeks without being their instructors returning their emails, and some spoke of their instructors also not being available during office hours. Because we feel that regular access to our instructors helps us develop valuable relationships with them, as well as self-assess our learning and performance, we propose that by maintaining accessibility, instructors can facilitate greater ownership and motivation among their students.

In order to increase overall engagement, ownership, and motivation among students, we advocate that instructors:

- Incorporate more interactive activities into the curriculum (such as experiential learning, clickers, and other methods) that allow students to actively participate in their learning.
- Increase opportunities for peer or small group discussion about course material.
- Attempt to accommodate different modes of learning (such as active or visual learning) by using different methods of instruction over the course of the semester.
- Strive for consistent accessibility, and invite students to ask questions after class, during office hours, or through email.
- Include multiple in-class responses and opportunities for students to gauge their understanding of course material. Ideally, some or all of these would be ungraded.
- Utilize the Blackboard grade posting system for all courses, and that grades be posted in a timeframe that allows students to gauge their performance over the semester.

5. Empowering Ownership Over Learning

As expressed in previous sections, we feel there is a lack of engagement, ownership, and motivation among many students. In addition to the perceived reasons described above, we suspect that many students often do not understand their instructors’ intended outcomes, or the relevance of their course
material. Some students might figure this out over the course of the semester, but our instructors could help us get there faster by making these expectations and outcomes explicit early on. One student described a “lack of communication about expectations,” and another expressed a desire to see a greater “connection between presented material and its purpose or use.” We feel that when instructors clearly delineate their objectives and expectations, students are better able to guide their own learning because they know what outcomes they are striving for. It is also likely that when students receive more non-graded assignments aimed at assessing and promoting their learning, they will in turn demonstrate greater learning throughout the course. In summary, we propose that through more intentional communication of learning outcomes and non-graded assessment of learning, students will take greater ownership and achieve greater learning.

Secondly, a lack of knowledge about the courses they are selecting during the registration process may also indirectly contribute to the lack of ownership many students exhibit over their learning. Often students choose courses they would not have chosen if they had access to better information. One student expressed that he finds it “frustrating to blindly guess about courses,” and stated that he would “like to have the opportunity to make more educated decisions about scheduling.” The opposite scenario can occur as well, with certain courses not appealing to many students because they do not recognize the value of the course from the information available. Therefore, we feel that if students had more complete information about courses during registration, they would be able to make more informed decisions over what courses to take.

Therefore, in order to increase student ownership through intentional course selection and increase engagement, ownership, and motivation throughout courses, we propose the following:

- All course syllabi include intended learning outcomes.
- Instructors discuss these outcomes in depth on the first day of class, and continually tie course material and activities back to these outcomes.
- Courses include regular formative assessment of students’ learning and overall progress.
- That the University compile a database of syllabi for all UT courses, with each syllabi containing at minimum the course learning outcomes, assignments, grading scale, instructor expectations, and teaching methods. (Such a database could include the syllabi from the last time the course was offered, and instructors could replace the syllabi every time the course is updated.)
- The syllabi database be integrated into the Banner system, so that students can view it as they are registering.
- The TN 101 system also be integrated into Banner so students can view evaluative data alongside the course syllabus.
6. Diversity and Interculturalism

During our first meeting of Fall 2011, we had the privilege of having Rita Geier speak with us about diversity issues on campus and in society. Through this meeting, many members came to a better understanding of why appreciation for diversity is a critical component of an academic community. At the heart of our conversation was a desire for diverse student voices to not only be heard, but to be sought out and valued. One student mentioned that, “In order to appreciate your fellow classmate, you need to first learn how to appreciate their unique background.” As a group, we agreed that all students graduating from UT should have an appreciation for differences, and that the University should be a place where we embrace these differences and learn from each other. Another student said, “I don’t feel as though any of my courses, save one specifically on race, addressed diversity or facilitated diversity in the classroom.” We would like to see a campus culture that accepts and values individual differences, one that promotes an inquisitiveness and desire to engage with multiple and varied perspectives and experiences. We feel that a more visible and institutionalized emphasis on appreciation for diversity and interculturalism would create a warmer learning environment for many students, and would contribute to greater student involvement and success. The SFL plans to address this issue ourselves, through a video aimed at helping students understand and appreciate the diverse experiences of their peers. We hope that the University will also work to foster these outcomes by considering the following measures:

- Including a diversity module, similar to the Life of the Mind module, in the orientation process, and making it mandatory for all entering freshmen.
- Including in every academic major multiple “access points” for diversity and interculturalism messages. Examples include integrating training into course curriculum, making it a recurring part of departmental discussions, and including it in the faculty rewards structure.

7. Facilities and Physical Spaces

Last Fall, the SFL served as a focus group for the Classroom Renovation Committee, informing ideas for the Humanities classroom renovations. As we thought about our experiences in various classroom spaces across campus, we realized that the state of the University’s physical spaces affects our perceptions about how we are valued by the University, and in many cases affects our ability to learn. For instance, those of us who have attended classes in the Haslam Business Building or the new Ayers Hall conveyed feelings that these were “more serious learning spaces” than the Humanities and Social Sciences building, or Estabrook Hall.

Some members described incidents in which the physical classroom space actually inhibited their learning. Issues including extreme temperatures, loud construction, and noisy air conditioning units contributed to these classroom disruptions. For example, several students complained of extreme
temperatures in buildings such as Estabrook Hall, in which one student took multiple tests in eighty-degree temperatures. To combat this problem, window air conditioning units were added to cool the classrooms, but the units were unsuccessful and just created more noise and distraction. Additionally, students repeatedly pointed out the “decrepit” state of some buildings on campus. For instance, as one person described, “During last year’s hailstorms, I was one of the fortunate students who got stuck in Estabrook Hall, working on a design project, when the roof began to break as balls of hail struck it and entered the building.” Students also mentioned many of the classrooms limiting their instructors’ use of teaching methods other than traditional lecture. This, too, was felt to be problematic, because as mentioned above we are able to take greater ownership over our learning when we are involved in the process. In summary, we feel that the declining state of many facilities impedes student engagement and contributes to many students feeling like they are a low priority to the University.

As part of the Classroom Renovation Committee proposal, we also photographed students studying across campus, to inform where students spend time studying. This project prompted us to examine the availability of informal learning spaces. Many students voiced a desire for more of these spaces, where they could engage in individual or group study. These spaces could range from a group of tables and a white board to a sophisticated space such as the Library Commons. Some buildings across campus have such spaces, and we feel they contribute to a more tight-knit and engaged academic community. The Library Commons is a great example of an effective informal learning space, and we hope that more buildings could integrate smaller versions of this type of space. In order to address this and the concern of inadequate learning facilities, we suggest the following measures:

- Classrooms in older buildings be equipped with ceiling fans.
- The University assesses the soundness of older buildings, and makes changes and updates necessary to creating comfortable classrooms.
- Newly built structures and classroom renovations allow for greater flexibility in teaching methods.
- The University integrates informal learning spaces into the renovation plans of all new academic buildings.

**Conclusion**

As stated in this paper’s preface, we recognize that our leaders have a vision for what they want us to become. As exemplified above, we too have aspirations for our learning and development. We hope the experiences we have shared can help shape and guide the development of this vision. To facilitate this process, we have, with feedback from the Tenn TLC and UTL, created the following template. This template includes what we believe to be some of the intended outcomes the University wants all students
to achieve, and allows an opportunity for further thinking about how targeted activities across the four-year span can address these. As stated above, we hope that this tool helps facilitate communication of the University’s vision for its students by clarifying and connecting overarching outcomes with specific actions. This template is just meant to provide a framework from which to build an operational definition of the vision. The categories provided are just examples.

### Example Outcomes:

**Core Base of Knowledge** | **Responsible Citizenship** | **Appreciation for Diversity** | **Professional & Personal Development**
--- | --- | --- | ---
**Freshman**

*Example: Join a learning community or formal study group* | *Example: Join a campus organization*  
*Example: Fulfill plagiarism module requirement* | *Example: Complete diversity orientation module* |  

*Example: Make contact with Career Services Center*  
*Example: Consider undergraduate research participation*

**Sophomore**

**Junior**

*Example: Undertake a major-related service-learning experience* |  

*Example: Consider travel abroad*

**Senior**

---

By equipping students with the tools we need and by integrating purposeful opportunities to achieve targeted outcomes, the University can empower us to take greater ownership and responsibility over our learning and development. While we recognize that the University has made substantial enhancements dedicated to this end, there are still a number of inhibiting factors. The goal of this white paper was to identify some of these factors and contribute potential solutions through which they might be addressed. Our hope is that through creating conditions that allow and encourage greater ownership over our learning and development, that the university might be a richer, more fulfilling place for all.
Curriculum Procedures Taskforce Report

April 2013

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## Contents

- **Introduction** ................................................................. 3
- **Taskforce Charge** ......................................................... 3
- **Taskforce Recommendations** ......................................... 4
- **Curriculog™ Timeline/Budget** ...................................... 7-8
- **Appendices** ................................................................. 9
INTRODUCTION

In February 2012, the Curriculum Procedures Taskforce (CPT) was convened to examine the curricular review process and to make recommendations for improvement. Several factors precipitated the review:

- The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accreditation standards now require all institutions to define a credit hour and to establish procedures for monitoring the assignment of such hours to coursework.
- SACS standards also require institutions to define student learning outcomes (SLOs), regularly assess attainment of said outcomes, and use the assessment results to drive curricular changes.
- The current curricular calendar does not provide a College the opportunity to respond to other Colleges’ changes (most proposals are submitted at the same time, just before the extended winter break). This is particularly problematic when dealing with high demand and general education courses.
- Current procedures do not ensure that course fees are reassigned when course disciplines and/or numbers change.
- At present, changes in delivery method are not included in the curricular review process. It’s increasingly difficult to accurately track distance education offerings for promotion and reporting purposes.
- The curricular change process is inconsistent between undergraduate and graduate curricula.
- Curricular submission errors are increasing over time.

TASKFORCE CHARGE

Map out a process for managing curriculum development and revision that will conform with SACS requirements for implementation of the credit hour policy. The process should also integrate student learner outcomes and show how they have been developed, assessed, and utilized for curriculum revision. Ideally, the process will also identify high-impact courses and have mechanisms for ensuring that all affected parties are given timely notice of changes to high-impact courses. Whenever possible, the process should be the same for undergraduate and graduate curricula. If possible, some type of technology solution may be recommended as a tool for reducing the errors in curricular submission.
TASKFORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Credit Hour Definition
SACS accreditation standards now require all institutions to define a credit hour and to establish procedures for monitoring the assignment of such hours to coursework (see Appendix 1).

The Faculty Senate approved the following CPT proposal in March 2013. The guidelines now appear in the university catalogs and in the Curricular Submission Guidelines Manual.

“The unit of credit is the semester credit hour. One semester credit hour represents an amount of instruction that reasonably approximates both 50 minutes per week of classroom-based direct instruction and a minimum of two hours per week of student work outside the classroom over a fall or spring semester. Normally, each semester credit hour represents an amount of instruction that is equivalent to 700 minutes of classroom-based direct instruction. The amount of time that is required to earn one semester credit hour in a laboratory, fieldwork, studio, or seminar-based course varies with the nature of the subject and the aims of the course; typically, a minimum of two or three hours of work in a laboratory, field, studio, or seminar-based setting is considered the equivalent of 50 minutes of classroom-based direct instruction. Semester credit hours earned in courses such as internships, research, theses, dissertation, etc. are based on outcome expectations established by the academic program.”

Student Learning Outcomes
SACS standards require institutions to define student learning outcomes (SLOs), regularly assess attainment of said outcomes, and use the assessment results to drive curricular changes.

To ensure SACS compliance, the Curriculum Procedures Taskforce recommends that all future program proposals include program-level student learning outcomes and assessment methods. Further, all substantive program revisions should include assessment results or other data corroborating the need for revision. The documentation need not be extensive. A description of how the proposed program change will improve the curriculum and what evidence informed that decision is adequate. The rationale will help corroborate for SACS that assessment and/or other forms of feedback are driving program improvements ("closing the loop"). Additional information on program-level SLOs and assessment is available at: http://tenntlc.utk.edu/programmatic-and-course-based-assessment/ and http://sacs.utk.edu/.

To ensure that Curriculum Committee members’ time and resources are focused on more substantive curricular issues, the CPT also recommends the use of a consent agenda for minor, low-impact curricular changes. Uncontested revisions and routine housekeeping edits will be voted on as a package (see Appendix 2). More substantive issues that may impact multiple units will be highlighted in the agenda for easier review. The committee evaluates proposals on several criteria, including but not limited to:
TASKFORCE RECOMMENDATIONS (CONT.)

- Adherence to the standards of the university and/or the individual program’s accrediting body
- Adherence to the guidelines of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission
- Inclusion of measurable student learning outcomes and assessment methods
- Impact on general education requirements
- Impact on the curricula of other departments
- Accuracy of course offerings in the catalog
- Adequate university, college, and departmental resources to accommodate the change
- Sufficient supporting documentation

(adapted from Graduate Council Curriculum Committee Bylaws)

High Impact Changes

The current curricular calendar does not provide a College the opportunity to respond to other Colleges’ changes (most proposals are submitted at the same time, just before the extended winter break). This is particularly problematic when dealing with high demand and general education courses.

The Curriculum Procedures Taskforce recommends that course impact reports be run in advance of the proposal submission deadline. Preferably in October*, the academic associate deans will send their list of proposed course changes to the curriculum coordinators who will run the course impact report and distribute the results. The November Associate Deans Group meeting will provide an opportunity for further discussion of the impact report should it be warranted.

A follow-up Curriculum Committee meeting will also be scheduled each year after the main January session in case (1) an issue arises that requires consultation with the program faculty, (2) impacted units need more time to respond to a significant change, and/or (3) the committee conditionally approves a proposal contingent upon recommended changes.

Changes to Courses with Fees

Current procedures do not ensure that course fees are reassigned when course disciplines and/or numbers change.

The Argos course fees report (TWRFEEC) will be cross-referenced against all incoming curricular proposals. The courses with fees will be labeled in the Curriculum Committee and the Council agendas (similar to cross-listed and general education courses) to ensure that fees are not inadvertently affected by curricular revisions (see Appendix 3).

* Ideally, units considering changes to high enrollment service courses would request a course impact report during the early planning phase, so affected units could be included in the discussions.
Delivery Method Changes

At present, changes in delivery method are not included in the curricular review process. It’s increasingly difficult to accurately track distance education offerings for promotion and reporting purposes.

Distance education courses have different requirements and expectations than traditional courses; students need to know up front if a course is delivered solely online, in hybrid format, etc. The Online Course Work Group is currently reviewing a coding structure that would more precisely reflect teaching modalities and course expectations.

The Curriculum Procedures Taskforce recommends that instructors discuss variations in delivery method with their department head prior to instituting any changes. Across-the-board delivery method modifications to all sections of a course (particularly high enrollment service courses) should be reviewed by the Curriculum Committee to ensure that the affected Colleges have adequate time to adjust their curricula if needed.

Proposal Consistency

The curricular change process is not consistent between undergraduate and graduate curricula. Further, curricular submission errors are increasing over time.

Curriculog™ is a curriculum management solution developed by Digital Architecture, the company behind the catalog management software, acalog™. Curriculog™ integrates with student information systems, streamlines curriculum approval processes, and makes approved courses and programs available for catalog publishing (Curriculog™ brochure, www.digarc.com).

The system has the potential to dramatically reduce submission errors, provide consistent processing of undergraduate and graduate changes, track proposals through every step of the process, and eliminate triple entry of curricular changes (Curriculum Committee agenda, Banner student information system, and acalog™ catalog management software).

The university plans to implement the new system in the 2013-14 academic year.
# Proposed Curriculog™ Timeline

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<th>Time Frame</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>January 2013-June 2013</td>
<td>Acalog conversion to core structure and semester-by-semester sequencing</td>
<td>Digital Architecture</td>
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<td>July 2013</td>
<td>Contracts</td>
<td>Digital Architecture</td>
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<td>Kick-Off Meeting</td>
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### PROPOSED CURRICULOG™ BUDGET

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APPENDIX 1

SACS Credit Hour Requirements

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
Commission on Colleges
1866 Southern Lane
Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097

CREDIT HOURS

– Policy –

As part of its review of an institution seeking initial or continuing accreditation, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) conducts reviews of an institution’s assignment of credit hours. Academic credit has provided the basis for measuring the amount of engaged learning time expected of a typical student enrolled not only in traditional classroom settings but also laboratories, studios, internships and other experiential learning, and distance and correspondence education. Students, institutions, employers, and others rely on the common currency of academic credit to support a wide range of activities, including the transfer of students from one institution to another. For several decades, the federal government has relied on credits as a measure of student academic engagement as a basis of awarding financial aid.

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to institutions and evaluation committees on the Commission’s expectations regarding credits and to set forth the federal regulations regarding the award of credit.

Federal Definition of the Credit Hour. For purposes of the application of this policy and in accord with federal regulations, a credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates

1. Not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time, or

2. At least an equivalent amount of work as required outlined in item 1 above for other academic
activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

**Guidelines for Flexibility in Interpretation.** An institution is responsible for determining the credit hours awarded for coursework in its programs in accordance with the definition of a credit hour for Federal program purposes. The definition does provide some flexibility for institutions in determining the appropriate amount of credit hours for student coursework.

- The institution determines the amount of credit for student work.
- A credit hour is expected to be a reasonable approximation of a minimum amount of student work in a Carnegie unit in accordance with commonly accepted practice in higher education.
- The credit hour definition is a minimum standard that does not restrict an institution from setting a higher standard that requires more student work per credit hour.
- The definition does not dictate particular amounts of classroom time versus out-of-class student work.
- In determining the amount of work the institution’s learning outcomes will entail, the institution may take into consideration alternative delivery methods, measurements of student work, academic calendars, disciplines, and degree levels.
- To the extent an institution believes that complying with the Federal definition of a credit hour would not be appropriate for academic and other institutional needs, it may adopt a separate measure for those purposes.
- Credits may be awarded on the basis of documentation of the amount of work a typical student is expected to complete within a specified amount of academically engaged time, or on the basis of documented student learning calibrated to that amount of academically engaged time for a typical student.

The intent of the above flexibility as provided by Federal guidance is to recognize the differences across institutions, fields of study, types of coursework, and delivery methods, while providing a consistent measure of student work for purposes of Federal programs.

**Commission Obligations in the Review of the Credit Hour.** The Commission reviews the institution’s (1) policies and procedures for determining credit hours, including clock to credit hour conversions, that the institution awards for coursework, and (2) the application of its policies and procedures to its programs and coursework. Following the evaluation, the Commission’s Board of Trustees is obligated to make a reasonable determination regarding the institution’s assignment of credit hours and whether it conforms to commonly accepted practice in higher education. In doing so, the Commission may use sampling or other methods in its evaluation. As with the identification of non-compliance with other standards, the Board is obligated to take action in accord with that used in relation to other standards of non-compliance. If the Commission’s Board finds systemic non-compliance with this policy or significant non-compliance regarding one or more programs at the institution, the Commission is required to notify the U.S. Secretary of Education.
Procedures

1. **Institutions preparing Compliance Certifications in anticipation of reaffirmation of accreditation (accredited institutions) or initial membership (candidate institutions).** The institution will be required to document compliance with Federal Requirement 4.9 (Definition of Credit Hours) and Comprehensive Standard 3.13.1 (Policy Compliance) as relates to credit hours. If the Board imposes a public sanction or takes adverse action in part or in full for continuing non-compliance with FR 4.9 and CS 3.13.1 as applies to the credit hour, the Commission will notify the U.S. Secretary of Education. The institution will be informed of such action.

2. **Institutions undergoing substantive change review related to an academic program review in anticipation of continuing accreditation.**

   The institution will be required to address Federal Requirement 4.9 (Definition of Credit Hours) as part of its prospectus (program expansion) or application (degree level change). Following review of the prospectus, Commission staff will refer the substantive change case to the Commission’s Board of Trustees if there is evidence of non-compliance with FR 4.9. For substantive change cases involving level change, the application will automatically be forwarded to the Commission’s Board of Trustees.

   As a result of Board review that may include a site visit, if the Board imposes a public sanction or takes adverse action in part or in full for continuing non-compliance with FR 4.9 and CS 3.13.1 as applies to the credit hour, the Commission will notify the U.S. Secretary of Education. The institution will be informed of such action.

3. **The Commission is not responsible for reviewing every course and related documentation of learning outcomes; rather, the Commission will review the policies and procedures that the institution uses to assign credit hours, with the application verified by a sampling of the institution’s degrees and nondegree programs to include a variety of academic activities, disciplines, and delivery modes. The review process for sampling encompasses a varied sample of the institution’s degree and nondegree programs in terms of academic discipline, level, delivery modes, and types of academic activities. In reviewing academic activities other than classroom or direct faculty instruction accompanied by out-of-class work, the Commission will determine whether an institution’s processes and procedures result in the establishment of reasonable equivalencies for the amount of academic work described in paragraph one of the credit hour definition within the framework of acceptable institutional practices at comparable institutions of higher education for similar programs.**

4. **The Commission will notify the U.S. Secretary of Education of its findings of systemic non-compliance with this policy or FR 4.9 or of significant non-compliance regarding one or more programs at the institution only after the Commission follows its review process that includes notification to the institution of non-compliance and a reasonable time period for the institution**
to respond to the citations and provide documentation of compliance.

5. Comprehensive Standard 3.4.6 reads as follows: “The institution employs sound and acceptable practices for determining the amount and level of credit awarded for courses, regardless of format or mode of delivery.” It is to be reviewed in conjunction with FR 4.9.

Document History
Approved: Board of Trustees, June 2011
## APPENDIX 2

### Categorizing Curricular Changes

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<tr>
<th>Curricular Change</th>
<th>Revision Type</th>
<th>Enforced in Banner</th>
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<th>Substantive Change</th>
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* Impact depends on the course. Dropping a high enrollment or a general education course is much more significant than altering one required by only a few majors. The same is true when limiting enrollment in a course that was previously open to all students. Not sure of impact? Contact the Office of the University Registrar or the Graduate School for a course impact report.
APPENDIX 3

Course Fees Designation

Curricular Proposals

- College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources
- College of Architecture and Design
- College of Arts and Sciences
- College of Business Administration
- College of Communication and Information
- College of Education, Health and Human Sciences
- College of Engineering
- College of Nursing
- College of Social Work
- First-Year Studies Program
- University Honors Program

* General education course
† Cross-listed course
$ Course with fees
◆ Add or drop of major, concentration, minor
The Online Learning Taskforce includes members from academic units that currently participate in online and distance education at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. In addition to these academic units, representatives from the Office of the Provost, the Office of Information Technology, and the Tennessee Teaching and Learning Center offer the following report as our combined thoughts and direction for the future of online learning at UTK. Members are named in Appendix 1.

The taskforce was charged with the following:

This taskforce will focus primarily on how the university should support online courses and distance programs. The final report of the taskforce should include clear definitions of how these teaching modalities are/should be implemented at UTK. It should include a vision, mission, and proposed structure for support of online courses and distance programs. In addition, consideration should be given to both breadth and scope of revised teaching modalities…. While funding of programs may be a point of discussion, the focus should be on the types of support needed for faculty, students, and others rather than on the specifics of how online and/or DE should be funded.

This report provides draft mission, vision, and values statements and also provides a framework for the support needed to sustain and grow online learning.

Mission, Vision, and Values

After considerable deliberation and review of input from the Deans, Directors, and Department Heads retreat, the taskforce drafted statements designed to model the mission and vision for the Knoxville campus. The taskforce intentionally kept the mission and vision statements focused on broad principles rather than specific practices so that they can be sustainable in the ever-changing world of online technology and advancements in teaching modalities.

The value statements are intended to direct departments when planning for growth in online education. The value statements also further emphasize the major needs for the next steps of support in the growth of online education.

Mission

The primary mission of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville is to move forward the frontiers of human knowledge and enrich and elevate the citizens of the state of Tennessee, the nation, and the world. Innovative teaching is central to this mission. As technology evolves, new modalities build communities of learners in ways that increase flexibility and enhance access for motivated and qualified students. Most students will experience an immersive campus-based educational environment that is augmented with technology. Some students will also experience learning in virtual communities through online and blended courses. UT offers selected online programs that provide high-quality graduate and professional education to students whose primary learning environment is not on campus.
Vision
Aligned with the Vision of the University we embrace a three-part vision: Value creation, Original ideas, and Leadership.

*Value creation* by providing educational opportunities in areas that support the growing needs of the state, region, country, and world taught by top faculty and professionals while expanding the boundaries of our campus.

*Original ideas* that advance teaching, research, and service through non-traditional methods. Committed and diverse faculty members explore new methods in educational delivery and interact with students in ways that move higher education into the twenty-first century.

*Leadership* in enhancing the UT name and experience by using innovative teaching modalities. We strive for leadership in the use of technology to expand learning inside and outside the classroom for both on-campus and off-campus students.

Value Statements:
In online education we at UT value:
- Quality and accountability of the educational experience.
- Consideration for diversity; including people of all races, creeds, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, gender identities, physical abilities, and socioeconomic groups.
- Flexibility in offerings and presentation of courses and programs.
- Excellent service and support for the students, faculty, and staff.
- Maintaining and following established best practices for developing and delivering online instruction.*
- Appropriate assessment of educational opportunities and the value added to the student experience.
- Wise management of institutional resources and offering programs and courses that support a growing need both internally and externally.
- Maintaining the “UT Experience” for undergraduate students.

*Appendix 2 provides a link to a Best Practices document was developed prior to the work of the current taskforce and has been vetted by a broad spectrum of campus constituencies. Appendix 2 also includes a link to a glossary of key terms related to online learning that has had similar campus-wide review.*
Summary of Support Needs

Table 1 summarizes support needs identified by the taskforce. The summary of student needs focus primarily on students who are not on campus.

Table 1: Summary of Support Needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUPPORT NEEDS</th>
<th>EXISTS</th>
<th>EXPAND</th>
<th>NEED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Faculty and Departmental Needs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Clear policies and procedures for development and approval of online programs and courses</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Tools and processes for determining appropriateness of course/program offerings</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Training and development support – including possible certification program(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Technical support for teaching – need to stay current</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) Assistance with assessing student learning and learner outcomes</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f) Proctoring of assessments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g) Tools for quality assessment of course (See Appendix 2)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h) Process and procedures for quality assessment of courses and programs</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i) Clarity of intellectual property issues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j) Website that offers faculty a one-stop service center for online teaching (possibly part of a larger faculty one-stop web site)</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k) Clearly defined and implemented model for funding of online courses and programs</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Student Needs (Particularly for students who are not on campus)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Support for transactions with the university (e.g., bursar, registrar, financial aid)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Library support</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Assessment of readiness to learn online</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Academic advising guidelines for online programs</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) Mentoring and career services guidelines</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f) Disability services</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g) Tutoring Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h) Bookstore</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i) Tech Support including test flights</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j) Clarity of labeling and expectations regarding course modality (including technology requirements)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k) Ability to participate in “academic virtual communities”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l) Ability to participate in the “UT Experience”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m) Web site that clearly defines online offerings and processes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Support Needs Detailed
The following narrative provides more detail on items in the Table 1. The taskforce believes that the items marked as “Exists” are currently in place and meeting existing needs. Items marked “Expand” already exist but need to be expanded and those marked “Need” exist minimally if at all. Numbers in the narrative below refer to numbers in Table 1.

Exists
The taskforce believes technical support for teaching (1d), and tools for quality assessment (1g) are currently being met. The best practices document referenced in Appendix 2 is an excellent tool developed by a former UT taskforce that represents an in depth assessment of best practices in online education. Both of these areas of faculty support must be kept current and we have resources in OIT committed to meeting this need.

Three areas of student support are also currently met. Offerings from the library (2b) include research support and the continued support of document scanning and delivery services. The book store (2h) has created an online marketplace for textbooks including E-text books. OIT and the help desk provide good technical support for students (2i) including the program of test flights for BlackBoard. Again, it will be important to continue to monitor these service areas to make sure they continue to meet demand.

Expand: Faculty
Some areas of service to faculty exist, but not at the full level needed. One of the highest priorities is for more clarity of policies and procedures (1a) for development and approval of online programs and courses. The decisions for changing the teaching modality should originate with the department and instructor. However, creation of a group of policy documents clearly outlining the procedures for developing programs and courses should be considered. Included in these documents should be a set of guiding principles and instructions for obtaining approval for offering online courses. Approval should include approval processes for state, regional, and professional accreditation.

Some training and development support (1c) currently exists in the form of a summer teaching institute and a variety of training programs provided by OIT and the TennTLC. OIT currently has seven instructional designers – some of whom also do other IT work. However all training programs and resources should be expanded and promoted to faculty and departments. Consideration should also be given for formal certification programs and development of faculty learning communities and mentorship programs for faculty involved in online learning.

Assistance with assessing student learning and student learning outcomes (1e) is something that should happen on all levels of teaching. Both the OIT and the TennTLC have provided support for faculty who are developing assessment tools, but faculty need additional assistance in developing appropriate student outcomes and student assessments. Professors should be working on developing assessments that test higher levels of learning beyond simple recall from multiple choice exams. Expansion in this area will also allow for a smaller need for proctored examinations. While proctored exams should not be avoided and are discussed more in depth
below, there is some recognition that testing higher levels of learning is a way to combat opportunities for plagiarism and cheating.

Currently, academic units receive 50% return of tuition generated for programs that offer full programs to students who are not on campus. That return is only for students who take all of their coursework via online modalities. Those students pay a DE fee in lieu of some of the campus-based fees paid by on-campus students. This model is not well understood. It also needs to be refined to reflect current realities of online education (1k).

**Expand: Students**

Student needs that require some expansion begin with an assessment for online readiness of students (2c). Some departments currently offering distance education use such a tool, but many do not. Some students are more likely to succeed in an online environment than other students and assessments should be implemented to help our students determine if an online environment is right for them. In addition expansion of minimum technological requirements should be considered and promoted with students and faculty. This could also include providing support for students and faculty to gain access to the latest in technological tools.

Consideration for students with disabilities (2f) is a high priority in the needs expansion category. This consideration will require a change in mindset among the faculty and a need for additional support and resource from the university. As online programs and courses expand it is increasingly important to include ODS in early development conversations to allow for proper support mechanisms to be in place on the front end when students need them. ODS currently works with faculty who are developing online programs, but too often they are called in very late in the process – often only when a student with special needs enrolls.

We currently have minimal, and often confusing, labeling of online courses (2j). Clarity is needed on course modality in both the catalog and timetable. Expansion in this area will allow for students to know what kind of courses they are signing up for and for those students who need online courses to easily find the courses they need. It will also clarify technology requirements as appropriate.

Consideration should be given to providing support for developing academic virtual communities (2k) that are related to online courses and programs. Many of these are created by the students, but in some cases a platform and a location for creating these communities is necessary. It is the recommendation of this taskforce that support for these virtual communities should begin with the faculty but should ultimately be monitored, developed, and controlled by the students. This will allow for these communities to develop without fear of retribution from university administration.

In addition to academic virtual communities, more access should be available to distance students for activities that make up the “UT Experience” (2l). This includes online streaming of guest lectures, concerts, sporting events, or other campus experiences. This already exists for the larger campus events and campus media vehicles also have a strong online presence. This taskforce would like these opportunities to be expanded. We also suggest some student activities
should encourage connections between distance students and on-campus students. This could be through interactive discussion groups, or any other means to allow online students to feel that they are participating in the “UT Experience.”

**Needed: Faculty**

*Tools and processes for determining appropriateness of program/course offering* (1b)

Programs need more support for making appropriate decisions about when and how to offer programs and courses online. This should include support for market research and continued support for the Best Practices document supplied in Appendix 2. Included in this effort is a need for accurate and timely data demonstrating a need for certain courses to move to an online modality. Through this support departments will be capable of making decisions that support university goals for relieving bottlenecks and supporting the needs of the university community.

*Proctoring of assessments* (1f)

Efforts and processes to combat plagiarism and cheating need to be developed, implemented, and provided to faculty. Administrative support for proctoring of assessments is a high-level need for many areas and should be studied further. Many administrative models exist but investigation into these is beyond the scope of this taskforce.

*Process and procedures for quality assessment of courses and programs* (1h)

A plan for quality assessment for all teaching needs to be developed. A separate taskforce is working on suggested enhancements for review of teaching that should apply to all learning environments. However, because of the unique nature of online learning and the resources needed to develop an online program, quality assessment that focuses specifically on technology-enhanced learning modalities is strongly encouraged. A variety of assessment models exist and should be studied further. This assessment should be modeled on the peer review process that already exists in other areas of academe, and should be implemented for all programs new and old.

*Clarity of intellectual property issues* (1i)

Clear policies on intellectual property in relation to online courses and online learning modules needs to be developed by the General Counsel’s office in cooperation with the faculty senate.

*Website that offers faculty a one-stop service center for online teaching* (1j)

A singular portal for faculty using online learning modalities should be developed. This may be a part of a larger faculty one-stop website. This portal should also be a source for frequently asked questions, and a source for listing online courses and program offerings. It should also include a section for faculty to share ideas about online teaching.

**Needed: Students**

*Support for Transactions with the University* (2a)

The new One-Stop student services center will need to support students that are unable to come to campus. This office should consider developing methods of support that match the needs of our online students, including live chat, video support, and extended hours to support the flexible schedule of online students.
**Academic Advising Guidelines for Online Programs** (2d)
Because most programs will be taught at the graduate level, guidelines for faculty advising need to be developed so faculty and students will understand the requirements and necessary support online and distance students will require. In addition current undergraduate advising needs to support students that are at a distance from the university for short periods of time. Advisors also need to learn to work with students to help them if an online course would be better than taking an on campus course.

**Mentoring and Career Service Guidelines** (2e)
Similar to supporting students in academic advising, faculty and career services should work together to provide career support for online and distance students. This may require adjustment of the current fee structure to provide this support.

**Tutoring Services** (2g)
This includes the need for developing tutoring support for students taking both graduate and undergraduate online courses. Tutoring services should work towards providing support in a medium that works with online students. Adjustment of the current fee structure may be required to provide this support.

**Website that Clearly Defines Online Offerings and Processes** (2m)
This should be included with the faculty website for online processes. In addition a simple search tool should be developed for students to discover courses that are offered online. Web tools should also help market existing programs.
Recommendations

Table 2 provides a summary of recommendations for next steps in moving forward with enhancement of online courses and programs at the University of Tennessee.

**Table 2: Recommendations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>When</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review Mission, Vision, and Values and seek input. If changes are suggested, review those with the taskforce to finalize language.</td>
<td>Share these with the following groups: Faculty Senate Graduate and Undergraduate councils Academic Deans and Department Heads Representative student groups Administrative and support groups</td>
<td>Fall 2012 and early spring 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a plan to communicate better about existing services in support of technology-enhanced programs.</td>
<td>Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Coordinator of Online Programs with input from online taskforce.</td>
<td>Fall 2012 and early spring 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue to develop services noted in the “expand” column of Table 1 and communicate more effectively about those services as well.</td>
<td>Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Coordinator of Online Programs with input from online taskforce.</td>
<td>Fall 2012 and early spring 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hire a Director of Online Programs, reporting direction to the Provost’s office, to assist with prioritization and development of all services.</td>
<td>Taskforce serves as search committee for new position.</td>
<td>Spring 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refine, clarify, and communicate about funding model for online programs.</td>
<td>Provost office and office of the Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration</td>
<td>Summer 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hire administrative support staff person for the director of online programs</td>
<td>Director of Online Programs</td>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make recommendations to hire additional staff in online office and/or related areas (e.g., TennTLC, OIT, ODS) as needed</td>
<td>Director of Online Programs</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix 1: Taskforce Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Department/College</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suzie Allard</td>
<td>Information Sciences/College of Communication &amp; Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chuck Collins</td>
<td>Mathematics/College of Arts &amp; Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sherry Cummings</td>
<td>Social Work/College of Social Work, Nashville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jean Derco</td>
<td>Office of Information Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wes Hines</td>
<td>Nuclear Engineering/College of Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sally McMillan (Chair)</strong></td>
<td>Vice Provost for Academic Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taimi Olsen</td>
<td>Tennessee Teaching &amp; Learning Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tami Wyatt</td>
<td>College of Nursing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa Yamagata-Lynch</td>
<td>Instructional Technology/College of Education, Health, &amp; Human Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jason Smethers</td>
<td>Office of the Provost</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Minutes recorded by: Mindy Koon, Administrative Coordinator for Sally McMillan*
Appendix 2: Best Practices Document

The best practices document referenced earlier in this report can be found at: https://oit.utk.edu/instructional/strategies/Documents/Course%20Standards.pdf

A glossary of terms related to online education and how those terms are used at UTK can be found at: https://oit.utk.edu/instructional/strategies/Documents/CourseStandardsGlossary.pdf
**UTK Substantive Change Policy**

The Chancellor of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville is required to notify Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) of any proposed modification of the essential characteristics of UTK as an educational institution. We, the faculty and staff, are obliged to assist with recognizing and reporting such substantive changes.¹

SACS is mandated by the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) to “maintain adequate substantive change policies that ensure that any substantive change to the educational mission, program or programs of an institution after the agency has accredited ... the institution does not adversely affect the capacity of the institution to continue to meet the agency’s standards.”²

Failure of the Chancellor to report these and other planned substantive changes (described in the table below) can result in loss of our accreditation. For that reason, and to preclude the possibility of the quality of our programs being called into question, the following procedures for recognizing and reporting substantive change are hereby established.

The administrative heads of both academic and non-academic units are responsible for being attentive to what SACS considers a "significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution" and for being aware of related information resources concerning accreditation (see [http://www.sacscoc.org](http://www.sacscoc.org)).

It is the duty of the provost, vice chancellors, deans, heads, directors, and like administrators to ensure that the university's SACS liaison is notified of planning for a modification that may prove substantive and that the Chancellor be informed of the determination of its status as soon as possible. Implementation of a change that clearly is or may be substantive cannot occur until the university notifies SACS of its intention and receives approval.

Substantive changes can be addressed in several ways. In the SACS substantive change policy, the approach is based on reporting requirements, i.e., notification and approval required before implementation of a substantive change, just notification required, or something else required. While this is convenient for a regulatory entity, a university is more likely to consider such changes from an organizational level approach such as (1) Program/Course Level, (2) School/College/Department Level, and (3) Institutional Level.

**Program/Course Level:**

1. Initiating coursework or programs at a different level than currently approved;

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¹ Comprehensive Standard (CS) 3.12 Responsibility for compliance with the Commission’s substantive change procedures and policy and CS 3.12.1 The institution notifies the Commission of changes in accordance with the Commission’s substantive change policy, and, when required, seeks approval prior to the initiation of changes.

2. Expanding at current degree level or developing a new general education program (significant departure from current programs);
3. Initiating a certificate program at employer’s request and on short notice;
4. Initiating other certificate programs;
5. Initiating joint or dual degrees\(^3\) with another institution;
6. Altering significantly the length of a program;
7. Initiating degree completion programs;
8. Closing an academic program (requires a teach-out plan);
9. Closing a program approved off-campus site, branch campus, or institution

**Example of Program / Course Level Change:** The closure of the College of Social Work office and program in Memphis.

**School/College/Department Level:**

10. Initiating off-campus sites (including Early College High School programs offered at the high school);
11. Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus sites;
12. Initiating distance learning;
13. Initiating programs or courses offered through contractual agreement or consortium;
14. Entering into a contract with an entity not certified to participate in USDOE Title IV programs;

**Example of School / College / Department Level Change:** Entering into a consortial arrangement with an international university for the delivery of educational programming

**Institutional Level:**

15. Initiating a branch campus;
16. Altering significantly the educational mission of the institution;
17. Initiating a merger/consolidation with another institution;
18. Changing governance, ownership, control, or legal status of an institution;
19. Relocating a main or branch campus;
20. Moving an off-campus instructional site (serving the same geographical area);
21. Changing from clock hours to credit hours;
22. Acquiring any program or site from another institution;
23. Adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out for students from another institution that is closing;

Some substantial changes may never occur; however, we are required to be aware of them and address them in policy.

\(^3\) SACS defines a **Dual Degree Program** as separate program completion credentials each of which bears only the name, seal, and signature of the institution awarding the degree to the student; and a **Joint Degree Program** as a single program completion credential bearing the names, seals, and signatures of each of the two or more institutions awarding the degree to the student.
Substantial changes that relate to current and proposed academic programs are included in the guidelines for curricular submissions prepared by the Undergraduate and Graduate Councils for units to follow (guidelines are available at the Councils’ websites). Units must consult these documents when considering significant changes to academic programs.

SACS’s specifications of time lines for notification and means of requesting approval appear in the table below.

From time to time, SACS will review their policy. This university policy, following review after SACS releases updates in January of each year, will be distributed electronically by the university’s SACS liaison to all vice chancellors, deans, and heads.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Change (as specified by the SACS Substantive Change Policy)</th>
<th>Notification of SACS prior to implementation is required</th>
<th>Approval by SACS prior to implementation is required</th>
<th>Office requiring notification prior to initiating the change</th>
<th>Mode of notification of SACS and timeline for submission of notification prior to planned implementation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initiating coursework or programs at a more advanced level than currently approved</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Application for Level Change 12 months in advance and by either April 15 or September 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanding at current degree level (significant departure from current program, e.g., number of faculty, new courses, learning resources, equipment and facilities, and other funded requirements)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Prospectus 6 months in advance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating joint degrees with another institution, not SACS accredited</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Prospectus 6 months in advance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating joint degrees with another institution, SACS accredited</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Letter with copy of signed agreement, contact information for reach institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating dual degree programs</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Letter with copy of signed agreement, contact information for reach institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Change (as specified by the SACS Substantive Change Policy)</td>
<td>Notification of SACS prior to implementation is required</td>
<td>Approval by SACS prior to implementation is required</td>
<td>Documentation prepared by</td>
<td>Office requiring notification prior to initiating the change</td>
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<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initiating a certificate program (typically for workforce development):</td>
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<tr>
<td>using existing approved courses</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at a new off-campus site (previously approved program)</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Dean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that is a significant departure from previously approved programs</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Dean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating off-campus sites (including Early College High School programs offered at the high school) where...</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student can obtain 50 percent or more credits toward program</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Department Head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student can obtain 25-49 percent of credit</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Department Head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student can obtain 24 percent or less</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanding program offerings at previously approved off-campus sites</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adding programs that are significantly different from current programs at the site</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of Change (as specified by the SACS Substantive Change Policy)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Notification of SACS prior to implementation is required</strong></td>
<td><strong>Approval by SACS prior to implementation is required</strong></td>
<td><strong>Documentation prepared by</strong></td>
<td><strong>Office requiring notification prior to initiating the change</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adding programs that are NOT significantly different from current programs at the site</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altering significantly the length of a program</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altering significantly the educational mission of the institution (see the UTK mission statement)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>SACS Liaison</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating distance learning...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offering 50 percent or more of a program for the first time</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offering 25-49 percent</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Dean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offering 24 percent or less</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating programs/courses offered through contractual agreement or consortium</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Dean of the Graduate School or Vice Provost for Academic Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating a merger/consolidation with another institution</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>SACS Liaison</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating a branch campus</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>SACS Liaison</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Change (as specified by the SACS Substantive Change Policy)</td>
<td>Notification of SACS prior to implementation is required</td>
<td>Approval by SACS prior to implementation is required</td>
<td>Documentation prepared by</td>
<td>Office requiring notification prior to initiating the change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relocating a main or branch campus</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>SACS Liaison</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moving an off-campus instructional site (serving the same geographic area)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>SACS Liaison</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing governance, ownership, control, or legal status of an institution</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>SACS Liaison</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing from clock hours to credit hours</td>
<td>NA for UTK</td>
<td>NA for UTK</td>
<td>NA for UTK</td>
<td>NA for UTK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altering significantly the length of a program</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating degree completion programs</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing program, approved off-campus location, branch campus, or institution</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution to teach out its own students</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution contracts with another institution to teach-out students (Teach-out Agreement)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dean and/or Department Head or Program Director</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Change (as specified by the SACS Substantive Change Policy)</td>
<td>Notification of SACS prior to implementation is required</td>
<td>Approval by SACS prior to implementation is required</td>
<td>Office requiring notification prior to initiating the change</td>
<td>Mode of notification of SACS and timeline for submission of notification prior to planned implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquiring any program or site from another institution 4</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>SACS Liaison</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out for students from another institution that is closing 4</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>SACS Liaison</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Policy Notes:**

Additional substantive change information is provided to academic departments in the curricular submission guidelines provided by the Undergraduate Council ([http://web.utk.edu/~ugcouncl/](http://web.utk.edu/~ugcouncl/)) and Graduate Curriculum Committee ([http://gradschool.utk.edu/GraduateCouncil/CurrComm.shtml](http://gradschool.utk.edu/GraduateCouncil/CurrComm.shtml)).

This policy is reviewed by the SACS Liaison annually to make sure it conforms to the SACS Substantial Change Policy. SACS Substantive Change Policy is available at [http://www.sacscoc.org/policies.asp](http://www.sacscoc.org/policies.asp).

Policy version: December 19, 2012
Revised: March 1, 2013

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4 See SACSCOC policy *Mergers, consolidations and change of ownership; review and approval*