

DATE: January 28, 2016

SUBJECT: Academic Program Review

ACTION RECOMMENDED: Information

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: As Tennessee’s institutions of higher education continue to focus on the goals of completion and student success, there is a clear need for an ongoing evaluation of the state’s academic programs. Recent years have seen a period of extensive growth in the current academic program inventory coupled with the concerns that a significant number of programs are failing to meet productivity thresholds. Therefore, THEC performs an annual Academic Program Review which examines new programs across the state.

Each year, THEC works with the governing boards and institutions to assess the health of academic offerings, make necessary adjustments to academic program policy, and ensure all programs are fully aligned to student success. As the state continues to move toward 55 percent of Tennesseans obtaining a college degree or certificate by 2025, it is vital that our institutions of higher education provide students with high quality academic programs.

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

- **Program Activity:** Depicts new programs added to the state inventory in 2015, as well as programs that have been terminated.
- **Post Approval Monitoring:** Assesses success of new programs approved within the last five years against projected enrollment and graduation benchmarks.

Program Activity

The Commission has the statutory responsibility to review and approve new academic programs, while responsibility for program termination lies with the two governing boards. However, Commission staff may recommend termination to the TBR and UT systems.

During 2015, the Commission approved 12 programs and eight programs received approval for modifications from the THEC Executive Director. The Board of Regents approved 15 pre-baccalaureate programs. The governing boards terminated 11 programs.

A complete listing of new programs, program modifications, and terminations can be found in Appendix A.

Table 1: New Programs, Modifications and Terminations, 2015

	New Programs	Modified Programs	Terminations	Net Change
TBR Universities	8	6	3	11
UT System	4	2	1	5
TBR Community Colleges	15	--	7	8
Total Actions	27	8	11	24

- Of the 27 new programs, over half were certificate and associate degree programs approved by the Board of Regents.
- Eight programs were approved through the revised Academic Policy A1.1 that allows the THEC Executive Director to approve program modifications. The most common program modification was the result of the separation of a concentration from an existing program to establish a free standing program.
- Program approval activity for 2015 remained stable in comparison to 2014. During 2014, there were 34 new program approvals as compared to a total of 35 program approvals in 2015.
- THEC approved 11 graduate programs and one baccalaureate program. Each of these programs was approved under the more rigorous program approval process instituted in 2011 and is congruent with the institutional mission profile.
- Overall termination activity was slightly lower when compared to 2014. Termination activity consisted of seven pre-baccalaureate programs and four baccalaureate programs.

Post Approval Monitoring

Newly approved programs are evaluated through Post Approval Monitoring (PAM). The PAM review evaluates programs against enrollment and graduate projections, program cost, and other goals agreed upon by the governing boards and THEC. The PAM cycle is three years for pre-baccalaureate programs and five years at the baccalaureate and masters level. Effective with the revised academic policy, new doctoral programs will be monitored for a seven-year period.

A total of 62 programs participated in PAM in 2015. Nearly half of all programs in PAM were certificate and associate degree programs at the TBR community colleges. The UT System made up slightly more than 10 percent of programs in PAM. A total of 21 programs completed Post Approval Monitoring in 2015.

Table 2: Programs in Post Approval Monitoring, 2015

	Certificate & Associate	Bachelor	Master	Doctoral	Total
TBR Universities	-	6	14	5	25
UT System	-	1	2	4	7
TBR Community Colleges	30	-	-	-	30
Total Programs in PAM	30	7	16	9	62

Enrollment and graduation benchmarks for programs are developed by each institution and failure to meet these benchmarks can impact the institution substantially. For example, if the institution does not enroll the projected number of students then there may be a deficit in tuition receipts, and thus, a financial burden to the institution.

There are various reasons why programs may not meet projected benchmarks. Sometimes the implementation of programs are delayed due to difficulty hiring faculty, inadequate recruitment practices, changes in labor market demands, or other issues not within the control of the institution. For example, the Advanced Integrated Industrial Technology associate program at Southwest Tennessee State Community College lost a key faculty member responsible for curriculum development. In addition, there was a delay in purchasing the equipment necessary for hands on training. The staff departure and delay in equipment procurement has caused a delay in the program meeting enrollment and graduation benchmarks.

Programs that did not meet benchmarks during the monitoring period completed a Program Productivity Plan that addressed deficiencies and provided specific plans for corrective actions. The Program Productivity Plan serves to help improve the program by helping institutions formulate a strategy to address enrollment, retention and completion goals. For example, through the Program Productivity Plan the Professional Sciences Masters at Tennessee Tech University has initiated an advertising campaign and created four teaching assistantships to help recruit students and provide additional financial support.

Programs that have completed PAM are monitored by THEC through the Quality Assurance Program. Programs that are underperforming at the end of the monitoring cycle are in true peril of failing to reach the institutionally developed projections that indicate success. Underperforming programs that complete PAM are monitored by THEC through the Low Producing Program evaluation. THEC can recommend termination for those programs that do not, over the monitoring period, show improvement.

**Table 2A: 2015 Post Approval Monitoring
Certificate and Associate Programs**

	Institution	Academic Program	Degree Level	Implementation Term/Year	Monitoring Year	Met Enrollment Benchmark	Met Graduation Benchmark
1	Northeast	Entertainment Technology Sound and Lighting	Certificate	Spring 2014	1st		
2	Chattanooga	International Business	Certificate	Spring 2013	2nd		--
3	Dyersburg	Advanced Integrated Industrial Technology	Associate	Spring 2014	1st		x
4	Columbia	Early Childhood Education	Associate	Fall 2014	1st	x	--
5	Motlow	Emergency Medical Services	Associate	Fall 2014	1st	x	
6	Roane	Financial Services	Associate	Fall 2014	1st		--
7	Roane	Medical Informatics	Associate	Fall 2014	1st		--
8	Roane/Walters	Surgical Technology	Associate	Fall 2014	1st		
9	Volunteer	Computer Information Technology	Associate	Fall 2014	1st	x	
10	Southwest	Advanced Integrated Industrial Technology	Associate	Fall 2013	2nd		
11	Volunteer	Fine Arts	Associate	Fall 2013	2nd	x	--
12	Motlow	Mechatronics Technology	Associate	Fall 2013	2nd	x	x
13	Nashville	Medical Informatics	Associate	Fall 2013	2nd	x	
14	Volunteer	Medical Informatics	Associate	Fall 2013	2nd	x	
15	Volunteer	Entertainment Media Production	Associate	Fall 2013	2nd	x	
16	Columbia	Advanced Integrated Industrial Technology	Associate	Fall 2012	3rd	x	
17	Chattanooga	Fine Arts	Associate	Fall 2012	3rd		
18	Cleveland	Fine Arts	Associate	Fall 2012	3rd		
19	Columbia	Fine Arts	Associate	Fall 2012	3rd		
20	Dyersburg	Fine Arts	Associate	Fall 2012	3rd	x	
21	Nashville	Fine Arts	Associate	Fall 2012	3rd		
22	Pellissippi	Fine Arts	Associate	Fall 2012	3rd	x	x
23	Roane	Fine Arts	Associate	Fall 2012	3rd	x	
24	Walters	Fine Arts	Associate	Fall 2012	3rd		
25	Chattanooga	Health Sciences	Associate	Fall 2012	3rd	x	x
26	Cleveland	Health Sciences	Associate	Fall 2012	3rd		
27	Columbia	Health Sciences	Associate	Fall 2012	3rd	x	x
28	Nashville	Health Sciences	Associate	Fall 2012	3rd	x	
29	Pellissippi	Health Sciences	Associate	Fall 2012	3rd		
30	TBR Comm Colleges	Criminal Justice, RODP	Associate	Fall 2012	3rd		

- Thirty of the 62 programs evaluated through PAM in 2015 were Certificate and Associate degree programs.
- 15 Associate degree programs completed PAM in 2015. Eight of these programs are not meeting either enrollment or graduation benchmarks and will continue to be monitored.
- Programs Not Meeting Benchmarks:
 - The Advanced Integrated Industrial Technology associate program at Southwest, joint Surgical Tech associate program at Roane and Walters and the Criminal Justice RODP associate program are not meeting enrollment or graduation benchmarks.
 - The Fine Arts associate program at Chattanooga, Cleveland, Columbia, Nashville and Walters are not meeting enrollment benchmarks and 7 of the 8 Fine Arts programs in PAM are not meeting graduation benchmarks.
 - The Health Sciences associate program at Cleveland and Pellissippi are not meeting enrollment or graduation benchmarks.

**Table 2B: 2015 Post Approval Monitoring
Baccalaureate Programs**

	Institution	Academic Program	Implementation Term/Year	Monitoring Year	Met Enrollment Benchmark	Met Graduation Benchmark
1	East Tennessee	Graphic Design	Fall 2014	1st		--
2	Middle Tennessee	Theatre	Fall 2014	1st	x	--
3	Middle Tennessee	Mechatronics Engineering	Fall 2013	2nd	x	--
4	Tennessee Tech	Environmental and Sustainability Studies	Fall 2012	3rd		x
5	UT Chattanooga	Integrated Studies	Fall 2012	3rd	x	x
6	East Tennessee	Bluegrass, Old Time & Country	Spring 2010	5th	x	
7	Univ of Memphis	Interior Design	Spring 2010	5th		x

- Seven baccalaureate programs were evaluated in PAM in 2015
- Two baccalaureate programs completed PAM in 2015, and both are meeting either enrollment or graduation benchmarks.

**Table 2C: 2015 Post Approval Monitoring
Masters Programs**

	Institution	Academic Program	Implementation Term/Year	Monitoring Year	Met Enrollment Benchmark	Met Graduation Benchmark
1	Austin Peay	Engineering Technology	Fall 2014	1st		--
2	East Tennessee	Digital Marketing	Fall 2014	1st	x	--
3	Tennessee State	Computer Science	Fall 2014	1st	x	--
4	UT Knoxville	Creative Writing	Fall 2014	1st	x	--
5	UT Health Science	Physician Assistant	Spring 2014	1st	x	--
6	Tennessee State	Professional Science Masters	Fall 2014	1st		--
7	Austin Peay	Computer Science and Quantitative Methods	Fall 2013	2nd	x	x
8	Middle Tennessee	Management	Fall 2013	2nd	x	
9	Tennessee Tech	Professional Science Masters	Fall 2013	2nd		
10	East Tennessee	Appalachian Studies	Fall 2013	2nd	x	
11	Middle Tennessee	International Affairs	Spring 2011	3rd		x
12	East Tennessee	Geosciences	Fall 2011	4th	x	x
13	Middle Tennessee	Information Systems	Fall 2011	4th	x	x
14	Middle Tennessee	Leisure & Sports Mgmt	Fall 2011	4th	x	x
15	Univ of Memphis	Social Work	Fall 2011	4th		x
16	Middle Tennessee	Horse Science	Fall 2010	5th		x

- Sixteen Master’s programs were evaluated in PAM in 2015
- The Professional Science Masters at Tennessee Tech University is not meeting the enrollment or graduation benchmarks.
- The Horse Science MS program at Middle Tennessee State University completed PAM in 2015 and achieved graduation benchmarks.

**Table 2D: 2015 Post Approval Monitoring
Doctoral Programs**

	Institution	Academic Program	Implementation Term/Year	Monitoring Year	Met Enrollment Benchmark	Met Graduation Benchmark
1	Univ of Memphis	Health Systems and Policy	Fall 2014	1st	x	--
2	UT Chattanooga	Occupational Therapy	Fall 2014	1st		--
3	Middle Tennessee	Assessment, Learning, and School Improvement	Fall 2013	2nd		--
4	Univ of Memphis	Epidemiology	Fall 2011	4th	x	
5	UT Knoxville	Doctor of Nursing Practice	Spring 2011	4th	x	
6	UT Knoxville	Energy Science and Engineering	Fall 2011	4th	x	x
7	East Tennessee	Sports Physiology	Spring 2010	5th	x	x
8	Univ of Memphis	Social and Behavioral Science	Spring 2010	5th		x
9	UT Chattanooga	Doctor of Nursing Practice	Fall 2010	5th		x

- Nine doctoral programs were evaluated in PAM in 2015, four UT programs and five TBR programs.
- Three doctoral programs completed PAM in 2015, and all achieved graduation benchmarks.
- At the University of Memphis, three doctoral programs – Health Systems and Policy, Epidemiology, and Social and Behavioral Science are in the School of Public Health. These doctoral programs are closely related but distinct programs. Given the shared resources of these programs, University of Memphis received approval to combine the graduation target with the expectation of three graduates per year across the three Public Health doctoral programs.

In 2015, five programs completed post-approval monitoring; however, these programs failed to meet both enrollment and graduation benchmarks and therefore remained on monitoring status through 2015. These programs and their current status are reflected in Table 3.

Table 3: Under-Performing Programs: Monitoring Cycle Extended

	Institution	Academic Program	Degree Level	2014-15 Graduates
1	Austin Peay	Chemical Engineering Tech	Associate	Program inactivated
<i>Status Update: The Hemlock Semiconductor plant was the primary employer for program graduates. The program was inactivated as of August 2015 as the demand decreased after the Hemlock plant closed. If the program is not activated by August 2018, the program will be terminated.</i>				
2	Middle Tennessee	Forensic Science	Baccalaureate	6
<i>Status Update: Healthy enrollment of 25 seniors enrolled in the program in 2014-15.</i>				
3	Middle Tennessee	Computational Science	Doctoral	3
<i>Status Update: Program met the minimum productivity requirement for doctoral programs.</i>				
4	Middle Tennessee	Molecular Biosciences	Doctoral	6
<i>Status Update: Program exceeded the minimum productivity requirement for doctoral programs.</i>				
5	Walters State	Clean Energy Tech	Associate	4
<i>Status Update: Program recruitment continues to increase with 10 students enrolled in the program in 2014-15. Additionally, program received \$354,000 from the Governor's Competitive Grant process for equipment which will enhance instruction and provide hands-on training for students.</i>				

Appendix A
2015 Program Activity Report: New Programs

	Institution	Academic Program	Degree Level
1	East Tennessee	Global Sport Leadership	Doctoral
2	East Tennessee	Pharmacy Studies	Bachelors
3	East Tennessee	Post-DNP Family Nurse Practitioner	Graduate Certificate
4	East Tennessee	Post-DNP Adult/Gerontological Nurse Practitioner	Graduate Certificate
5	East Tennessee	Post-DNP Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner	Graduate Certificate
6	East Tennessee	Post-DNP Executive Leadership in Nursing	Graduate Certificate
7	Middle Tennessee	Finance	Masters
8	Middle Tennessee	Liberal Arts	Masters
9	UT Chattanooga	Interior Design	Masters
10	UT Chattanooga	Social Work	Masters
11	UT Knoxville	United States Business Law	Masters
12	UT Martin	Strategic Communication	Masters
13	Chattanooga	Mammography	Certificate
14	Chattanooga	Paramedic	Associate
15	Columbia	Computed Tomography	Certificate
16	Nashville	Mechatronics	Certificate
17	Northeast	Aviation Maintenance Technology	Certificate
18	Northeast	Aviation Mechanical Technology	Certificate
19	Northeast	Entertainment Technology	Associate
20	Pellissippi	Building Information Modeling	Certificate
21	Pellissippi	Fundamentals of Sustainability	Certificate
22	Roane	Mechatronics Technology	Associate
23	Southwest	Allied Health Science	Associate
24	Southwest	Fire Science	Associate
25	Southwest	Industrial Control Fundamentals	Certificate
26	Southwest	Industrial Process Control Technology	Associate
27	Volunteer	Environmental Technology	Certificate

2015 Program Activity Report: Modified Programs

	Institution	Academic Program	Degree Level
1	Austin Peay	Accounting	Bachelors
2	Austin Peay	Finance	Bachelors
3	Austin Peay	Management	Bachelors
4	Austin Peay	Marketing	Bachelors
5	Middle Tennessee	Actuarial Science	Bachelors
6	Middle Tennessee	Library Science	Masters
7	UT Knoxville	Entomology, Plant Pathology, and Nematology	Doctoral
8	UT Knoxville	Public Health	Doctoral

Appendix A
2015 Program Activity: Terminated Programs

	Institution	Academic Program	Degree Level
1	East Tennessee	Geology	Bachelors
2	East Tennessee	Geography	Bachelors
3	Middle Tennessee	Speech and Theatre	Bachelors
4	UT Chattanooga	Applied Mathematics	Bachelors
5	Chattanooga	Food Science and Technology	Certificate
6	Motlow	General Education	Certificate
7	Volunteer	Multi-Media Web Design	Certificate
8	Volunteer	Video Production	Certificate
9	Volunteer	Music Production	Certificate
10	Volunteer	Music Production	Certificate
11	Volunteer	General Technology	Associate