

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish the criteria and procedures for modifying existing academic programs, proposing new programs, and submitting program modifications and proposals to the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC).

Policy

Pellissippi State is committed to its mission of fostering the academic, social, economic, and cultural enrichment of the individual and the community and to success in workforce training and certificate and degree programs. In order to achieve this mission, the College, as necessary, modifies existing programs and adds new programs according to the needs of the community and to advances in technology and training. Such changes are initiated by faculty in the relevant academic areas in consultation with advisory boards and area businesses and industries.

I. Program Modifications

- A. Modifications that impact 9 semester hours or fewer may be approved through the College's established curriculum development and review process and with approval of Curriculum Development Committee and the chief academic officer. Courses approved within the Tennessee Transfer Pathways and approved general education requirements may not be modified without approval of the respective state committees. Changes to courses approved to be included in the TBR-aligned libraries must be submitted for modification to those libraries and approved by the respective state committees.
- B. The following program modifications must be submitted to the TBR for approval:
 1. Name change for an existing program.
 2. Change of degree designation for an existing academic program or concentration per recommendation of disciplinary accreditation body or to more accurately represent the program to the workplace.
 3. Change of degree designation for an existing academic program or concentration when the change involves a significant curriculum shift.
 4. Conversion of an existing on-ground academic program to a fully online delivery format, with or without termination of existing program.
 5. Consolidation of existing academic programs.
 6. Substantive curriculum modification, i.e., modifications involving 9 semester hours or more.
 7. Establishment of a certificate of fewer than 24 semester credit hours.
 8. Establishment of a new concentration or minor; new concentrations should be in keeping with the goals of the existing program and must share the same core courses as all other existing degree concentrations.
 9. Establishment of a free standing degree program from an existing concentration. An existing concentration with a steady enrollment and graduation rate for a period of at least three years may be made free standing if such designation does not compromise the remaining degree and does not require new faculty resources.
 10. Termination, inactivation, or reactivation of a program.

11. Curriculum modifications which increase or decrease total hours required for a degree.

II. Process for Program Modifications

- A. A possible need for the proposed modification is identified.
- B. The appropriate program coordinator or discipline chair coordinates development of the proposal to include approval by the program advisory committee and submits the proposal to the dean of the academic department electronically
- C. The academic dean approves the proposal and forwards to the director of Curriculum, who forwards the proposal to the Curriculum Development Committee (CDC) for review and recommendations (all done electronically).
- D. After review, the CDC may recommend the proposal for implementation as presented, recommend the proposal not be implemented, or return the proposal to the academic department for revision.
- E. After approval by CDC, the proposal is sent to the chief academic officer for review and recommendation (electronically). Upon approval, the CAO sends the proposal to the president for approval.
- F. Proposals for modifications of the types listed above are forwarded to the vice chancellor for Academic Affairs and the associate vice chancellor for Academic Affairs at TBR. Approval by the chancellor will be given by delegated authority at the end of the 30-day review period unless objections are voiced by the Board.
- G. When appropriate approvals are received, the chief academic officer manages the implementation of the action.

III. New Academic Programs and Certificates of 24 SCH or more

The proposal of a new academic program or of a certificate of 24 semester hours or more requires more extensive documentation and approval by both TBR and THEC. New programs originate with discipline faculty and are developed and reviewed through the institutional process described above. After development and institutional approval, the College submits a Letter of Notification and, if required, a Letter of Application.

- A. The Letter of Notification is submitted electronically to the vice chancellor for Academic Affairs and the associate vice chancellor for Academic Affairs at least 30 days before the anticipated date for submission of the Letter of Application. It serves as documentation for the TBR system of the initiation of the planning stage for the proposed program.

The Letter of Notification includes the following information:

1. Title of the proposed program and any concentrations.
2. CIP and SOC codes for the overall program and any concentrations.
3. Alignment with institutional Strategic Plan and Mission.
4. Proposed implementation date.

5. Proposed location(s) where the program will be offered.
 6. Explanation of the resources available to support the program.
 7. Anticipated new cost.
 8. Duplicate programs offered at other institutions serving the same region or population.
 9. List of all comparable or closely related programs, regardless of assigned CIP and SOC codes.
- B. The Letter of Application may be waived in some instances, e.g., if another institution has an established degree that fully duplicates the proposed program. In that case, the institution will be notified that it may proceed with planning for the program based on delegated authority from THEC.

The Letter of Application is submitted electronically to the associate vice chancellor for Academic Affairs and contains the following information:

1. A letter from the president stating his or her support for the development of the program.
2. All information initially submitted in the Letter of Notification.
3. PDF of the signed cover page.
4. Completed Letter of Application Form located on the TBR Academic Affairs website.
5. THEC Financial Projections form; per THEC Policy 1.1.20P, the benefit to the state should outweigh the cost of the program with detailed explanations of reallocation, grants, gifts and partnerships accompanying the Letter.
6. Copy of signature sheets from college approval authorities—CDC, chief academic officer, president—verifying that the proposal has been approved through the College’s established process, if required.

TBR and THEC staff will review the Letter of Application and may take one of four actions: approval, disapproval, conditional approval (only granted for temporary programs), or deferral of approval pending a TBR site visit.

Once all approvals are granted, the College will proceed with implementation of the new program. All newly approved academic programs are subject to post approval monitoring for three years by the TBR and the THEC.

Source: TBR Policy 2.01.01.00 Approval of Academic Programs, Units, and Modifications
TBR Guideline A-010 Program Modifications and New Academic Programs

Reviewed/Recommended: President’s Council, January 25, 2021
Approved: President L. Anthony Wise Jr., January 25, 2021