

Federal Requirement 4.4

Program length is appropriate for each of the institution's educational programs.

Compliance Non-Compliance

Proof/Explanation:

According to the Tennessee Board of Regents, all baccalaureate degrees must require a minimum of 120 semester credit hours. Degree requirements for each undergraduate program are presented in the Undergraduate Catalog (1). The Tennessee Board of Regents requires a justification for any undergraduate program that exceeds 120 semester hours. All post-baccalaureate, graduate, or professional degree programs at Tennessee Technological University require at least 30 semester credit hours. Degree requirements for each program are presented in the Graduate Catalog (2).

Additional hours are required in some programs due to accreditation requirements and state Department of Education or licensure requirements. The following baccalaureate programs require 128 semester credit hours:

Bachelor of Science, Chemical Engineering (3)
Bachelor of Science, Chemical Engineering with Biomolecular Engineering Concentration (4)
Bachelor of Science, Civil and Environmental Engineering (5)
Bachelor of Science, Computer Engineering (6)
Bachelor of Science, Electrical Engineering (7)
Bachelor of Science, Mechanical Engineering (8)
Bachelor of Music, Instrumental Music Education Licensure (9)
Bachelor of Music, Vocal/General Music Education Licensure (10)

The number of semester credit hours for a doctorate varies by degree program. The Ph.D. degree in Engineering requires a minimum of 48 credits, but a total of 72 hours beyond baccalaureate work (11). The Ph.D. degree in Environmental Sciences requires a minimum of 61 semester credit hours, but a total of 43 hours beyond the bachelor's degree (12). The Ph.D. degree in Exceptional Learning requires a minimum of 79 semester credit hours (13).

The same number of semester credit hours is required for our distance education programs and accelerated programs. Accelerated programs offer 3 short terms within a regular semester so students can earn credit at an accelerated pace (14). Deans, departmental chairpersons, and University faculty members participate in the off-campus advisory and instructional program to insure that courses offered are of the same quality as those taught on the main campus. Partnering with academic and administrative units, highly qualified personnel from business, industry, and various educational agencies are utilized to provide direction and instruction for conferences, seminars, workshops, and special events.

New programs are developed by faculty at the department level in response to a perceived need. Departments then make proposals to a college-level committee. Proposals approved by the college-level committee are then reviewed by the University Curriculum Committee (if undergraduate level) or the Graduate School Executive Committee (if graduate level) and, if approved, submitted to the Academic Council. Proposals approved by the Academic Council are submitted to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Finally, proposals approved by this Office are submitted to the Tennessee Board of Regents for final approval (15). At each stage of the review of proposed new programs, the length of the program is reviewed.

One measure of quality of academic programs is students' scores on the California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST). An average of about 30% of our graduates are tested each year; therefore these results can serve as an overall indicator of the quality of individual programs. The institutional mean score of TTU seniors has exceeded the national scores for each of the last five years.

TTU CCTST Scores with Comparison to National Score

Year	Percent Tested	Institution Mean Score	National Mean Score	Diff (I-N)	% Institution to National Average
2005-06	35%	18.6	16.8	1.8	100%
2006-07	31%	18.9	16.8	2.0	100%
2007-08	29%	18.4	16.8	2.0	100%
2008-09	30%	18.6	16.8	2.0	100%
2009-10	27%	18.1	16.8	1.0	100%

Another indication of the quality of the academic programs is the Performance Funding review. Coordinated by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, the Performance Funding review provides financial incentives for institutions to implement research-based planning and evaluation processes for continuous improvement. The Performance Funding Scorecard for 2005-2010 shown below lists the standards and the maximum number of points which can be earned for each standard by the institution in a given year.

Performance Funding Scorecard: 2005 – 2010 Cycle

Performance Funding Standards	Points
Standard One – Student Learning Environment and Outcomes	
1.A: Student Learning – General Education	15
1.B: Student Learning – Major Field Assessment	10
1.C.1: Accreditation – Academic Programs	5
1.C.2 Undergraduate Program Review	5
1.C.3: Graduate Program Review	5
Standard Two – Student Satisfaction	
2.A: Student, Alumni, and Employer Surveys	10
Standard Three – Student Persistence	
3.A: Retention	5
3.B: Persistence to Graduation	5
3.C: Student Persistence Planning Initiative	5
Standard Four – State Master Plan Priorities	
4.A: Institutional Strategic Planning	5
4.B: State Strategic Planning	10
4.C: Articulation and Transfer	5
Standard Five – Assessment Outcomes	
5.A: Assessment Pilot	5
5.B: Assessment Implementation	10
Total Points	100

TTU has consistently scored near the top among the TBR institutions, and the highest score in the last five years was achieved in 2008-09. The following data are shown in the table below:

- TTU's Performance Funding score (out of 100 points)
- TTU's place among the nine public universities in Tennessee (including both the TBR and the University of Tennessee system)
- TTU's place among the six TBR universities for the five most recent years

Performance Funding Scores and Comparison with Public Universities in Tennessee

Year	Performance Funding Score (out of 100)	TTU's place among all 9 public universities in Tennessee	TTU's place among 6 TBR universities
2009 - 2010	92.5	2 nd	2 nd
2008 - 2009	97	1 st	1 st
2007 - 2008	96.5	Tied for 1 st	Tied for 1 st
2006 - 2007	96	1 st	1 st
2005 - 2006	77	Tied for 1 st	Tied for 1 st

Supporting Documentation:

1. Undergraduate Catalog <http://catalog.tntech.edu/index.php?catoid=3>
2. Graduate Catalog <http://catalog.tntech.edu/index.php?catoid=6>
3. Bachelor of Science, Chemical Engineering
http://catalog.tntech.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=3&poid=324&returnto=396
4. Bachelor of Science, Chemical Engineering with Biomolecular Engineering Concentration
http://catalog.tntech.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=3&poid=325&returnto=396
5. Bachelor of Science, Civil and Environmental Engineering
http://catalog.tntech.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=3&poid=330&returnto=397
6. Bachelor of Science, Computer Engineering
http://catalog.tntech.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=3&poid=334&returnto=399
7. Bachelor of Science, Electrical Engineering
http://catalog.tntech.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=3&poid=339&returnto=399
8. Bachelor of Science, Mechanical Engineering
http://catalog.tntech.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=3&poid=385&returnto=401
9. Bachelor of Music, Instrumental Music Education Licensure
http://catalog.tntech.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=3&poid=390&returnto=434
10. Bachelor of Music, Vocal/General Music Education Licensure
http://catalog.tntech.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=3&poid=396&returnto=434
11. Ph.D. in Engineering Requirements <http://catalog.tntech.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=879>
12. Ph.D. in Environmental Sciences Requirements
http://catalog.tntech.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=6&poid=623
13. Ph.D. in Exceptional Learning Requirements
http://catalog.tntech.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=6&poid=625&returnto=874
14. Accelerated Degree Programs <http://www.tntech.edu/is/accelerated/>
15. New Programs Procedures and Forms <http://www.tntech.edu/academicaffairs/new-programs/>