

3.13.4.b

Policy Compliance: Reaffirmation of Accreditation and Subsequent Reports

Applicable Policy Statements

If an institution is part of a system or corporate structure, a description of the system operation (or corporate structure) is submitted as part of the Compliance Certification for the decennial review. The description should be designed to help members of the peer review committees understand the mission, governance, and operating procedures of the system and the individual institution's role with in that system.

Documentation: The institution should provide a description of the system operation and structure or the corporate structure if this applies.

Judgment

Compliance Partial Compliance Non-Compliance Not Applicable

Narrative

Tennessee Technological University (TTU) is one of 46 institutions of Tennessee post-secondary education governed by the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR). TBR establishes policies and guidelines that govern all TBR institutions [1]. TBR is one of two post-secondary education systems in Tennessee, the other being the University of Tennessee (UT) system. Both the TBR and UT systems are coordinated by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC). The TBR system charter was established by Acts of the General Assembly of Tennessee found in Tennessee Code Annotated 49-8-101 and includes the six universities, 13 community colleges, and 27 technical schools (referred to as the Tennessee College of Applied Technology or TCAT) as well as 18 board members, and the TBR Chancellor.

TBR Mission

The TBR Mission is to advance excellence in its diverse educational programs, research, service, and outreach in order to benefit Tennessee and its citizens through innovation and through judicious use of resources [2]. TBR currently has four key program areas and initiatives. These include the Governor's Drive to 55 [3], Tennessee Transfer Pathways [4], Regents Online Campus Collaborative (ROCC) [5], and Critical Conversations [6].

TBR Governance

The TBR is governed by 18 board members with the composition of the board set forth by Tennessee Code Annotated § 49-8-201. Each of the state's nine congressional districts and three grand divisions is represented on the board with lay citizens appointed by the governor of Tennessee. In addition, one faculty member and one student member are appointed by the governor. There are four ex officio members on the board. These ex officio members are the Governor of Tennessee, the Commissioner of Education, the Commissioner of Agriculture, and the Executive Director of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission [7]. The organizational chart for TBR includes the Board of Regents, Chancellor, Director of Systemwide Internal Audit, six Vice-Chancellors, Director of Communications, Chief Information Officer, and the General Counsel [8].

According to TBR bylaws, the purpose of the Board of Regents is five-fold with its primary purpose to "establish, govern, manage, and control the State University and Community College System of Tennessee" [9].

TBR Operating Procedures

TBR operating policies and procedures reflect a “decentralized decision-making and operations” practice with standardization of policies to “ensure institutional accountability while maintaining campus prerogatives” [10]. All policies and substantive issues are deliberated by a strong committee structure maintained by the TBR. Student and faculty representatives comprise the major committees with additional ad hoc committees established as needed. The Chancellor is the Chief Executive Officer of the system and can act on behalf of TBR. The Chancellor’s staff ensure that TBR policies and directives are implemented. The Chancellor’s staff can initiate studies and provide centralized services if needed.

TBR bylaws [11] outline the following:

- Name, Charter, and Purpose
- Elements of the State University and Community College System
- Members
- Meetings of the Board
- Office of the Board of Regents
- Duties of the Board
- Committees of the Board
- Officers and their Duties
- Universities, Community Colleges and Colleges of Applied Technology
- Degrees, Diplomas, and Certificates
- Appeals
- Amendments of Bylaws
- Parliamentary Authority

The President of each TBR member institution serves as the chief executive officer of the institution and reports to the TBR via the Chancellor. The President delegates to the institution’s senior administration to fulfill responsibilities related to campus management and operations [12] and faculty, staff, and students participate in shared governance of the campus.

TTU Role within TBR System

The TBR 2010-2015 Strategic Plan, Charting the Course, contains four priorities to which each member institution can uniquely contribute [13]. The four key priorities are Access, Student Success, Quality, and Resourcefulness and Efficiency. TTU’s role within the TBR system is to support the mission and vision of TBR programs, initiatives, and priorities. TTU currently fulfills this role through its own strategic plan called Flight Plan: Focused on the Future [14]. The Flight Plan has four focus areas [15]:

- Improve Undergraduate Experience
- Transform Technology
- Create Distinctive Programs and Invigorate Faculty
- Expand Financial Resources and Modernize Infrastructure

Within the four focus areas, the Flight Plan highlights 12 key priorities as well [16]. Each of these priorities currently serves to advance the mission and vision of TTU while simultaneously contributing to the mission and vision of TBR.

Conclusion

TTU is one of six universities governed by the TBR system. The TBR system is described in terms of mission, governance, and operating procedures. TTU's role with the TBR system has been described as well. Therefore, the University is in compliance with Comprehensive Standard 3.13.4b.

Sources

 [01] Our Institutions _ Tennessee Board of Regents

 [02] Strategic Planning_Mission

-  [03] Governors Drive to 55
-  [04] Tennessee Transfer Pathway
-  [05] Regents Online Campus Collaborative
-  [06] Critical Conversations
-  [07] Board_Members_2014
-  [08] TBR OrgChart_July2014
-  [09] Board Purpose and Operations
-  [10] TBR Operations
-  [11] TBR Bylaws _ 1 _ Policies_TBR
-  [12] Senior Administration
-  [13] Charting the Course 2010_2015 Final
-  [14] Flight Plan Publication
-  [15] Focus Areas
-  [16] Key Priorities