

### 3.4.11

#### **Educational Programs: All:Academic program coordination**

For each major in a degree program, the institution assigns responsibility for program coordination, as well as for curriculum development and review, to persons academically qualified in the field. In those degree programs for which the institution does not identify a major, this requirement applies to a curricular area or concentration.

#### **Judgment**

Compliance     Partial Compliance     Non-Compliance     Not Applicable

#### **Narrative**

All academic degree programs at Tennessee Technological University (TTU) are housed in an academic department or school led by a chairperson or director with an appropriate terminal degree and academic expertise in at least one of its major programs. The chairperson or director is responsible for assigning qualified faculty to teach courses, for evaluating teaching performance, and for overseeing and coordinating his or her unit's major program curricula [1]. In units with multiple distinct disciplines and/or graduate programs, the chairperson or director works closely with faculty in each discipline area and may formally designate certain faculty members with relevant expertise and terminal degrees to oversee the integrity and development of its major programs and/or concentrations, as shown in the table linked below [2].

#### **Program Coordination**

As academic leaders for their respective disciplines, chairpersons and directors ensure the quality and integrity of degree programs and concentrations. In this role they work closely with their departmental faculty colleagues, especially those with delegated responsibility to coordinate particular concentrations or options who also typically serve as advisors to students in their respective areas. All department chairpersons and school directors serve on the University Curriculum Committee, where they present for approval all curricular additions, deletions, and modifications, and represent the role of their unit's teaching disciplines in the curricula of other degree programs [3]. Before reaching the University Curriculum Committee, curricular proposals are reviewed by faculty in the initiating department or school and then by a college-level faculty curriculum committee. Graduate curriculum and policy changes follow the same process but are reviewed at the University level by the Graduate Studies Executive Committee, with representatives from all colleges with graduate programs [4]. The Academic Council must review and approve all new degree programs or substantive changes to existing degree programs, further ensuring the integrity and implementation of TTU academic programs [5].

The chairperson or director is responsible for reviewing and approving all exceptions to University academic requirements majoring in their department or school [6], and all course substitutions in the curricula of all students, undergraduate [7] and graduate [8]. Approximately every five years, the chairperson or director also leads the department faculty in a comprehensive Academic Audit of their degree program(s), conducted by external reviewers [9].

In some instances, the highest degree of a faculty member is not the terminal degree in the discipline corresponding to a program that he or she oversees [10]. In several of these cases, the program coordinator holds a master's degree that is directly relevant to the academic program and a doctoral degree based on research within the relevant field. In most such cases, the coordinator's relevant professional experience is also a key factor. A program may also be coordinated on an interim basis by a faculty member while a permanent coordinator is identified; in all such cases, care is taken

to identify interim coordinators who are experienced in administrative and curricular matters, to ensure appropriate guidance for students, effective relations with faculty, and continuity in the academic program.

## Conclusion

Academic program coordination is entrusted to faculty members with appropriate terminal degrees and/or professional expertise in their discipline to oversee the proper implementation of curricula, in cooperation with department colleagues, chairpersons or directors, and college-level committees, within the process of curricular oversight vested in the University Curriculum Committee and the Academic Council. TTU is therefore in compliance with Comprehensive Standard 3.4.11.

## Sources

-  [01] Job Descriptions
-  [02] TTU Academic Program Coordinators s15
-  [03] University Curriculum Committee Procedures 9\_25\_2014
-  [04] Graduate Studies Executive Committee Procedures
-  [05] Academic Council
-  [06] Request for Exception
-  [07] Undergraduate Course Substitution Form
-  [08] Graduate Substitution Form\_2014
-  [09] Academic Audit Handbook 2014\_15
-  [10] Academic Coordinators with Nonstandard Terminal Degrees