

Tennessee Technological University
Policy No. 225



**New Academic
Programs**

Effective Date: January 1, 2018

Policy No: 225

Policy Name: New Academic Programs

Date Revised: January 1, 2020

I. Purpose

This policy establishes an approval process for new academic programs at Tennessee Tech, consistent with the corresponding policy (A1.0) of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission.

II. Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years or whenever circumstances require review, whichever is earlier, by the Senior Associate Provost or the Associate Provost, with recommendations for revision presented to the Academic Council, University Assembly, and the Board of Trustees.

III. Policy/Procedure

- A. Tennessee Tech hereby adopts THEC policy A1.0 (New Academic Programs: Approval Process), as may be amended from time to time.
- B. THEC has the statutory responsibility to review and approve new academic programs. As outlined in THEC Policy A1.0, the process in developing a new academic program in excess of 24 semester credit hours includes the following essential steps:
 1. Letter of Notification (LON)
 2. Evaluation of LON
 3. New Academic Program Proposal (NAPP)
 4. External Judgment
 5. Post-External Judgment and THEC Action
 6. Institutional Governing Board
 7. Commission Action
- C. Any proposals for new academic programs made pursuant to this policy must also comply with TTU Policy 221 (Substantive Change).
- D. Preparation and Submission of Letter of Notification
 1. The academic unit requesting the new academic program shall prepare a Letter of Notification (LON) that includes all items listed on *THEC LON Checklist*.
 - a. The LON must address the criteria for review as outlined in THEC Policy 1.0, Section 1.0.2A1 and 1.0.2A2 a
 - b. The LON must include a feasibility study that addresses the following criteria:
 - 1) Student Interest for the proposed academic program
 - 2) Local and Regional Need/Demand
 - 3) Employer Need/Demand
 - 4) Future Sustainable Need/Demand

- c. The feasibility study shall be conducted by people with expertise in economics/labor analysis outside the academic unit. The academic unit can contact the Office of the Provost for assistance.
 - d. The academic unit shall send the LON to the college dean and the Provost's Office for review and approval.
 - 2. The Provost's Office will send the approved LON to the Tennessee Tech Board of Trustees (Board) for review and approval.
 - 3. After the Board's approval, the Provost's Office will submit to THEC the LON with the following documents for the proposed new academic program:
 - a. Tennessee Tech Cover Form with appropriate signatures
 - b. The Feasibility Study
 - c. A letter from the Tennessee Tech President signifying support from the Board
 - d. Timeline for development and implementation
 - e. THEC Financial Projection Form
- E. Upon receiving THEC's approval of the Letter of Notification, the academic unit requesting the new program shall prepare a New Academic Program Proposal (NAPP). A New Academic Program Proposal must undergo institutional approval processes at Tennessee Tech.
 - 1. The NAPP should complement the LON by addressing the following criteria in the NAPP Checklist (THEC A1.0):
 - a. Curriculum
 - b. Academic Standards
 - c. Program Enrollment and Graduates
 - d. Equity
 - e. Administrative Structure
 - f. Faculty Resources
 - g. Library and Information Technology Resources
 - h. Support Resources
 - i. Facilities and Equipment
 - j. Marketing and Recruitment
 - k. Assessment/Evaluation
 - l. Accreditation
 - m. Funding
 - 2. An academic unit requesting a new academic program must submit the NAPP to the following offices/committees, as appropriate, for review and approval within Tennessee Tech:
 - a. Departmental faculty
 - b. College curriculum committee and College dean or his/her designee
 - c. University Curriculum Committee (if undergraduate level) or Graduate Studies Executive Committee (if graduate level)

- d. Academic Council
 - e. Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
3. The Provost's Office will send the approved NAPP and a TTU Cover Letter with appropriate signatures to THEC for review and approval.

F. External Judgment

1. External consultants may be required for baccalaureate and graduate programs. THEC staff will determine if a review by an external authority is required before framing a recommendation to the Commission.
2. The unit and college requesting the new program will be asked to propose a list of potential external reviewers. Individuals used in the development stage as external consultants may not serve as external reviewers. The criteria for potential external reviewers are outlined in THEC Policy A1.0.
3. THEC will notify Tennessee Tech or the Board of the selected reviewer(s) and provide a list of questions for the external reviewer(s) to address during the review. Tennessee Tech may add questions to the THEC review questions.
4. Reviewer(s) must provide concurrently a written report in response to the questions to Tennessee Tech and THEC staff within 30 days of the site visit.
5. Tennessee Tech will be responsible for inviting the external reviewer(s), all scheduling, expenses, and contracting with the external reviewers.

G. Post-External Judgment and THEC Action

1. Within 30 days of receipt of the external review, Tennessee Tech must propose to THEC solutions for all issues identified by the reviewer(s).
2. Based on the proposed revisions, THEC will choose one of three determinations:
 - a. Support
 - b. Not support
 - c. Defer Support

The description of each action is outlined in THEC A1.0.

H. Institutional Governing Board Action

1. Upon determination by THEC that a proposed academic program will be supported for approval by the THEC Commission, the Provost's Office will submit the NAPP to the Board of Trustees for approval.
2. After Board approval, the Provost's office will submit the record of board approval to THEC and submit a request to THEC Executive Director that the proposed program be placed on the earliest possible Commission agenda.

IV. Interpretation

The Provost or his/her designee has the final authority to interpret the terms of this policy.

V. Citation of Authority for Policy

T.C.A. § 49-8-203(a)(1)(B)

THEC Policy A1.0 (New Academic Program: Approval Process); THEC Letter of Notification (LON) Checklist and New Academic Program Proposal (NAPP) Checklist

Approved:

Academic Council: November 15, 2017; November 13, 2019

University Assembly: November 29, 2017; November 20, 2019

Board of Trustees: December 11, 2017; December 5, 2019