

3.5.4

Educational Programs: Undergraduate: Terminal degrees of faculty

At least 25 percent of the course hours in each major at the baccalaureate level are taught by faculty members holding an appropriate terminal degree—usually the earned doctorate or the equivalent of the terminal degree.

Judgment

Compliance Partial Compliance Non-Compliance Not Applicable

Narrative

At Tennessee Technological University (TTU), 64 percent of the credit hours taught in courses satisfying major requirements for baccalaureate degree programs in the Fall 2014 academic semester were instructed by faculty members holding an appropriate terminal degree for the subject matter of each individual course. All majors taught at TTU had more than 25 percent of the credit hours taught by faculty members holding the appropriate terminal degree. In case

Distance Education Requirements

There are no baccalaureate degree programs that are offered exclusively by the institution that can be completed in an exclusively online format; however, TTU does participate in the Regents Online Campus Collaborative (ROCC). The ROCC allows students enrolled in this program to earn a degree completely online by taking courses in a Web format that are offered by partnering institutions in addition to TTU. The ROCC courses taught in the chosen semesters by TTU faculty totaled to 425 credit hours, of which 305 were taught by faculty holding an appropriate terminal degree (or 72 percent of the total credit hours taught by TTU faculty). Currently, the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) is assembling an aggregate database of all faculty credentials from participating universities to ensure that they have the opportunity to examine the faculty qualifications of ROCC course instructors. Since TTU does not offer any undergraduate degrees in an online format (exclusive of ROCC programs), the online courses and other distance education mediums (excluding ROCC courses) are included in the calculations.

Terminal Degrees

TTU hires faculty with terminal degrees in the field related to the courses they teach. In most fields, the earned doctorate would be considered as the appropriate terminal degree for the discipline. TTU identifies terminal degrees in consistent practice with degrees identified as terminal by TBR. Those terminal degrees identified by TBR as terminal include the: PhD (Doctor of Philosophy), EdD (Doctor of Education), and DA (Doctor of Arts). Master's degrees considered as terminal include the MFA (Master's of Fine Arts), MLS (Master's in Library Science), MM (Certain Specialties in Music), and the Master's in Engineering or Master's with a major in Engineering (Engineering Technology, University Level). The JD (Juris Doctor) is not identified as a terminal degree.

Major Program Courses

The courses were separated by their associated department and discipline codes. In cases where a program spans multiple departments/disciplines, the Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) code was used to aggregate the information.

Courses Taught by Faculty with Terminal Degrees Methodology

In most cases, the discipline associated with each course is closely correlated with the terminal degree of the faculty member teaching the course; however, there exist a few instances where a faculty

member has a terminal degree in a field that does not directly associate with the content of the course being instructed. In these instances, the courses would be considered as being taught by faculty without the appropriate terminal degree. In all cases, the content of each course has been compared to the field in which the faculty member acquired the terminal degree to analyze whether or not the degree is consistent with course content. The credit hours taught by faculty with the appropriate terminal degrees and their respective percentage of all credit hours taught are included in the Table 1: Credit Hours of Faculty with Appropriate Terminal Degrees [1]. The faculty whose terminal degrees are considered applicable to the courses taught are listed in Table 2: Faculty with Appropriate Terminal Degrees by Discipline [2].

Conclusion

TTU maintains at least 25 percent of the credit hours in each program is taught by faculty who hold an appropriate terminal degree. Appropriate terminal degree is defined by TBR and documentation is provided to demonstrate the University is in compliance with Comprehensive Standard 3.5.4.

Sources

 Table 1_Credit Hours of Faculty with Appropriate Terminal Degrees

 Table 2_Faculty with Appropriate Terminal Degrees by Discipline