



# TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

## ACADEMIC MASTER PLAN 2008 - 2028



*ENVISIONING THE FUTURE THROUGH  
THE LENS OF OUR HERITAGE*

**TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY  
ACADEMIC MASTER PLAN**

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**TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY  
ACADEMIC MASTER PLAN**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Academic Master Plan (AMP) has been developed through an **inclusive** and **transparent** process. It makes a compelling case for **change** and **productivity** at TSU because of an increasingly competitive higher education environment. Data have informed the development of the plan, as have the views of multiple stakeholders.

Building on the University's **Mission** and **Core Values** (p.8), the AMP supports the University's **Vision** of achieving "national and international prominence, building on its heritage and preparing leaders for global society" (p.8). It does so, in part, through a complementary **Academic Vision Statement** (p.9). At the core of the AMP is strengthening **quality** in every aspect of the University (faculty, academic programs, student, research, staff, and in all services, policies, and procedures).

The AMP proposes a dynamic and innovative set of new approaches to academic programs through **Major Focus Areas**, **Signature Academic Programs**, and **Cross-Cutting Focus Areas**. The Major Focus Areas (pp. 14-18) will be three broad sets of interdisciplinary academic disciplines, which will receive extra resources to build excellence: **Enterprise and Leadership**; **Health and Education**; and **Pure and Applied Science**. From within those three areas, the AMP proposes a process to select an initial three Signature Academic Programs (p.19), which will be specific undergraduate or graduate degree programs that, with additional resources, have the potential for national and/or international prominence. To provide students with a unique preparation, the AMP calls for five Cross-Cutting Focus Areas (pp.20-23) that are academic initiatives that cut across all disciplines: **The Quality Enhancement Plan**, **Critical and Creative Inquiry**, **the Academy of Leadership**, **the Engaged University**, and **the Honors College**. The AMP also calls for the exploration of adding a **new professional school**. It further proposes that by 2015, all undergraduate and graduate majors meet **degree productivity levels** at 1.5 times the THEC minimums (p.23).

To achieve the goals of the AMP (p.10), TSU will need to improve significantly its **infrastructure**, (pp.24-27) including academic policies and procedures, the budget priority setting process, and multiple non-academic policies and processes. In particular, TSU must have zero-tolerance for poor service as students have many choices of institutions. The AMP calls for an enrollment of **12,000 students by 2015**, with an **undergraduate/graduate mix of 75% to 25%** and a **more robust research enterprise**. These and other goals require TSU to be a highly functioning university at all levels.

The AMP provides a detailed set of **implementation plans** (pp.27-30) for years one, two, three, four and seven of the plan and a description of how the plan will be monitored, updated, and revised as necessary over a twenty or more year period. As TSU establishes a comprehensive planning culture, the AMP details how those other **planning processes** (Strategic; Budget; SACS; Facilities; Fundraising; and Enrollment Management) **should be integrated** with the AMP informing all other planning at the institution (pp.30-31).

With an AMP as a framework for its future, TSU has many opportunities to distinguish itself and many advantages (including its location and its talent base) to build on. To reach its destiny, however, TSU must implement, with courage and conviction, the changes outlined in the AMP. If it does so, TSU will provide a unique and distinctive education for its students, thereby opening to them endless leadership opportunities on a global scale.

# TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC MASTER PLAN

## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. Context

Tennessee State University (TSU) is at a critical juncture in its long and distinguished history. As a Historically Black College and University (HBCU), founded in 1912, TSU has an unusual profile with an urban location (two campuses in Nashville) and a land-grant mission (and a farm and a nursery). With approximately 9,000 headcount and approximately 7,500 FTE students, TSU offers 42 Bachelor's degrees, 23 Master's degrees, and 7 doctoral programs. With the settlement of the Geier<sup>1</sup> case and the increased competition for students (including African American students), we must now more than ever define and plan our future.

Underlying the Academic Master Plan is an assumption that TSU **needs to change** to meet the challenges that it faces and to seize its opportunities. The Steering Committee for the Academic Master Plan (AMP) became convinced of the imperative of change for TSU to grow in size and stature and to become the university of choice for students, faculty/staff, and employers. We must change because of the need to:

- rise to the excellence where we know we should and can be, beginning by forthrightly addressing persistent and pervasive problems.
- be proactive rather than reactive, especially in anticipating increased competition from TBR and other institutions (most of whom have demonstrated the ability to develop long-term plans and achieve them).
- strengthen our practices, processes, and even culture if we are to nourish our dreams so that they do not die from lack of internal encouragement and support.
- establish academic program priorities and to maximize the resources committed to our strengths and to new programs that respond to demonstrated need.
- respond to national and international academic trends, such as the increasingly interdisciplinary nature of teaching, learning, research, and service.
- respond to state and national accountability demands by measuring results and embracing a culture of data informing decisions.
- recognize there are subtle but growing consequences for not changing, including the risks of resource reductions, restructuring of Tennessee higher education, and other adverse actions.
- plan at all levels and to insure that the plans are fully integrated.
- have the political will to implement the AMP and other changes that will allow TSU to excel.

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<sup>1</sup> Tennessee Higher Education Desegregation Case (In 1968, Rita Sanders, then a TSU faculty member, along with other Tennesseans, sued the state, demanding that the dual educational system be dismantled and made fair for all its citizens. The lawsuit is now known as the *Geier* case).



Change for change's sake has little value. Yet, at the same time, complacent comfort with the status quo at an institution with little history of making difficult choices will likely doom us to mediocrity at best. But properly planned and timely executed change will add a new and exciting chapter to the illustrious history of TSU if we become a highly focused and disciplined institution that is relentless in its pervasive pursuit of quality.

## B. Background, Process, and Scope

The Academic Master Plan concept was first conceived in 2005, with some initial steps being taken during the 2005-2006 academic year. In the fall of 2006, newly appointed Provost Robert Hampton formally charged the academic deans and a Steering Committee (see Appendix 1 for the membership) with developing an academic master plan that would guide the University's "strategic planning, program development, fund-raising activities, budget planning, and facility planning and management for at least the next twenty years". Other provisions of the charge specified that the AMP should:

- Involve broad based participation of faculty, academic and non-academic staff, students, alumni, and other constituents in its development.
- Be comprehensive, addressing the three-part mission (instruction, research, service).
- Be both conceptual and data driven.
- Provide a means for monitoring and reporting progress.
- Provide a means for updating and revising to meet changing circumstances.

To ensure broad participation, to provide an independent perspective on both concepts and data, and to provide overall guidance, the Steering Committee engaged the Pappas Consulting Group Inc. (Pappas Group), which had considerable national and international experience in higher education planning. (See [www.pappas-consulting.com](http://www.pappas-consulting.com))

The Pappas Group conducted 35 individual interviews with key campus leaders, and a series of 22 focus groups with faculty, staff, students and alumni; these representative input sessions provided the Steering Committee with critical information and perspectives. In addition, the Pappas Group provided an analysis of both internal and external data and trends; conducted two retreats with the Provost's Council (one at the initial planning stage and one after the release of the Draft report); and facilitated a portion of the Cabinet Retreat.

The Steering Committee began its work by collecting an extensive library of related planning documents from the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC), as well as education and employment data and forecasts published by local, state, regional and national agencies and organizations. (See Appendix 2 for access to all documents used by the Steering Committee.)

The Committee also solicited direct input from the faculty by collecting discipline-specific planning assumptions. These assumptions were collected by convening the faculty in focus groups by college and school at the January 2007 Faculty Institute. Similar focus groups were conducted with non-academic staff to solicit their assumptions about the future of the university. Each area vice president and direct-report to the President was requested to submit assumptions to the Steering Committee as well. Throughout the development of the AMP, the Steering Committee has vetted its work with the Provost's Council. The Provost, the Provost's Council, and the Steering Committee developed four planning assumptions ("givens") and their related implications.



1. ***TSU will receive no exponential increase of state funding, although there will be increases from available special performance-based funding rewards and growth in in-state student enrollment.***

The implications of this assumption include:

Enrollment growth must be a major factor in selecting new academic programs; our enrollment must grow, including through improved retention, to increase enrollment-based state funding; our fundraising must be increased; our available resources must be used more efficiently and effectively; our performance and outcomes must be improved to take advantage of any new or growing performance-based funding mandates (federal; state; private); our research grants should be aligned with academic initiatives and support for grant funding initiatives must be improved.

2. ***TSU will not abandon its land grant mission.***

The implications of this assumption include:

Our land grant mission commits us to integrate research, education and public service and opens up more opportunities in each of these areas; our connecting academic and other activities to doing land grant service could be very distinguishing for TSU; our academic programs may need to be more cross-disciplinary in specific areas to take advantage of our land grant status; our land grant-based academic programs may need to be a focus for academic reorganization, future programming and funding opportunities; and our land grant mission and other access initiatives can be enhanced by distance education.

3. ***TSU will have a downtown campus serving a growing constituency that works there and it will operate within a greater University construct.***

The implications of this assumption include:

Our downtown campus is seen as an integral part of the University; our terminology should be intentional to emphasize the one university concept; our government, business, and health care programs will be important focuses in downtown; our downtown campus will have strong evening, weekend, and other alternative programs with strong support services; and our overall support services will need to be scaled, coordinated and distributed across campuses to avoid unnecessary or ineffective duplication, while allowing for areas of specialty at locations.

4. ***TSU needs to grow in enrollment in order to be a recognized player in State-wide initiatives to enhance educational access and outcomes for Tennessee residents.***

The implications of this assumption include:

Our growth should: guide resource allocation; impact facilities and space demands, but those specifics will depend on the mix and profiles of students and programs that fulfill this growth; take into account the future Tennessee job market (or how that job market is desired to be changed); and increase bachelor's degrees for undergraduates from Tennessee, while establishing growth goals that transcend the current political climate.

The President reaffirmed the planning assumption about growth, pointing out that while African Americans will remain the majority, the highest rate of increase will likely be Hispanic students. He also pointed out that TSU will continue to appeal to first generation students.

A draft report was made available and reactions were sought from stakeholders, including a Town Hall meeting. The draft report was edited in form, but not substance, by the Pappas Group.

The AMP provides guidance for the period 2008 - 2028 and beyond. The plan delineates the University's academic, research, and service priorities and, thus, will guide all other planning processing. (See Section VII.B for details of other planning processes)

The AMP describes the current profile, as well as the opportunities and challenges arising from the environment within which the University now operates. The plan identifies priority "academic focus areas"; "cross-cutting focus areas"; a process for identifying a limited number of "signature academic programs"; and productivity standards for programs to meet. Finally, the AMP recognizes and addresses academic support, faculty and staff development, student support, and resource development as critical to the University.

We began this process uncertain about where the journey would take us. With the help of many people and the opportunity provided to all stakeholders to participate, it has not been a lonely journey. The process has been transparent and has been guided throughout by data and information. Thus we are confident that we have arrived at a good first destination point: the report itself. Now our destiny will be determined by our success at reaching the various destination points spelled out in the report: the implementation stage.

## **II. DATA AND DATA/OTHER ANALYSIS**

### **A. Institutional Analysis**

#### **1. *University-wide Enrollment, Graduation, and Retention***

The Steering Committee examined data for the past six years. These data reveal that first-time freshmen enrollment has remained relatively constant at about 1,200. Tennessee freshmen come almost exclusively from Davidson and Shelby counties, with TSU drawing very few students from its contiguous counties. The number of applications has actually declined, while the percent of accepted students who enroll has increased. Total undergraduate enrollment has also remained relatively consistent, ranging from a high of 7,239 (2002) to a low of 7,036 (2005). Distribution of students by class year has also changed little.

The undergraduate/graduate student mix has remained constant at 80% undergraduate to 20% graduate. Graduate enrollment, excluding 2002, has been consistently within the range of 1,843 to 1,906 students. Master's programs account for about 62% of graduate enrollment. Doctoral enrollment has been steadily increasing, from a low of 213 students (2002) to a high of 342 students (2006). The number of non-degree seeking graduate students has been steadily decreasing.

The distributions of students by age, race, gender, and full-time/part-time status have all remained constant. Approximately 33% of all students are 25 years of age or older, with most of these in the 25-35 age range. The majority of older students are graduate students, with only about 15% of undergraduate students being over the age of 25. The undergraduate student population is 81% Black, 16% White and 3% other races. The graduate student population is 55% Black, 41% White, and 4% other races. These distributions have generally remained steady although enrollment of Asian students has been trending downward. By gender, 65% of undergraduates are female; 35% are male. The graduate student population is 70% female and 30% male. While the

female distribution is higher than national averages, it is more typical of HBCU institutions. Finally, 82% of the undergraduate students attend full-time and 18% attend part-time. For graduate students, only 32% are full-time, with 68% being part-time.

The fall-to-fall retention rate for first-time freshman has declined over the past six years from a high of 78% (2003) to a low of 71% (2007). The persistence-to-graduation rate (6 year rates) has also declined, ranging from 48% (cohort year 1997) to 42% (cohort year 2001).

Analysis of these data and demographic data supports our goal of adding 3,000 additional students by 2015, with an increase in the proportion of graduate students to 25% of the total enrollment of 12,000. We see opportunities to break out of a non-growth enrollment environment (with its negative consequences for growth in state formula funding) by implementing the AMP. Specifically, we believe TSU should develop and implement a sophisticated and comprehensive Enrollment Management Plan that results in:

- Continued access, especially for undergraduates, to underserved populations, including Hispanic students and males.
- Increasing the proportion of out-of-state students in selected programs.
- Increasing the number of undergraduate transfers, focusing on productive partnerships (for example, with seamless 2+2 matriculated programs) with Middle Tennessee Community College students and graduates.
- Increasing the number of nontraditional aged students from the Middle Tennessee region, especially those who already have earned some college credits.
- Increasing the number of students enrolled in on-line or hybrid degree programs.
- Increasing the number of degree-seeking international students.
- Increasing the number of graduate students with assistantships/fellowships.
- Increasing the proportion of full-time graduate students.
- Increasing the retention and graduation rates.

The Enrollment Management Plan (See also Section VII.B.6) will have action steps for each of these goals.

## 2. *Academic Program Enrollment and Graduates*

Degree productivity is one of the most significant factors by which the University is measured by THEC, TBR, and the numerous ranking organizations. For THEC and TBR, degree granting programs are expected to maintain the following average number of degrees per year over a five-year period: 10 for undergraduate programs; 5 for master's programs; and 3 for doctoral programs.

The number of undergraduate degrees awarded annually for the period August 2001 through May 2007 has remained fairly constant at around 1,100 undergraduate and graduate degrees at about 481. The **College of Arts and Sciences** awards the largest number of undergraduate degrees, with 35% of its degrees being the Arts and Sciences general baccalaureate degree. Seven degree programs in that College average 10 or fewer degrees awarded per year: Africana Studies, Art, Foreign Languages, History, Mathematics, Music, and Physics. Four more programs average between 10 and 20: Chemistry, Political Science, Social Work, and Sociology. English averages

22 degrees; the three remaining programs produce in excess of 30 degrees: Biology; Criminal Justice; and Speech Communication and Theater.

The **College of Business** has consistently produced about 200 degrees per year, although two of its four programs have seen significant declines in the number of degrees per year: the B.B.A. in Accounting, which averages 35 degrees over the period, and the B.B.A. in Economics and Finance, which averages 16 degrees. Business Information Systems has a record of uneven production but averages 42 degrees. The Business Administration program awards in excess of 100 degrees.

The number of degrees awarded by the **College of Health Sciences** has fluctuated from a high of 121 (2002) to a low of 91 (2004). Two of its eight programs produce fewer than 10 degrees: the B.S. program in Medical Technology and the B.S. program in Dental Hygiene; the remaining undergraduate programs produce from 10 to 16 degrees. The A.S.S. degree in Dental Hygiene produces almost 30 degrees. The baccalaureate degree in health sciences produced 24 degrees in its third year of operation.

The **School of Nursing** retains consistent enrollment and graduation figures, especially at the associate degree level, producing an average of 118 undergraduate degrees.

Having phased out the bachelor's program in special education, the **College of Education** offers two undergraduate degree programs: Psychology and Human Performance and Sport Science, with just over 20 degrees a year, and the psychology program averages about 70 degrees.

The **College of Engineering, Technology and Computer Science** has seen significant decline, from a high of 133 degrees (2004) to a low in 2007 of 76 degrees: Computer Science (35 degrees) and Electrical Engineering (29 degrees) produce the largest number of undergraduate degrees, while both Mechanical Engineering and Aeronautical and Industrial Technology graduate an average of 12 students each, with Civil Engineering graduating an average of 5.

In the **School of Agriculture and Consumer Sciences**, the Early Childhood Education program has awarded an average of 7 degrees per year, while Agricultural Sciences has produced an average of 10 degrees. Family and Consumer Sciences has produced an average of 25 degrees per year for the same period.

At the graduate level, the largest number of degrees is awarded by the College of Education, with an annual average of 295. Administration and Supervision averages 160; Curriculum and Instruction averages 78; Elementary Education averages 22; Special Education averages 20; and Health, Physical Education and Recreation averages 15. Psychology averages 39 degrees when all of its degree options are combined. The second largest producer of graduate degrees are the Institute of Government and the College of Arts and Sciences, with 31 degrees each per year, followed by the College of Business with 30 degrees, the College of Health Sciences with 23 degrees, the College of Engineering with 12 degrees, the School of Nursing with 8 degrees, and the School of Agriculture and Consumer Sciences with 5 degrees. In the College of Arts and Sciences, the Biological Sciences programs produce an average of 11 degrees; Criminal Justice and English produce an average of 6 degrees, and three programs produce an average of 3 or fewer graduate degrees: Chemistry, Mathematics, and Music Education.

An analysis of these data suggest that our resources are spread too thinly over a significant number of programs that produce relatively few graduates. (See also Section IV. B).

## B. Consultant Analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT)

After conducting numerous focus groups and interviews, as well as reviewing considerable internal and external data and documentation, the Pappas Group provided the following analysis:

### 1. *TSU Strengths*

TSU has some strong **academic programs** (e.g., Business and Health Sciences). Student enrollment is sufficient to support a relatively broad array of academic programs. A core of dedicated and talented **faculty** is committed to teaching and learning in a relatively **collegial faculty environment** and **vibrant campus community**, with some pockets of **funded research** activity. The campus and its facilities are attractive and the location of Nashville is a competitive advantage.

### 2. *TSU Weaknesses*

Academic program offerings have breadth but limited depth. There is an absence of an **academic program priority setting** process and little link to the budget allocation/reallocation process. There is not a culture of academic planning, budget reallocation, or of eliminating low producing programs. An inadequate proportion of state **budget** is allocated to instruction, and a high proportion to administration support, compared to TBR average.

There are a relatively large number of schools and colleges for the size of the institution and uneven strength in the colleges. The institution's **standards for scholarship** for graduate faculty (especially those teaching in doctoral programs) need to be strengthened, concurrent with addressing doctoral faculty workloads, incentives, services and graduate research assistants. **Faculty workloads** leave limited time for research/creative work/community engagement.

A poor **service** towards students is tolerated, and administrative processes to support the needs of faculty and academic administrators are weak. The academic program review process is too slow and bureaucratic at both the institution and TBR levels to respond to market needs.

There are inadequate student **scholarships** and inadequate number/funding for graduate assistants. There is a low level of competitive research funding.

### 3. *TSU Opportunities*

TSU has the opportunity to become Nashville's public university of choice through the quality of its academic programs, research, and service to the community, contributing to, and capitalizing on, Nashville's growth and attractiveness through relevant academic programs and greater community engagement. Both campus locations can be optimized by realigning program offerings at each. Retention and graduation rates can be improved by changing the campus culture to a service orientation committed to student success. TSU's resource base can be diversified through external funding and entrepreneurial activity. Academic programs can be strengthened by allocating a greater proportion of the budget to instruction, and by greater creativity and flexibility concerning policy interpretations provided by the TBR.

#### 4. *TSU Threats*

The University has an uneven **reputation** for academic quality. There is **competition** from other TBR universities and from independent colleges in Nashville and in the region. **Resources** are too limited, especially as enrollment has not grown, to accomplish the Mission and Vision. TSU struggles to compete for faculty, particularly in high demand fields, with relatively low salaries and relatively high workloads. There are not enough full-time faculty to accomplish the Mission and Vision. Some programs have poor pass rates on major field test. TSU has not fully overcome history and **historical biases**.

#### C. Career Demand Analysis

Tennessee job markets reflect national shifts from manufacturing to services, a trend that is likely to escalate with service-sector jobs expected to grow three times faster than manufacturing and industrial sector jobs. In Tennessee, opportunities are projected in business, government, health care, education, and computer professions. Professional and business services are expected to be particularly strong in Davidson, Rutherford, Shelby and Knox counties. Similar trends are expected nationwide and even globally, with additional needs in customer service, foreign language, engineering and technology, and banking and financial management.

In addition to the technical skills and knowledge required in the employment areas identified above, future employment and professional opportunities will require strong analytic skills along with skills in communicating, listening, problem-solving, teamwork, technology applications, human management, and mathematics.

Analysis of these trends indicates that the AMP must be responsive both in the curriculum offered and the pedagogy utilized. The new economy demands that students be prepared in new ways, with an emphasis on cross-cutting global skills and knowledge.

### III. TSU MISSION, VISION, CORE VALUES AND ACADEMIC VISION STATEMENT

#### A. University's Mission Statement

Tennessee State University, a Historically Black College/University (HBCU), fosters scholarly inquiry and research, life-long learning, and a commitment to service.

#### B. University's Vision Statement

Tennessee State University aspires to achieve national and international prominence, building on its heritage and preparing leaders for a global society.

#### C. University's Core Values

Tennessee State University maintains the following core values:

- Excellence
- Learning
- Accountability
- Integrity
- Shared governance
- Diversity
- Service

#### D. Academic Vision Statement

Aligned with the University mission and core values, the academic vision of Tennessee State University (TSU) affirms the importance of teaching, learning, research and service. TSU aspires to build on its historic mission by extending its geographic reach. Because of Tennessee State University's historic past and its present reputation as a top-tier public Historically Black College and University (HBCU), the institution's geographic reach extends to traditional African-American students and other under-represented populations throughout the State of Tennessee and the nation who value a quality education. Because of its location in Tennessee's capital city and in the heart of the mid-South, TSU's primary growth area is in the middle Tennessee region from which the University's undergraduate and graduate programs draw both traditional and non-traditional students of all races. The University seeks to extend its reach to contiguous counties in Kentucky, Alabama, Mississippi, and Georgia, and through distance education and other alternative delivery systems, the University extends a limited number of high quality programs, globally. Thus, by the year 2015, the University will have a student population of 12,000 which represents an optimum enrollment target that is based on student demographics, academic program demand, and capacity and mission-based target groups.

TSU offers academic programs, including bachelor's degrees, master's degrees, and doctoral degrees. It offers these degrees to students who are prepared to succeed. Furthermore, the University is committed to providing access to higher education through alternative modes of delivery to the adult and working population of Middle Tennessee.

Priority will be given to the development or expansion of academic programs that have a direct relationship to the career opportunities in the region, to liberal arts degrees that have demonstrated excellence and/or a demonstrated track record of preparing students for careers or graduate school, and to science and technology degree programs that will address the professional training needs of the nation. TSU will be primarily an undergraduate institution (approximately 75%); its graduate programs will place a priority on serving those students living/working in the region. Workforce demand and changing demographics will guide the University in its exploration to establish a professional school.

Quality will be the hallmark of all TSU programs. To achieve quality in degree programming, the division of Academic Affairs has determined that it will build on existing program strengths, and identify and develop signature degrees that enhance the academic reputation of the University. Additionally, TSU will establish accountability measures to assess program viability, while simultaneously spurring enrollment growth. The expansion of institutional data collection and analysis will assist in gauging the progress and productivity of degree programs. More importantly, data will guide decision-making relevant to program quality, viability, and resource allocation. Those programs with poor outcomes will be given specific targets and timetables for improvement.

Priority will be given to the teaching and learning mission of TSU. A focus on instruction requires that the institution maintain intellectual enthusiasm which demands active faculty participation in research and other scholarly endeavors. This scholarship will assist in keeping the curriculum up to date and it will also stimulate faculty who are simultaneously teaching and conducting research. In the area of research, the University will continue to support its research agenda which extends over the entire curriculum. The University will broaden its commitment to teaching and learning through support for faculty development and research, and through the assessment of the quality and relevance of the student learning experience. Thus, the research enterprise will be supported and expanded in areas where there's demonstrated external support, especially for competitive funding. Research will be closely integrated with both the graduate and undergraduate programs.



TSU will also extend its service and community engagement activities where they are central to the academic program. The University will continue to be an integral contributor to Nashville's cultural, economic and civic communities. Faculty, staff, and student engagement in the community will build mutually beneficial relationships through service and research activities. Student support activities will be conducted in accordance with best practices to maximize academic success.

TSU will allocate in excess of 50% of its budget to the academic enterprise and will re-engineer its academic support services (including student services and financial aid) to increase effectiveness, efficiency, and student satisfaction.

TSU's overall academic vision is to provide select high quality academic programs that are responsive to the needs of the region and the nation. It also recognizes that a culture of continuous assessment and improvement is integral to the success of the University.

#### E. Goals

The following goals emerge from the AMP and will require detailed action plans. TSU will:

1. Provide quality academic programming, using higher education best practices and benchmarking its excellence to peer and aspirant institutions. (Related Sections of the Master Plan: III, IV.A, IV.B, V, VI.A)
2. Implement strategies to promote a culture of customer service by adopting a zero tolerance policy for poor service. (Related Sections of the Master Plan: VI.B, VI.D.)
3. Serve the educational needs of the State of Tennessee and the Nation by expanding its enrollment to 12,000 students by 2015 and by achieving an undergraduate-graduate student population mix of 75-25%. (Related Section of the Master Plan: III.D)
4. Provide academic programs that have a direct relationship to regional and national career opportunities. (Related Sections of the Master Plan: II.B; III.D; III.E; V.B-E)
5. Continue to expand its academic outreach initiative by providing access to higher education through alternative modes of delivery to the adult and working populations. (Related Sections of the Master Plan: III.D; III.E.2; VII.B.6)
6. Provide academic programs in the pure and applied sciences, health/education, and enterprise/leadership which address the professional training needs of the nation. (Related Sections of the Master Plan: V.B, VII.B)
7. Expand service and community engagement activities that are directly related to its academic programming. (Related Sections of the Master Plan: III.D; V.D)
8. Expand its research initiatives related to its academic programming. (Related Sections of the Master Plan: III.D; IV.D; V.; VI.C)
9. Provide academic programs in the liberal arts that exhibit demonstrated excellence and/or a demonstrated track record of preparing students for careers or graduate school. (Related Sections of the Master Plan: III.D; V.F)
10. Re-engineer its infrastructure to support its academic, research and service endeavors. (Related Sections of the Master Plan: VI.A; VI.C; VI.D)

#### IV. ACADEMIC QUALITY AND REPUTATION

We will build our reputation on the quality of our academic programs, on the quality of a targeted and integrated research enterprise, and on the effectiveness and efficiency of our academic support services. In all of these areas, we will exceed the expectations of the TBR, our students, and our stakeholders.

##### A. Faculty Quality

We regard faculty quality as essential to the fulfillment of our mission, vision, and academic vision. Consequently, we call on the Provost and Deans to ensure, without exception, that TSU only appoints, retains, promotes, and tenures exemplary teacher/scholars. These faculty must be led by well-trained, well-supported, and regularly evaluated academic leaders who are held accountable for results. In addition, the Provost and Deans must ensure that faculty have: workloads that permit them to be teachers/scholars and to be able to provide students with the support they need to succeed; sufficient professional development opportunities to stay current with their fields, with pedagogy, and with technology; and a faculty policy and procedures environment that provides faculty clear expectations. Finally, the Provost and the School of Graduate Studies and Research should review, enhance, implement, and monitor the standards and requirements for graduate faculty appointment, especially those for the doctoral programs.

##### B. Academic Program Quality

We believe our academic programs must become increasingly productive in generating graduates and must be characterized by student learning that is assessed continuously to improve both curriculum and pedagogy, including the use of cutting-edge learning technology. Specifically, we recommend that:

- **The Provost implement minimum degree production requirements, to be phased in by 2015, with the normal minimum standard being 1.5 times the average number of degrees identified by THEC (THEC standards based on 5-year averages: undergraduate majors, 10 degrees per year; masters, 5 degrees; doctoral, 3 degrees).**

This requirement will be necessary to ensure that our academic programs have the resources required for excellence since the Tennessee Higher Education Funding Formula is based substantially on student credit hours generating faculty positions. Therefore, continuing low producing majors results in high producing majors having fewer faculty hires than they generate and fewer other academic resources (such as library materials and learning technology) because they are spread thinly over too many majors. In addition, the existence of low producing majors and the attempt to justify all those majors hurts TSU's public image and raises questions about its overall quality.

As a normal practice, the Provost should set the expectations for program productivity; provide a reasonable timeframe and reasonable levels of support for programs to reach these expectations; and then implement an automatic "phase out" mode unless there are compelling reasons not to do so. Those reasons could include: data showing that the need for those graduates will be increasing dramatically in the near future, and the major provides convincing evidence that it has a plan to respond; data indicating that the major is a low-cost complement to an area of focus for TSU; or that data demonstrate that the major is in high demand but has little production because of accreditation or resource restraints.

- **The Provost and Deans hold academic leaders and faculty accountable to implement the assessment of student learning in the general education curriculum (GEC), in linking the GEC skill sets to upper division courses, and in assessing upper level major courses learning (including using external evaluation instruments and exceeding accreditation requirements).**

In addition to ensuring a learning assessment environment that informs curricular and pedagogical change, TSU will expect departments to provide students with diverse learning experiences (such as internships, co-op experiences, service learning, and undergraduate research). TSU will also expect the Libraries and Media Centers to provide innovative information and multi-media technologies and to provide instruction that prepares students to be information literate, life-long learners, and will be assessed accordingly.

- **The Provost and the Deans increase the expectations of, and support for, the use of technology in teaching.**

To accomplish the increased use of effective learning technology, TSU will: establish a more centralized focus on technology support services; increase its investment in learning technology; and expand its opportunities for faculty training and professional development in learning technology.

#### C. Student Quality

We expect TSU to maintain its historic commitment to access yet, at the same time, to increase the quality of its incoming students and its graduates.

- TSU should, by 2015, enroll a freshman class in which at least 75% of the students do not require remediation and should graduate students above the TBR average.
- TSU should, by 2015, revise its graduate admissions criteria so that: at least 60% of graduate students are unconditional admits and graduates should perform above national averages on certification and state board examinations.
- TSU will increase its employment surveys (including graduate admissions) for both undergraduate and graduate students to ensure that we are producing quality graduates who can compete for top positions in their chosen fields.

#### D. Research Quality

We anticipate that the research agenda will be expanded as a result of the AMP and will be closely aligned to the academic focus and signature areas (See Section V.). Research that is interdisciplinary, that leverages existing resources, and provides new funding opportunities will be supported.

The Provost, Vice President for Research, Deans, and other academic leaders will need to collaborate to enhance the quality of the research program so that it ranks with its peer institutions in research productivity. This productivity will be measured by: the number of publications in peer reviewed journals; the number and amount of grants sought and awarded; the number of patents secured; and the amount of technology transferred.

#### E. Academic Staff Quality

We know that TSU is dependent on the quality of its academic staff to achieve its AMP and to accomplish its overall mission and vision. Consequently, we call on the President, all Vice Presidents and executive officers to ensure, without exception, that TSU only appoints and retains appropriately qualified and talented academic staff. The leadership must also hold all supervisors accountable for the performance of their staff (particularly for their customer service performance) and for providing appropriate training.

No later than 2015, TSU should be able to demonstrate the pervasiveness of quality in its faculty, staff, students, and academic program and research.

### V. **ACADEMIC PROGRAM PRIORITIES AND DEVELOPMENT**

#### A. Introduction and Definitions

While we recognize that establishing academic priorities and assigning disproportionate resources to those priorities are difficult tasks and are not part of TSU's previous academic culture, we believe they are central aspects of any AMP. In this section, we introduce three innovative concepts: Major Focus Area; Signature Academic Programs; and Cross-Cutting Focus Areas.

To identify these three areas, we examined an extensive array of data, both internal and external, including enrollment and degrees awarded by major; student performance on licensure, certification, and major field tests; local, state, regional, national and international data on employment forecasts; external analyses of higher education trends; and surveys completed by TSU's academic deans.

**The term *Major Focus Area* refers to a broad academic discipline or set of disciplines within which the University will concentrate its efforts and resources to achieve a recognizable level of excellence.** It does not correspond to any particular academic major, even if the Major Focus Area uses a term that is also reflected in the title of an academic college or school or major.

The three major focus areas we identified are:

- Enterprise and Leadership
- Health and Education
- Pure and Applied Sciences

Within the Major Focus Areas, the AMP provides for the identification of Signature Academic Programs. ***Signature Academic Programs* are specific undergraduate and/or graduate degree programs, upon which the University will focus its reputation; these programs will receive resources and other considerations to achieve an exceptional level of excellence.** The AMP itself does not identify the Signature Academic Programs. It does, however, provide a process for identifying three (3) initial Signature Academic Programs, including the submission of proposals assessed by an external panel against a set of criteria identified in the plan. Additional Signature Academic Programs may be added or removed throughout the term of the AMP.

***Cross-cutting Focus Areas* represent academic, intellectual or research issues or strategies that cut across academic disciplines.**

The cross-cutting focus areas are:

- Quality Enhancement Plan
- Critical and Creative Inquiry
- Academy of Leadership
- The Engaged University
- Honors College

This section of the AMP also discusses the exploration of a new professional school and the impact of the AMP on disciplines not identified in the areas above.

## B. Major Focus Areas

### 1. *Enterprise and Leadership*

#### (a) Description/Thrust

Nashville (and the middle Tennessee area) is a major business and communications hub in the southeast, as well as being the state capital. TSU is, then, in a unique position to develop a major thrust in economic enterprise, entrepreneurship, and leadership. Rather than rely on outmoded, traditional concepts of business, sector distinctions, or leadership, TSU will chart a new direction for students by emphasizing leadership studies for the kind of interconnected economies – and world - the next generation will inherit.

In the new millennium, leaders must be able to navigate public, private, and non-profit sectors as American business increasingly transcends those boundaries. Leadership success means understanding and mastering what makes business succeed, no matter if that “business” is philanthropic, a public library, or the next *Google*. Leaders with the right mix of skills, knowledge and competencies are in short supply (especially because of the large numbers of projected executive retirements by 2015) and can, therefore, select premium jobs.

Currently, each College, School or department regards leadership through its own prism. However, today’s students will enter a world where leaders will, for example, need to: bridge sectors such as public-private-nonprofit, solving problems too large for one sector alone to manage effectively; learn to negotiate virtual organizations, business and economic enterprises to accomplish objectives; consider global perspectives regarding environmental sustainability when they evaluate state or local economic development initiatives; and consider global standards such as responsible stewardship of resources and international standards of justice and professional ethics.

#### (b) Rationale

Students who choose leadership as a focal area of competency development need to pursue it in a variety of settings. TSU should offer its students, an innovative and integrated leadership education by:

- *Creating programs which stress leadership in a variety of professions (e.g., government, agriculture, education); applications in and across a range of settings including public, private, non-profit sectors; and in a variety of contexts ranging from local community leadership to global or transnational settings.*

- *Ensuring that the leadership taught is ethical leadership.* This approach builds on the College of Business' vision statement: to educate "graduates who are ethical and productive participants in the global marketplace." Integrity, ethical conduct and accountability are also cited as core values or codes of conduct for many of these professions (see for examples, the American Society for Public Administration and the American Association of Fundraising Professionals).
- *Conveying that global contextualization will frame how leaders need to think, define problems, conceive alternatives, and use different frames of reference to solve problems creatively.*

(c) Potential Programming Areas

The Master of Business Administration (which has international components in every course) and the undergraduate concentrations in international business and supply chain management already exhibit some of the elements above. Also, professional programs in education, public administration, agriculture, nursing and health sciences address leadership within the context of their career-based perspectives, while political science and sociology explore the nature and development of leadership through their research and teaching. This level of interest in leadership cuts across the University and could become integrated rather than siloed.

TSU could develop a non-profit management curriculum and re-direct current leadership components. Courses in health economics could be offered to students in non-business areas to provide advanced offerings in health policy and administration. Interdisciplinary collaborations could bring together education administrators (students and non-students) with those from business and government to explore innovative work processes and methods to improve service quality through leadership.

(d) Implications

(i) Programmatic Aspects

Programs already offering leadership courses would need to incorporate global paradigmatic thinking, ethics perspectives and cross-sector or interdisciplinary/inter-professional treatments. In many cases, classroom and outside the classroom experiences can be re-conceptualized to teach these broader and deeper aspects of leadership. Symposia, collaborative learning exercises between classes from different professions/departments, and service learning experiences could be linked to a given leadership topic. Ultimately, however, an integrated interdisciplinary curriculum would provide TSU the greatest opportunity for distinctiveness.

(ii) Resources

Additional resources to add specialized faculty may be required. In other academic areas, current resources redirected should be adequate. In some units, adding a leadership component might require additional resources or the reallocation of resources.

(e) Partnerships

Existing partnerships between the College of Business with Dell, Boeing and Microsoft target leadership. Other COB partnerships with the World Trade Council of Middle Tennessee and the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce promote leadership, local and international business. In

Public Service and Urban Affairs, the partnership with American Humanics already promotes the development of leadership through community involvement and work experiences. These collaborations could be replicated by other fields. Service learning initiatives may also offer opportunities to pursue leadership study. Semesters or mini-semesters abroad, such as the Jamaica Study Abroad Program, would introduce students to cultural reference points for managing business. Similar programs will need to be added and integrated.

## 2. *Health and Education*

### (a) Description/Thrust

The Health and Education area focuses on the overall well-being of the general public, including programs which address the mental, physical, social and educational needs of individuals and groups. At TSU and in the surrounding community, health and education are inextricably tied.

TSU is uniquely positioned to address personnel needs in critical shortage areas. Our programs in Health and Education consistently prepare outstanding professionals who are able to make a difference in communities both locally and globally. Toward this end, TSU will continue to bolster existing programs, while developing new ones.

### (b) Rationale

Tennessee ranked 47th in overall health outcomes (United Health Foundation – American’s Health Ranking) in 2007, yet the Chamber of Commerce’s Healthcare Council states proudly that, “Nashville is widely recognized, nationally and internationally, as a health care industry capital and is well known for nurturing dynamic, innovative health care companies.” This dichotomy, between a robust health care economy and poor health outcomes, provides a rich opportunity for TSU to make a difference.

Likewise, the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth (<http://www.state.tn.us/tccy/kc.html>) reports that Tennessee ranks: 46th in percent of persons age 25 and over with a high school diploma; 41st in percent of adults with a bachelor's degree; 50th in total education spending per capita; and 49th in elementary and secondary education spending. It is estimated that 20% to 39% of Tennesseans are functionally illiterate, and 74% of the state's prisoners failed to complete high school. It is critical that we continue to emphasize the importance of education and make a difference by contributing to a more educated Tennessee.

TSU has been instrumental in providing the workforce for health care facilities and schools throughout the state, responding to the documented shortages. Health and Education can expand even further, with creative collaborative efforts that would be innovative and distinctive.

### (c) Potential Programming Areas

TSU currently has strong programs with the potential to grow. At the undergraduate level, these include health sciences, psychology, and teacher certification. At the graduate level, these include education, nursing, psychology and public health (anticipated 2009).

The primary goal of this focus area, as in the other focus areas, is to emphasize flexible, agile, cross disciplinary curricula that recognize national and international areas of emerging interest and that prepare graduates to contribute meaningfully. Priority will be given to developing programs that use existing resources to create new areas of student interest, including certificate, minor, and major programs. One primary guideline for proposed new programs will be how they involve



disciplines across the campus to meet the emerging needs of both our national and global societies in health and education.

A long term goal might be the establishment of a center for urban health and education, including clinics and a faculty practice plan to provide health and educational services to the community; to provide opportunities for student learning under the supervision of faculty; and to become a center for research, training and best practices. Ultimately, this facility would be self-supporting.

(d) Implications

(i) Programmatic Aspects

Future programs should emphasize interdisciplinary collaboration, such as:

- Rehabilitation Sciences – collaboration among speech pathology, occupational therapy, art, music, engineering, physical therapy, psychology and social work.
- Neurosciences – collaboration among biology, education, psychology, engineering and health sciences.
- Public Health – collaboration among health sciences, psychology, sociology, education, intelligence studies, and nursing.
- Urban Health and Education – collaboration among Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Agriculture and Consumer Sciences, Health Sciences, Education.

(ii) Resources

Resources will be needed to ensure that the student/faculty ratios meet accrediting agencies requirements. Resources will also be needed to provide cutting edge learning resources.

(e) Partnerships

Health and education programs traditionally have many partnerships in the community, particularly for internships and student training. TSU can build and expand on these to form creative partnerships between the public and private school systems, businesses related to health and education, and hospitals and other health care facilities.

3. *Pure and Applied Sciences*

(a) Description/Thrust

TSU has long offered traditional science and technology disciplines such as biology, chemistry, the agricultural majors, and the engineering majors (civil, electrical, architectural, mechanical and technical). All of these areas have generally stood proudly independent, have generally been not-so-proudly underfunded, and have generally seen their enrollments rise and fall with the employment prospects of their graduates. The nation has made the expansion of STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) graduates a priority. The inescapable truth of a ferociously changing global and technological society faces all of us daily. Nanotechnology, barely nascent, has already escaped from the laboratory, while the nanoecology disciplines needed to control it have yet to be born. MySpace and its children engage our children in social and commercial interactions below the awareness of most parents. New virtual worlds are being created apace, while most universities are considering addressing them anon. So, for the disciplines related to science and technology at TSU to flourish and, more importantly, to have relevance, they must reflect this global, fluid, interactive Web n.0 reality.

Hence, the primary goal for this focus area is that: *TSU will emphasize flexible, agile, cross-disciplinary curriculums that recognize national and international areas of emerging STEM interest and prepare graduates to contribute meaningfully in these areas.*

(b) Rationale

In many forums (including political/governmental and academic) it is believed “that excellence in STEM education at all levels, among all populations, is vital to our nation’s long-term economic prosperity, global competitiveness and homeland security” (STEM Educational Coalition<sup>2</sup>). However, American students perform poorly in science and technology areas. The NAEP Nation’s Report Cards for math and science assessment in 2005 showed only 18% of our 12<sup>th</sup> graders as “proficient,” and our 8<sup>th</sup> graders were second from the bottom in science among G-8 countries in 2003 (Trends in International Mathematics and Sciences Study). To compound the challenge, Tennessee students are below national averages in math and science tests.

(c) Potential Programming Areas

American students often avoid science and technology areas because they lack adequate preparation. TSU shares this experience: many of our traditional science and technology majors are low-producing or not much above. For example, in the School of Agriculture and Consumer Sciences, only the Family and Consumer Science degree has demonstrated strong degree production. However, considered in tandem, the School and the Institute of Agricultural and Environmental Research present a very high capacity to conduct research and provide experiential learning opportunities for students in such cross-disciplinary or “mash-up” areas as food safety and human nutrition, biotechnology and biosecurity, environmental protection and remediation, geographic information systems, and agricultural economics and policy. TSU must develop these interdisciplinary areas for its students.

While some traditional engineering programs have experienced enrollment challenges, cross-disciplinary programs, such as business information systems and computer and information systems engineering, continue to attract students and place graduates in attractive positions. Homeland security initiatives, concerns over bioterrorism, potential threats to the food supply chain, and increasing awareness of environmental vulnerabilities all create a need for graduates with targeted skills. TSU must provide those to graduates.

All science and technology areas—including the agricultural sciences, biology, chemistry, mathematics, and engineering—will be reviewed and provided the following guidelines for new programs:

- (i) Use existing resources to create new opportunities for students, including certificate, minor and major programs.
- (ii) Involve disciplines across the university to meet the emerging STEM needs of national and global societies.

Examples of promising areas for future development include: human nutrition and food safety (health sciences, biology, and agriculture); environmental science (engineering, chemistry, and agriculture); biotechnology, bioenergy, and biosecurity (agriculture, biology, and engineering); and business intelligence, entrepreneurial gaming, and social networking and marketing (computer science, psychology, and business).

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<sup>2</sup> STEM Education Coalition’s November 9, 2007 letter to the House Subcommittee on Higher Education

(d) Implications

(i) Programmatic

Students live in a multi-disciplinary world better represented by the *taijitu* symbol for the swirling complementary forces of yin and yang than by the silo and fortress. Their programs of study should prepare them for this interactive world, requiring multiple skill sets and flexibility of mind rather than forcing them into programmatic templates and relying on them to recreate themselves in the world of work. Our programs will need to change substantially, as described above, to respond.

(ii) Resources

The combined resources already available in traditional programs will make offering some of these cross-disciplinary options possible. However, some additional resources will be necessary.

(e) Partnerships

The partnerships already established provide working models for developing new partnerships that could produce numerous dynamic certificate, minor and major programs of study. Agriculture and biology already cooperate for the PHD in biological sciences. Other such partnerships include the graduate degree in CISE (engineering, center of excellence) and the BIS undergraduate degree (business and computer science). Partnerships with external agencies and companies will need to be expanded.

C. Signature Academic Programs

Initially, TSU will identify three (3) Signature Academic Programs, but more may be identified in the future.

To identify Signature Academic Programs, the University will request proposals from current programs. The proposals will be evaluated and rank-ordered by a panel of external experts, using the criteria below, with the final decisions being made by the Provost and the President. Selected Signature Academic Programs will receive special funding to achieve the proposed levels of excellence.

The external panel, to be chosen by the Provost, will consist of five (5) experts: at least one will have been the Provost (or comparable academic officer) of an institution similar to TSU in size and program offerings; at least one will have served as a system academic officer or chancellor at a system comparable to the TBR or in a coordinating agency comparable to the THEC; one will have served as an academic dean; and two will be faculty members with expertise in program evaluation and/or community members with appropriate expertise.

The format for proposals will be finalized by the Provost's office within three (3) months of the adoption of this AMP. Proposals will need to demonstrate that a program has: (1) current, recognizable level of excellence; and (2) demonstrated potential to achieve an exceptional level of excellence.

- **Enrollment and Degree Productivity:** (1) Current: Meets or exceeds the minimum criteria defined by THEC, TBR, and TSU. (2) Potential: To sustain an enrollment that consistently exceeds these minimum criteria.
- **Student achievement and performance:** (1) Current: Clearly defined learning outcomes. An undergraduate program's students perform at least at the national norm and at least at levels consistent with peer institutions on major field tests, licensure or certification tests, or comparable standardized measures. A graduate program identifies appropriate student performance measures that allow comparison between its students and students in comparable programs at peer institutions and demonstrates that its students meet or exceed the performance measures of students in those programs. (2) Potential: Same as (1) except undergraduates should be able to perform significantly above national norms and significantly above those at peer institutions. Graduate students should perform significantly above those at peer institutions.
- **Student placement:** (1) Current: Demonstrates that at least 70% of its completers are employed in fields appropriate to their degrees or are enrolled in advanced degree programs within nine (9) months of graduation. (2) Potential: same as (1) above except at 85%.
- **Faculty scholarly productivity:** (1) Current: At least 60% of its faculty are active, productive scholars as determined by measures appropriate to the academic discipline such as refereed/juried publications and presentations or creative endeavors; participation in professional organizations at the state or national level; service as consultants to business, industry, and the corporate and non-profit sectors. (2) Potential: Same as (1) above except 85% of faculty show professional productivity, including some at an international level.
- **Academic reputation:** (1) Current: Evidence of at least a state or local reputation for excellence. (2) Potential: Regional and/or national and/or international reputation for excellence.
- **Program Partnerships:** (1) Current: Interdisciplinary academic partnerships created (or planned) within TSU or with other entities to support programs, utilizing resources effectively. (2) Potential: Partnerships both within and beyond TSU.
- **Resource Utilization:** (1) Current: Provides evidence of cost-effectiveness and sound utilization of resources. Faculty are active, successful grant writers and have secured external support. (2) Potential: Effective plan for use of additional resources and for additional faculty grant success.

Signature Academic Programs will undergo comprehensive review in year three by the Provost and in year five by an external panel to ensure that they are meeting goals established in the original proposal. Subsequently, the program will be evaluated every three years by a panel to confirm its status as a Signature Academic Program or to remove the designation. The report format and the mechanics of the review process will be formulated by the Provost's office within one year of the designation of the first Signature Academic Programs.

#### D. Cross-Cutting Focus Areas

We believe that a challenging intellectual and creative environment that fully engages students is central to student learning and to TSU's competitive future. Therefore, the AMP calls for Cross-Cutting Focus Areas to engage students as active and effective learners who can use information to construct new knowledge by interpreting accurately the excess of information they are exposed to on a

daily basis. By designing, developing, and implementing focal areas that span the disciplines, TSU will better prepare students for the unscripted challenges that their careers and lives will undoubtedly put on their future stages.

All the Cross-Cutting Focus Areas exist currently at TSU in one form or another, but none of them are yet highly developed nor yet fully integrated into the lives of all students. Yet each can provide students with lifelong learning preparation and can increase their competitiveness for careers or graduate schools through a myriad of planned and purposeful opportunities, such as: involvement in national competitions; study abroad and other international opportunities; discipline-based advanced study and research; and other opportunities to prepare the culturally competent leaders of tomorrow. We will establish a baseline for student engagement through the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and then look for continuous improvement each year both against our own baselines and the results from our peer and aspirant institutions.

### 1. *Quality Enhancement Plan*

As required for SACS reaccreditation, TSU is developing a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). The QEP will focus on integrating and reinforcing general education competencies through the upper level curricula. A specific competency or set of competencies will be chosen for initial implementation in 2010.

#### **Measures of Success:**

An exemplary response from SACS and positive faculty and student survey responses.

### 2. *Critical and Creative Inquiry*

Research is an essential skill for career success as well as a significant learning tool in the academic environment through the integration of research with teaching. National studies provide evidence of the effectiveness of undergraduate research on learning and also provide best practices. This cross-cutting area encourages students to be involved in substantive ways in research or creative activities (both independently and with faculty mentors), and provides opportunities for faculty to collaborate with students on research issues.

#### **Measures of Success:**

- (a) An increase in the number of courses which include a research-based requirement.
- (b) An increase in the number of students successfully completing research-inquiry-performance-activities as co-curricular activities.
- (c) Student satisfaction with research experiences will meet or exceed established baseline data.

### 3. *Academy of Leadership*

TSU has a historic commitment to developing its students as leaders. The purpose of the leadership initiative is the total development of students as leaders through academic, moral, civic and life-centered initiatives. The leadership opportunities within the Academy of Leadership will be designed to provide a link among the curricular, co-curricular, and service programs that are critical to the holistic development and growth of students as leaders. This emerging model for leadership development will be a collaborative effort with the corporate community, university faculty, staff, and students with designed courses, special programs, leadership opportunities, community service, and entrepreneurial experiences. Through the Academy of Leadership, students will be exposed to leadership models, issues, and real world organizational environments

where leadership skills are an essential component of success, They will, consequently, be empowered to solve complex problems with passion, integrity, and skill.

**Measures of Success:**

- (a) Meet or exceed established baseline leadership competencies (based on a review of the literature and best-practices).
- (b) An increase in the number of academic areas that include a leadership component formally or embedded in the curriculum.
- (c) A continuous growth in the number of students who participate in and complete the leadership academy.
- (d) Student satisfaction with the leadership initiative will meet or exceed established baseline data.

4. *The Engaged University*

To enhance academic quality and the synergistic relationship between curricular engagement, outreach and partnerships, and our commitment to service, we will seek the Carnegie Elective Classification of an Engaged University, as that designation is consistent with: our core values at TSU (including our commitments to social justice, inclusion, and community development); our existing curricular and programmatic strengths in service and service learning (including our initiatives led by the Center for Service Learning and Civic Engagement); and our role as the lead institution in the Tennessee Campus Compact.

The Carnegie designation has two elements: “curricular engagement” and “outreach and partnerships”. The AMP calls for TSU to seek both (although the activities are more important than the designation). Carnegie describes each, as:

- Curricular Engagement includes institutions where teaching, learning and scholarship engage faculty, students, and community in mutually beneficial and respectful collaboration. Their interactions address community-identified needs, deepen students’ civic and academic learning, enhance community well-being, and enrich the scholarship of the institution.
- Outreach and Partnerships includes institutions that provided compelling evidence of one or both of two approaches to community engagement. Outreach focuses on the application and provision of institutional resources for community use with benefits to both campus and community. Partnerships focus on collaborative interactions with community and related scholarship for the mutually beneficial exchange, exploration, and application of knowledge, information, and resources (research, capacity building, economic development, etc.).

We believe that the concepts of a community engaged university will prepare our students to compete effectively in the marketplace and to be active citizens in our global community.

**Measures of Success:**

- (a) Receiving the Carnegie designation of an Engaged University.
- (b) A measurable increase in the curricular and co-curricular opportunities for students to participate in: service learning and civic engagement; internship and co-op activities; and discipline-specific activities of engagement
- (c) Student satisfaction with engagement experiences will meet or exceed established baseline data.

## 5. *The Honors College*

To enhance further academic quality and to attract top students, TSU's nationally distinguished Honors Program will be strengthened and elevated to an Honors College. The focus will be on the recruitment, retention, and development of outstanding undergraduate students through providing a nurturing, yet rigorous and enriched academic experience in the culturally diverse environment. The Honors College will be a positive means of promoting faculty-student interaction with an innovative curriculum that challenges the brightest students through offering individualized academic program planning.

### **Measures of Success:**

- (a) The number of applications to the honors college; the number of students admitted to the honors college; the number of students maintaining honors college qualification criteria one year after admission; and the number of students to complete honor college requirements within 5 years will all meet or exceed established numeric goals.
- (a) Student satisfaction with the honors college experience will meet or exceed established baseline data.

## E. Establishment of a Professional School

As TSU plans for the future, it will explore developing a new professional school that is appropriate to the University's academic mission, that serves regional needs, and that is consistent with the AMP. Through this AMP, TSU is poised to enhance the quality of its students, faculty, and programs and is planning for strategic enrollment growth. Thus, a new professional school at TSU could serve to:

- Increase enrollment outside the traditional graduate degree programs.
- Extend the University's influence and raise its visibility and reputation.
- Build on current program strengths.
- Meet state and regional needs for well trained professionals.

The President and Provost will lead the initial discussions and explorations about establishing a new professional school. This planning process will include consultation with faculty and state and regional partners.

## F. Implications for Non-Major Focus Areas

We recognize and appreciate the importance of the arts and humanities to a student's education and to the life of the University, as these disciplines have played an important role throughout the University's history. Therefore, TSU will most certainly continue to offer traditional liberal arts programs and other mission-related programs which do not immediately appear related to the focus areas. Non-focus areas will be expected, however, to maintain enrollment and graduation levels which exceed the minimum productivity levels defined by THEC with the general expectation that such programs will, no later than the year 2015, produce 1.5 times the average number of degrees identified in the THEC guidelines.

We hope that the arts and humanities majors will be able to sustain and even increase enrollment in current programs and will play an increased role in the general education program, particularly when that is revised during the period of the AMP. If these programs experience inadequate enrollments and graduations, however, they ought to consider collaborative degree programs. When proposing the establishment of new programs, non-focus areas should consider cross-



disciplinary degrees that include collaboration with other arts and humanities programs or with the focus areas. For example, Technical Writing major could link with any or all of the major focus areas.

Non-focus areas will remain important components of the University as it strives to achieve and expand its mission, but they will need to become more innovative if they are to thrive in the new academic environment proposed in the AMP.

## **VI. INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **A. Academic Policies and Processes**

TSU aligns its internal policies with those of TBR and is judged, to some degree, by the quality of its policy implementation. So systematic oversight of the TSU compendium of policies will be an important step in implementing the AMP and in demonstrating our overall quality. We, therefore, recommend the designation of a position to coordinate University policy making and archiving. Other duties would include: minimizing the risks of non-compliance with both internal entities and external agencies; standardizing the policy format; improving the organization of current policy documents; outlining a clear process for submitting new policy and revising current policy; establishing a website that provides access to all University policies. It will also be the responsibility of this position to chair the University-wide policy review council which will examine annually all university policies.

To further assist with the management, evaluation, and monitoring of the considerable body of policies and regulations that guide the academic community, we recommend several Provost advisory committees or councils be established:

- The **Academic Planning Committee** will be charged with ensuring that new academic programming is aligned with the strategic direction set forth in the AMP (see Appendix 3 - Proposed Routing Procedure for Academic Proposals). This committee would also mediate the discussion about existing programs that do not meet the standards for continuation.
- The **Academic Policy Review Council** will be a sub-committee of the University-wide policy review council. The Provost will charge the Council with the annual examination of all academic policy (see Appendix 3 - Proposed Routing Procedure for Academic Policy). The Council's written report to the Provost should include recommendations for (1) eliminating policies that are no longer needed and (2) revising and improving existing policies, including the following priorities:
  - Faculty Handbook (needs to be made current).
  - Faculty merit, promotion, and tenure policies (need updating to reflect new mission and vision).
  - Faculty Workload Policy (needs a more liberal interpretation of TBR policy).
  - Graduate Faculty Designation Policy (needs strengthening, especially for Ph.D. programs).
  - Research incentives policy (needs to provide greater incentives to individual faculty, departments, and colleges through the return of a consistent and substantial proportion of overhead).
  - Admissions and other Academic Policies and requirements in the Undergraduate and Graduate catalogs, and in the Student Handbook (need updating to reflect new mission and vision).

These reviews and revisions will fall, in part, to the shared governance process. The AMP Steering Committee respects the importance of shared governance, while urging the necessary revisions to accomplish the AMP.

- The **Academic Affairs Budget Advisory Committee** will be a consultative body for the Provost during the budget process, making the budget process transparent to academic units. Other committee responsibilities will include making recommendations to the Provost concerning budget allocations, standardizing formats for reporting annual budgets, and ensuring the budgetary goals and priorities are responsive to the goals outlined in the AMP and the University strategic plan.
- The **Academic Facilities Management Committee** will serve as an advisory committee to the Provost regarding the inventory of academic space, including the establishment of a facilities and space plan that is aligned with the University's facilities master plan and the AMP goals.
- The **Educational Technology Council** will have representatives from each academic unit and will ensure a systematic approach to educational technology planning, to support the AMP, including providing input into the University-wide Information Technology plan.

## B. Academic and Student Support Functions

### 1. *Academic Support*

TSU has academic support units to aid and enrich the academic experience of students including: the University Libraries and Media Center; Academic Enrichment; Advisement and Orientation; the University Testing Center; and the Office of Enrollment Management (admissions, financial aid, veterans' services, records and registration, and new student orientation). Each of these units must now develop unit plans needed to implement the AMP (for example, the Office of Enrollment Management will need a tactical plan to achieve the enrollment goals in the AMP, See Section VII, B.6).

### 2. *Student Support*

The AMP calls for Academic Affairs and Student Affairs to work collaboratively to integrate the total student experience, redefining existing student support services to create an even richer out-of-the-classroom living/learning environment where students can pursue their educational and personal goals. The division of Student Affairs will need to accomplish the following to help the AMP succeed:

- Providing convenient access to all support services to students who study via alternative delivery formats (off-campus and distance education).
- Ensuring availability of housing for an increased number of undergraduate students and full-time graduate students.
- Establishing living and learning communities for honor students.
- Developing expanded services that assist students with post-undergraduate workforce and professional studies opportunities.
- Increasing co-curricula activities and informal educational opportunities.

The academic community embraces and will actively participate in Student Affairs programming that enhances student learning and service engagement.

### C. Budget Allocation and Reallocation and Priorities

Decisions about budget allocation and reallocation should be directly linked to the AMP, and the plan itself establishes priorities which should then become the academic budget priorities. A transparent process of budget development, requests, and priorities should be developed consistent with the AMP and widely disseminated to campus constituents, including through open budget workshops. Provisions should be made for periodic review of allocations, taking into consideration program growth and shrinkage. In developing its allocation processes, TSU will need to consider such measures as the Delaware Cost Study, the THEC funding formula, and other budget measures, making the data and implications of each of these available to the campus community as part of AMP's commitment to have data inform decisions.

### D. Non-Academic Policies and Processes

We heard consistently, and loudly, that the following support policies, processes, and practices need significant improvement if we are to be a nimble institution with a competitive advantage.

#### 1. *Procurement*

Current procurement processes create a serious threat to the instructional, research and administrative endeavors of the University. Acquisition of materials, including software licenses and other contracts, is oftentimes delayed so long that research is stifled, grants are jeopardized, and teaching innovation stymied.

#### 2. *Recruitment and Hiring of Personnel*

Current recruitment and hiring procedures impede attracting and employing the highest qualified faculty and staff. The process for posting a position is cumbersome and slow and inadequate. Departmental operational budgets do not allow many departments to advertise in the most effective publications to attract discipline-specific faculty. Our hiring process also extends too late into the academic year (when most other institutions have already made offers to candidates) and the time to actually offer a contract is so protracted that candidates often receive and accept other offers. Non-competitive salaries and workloads also impede hiring the best faculty.

#### 3. *Other Personnel Processes*

Current personnel processes are counter-productive to high employee morale and to retaining skilled personnel. These include, for example, reclassification, adjunct faculty contracting, overload and extra-service pay, change in status, and payroll. In many cases, neither the department chair nor the employee receives a copy of the executed form.

#### 4. *Space Allocation*

Currently, TSU has no policy for determining what constitutes adequate space for academic programs, including instruction, research, service, and academic support. The University should develop a space allocation procedure to: (a) determine what constitutes adequate space in terms of the quality and quantity of that space; (b) allocate specific physical facilities to meet programmatic needs; (c) periodically review space utilization; and (d) reallocate facilities when warranted by the periodic review.

#### 5. *Human Resource Allocation*

Currently, TSU has no policy for determining the staffing level required to offer academic programs or to provide support functions and cannot demonstrate, for example, that the number of faculty or staff for any program is adequate, inadequate, or excessive. The University should develop a human resource allocation procedure to: (a) determine what constitutes adequate staff, including faculty; (b) allocate a specific number of faculty and staff positions to meet programmatic needs; (c) periodically review staffing levels; and (d) reallocate faculty and staff positions when warranted by the periodic review.

#### 6. *Travel*

Currently, travel procedures are an impediment to faculty and staff development and to effective and cost-efficient management. The travel approval process is lengthy, sometimes resulting in higher airfares, requiring supplement requisitions which then, in turn, result in even higher airfares. Neither the traveler nor the department head receives a copy of the approved requisition before the travel, so neither knows whether the travel has been approved. Finally, the lengthy process for reimbursement means the traveler either has to pay all expenses from personal funds or incur interest charges on a credit card while waiting for reimbursement.

#### 7. *Policy Management*

Currently, no clear approval process and no official location for policies and procedures exist. Some divisions have an official policy manual, but links on unit's web pages are frequently outdated. A search on the University's web site results in finding: several contradictory versions of the same policy or uncertainty about whether a policy is current or even an absence of a critical policy. These issues create administrative and management problems, pose potential legal and accreditation risks, and create public relations issues. The University should establish a single web site where official policies are posted all other TSU web sites should be prohibited from including policy statements, but should provide links to the official site. A high level policy management official should also be appointed (see p. 24).

The AMP Steering Committee recommends that the University select one or two of the above areas for process redesign (perhaps with external assistance) to demonstrate that significant change is possible. Furthermore, the University should rigorously hold personnel accountable for effective, efficient, and courteous service and should expect them to research and implement best practices.

## **VII. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

### A. Implementation Timetable

#### 1. *Year One (2008-2009)*

- a. Revision of Academic Policies and Processes (Section VI.A.)
- b. Development of Signature Program application process (Section V.C)
- c. Enhancement of Academic Support functions (Section VI.B)
- d. Development of a Budget Allocation and Reallocation Process (Section VI.C)
- e. Revision of Recruitment and Hiring and Other Personnel Processes (Section VI.D)
- f. Development of a Space Allocation Process (Section VI.D)
- g. Development of a Human Resource Allocation Process (Section VI.D)
- h. Enhancement of the Travel procedures (Section VI.D)

- i. Development of a Policy Management process (Section VI.A. and D)
- j. Development of a structure for coordinating University Planning Processes (Section VII.B)
- k. Completion of the Facilities Master Plan, reflecting its relationship to the AMP (Section VII.B)
- l. Completion of the Enrollment Management Plan, reflecting its relationship to the AMP (Section VII.B)
- m. Completion of the Compliance Certification report to the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), reflecting its relationship to the AMP (Section VII.B)
- n. Initiation of the Strategic Plan for TBR for the period 2010-2015, incorporating the goals of the AMP (Section VII.B)
- o. Establish a process for developing long-term academic and non academic unit action plans consistent with the AMP (Section III.E)

2. *Year Two (2009-2010)*

- a. Enhancement of Student Support functions (Section VI.B)
- b. Implementation of Signature Program application process (See 1.b above)
- c. Implementation of Budget Allocation and Reallocation Process (See 1.d above)
- d. Implementation of Space Allocation process (See 1.f above)
- e. Implementation of Human Resource Allocation process (See 1.g above)
- f. Implementation of Policy Management process (See 1.i above)
- g. Implementation of a structure for coordinating University Planning Processes (See 1.j above)
- h. Completion of the QEP in the process of SACS reaffirmation of accreditation, reflecting its relationship to the AMP (Section VII.B)
- i. Submission of the new Strategic Plan to TBR for the period 2010-2015, reflecting the goals of the AMP (Section VII.B)
- j. Submission of the related Performance Funding goals to THEC, reflecting the goals of the AMP (Section VII.B)
- k. Development of long-term academic and non-academic unit action plans consistent with the AMP (Section III.E)
- l. Implementation of the Enrollment Management Plan (See 1.l above)

In Year Three of the Plan (2010-2011), TSU will begin to see the most dramatic transformations in its academic programming, and by Year Four (2011-2012), TSU will have achieved its initial goal for growth, reaching an enrollment of 12,000 students in the year of the University's centenary.

3. *Year Three (2010-2011)*

- (a) Implementation of the long-term academic and non-academic unit action plans (See B.2.k above)
- (b) Implementation of the QEP (See B.2.h above)
- (c) Announcement of Signature Academic Programs (See B.2.b above)
- (d) Review of the effectiveness of all revisions and enhancements made in Year One (See B.1a, c, e, and h above)

4. *Year Four (2011-2012)*

- (a) Review of the effectiveness of all enhancements made in Year Two (See B.2.a above)
- (b) Review of the effectiveness of all processes and procedures implemented in Year Two (See B.2. b, c, d, e, f, and g above)
- (c) Review of the effectiveness of the Enrollment Management Plan (See B.2.l above)

5. *Year Seven (2014-2015)*

Submit report on the effectiveness of the QEP and mid-cycle report to SACS (See C.1.b above)

B. Integration with Other Planning Processes

The AMP will be the keystone to TSU's integrated planning process. The AMP will inform all other planning processes.

1. *Strategic Planning*

TSU is currently operating under a 2005-2010 Institutional Strategic Plan, as required by TBR. The next planning cycle, for 2010-2015, will begin in summer 2008. The Steering Committee recommends that, in this cycle, TSU take advantage of the opportunity provided by TBR to include items from the AMP, including, where appropriate, the strategies to be utilized to reach the goals that are included.

2. *Budget Management and Performance Funding*

An inadequate understanding of the funding implications associated with various decisions exists. Prior to finalizing the AMP and the Enrollment Management plan, TSU should conduct an open workshop on the elements and weightings in the performance funding formula and on other budget management policies, including use/sharing of Indirect Costs. Following the workshop, TSU should model the financial implications of the AMP and the Enrollment Management plan.

3. *Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)*

The SACS team visit will occur in 2010. Therefore, the AMP will be able to inform TSU's SACS response and the QEP selection process will result in a project that will be fully compatible with, and complementary to, the AMP. In addition, the SACS coordinator is a member of the AMP Steering Committee.

4. *Facilities Master Plan*

The Facilities Master plan (FM), developed in concert with the BKV Group, is near completion and follows the traditional format for a facilities master plan, including identifying significant facility needs (over 1M. gross square feet). The Steering Committee recommends that the Facilities Master plan not be finalized until after the completion of the AMP. The AMP, for example, identifies academic focus areas slated for significant growth and the FM will need to identify the space needed for such growth. Furthermore, as TSU adds 3,000 more students, it must initially accommodate those students within the current facilities as it is unlikely to have a major state-funded facility built over the next 8 years and is unlikely to raise sufficient private funds in that time period, either. Thus the FM must propose innovative space utilization strategies.

5. *Development, Fundraising, and Marketing/Branding*

TSU does not yet have a mature fundraising and marketing operation. It is still in the infrastructure building stage and is unlikely to be in a position to contribute significant private dollars for the purposes of the AMP in the near future. A capital campaign to coincide with the institution's centennial (2012) seems logical. As that campaign is planned, TSU should maximize the AMP in its case statement, with particular emphasis on endowed chairs for signature academic programs,

program enhancement for the cross-cutting programs, and facility enhancement for focus areas and signature academic programs.

6. *Diversity Plan*

Tennessee State University recognizes that planning for diversity and access is an integral component of the University's future. Therefore, the University has begun to review and modify existing access and diversity initiatives for faculty, staff, and students, and develop new initiatives. One of the first steps of the process was the formulation of an Academic Interdisciplinary Committee on Access and Diversity, composed of faculty, staff, and students. A member of the AMP Steering Committee serves on the Access and Diversity Committee.

7. *Enrollment Management*

Enrollment Management will now need to develop a comprehensive plan based on the goals listed in the AMP to be implemented fully in the 2009-2010 academic year. A member of the AMP Steering Committee should be included on the working group that develops the enrollment management plan.

Specifically, the plan should:

- Outline the growth targets and explicit action steps by year that result in 12,000 students by 2015.
- Reflect targets and explicit action steps by year that result in a 75% undergraduate and 25% graduate population. These growth targets should be disaggregated by first-time full-time freshman, transfer students, part-time students, gender, and race. The targets should include specific numbers by college/school or degree program.
- Include specific action steps, developed in collaboration with the programs, for significant enrollment growth in the Focus Areas identified in the AMP.
- Describe new modes of delivery for certain programs that would appeal to part-time and working students. These might include accelerated programs, on-line programs, hybrid programs, and contract programs.
- Include demographic data for the region on projected high school graduates (with special emphasis on feeder high schools) and potential transfer students, disaggregated by gender and race.

Provide explicit action items needed to increase retention rates and establish the proportion of the enrollment increase that will result from improved retention rates.

As the above demonstrates, planning has increasingly become part of the culture at TSU. The challenge now is to ensure that all planning and implementing of plans are integrated and complementary activities. As these plans cut across all elements of the University, the President must be the one to insist on their full integration.

## **VIII. PROCESS FOR MONITORING THE PLAN**

Successful implementation of the AMP and realization of the benefits are contingent, in part, on how the University monitors the plan, assesses and reports its accomplishments, and uses the assessments for improvement.

A. Process for Reporting Accomplishments

1. The Provost will appoint a small committee charged with monitoring the AMP by:

- a. Determining the reporting parameters for the year, consistent with the requirements of other University planning activities, and establishing the format for reporting the year's accomplishments (January)
- b. Receiving the reports
- c. Issuing an annual report to the Provost (December)



2. Annually, the Provost shall:
  - a. Appoint or confirm the membership of the committee and charge it (January)
  - b. Receive the committee's annual report (December)
  - c. Disseminate the report to the President's Cabinet and to the Provost's Council (December)
  - d. Disseminate the report to the campus community online (December)
  - e. Ensure that the report appears on the agenda of at least one meeting of the Provost's Council (February following the issuance of the report)
  
3. Cyclically, the committee will:
  - a. Compile the annual reports and other pertinent data or information collected into a three-year report (2012, 2015, 2018, etc.)
  - b. Ensure that all reports and other documents related to the AMP are accessible to the campus community online.

B. Process for Updating/Revising

In the year prior to a new TBR/THEC Strategic Planning cycle, the AMP committee will conduct hearings, forums or similar sessions designed to solicit recommendations for updates or revisions to the AMP. The committee and the Provost will lead the Provost's Council in a discussion of whether revisions to the AMP are warranted and, if so, what changes should be made. Once approved by the Provost's Council, the proposed revisions will be forwarded to the President's Cabinet for discussion and action.

## **IX. CONCLUSION**

We want to thank the University community for the opportunity to think broadly and boldly about TSU's academic future. As goes its academic future, so goes TSU. We posit an innovative future, marked by new ways of connecting disciplines and of expanding learning. We do so with full knowledge that to realize our considerable ambitions for TSU, we must all be focused on excellence in every aspect of the University and accept no less. Our competitive environment now demands that and our students expect it. Change is our imperative, and the AMP provides the framework for that change.

## APPENDIX 1

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### AMP Steering Committee Membership

The Steering Committee was expanded by addition of several new members and was constituted as follows:

- Dr. Helen Barrett, Dean of School of Graduate Studies and Research, Chair
- Dr. Yildiz Binkley, Director of Libraries
- Dr. G Pamela Burch-Sims, Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Quality and Assessment
- Dr. Sam Comer, Chair of the Faculty Senate (2007-2008; 2008-2009)
- Dr. Edward Sanford, Chair of the Faculty Senate (2006-2007)
- Dr. Dennis Gendron, Vice President for Communication and Information Technologies
- Dr. Robert Hampton, Provost and Executive Vice President
- Dr. Stephen Kolison, Dean of the Institute for Agricultural and Environmental Research
- Dr. Kathleen McEnerney, Dean of the College of Health Sciences
- Dr. Peter Millet, Dean of the College of Education
- Dr. Evelyn Nettles, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Dr. Timothy Quain, Professor of English
- Dr. Ann-Marie Rizzo, Director of the Institute of Government

## APPENDIX 2

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### Support Documents Access

The Steering Committee believed that the Academic Master Plan needed to be deeply informed by data and information. It reviewed local, state, regional, and national reports; it gathered information and data from TSU sources; and it engaged the Pappas Consulting Group Inc. to review data, conduct focus groups, and prepare an independent report.

All documents collected, reviewed, referenced or generated in the process of developing this Academic Master Plan are available for review on-line by accessing Tennessee State University's library website:

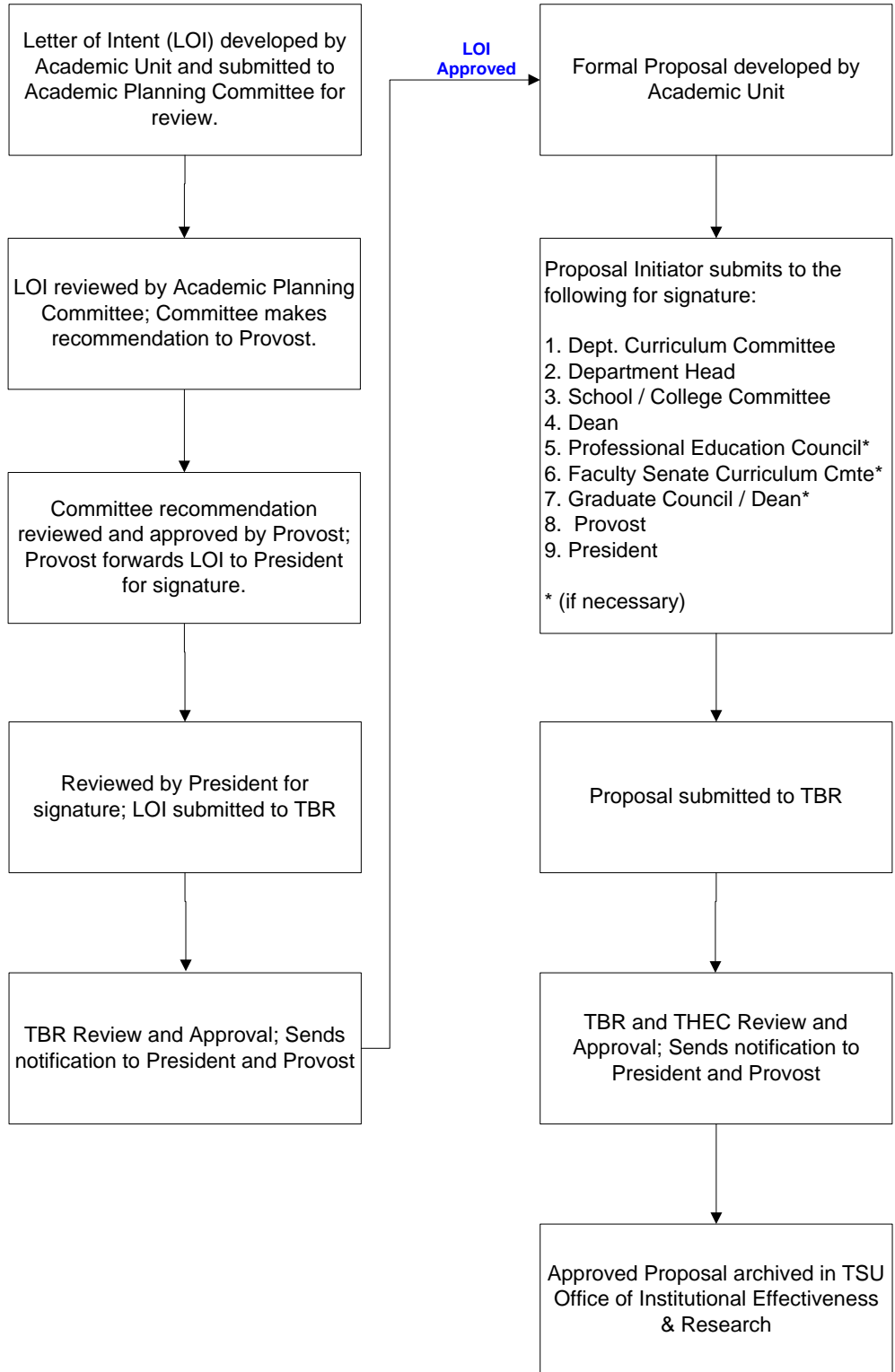
- Begin at the TSU web site ([www.tnstate.edu](http://www.tnstate.edu))
- Click on *Academics* (top left)
- Click on *Academic Master Plan* (bottom of blue box)
- Enter password *plan*

**APPENDIX 3**

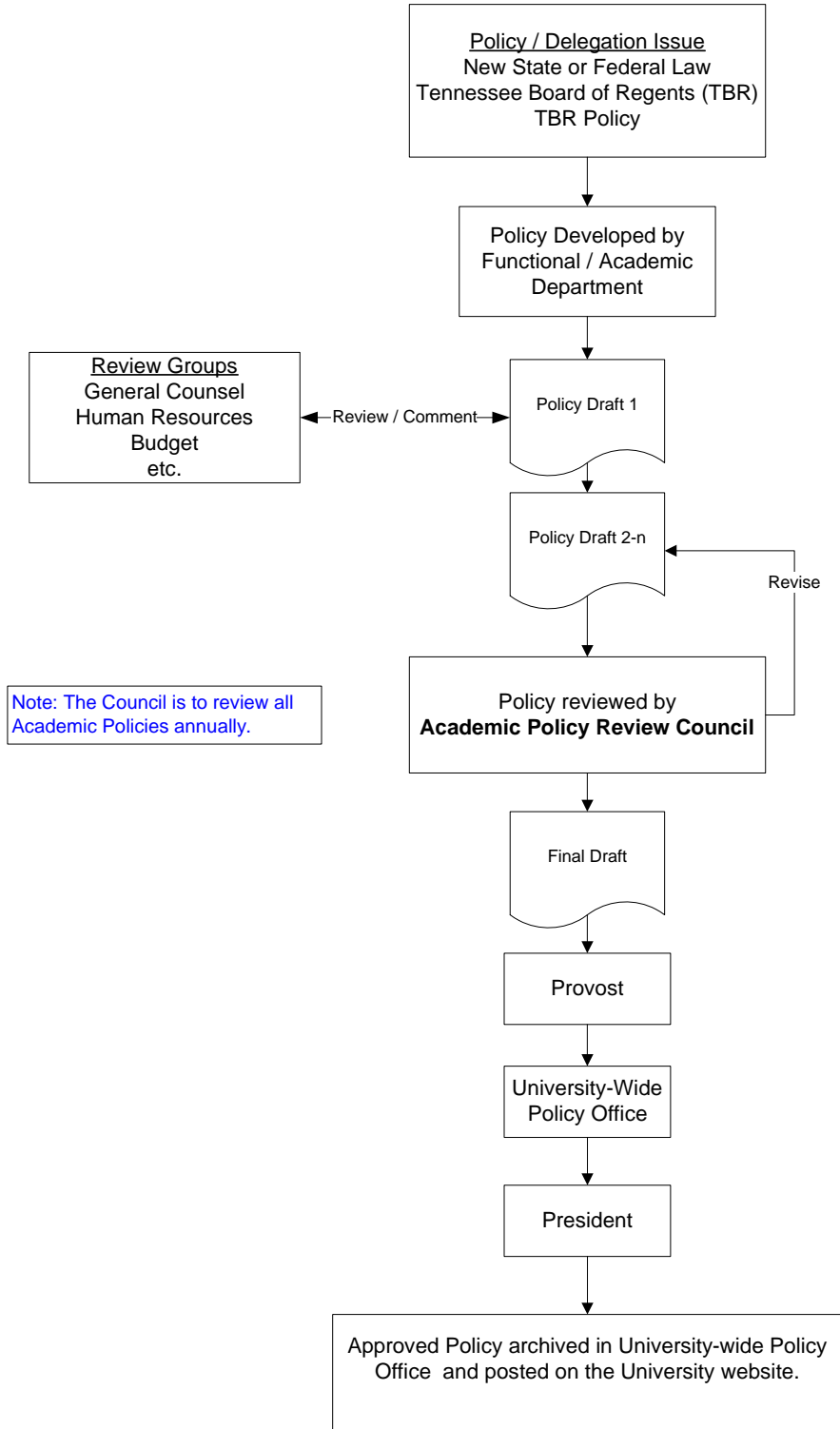
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**Proposed Routing Procedure for Academic Proposals**

Tennessee State University  
Proposed Routing Procedures for Academic Proposals



Tennessee State University  
 Proposed Routing Procedures for  
 Academic Policy



## Tennessee State University Academic Master Plan

### Questions and Answers

Tennessee State University is proud to announce the completion and adoption of its first ever Academic Master Plan for the period 2008-2028 and beyond. This plan was developed with extensive stakeholder input and with great transparency. In keeping with that spirit of transparency, we have prepared the following “Questions and Answers” aimed at making the plan understandable and accessible to our stakeholders. The complete report can be found at [www.tnstate.edu](http://www.tnstate.edu). We welcome your comments (email [ir@tnstate.edu](mailto:ir@tnstate.edu)) and look forward to your support as we start another new chapter in the illustrious history of TSU.

*Question:* What exactly is an Academic Master Plan (AMP)?

*Answer:* An Academic Master Plan provides a blueprint for future academic programming at TSU. It presents an Academic Vision Statement and Goals; it identifies academic areas that will receive priority attention, including targeted resources; it proposes a process to select three signature degree programs; it recommends five cross-cutting academic initiatives; and it highlights how the infrastructure must be strengthened to achieve the academic goals. An implementation timetable is also presented.

*Question:* Why does TSU need an Academic Master Plan? Did anyone mandate it?

*Answer:* No, it was not mandated. However, we believe that TSU taking the initiative to create an Academic Master Plan will be well received by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) and the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR), as well as by the Governor and Legislature.

The main reason to develop an AMP, however, is that TSU now operates in a very competitive higher education marketplace and must be proactive rather than reactive if it is to thrive. In addition, our graduates must compete for careers in a global economy that demands new and different skills and knowledge; therefore, our academic programs must be rearranged to serve our students.

*Question:* What were the top three principles that guided the development of the Academic Master Plan?

*Answer:* Quality, Quality, Quality.

*Question:* Does that suggest TSU does not currently have quality?

*Answer:* No, not at all. TSU has some very strong academic programs, has some very talented faculty, and produces some outstanding graduates. However, our very honest conclusion, verified by both data and external consultants, is that quality is not pervasive currently at TSU. Some of our academic programs produce too few graduates; we don't consistently attract the best faculty in the nation; and our services to student are often inadequate.

*Question:* What do you consider to be "too few graduates" and why does that matter?

*Answer:* THEC defines "low producing programs" by looking at five year average degree production: an undergraduate degree is expected to average 10 graduates a year, a masters program 5, and a doctoral program 3. We have recommended that TSU set its minimums at no less than 1.5 times those of the THEC.

We must do so because our analysis showed that our resources are spread too thinly over too many majors to be able to guarantee quality in all of them, especially as Tennessee's funding formula favors high enrollment programs. The AMP suggests that those majors that are currently low producing be given a period of time to reach the new minimums and also encourages them to explore innovative redesign of their programs.

*Question:* So where will the resources be concentrated?

*Answer:* The AMP calls for three innovative approaches to academic programs for the future, which would, once implemented, make a TSU graduate increasingly distinctive and competitive.

The first of these approaches is the identification of three Major Focus Areas, which actually cut across traditional colleges and majors:

- Enterprise and Leadership
- Health and Education
- Pure and Applied Science

These three areas provide excellent career opportunities for our students; they build on existing strengths in business, health programs, education, and science and engineering; and they create synergies and interdisciplinary links among current colleges and departments.

The second approach is to identify a process to select 3 initial Signature Academic Programs. These would be either undergraduate or graduate programs from the three Major Focus Areas that are currently strong and that, with additional resources, have the demonstrated potential for a national or international reputation. The selection process will include an external panel of experts.



The third approach is to either develop or expand five academic initiatives that cut across colleges and majors and that give students wonderful opportunities to be fully engaged in their education. The five are:

- The Quality Enhancement Plan
- Critical and Creative Inquiry
- Academy of Leadership
- The Engaged University
- The Honors College

*Question:* Does the Academic Master Plan call for any other new academic initiatives and what are the implications for traditional humanities, arts, and social science majors?

*Answer:* The AMP calls on the President and Provost to explore the addition of a new professional school that would be consistent with TSU's history and with the principles of the AMP (including meeting regional employment needs).

The disciplines outside of the Major Focus Areas will play an increasingly important role in the general education program (first two years) and will be encouraged to strengthen their majors, including by combining with other majors or linking their degrees to some aspect of the Major Focus Areas.

*Question:* Isn't the Academic Master Plan just one small part of the puzzle for TSU's future? What about research? New facilities? More fundraising? Better technology? Improved services?

*Answer:* While it is true that the AMP is only one of the several planning exercises, it is the one that should inform all the others, as we are an academic institution. The AMP does call for the research enterprise to grow, to be even more competitive, and to be integrated with the academic programs. It also indicates that the Facilities Master Plan will have to reflect growth in enrollment and specific academic areas of growth. And, of course, TSU will need to expand on and diversify its resource base to accomplish the AMP.

*Question:* If all goes according to the plan, how will TSU be different in say 2012 as it celebrates its centennial?

*Answer:* Even better. Even bigger. Even more diversified. Even playing on a national scale for the innovativeness of its academic programs.

We should be well on the way to our goal of 12,000 students by 2015; with a mix of 75% undergraduates and 25% graduate students. We will still be an access institution but our incoming and especially our graduating students will be stronger. We will still be a majority black student institution, but our number of Hispanic students will have increased. Our two campuses will be more fully integrated as one university, and our delivery of education will be

more varied (more on-line, evening, weekend, “hybrid courses”). Our interdisciplinary Major Focus Areas will be attracting large numbers of students; we will have selected three signature degree programs that will be on their way to national prominence; and our students will be benefiting from one or more of the cross-cutting areas. Finally, no matter which office you walk into, the personnel will be unfailingly customer and service oriented.

*Question:* How can we be certain that the Academic Master Plan is fair and is good for the future of Tennessee State University and who will be responsible for making it happen?

*Answer:* We are confident that it is a fair plan because of the careful, thorough, and transparent process that was followed. That process relied on data informing decisions and our approach was validated by nationally recognized higher education planning consultants. This does not mean that some people won’t disagree with the AMP recommendations. They will, as it calls for priorities to be established and for resources to be applied to those priorities.

We are also confident that implementing the AMP will be good for TSU and especially good for our students. We cannot simply sit back and demand the legislature or others just send us more money. Our credibility rests on our ability to make tough choices and to demand excellence in all we do.

While the President and Provost have the ultimate responsibility for implementing the AMP, the entire University community, its alumni, and its friends and supporters, all have a role and a stake in its success. We see TSU’s destination as its destiny and invite all our stakeholders to join us on the journey.

*Question:* What does the Academic Master Plan mean for students?

*Answer:* The Academic Master Plan will transform the University resulting in more cutting-edge programs that prepare students for challenging and lucrative careers. The Plan will enhance the quality of students’ experience at the University resulting in an enhanced quality of life and preparation for life-long learning. Finally, the Plan provides increased opportunities for students to develop leadership skills and to engage in research and creative endeavors.