Commission on Colleges
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

REPORT OF THE REAFFIRMATION COMMITTEE

Statement Regarding the Report

The Commission on Colleges is responsible for making the final determination on reaffirmation of accreditation based on the findings contained in this committee report, the institution's response to issues contained in the report, other assessments relevant to the review, and application of the Commission's policies and procedures. Final interpretation of the Principles of Accreditation and final action on the accreditation status of the institution rest with the Commission on Colleges.

Name of the Institution: Tennessee State University

Date of the Review: March 23-25, 2010

COC Staff Member: Dr. Cheryl Cardell
Vice President

Chair of the Committee: Dr. Neal E. Armstrong
Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs
The University of Texas at Austin
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Part I. Overview and Introduction to the Institution

Organized as the Agricultural and Industrial State Normal School in 1909, Tennessee State University (TSU) began serving students on June 19, 1912. It was raised to the status of a four-year teachers' college in 1922 then elevated to full-fledged land-grant university status by the Tennessee State Board of Education in 1958. TSU is located in Nashville (population about 600,000), the state capital and second largest city in Tennessee. Popularly known as "Music City USA" and "The Athens of the South," Nashville is a thriving center of government, banking, insurance, publishing, healthcare, art, culture, and education.

Currently, the University consists of six colleges: The College of Arts and Sciences, The College of Business, The College of Education, The College of Engineering, Technology, and Computer Science, The College of Public Service and Urban Affairs, and The College of Health Sciences; and three schools: The School of Agriculture and Consumer Sciences, The School of Nursing, and The School of Graduate Studies.

TSU is Nashville's only public University. It is a Carnegie Doctoral/Research land-grant university that offers 7 doctoral programs, 24 Master's, and 42 Bachelor's degrees in numerous disciplines. Its location in the state capital, a federal gateway to America's south and a major hub for healthcare, music, banking, publishing, and transportation industries, offers unparalleled research and service opportunities to students, scholars, and business partners from around the globe. Nearly 430 full-time faculty and approximately 200 part-time faculty serve a student population of over 8200 drawn from 42 states and 45 countries. More than 70% of the student population is African American, while twenty-two percent is white. A growing number of Latino, Asian, and international students is also present at the University.

TSU filed its Compliance Certification Report with SACS in September 2009, summarizing findings from its comprehensive compliance audit performed by the off-site review committee. TSU submitted its Focused Report and Quality Enhancement Plan in February 2010.

An on-site review committee visited TSU on March 23-25, 2010. The on-site committee would like to thank President Melvin N. Johnson, Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs Kathleen McEnerney, and Accreditation Liaison Timothy J. Quain for their gracious and collegial hospitality during the visit and for their responsiveness in meeting the on-site committee's needs for information and logistical support.

Part II. Assessment of Compliance

A. **Assessment of Compliance with Section 1: The Principle of Integrity**

   1.1   The institution operates with integrity in all matters. **(Integrity)**

   The off-site and on-site committees found no evidence of non-compliance.

B.   **Assessment of Compliance with Section 2: Core Requirements**

2.1   The institution has degree-granting authority from the appropriate government agency or agencies. (**Degree-granting Authority**)

The Committee found that TSU has degree granting authority from the State of Tennessee, which established the University as part of a State University and Community College System with oversight by the Board of Regents. The Board has established policies for the creation of degrees and programs at its member institutions, including TSU, because it has been given the power "to prescribe curricula and requirements for diplomas and degrees."

2.2   The institution has a governing board of at least five members that is the legal body with specific authority over the institution. The board is an active policy-making body for the institution and is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the financial resources of the institution are adequate to provide a sound educational program. The board is not controlled by a minority of board members or by organizations or interests separate from it. Both the presiding officer of the board and a majority of other voting members of the board are free of any contractual, employment, or personal or familial financial interest in the institution.

A military institution authorized and operated by the federal government to award degrees has a public board on which both the presiding officer and a majority of the other members are neither civilian employees of the military nor active/retired military. The board has broad and significant influence upon the institution's programs and operations, plays an active role in policy-making, and ensures that the financial resources of the institution are used to provide a sound educational program. The board is not controlled by a minority of board members or by organizations or interests separate from the board except as specified by the authorizing legislation. Both the presiding officer of the board and a majority of other voting board members are free of any contractual, employment, or personal or familial financial interest in the institution. (**Governing Board**)

The Board is the legal body with specific authority to oversee the institution. It consists of eighteen members: twelve public members appointed by the governor; three at large from different geographical areas; one faculty member from a System school selected from three nominees—one faculty senate chair from a four-year and a two institution and a faculty representative from a technical center; one student from a System institution; two commissioners—one from education and one from agriculture; and the Executive Director from the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC). This demonstrates that the presiding officer of the board and a majority of other voting members of the board are free of any contractual, employment, or personal or familial financial interest in the institution. The institution presented policies that show the board has committees and meets quarterly. However, there are is insufficient documentation to demonstrate the Board is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the financial resources of the institution are adequate to provide a sound educational program.

Based on the materials in the Focused Report, the on-site committee finds that the Board is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the financial resources of the institution are adequate. The University presented the Bylaws of the

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Tennessee Board of Regents that establish the purpose of the Board is "To establish, govern, and control the Tennessee State University and Community College System." That System includes Tennessee State. The Bylaws go on to state it is also the purpose of the Board, "To increase the ability of the institutions and schools and the System to compete and account for state appropriations." Board minutes indicate that the Board does, in fact, discuss and approve the overall budget of the University and has control over both revenues and expenditures.

2.3   The institution has a chief executive officer whose primary responsibility is to the institution and who is not the presiding officer of the board. **(Chief Executive Officer)**

The Tennessee Board of Regents is responsible for the selection and employment of the chief executive officers of the member institutions of the State University and Community College System of Tennessee, based upon the recommendation of the chief executive officer of the System." The primary responsibility of the president is to the institution. The president reports to the board and does not preside over it.

2.4   The institution has a clearly defined, comprehensive, and published mission statement that is specific to the institution and appropriate for higher education. The mission addresses teaching and learning and, where applicable, research and public service. **(Institutional Mission)**

TSU's mission statement is "Tennessee State University, a Historically Black College/University (HBCU), fosters scholarly inquiry and research, life-long learning, and a commitment to service." The mission statement is clearly defined, appropriate to higher education and specific to the institution. It is published in the University's 2007-09 Graduate and Undergraduate Catalogs, the Personnel Handbook, and on their website.

2.5   The institution engages in ongoing, integrated, and institution-wide research-based planning and evaluation processes that (1) incorporate a systematic review of institutional mission, goals, and outcomes; (2) result in continuing improvement in institutional quality; and (3) demonstrate the institution is effectively accomplishing its mission. **(Institutional Effectiveness)**

TSU recently developed a 2010-2015 Strategic Plan that incorporates a mission and vision, goals, objectives, action steps, effectiveness measures and assigns responsibility for implementation. TSU also has a 2008-2028 Academic Master Plan that is linked to the 2010-2015 Strategic Plan and prioritizes academic programs. They have contracted with an outside company for assistance once in developing a Business Intelligence Plan. However, TSU did not provide evidence that institution wide evaluation processes are in place that lead to continuous improvement.

The on-site review committee's review of the institution's Transforming Tennessee State University: Strategic Plan 2010-2015, the Academic Master Plan 2008-2028, a sample of academic program reviews and audits, schools/colleges' annual reports, 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 Annual Institutional Effectiveness Plan and Reports, and the recently developed 2010-2015 Institutional Assessment Plan and Implementation concluded that TSU only partially meets the intent of the requirements.

TSU showed evidence that it has engaged in ongoing, and institution-wide research-based planning process as in the University Strategic Plan 2010-2015 and the Academic Master Plan 2008-2028, but the same level of commitment was not shown for the evaluation process. The institution acknowledged that its recent assessment activities have not been adequately integrated as evident in the 2008-2009 Annual Institutional Effectiveness Plan and Reports, and the recent Assessment Audit's checklists and worksheets. The previous assessment activities did not incorporate a systematic review of the university mission, goals, and outcomes into the assessment plan. Though there were changes and improvements the university could cite as results of data gathering activities and analyses, they did not come from a plan that systematically reviewed its mission, goals and objectives.

TSU has recently installed a new 2010-2015 Institutional Assessment Plan and Implementation. The plan requires each division and unit to identify their mission and outcomes; however, there was no place in the plan to show how they are linked to the university mission and goals. This link is essential for the university to be able to demonstrate that planning and evaluation processes are integrated. The plan does not require criteria for success, nor does it have academic units distinguish between their student learning outcomes and their administrative outcomes.

There is a lack of common understanding across the university on what each component of the plan calls for, and how to fill out the assessment forms. For example, in the first column of Form AP-5 labeled "Expected Outcome", some units did not use the same outcomes as the ones they specified in Form AP-4 (Unit Outcome Statement), and the measurement section lacks specificity and detail. (See CS 3.3.1 for a full description of the assessment plan).

Recommendation 1:
The committee recommends that the institution provide evidence that demonstrates a fully integrated institutional effectiveness model including an assessment and evaluation process that is linked to its mission and goals.

2.6 The institution is in operation and has students enrolled in degree programs. **(Continuous Operation)**

TSU has been in operation since 1912. It demonstrated through its catalog that it has been in continuous operation, with fall enrollments in 2006 of 9,038, in 2007 of 9,065 and in fall of 2008 of 8,254.

2.7.1 The institution offers one or more degree programs based on at least 60 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the associate level; at least 120 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the baccalaureate level; or at least 30 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the post-baccalaureate, graduate, or professional level. If an institution uses a unit other than semester credit hours, it provides an explanation for the equivalency. The institution also provides a justification for all degrees that include fewer than the required number of semester credit hours or its equivalent unit. **(Program Length)**

Tennessee State offers 73 degree programs: 42 baccalaureate programs, which require 120 credit hours, 24 masters programs, and 7 doctoral programs. At the graduate level, 30 credit hours are required for a degree. The institution also offers associate degree programs, which require 60 credit hours. All these programs are listed in their respective catalogs. A multiple step process is designed to establish new programs. The Program Audit Report validates graduate and undergraduate program review and requirements. TSU certifies and provides documentation through its undergraduate and graduate catalogs that associate, baccalaureate and graduate degree programs meet the state and regional standards for minimum required semester credit hours. External reviews by accrediting associations and internal audits validate program requirements.

2.7.2 The institution offers degree programs that embody a coherent course of study that is compatible with its stated mission and is based upon fields of study appropriate to higher education. **(Program Content)**

Program content as stated in the compliance certification is very clear, comprehensive and substantial in the undergraduate and graduate curriculum. The statewide postsecondary Articulation Manual designed to enhance program coherence further strengthen the institution's response to the standard. The program content is validated through program approval and the review process.

2.7.3 In each undergraduate degree program, the institution requires the successful completion of a general education component at the collegiate level that (1) is a substantial component of each undergraduate degree, (2) ensures breadth of knowledge, and (3) is based on a coherent rationale. For degree completion in associate programs, the component constitutes a minimum of 15 semester hours or the equivalent; for baccalaureate programs, a minimum of 30 semester hours or the equivalent. These credit hours are to be drawn from and include at least one course from each of the following areas: humanities/fine arts, social/behavioral sciences, and natural science/mathematics. The courses do not narrowly focus on those skills, techniques, and procedures specific to a particular occupation or profession. If an institution uses a unit other than semester credit hours, it provides an explanation for the equivalency. The institution also provides a justification if it allows for fewer than the required number of semester credit hours or its equivalent unit of general education courses. **(General Education)**

The committee's review of the Undergraduate Catalog and the University's website, confirms that the institution requires undergraduates to complete a broad, college-level general education program that comprises a substantial portion (34.1%) of the baccalaureate education experience. The institution's General Education Program promotes students' acquisition of a foundation of knowledge across six areas identified as communication; Humanities and/or Fine Arts; Social and Behavioral Sciences; History; Natural Sciences, and Mathematics.

General Education courses support competencies identified by the Tennessee Board of Regents and enlivens the institution's purpose to "increase the student's level of knowledge, enhance the student's skills, and expands the student's awareness" as well as to "promote and nurture students' growth and development as persons who are liberally educated." A broad-based representative committee promotes shared governance for general education and monitors achievement of common student

learning outcomes in furtherance of the philosophy that the course are foundational and not specific to any single profession or vocation.

2.7.4 The institution provides instruction for all course work required for at least one degree program at each level at which it awards degrees. If the institution does not provide instruction for all such course work and (1) makes arrangements for some instruction to be provided by other accredited institutions or entities through contracts or consortia or (2) uses some other alternative approach to meeting this requirement, the alternative approach must be approved by the Commission on Colleges. In both cases, the institution demonstrates that it controls all aspects of its educational program. (*See Commission policy "Core Requirement 2.7.4: Documenting an Alternate Approach."*) **(Course work for Degrees)**

Tennessee State provides all coursework for its degree programs. Both undergraduate and graduate course catalogs provide comprehensive descriptions of coursework toward degrees.

*2.8 The number of full-time faculty members is adequate to support the mission of the institution and to ensure the quality and integrity of its academic programs. **(Faculty)**

The number of full-time faculty at TSU is adequate to support the mission of the institution and to ensure the quality and integrity of academic programs. Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) policy 5:02:01:00 defines faculty as "personnel . . . whose regular assignments include instruction, research, and/or public service as a principal activity, and who hold academic rank as professor, associate professor, assistant professor or instructor . . . ." TBR policy 5:02:07:10 distinguishes temporary faculty as those whose appointments are for no more than one year. TSU employed 422 (69.5%) full-time instructional faculty members and 185 part-time instructional faculty members (30.5%) in 2007 and also reported that the student-faculty ratio is about 19:1. Faculty credentials are displayed in Comprehensive Standard 3.7.1. TBR policy 5:02:01:05 sets forth expectations for continuous professional development of faculty. Moreover, TSU conducts on-going faculty evaluation to ensure adequacy and relevance.

The on-site review committee conducted interviews with the Vice President for Academic Affairs and deans of the schools, department heads and various faculty members and reviewed pertinent documentation including the faculty roster and the information relevant to enrollment statistics in support of the institution's case for compliance and sustained the off-site review committee's findings.

2.9 The institution, through ownership or formal arrangements or agreements, provides and supports student and faculty access and user privileges to adequate library collections and services and to other learning/information resources consistent with the degrees offered. Collections, resources, and services are sufficient to support all its educational, research, and public service programs. **(Learning Resources and Services)**

The institution provides appropriate library collections and services. Locally held resources (print and electronic) include more than 400,000 print monographs, more than 200,000 e-books, and access to 191 databases. Appropriate proxy authentication is used to provide access for users off-campus including distance learners. Collection

assessments are done in concert with departmental accreditation reviews. In every instance the collections were found to be adequate or more than adequate. Distance learners also have opportunity to check out materials from any Tennessee Board of Regents member libraries including the research library at the University of Tennessee. Appropriate services are provided which enhance the availability of resources including interlibrary loan and relationships with other libraries to share resources. A courier service to deliver print materials three times a week is in evidence. The Tennessee Electronic Library provides statewide access to electronic .resources such as newspapers, magazines and reference materials. The library is open 92 hours per week including extended hours during finals, provides seating for 350 persons, and 78 computer workstations. Librarians are appropriately engaged in the provision of information instruction and training. Distance learning students are supported by a designated Distance eLearning Librarian, a website on policies, the online reference service, and assistance by telephone.

*2.10   The institution provides student support programs, services, and activities consistent with its mission that promote student learning and enhance the development of its students. **(Student Support Services)**

Student support programs services and activities at TSU are in agreement with the mission of the institution, promote student learning and enhance the development of its students. The Division of Student Affairs has modified its mission to support student learning and has outlined assumptions in response to the 2008-2028 Academic Master Plan. Student life comprises a breadth of services designed to encourage career development as well as leadership skills. The Student Union Board of Governors offers speakers, convocations, and programs designed to assist student development and campus community. More than 90 student organizations work with faculty at the graduate and undergraduate levels to coordinate the co-curricular student learning experiences. The Counseling Center offers educational programs in collaboration with Academic Affairs and has recently undergone an extensive program review. The Queen Washington Health Center provides a health clinic that works closely with community physicians. The Avon Williams Campus has a one-stop-shop for student services including International and Multicultural Student Support Services, and Counseling staff. The Distinguished Lecture Series and Leadership TSU programs offered by the Student Activities office appear to be exemplary programs. The Director of the First-Year Experience has partnered with English faculty to prepare a semester-long curriculum guide to incorporate student life skills and financial management into various courses from several disciplines. TSU is developing first-year learning communities for first-generation students with the assistance of a Wal-Mart Grant. In all, the institution provides student learning and personal development opportunities consistent with its student profile and mission. Programs are designed for all students on the main campus and all off campus sites. The one stop shop (single point of access for enrollment services) developed in 2003 at the Avon Williams Campus demonstrates TSU's commitment to assisting the non-traditional student.

The on-site review committee conducted interviews with the Vice President for Student Affairs, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs (Avon Williams Campus), and the Housing Department Director. Examples of the institution's student support services were detailed in the institution's Compliance Report. An examination of the institution's website and Catalog revealed additional support services that are available to their students: Housing Department

programming, Counseling Center, Trio Programs, Student Activities programming, Recreation and Well Center, Career Center (career counseling, cooperative education), Student Conduct and Mediation Services, International and multicultural Affairs, and Disabled Student Services.

During interviews with staff, additional information was shared regarding programming in the various offices, activity reports, and a brochure on the Avon Williams Center.

The information provided in support of the institution's case for compliance and sustained the off-site review committee's findings.

2.11.1 The institution has a sound financial base and demonstrated financial stability to support the mission of the institution and the scope of its programs and services.

The member institution provides the following financial statements: (1) an institutional audit (or *Standard Review Report* issued in accordance with *Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services* issued by the AICPA for those institutions audited as part of a systemwide or statewide audit) and written institutional management letter for the most recent fiscal year prepared by an independent certified public accountant and/or an appropriate governmental auditing agency employing the appropriate audit (or *Standard Review Report*) guide; (2) a statement of financial position of unrestricted net assets, exclusive of plant assets and plant-related debt, which represents the change in unrestricted net assets attributable to operations for the most recent year; and (3) an annual budget that is preceded by sound planning, is subject to sound fiscal procedures, and is approved by the governing board. (**Financial Resources**)

A review of the institution's budgeting process indicates a reasonable and sound budgeting process, with final approval of the Tennessee Board of Regents.

The institution has not provided audited financial statements for its most recent fiscal year, and indicates that audited financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2009, will be provided as soon as completed.

The on-site committee reviewed additional documentation provided by TSU, including audited financial statements for FY 2009, statements of financial position of unrestricted net assets, and related trend data. TSU's financial results over the past five years demonstrate a sound financial base and financial stability. Net assets increased by $14.7 million, or 9.4%, from FY 2005 through FY 2009, while the unrestricted fund balance increased by $7.9 million, or 34.2%, during the same period. The University's long-term debt of $38.2 million at FY 2009 is reasonable, with annual interest costs of $1.9 million. The University also incurred a large increase in unfunded retiree postemployment benefits for health insurance, with a balance of $3.9 million at June 30, 2009.

The two largest revenue sources are student tuition and fees, providing $41.9 million of funding in FY 2009, and state appropriations, providing $44.3 million of funding in FY 2009. The five-year trend line for tuition reflects increases in FY 2006 and FY 2007, followed by declines in FY 2008 and FY 2009. Headcount enrollment rebounded in Fall 2009 (revenues to be recorded in FY 2010 financials), posting a 7% increase. State appropriations increased each year

through FY 2008, with a decline of $6.3 million in FY 2009. TSU has managed these fluctuations and has made appropriate adjustments to its finances.

2.11.2 The institution has adequate physical resources to support the mission of the institution and the scope of its programs and services. **(Physical Resources)**

The TSU campus is comprised of 759 acres including 87 buildings and over 2 million square feet. The institution indicates that the Tennessee Higher Education Commission provides guidelines regarding the appropriate type and amount of space state institutions of higher education should have in their space inventory.

Based upon the evidence provided, the committee could not determine if the amount, type or condition of the space is appropriate for the enrollment and programs offered by the university.

The on-site committee reviewed additional information provided by the University, including the 2008 Campus Master Plan. The master plan provided a comprehensive analysis of space by category in comparison to peer group norms, using Fall 2006 as the base year. At the time of the study, the main campus and the downtown campus contained approximately 69 buildings and physical structures, with a total of 2.7 million GSF. The two largest components are academic/academic support space, with 1.2 million GSF, and residential space, with 0.8 million GSF. According to Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) statistics, TSU's assignable square footage per student FTE is above the median for all TBR universities.

Classroom space overall appears adequate, with an average utilization on the main campus ranging up to about 80% Monday through Thursday. Teaching laboratories reflect a surplus in assignable square feet. Research space also appears adequate for current activities.

The on-site committee discussed physical resources extensively with faculty, staff, administration, and students. The committee also toured several academic, research, student life, and administration facilities. All of the facilities were in adequate condition and in use for the intended purposes.

2.12 The institution has developed an acceptable Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) that includes an institutional process for identifying key issues emerging from institutional assessment and focuses on learning outcomes and/or the environment supporting student learning and accomplishing the mission of the institution. **(Quality Enhancement Plan)**

The on-site review committee finds that TSU has developed an acceptable Quality Enhancement Plan.

C.   **Assessment of Compliance with Section 3: Comprehensive Standards**

3.1.1 The mission statement is current and comprehensive, accurately guides the institution's operations, is periodically reviewed and updated, is approved by the governing board, and is communicated to the institution's constituencies. **(Mission)**.

TSU's mission statement is periodically reviewed and updated and is current. It was approved by the Tennessee Board of Regents on December 19, 2007. It accurately guides the institution's operations. The Strategic Plan is built upon the mission statement. The mission statement is communicated to the institution's constituencies via TSU's website, the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs, the Personnel Handbook, the 2010-2015 Strategic Plan and the 2008-2028 Academic Master Plan.

3.2.1 The governing board of the institution is responsible for the selection and the periodic evaluation of the chief executive officer. **(CEO evaluation/selection)**

The committee found that the Board of Regents is responsible for the selection and evaluation of the president of the university and delegates to the Chancellor the responsibility of conducting of an annual performance review of the president. However, the institution did not provide evidence that the president has been evaluated.

The on-site committee found that the Focused Report provided the 2008-09 evaluation of the President of Tennessee State University, by the Chancellor of the Tennessee Board of Regents.

3.2.2 The legal authority and operating control of the institution are clearly defined for the following areas within the institution's governance structure: **(Governing board control)**

3.2.2.1 the institution's mission;

The legal authority for establishing TSU and its mission are found within the Bylaws of the Tennessee Board of Regents. These bylaws indicate the responsibility of the TBR for approval of the mission of the institution.

3.2.2.2 the fiscal stability of the institution;

Tennessee State statutes and the bylaws of the Tennessee Board of Regents clearly outline the authority and responsibilities of the Board, as well as those of the Chancellor and President, for oversight of the financial stability of the university. The bylaws specify that the TBR is responsible for approval of university budgets and for overview of its financial management.

3.2.2.3 institutional policy, including policies concerning related and affiliated corporate entities and all auxiliary services;

The bylaws of the Tennessee Board of Regents indicate that policy making responsibilities rest with the Board. The TBR has a broad and well developed set of policies it has developed for governance of its institutions, including related corporate entities and auxiliary services.

3.2.2.4 related foundations (athletic, research, etc.) and other corporate entities whose primary purpose is to support the institution and/or its programs.

Tennessee State statutes and the bylaws of the Tennessee Board of Regents clearly authorize and outline Board responsibilities for relationships with foundations.

3.2.3 The board has a policy addressing conflict of interest for its members. **(Conflict of interest)**

The Board of Regents has established a conflict of interest policy (1:02:03:10) for its members; however, evidence was not found demonstrating adherence to the established policy.

The on-site committee found that the Focused Report provided the Conflict of Interest (COI) form that the Tennessee Board of Regents uses as well as completed forms for Board members for 2009.

3.2.4 The governing board is free from undue influence from political, religious, or other external bodies and protects the institution from such influence. **(External influence)**

The institution has demonstrated that through its mandated composition with term limits, the Tennessee Code 49-8-203, the code of ethics in TRB Policy 1:02:03:20, and the Conflict of Interest Policy 1:02:03:10, its governing board is free from undue external influence.

3.2.5 The governing board has a policy whereby members can be dismissed only for appropriate reasons and by a fair process. **(Board dismissal)**

The governing board has a board dismissal policy. However, the institution has not demonstrated whether it has implemented this policy.

Based on the information provided in the Focused Report and in the on-site visit as a follow-up to the Focused Report, the on-site review committee found that the Focused Report provided the Tennessee Board of Regents policy on dismissal, and a letter from the Chancellor of the Tennessee Board of Regents dated March 18, 2010 indicates that the Board has never had occasion to use the policy.

3.2.6 There is a clear and appropriate distinction, in writing and practice, between the policy-making functions of the governing board and the responsibility of the administration and faculty to administer and implement policy. **(Board/administration distinction)**

The Committee found that the institution has demonstrated that there is a clear and appropriate distinction in writing between the policy-making function of the Board of Visitors and the responsibility of the administration and faculty to administer and implement policy. It documents this with the Tennessee State codes and the policies and minutes of the Board of Regents.

3.2.7 The institution has a clearly defined and published organizational structure that delineates responsibility for the administration of policies. **(Organizational structure)**

The committee found that TSU has a clearly defined organizational structure that is published on its web site. Board of Regents policies 1:03:02:00 and 1:03:03:00

delineate the power of the Board to appoint the president to serve as chief executive officer of the institution.

* **3.2.8** The institution has qualified administrative and academic officers with the experience, competence, and capacity to lead the institution. **(Qualified administrative/academic officers)**

A review of the qualifications and experience level of senior leadership of TSU indicates that the administrative team is qualified and able to effectively lead the institution. Hiring practices, guidelines for professional development and certification procedures are implemented in accordance with Tennessee Board of Regents policies.

The On-Site Review Committee interviewed the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Human Resource Director and staff, and reviewed pertinent documentation, including personnel action forms and faculty offer letters, in support of the institution's case for compliance and sustained the off-site review committee's findings.

3.2.9 The institution defines and publishes policies regarding appointment and employment of faculty and staff. **(Faculty/staff appointment)**

Documents reviewed by the off-site review committee indicate that the institution relies upon policies set by the Tennessee Board of Regents to identify and establish clear conditions of employment, to ensure the employment of qualified professionals on a variety of levels and for the operation and management of the institution so as to achieve its goals and educational mission. The institution reports that policy revisions "are generally developed by the Office of Human Resources and submitted to the President's Cabinet for review." Reportedly, changes in policy are communicated through e-mail, i.e. the Exchange. However, there is no documentation of these communications. There is insufficient evidence that the institution affirms its role in the development, application, and monitoring of work conditions on the institutional level and that staff are well-informed about polices that affect them.

While the off-site review committee was concerned over the lack of documentation showing the effectiveness of communications between the Office of Human Resources and other cabinet level offices, a meeting with the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Associate Director of Human Resources, and the Associate Vice President/Director of Human Resources included a detailed discussion of TSU's recruitment and hiring procedures. The employment of an electronic medium (PeopleAdm) by the University to identify and store employment data that leads to the general employment contracts was also shared. The additional information shared included the role of the department head and dean in agreeing on the recommended terms of hire with the candidate to be included in the PeopleAdmin database. Sufficient documentation was provided to satisfy the Standard in that the policies and hiring procedures in the document, <u>HR 6.33 Recruitment and Employment Guidelines,</u> are published.

3.2.10 The institution evaluates the effectiveness of its administrators on a periodic basis. **(Administrative staff evaluations)**

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Administrators are evaluated annually via written form, as indicated by the Office of Human Resources. The President is evaluated in writing annually by the Chancellor of the Tennessee Board of Regents. Policies regarding this process are published in HR Policy 6.29.

3.2.11 The institution's chief executive officer has ultimate responsibility for, and exercises appropriate administrative and fiscal control over, the institution's intercollegiate athletics program. **(Control of intercollegiate athletics)**

The Committee found that the President has ultimate responsibility and exercises fiscal and administrative control over the university's intercollegiate athletics program. The Director of Athletics reports to the president, who annually approves the budget for Athletics. The university has established an Athletics Council to provide advice and oversight on broad policy issues related to the intercollegiate athletics program. The university reports that, "There is no external foundation specifically created for athletics. All athletic fundraising monies are deposited into an athletics state account or a university foundation account for athletics." The Athletics budget is approved as part of the annual university budget and there are annual audits of the expenditures for intercollegiate athletics.

3.2.12 The institution's chief executive officer controls the institution's fund-raising activities exclusive of institution-related foundations that are independent and separately incorporated. **(Fund-raising activities)**.

The President of the institution controls the institution's fund-raising activities, exclusive of institution related foundations that are separately incorporated, through the Vice President for University Relations and Development. The Vice President serves a member of the senior leadership team and oversees an appropriately staffed organization to provide oversight for fundraising activities.

3.2.13 Any institution-related foundation not controlled by the institution has a contractual or other formal agreement that (1) accurately describes the relationship between the institution and the foundation and (2) describes any liability associated with that relationship. In all cases, the institution ensures that the relationship is consistent with its mission. **(Institution-related foundations)**

The institution cites the existence of one affiliated foundation, that is not controlled by the institution; the Tennessee State University Foundation (Foundation). The committee's review of the charter, by-laws of the foundation and the agreement between the foundation and the University reveals a lack of clarity regarding liability assumed by each entity from this relationship.

The agreement that outlines the arrangement between the University and the Foundation indicates that much of the Foundation's operational support, to include budgeting, tax preparation, accounting services and office space, is provided by TSU without reimbursement to the University by the Foundation for these services. However, the agreement provided only includes approval of the chair of the Board of Trustees and does not include ratification by the University.

Based on materials presented in the Focused Report and interviews with TSU officials and Board members of the Tennessee State University Foundation, the

on-site committee concluded: 1) University officials did approve the affiliation agreement; 2) The University does not take on any liability in the preparation of the Tennessee State University Foundation IRS Form 990; and 3) The expenditures that the University makes on behalf of the Foundation are identified separately in the University's budget and are approved by the Board. Finally, the on-site committee concluded that there are no state laws on the books that prohibit state resources being used to support private corporations, including not-for-profit corporations.

3.2.14 The institution's policies are clear concerning ownership of materials, compensation, copyright issues, and the use of revenue derived from the creation and production of all intellectual property. These policies apply to students, faculty, and staff. **(Intellectual property rights)**

Tennessee State policies concerning intellectual property rights are established by the Tennessee Board of Regents. The institution has appropriate policies and mechanisms for offering advice on intellectual property rights. The Tennessee Board of Regents policies apply to all institutions in the system and define conditions under which intellectual property is the property of the institution. The institution has an Intellectual Property Advisory Committee which provides recommendations to the President of the institution. These policies are conveyed to students through the Student Handbook (undergraduates), and the Ownership of Thesis/Dissertation document (graduate students) along with a workshop on electronic thesis and dissertations required by the Graduate School. The policies are conveyed to the staff and faculty through websites.

* 3.3.1 The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results in each of the following areas **(Institutional Effectiveness)**:

3.3.1.1 educational programs, to include student learning outcomes

Program assessment data is documented in Annual Institutional Effectiveness Report but failed to describe how the results have been used for improvement, nor indicated concrete examples that the results have been used for improvement. The narrative states "each academic unit is required to provide evidence of planning and evaluation activities, including student learning outcomes" however, only four institutional effectiveness plans were included in the documentation (Cardio-Respiratory Care, Dental Hygiene, Health Administration & Health Sciences, and Health Information & Management). One institutional effectiveness plan for the department unit of History, Geography and Political Science was incorporated in the narrative. In lieu of specific student learning outcomes, areas of degree competencies, internships, and public service were assessed. TSU needs to assess student learning outcomes. Student learning outcomes are defined as the knowledge, skills or abilities that students should be able to demonstrate as a result of their educational program. Assessment data (aggregate scores) should be included in the institutional effectiveness plans so that actual outcomes can be compared to expected outcomes and improvements made when desired performance targets are not met. Remedial actions taken as a result of assessment findings need to be documented in detail such that it is evident that data are driving decision-making across the institution. TSU offers

approximately 7 doctorate degrees, 24 master's degrees and 42 bachelor's degrees. TSU provided examples of assessment plans for a very small sample of the degree programs it offers. Assessment plans documenting student learning outcomes for every degree program offered at the undergraduate and graduate levels need to be provided as supporting documentation. Additionally, information regarding how assessment activities are systematic and how results are used to improve the effectiveness of educational programs should be included.

In the focused report, TSU indicated that "The institution acknowledged that its recent assessment activities have not been adequately integrated." However the institution asserted that "there was a great deal of assessment taking place throughout the University which, while not integrated into a University-wide plan, was on-going, University-wide, and research based, and the results of which were used to improve the programs, services and operations of the University".

The committee's review of the document "2008-2009 Annual Institutional Effectiveness Plan" and reports provided in the schools/colleges' annual reports found that TSU's institutional effectiveness plan was incomplete as evidenced by the following:

1. The plan only required units to specify areas to be assessed, but did not specify intended outcomes, and/or student learning outcomes.
2. The plan did not have a direct link between a unit's mission and intended outcomes to the university mission and goals to be able to demonstrate that the institution is effectively accomplishing its mission and goals.
3. The plan did not require units to set criteria for success.
4. The majority of academic units did not assess student learning outcomes. From the list of results/improvements provided by schools/colleges in the focused report, only 10 out of 70 programs showed changes/improvements resulting from analyses of student academic performance.
5. Though TSU could show that academic units had used assessment for program improvement in the areas of curricular change, course revision, pedagogy, assessment methodology, etc, (Table 2 in the Focused Report), the method of assessment relied heavily on indirect measurement rather than direct measurement of student learning. For example, in the College of Arts and Sciences, the History, Geography, and Political Science Departments assessed the strength of the curriculum in history and political science programs using content analysis methodology, and it led to curricular changes. The Communication Department reviewed a course grading standards, and found grading consistency across sections. The Art Department used self-study program review to identify its strengths and weaknesses that led to hiring of a new advisor, and intensified recruitment activities. In the College of Health Sciences, the Speech Pathology and Audiology Department used a customer satisfaction survey to improve the clients and caregivers in the therapy process. The Health Information Management reviewed the student evaluation of instruction report that led the faculty to modify teaching strategies.

The College of Education, used feedback from faculty, students that led to two new positions being added.

6. Distance Education: The Center for Extended Education and Public Service Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2009 included the unit's attainment of the University institutional goals and other performance funding indicators. It showed they have set administrative objectives, baseline, projected progress, actual results, and percent of attainment. However, there was no evidence to demonstrate achievement of expected competencies by the students taking the courses/programs by distance education.

Recently, TSU began a new five-year assessment cycle as documented in "2010-2015 Institutional Assessment Plan and Implementation." While the institution has demonstrated progress with this effort, the plan lacks specificity and integration in several areas.

1. Plan components: (a) The plan does not require criteria for success. Criteria are needed so that units can judge if their outcomes have met their pre-set goals, and to elect plans for improvement if they do not, or modify the outcomes /goals, measurement, or criteria, if they do. (b) The Plan (see form AP-5) lacks detail, e.g., the measurement column does not include a full description of how outcomes will be assessed, no criteria for success, no timetable for assessment activities, or the person/position responsible for the assessment. (c) The Plan lacks classifiers to distinguish between academic units' student learning outcomes, and non-academic unit's outcomes. (d) For academic units, the plan does not distinguish between student learning outcomes and administrative outcomes (outcomes related to other unit functions such as recruitment, retention, graduation rates, advising issues). (e) Of all 37 academic units' plans in the 8 schools/colleges available for review, only 11 units (30%) (the Departments of Chemistry, Criminal Justice, Language, Literature and Philosophy, Music, Accounting and Business Law, Business Administration, Civil and Environmental Engineering, Computer Sciences, Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, and Physical Therapy) contain student learning outcomes statements. The rest have either administrative outcomes only, or student outcomes that are not specific, or concern student passing of certain national examinations only. (f) The measurement section of the plan lacks specificity and details.

2. Plan management and implementation: (a) The Assessment Plan includes the newly created Assessment Council, one of whose functions is to "review the mission statements and outcome measures, and make recommendations for improvement". It is not clear from the document that this has been implemented in the first year cycle (2010). (b) The Assessment Council is to use rubrics to assess the effectiveness of the plan. However, there were no rubrics provided to show that they are in place.

3. Other: There was no evidence that TSU has developed student learning competencies for the courses/programs offered by distance education. All 28 outcome statements for the Center for Extended Education and Public service listed on the new 2010-2015 Assessment Plan were administrative outcomes.

3.3.1.2 administrative support services

The narrative states "administrative support units utilize a variety of methods to identify and assess outcomes and that the Academic Affairs Division requires annual reporting." Included in the documentation were institutional effectiveness reports for two administrative units within Academic Affairs; Institutional Effectiveness, Quality and Assessment and The Title III, Faculty Support Center. Provided in the narrative were Delaware Cost Study data, a list of achievements for the Division of Communication and Information Technology, and a description of the ways in which the Student Affairs Division assesses the effectiveness of their efforts. Compliance with 3.3.1.2 requires an assessment plan with expected outcomes for all administrative offices across all divisions, documentation of assessment results for those outcomes and the use of the assessment results to drive institutional improvement. TSU did not provide this evidence.

The on-site review committee found that there was no evidence to indicate that an integrated and systematic assessment plan which identified expected outcomes**, and** criteria for success **were implemented in all administrative support services units in 2008-2009 fiscal or academic year. Though TSU provided a list of improvement or changes in administrative support services units over the past year, the information came from questions on the assessment audit worksheets that asked each unit to retrospectively think back and describe one change the unit made, and the reason why the change occurred. The results and the changes did not come from an existing integrated and systematic assessment plan.**

Recently, TSU began a new five-year cycle 2010-2015 Institutional Assessment Plan and Implementation. However, the plan lacks integration, specificity and detail in several areas as stated in 3.3.1.1.

3.3.1.3 educational support services

The narrative states "the Academic Master Plan Committee on Enhancement of Academic and Student Support Programs has developed an assessment tool that will be implemented next year." Compliance with 3.3.1.3 requires an assessment plan for all educational support services institution-wide, documentation of assessment results and the use of those results for institutional improvement. TSU did not provide this evidence.

Similar to CS 3.3.1.1 and CS 3.3.1.2, evidence has not been provided to show that TSU has implemented any assessment plans for educational support services. Though the documentation showed that there were data gathering activities using surveys, feedback, and observations, they were not done in a way that demonstrated that a systematic plan was in place to gather the data on pre-set intended outcomes **and with clear** criteria for success**. The Focused Report only cited the changes from some types of data analysis that were gathered retrospectively using assessment audit worksheets. Though the Academic Master Plan Committee on**

Enhancement of Academic and Student Support Programs has developed an assessment tool, there was no evidence that it has been implemented.

Recently, TSU began a new five-year cycle as part of the "2010-2015 Institutional Assessment Plan and Implementation." However, the plan lacks integration, specificity, and detail in several areas as stated in CS 3.3.1.1.

3.3.1.4 research within its educational mission, if appropriate

TSU did not provide an assessment plan for their Office of Research; however, the current (2005-2010) Strategic Plan does identify two research-related performance measures: 1) dollars awarded from external sources for research and 2) dollars awarded from external sources for research and sponsored programs. The 2010-2015 Strategic Plan sets out broader objectives for research and sponsored programs (6.1.2). The evidence of improvement based on research is demonstrated through the university's research funds reaching $40 million in fiscal year 2009, an increase of 15% over 2008. There was an increase in proposal submission from $43 million in 2008 to $121 million in 2009, an increase of 65%. The narrative reports the dollars awarded from external sources for research and although it was not a performance measure identified in their strategic plan, the dollars in research proposal submissions demonstrate compliance.

3.3.1.5 community/public service within its educational mission, if appropriate

The narrative primarily reported students' perceptions of service learning prior to and after engaging in service learning courses. Compliance with 3.3.1.5 requires TSU to have a plan with expected outcomes for community/public service, assess the extent to which it is achieving those expected outcomes and use the results of the assessment findings to make institutional improvements. There was no separate assessment plan for community service in the supporting documentation; however, the 2005-2010 Strategic Plan does contain a goal (1.2) on Civic Responsibility.

Upon the review of the following documents: 2005-2010 University Strategic **Plan, 2007-2012 Center for Service-Learning Title III Project, TSU Carnegie Engagement Classification Application, and Carnegie Classification: Community Engagement Recommendations, the on-site review committee found no evidence that TSU had fully engaged in an assessment plan that included the** identification of expected outcomes, systematic data gathering, and criteria for success to assess the extent to which it achieve the outcomes, and providing evidence of improvement based on the analysis of the results. **TSU reported the use of surveys, such as pre and post survey of students' perceptions of service learning, the NSSE, survey of faculty and staff for community engagement, and end of semester course evaluations; however there was no evidence of a systematic, campus –wide assessment plan that assessed the goals and objectives specified in the 2005-2010 University Strategic Plan.**

Recently, TSU began a new five-year cycle as part of the 2010-2015 Institutional Assessment Plan and Implementation. However, the plan lacks integration, specificity and detail in several areas as stated in CS 3.3.1.1.

Recommendation 2:
Given the recently created assessment plans for many of its educational programs, administrative, educational support services, and community/public service units and considering the lack of results obtained as well as the usage of results for continuous improvement, the on-site committee recommends that the institution provide evidence of an integrated assessment plan that encompasses expected outcomes (student learning as appropriate), measurement methods, analysis of data and evidence of improvements made based on evaluation of the assessment results.

3.3.2 The institution has developed a Quality Enhancement Plan that (1) demonstrates institutional capability for the initiation, implementation, and completion of the QEP; (2) includes broad-based involvement of institutional constituencies in the development and proposed implementation of the QEP; and (3) identifies goals and a plan to assess their achievement. **(Quality Enhancement Plan)**

See Section III for a detailed analysis.

3.4.1 The institution demonstrates that each educational program for which academic credit is awarded is approved by the faculty and the administration. **(Academic program approval)**

Tennessee State comprehensive academic program approval process is well documented via their course action request from, course catalog action request form, approval of academic programs, units and modifications, required proposal for establishment of new degree programs, and approval of establishment of new programs. Their approval of new programs must adhere to Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) and Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) policies and guidelines.

3.4.2 The institution's continuing education, outreach, and service programs are consistent with the institution's mission. **(Continuing education/service programs)**

Continuing education, outreach, and service programs at TSU are consistent with the mission and strategic plan of the institution which is to "foster scholarly inquiry and research, life-long learning and a commitment to service. Through the Center for Extended Ed and Public Service and the Avon Williams Campus, TSU seeks to provide opportunities for the non-traditional learner through face to face and virtual mediums. and non-credit course offerings for professional and personal self improvement. Noted examples include the Center for Legal Studies, Gatlin Education Services, JER Group Inc. – which offers domestics and international student programs in areas of health care, hospitality, entertainment to special interest courses.

*3.4.3 The institution publishes admissions policies that are consistent with its mission. **(Admissions policies)**

Admissions guidelines are published in the Tennessee State University Undergraduate Catalog 2007-2009, and all recruitment materials. The admissions criteria are also available through the institutional website.

The On-Site Review committee conducted interviews with the Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs; Interim Dean of the Graduate School; Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management; Director of Admissions and Recruitment; and the Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management; and reviewed pertinent documentation (TSU Undergraduate and Graduate catalogs, as well as selected recruitment materials) and sustained the off-site review committee's findings.

3.4.4 The institution has a defined and published policy for evaluating, awarding, and accepting credit for transfer, experiential learning, advanced placement, and professional certificates that is consistent with its mission and ensures that course work and learning outcomes are at the collegiate level and comparable to the institution's own degree programs. The institution assumes responsibility for the academic quality of any course work or credit recorded on the institution's transcript. **(Acceptance of academic credit)**

Tennessee State transfer policies are published in undergraduate and graduate studies and research catalogs on the TSU Website. There is a published articulation agreement between Tennessee four-year public institutions, including Tennessee State, and two year public institutions of higher learning that meets specified criteria. Tennessee State adheres to the policies contained in the articulation agreements with Virginia Community College System. Tennessee State does not award credit for experiential learning.

3.4.5 The institution publishes academic policies that adhere to principles of good educational practice. These are disseminated to students, faculty, and other interested parties through publications that accurately represent the programs and services of the institution. **(Academic policies)**

The Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC Policy No. A1:0 and A1:1) sets forth general academic policies regarding new degree programs, the establishment of a certificate of credit, etc. Tennessee Board of Regents should approve all academic policies regarding academic programs (TBR 2:01:01:00). Academic policies that adhere to recognized, standard principles of good educational practice at TSU are published and disseminated in a number of documents to include but not limited to: Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs, Faculty Handbooks and Student Handbooks. Evidence was provided demonstrating faculty and administration participation in the modification of academic policies at TSU.

3.4.6 The institution employs sound and acceptable practices for determining the amount and level of credit awarded for courses, regardless of format or mode of delivery. **(Practices for awarding credit)**

TSU employs sound and acceptable practices for determining the amount and level of credit awarded for courses, regardless of format or mode of delivery. AACRAO standards are considered when determining the type and amount of credit awarded.

The undergraduate and graduate catalogs house the guidelines that govern the awarding of credit.

3.4.7   The institution ensures the quality of educational programs and courses offered through consortia relationships or contractual agreements, ensures ongoing compliance with the comprehensive requirements, and evaluates the consortial relationship and/or agreement against the purpose of the institution. **(Consortia relationships/contractual agreements)**

TSU participates with the other 18 universities and community colleges of the Tennessee Board of Regents System in the Regents Online Campus Collaborative (ROCC) which offers online degree and continuing education programs. The narrative indicated that TSU students enrolled in the ROCC programs are given the same exit examination to evaluate learning outcomes that students take for on-campus programs.

3.4.8   The institution awards academic credit for course work taken on a noncredit basis only when there is documentation that the noncredit course work is equivalent to a designated credit experience. **(Noncredit to credit)**

The committee's review of the Undergraduate Catalog provides evidence of the institution's report that it does not award academic credit for non-credit course work.

3.4.9   The institution provides appropriate academic support services. **(Academic support services)**

Numerous forms of academic support services are available to all students, and faculty that are designed to promote student success. The institution's response to this standard is brief and lacking in specifics. As a result there is little evidence to assess whether the standard has been met. An assessment mechanism to evaluate the academic support programs is being developed but has not been implemented.

The institution's response in the Compliance Report was brief and lacking in specifics. However, the on-site review committee reviewed the Focused Report, the institution's Catalog, and its website and found that the institution is providing appropriate academic support services.

3.4.10 The institution places primary responsibility for the content, quality, and effectiveness of its curriculum with its faculty. **(Responsibility for curriculum)**

The committee's review of the Faculty Handbook (1989) and Tennessee Board of Regents policies indicate that instructional faculty along with Academic Affairs hold authority and responsibility for the content, quality, and effectiveness of the curriculum. Because the institution relies upon common syllabi in general education courses, the evidence presented indicates that the primary expression of faculty governance revolves around the development of course syllabi by departmental faculty who are informed by "professional organizations" and accreditation agencies, with program assessment processes managed by the Tennessee Board of Regents' "academic audit initiative" and accreditation processes. Additional evidence should be provided to show more clearly how faculty participate in shared governance for decision-making about

curriculum and participation in authentic program-level assessment to determine course and program strengths and weaknesses.

TSU has demonstrated evidence of faculty involvement in development of new program proposals and new courses. New courses are presented by the department or program chair/director after approval by the department or program faculty to the Faculty Senate. The Curriculum Committee of the Faculty Senate considers the course request and forwards recommendations to the full Senate which then submits the recommendations to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

The Tennessee Board of Regents policy regarding faculty responsibility for curriculum indicates that the faculty have "an interest" in this arena. Although this may be construed as a vague statement, the Board confirmed that the intent of the policy is to assign responsibility to the faculty. Within the parameters of this Board policy, the institution has the liberty of developing an internal policy. While the Tennessee State University Faculty Handbook (1989) alludes to faculty responsibility for the curriculum, the institution is currently revising the Faculty Handbook and Senate Constitution to further clarify that the Institution places primary responsibility for the curriculum with its faculty.

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

Tennessee State's Chart of Academic Coordinators (CAC) identifies qualifications and competencies of academic program coordinators. The CAC also describes the role of program coordinators as to their responsibility for program coordination, curriculum development and review in some cases. TSU has assigned academically qualified program coordinators (i.e. department heads) for each major in a degree program, curricular area or concentration. Department heads are charged with the responsibility to coordinate program activities for respective departments. Those departments housing multiple degrees, faculty members academically qualified and/or having expertise in the field coordinate that specific degree program.

The on-site review committee conducted interviews with the Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs, Associate Vice President Human Resources, and the academic deans and department heads in support of the institution's case for compliance and sustained the off-site review committee's findings.

3.4.12 The institution's use of technology enhances student learning and is appropriate for meeting the objectives of its programs. Students have access to and training in the use of technology. **(Technology use)**

Appropriate evidence is provided on the manner in which information technology supports student success ranging from the provision of electronic classrooms to computing labs. An appropriate technology infrastructure exists including wired access to all residence rooms and campus wide wireless access. Software applications supporting specific disciplines such as music education and speech pathology are

available. An online portal for email, registration and course management is also available. The institution requires evidence of computer literacy from each degree program. This literacy is largely assessed through a capstone class or project requiring a demonstrated literacy in computer/digital media context. A variety of offices offer faculty support in instructional design, multimedia, and digital content creation. More than 500 faculty and staff have attended these workshops since 2006-2007.

3.5.1 The institution identifies college-level general education competencies and the extent to which graduates have attained them. **(College-level competencies)**

TSU in conjunction with the Tennessee Board of Regents has identified general education competencies in the following areas: oral and written communication, humanities and the fine arts, social and behavioral sciences, history, natural sciences, and mathematics. TSU has utilized Educational Testing Services' Measure of Academic Proficiency and Progress (MAPP) to assess general education competencies. Assessment results were presented for the 2005-06, 2006-07, and 2007-08 academic years. Results indicate that seniors at TSU scored significantly lower in all areas (i.e. reading, critical thinking, writing and mathematics) than their counterparts at other doctoral/research universities. Assessment results have been shared with TSU's administration and faculty and there are ongoing discussions based on the assessment results about how to improve student scores. Additionally, the Tennessee Board of Regents began requiring course embedded assessments of general education competencies effective with the current academic year. TSU has proposed a QEP topic that seeks to focus on general education competencies.

3.5.2 At least 25 percent of the credit hours required for the degree are earned through instruction offered by the institution awarding the degree. In the case of undergraduate degree programs offered through joint, cooperative, or consortia arrangements, the student earns 25 percent of the credits required for the degree through instruction offered by the participating institutions. **(Institutional credits for a degree)**.

TSU's institutional credits for a degree position is guided by Tennessee Board of Regents policies regarding articulation among community colleges and universities, proprietary colleges, and credits earned through extra-institutional learning. TSU has an established policy that prohibits the awarding of degrees to students who have not earned at least 25% of degree requirements at the university. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place for students who seek to participate in the TSU/Middle TSU consortium.

3.5.3 The institution defines and publishes requirements for its undergraduate programs, including its general education components. These requirements conform to commonly accepted standards and practices for degree programs. **(Undergraduate program requirements)**

Tennessee State's Undergraduate Catalog and the TSU homepage is the public repository for all undergraduate program requirements, including general education components. These are published in the Undergraduate Catalog (37-38). All requirements conform to commonly accepted standards and adhere to policies established by the Tennessee Board of Regents. Catalogs are available online. Program requirements conform to accepted standards and practices of degree

programs in higher education. Each program also specifies appropriate requirements in the catalog.

3.5.4 At least 25 percent of the discipline course hours in each major at the baccalaureate level are taught by faculty members holding the terminal degree—usually the earned doctorate—in the discipline, or the equivalent of the terminal degree. **(Terminal degrees of faculty)**

TSU is not in compliance with this requirement as four degree programs do not meet the standard. The examples cited in the Compliance Report regarding credentials of faculty by percent of courses taught by faculty with terminal degrees exceeded the 25 percent standard established by the Commission. Whereas justifications are provided, the fact still remains that the BSN in Nursing, the B.S. in Social Work, the B.S. in Health Information Management and B.S. in Medical Technology do not have at least 25% of the discipline courses being taught by faculty members holding the terminal degree in the discipline or its equivalent.

During an on-site committee meeting with the Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Interim Dean, College of Arts and Sciences, the Interim Dean, College of Health Sciences, the Dean, School of Nursing, the Associate Director of Human Resources, and the Associate Vice President/Director of Human Resources, the terminal degree status of faculty in four (4) programs was discussed. Four degree programs (BSN Nursing, B.S. Social Work, B.S. Medical Technology, and B.S. Health Information Management) were earlier identified as not having sufficient documentation showing that at least 25% of their discipline courses were taught by faculty holding the terminal degree.

First, the on-site committee requested and received a listing of the terminal degrees specific to the disciplines in each of the four (4) degree programs. In each of the disciplines, TSU showed that the doctoral degree in each of the disciplines was the Ph.D./Ed.D. or equivalent. The Dean, School of Nursing, provided an updated document (_Academic Year 2009-2010 Faculty Assignments to Courses in the Nursing Major_) clearly showing that more that 25% of the discipline courses were taught by faculty holding the terminal degree. The dean also shared a written Plan designed to increase the number of doctoral prepared nurses within the faculty. The document showed a seven (7) step plan of action, including recruitment strategies and hiring time frames. The on-site committee suggested that the School closely monitor this Plan, determine if the suggested resources are sustainable, periodically monitor benchmark salaries for doctoral prepared nurses, and to consider the introduction of Clinical Ranks as a means to recognize and attract clinically-focused nurses.

In the College of Arts and Sciences, the B.S. in Social Work program identified the Ph.D. as the terminal degree in the discipline. Only one faculty member was identified as holding the Ph.D. degree and this faculty member taught four (4) discipline-related courses in spring 2010 (approximately 26.7% of all the discipline courses). The dean indicated that the Ph.D. in social work was a relatively new terminal degree, since most social work education programs historically identified the Master of Social Work (MSW) degree as the terminal degree. It was mentioned that currently insufficient numbers of doctoral prepared faculty currently exist in this field. The on-site committee member

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shared with the assembled group that there is a difference between "terminal degree" and "terminal qualification". In disciplines where the terminal degree is the doctorate, yet where insufficient pools exist, the institution could identify the "degree qualification" as something other than the doctoral degree. Since the B.S. social work program is compliant with the Standard, the fact that only one faculty member holds a Ph.D. places the program in a tenuous position. It is recommended that the B.S. social work program consider continuing to use the MSW as the "terminal qualification" and consider phasing in the requirement of the "terminal degree" within a 3-5 year period. It was also reported that TSU was in the process of establishing a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree program. When this program is established, the on-site committee would view the Ph.D. degree as the "terminal degree" faculty would be expected to hold to teach at this level.

The Interim Dean, College of Health Sciences confirmed that the Ph.D. degree is the terminal degree for faculty in the Health Information Management (HIM) Program. However, there are currently no doctoral programs in Health Information Management. The Interim Dean prepared a document that showed that approximately 0.2% of HIM faculty nationally hold a Ph.D. in a related discipline. In addition, it was noted that the Commission on Accreditation for Information Management Education (CAHIM) identifies the master's degree as the qualifying faculty teaching credential. The HIM program is comprised of only two (2) full-time and four (4) part-time faculty. Currently, no HIM faculty member holds the terminal degree. Although the Interim Dean reported that both full-time faculty members plan on applying for doctoral study in 2010, the on-site committee suggested that the program consider using the "terminal qualification" (master's degree) designation in responding to this Standard. This would enable the program to be in compliance with the Standard and allow the program to phase in the "terminal degree" within a 3-5 year period.

Finally, the Interim Dean, College of Health Sciences, confirmed that the phasing out of the B.S Medical Technology program will be completed in December 2010.

3.6.1   The institution's post-baccalaureate professional degree programs, and its master's and doctoral degree programs, are progressively more advanced in academic content than its undergraduate programs. (Post-baccalaureate program rigor)

Post-baccalaureate, professional, masters and doctoral degree programs at TSU are progressively more advanced in academic content than undergraduate degree programs at TSU. "The University ensures that the academic content and rigor of its graduate programs are progressively more advanced than its undergraduate programs. (i) The graduate programs meet standards established by the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR), the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC), and program specific national accrediting agencies, (ii) comply with course numbering systems and course descriptions, (iii) have established processes for curriculum development and/or course and program review processes, (iv) have set standards for graduate faculty appointment, and (v) have graduate admission requirements." Evidence of the aforementioned was provided. The Academic Integrity Statement found in the Graduate Catalog (p. 31) conveys that graduate study involves increased attention to "personal integrity and knowledge of scholarly methods." The Graduate Faculty Handbook (2000) provides additional scholarly criteria for eligibility to teach graduate

courses and for the opportunity to supervise graduate students conducting research completing master's thesis and dissertations.

3.6.2 The institution structures its graduate curricula (1) to include knowledge of the literature of the discipline and (2) to ensure ongoing student engagement in research and/or appropriate professional practice and training experiences. **(Graduate curriculum)**

Graduate Curricula that include knowledge of the literature of the discipline and ongoing student engagement in research and training experiences are stated in the Tennessee State Graduate Catalog. The Compliance Report states that the depth of the graduate curricula at TSU may be gauged by the content of course syllabi where learning objectives, outcomes, course requirements, and expectations are outlined (see sample syllabi) [2], but the institution failed to attach a graduate program as an example. Instead, sample syllabi [2] in an undergraduate program (HIST 2100) was provided.

The on-site committee found that the institution had provided additional documentation demonstrating that the graduate curricula stress knowledge of the literature of the discipline and student engagement in research or appropriate professional training. Sample course syllabi include a Biology course titled "Reading, Analyzing, and Communicating Scientific Data", and a doctoral course in Psychology titled "Statistics & Computer Applications to Research" suggesting that knowledge of the literature and participation in research are key components of the graduate curriculum. The PhD program in Public Administration provided a table of competencies which includes research. Clinical disciplines such as Speech Pathology, Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy provided evidence of appropriate professional practice and training experiences.

3.6.3 The majority of credits toward a graduate or a post-baccalaureate professional degree are earned through institution offered by the institution awarding the degree. In the case of graduate and post-baccalaureate professional degree programs offered through joint, cooperative, or consortia arrangements, the student earns a majority of credits through instruction offered by the participating institutions. **(Institutional credits for a degree)**

The majority of credits toward a graduate or post baccalaureate professional degrees are earned at TSU. The maximum number of transferable hours allowed for the master's degree is 12sch's and 6sch's for the specialist and doctoral levels. The one joint master's degree program earned through a joint program requires residency study at both institutions. The requirements are defined for the Regents online degree program which is cooperative program of nineteen institutions that comprise the Tennessee Board of Regents. Transfer credits are governed by the policies and practices of the host institution selected by the student.

3.6.4 The institution defines and publishes requirements for its graduate and post-graduate professional programs. These requirements conform to commonly accepted standards and practices for degree programs. **(Post-baccalaureate program requirements)**

Requirements for graduate and post-baccalaureate professional programs are published in the Graduate Catalog biannually, the Graduate School Calendar, and the

Graduate School Webpage. The process of review and approval of the requirements are designed to ensure that all courses/programs meet Tennessee Board of Regents mandated standards and are consistent with commonly accepted national standards and practices. The review and approval process includes: departmental committees, department chair, college/school curriculum committee, college/school dean, graduate council, graduate dean and the provost/vice president for academic affairs.

The committee's review of the institution's Graduate Catalog, the Graduate Schools' Guidelines for the Preparation of Dissertations, Theses, Projects and Course Papers confirms that the institution defines and widely disseminates in print and online degree requirements for graduate and post-baccalaureate programs that conform to commonly accepted standards and practices for post-baccalaureate and graduate degree programs. The institution articulates shared expectations for residency and GPA related to admissions and matriculation as well as differences in program requirements. In its publications the institution accounts for nuances among different disciplines and programs, including thesis and non-thesis requirements.

3.7.1 The institution employs competent faculty members qualified to accomplish the mission and goals of the institution. When determining acceptable qualifications of its faculty, an institution gives primary consideration to the highest earned degree in the discipline. The institution also considers competence, effectiveness, and capacity, including, as appropriate, undergraduate and graduate degrees, related work experiences in the field, professional licensure and certifications, honors and awards, continuous documented excellence in teaching, or other demonstrated competencies and achievements that contribute to effective teaching and student learning outcomes. For all cases, the institution is responsible for justifying and documenting the qualifications of its faculty. **(Faculty competence)**

Review of the Faculty Credentials Table and the Faculty Roster indicates that the institution employs competent faculty members qualified to accomplish the mission and goals of the institution. A high percentage of the full-time tenured faculty holds the terminal degree in the teaching discipline. In cases where instructors do not hold the terminal degree, most instructors hold a master's in the teaching discipline and are qualified to teach undergraduates. However, credential information for a good number of part-time instructors is missing from the Credentials Table and Roster. In addition, there is insufficient information provided for these instructors relevant to departmental justifications so as to allow the committee to evaluate individual qualifications for teaching such as a record of competence and effectiveness (as evaluated by students and peers), related work experiences, professional licensures and certifications, honors and awards, as well as publications and presentations in the field.

The on-site committee's preliminary assessment of this Standard revealed that the academic credentials of most faculty were properly documented and recorded. However, the academic credentials of four (4) part-time faculty members and one (1) full-time faculty member were determined to be in question based on the documentation presented. Subsequent documentation provided by the deans revealed that each of the faculty members in question possessed the appropriate academic credentials to teach their assigned courses.

In addressing on-site committee questions concerning the verification and storage of faculty credentials, TSU Human Resources officials demonstrated a

new institutionally established database referred to as <u>Human Resources Credentials</u>. This database, which is currently under construction, would digitize and store faculty credentials once they are verified at the department level. The on-site committee confirmed that full and part-time faculty credentials are verified for accuracy at the department level. The Office of Human Resources (HR) notifies newly hired faculty that official transcripts must be submitted to their office within a designated period of time. The HR Office also follows-up with each new faculty member to ensure compliance with receipt of required documents.

The on-site committee encourages TSU to consider using a digital database, like Digital Measures, to store faculty activity records and academic credentials.

3.7.2   The institution regularly evaluates the effectiveness of each faculty member in accord with published criteria, regardless of contractual or tenured status. (**Faculty evaluation**)

The Tennessee Board of Regents has two policies related to faculty evaluation that TSU is subject to: "Guidelines for Faculty Promotion Recommendations" and "Policy on Academic Tenure for the Tennessee Board of Regents." All tenured, tenure-track, temporary and adjunct faculty are evaluated annually in accordance with the criteria published in TSU's Faculty Handbook. Each college/school has a faculty evaluation process which encompasses similar criteria – teaching, research, and service consistent with Tennessee Board of Regents guidelines. Student evaluation of teaching is an integral part of the faculty evaluation. Faculty members are evaluated on teaching, research, service and outreach. Students' evaluations of instruction are incorporated in the evaluation. TSU provided copies of faculty evaluations to evidence compliance with this standard.

3.7.3   The institution provides evidence of ongoing professional development of faculty as teachers, scholars, and practitioners. (**Faculty development**)

Faculty development activities at TSU are ongoing and varied. The Faculty Support Center is the hub that provides assistance to faculty in an effort to improve instruction. Noted examples provided are as follows; Faculty Learning Communities; Summer Research Academy; Teaching & Learning Workshops and New Faculty Orientation.

3.7.4   The institution ensures adequate procedures for safeguarding and protecting academic freedom. (**Academic freedom**)

Established policies and procedures are in place to safeguard and protect academic freedom at TSU. These policies are defined by the Tennessee Board of Regents policy 5:02:03:30 and can be found in the faculty handbook and faculty contracts.

3.7.5   The institution publishes policies on the responsibility and authority of faculty in academic and governance matters. (**Faculty role in governance**)

The Faculty Handbook and other university policies outline the responsibility and authority of faculty in academic and governance matters. Faculty members are well represented in various university standing and ad hoc committees, and their engagement includes the development and oversight of academic programs and

policies, policies and procedures affecting faculty employment, approval of new or revised courses and certificates, and new degrees. The Faculty Senate officers meet regularly with the provost and president to share concerns and information.

3.8.1 The institution provides facilities and learning/information resources that are appropriate to support its teaching, research, and service mission. **(Learning/information resources)**

The institution provides two libraries – one on its main campus and the other on the downtown campus. Hours of operation are appropriate. Both libraries were renovated in the last 5 years; however the report acknowledges that "the square feet of usable space for both campus libraries is inadequate." According to the institution, usable space for both libraries is inadequate for the student population and for collections. Library satisfaction surveys also indicate a need for a larger information commons. No plans are in evidence for addressing those concerns. Services and collections are assessed each semester via a Library User Satisfaction Survey. The institution indicates that results are used to improve services but no specific evidence of that is provided.

TSU has requested additional capital outlay funds from the state of Tennessee to enlarge the library due to perceived issues with inadequate space and recent recommendations by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission that the TSU should have ~15,000 additional square feet. The most recent Library Satisfaction Survey (2009) indicates that the Library is providing excellent services to the students and faculty. The Library has demonstrated significant improvements made in response to the comments made on the Library User Satisfaction Survey. The on-site committee, upon visiting the Library and other facilities on the campus, judged that the facilities and learning/information resources were appropriate for the mission of the Institution.

3.8.2 The institution ensures that users have access to regular and timely instruction in the use of the library and other learning/information resources. **(Instruction of library use)**

The institution provides an appropriate array of instruction opportunities ranging from one on one consultation at the reference desk, by phone and by email to library orientation and course specific assignment in concert with faculty instructors. The data provides reveals a sustained and growing delivery of in-class instruction which reaches approximately 3,500 to 4,000 students per year. The library indicates a high level of satisfaction with the library orientations from student evaluations. The evidence provided is for 2004 and 2005 but no more recent student evaluations are provided. The library has also adopted new best practices in the delivery of instruction which focus on embedding instruction in class assignments.

3.8.3 The institution provides a sufficient number of qualified staff—with appropriate education or experiences in library and/or other learning/information resources—to accomplish the mission of the institution. **(Qualified staff)**

The institution provides sufficient, qualified staff (librarians and support staff to accomplish the mission of the institution as evidenced in the acceptable scores in their LibQual survey results. The institution self reports that the library faculty staffing is somewhat comparable to the peer institutions and the number of support staff is below the number of support staff employed at peer libraries. The report further notes that the

faculty staffing levels rank below the median (21) of the American College and Research Libraries 2006 Academic Library Trends and Statistics. The number of support staff is also consistently below the median level (26) of the ACRL trends and statistics. The librarians have appropriate Masters of Library Science degrees from ALA-accredited institutions.

3.9.1 The institution publishes a clear and appropriate statement of student rights and responsibilities and disseminates the statement to the campus community. **(Student rights)**

Students' due process rights and responsibilities are published in the *Student Handbook* which is distributed annually. This information is also made available at New Student Orientation and is posted on the institutional website. The Office of Student Conduct and Mediation oversees these procedures and dissemination of information.

3.9.2 The institution protects the security, confidentiality, and integrity of its student records and maintains special security measures to protect and back up data. **(Student records)**

TSU has explicit policies to protect the security, confidentiality and integrity of student records. Procedures granting access to educational records is clearly defined in accordance with Tennessee Board of Regents Policy No. 3.02:03:00. Sungard Banner software is utilized to secure student records. Paper records from 1912-1988 are stored in fire proof file cabinets and also stored off campus.

3.9.3 The institution employs qualified personnel to ensure the quality and effectiveness of its student affairs programs. **(Qualified staff)**

The Division of Student Affairs Vice President has more than 25 years experience from multiple institutions. Directors and senior administrators possess the academic credentials and leadership experience needed to lead the division in enhancing student learning and development. The revised mission statement and strategic plan indicates that the personnel are providing expertise to ensure the quality and effectiveness of its student affairs areas in keeping with the institutional mission.

3.10.1 The institution's recent financial history demonstrates financial stability. **(Financial stability)**

TSU is a member of the Tennessee Board of Regents System and is audited annually by the Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury. TSU has provided audited financial statements through June 30, 2007. The audits are conducted by the Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury. The committee's review of the 2005, 2006 and 2007 audited financials indicates overall positive trends and no major findings related to the University's financials or system of internal controls.

The State of Tennessee provides enrollment driven funding for its institutions of higher education. The formula structure protects institutions from major swings in enrollment, either up or down, to provide institutions an opportunity to adjust to shifts in funding. Additionally, institutions of higher education governed by the Tennessee Board of Regents are required to maintain 2% of educational and general expenditures in

reserve. These reserves are also intended to protect institutions during times of decreased funding.

Enrollment data provided by the University indicates a gradual decline in enrollment over the period from 2004 to 2008. This trend coupled with a lack of financial statements or ratios for fiscal years 2008 and 2009 prevent a reasonable assessment by the off-site committee of ongoing financial stability based upon current financial data.

The FY 2008 and FY 2009 financial statements and additional information were available for analysis by the on-site committee,

TSU has faced a challenging financial environment over the past couple of years, and particularly in FY 2009, as have most other higher education institutions. State appropriations peaked at $50.5 million in FY 2008, with a reduction of $6.3 million, or 12.4% in FY 2009. Headcount enrollment also declined from its peak of 9,065 in Fall 2007 to 8,254 in Fall 2008, rebounding to 8,824 in Fall 2009. This increase in enrollment will result in additional formula-driven funding for state appropriations. TSU has managed these fluctuations and maintained adequate financial stability.

3.10.2 The institution provides financial profile information on an annual basis and other measures of financial health as requested by the Commission. All information is presented accurately and appropriately and represents the total operation of the institution. **(Submission of financial statements).**

TSU has provided the financial profile information and measures of financial health as requested by the Commission.

*3.10.3 The institution audits financial aid programs as required by federal and state regulations. **(Financial aid audits)**

TSU is audited annually by the State of Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury – Division of State Audit. This audit is a segment of the organization wide audit of the State of Tennessee in compliance with the Single Audit Act and includes review of federal financial assistance programs.

The on-site review committee conducted interviews with the Vice President for Business and Finance and the Director of Financial Aid, and also reviewed the FY 2008 and FY 2009 State Audit financial/compliance audit reports in support of the institution's case for compliance. The interviews and additional documentation sustained the Off-Site Review Committee's findings.

3.10.4 The institution exercises appropriate control over all its financial resources. **(Control of finances)**

TSU has an appropriately developed business support organization that monitors and manages the financial resources of the University. Additionally, the University has a well developed set of budgetary and financial policies in place to ensure appropriate control over its financial resources, and that compliance with Tennessee Board of Regents policies is achieved.

Financial controls are enhanced by the activities of the Internal Audit department that reports directly to the President of the University as well as to the Director of System Wide Internal Audit for the Tennessee Board of Regents. Additionally, an annual risk assessment is performed by the institution to identify risk areas and to develop management and audit plans to address this risk. Finally, the State of Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury – Division of Audits conducts an annual audit of the financial statements and internal controls. A review of the most recent reports provided does not indicate any significant findings.

3.10.5 The institution maintains financial control over externally funded or sponsored research and programs. **(Control of sponsored research/external funds)**

The TSU Division of Research and Sponsored Projects (RSP), together with the General Accounting Office, are responsible for ensuring appropriate financial controls over externally funded research and sponsored project. The University has developed a Principal Investigator's Handbook that provides research administrators a robust set of guidelines to be used in developing their proposal and managing the project if awarded.

Enhancing controls over research and external funds are the annual audits by the Comptroller of the Treasury – Division of State Audits, as well as audit activity by the Office of Internal Audit.

The University describes a program that provides appropriate controls, however little evidence was provided to support the narrative. Although the Principal Investigator's Handbook was provided, no additional documentation of internal or external audits of sponsored programs, organizational structure, financial policies or staffing was provided.

Additional documentation was available for review by the on-site committee. The University provided three review reports conducted by federal and state agencies, all of which indicated satisfactory results. Organizational charts and staffing information for the Division of Business and Finance and subsidiary units that manage externally funded or sponsored research and programs were provided. Additional staffing information was also provided for the Division of Research and Sponsored Programs. These organizations are appropriately structured and appear adequate to provide financial control.

The FY 2008 financial and compliance audit of the University conducted by State Audit was provided with the focused report, and no findings related to sponsored research/external funds were noted. The FY 2009 financial and compliance audit was made available March 18, 2010, and there are no findings related to this standard in the FY 2009 report.

TSU did not include as documentation any of the Single Audit Reports prepared by the Comptroller of the Treasury, Division of State Audit. The on-site committee located the Single Audit Reports for FY 2005 through FY 2008 online at the State Audit website, noting no internal control findings for TSU during this period. According to information provided to the University by State Audit, Tennessee has received an extension until May 31, 2010 for its FY 2009

Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR), and the FY 2009 Single Audit Report will not be issued until the CAFR is issued. Current compliance cannot be assessed without a review of these reports.

A list of TSU internal audit reports issued from July 27, 2004 through January 2, 2010 were provided by the University. During this period, there were no internal audits related to externally funded or sponsored research and programs. Such internal audits, if they were conducted, would provide additional evidence of financial control.

Recommendation No. 3:
The committee recommends that the University provide copies of the FY 2009 Single Audit Report and the FY 2009 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) as published by the Division of State Audit. Internal control weaknesses related to externally funded or sponsored research and programs, if any, should be explained.

3.11.1 The institution exercises appropriate control over all its physical resources. (Control of physical resources)

TSU places primary responsibility over proper stewardship of its physical resources on the Vice President for Business Affairs. The departments within the Division of Business Affairs are responsible for, among other duties: procurement, property administration, facilities management, construction and risk management. The University's narrative describes a facilities management program that strives to provide efficient and effective services. The narrative further discusses construction planning/budgeting and some aspects of risk management.

The narrative and evidence provided do not provide information related to property administration/management procedures. This lack of information makes it difficult to adequately assess whether the institution has appropriate controls over its physical assets.

Additional financial and compliance audit reports published by Tennessee State Audit for FY 2008 and FY 2009 were provided to the on-site committee. These audit reports demonstrate compliance with this standard, as there are no internal control weaknesses for physical resources in the reports. The on-site committee also noted that detailed inventory procedures for movable property are included in the Property Management Manual published by the Office of Procurement and Business Services. A review of this area is conducted routinely in the annual state audits.

A list of TSU internal audit reports issued from July 27, 2004 through January 2, 2010 was provided by the University. During this period, there were no internal audits related to control of physical resources. Such internal audits, if they were conducted, would provide additional evidence of compliance.

3.11.2 The institution takes reasonable steps to provide a healthy, safe, and secure environment for all members of the campus community. (Institutional environment)

A review of TSU's organizational and policy framework indicate appropriate systems to ensure a safe, healthy and secure environment for the campus community.

The TSU Police Department's officers are certified by the Tennessee Peace Officers Standards and Training Commission. Communications dispatchers and the crime prevention counselor are also appropriately credentialed. The Police and Facilities department engage in regular drills for emergency situations such as active shooter or tornado response. The University also has an outdoor warning system in place in the event of emergency and it has established an emergency response plan.

The Environmental Health and Safety Services office is responsible for overall campus safety conditions and workforce safety programs. Its primary responsibilities related to laboratory safety, inspection and maintenance of fire suppression systems, radiation and bio-safety.

*3.11.3 The institution operates and maintains physical facilities, both on and off campus, that appropriately serve the needs of the institution's educational programs, support services, and other mission-related activities. **(Physical facilities)**

The TSU campus is comprised of 759 acres including 87 buildings and over 2 million square feet. The institution indicates that the Tennessee Higher Education Commission provides guidelines regarding the appropriate type and amount of space state institutions of higher education should have in their space inventory. Additionally, the institution's narrative indicates that the university conducts regular facility surveys that are submitted to the Tennessee Board of Regents. However, no evidence or documentation related to the adequacy, appropriateness or condition of the university's facilities was provided.

Based upon the evidence provided, the off-site committee could not determine if the amount, type or condition of the space is appropriate for the enrollment and programs offered by the university.

The on-site committee reviewed additional information provided by the University, including the 2008 Campus Master Plan. The amount of available space as documented in the institution's space inventory is adequate to support the current enrollment and activities of the University. The on-site committee also discussed physical resources extensively with faculty, staff, administration, and students, all of which spoke positively about the University's facilities and indicated that both facilities and equipment met the needs for the University's programs.

The committee also toured several academic, research, student life, and administration facilities, noting that the condition of all facilities was acceptable.

The University recently constructed a research building that is well equipped with technologically up to date fixed and movable equipment to support research and instruction.

3.12.1 The institution notifies the Commission of changes in accordance with the substantive change policy and, when required, seeks approval prior to the initiation of changes. **(Substantive change))**

TSU has demonstrated that it has notified the Commission in advance of substantive changes. Since June of 2003, it has notified the Commission and received prior approval for 22 of 23 degree additions or changes (one is pending). The institution has listed the dates of notification and approval for these changes and has provided documentation of Commission approval for one of these changes.

3.13.1 The institution complies with the policies of the Commission on Colleges. **(Policy compliance)**

The off-site and on-site committees found no evidence of non-compliance.

3.14.1 A member or candidate institution represents its accredited status accurately and publishes the name, address, and telephone number of the Commission in accordance with Commission requirements and federal policy. **(Publication of accreditation status)**

Tennessee State documents that it represents its accreditation status with the Commission in its undergraduate and graduate catalogs.

D. **Assessment of Compliance with Section 4: Federal Requirements**

*4.1 The institution evaluates success with respect to student achievement including, as appropriate, consideration of course completion, state licensing examinations, and job placement rates. **(Student achievement)**

TSU utilizes the Measure of Academic Proficiency and Progress (MAPP) to assess seniors' skills in the areas of critical thinking, reading, writing, mathematics, humanities, social sciences and natural sciences. Test results from 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08 were provided in the supporting documentation. TSU indicates in its narrative that it uses professional certification, licensure exams and completion rates to evaluate success with respect to student achievement. TSU did not indicate whether they monitor job placement rates through alumni surveys.

The on-site review committee conducted interviews with the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Director of Office of Effectiveness, Quality, and Assessment, and the Director of Testing, and reviewed pertinent documentation (the senior exit exam report, the MAPP scores report, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission Performance Funding Report, and the alumni survey) in support of the institution's case for compliance and sustained the off-site review committee's findings.

*4.2 The institution's curriculum is directly related and appropriate to the purpose and goals of the institution and the diplomas, certificates, or degrees awarded. **(Program curriculum)**

TSU's curriculum is directly related and appropriate to the purpose and goals of the institution. The institution offers a variety of degree programs that support the mission which is to "foster scholarly inquiry and research, lifelong learning and commitment to service. Curriculum development at TSU is based on the Tennessee Board of Regents requirements. Additionally, faculty involvement is evident in the initiation and development of curricular changes.

The on-site review committee conducted interviews with the Vice President for Academic Affairs, deans of the Schools, department heads and various faculty members and reviewed pertinent documentation including the mission statement, the University catalog, program course offerings and requirements and individual course syllabi, in support of the institution's case for compliance and sustained the off-site review committee's findings.

*4.3 The institution makes available to students and the public current academic calendars, grading policies, and refund policies. **(Publication of policies)**

The TSU calendars, grading and refund policies are printed in the graduate and undergraduate catalogs and available on line at the various college websites. The Student Handbook also publishes the academic calendars, grading and refund policies annually.

The on-site review committee conducted interviews with the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Director of Banner Services/Protocol Officer, and the Interim Dean of Graduate School, and reviewed of pertinent

documentation (Tennessee Board of Regents' Academic Calendars and Student Registration guidelines, undergraduate and graduate catalogs, Student Handbook, and college websites) in support of the institution's case for compliance and sustained the off-site review committee's findings.

*4.4   Program length is appropriate for each of the institution's educational programs. (Program length)

Program length is appropriate for each of TSU's educational programs and is consistent with standard practices in higher education. Changes made to program follow a formal process that is initiated by the faculty at the departmental level with final approval by the appropriate governing body.

The on-site review committee conducted interviews with the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and Interim Dean of the Graduate School and reviewed pertinent documentation (University Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs, Faculty Handbook, and program and course approval procedures) in support of the institution's case for compliance and sustained the off-site review committee's findings.

*4.5   The institution has adequate procedures for addressing written student complaints and is responsible for demonstrating that it follows those procedures when resolving student complaints. (Student complaints)

Students may obtain a complaint form from multiple locations on campus and at the One-Stop-Shop located on the Avon Williams Campus. The process will be published in the 2010 Student Handbook. The form is also available on line. The complaint is logged, assigned a number, and forwarded to the appropriate vice president for response. Several examples of resolution of complaints were provided indicating a timely, appropriate process for addressing student concerns.

The on-site review committee conducted interviews with the Vice President for Student Affairs, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs (Avon Williams Campus), the Housing Department Director, and students and reviewed pertinent documentation on the website, Student Handbook, and the Student Complaint Form. Students are also encouraged to work directly with departments in resolving a complaint. In conversations with students, they were aware of the procedures for resolving complaints and felt comfortable using them when necessary.

*4.6   Recruitment materials and presentations accurately represent the institution's practices and policies. (Recruitment materials)

Admissions criteria and related policies are clearly articulated in publications as well as online. They are reviewed in accordance with Tennessee Board of Regents policy 2.03:00. Deadlines for application, residence requirements, and tuition and fee information are made available through the Future Tiger website, the catalog and appropriate web sites. The Office of Admissions Recruiter Training manual appears to be complete and consistent with regard to admissions standards.

The on-site review committee conducted interviews with the Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management and the Dean of the Graduate School and reviewed pertinent documentation, including recruiting brochures and other recruiting materials, in support of the institution's case for compliance and sustained the off-site review committee's findings.

*4.7   The institution is in compliance with its program responsibilities under Title IV of the *1998 Higher Education Amendments.* **(Title IV program responsibilities)**

A review of materials provided, including the annual audit by the Comptroller of the Treasury – Division of State Audits indicate that TSU is in compliance with its obligations under Title IV of the 1998 Higher Education Amendments. However, since the last audited financials provided are for the year ended June 2007, current compliance status cannot be assessed until those audit reports are received.

Additional documentation was available for review by the on-site committee. TSU did not include as documentation any of the Single Audit Reports prepared by the Comptroller of the Treasury, Division of State Audit. These reports provide the best evidence of compliance with program responsibilities under Title IV. The committee located the Single Audit Reports for FY 2005 through FY 2008 online at the State Audit website, noting no internal control findings for TSU during this period. According to information provided to the University by State Audit, Tennessee has received an extension until May 31, 2010 for its FY 2009 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR), and the FY 2009 Single Audit Report will not be issued until the CAFR is issued. Current compliance cannot be assessed without a review of these reports.

The FY 2008 financial and compliance audit of the University conducted by State Audit was provided with the focused report, and no findings related to Title IV program responsibilities were noted. The FY 2009 financial and compliance audit was made available March 18, 2010, and there are no findings related to this standard in the FY 2009 audit report.

A list of TSU internal audit reports issued from July 27, 2004 through January 2, 2010 was provided by the University. During this period, internal audit conducted two investigations related to specific aspects of federal financial aid programs, but there is no evidence that internal audits of these programs are conducted on a routine basis. Such internal audits would provide additional assurance that the University is in compliance with its program responsibilities under Title IV of the *1998 Higher Education Amendments.*

Recommendation No. 4:
The committee recommends that the University provide copies of the FY 2009 Single Audit Report and the FY 2009 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) as published by the Division of State Audit. Internal control weaknesses related to Title IV program responsibilities, if any, should be explained.

Part IV. Third-Party Comments

To be completed by the On-Site Reaffirmation Committee.

If an institution receives Third-Party Comments, the institution has an opportunity to respond to those comments and the On-Site Reaffirmation Committee reviews the response as part of its comprehensive evaluation of the institution.

The Committee should complete one of the following:

__X__ No Third-Party Comments submitted.

____ Third-Party Comments submitted. *(Address the items below.)*

    1. Describe the nature of the Comments and any allegations of non-compliance that may have been part of the formal Third-Party Comments;

    2. Indicate whether the Committee found evidence in support of any allegations of non-compliance.

    If found to be out of compliance, the Committee should write a recommendation and include it in Part II under the standard cited with a full narrative that describes why the institution was found to be out of compliance and the documentation that supports that determination. In this space, reference the number of the Core Requirement, Comprehensive Standard, or Federal Requirement and the recommendation number cited in Part II.

    If determined to be in compliance, explain in this space the reasons and refer to the documentation

Part III. Assessment of the Quality Enhancement Plan

A. Brief description of the institution's Quality Enhancement Plan

WRITE, TSU's Quality Enhancement Plan, is an ambitious university-wide initiative designed to enhance the written communication skills of students from the first year to the senior year to insure that students who graduate from the university are competent writers. WRITE, the title of the Quality Enhancement Plan, is an acronym for write, reflect, integrate, transfer, and excel, competencies that students are expected to develop in first-year writing courses and selected upper level courses throughout their experience at TSU. WRITE is intended to communicate and promote a larger and expansive vision of writing throughout the campus. The broader vision of WRITE is to provide an institutional context: "a model for connected, visible, reflective, and goal directed learning beyond individual courses that faculty can adapt for other competencies and extend to all academic programs at the university."

TSU has three institutional strategic initiatives. The first initiative focuses on strengthening students' ability to transfer learning within the General Education Core to upper level courses. A second set of initiatives comprises a faculty development plan including general education courses but focused primarily on selected upper division programs. The third set of initiatives addresses the need for more extensive and effective tutorial resources to assist the faculty at all levels in motivating and nurturing more competent student writers.

WRITE begins with the First-Year Composition Program that introduces the first writing enhancement - the electronic portfolio, or eportfolio. During the second year, students continue their writing experience in The History Survey: Sophomore-Level Transfer, a two semester course required of all students. These courses provide students opportunities to develop appropriate artifacts for the eportfolio that was begun in the First-Year Composition Program. The third enhancement is The Upper Level: Selection of WRITE Undergraduate Degree Programs in the various majors. The programs selected to participate in this enhancement must offer a capstone course that meets the university's requirement for this designation. This enhancement provides opportunities for further development of the eportfolio. Finally, WRITE provides electronic portfolio technology for e-learning and a WRITE Studio to support writing and learning throughout the university.

The university has developed a plan to assess the success of the program. The assessment design will utilize a variety of qualitative data captured at multiple time points throughout the implementation of the program. This data will include eportfolio assessments, student surveys, and scores on internally developed rubrics designed to assess the value added resulting from the WRITE experience.

B. Analysis of the Acceptability of the Quality Enhancement Plan

1. ***Broad-based Process***. *The institution uses a broad-based institutional process for identifying key issues emerging from institutional assessment.*

    TSU used a broad-based institutional process for developing its Quality Enhancement Plan and has solicited broad-based support from the faculty,

administration, and staff. The QEP was developed over a period of approximately two and a half years, and its development was led initially by the university's SACS Leadership Team and later by the Quality Enhancement Development Committee representing all of the university's departments and schools. The SACS and Leadership Team and the QEP Development Committee employed a variety of steps in identifying key issues emerging from institutional assessment.

Specifically, the committee reviewed WRITE, the Quality Enhancement Plan; Tennessee State University Academic Master Plan, 2008-2028; and Transforming Tennessee State University: Strategic Plan 2010-2015. The committee found that in developing the QEP TSU identified key issues that emerged from institutional assessment and integrated these issues in the QEP, the university's Master Academic Plan, and the 2010-2015 Strategic Plan.

The QEP is one of the five cross-cutting focus areas that cut across academic disciplines in the twenty year Master Academic Plan, and the QEP also represents the first strategic goal of the 2010-2015 Strategic Plan. The university also incorporated institutional assessment of general education and major field competencies among graduating seniors by analyzing the Academic Profile/Measure of Academic Proficiency and Progress (MAPP) test scores from 2005-2008. The analysis suggested that graduating seniors at TSU were significantly below the national average scores in critical thinking, reading, writing skills, and mathematics. Using the available data, QEP topics were identified and subsequently focused to upper-level general education transfer and then narrowed down to writing skills. Moreover, the use of a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis also helped identify the need to enhance the quality of learning at the university.

2. ***Focus of the Plan***. *The institution identifies a significant issue that (1) focuses on learning outcomes and/or the environment supporting student learning and (2) accomplishes the mission of the institution.*

The focus of TSU's Quality Enhancement, WRITE, is to promote and enhance the writing proficiency of students across the entire undergraduate experience. The plan proposes to have faculty operationalize the definitions of writing to their specific contexts, to present students with increasingly more challenging writing tasks as they proceed through their degree programs, and to improve faculty practice related to writing.

To accomplish this goal, the Quality Enhancement Plan focuses on the First-Year Composition Program and the introduction of the electronic portfolio (eportfolio), The History Survey as Sophomore-Level Transfer, and The Upper-Level: Selection of WRITE Undergraduate Degree Programs throughout the major programs. These writing enhancements are designed to ensure that students have opportunities to continue to develop their writing competencies at every level throughout their experiences at the university. The ultimate goal of the QEP is to ensure that the university graduates confident and capable writers. The plan identifies five student learning outcomes. They are:

- Students are able to distill a primary purpose into a single, compelling statement.
- Students are able to order major points in a reasonable and convincing manner on that purpose.
- Students are able to develop their ideas using appropriate rhetorical patterns in response to their rhetorical situations.
- Students are able to employ standard diction, syntax, usage, grammar, and mechanics.
- Students are able to manage and coordinate basic information gathered from multiple sources.

The learning outcomes identified are consistent with WPA's (Writing Program Administrators) First-Year Writing Outcomes, the Tennessee Board of Regents General Education Outcomes, and the Tennessee State University's General Education outcomes.

The plan focuses on three strategic initiatives:
- Strengthening transfer within the General Education Core to support writing in and across academic disciplines;
- Providing faculty development in the major disciplines to enhance teaching and learning; and
- Providing resources, mentoring, advising, and tutoring to support writing throughout the university.

3. ***Institutional Capability for the Initiation and Continuation of the Plan***. *The institution provides evidence that it has sufficient resources to initiate, implement, sustain, and complete the QEP.*

The University has identified funding to initiate and sustain the QEP through a combination of Title III and other institutional funds, with resource allocations that match the timeline for implementation. A renovation to accommodate the WRITE studio and offices is planned for Fy2011. First-year staffing will consist of the Write director and an office assistant, with temporary faculty positions and Write advisors/associates coming on board as the program progresses. When fully staffed, three faculty persons will be assigned to the program in addition to the administrative positions. The annual recurring costs are estimated to be approximately $600,000.

The Administration has indicated that the University is fully committed to funding the program in spite of the current difficult economic environment and the possibility of future budget reductions.

4. ***Broad-based Involvement of the Community***. *The institution demonstrates that all aspects of its community were involved in the development and proposed implementation of the Plan.*

TSU's Quality Enhancement Plan was developed over a period of two and one-half years beginning in August, 2007 in a process initiated by the SACS Leadership Team and subsequently led by a QEP Development Committee.

Faculty leadership was assured through the composition of the Committee as well as the presentation and discussion of the QEP's development in on-line forums and at the bi-annual Faculty – Staff Institute. The Committee consisted of a cross section of the institution and included representation from the Student Government Association; the Graduate School; Student Affairs; University Relations; Effectiveness, Quality and Assessment; Title III; Libraries and Media Centers; Testing; Research and Sponsored Programs; Budget and Finance; and Academic Enrichment, Advisement and Orientation (AEAO). The Director of the Writing Center and the Coordinator of the First-year Writing Program were added to the Committee in the 2008 Fall Semester.

Though there were student focus groups with Leadership TSU and SGA, the committee would have liked to have seen more involvement with the student body in the development of the QEP. There is still time for the institution to involve major employers of TSU's graduates who could help define the level of expected writing ability and high schools feeding students to TSU which could benefit from knowing the expected college readiness levels of entering students.

5.   ***Assessment of the Plan***. *The institution demonstrates that it has goals and a plan to access their achievement.*

The committee's review of TSU's Quality Enhancement Plan, WRITE, Tennessee State University Academic Master Plan 2008-2028, and Transforming Tennessee State University: Strategic Plan 2010-2015 found that in developing the QEP, TSU has identified key issues that emerged from its institutional assessment and has integrated the issues into the QEP as well as the university's Master Academic Plan and the 2010-2015 Strategic Plan. The QEP is one of the five cross-cutting focus areas that cut across academic disciplines in the twenty-year Master Academic Plan. In addition, the QEP represents the first strategic goal of the 2010-2015 Strategic Plan. The university also incorporated institutional assessment of general education and major field competencies among graduating seniors by analyzing the Academic Profile/Measure of Academic Proficiency and Progress (MAPP) test scores from 2005-2008. The analysis suggested that graduating seniors at TSU were significantly below the national average scores in critical thinking, reading, writing skills, and mathematics. QEP topics were identified and subsequently focused to upper-level general education transfer, and then narrowed down to the writing skill. Moreover, the use of a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis also helped identify the need to enhance the quality of learning at the university.

C.   **Analysis and Comments for Strengthening the QEP**

1.   The proposed scope of the Quality Enhancement Plan is very ambitious in that its focus is on promoting and enhancing writing competencies across the entire undergraduate experience and involving the entire student population; however, the resources appear to be inadequate to support all of the initiatives planned for the program. To address this issue, the committee encourages the university to

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consider ways it may scale back the program's focus. Instead of including all students in the proposed plan, the university may wish to focus on students in one or more schools in a pilot program. Scaling back the program would make available more funds for introducing and supporting the eportfolio technology, for enhancing the WRITE Studio, and for the extensive faculty development activities that are required for the plan's success.

2. The on-going oversight of a disbursed writing across the curriculum (WAC) and writing in the discipline (WID) initiative requires much attention to program development as demonstrated by successful programs at many institutions. If university structures are not in place currently at TSU, the committee strongly encourages the QEP implementation team and/or the QEP Director to identify these structures early in the implementation of the QEP to ensure that courses that are designated as WAC and WID have commonalities that cross disciplines. Considerations may include limited class size, opportunities for revision of writing assignments, the inclusion of a percentage of overall course grade based on writing, and require writing that is relevant to a specific discipline. The literature shows that there are many successful program models that include similar types of considerations.

3. The eportfolio is identified as one of the key initiatives of the proposed Quality Enhancement Plan. The purpose of the eportfolio is clearly articulated for the first-year writing program; however, its purposes and functions are not clearly defined for the later years, especially the senior year. In addition, the method for assessing the eportfolio during the senior year is not clear. The committee encourages the university to clearly identify the function of the eportfolio for students, for faculty, for departments, and for the QEP goals and assessment during the five years.

4. Since the success of the Quality Enhancement Program will depend largely on a strong leadership role in implementing and guiding the program's goals and objectives, the committee strongly encourages the university to identify a QEP Director as quickly as possible but definitely prior to the time the program is scheduled to be implemented. It is imperative that the director be identified and in place prior to the program's initiation.

5. One of the major initiatives of the Quality Enhancement Plan is faculty development. Although the proposed budget for the QEP includes funds for faculty development, the total amount of funds allocated in the budget over the five-year period appears to be inadequate to support the faculty development activities that will be required to ensure a successful program. The committee encourages the university to revisit the budget and to seek ways to increase the total amount of funding for faculty development. The committee sees faculty development as essential to faculty support and to program success.

6. The duties and responsibilities of the Quality Enhancement Program Director are not clearly delineated and articulated in the QEP proposal. The proposal does not provide an organizational chart; therefore, it is not clear to whom the QEP Director reports and how information regarding on-going issues of the QEP are shared with the Vice President for Academic Affairs and with the President of the university. Since the QEP (WRITE) will play a major role in enhancing teaching and learning throughout the university, the committee encourages the university to develop a

mechanism that will allow for a free flow of information between the administration, the faculty, and the students.

7. Assessment: The University has proposed a detailed assessment plan to measure student learning that results from the five-year quality enhancement plan, WRITE. The plan utilizes formative, summative, and indirect assessment strategies to determine student success and program quality and effectiveness. In order to strengthen the assessment plan, the committee offers the following ideas:

   - It is possible that in the senior WRITE classes in years 4 and 5 there could be students who have not gone through any or part of the WRITE program. To prevent this from occurring, there should be some type of tracking system at the student level to identify who has gone through the WRITE program and who has not in order that the scores of students who did not receive the intervention in the earlier years will not be included in the summative data and analysis.
   - According to the proposed plan, the control group's baseline data will be gathered through senior capstone projects in year 1 through year 3, and the experimental group's data will be gathered in years 4 and 5. To ensure the inter-rater reliability and consistency of the rubrics, it would work better to grades all the projects at the same time at the end of the fifth year for summative assessment without the raters' knowledge of which projects belong to which groups of students.
   - More deliberation is needed on how to use the eportfolio as a mean for value added assessment, specifically how to show the gains from year 1 though year 5 when students' learning outcomes get more complex as they advance from a lower division to an upper division.

8. The committee commends TSU for developing a Quality Enhancement Plan that addresses an important area of concern for the University, the state, and the nation: the need to enhance the writing (and thinking) skills of students and to ensure that their graduates are able to demonstrate an acceptable level of proficiency at the point of graduation. Although the QEP is an ambitious undertaking for the university, the administration, faculty, staff, and students have expressed strong support and enthusiasm for the plan.

APPENDIX A

Roster of the On-Site Review Committee

On-Site Review Committee

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APPENDIX B

Off-Campus Sites or Distance Learning Programs Reviewed

MCGAVOCK HIGH SCHOOL [offers M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction]
The Site Visitor traveled to the Off-Site location (McGavock High School) on Monday, March 22, 2010 and met with the following TSU personnel:

Rhonda McClain	Administrative Assistant/Site Coordinator
Evelyn Nettles	Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs
Cheryl Seay	Director, Distance Education
Sharon Peters	Director, Off-Campus Programs and Evening and Weekend College
Debby Norman	Professor

Personnel:
TSU operates and administratively staffs the McGavock High School Site in cooperation with Volunteer State Community College and Metro Nashville Public Schools. There is one full-time staff person, Ms. Rhonda McClain, Administrative Assistant/Site Coordinator, and her salary is split 50-50 between TSU and Volunteer State Community College. Her role is to serve as a liaison between the Off-Campus Site and TSU relative to admissions, record keeping, and counseling students. The Director of Distance Education and Director of Off-Campus Programs regularly visit the Site and meets with students and staff.

There are only two graduate (master's level) courses offered at this Site. Both courses are in the College of Education. Faculty are assigned to teach these courses by the on-campus department head. The Site Visitor met with Dr. Debby Norman, a professor who teaches at the Site, during the visit. Dr. Norman is a highly qualified and credentialed faculty member. Faculty assigned to teach at this site may have either full-time or part-time status.

Therefore, staffing of this Off-Site location is ADEQUATE.

Learning Outcomes:
The Site visitor talked with staff and the faculty member present about the compatibility of learning outcomes from the courses taught at the Site as compared to the same courses taught on-campus. Documentation in the form of course syllabi was shared which reflected identical learning outcomes with comparable on-campus courses.

Student Access to Faculty and Involvement on the Establishment of the QEP:
The Site Visitor met with three (3) graduate students who spoke highly of their graduate experience at TSU. They also lauded the faculty and spoke highly of their accessibility, professionalism and concern for students. Since the QEP focuses exclusively on the undergraduate experience, these graduate students had minimal understanding of or involvement in establishing the QEP. However, each student stated that they were aware of the QEP thru campus announcements, postings, and that they were given an opportunity to respond to various elements of the QEP via the TSU website. One student, who was also a part-time employee at TSU, noted that he was very familiar with the QEP discussions taking place on campus, and that he strongly supported the QEP.

Facilities:

Two classrooms, an administrative office were used at this Site. Information Technology (IT) equipment owned by Volunteer State Community College was readily available for students and staff. There were no on-site library services available; however, students and staff had access to TSU's online library database, as well as the TSR Library Databases. Students also have access to the Site's computer facilities.

<div align="center">Therefore, facilities are ADEQUATE</div>

Resources to Operate Off-Campus Site:
Staff informed the Site Visitor that resources to operate this off-campus site were limited, but adequate. Collaboration between TSU, Volunteer State Community College and the Metro Nashville Public Schools has resulted in the shared use of facilities and personnel. Although collaboration between these three organizations is sufficient, TSU's desire to expand program offerings using a cohort of associate degree students in business administration will require additional resources and personnel.

<div align="center">Currently, resources are ADEQUATE</div>

Interview with Students:
The three graduate students again expressed satisfaction with their graduate experience, passion of their faculty toward teaching; however, they did express the following concerns:
1. Better communication between the on-campus and off-campus locations relative to classroom locations;
2. Better communication with off-site students when academic announcements are made, such as cancelled classes;
3. TSU should identify off-campus sites closer to the main campus; and
4. Evening classes begin too soon (4:30pm) which does not allow working students time to leave their jobs and attend classes on time.

SUMMARY:
The Off-Site location at McGavock High School has demonstrated compliance with all pertinent standards in the Principles of Accreditation.

VOLUNTEER STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE [offers B.S. in Arts & Sciences, A.A.S. in Nursing, M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction]

The Off-Campus site at Volunteer State Community College (VSCC) in Gallatin, TN offers three degree programs – an associate degree in nursing (AASN), a BS in Elementary Education, and an MS in Curriculum and Instruction. Students in the AASN program generally fulfill their non-nursing courses at VSCC and their nursing curriculum with TSU's faculty. Faculty in the second year of the ASSN program teach at both the VSCC site and the main campus. Testing is generally performed using common tests between the two campuses.

The BS in Elementary Education is a two plus two program in which TSU provides the course work for the 3rd and 4th years whereas the VSCC (for most students) provides the first two years of general education. Faculty in this program teach at both the VSCC campus and the main campus. The Counselor for this program also counsels on the main campus as well at VSCC.

The MS is offered via night school courses generally offering two courses per semester.

Support services for the students are provided by counselor located at the VSCC campus and the One Stop Shop program. Students were pleased with the accessibility of faculty and support services and the environment conducive to pursuing their education.

APPENDIX C

List of Recommendations
Cited in the Report of the Reaffirmation Committee

CR 2.5 Institutional Effectiveness: Recommendation #1

The committee recommends that the institution provide evidence that demonstrates a fully integrated institutional effectiveness model including an assessment and evaluation process that is linked to its mission and goals.

CS 3.3.1 Institutional Effectiveness: Recommendation #2

Given the recently created assessment plans for many of its educational programs, administrative, educational support services, and community/public service units and considering the lack of results obtained as well as the usage of results for continuous improvement, the on-site committee recommends that the institution provide evidence of an integrated assessment plan that encompasses expected outcomes (student learning as appropriate), measurement methods, analysis of data and evidence of improvements made based on evaluation of the assessment results.

CS 3.10.5 Control of Sponsored Research/External Funds: Recommendation #3

The committee recommends that the University provide copies of the FY 2009 Single Audit Report and the FY 2009 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) as published by the Division of State Audit. Internal control weaknesses related to externally funded or sponsored research and programs, if any, should be explained.

FR 4.7: Title IV Program Responsibilities: Recommendation #4

The committee recommends that the University provide copies of the FY 2009 Single Audit Report and the FY 2009 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) as published by the Division of State Audit. Internal control weaknesses related to Title IV program responsibilities, if any, should be explained.