

# TSU FINANCIAL STANDING AND STUDENTS SERVICES FAQs

## FINANCIAL STANDING AND FUNDING

- **Q:** What steps are TSU taking to address financial challenges?

**A:** TSU is working on a multi-year financial plan, while exploring additional cost-saving measures to address financial challenges. The university implemented a financial action plan September 2024 that includes a hiring freeze, spending freeze, strategic realignment of resources, including workforce reduction. In addition, the State is providing resources from two departments, THEC and TBR to assist TSU. THEC is providing staffing support for our Financial Aid Office. TBR is assisting the university in closing out prior year audits.

- **Q:** What is the university's stance on the \$2.1 billion underfunding claim?

**A:** We would like to present an historical timeline and documents related to the \$2.1 billion. The \$2.1 billion figure was identified in a federal report by the U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) on underfunding to 1890 institutions- historically Black colleges and universities (HBUCs) designated as land-grant institutions. (*See 1890 Data Briefing*). Both federal agencies sent a joint letter, dated September 18, 2023, to the governors of the 13 states identified in the report. Tennessee Governor Bill Lee received the letter that outlined the findings from the research. This communication was to make states aware of the possible underfunding. The letter did not include an obligation for payment but recommended that the respective states work with institutions regarding these findings. (*See Gov. Bill Lee's letter*)

A follow up letter dated January 7, 2025 asked the governors to “explore ways to address the funding imbalance” and “strongly recommend establishing a state-level bipartisan joint legislative committee to gather data and conduct historical budget analysis of how the state has allocated funds to ensure it has provided its share of required matching funds for 1862 and 1890 universities related to federal grant programs.” (*See follow up letter*)

The letter also highlighted the process the State of TN used and completed in 2021. On April 5, 2021, the TN General Assembly Joint Land Grant Institution Funding Study Committee revealed the State of TN owed TSU approximately \$544 million of unpaid land-grant matching funds, dating back to the 1950s. (*TSU Underfunded by \$544 Million*)

In April 2022, Gov. Bill Lee and lawmakers allocated a historic funding package for \$250 million for infrastructure developments and major improvements for TSU that also included outdoor lighting, HVAC system upgrades, and interior décor. (*TSU Awarded Record \$250 Million*) To date, TSU has used \$80 million of the \$250 million that was allocated. The university will continue to seek approval to secure these funds for on-going infrastructure needs.

In closing, the joint legislative committee revealed that the State of TN owed TSU \$544 million, of which TSU has spent (**\$ waiting amount from White/Radford**).

## ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND ACCREDITATION

- **Q:** Will TSU be cutting any academic programs due to financial challenges?

**A:** The Office of Academic Affairs is currently evaluating low-enrollment programs for potential realignment or elimination. All programs are accredited, and full-time faculty will return in Spring 2025.

- **Q:** Is TSU accredited?

**A:** Yes, TSU is fully accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACS COC).

## ACADEMIC SUPPORT AND REGISTRATION

- **Q:** What is TSU doing to improve the registration process and academic support?  
**A:** The university operates the TSU One Stop Shop in Kean Hall to assist students during the first two weeks of the fall and spring semesters. This is one of the ways we have worked to improve the registration process for students. Students can help with this process by making sure they do not have a balance prior to registration. Free tutoring services are available through the Academic Achievement and Retention Center to address the academic needs of our students. Students should contact their respective academic advisors, department heads or deans' for information. Additionally, students can register for courses, make payments, and set up payment plans on-line.
- **Q:** How can students check if their courses align with financial aid eligibility? **A:** Students can verify courses using Degree Works and the CPOS (Courses in Program of Study) tool available in the MyTSU portal to make sure their course load meets financial aid eligibility requirements. Students may also contact the Financial Aid Office to verify eligibility, email [finaid@tnstate.edu](mailto:finaid@tnstate.edu) or call (615)-963-5701.
- **Q:** What is TSU doing to enhance graduate student experiences?  
**A:** The School of Graduate and Professional Studies has adopted a comprehensive strategy to enhance the experience of graduate students at TSU. This includes offering academic support through mentorship programs, seminars, and dedicated assistance for thesis and dissertation writing, as well as career development and wellness initiatives. A few of those initiatives include stress management and physical activity workshops. The graduate school fosters community engagement through social events, including the graduate school mixer, homecoming activities, and graduate student appreciation week. Additionally, to improve communication with graduate students, the school has extended office hours, enhanced communication strategies, and relocated from the Avon Williams Educational Site to the main campus for better accessibility. This new location also benefits undergraduate students seeking to pursue a second degree at TSU. For further information about the Graduate School, please contact us at [gradschool@tnstate.edu](mailto:gradschool@tnstate.edu) or call (615) 963-7371.
- **Q:** Are there plans to introduce new graduate programs or expand current offerings?  
**A:** The graduate school annually reviews potential academic programs based on demand, focusing on high-demand fields and expanding online offerings. New programs are proposed by assessing market needs, institutional goals, and curricular gaps, while faculty monitor industry trends and student interests to ensure resource availability and compliance with accreditation standards.

## FUTURE PLANS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Q:** What is TSU's plan for infrastructure improvements?  
**A:** TSU has several major renovation and construction projects that speak to investments into the institution's future. Students returning for the 2025 spring semester will enjoy the newly renovated Wellness Center and the Gentry Aquatic Center (the TSU pool), pending an inspection. Major construction projects will include the College of Agriculture's Food and Animal Science and Environmental Science buildings, totaling \$63 million that were recently approved by the State Building Commission, with a completion date of fall 2026. TSU will continue renovation of additional buildings, construction of new facilities, and address deferred maintenance with state funds. (*See a list of current and upcoming projects*).

## FINANCIAL AID AND SCHOLARSHIPS

- **Q:** Do I need to submit a FAFSA to maintain my merit scholarship?  
**A:** Yes, the FAFSA is required to be completed annually to maintain a merit scholarship, even if the student is ineligible for financial aid.
- **Q:** When will scholarships be applied to student accounts?  
**A:** Scholarships funds may appear on student accounts after the holiday break in the following order: tuition charges, tuition discounts, financial aid, and institutional scholarships.
- **Q:** How does TSU ensure students won't lose scholarships due to financial aid issues?  
**A:** TSU is committed to honoring all current scholarships. The Financial Aid Office is working to resolve operational issues and has engaged an external consultants to assist in processing aid more efficiently.

The Office of Financial Aid, Bursar's, and Scholarships will coordinate and communicate about updating accounts. Students accounts that have not been updated will be flagged "Financial Aid pending." Students with a balance of \$200 or less will not be dropped from classes and will not have a 'HOLD' placed on their account.

**Q:** What is TSU doing to address financial aid concerns and delayed refunds?

**A:** The Financial Aid Office is actively reviewing accounts and resolving pending issues. External consultants are assisting in processing aid more efficiently, resulting in a more timely refund process.

- **Q:** Will TSU offer more flexible payment plans for tuition?  
**A:** TSU offers several payment plan options for students. Please contact the Bursar's Office for details at [bursar@tnstate.edu](mailto:bursar@tnstate.edu) or call 615 (963)-5600.

## HOUSING AND CAMPUS LIFE

- **Q:** What is TSU doing to improve housing assignments and address overcrowding?  
**A:** Residence Life is currently reviewing enrollment data to anticipate housing needs and capacity for fall 2025. TSU will consider options for expanding housing based on that data as information becomes available. Housing applications open on February 1 for first-time freshmen and March 3 for transfer and returning students. Housing assignments will be made on a first come, first serve basis. A housing deposit and a clear balance are required to receive a housing assignment. Freshmen and graduating seniors have priority. Individuals must be registered as full-time students, with 12 credit hours or more, to live on campus. Please contact Residence Life at [www.tnstate.edu/housing](http://www.tnstate.edu/housing) or call (615) 963-5361 for additional questions or concerns regarding room assignments and fees.
- **Q:** How can students get involved in campus improvement initiatives and enhance campus morale?  
**A:** Students are encouraged to participate in student organizations, volunteer for events like the MLK Day of Service, and provide feedback during forums and town halls.
- **Q:** What is TSU doing to support international students?  
**A:** The Office of International Affairs offers visa support, cultural adjustment resources, and academic advising to our international students. For more information on the Office of International Affairs and service please call (615) 963-7047.



- **Q:** What resources are available for career development?  
**A:** Job placement is an important part of the TSU student experience. In recent years the university has been successful in assisting students on their career paths with on-site and virtual job fairs. The Career Development Center continues to play a major role as an employment resource, offering resume building, mock interviews, and job placement services. The Career Development Center is open Monday -Friday from 8 am-4:30 pm. Contact staff at [tsucareerdevelopmentcenter@tnstate.edu](mailto:tsucareerdevelopmentcenter@tnstate.edu) or call (615) 963-5981.

## COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT

- **Q:** What is TSU doing to improve communication with students and parents?  
**A:** TSU is hosting regular forums and Q&A sessions, and implementing a Tiger Support Call Center to answer student inquiries. The sharing of important information and updates via student emails, mytsu, and on all university social media platforms is a priority. Follow TSU on the following social media platforms: Facebook-@Tennessee State University; Instagram- @tennstateu; Twitter-@TSUedu; Link- Tennessee State University.
- **Q:** How can students report unresolved issues or concerns?  
**A:** Students can document issues via Speak TSU and submit the official support form at [www.tnstate.edu/speaktsu](http://www.tnstate.edu/speaktsu), or attend forums to address concerns directly with university leadership.

## SAFETY AND ACCESSIBILITY

- **Q:** How is TSU ensuring campus safety?  
**A:** TSU ranks in the top 10% of safest colleges in the U.S. and recently received Tennessee Law Enforcement Accreditation (TLEA), signifying the department has achieved the industry's best standards and practices for officer training and campus safety measures. These safety measures include increased mobile cameras, police liaisons in residence halls, and other proactive security measures. The university is currently in process of hiring additional police officers. Please visit the TSU Police Department in the Queen Washington Building located at 1120 37<sup>th</sup> Ave. North. Please contact the TSU Police Department if you have additional questions regarding campus safety at (615) 963-5171. TSUPD is located in the Queen Washington Building at 1120 37<sup>th</sup> Ave. North.
- **Q:** What is being done to improve accessibility for students with disabilities?  
**A:** The Office of Disability Services (ODS) provides support for reasonable accommodations across all academic programs and services. The ODS staff engages directly with students to establish reasonable accommodations and collaborates with the faculty to implement required adjustments. For buildings with restricted accessibility, ODS coordinates alternate locations for programs and services while partnering with facilities management to identify priorities for long-term facility improvements. Students requiring assistance may visit Kean Hall, Suite 131; call (615) 963-7400; or access [www.tnstate.edu/disabilityservices](http://www.tnstate.edu/disabilityservices) for additional information.

## FOOD SERVICES AND DINING

- **Q:** How is TSU addressing food service concerns like high cafeteria charges?  
**A:** TSU is currently reviewing food service contracts for affordability and encourage student feedback to address broader concerns. Submit recommendation and concerns through the Speak TSU student empowerment program at [www.tnstate.edu/speaktsu](http://www.tnstate.edu/speaktsu).

## IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Bursar's Office

Email: [bursar@tnstate.edu](mailto:bursar@tnstate.edu)

Phone: (615) 963-5600

Career Development Center

Email: [tsucareerdevelopmentcenter@tnstate.edu](mailto:tsucareerdevelopmentcenter@tnstate.edu)

Phone: (615) 963-5981

Financial Aid Office

Email: [finaid@tnstate.edu](mailto:finaid@tnstate.edu)

Phone: (615) 963-5701

Graduate School and Professional Services

Email: [gradschool@tnstate.edu](mailto:gradschool@tnstate.edu)

Phone: (615) 963-7371

Office of Disability Services

Website: [www.tnstate.edu/disabilityservices](http://www.tnstate.edu/disabilityservices)

Phone: (615) 963-7400

Office of International Affairs

Phone: (615) 963-7047

Residence Life

Webpage: [www.tnstate.edu/housing](http://www.tnstate.edu/housing)

Phone: (615) 963-5361

### SCHOLARSHIPS

Merit Scholarships

Contact: Ms. Holly Blakemore

Email: [hblakemo@tnstate.edu](mailto:hblakemo@tnstate.edu)

Phone: (615) 963-1554

Foundation Scholarships

Academic Works

Contact: Ms. Tiffany Baker

Phone: (615) 963-1880

Email: [tbaker02@tnstate.edu](mailto:tbaker02@tnstate.edu)

TSU Police Department

Phone: (615) 963-5171

### TSU SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook-@Tennessee State University

Instagram- @tennstateu

Twitter-@TSUedu

Link- Tennessee State University

### TSU HOMEPAGE

[www.tnstate.edu](http://www.tnstate.edu)

