

Section Title: Academic Policies

Policy Title: Contract Programs

Policy Number: A3.1

3.1.10 **Review Criteria.** The standards given here are representative of the elements considered by the Commission in the specific appraisal of contract programs. This list is not exhaustive. Review of specific contract programs may call for adjustment in the application of these criteria.

3.1.10A **Mission.** A contract program should be consistent with the mission of the institution as approved by the board of trustees. Further, the contract program should have the approval of the institution's governing board before it is acted upon by the Commission.

3.1.10B **Demand.** There should be well-documented justification for the program in terms of student interest and appropriate employment market demands in Tennessee.

3.1.10C **Curriculum.** The curriculum of the proposed contract program should show a commitment to careful planning via clear statements of the following:

1. The degree, major, and sub-majors (options, concentrations, emphasis) to be contracted, as they are to appear on student records and catalog announcements;
2. The goals and objectives of the contract program, precise enough to facilitate program evaluation;
3. The compatibility of courses with contract program goals and accreditation standards where evaluated;
4. The procedures, measures/indicators, standards to be used for on-going institutional evaluation of the contract program;
5. The identification of persons and/or advisory groups qualified to provide an independent review of the contract proposal; and
6. The professional accreditation status of the program - if accreditation is available.

3.1.10D **Academic Standards.** The admission, retention, and graduation standards should be clearly stated, be compatible with existing institutional policy, and be designed to encourage high quality.

- 3.1.10E **Faculty.** Current and/or anticipated faculty resources should insure a program of high quality. The number and qualification of faculty should at least meet existing institutional standards and be consistent with external standards where appropriate.
- 3.1.10F **Library Resources.** Current and/or anticipated library resources should be adequate to support a high quality program and should meet recognized standards for study at a particular level or in a particular field where such standards are available.
- 3.1.10G **Administration/Organization.** The organizational placement and the administrative responsibility for the program should be clearly defined and designed to promote success of the program.
- 3.1.10H **Support Resources.** All other support resources - existing and/or anticipated - should be adequate to support a high quality program. This would include clear statements of the availability of clerical personnel, equipment, and arrangements for clinical or other affiliations necessary for the program.
- 3.1.10I **Facilities.** Existing and/or anticipated facilities should be adequate to support a high quality program.
- 3.1.10J **Program Costs.** The costs to the state of a contract program should be carefully estimated. The Commission will evaluate whether the cost associated with the program appears to be justified by the educational benefits to students and the state and whether the contract proposal appears to be the most cost effective way to provide the services.
- 3.1.20 **Review Procedures.** Formal request by a private institution for a contract will be initiated by the Commission staff upon submission by the private institution of a contract program proposal.
- 3.1.20A Early and informal contact with Commission staff in the planning of a contract program is encouraged. This involvement may facilitate such activities as:
1. Assessment of program need and demand;
 2. Identifying criteria that may be seen as particularly important for a given program review;
 3. Exploring the need for consultants, the timing of their entry into the planning process, and their role;

4. Negotiating changes in the proposal format where that is seen as desirable; and
5. Comparing contract program costs with comparable program costs in the public institutions.

3.1.20B A contract program proposal should be submitted to the Commission staff for review no later than July 1 of the fiscal year prior to the fiscal year for which funding will be requested.

3.1.20C When the review process has been completed, the proposal will be presented to the Commission, where it will be approved disapproved, or deferred with a statement of specific conditions necessary for further consideration of the proposal.

3.1.30 **Accountability.** The Commission is responsible for monitoring the institution's use of appropriated funds and for certifying the residency of student applicants.

3.1.30A Contract programs are subject to audit according to procedures established by the Comptroller of the State of Tennessee.

3.1.30B Enrollment information for contract programs will be submitted to the Commission in a form and on a schedule comparable to that of public institutions.

Approved: April 22, 1988