



Policy on Institutional Accreditation

Policy No. 2.42.

Effective Date: November 22, 2024

I. PURPOSE

This policy is established to ensure compliance with the institutional accreditation policy requirements as stipulated in Tennessee Public Chapter 868 (2024). This law requires institutions of higher education to take specified actions pertaining to their accreditation status, including the identification and determination of the university's institutional accrediting agency and the eligibility of the accrediting agency to serve as an accreditor.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to Tennessee State University ("University" or "TSU").

III. OVERVIEW

- A. General. Accreditation in the United States is a periodic, peer-based system of review of higher education institutions. The process is one element of several that are designed to assure the public of an institution's commitment to academic quality and fiscal integrity, as well as to stimulate continuous improvement by an institution.
- B. Federal Financial Aid. In order for students of an institution of higher education to receive federal financial aid from the U.S. Department of Education ("Department") for postsecondary study, the institution must be accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency.
- C. Recognized Institutional Accreditors. Under the Higher Education Act ("HEA"), the Department recognizes accrediting agencies that the U.S. Secretary of Education determines to be reliable authorities as to the quality of education or training provided by institutions of higher education, and the Department publishes a list of nationally

recognized accrediting agencies (“Institutional Accrediting Agencies”).¹

- D. TSU’s Institutional Accrediting Agency. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) serves as the University’s current Institutional Accrediting Agency.

IV. ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION OF AN INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITING AGENCY

- A. Eligibility. All Institutional Accrediting Agencies, as published by the Department, are deemed by the TSU Board of Trustees (“Board”) to be eligible for consideration to serve as an Institutional Accrediting Agency or Association for the University.
- B. Selection. The University is authorized to pursue institutional accreditation by any eligible Institutional Accrediting Agency consistent with the review and approval process set forth herein.

V. INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION CONFORMANCE AND APPROVAL PROCESS

- A. Conformance to Changes Required by Federal Law. TSU shall update its policies and practices regarding institutional accreditation to ensure compliance with changes implemented by the Department or U.S. Congress.
- B. Reviews and Recommendations. The Board shall approve any proposed change in the University’s Institutional Accrediting Agency.

VI. INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITING AGENCY ACTION AND STATE LAW

In the event an Institutional Accrediting Agency compels the University to violate any state law, the Board Chair, on behalf of the Board, shall notify the general assembly in accordance with Tennessee Public Chapter 868.

Approved: November 22, 2024

Last Reviewed: November 2024

¹ 34 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) Part 602 and Section 496 of the HEA, as amended.