

### Proposed Policy #3

#### **Policy for the Admission and Delivery of Services to International Students and for the Employment and Delivery of Services to International Faculty and Academic Staff at TBR Institutions**

The Tennessee Board of Regents encourages its constituent institutions to receive international students and faculty into their communities in order to strengthen and expand the global academic market of ideas and knowledge. The TBR recognizes that international students and scholars have legitimate special needs, many of which are imposed by federal immigration laws and others which are ethical responsibilities.

In general, TBR institutions, which have international students, faculty, or academic staff, shall provide trained personnel to deliver services required by law and not discriminate against any international student, faculty, or academic staff member on the basis of national origin.

#### **I. Recruitment and Admission of Students**

- A. No TBR institution will contract with any organization, agency, or agent which recruits *to the institution,* international students on a per capita fee basis.
- B. TBR institutions will accept international students for admission to their programs according to TBR Policy 2-01-00.00, established academic criteria and such other requirements as the U.S. Department of Homeland Security may impose upon non-immigrant foreign nationals, excluding from such decisions any economic benefit, which may accrue, to the institution or the system.
- C. All TBR institutions will seek reasonable and appropriate consistency in determining admissions standards for degree-seeking students, including use of the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) or IELTS (International English Language Testing System) scores, transfer credit policies, transcript evaluation, recognition of degrees from foreign institutions, and the like, recognizing that differential policies in such areas may damage the academic credibility of the TBR System.
- D. All TBR institutions will establish reasonable and appropriate consistency in determining procedures for tuition payment, acceptance deposits, and other financial matters, taking into account the logistical constraints, which may be posed by international currency transfers.

## II. Academic Support and Other Services

- A. Institutions that receive international students must provide an orientation program that specifically addresses the particular needs of those individuals.
- B. Every international student will enroll in annual health insurance coverage contracted by the TBR, unless a waiver is granted for comparable or superior coverage. The premium for such insurance will be added to the student's regular institutional billing for tuition, fees, and services. Institutions must inform international students of all required immunizations at time of admission.
- C. The *Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)* permits institutions to comply with information requests from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and its Immigration and Customs Enforcement Bureau (ICE) in order to comply with the requirements of the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS).
- D. An offer of admission for a degree-seeking student must not be made when it has been verified that a student does not have adequate English proficiency for the individual institution. Postponement of admission pending improvement of English skills is preferable to failure or delays in time to degree due to language deficits.
  1. Any TBR institution that conditionally admits students with English proficiency performance below established standards must provide either an appropriate, professionally staffed ESL program or provide access to such a program to remedy such deficiencies.
    - a. Students will pay fees for such programs, if not otherwise provided by standard institutional tuition.
    - b. Institutions should establish mandatory standard proficiency levels which are expected in order for students conditionally admitted due to language deficiencies to achieve unconditional admission.
- E. TBR institutions must provide international students with fair and reasonable access to classes, housing, and other programs and services, recognizing that normal domestic deadlines and procedures for their delivery may require modification in order to accommodate the extended timeframe often created by the international admissions process.
- F. TBR institutions will provide advising and other services as required by federal regulations governing non-immigrant foreign nationals studying in the U.S.

- G. Institutions must establish policy to determine from which international institutions international students may be admitted and how grading scales from educational systems outside the US will be considered for equivalency.

### **III. Employment and Delivery of Services to International Faculty and Academic Staff**

- A. In keeping with TBR Policy 5:02:01.03 *Faculty Proficiency in Oral and Written English*, TBR institutions will establish procedures to assure consistency and adherence to applicable laws and regulations in the hiring and continued employment of international faculty and academic staff.
- B. TBR institutions will inform international faculty and academic staff of their rights and responsibilities appropriate to their visa classification. Certain visa classifications require the host institution to provide particular services to the international scholar.

### **IV. Relationship with INS and other Government Agencies**

- A. TBR institutions seek to maintain positive, cooperative relationships with state and federal agencies. However, in no situation dealing with international faculty, academic staff or students will any TBR institution serve as an enforcement arm of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service or other governmental agencies.
- B. While a TBR institution has a responsibility to inform international students, faculty, and academic staff of the potential impact of their actions upon their immigration status, in no situation dealing with international faculty, academic staff, or students will a TBR institution threaten or intimidate such persons with the revocation, loss, or infringement of their immigration status.
- C. TBR institutions agree to maintain the confidentiality of personal records and other information not in the public domain which they may possess about international students, academic staff, and/or faculty, and they will report such information only in aggregate, non-specific form to requesting agencies, except as required by federal regulations.

### **V. Respect for Cultural Diversity**

- A. TBR institutions must accommodate the observance of religious holidays by international faculty and seek to accommodate international students.