

## Tennessee Board of Regents

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### MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Tennessee Board of Regents

FROM: Charles W. Manning

SUBJECT: *Academic Affairs Brief*

DATE: June 21, 2004

Dr. Paula Myrick Short has initiated a newsletter summarizing current activities in the academic affairs area they will periodically send to academic staff, faculty, TBR presidents and Board members. It is intended as a brief identification of on-going projects that you can quickly read. I think you will find it helpful in keeping yourself knowledgeable about the variety of academic initiatives within the TBR system. I recommend it to you and encourage you to call Dr. Short or me with any questions or comments that you have as you read the *Academic Affairs Brief*.

cc: TBR Presidents

Austin Peay State University • East Tennessee State University • Middle Tennessee State University • Tennessee State University  
Tennessee Technological University • University of Memphis • Chattanooga State Technical Community College  
Cleveland State Community College • Columbia State Community College • Dyersburg State Community College  
Jackson State Community College • Morlow State Community College • Pellissippi State Technical Community College  
Roane State Community College • Southwest Tennessee Community College • Volunteer State Community College  
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The Tennessee Technology Centers



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## *Academic Affairs Brief*

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Volume 1

Number 1

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### **WELCOME**

Welcome to the first of a series of periodic briefs from the Office of Academic Affairs. The purpose of these briefs is to keep you informed of many of the initiatives underway in academic affairs at the Tennessee Board of Regents. These briefs will focus on specific issues of interest to you.

This first brief deals with retention of lottery scholarship recipients. It highlights initiatives being employed by our TBR campuses to inform students about the lottery scholarship opportunities and to assist them in maintaining their scholarships. Future briefs are being planned around areas such as academic audit, P-16 initiatives, sponsored research, strategic planning, and transfer and articulation. We hope you enjoy these briefs and find them beneficial.

Paula Myrick Short, Ph.D.  
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

### **RETENTION OF LOTTERY SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS**

With the implementation of the lottery scholarship program, we are even more concerned about retention rates. Our campuses understand they must assist students to ensure they are well informed and retain their scholarships. We recently asked our institutions about strategies they are employing or plan to employ to meet the lottery scholarship needs of students. A summary follows.

### **CAMPUS ACTIVITIES**

Other than the traditional types of course monitoring, such as mid-term grade notices, we asked the campuses what information they are providing or plan to provide students about how well they are performing in their courses.

#### **Performance in Courses**

- Early alert systems to contact students having difficulty
- Enhanced monitoring of lottery students
- Excessive absence reports
- Faculty emphasis on their grading policies to students



Since the lottery may bring about a change in student course selection and hours attempted, we also asked the campuses about changes in advising due to the lottery.

### **Advising**

- Preparation of advising information sheets
- Training workshops for faculty and staff
- Emphasis on early career decisions
- Counseling that focuses specifically on maintaining lottery scholarships
- Information for adjunct faculty
- Additional staff, especially for undeclared majors

In order to maintain their scholarships, it is important that students do well in their courses. Following are some activities campuses are undertaking to inform students about this.

### **Emphasis on the Importance of Doing Well**

- Information sessions for students and parents
- Mailings and orientation
- Opportunities for tutoring programs
- Warnings to students registering online about the impact of course withdrawals

As with any program, particularly new ones, many questions arise. We also asked the campuses about what types of processes they plan to have in place to answer lottery questions.

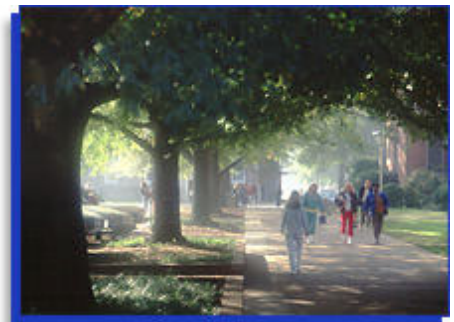
### **Processes to Address Lottery Questions**

- Training of staff members
- Web sites and brochures
- Information for students about where to get answers
- Videos in strategic campus locations

Although a lot of campus activities are occurring in the first four areas, many other activities are also going on. For example,

### **Other Activities**

- Institutional review panels
- Visits to high schools
- Parent orientations
- Computer tracking systems



## **TBR ACTIVITIES**

At the same time campuses are addressing lottery issues, TBR central office staff must do likewise. During this past year, we have met several times with a task force of various campus personnel to discuss and resolve lottery issues. We held web conferences and workshops with all campuses participating and developed computer programming around the lottery scholarships. We are instituting a monitoring mechanism for lottery implementation. This will include best practices on the campuses, monitoring of campus grade distributions, monitoring of student retention, and provision of lottery scholarship reports.

- Continuation of system wide task force and sub-council agenda items
- Continuation of web conferences and other communication
- Continuation of computer programming support
- Establishment of a monitoring mechanism
  - Best practices
  - Grade distribution studies
  - Student retention studies
  - Various reports

(Photos courtesy of The University of Memphis)