

**Austin Peay State
University**

Program Accreditation

Issued: November 26, 2019

POLICIES

**Responsible
Official:** Provost and Senior Vice President of Academic
Affairs

Responsible Office: Office of Academic Affairs

Policy Statement

It is the policy of Austin Peay State University to adhere to required accreditation standards and to accurately represent itself to all accrediting agencies recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

Purpose

This policy establishes responsibility for specialized program accreditation and licensing as required for selected academic programs at Austin Peay State University.

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- SACSCOC Policy: Accrediting Decisions of
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Guidebook

Definitions

Academic Program	An academic program is a coherent set of courses leading to a credential (degree, diploma, or certificate) awarded by the institution. Two types of academic programs are offered at APSU – a degree program, which includes a major (such as the BA English); and a certificate program.
Degree Program	A degree is an approved program that results in the award of an Associate, Bachelor, Master or Doctorate degree.
Certificate Program	A certificate program is a type of academic program that is a credit bearing, standalone program; it is not a degree program.
Concentration	A concentration is an approved grouping of courses that provides a focus to the students' time and course selection in a specific area of their major. A concentration is included on a student's transcript. A concentration is a subset or part a degree program.

Procedures

Introduction

A. Representation to Accrediting Agencies

Austin Peay State University represents itself accurately to all U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) recognized accrediting agencies with which it holds accreditation, including the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), and informs those agencies of any change in accreditation status, including the imposition of public sanctions.

B. Seeking and Maintaining Accreditation

1. Academic programs seeking or maintaining specialized accreditation or licensing must describe the institution to each agency in identical terms.

2. All program accreditation or licensing documents must be reviewed and approved by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (or designee) prior to submission to the accrediting agency.

C. Documentation

To ensure accuracy, academic programs seeking or maintaining specialized accreditation or licensing must submit the following to ~~the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment and~~ the Office of Academic Affairs:

1. a timeline verifying steps to meet the program accreditation/reaccreditation/renewal deadline;
2. a draft of the self-study, application or other accreditation document at least two weeks prior to the submission deadline, in order to obtain feedback and approval from the Provost (or designee)
3. a copy of the completed self-study prior to or on the day of deadline;
- ~~3.4.~~ Annual updates on the status of steps identified in the timeline; and
- ~~4.5.~~ copies of all correspondence to/from the accreditor immediately upon receipt.

General

Academic programs follow relevant regional and program accreditation procedures pertaining to specialized program accreditation and licensing.

Seeking and Maintaining Accreditation

- A. The designated supervising administrator, typically the dean, or the designated supervising department chair, collaborates with the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Vice Provost and Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, as appropriate, in making decisions as to which academic programs will seek specialized accreditation. All academic programs that are creditable are required to seek, obtain and maintain accreditation per Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) ~~2015-2020~~ Quality Assurance Funding ~~Guidebook~~ Guidelines:
https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/thece/bureau/aa/academic_programs/qaf/THEC_2015-20_Quality_Assurance_Funding_Guidebook.pdf

Concentrations are not required to seek, obtain, and maintain accreditation, unless required by an external agency or law. If an academic department desires to seek accreditation for a concentration, the designated supervising administrator must provide a written rationale and obtain written approval from the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, in order to ensure that appropriate university resources can be allocated to the accreditation. Upon receiving approval, the designated supervising administrator must notify the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment to track the accreditation application process.

- B. The supervising administrator, in consultation with faculty, prepares a self-study, applies for, completes the requirements of, and maintains accreditation and licensing as required for academic programs under his or her administrative direction when such accreditation is determined to be in the best interest of students and the institution.
- C. Upon request, the Office of Academic Affairs provides to the academic department a description of the institution that includes general information regarding the institution's purpose, governance, academic programs, degrees, diplomas, certificates, personnel, finances, and constituents. This information shall be utilized in the program accreditation documents as applicable, in order to ensure that the institution is described accurately and consistently to all accreditors.
- D. The Vice Provost and Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, as appropriate, monitors, maintains, and reports updated information or changes in accreditation status or licensing for all academic programs in a timely manner to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.
- E. The Vice Provost and Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, as appropriate, informs accrediting agencies of any change of accreditation status, including the imposition of sanctions (per SACSCOC Policy "Accrediting Decisions of Other Agencies").

F. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs monitors, maintains, and reports updated information to the President.

Documentation

A. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment [in collaboration with the Office of Academic Affairs](#) maintains a listing of specialized program accreditations and licensures for the institution and maintains a repository of related correspondence from accrediting agencies. The listing includes:

1. the university's master list of all programs that have specialized accreditation and licensure, including respective accreditation cycle dates and date of most recent accreditation letter;
2. new programs that are in the process of seeking accreditation.

B. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment [in collaboration with the Office of Academic Affairs](#) publishes a listing of specialized program accreditations and licensures for the institution and maintains a repository of related correspondence from accrediting agencies. The published listing includes the university's master list of all programs that have specialized accreditation and licensure, including respective accreditation cycle dates and date of most recent accreditation letter.

C. The Office of Academic Affairs provides each U.S. Department of Education recognized accrediting agency with which APSU programs hold accreditation a description of the institution with regards to purpose, governance, programs, degrees, diplomas, certificates, personnel, finances, and constituents on a regular basis.

D. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment is responsible for forwarding copies of program accreditation correspondence (from or to the University) to the Tennessee Higher Education Commission staff, in support of the Quality Assurance Funding requirement.

E. Individuals who wish to obtain or review documents describing accreditation, approval, or licensing are

encouraged to contact the Office of Academic Affairs for assistance.

Support

- A. The Office of Academic Affairs supports academic departments in their affirmation/reaffirmation/renewal by providing consultancy resources upon request. This may include reviewing and revising relevant sections of self-study reports.
- B. Academic departments shall invite staff from the Office of Academic Affairs to participate in accreditation activities, such as the exit conference of the on-site visit.
- C. Programs are encouraged to request consultation with the Office of Academic Affairs if the program receives recommendations, stipulations, or other requests for follow-up from the accrediting agency.

Links

SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement Standard 14.4: Representation to other agencies	http://sacscoc.org/pdf/2018PrinciplesOfAcreditation.pdf
SACSCOC Policy: Accrediting Decisions of Other Agencies	http://sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/AccredDecisionsOthers.pdf
Tennessee Higher Education Commission 2015-20202020-2025 Quality Assurance Funding Guidebook	https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/thecc/bureau/aa/academic-programs/qaf/THEC_2015-20-Quality-Assurance-Funding-Guidebook.pdf https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/thecc/bureau/aa/academic-programs/qaf/THEC_2020-25%20Quality%20Assurance%20Funding_Guidebook_Dec%209%202021.pdf

Revision Dates

APSU Policy 2:032 – Issued: November 26, 2019

Subject Areas:

Academic	Finance	General	Human Resources	Information Technology	Student Affairs
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					

Approved

President: signature on file
