

Standardized Description of UT for Programmatic Accreditation

(Created May 2015; revised July 2020)

Purpose

The SACSCOC policy Accrediting Decisions of Other Agencies states,

“Any institution seeking or holding accreditation from more than one U.S. Department of Education recognized accrediting body must describe itself in identical terms to each agency with regard to purpose, governance, programs, degrees, diplomas, certificates, personnel, finances, and constituents, and must keep each USDOE recognized accrediting body, including SACSCOC, apprised of any change in its status with one or another accrediting agency.”

When preparing accreditation reports that require a description of the University, the mission and vision statements (see <https://volvision.utk.edu/mission-vision/> accessed July 16, 2020) or other language relating to the items previously listed, departments should contact the SACSCOC Liaison to ensure each uses similar language and maintains compliance with this policy.

This document provides recommended text (abbreviated and expanded descriptions) and is maintained by the Office of Accreditation and posted to <https://sacs.utk.edu/programmatic-accreditation/> for department use.

Abbreviated Description of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville (UT Knoxville) is the flagship, land-grant, comprehensive research university in the University of Tennessee System (UT System). The University offers more than 300 degree programs to its 29,460 students and is authorized to award bachelor, master, professional and doctoral degrees. UT Knoxville’s Carnegie Classification is Research University/very high and holds the Elective Carnegie Community Engagement Classification.

UT Knoxville is one of the nation’s oldest institutions of higher education. Established in 1794 as Blount College, it was renamed East Tennessee College (1820) and again as East Tennessee University (1840). The Civil War forced the institution to close, and its buildings were used as a hospital. The University reopened after the war and, in 1869, was chosen as Tennessee’s land-grant institution, changing its name to the University of Tennessee (UT) in 1879. The medical campus in Nashville was acquired by the University in 1879 and moved to Memphis in 1911.

The UT System was created in 1968, bringing various entities together under one Board of Trustees.

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville has held continuous SACSCOC accreditation since 1897. UT Martin (1951), UT Chattanooga (1910), and the UT Health Science Center (1972) carry separate regional accreditation by SACSCOC.

Since creation of the state lottery that provides funds for the Tennessee Hope Scholarship, applications to UT have increased, and the quality of incoming freshmen has risen continuously during the past decade. The incoming fall 2019 freshman class has an average ACT score of 27.2 and average high school GPA of 3.97 (data from the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, <https://oira.utk.edu/>).

Expanded Description of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville

NOTE: Delete sections as appropriate depending upon the requirements of each programmatic accreditor's guidelines.

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The UT System Board of Trustees, acting through a president and other officers, leads the UT System through the adoption and administration of system-wide human resources, financial management, and academic policies (<https://universitytennessee.policytech.com/>, accessed July 16, 2020). Randy Boyd became President of the UT System on March 27, 2020. The

President and the UT System Administration maintain their principal offices on the Knoxville campus. The organization of the UT System and Board of Trustees is defined in the Tennessee Code Annotated (Title 49, Chapter 9) and the Board of Trustees Charter Provisions and Bylaws (<https://trustees.tennessee.edu/bylaws/>, accessed July 16, 2020). The UT System President and Board of Trustees report to the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (www.tn.gov/thecc/, accessed July 16, 2020).

The President, his staff, and the Board of Trustees review the UT System Mission Statement, the UT System Administration Mission Statements (<https://tennessee.edu/mission-statements/>, accessed July 16, 2020), and the mission statements of each campus and institute to ensure system integrity and identity. The Knoxville campus mission statement, as published on the web (see <https://volvision.utk.edu/mission-vision/>, accessed July 16, 2020), is:

The primary mission of UT is to move forward the frontiers of human knowledge and enrich and elevate the citizens of the state of Tennessee, the nation, and the world. As the preeminent research-based, land-grant university in the state, UT embodies the spirit of excellence in teaching, research, scholarship, creative activity, outreach, and engagement attained by the nation's finest public research institutions.

At the campus level, governance structures and rules applicable to campus and unit personnel and activities are set forth in the Faculty Handbook, available at <https://facultyhandbook.utk.edu/> (accessed July 16, 2020) with leadership from the UT Knoxville Faculty Senate, Chancellor Dr. Donde Plowman, and her Cabinet that includes (from <http://chancellor.utk.edu/cabinet/>, accessed July 16, 2020):

- Ms. Tisha Benton, Vice Chancellor for Communications;
- Mr. Chip Bryant, Vice Chancellor for Advancement;
- Mr. Chris Cimino, Senior Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration;
- Dr. Tim Cross, Senior Vice Chancellor and Senior Vice President for Agriculture;
- Dr. Frank Cuevas, Vice Chancellor for Student Life;
- Mr. Phillip Fulmer, Vice Chancellor and Director of Athletics;
- Dr. Matthew Mench, Interim Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement;
- Mr. Matthew Scoggins, Chief of Staff, Chancellor's Office;
- Mr. Tyvi Small, Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Engagement; and
- Dr. John Zomchick, Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor.

Other campus policies relating to academics and student life, administration and operation, environmental health and safety, finance, human resources, information technology, and research and intellectual property may be found at Policy Central (<http://policycentral.utk.edu/>, accessed July 16, 2020).

UT Knoxville's strategic plan, refreshed during the 2014-2015 academic year, Vol Vision 2020 (<http://volvision.utk.edu/>, accessed July 16, 2020) was approved by the UT System Board of Trustees on June 23, 2016. The six strategic priorities are: 1) undergraduate education; 2) graduate education; 3) research, scholarship, creative activity, and engagement; 4) faculty and staff; 5) resources and infrastructure; and 6) diversity and inclusion. Vol Vision 2020 is guided by adherence to core values that define the Volunteer spirit and permeate who we are, what we do, and our approach to living and learning at UT Knoxville and beyond. The vision of this strategic plan is to establish the University of Tennessee as a top tier public research university.

UT Knoxville is composed of eleven colleges which offer graduate and professional degrees, of which, nine offer baccalaureate degrees. The Graduate School provides oversight for graduate admissions, curriculum, and other aspects of graduate education. Both undergraduate and graduate catalogs are electronic and available online (<http://catalog.utk.edu/>) and managed by the Office of the University Registrar (undergraduate catalog) and the Graduate School (graduate catalog).

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