



## APPENDIX D Academic Infrastructure for Study Abroad and Exchange Programs

The Tennessee Consortium for International Studies (TnCIS) has the ability to offer several types of programs including:

1. those which are available to all students at TnCIS member institutions,
2. those for which TnCIS has been commissioned to offer to a special group of students or institutions, and
3. those programs which do not offer academic credit.

TnCIS will also help to promote all programs offered internally by TnCIS member institutions but not administered by it.

### **I. For programs sponsored and administered by TnCIS and available to all students at TnCIS member institutions, the following conditions and procedures have been implemented:**

#### Establishment of TnCIS Programs

All international programs to be offered by TnCIS must first be reviewed and approved by the Executive Director according to internal TnCIS procedures. This must be done for both continuing programs as well as new programs. All course offerings will be closely examined for their academic rigor and compliance with Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) principles of accreditation.

All programs will undergo review by the TnCIS Advisory Council prior to being approved for the next program year. A subcommittee comprised of community college and university institutional representatives will review all applications for programs and courses prior to the spring Advisory Council business meeting. A spokesperson will present recommendations for approval or revision based on the subcommittee's discussion on the viability of a program or acceptability of a course. The Advisory Council as a whole will vote on acceptability of all proposed programs and courses during the business meeting. The TnCIS Executive Director will report the Advisory Council's decision to proposers and TBR according to the timetable below.

TnCIS will consult U.S. State Department websites to determine if safety will be an issue for a program offered in a country or geographic area on their current Travel Alert/Warning list.

A list of all courses with supporting documentation will be forwarded to the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs who will forward to the Chief Academic Officers of TnCIS member institutions, who may suggest revisions or ask for further information. Supporting documentation will include:

1. Application Form
2. Institutional Approval Form
3. Full syllabus for each course
4. Vita for the instructor, and
5. in cases where foreign faculty are involved, a statement will be attached explaining how the instructor meets SACS standards.

**The timetable shown below is for example purposes only – exact dates will be posted on the TnCIS website each year:**

*TnCIS Course and Program Proposal Approval Process*

**Mid-November**

Call for Course Proposals

Call for New Program Proposals

**February – 1<sup>st</sup> week**

Course and New Program Proposals due in TnCIS office

**February – 3<sup>rd</sup> week**

Course Review Committee receives proposals

**March**

Course Review Committee report (conference call)

Forward to Governing Committee:

- Course proposals recommended by the Course Review Committee
- New Program proposals

**Late March - April**

Governing Committee makes recommendation for:

- The next year's courses
- New Program proposals

Next year faculty notification – letters of agreement sent

**May**

Next academic year program and course information sent to TBR to be forwarded to CAO's

The CAO's will either:

1. approve the program and its courses,
2. reject the program or certain courses in it for their institution (giving reasons),  
or
3. request further information before making a determination.

In the case of number 3, the further information requested will be provided immediately so that the process can be expedited.

**August**

CAO's sends report on approved courses and programs back to TnCIS.

**New Courses and Matching Courses with Existing Courses**

In order to take advantage of the geographic environment and culture of a program site, it is frequently necessary in all international programs to offer unique courses not presently in our college and university catalogues. Such unique courses may exist on one campus but not on another.

For example, a course such as: Twentieth Century British Theater. If this course does not exist at one or more institutions, then it either:

1. must be created on an experimental basis, or
2. linked to a Directed Study or Open Seminar course, or
3. not accepted for credit at that institution.

In the latter case, if the courses are not accepted for credit, the program in general would likely not be accepted at that institution.

Directed Studies, Topical Seminar Courses or Study Abroad courses may have to be considered for adoption if they do not presently exist in order to facilitate internationally offered courses.

### Mechanics

In principle, for all programs sponsored by TnCIS, students will apply for the program, register for the courses and pay all fees to their home institutions.

A timetable must be established for each type of program (summer, spring or fall semester). All program dates will be published on the TnCIS website with student application deadlines set by TnCIS.

A timetable must also be established when TnCIS is informed by the institutions about enrollments in courses and payment of fees (see also infrastructure for finances).

Each institution will then offer these courses during the appropriate time period, clearly identifying them through unique section numbers (or other means) as TnCIS courses.

Each institution will also be responsible for processing financial aid applications from their students studying abroad through TnCIS. As they will be registered at their own campuses, they should be eligible for all types of aid including scholarships and loans.

Any drop/add after the beginning of a program will be reported to the TnCIS office and to the registrar at the student's home campus.

Grades will be turned in to the TnCIS office at the termination of the program and submitted via the TnCIS member portal to the students' home campuses.

### Academic Policies

All academic programs sponsored and administered by TnCIS which award academic credit must comply with all SACS principles of accreditation.

- In accordance with TBR Guideline A-090, each 3 hour course must consist of 2250 minutes or 37.5 full hours of instructional time.
  - Some of these hours may be while on an excursion, but the excursion experience must be structured as a formal part of the course and be integrated into the course requirements and student evaluation.
- Each instructor will submit a course report, verifying the number of contact hours and the completion of work and course requirements outlined in the syllabus.
- Each course must have a detailed syllabus outlining learning objectives, course requirements, means of evaluation, grading procedures, and required reading.

- Syllabi must be provided to students at least two weeks prior to the beginning of the program.
- All students are required to attend all classes.
- There are no unexcused absences.
  - Several absences will be grounds for removing a student from a program
  - Absences due to illness must be legitimate and be documented
  - Excessive tardiness or inability to function actively in a class will be counted as an absence.
- Students may drop/add after no more than two class days in short term programs and no more than five class days in semester programs.
- All students must be registered for credit in at least one 3 hour course in short term programs and in four 3 hour courses or a total of 12 hours in semester long programs.
- All instructors must possess appropriate degrees, “competencies, effectiveness, and capacities” (SACS), for the course(s) they are teaching, and TnCIS must have all vitae on file and available for inspection. TnCIS will provide copies of vitae for all instructors to member institutions upon request.
- An anonymous formal course and faculty evaluation done by students will be conducted near the end of each course. Results will be summarized and forwarded to the instructor and the TnCIS campus representatives.

**II. For special, commissioned programs sponsored and administered by TnCIS and available to a select group of students or TnCIS member institutions, the following conditions and procedures are being proposed:**

Special or commissioned programs offered by TnCIS do not have to have the general approval of all TnCIS member institutions as outlined in **Establishment of TnCIS Programs** in the above section. These programs will be negotiated separately with the institution(s) involved.

The academic policies for these programs offering academic credit must comply with the standards as outlined in **Academic Policies** in the above section.

**III. For TnCIS Programs which do not offer academic credit, the following conditions are being proposed:**

Comply with and further the overall goals for international education as outlined, for example, by the TBR Strategic Plan,

Comply with all policies and procedures relating to conduct, accounting, attendance, etc. normally accepted at, for example, TBR and other institutions. Such programs might include such things as a choir or athletic tour.

**IV. For non-TnCIS programs promoted by the Consortium:**

Through its website and by other means, TnCIS will assist institutions with publicizing their individual study abroad programs and with recruiting efforts. When students register for a program sponsored by another institution, they will have to become guest students at the sponsoring institution and pay all fees to that institution.