

Focal Area 1: Access and Student Success

Theme	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Preparation of Incoming Students	The lottery scholarship facilitates access to higher education in Tennessee by academically gifted students, though it has the effect of lowering the financial desirability of community college attendance.	Tennessee’s current K-12 system is producing a significant number of graduates who cannot attend an institution without taking remedial/developmental courses.	Dual-credit, dual-enrollment, and dual-admissions programs could increase the number of students prepared to enter college.	Too many Tennessee high school students are unprepared for college-level work. Future enrollment growth likely to come from traditionally lower achieving students.
	The lottery scholarship makes in-state education more attractive to higher achieving students.	Admissions standards are too low and some modifications are needed to improve the quality of students.	Continue movement to align high school graduation requirements with freshmen level course work.	Preparation of non-traditional students entering college
Increasing Access	Regents Online Campus Collaborative provides access to higher education online.	Because the postsecondary education attainment levels of Tennessee’s resident adults are well below the national average, an increase in enrollment will have to rely on a greater than average number of 1st generation college students.	Tennessee’s population is expected to increase by 7% from 2008 to 2018, though six other SREB states will see even more significant population increases.	The relatively low percentage of Tennesseans with college degrees may contribute to a social and political climate which tends to undervalue higher education.
	Strategically enroll more individuals in low producing programs.	The goal of increasing graduates of Tennessee institutions will require significant enrollments of non-traditional students, who pose special persistence challenges.	New technologies will make it easier to serve students without regard to their location and without significant new capital expenditures. Additionally, technology offers support for course redesign for at least some courses.	Increasing educational costs will limit access to higher education unless financial aid keeps pace with these costs. Tennessee is on the verge of moving from a moderate tuition to a relatively high tuition state as state support for higher education declines.
	Free services offered to our adult and first generational students by our TRiO programs	Lack of scholarship for non-traditional populations (adult students)	Recruitment of new students using new technologies (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and marketing strategies (adults).	The fastest growing demographic of high school graduates over the next fifteen years will be Hispanic students, but nationally, this category of students has a lower tendency to enroll in college.
		Staffing must increase parallel with enrollment growth	Opportunity to remove barriers to access for non-traditional students.	Enrollment of male students High school dropout rates

Focal Area 1: Access and Student Success (continued)

Theme	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Retention Initiatives	Retention Efforts and Initiatives: Redesign, Etc.	Most TBR campuses do not yet have a rich first-year experience that extends well beyond the classroom.	Student/ Faculty Engagement in community.	
		Tennessee’s production of degrees and other higher education credentials, as compared with its investment in higher education, is poor compared to other states.	Chance to use new technology to aid student success	
	Student engagement through co-curricular activities.	Six year graduation rates for TBR institutions fall below US and SREB averages.	Study abroad and internship opportunities.	
Technology	Communication networks – Access to state wide data network (NetTenn) and local access to reasonably fast and affordable voice and data services at the campus.	Need to upgrade IT infrastructure on campuses & across the state (“last mile”). IT infrastructure at most schools is not capable of handling increased loads, HD interactive broadcast, etc	Growth in on-line enrollment	Distance Education/ on-line impact on on-campus
	RODP and on line learning initiatives are very strong	Overall lack of support for technology in the classrooms, for research, and for outreach	Distance Education	Support for aging physical infrastructures on campus
		Expensive and ineffective strategy to support administrative technology on campuses. Too many dollars spent on administrative technology and not enough on teaching, learning and research technology.	Emerging technologies/trends in the labor market could create or facilitate positive change and reduce costs.	For-profit online programs.
		2 year and 4 year schools have different IT needs and challenges.		Falling behind others in technology could put system at risk.

Focal Area 2: Institution Quality

Theme	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Faculty and Staff Quality	All Faculty SACS Credentialed	Recent reductions of continuing education staff due to budgetary concerns	This may be an excellent time to hire qualified faculty who are now looking to relocate	Loss of accreditation if full time to part time faculty ratio falls below minimum standards
	Professional Development opportunities provided to maintain teaching and research credentials	Inconsistent Professional Development may result in under prepared faculty	Create in-house professional development for faculty, or system wide academies.	Reduction in State funding will result in fewer fiscal and personnel resources to hire faculty.
	Undergraduate students at our universities are taught mostly by full-time faculty who have a terminal degree	Poor ratio of full time to part time faculty at Community College level	May need to look at adding clinical-type instructors to departments that traditionally have not used clinicians	Loss of existing faculty and inability to hire new faculty if salary remains below SREB peers, especially true for research intensive faculty
		Sometimes difficult to get hiring approval for “high powered” professionals who lack advanced academic degrees	Faculty/staff salaries need to be increased substantially in order to attract and retain quality employees.	Trying to fit higher education into a factory model; perception at the state level that faculty are mere cogs in the education machine.
Scholarly and Creative Activity	Campus music and art initiatives benefit the community and add to the institution’s reputation.	Lack sufficient or updated facilities for research		Loss of existing faculty and inability to hire new faculty if salary remains below SREB peers, especially true for research intensive faculty
		Salary no longer at market range within SREB impedes hiring, especially for faculty with high research potential		

Focal Area 2: Institution Quality (continued)

Theme	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Academic Program Quality	Pass rates on licensure exams are competitive with national averages	Philosophical move of TBR and community college leadership from the comprehensive mission of the community college	New emphasis beginning with emphases to raise academic level of incoming freshmen through multiple initiatives (e.g. Tennessee Diploma Project, Ramp-up, Gear-up, math “bridge” courses, etc.)	What appears to be a general lack of understanding on the part of the legislature as to the mission of higher education in Tennessee
	Strong business and nursing programs of study at the community colleges	Inconsistent vocational and academic counseling of students	New technology in student success research.	State budget seeing diminished revenues for the foreseeable future
	Strong transition programs [general education, AA and AS] of study to the four-year institutions at the community colleges	Lack of funding for upgrades to facilities for student learning and research	Ability to do data driven research.	Continued need for remediation on high percentage of incoming traditional-age freshmen
	Articulation policy to move students from the TTC’s to the community colleges and then to the universities. Smooth articulation process.	Retention and graduation rates are lower than our peers--indicative of problems in getting students connected, in overcoming their financial problems or other barriers to success, or academic performance	We need to find a way for TBR to assist the academic community in asserting itself through the electoral process.	The political climate will impact how the governor and legislature choose to fund the TBR system.
	Good DSP programs experimenting with making the remediation programs stronger, and more time and economically viable for students thus moving the student more rapidly toward occupational goals	Institutions need to increase the rigor of some of their academic programs in order to attain excellence, to help ensure their graduates acquire the knowledge and skills that will give them a competitive advantage.	E learning pilots	Gubernatorial support of only one or two research-level institutions.
	Many academic programs enjoy a national reputation for excellence.	Loss of institution identity when commercializing.		Too much politicking at the state level with regards to new programs.
	Dynamic online learning statewide collaborative: ROCC	Need more cross-discipline teaching for courses that have the same general content except for a small department-specific component.		

Focal Area 3: Affordability, Awareness, and Aspiration

Theme	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Cost of attending College	Lottery Scholarships have provided awareness and opportunities for higher education.	Lack of need-based opportunities available to adult students. Lack of scholarships for transfer, adult, returning students	Implementation of cost estimators at community colleges and universities.	Declining value of the US dollar and unstable economy could further impact the cost of education
	Lower costs of TTC's and community colleges.	Online course costs are above average.	Partnership with K-12 to stimulate discussions of affordability, cost estimates, types of available aid, etc., at the middle-school level to plant seeds early.	Competition for students from other states, competition between in-state-institutions for RODP students.
	Cost of education is centralized and can be coordinated via Central Office		Campaign to our legislators and other elected officials the need for, and benefits of, need based aid programs for adult students.	State appropriations per FTE student need to be increased substantially while minimizing increases in tuition and student fees
	Implementing models to reduce textbook costs, such as open-source models and campus initiatives.	Cost of textbooks and other learning materials.	Federal Requirement that textbook costs and processes will have to be clearly stated by bookstore.	Failure of higher education systems and institutions to explain rising costs will threaten public support.
	Tuition and fees in Tennessee are average among SREB states and below the US average.	System level administrative costs need review.	Partner with THEC on the annual tuition cost increases	Lack of financial planning and research of cost by families who have the income resources.
	Regents Online Campus Collaborative eliminates duplication of online classes by campuses.	Progressively rising tuition costs.	The public understands that higher education is tuition driven	Decrease in out-of-state students due to rising costs.
Resource-fulness	Room for growth in development and private donations (local color)	Under-utilization of potential grant-writing opportunities	Inject more resources into fund raising. TBR could help educate campuses on how to improve fund raising efforts Utilize or maximize prospecting methods or tools.	Reduced levels of private donations
	Growth in Sponsored Research programs in the last five years.		Potential to expand research and development funding with industry, etc.	Slow/limited growth of NIH and NSF research support.
	Most funds available are for four year universities	Need more faculty involvement in efforts to gain support from external funding sources. Faculty/programs need to become more involved in the public face of the institutions.	Implement plans to grow our grant-writing programs. Grants for need-based opportunities and/or affordability programs for rural areas or for adult students.	Ability of financial aid to cover tuition gap could decrease.
	Libraries have partnerships for reducing costs of materials.		Expand revenue by licensing of intellectual property	

Focal Area 4: Environmental Conditions

Theme	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Competitive Environment	Educational environment attractive to out-of-state students	Size of adult populations without degrees	Student achievement initiative; Momentum Point Calculation	TN traditionally one of the least educated states.
		Per FTE funding in lower range compared to SREB states	Compare TN system level data to other system level data	Some areas of the state are growing while others are losing population.
		Behind in delivery of alternate methods of course delivery.	Growing Hispanic population with corresponding educational needs	Lower per capita income compared to SREB and national index
			Getting to potential adult students	Increase in for-profit schools.
			Low state tax rate, compared to SREB and national index, favorable to attracting industries	Uncertain status of pool of international students.
Leadership And Governance	Community confidence in Presidential leadership	Program and service duplication	Opportunity to rethink internal governance and decision making processes	Right-sizing the number and types of programs at each school—political will to get this right.
	Working with sister institutions to coordinate TTC graduates to continue education	Uncertainty in future leadership and direction of higher education system	Opportunity to rethink external governance and decision making processes	Commercialization of college campuses
	Presence of institution leaders in community. Community involvement and enhancement by institution leadership.	Increased bureaucracy/reporting requirements for compliance with regulations and mandates at all levels.	TBR institutional locations around the state, nation, and worldwide.	“Methods” based education and rigid basis for credentialing teachers may inhibit opportunity to enlist retirees.
	System governance structure should facilitate the possibility of coordination between universities and community colleges to increase graduation rates through articulation agreements, etc.	Current funding formula diminishes capacity of the state to allocate resources appropriately to institutions with increasing enrollments or graduation rates.		Funding formulae of the State (i.e. THEC) that under-funds occupational, technical and workforce programs of study, both credit and non-credit
		Funding formulas based on graduation rates without considering particular subcategories of students such as nontraditional, low income, or minority students will undermine the larger goal of increasing the number of degrees.		Producing more graduates in Tennessee will almost certainly require creativity and innovation at the campus level, though this is not always encouraged by current norms within the Board of Regents system.

Focal Area 4: Environmental Conditions (continued)

Theme	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Economic Leadership	TTC-Regents online professional development and Regents Online Continuing Education – workforce development	Limited or isolated partnerships with business, industry, and other state agencies.	Through partnerships with business, industry, the creation of new faculty endowments for new programs may be possible.	Limited vision by other state agencies that only the TTC's are the economic leadership elements of the TBR
	Students who complete a program of study in the health sciences, business, or technology generally have marketable skills.	Non-equitable service to business and industry throughout the state	New federal funding sources for economic leadership initiatives such as in green job education and training	Lack of statewide vision for economic leadership, particularly in the area of integration of the community colleges within a plan
	TTC's and community colleges emphasize job placement for their communities. Placement rates of comm. college grads are comparable to peers.	Currently, there are not enough qualified faculty to train students for the career areas in which workers are most needed in this state.	TBR beginning to renew economic and labor department ties for all levels of higher education, partnerships with secondary education, career and technical classes, and dept of education.	Off-shore outsourcing of high-skill, high-wage jobs
	Some universities have increased doctoral and professional degrees awarded, especially in the health sciences, to meet regional and national demands.	Lack of quantifiable data reporting economic leadership elements	Place more emphasis upon economic development by anticipating workforce needs and then by modifying their programs to match those needs.	
	HOPE Scholarships and TELS Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant.	School's outreach to the communities	Intervention by higher education to assist in STEM areas	Off-shore outsourcing of high-skill, high-wage jobs
	Colleges ,universities and Technology Centers seen as critical to their local regions	Workforce viewed as underprepared for demands of current/future technology jobs	Rise in unemployment. Size of adult populations without degrees.	Spikes in enrollment based on economy
	Large number of high school students and adults who might enroll in community colleges and technology centers who want quick training for a new career	2 year schools and 4 year schools have very different IT needs and challenges.	Changing industry needs provide opportunities for working together	
	New value placed on education as an advantage in the employment marketplace, recognized need to improve college going rates.		New Veterans Benefits	
	Short turn around for the development of special industry programs to meet needs.		Attractive to high skills industries	