October 24, 2018

Dr. Lois Mann Bruce, Provost  
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Dr. Billy Greene, Interim Dean  
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Dr. Melinda Anderson, Director  
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Dear Dr. Mann Bruce, Dr. Greene, and Dr. Anderson:

In its October 22, 2018 meeting, the Council for Accreditation of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences voted to grant accreditation to the School of Human Ecology at Tennessee Technological University. This action followed careful review and consideration of the Self-Study Report, the report of the site visit team, and the institution’s response to the site visit report.

The Council for Accreditation commends the School of Human Ecology and faculty members for providing high quality Family and Consumer Sciences programs. The following strengths are particularly noteworthy:

1. The Director of the School of Human Ecology is to be commended for being a highly skilled and effective leader who has the respect of the University administrators, faculty, students, alumni, employers of graduates, and other academic units across campus.

2. The Unit is to be commended for working together to review and revise the Unit’s vision and mission statement and exit exam.

3. The Unit has established and maintained collegial working relationships with other academic units on campus.

4. The Unit is to be applauded for having a joint program with health and a new master’s degree program in Family and Consumer Sciences Education which began Fall 2017.
5. The University and various entities completed the renovation of Oakley Hall, home of the School of Human Ecology.

6. The Dean of the College of Agriculture and Human Ecology, Office of the Provost, and the Office of Creative Inquiry/Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) all indicated that funds for professional development are available and can be used when requested.

7. The Unit’s Advisory Council and alumni are both supportive of working with the Unit’s students as site supervisors and employers.

8. Unit faculty members are to be commended for their hard work, dedication, and commitment to the students, communities, families, and University while maintaining heavy teaching loads.

9. The Unit has depth and breadth in culminating experience opportunities for students in all concentrations.

10. Students articulate and embrace the Family and Consumer Sciences Body of Knowledge. There is student recognition of efforts to integrate the Family and Consumer Sciences Body of Knowledge with courses and experiences specific to the student’s concentration.

11. The technology support available to the unit has enhanced both learning and assessing opportunities in both classrooms on campus and within the culminating experiences.

12. Students recognize the value of research and creative endeavors in their coursework along with the multitude of community outreach activities made available to them through the Unit’s faculty members.

13. Employers endorse the desirability of hiring the Unit’s graduates in the workplace, reflecting the sound knowledge base and professionalism of the graduates.

The Council for Accreditation makes the following recommendations to strengthen compliance with accreditation standards and to assist in further enhancement of the programs in the School of Human Ecology:

1. Reflect priorities of the unit by the development and use of measurable long and short-term goals that are linked to the Unit’s mission statement. [Criterion 1.2(2)]

2. Determine methods by which the Unit’s goals will be assessed, use the results of the findings to formulate goals for the next year, and improve the system of evaluation. [Criterion 1.2(6)]

3. Reevaluate the teaching load of the Unit Director in comparison to other Unit Administrators across campus. Make certain that the demands of administering the Unit are recognized in relation to the total load of the Unit Director and aligned with other
accredited Unit Administrators on campus. In addition, ensure that sufficient time is allocated to accomplish administrative functions essential to supporting the mission and goals of the Unit. Investigate the possibility of a twelve-month appointment for the Unit Director. [Criterion 1.4(3)]

4. Explore opportunities to engage in research in the local community. [Criterion 1.5(6)]

5. Continue to update annually the public reporting of reliable School of Human Ecology aggregated student achievement/performance data and other outcome measures. Ensure that the data are no more than two clicks from the Unit homepage. [Criteria 2.2(1); 2.2(3)]

6. In the first interim report, provide revised core and revised outcome measures, data to be collected, follow-up action, and completion of matrices 2.1(a), 2.1(b), 2.1(c). [Criteria 2.1(1); 2.1(2); 2.1(3); 2.2(1); 2.2(2); 2.2(3)]

7. In the first interim report, provide evidence documenting decisions and actions regarding the core, associated assessment data gathered on a continuing basis, and evidence of actions taken to “close the loop.” [Criteria 2.2(2); 2.2(3)]

8. Seek external as well as internal support for activities which support student engagement in professional leadership activities such as the Women’s Leadership Institute and in research, scholarly, scientific, and creative experiences. [Criteria 3.1(4); 3.1(5)]

9. Assure that all faculty members, including part-time, temporary, and adjuncts have educational and other professional experiences that contribute to the knowledge of subject-matter and competency in instruction. In addition, assure that all faculty members are teaching in their area of specialization. [Criterion 4.1(1); 4.1(4)]

10. Identify the relevant policies and procedures guiding Unit decisions related to faculty recruitment; appointment; workload; and performance assessment including tenure, promotion, and post-tenure review. If relevant guidelines do not exist, then establish unit-level policies and procedures to guide current practices. [Criteria 3.1(1); 3.1(2); 3.1(3); 4.2(1); 4.2 (6a), 4.2(6b); 4.2(7); 4.3(6); 4.4(8)]

11. Assure assigned courses are aligned with faculty teaching credentials. [Criteria 4.3(1a); 4.3(1b)]

12. Ensure faculty members hired in the future demonstrate diverse professional preparation and education within the field, including degrees from a variety of educational institutions. [Criterion 4.3(2)]
13. Identify outcome measures by which the Unit assesses its success in achieving a diverse faculty and staff and use the data regarding the performance of these outcome measures to enhance recruitment efforts of forthcoming faculty and staff searches. [Criterion 4.3(7)]

14. In future interim reports, provide updates on enrollment numbers in the Food Systems Administration program. [Criterion 4.4(1)].

Actions taken in response to these recommendations are to be described in the Unit’s first interim report which shall be submitted in year three (2021) of accreditation. You will receive notification of the specific date the report will be due for consideration in the Council for Accreditation’s subsequent meeting.

Accreditation is granted by the Council for Accreditation for a period of ten years. Any extension and/or provisional accreditation periods are counted as part of the ten-year period. Therefore, this accreditation expires Fall 2028. The next Self-Study Report will be due September 1, 2027.

When accreditation is granted, the Unit is eligible to use the AAFCS Seal of Accreditation. This seal indicates that the Unit has been found to meet or exceed stated criteria and can be used in all communications, both print and electronic. You will be sent an electronic file containing the seal graphic with protocol-for-use.

Members of the Council for Accreditation join us in congratulating you and the faculty on the quality of programs offered by the School of Human Ecology. This comes with our good wishes for continued success of the programs.

With Best Wishes,

Lynda Martin, Ph.D.
Chair – Council for Accreditation

Lori Myers, Ph.D., CFCS
Senior Director: Credentialing, Education & Research