

I. ATHLETICS MISSION, PHILOSOPHY, OBJECTIVES, AND ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL

A. INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Tennessee Technological University (TTU) Intercollegiate Athletics, based upon and consistent with the University, is to encourage student scholarship and sportsmanship with emphasis placed on assisting student-athletes in making appropriate progress toward completion of their chosen academic degree program while competing for Ohio Valley Conference Championships and to ultimately become productive members of society.

The TTU Intercollegiate Athletics Program serves as a rallying point for the University as well as a public relations outlet for University activities by striving to bring positive recognition to TTU through a program built on concepts including excellence, integrity, and enthusiasm.

Academic integrity is a key element in athletic decisions, thus ensuring that the educational values, practices, and mission of the University set the standard for the program. TTU's athletic program strives for student-athlete excellence in competition and in the academic setting. TTU seeks to field disciplined and competitive athletic teams dedicated to observing sportsmanship and applicable rules, to providing quality athletic training and medical support to intercollegiate athletics, and to supporting the general welfare of student-athletes.

The TTU Intercollegiate Athletics Program focuses on the overall development of all persons participating in athletics. Ethical conduct and good sportsmanship is promoted among faculty and students, alumni and friends, athletics department staff, and student-athletes. The program adheres to the policies, rules, and guidelines of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), the Ohio Valley Conference (OVC), and the institution.

Intercollegiate Athletics is as supportive of women as of men and as supportive of those in the minority as those in the majority. The program is committed to complying with Title IX regulations. Intercollegiate Athletics provides opportunities to eligible persons without regard to age, gender, color, race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability.

B. PHILOSOPHY OF INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS

Intercollegiate Athletics at Tennessee Technological University dates from the establishment of the institution and has made a major contribution to the development of the University. Tennessee Tech continues to subscribe to the same basic belief as was voiced in the first catalog: "Athletics is an important part of student activities."

At Tennessee Tech, student-athletes shall be provided with the opportunity, encouragement, and instruction to progress toward a degree of their choice and the opportunity, environment, and coaching to develop their athletic abilities while competing for OVC Championships. These opportunities shall be consistent with high standards of academic scholarship, sportsmanship,

leadership, discipline, and loyalty and provide opportunities to females and minorities. The intercollegiate student-athletes who represent Tennessee Tech shall be bona fide students pursuing degree programs, as well as amateur competitors as defined by the NCAA.

We believe that an athletics program:

1. Shall be an important part of a well-rounded state university dedicated to the service of a broad range of interests of students, faculty, alumni, and the greater community.
2. Shall develop desirable character, maturity, and a sense of fair play as well as athletics excellence and physical vigor.
3. Shall provide the motivation and means for some individuals who, without such a program, might never continue their education -- to attend, study, learn, and graduate from a university.
4. Shall be important in creating an awareness of, interest in, and concern and support for the University.
5. Shall become a rallying point for students, faculty, alumni, friends, and the community while developing pride in the University.
6. Shall abide by the letter and spirit of the laws that require nondiscrimination because of age, gender, color, race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability.
7. Shall create positive relationships and sportsmanship with individuals at schools from which student-athletes are drawn and with persons at institutions that the University engages in game competition.
8. Shall comply with the OVC Sportsmanship Statement which follows:

10.1 General Principles. The OVC is committed to sportsmanship and developing healthy environments for competition. The Conference will strive to create “hospitable” environments. Part of the role of education through sports is to teach our youth and our communities to conduct themselves with respect for all participants and spectators.

10.2 Administrators. It is incumbent upon institutional administrators to create an environment of hospitality for visiting teams, particularly for those individuals at Conference institutions. Conference administrators must treat a visiting team and its fans with fairness, respect, and civility.

10.2.1 Official Welcome and Security. The athletics director, or his or her designee, at the host institution must approach the coach of the opposing team upon arrival at a spectator event to address any concerns, indicate the location of the game manager in the arena or stadium and identify security personnel present for the contest. The athletics director should educate security personnel to ensure

that the visiting team is protected from abuse from the home crowd and that security is in very close proximity to the visiting team's bench. Each institution should arrange its seating at spectator events in accordance with Conference ADAA 20-26 to emphasize sportsmanship and minimize the harassment of the visiting team and its fans.

10.2.2 Fairness and Respect. The institution's president or chancellor and athletics director should review periodically with other athletics department staff members, coaches, student-athletes and spirit groups (cheerleaders, bands, and mascots) precisely what is acceptable conduct.

10.3 Coaches' Responsibilities.

10.3.1 To Student-Athletes. Coaches must monitor their student-athletes' behavior and continually emphasize the need for sportsmanship and respect. Officials will expect coaches to remove student-athletes who demonstrate disrespect for an opponent, official or others.

10.3.2 Toward Supporters and Media. Coaches shall demonstrate at every opportunity, at any competition, the expectation that their fans support their team, while not tolerating abuse of the visiting team, its fans, or the media.

10.3.3 Support for Officials. Coaches should support the officials of any competition rather than criticize them publicly.

10.3.4 At the Contest. The coaches in any sport should remain in the designated coaching areas and refrain from any action which might incite the crowd. All coaches must realize that the continuation of any scheduled competition is the responsibility of the game officials, and that taking a team from any playing area is not the prerogative of the coach.

10.4 Student-Athletes and Spirit Groups. Respect for the game in which the student-athletes and spirit groups (e.g. bands, cheerleaderse, dance teams) participate also demands respect for the opponent. Student-athletes and spirit groups at Conference institutions are expected to treat opponents with sportsmanship. There can be no tolerance for verbal abuse, physical abuse, taunting and/or baiting of opponents.

10.5 Officials. Officials who are assigned Conference contests must enforce the rules regarding sportsmanship, without tolerance for abuse. The only warning to participants and coaches regarding sportsmanship should come at the beginning of the contest. Once the contest begins, penalties (consequences), not warnings, shall be assessed for unsportsmanlike conduct. Officials shall eject any coach who protests unsportsmanlike conduct calls, in accordance with the playing rules of the involved sport.

10.5 .1 Sportsmanship Statement - Read to Participants by Game Officials.

Each official assigned by the OVC will be provided a card with the following statement which must be read to the captains and coaches of every contest prior to the beginning of the competition: "The Ohio Valley Conference requires officials to enforce all rules regarding unsportsmanlike conduct by coaches and student-athletes. There will be no tolerance of negative statements or actions between opposing teams, including verbal abuse, physical abuse, taunting or baiting. If such comments or behavior is observed, a penalty will be immediately assessed. If

any coach protests an unsportsmanlike penalty, he/she will be ejected from the contest. We have been instructed not to issue warnings during the competition. It is strongly suggested that you remind your participants of this policy." Officials who do not follow this policy will be subject to suspension.

10.5.2 Sportsmanship Statement - Read to Spectators by Public Address Announcer. The public address announcer at all home games, including on conference competition, shall read the OVC Sportsmanship Statement immediately preceding the start of the competition: "On behalf of the Ohio Valley Conference and (INSTITUTION), welcome to today's event. In the spirit of sportsmanship we ask that all fans act in a responsible and courteous manner. Abusive language or disorderly conduct is unacceptable and unwelcome. Let's afford the participants and your fellow fans the respect they deserve. Your cooperation is appreciated."

10.6 Sportsmanship Affidavit. Conference member institutions are responsible for ensuring sportsmanship and ethical conduct are displayed at all athletics events by student-athletes, coaches, administrators, and fans. Each athletics director is responsible for ensuring all coaches, student-athletes, and other individuals employed by or associated with the institution are aware of the Conference's sportsmanship policies. All institutional athletics staff members are required to annually review the Conference's sportsmanship policies and sign and date a Conference Sportsmanship Affidavit in accordance with prescribed form and deadline set by the Conference Commissioner, or designee.

10.7 Commissioner. The commissioner is expected and authorized to assess penalties for improper behavior that is not detected or properly addressed during the contest. Institutions and their personnel are expected to cooperate fully with his/her effort to investigate possible violations of sportsmanship.

10.7.1 Altercation Occurrence. If an altercation occurs during competition, all individuals who are on the bench are expected to remain there. It is incumbent upon the head coach to ensure that this occurs. The commissioner is authorized to suspend the head coach of a team whose bench personnel enter the field or court of play during an altercation, regardless of whether those individuals become involved in the altercation.

10.7.2 Minimum Penalty for Ejection from Conference Contest.

10.7.2.a Conference sponsored sports. Any coach, student-athlete or athletics staff member ejected from a Conference contest in conference-sponsored sports shall be assessed an appropriate penalty in accordance with NCAA playing rules for that sport. Additional penalties related to the ejection may be imposed by the Commissioner. (*amended and approved 2/7/2011*).

10.8 Fans. The sportsmanship statement shall be read at least once in accordance with Bylaw 10.5.2. Institutions shall distribute a letter from the Commissioner, which includes the OVC Fan Code of Conduct, to all season ticket holders, booster club members, student organizations and student-athlete advisory committees on an annual basis

promoting the league's stance on sportsmanship and identifying acceptable fan behavior. See Appendix W for the OVC's Fan Code of Conduct. (*adopted 5/31/2012*)

Article 10, OVC Bylaws, OVC Handbook 2012-2013, Volume XXIX

C. OBJECTIVES OF THE INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS PROGRAM

The Intercollegiate Athletics program shall:

1. Field competitive student-athletes and teams who have been recruited and coached by skilled persons who abide by and support the rules and spirit of the sports as well as those rules of the University, the OVC, and the NCAA.
2. Have men and women representing the University whose conduct and sportsmanship as student-athletes and as students reflect credit upon themselves, the University, and their sports.
3. Emphasize the amateur, student-scholar nature of its student-athletes while providing appropriate counseling, advising, and instruction, thereby ensuring that those who participate will progress toward degree goals.
4. Create an environment such that faculty, staff, administrators, and students recognize the student-athletes and the athletics program as integral parts of the University with valid contributions to be made to the goals of the University.
5. Make apparent the fact that the Athletics Department is efficiently operated, has high ethical standards, and contributes to the improvement of college athletics.
6. Maintain a high quality of physical and emotional well being and safety for student-athletes.
7. Provide physical facilities, equipment, and uniforms that give ample support to athletics and that reflect the appropriate image of the University.
8. Schedule interesting, varied, and appropriate competition for student-athletes and teams.
9. Operate as cost effectively as possible and raise private funds, contributions, and other income to enrich the University's athletics program.
10. Have as a goal of the athletics department, to allow each student to receive a degree in the student's chosen field while competing for OVC Championships.

D. ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL

1. The policies and procedures included herein are the adopted “athletics” policies of the University. Any revisions to these policies and procedures must be approved by the Athletics Committee and the University’s Administrative Council with the final approval by the President.

2. Tennessee Board of Regents

Under the laws of Tennessee, overall control of Tennessee Technological University shall be vested in the Tennessee Board of Regents. Responsibility and final authority for establishing and modifying policies and budget concerning intercollegiate athletics shall rest with the Board.

3. The President of the University

The President of the University shall be the chief executive officer in charge of all of the University's operations, budget, and activities including intercollegiate athletics. The President shall be the University official who certifies that the University is in compliance with the regulations of the NCAA and the OVC.

4. Athletics Director

- a. The Athletics Director shall be in charge of the University's intercollegiate athletics program and shall report to the President. The Athletics Director shall provide the President with information and recommendations that are necessary for decisions regarding policy, administration, budget, personnel, and programs including scheduling of games. The Athletics Director shall be responsible for maintaining and implementing policies approved by the President through the normal university procedures, and also the rules and regulations of the NCAA, OVC, and University.
- b. The Athletics Director shall be an ex-officio member of the Athletics Committee and shall serve as the Executive Officer of the Committee.
- c. The Athletics Director shall be responsible for all fiscal matters within the Athletics Department.
- d. The Athletics Director shall be responsible for the overall conduct of the coaches in the Athletics Department and the conduct of each program, including adherence to budget and treatment of student-athletes.
- e. The Athletics Director shall evaluate Associate Athletics Directors and any other positions that directly report to the Director, and shall review the annual evaluation of coaches and staff. These evaluations shall be reported

annually to the President.

- f. The Athletics Director, when designated by the President, shall represent the University at meetings of the NCAA, the OVC, and other athletics-related organizations.
- g. The Athletics Director certifies eligibility on the basis of academic information provided by the person acting as the Registrar (Note: The Administrative Assistant for Certification actually prepares the eligibility forms and the person that performs the duties of the Registrar approves and certifies the information.)
- h. The Athletics Director shall provide an annual report to the Athletics Committee and the Administrative Council on the status of Athletics Department equity and minority issues.

5. Faculty Athletics Representative

The Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR) shall be appointed by the President and shall be a member of the Athletics Committee. The FAR shall serve on the Faculty Athletics Representatives Committee of the OVC and, when designated by the President, shall represent the University at meetings of the NCAA and the OVC. In addition to the Athletics Director, the FAR certifies eligibility on the basis of the academic information provided by the person acting as the Registrar. The FAR will also provide leadership for the University's NCAA Compliance Program. The FAR has overall responsibility for University compliance.

6. All positions in the athletics department shall have on file in the athletics department, a list of positions and the duties of each, and those duties shall be approved by the appropriate University procedures. Those job descriptions shall also be on file in the Human Resources Office of the University.

7. Athletics Committee

The Athletics Committee shall serve the University and the Athletics Director in an advisory capacity and assist by reviewing and/or making recommendations relative to:

- a. Policies governing the University's intercollegiate athletics program.
- b. The University's relationship with the NCAA, the OVC, and other athletics-related organizations.
- c. Such other matters as may be presented to the Committee by the President, other University officials, or the Athletics Director.

The Committee shall be a standing committee of the University having a minimum of sixteen members, serving renewable terms from one to three years each. Appointed by the President, the Committee shall include a minimum of six faculty members, a minimum of six administrators, and a minimum of four students. Membership on the Committee shall be a reflection of the University's commitment to diversity.

Actions of this Committee shall be subject to review by the Administrative Council and approval by the President.

