Study Identifies Knoxville-area Degree Programs as High Need Fields

KNOXVILLE -- Researchers from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER) and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) have completed a report analyzing how well the state's higher education system is supplying graduates to meet the occupational needs of employers. The findings show many gaps between supply and demand, and indicate that some of the degree programs preparing students for jobs in undersupplied fields are housed at Knoxville-area universities and colleges.

The researchers analyzed historical data from 2000 to 2008 to project academic awards for various instructional programs and disciplines for Tennessee's public, private, and non-profit institutions through 2018. They then linked the academic award projections on the supply side of the labor market to anticipated job openings by occupation on the demand side of the labor market.

According to the study’s findings, the largest undersupplied career pathways include several programs offered at the University of Tennessee- Knoxville and Pellissippi State Community College.

At UT-Knoxville, programs in Computer Engineering, Human Resource Management, Hospitality, and Animal Science were identified as High Need fields, and at Pellissippi State Community College, the Administrative Professional Technology program was also identified as a High Need program.

“While these findings should be handled with care because statewide trends may not always reflect the employment outlook for specific individuals, these academic programs show a clear deficit between the number of available jobs and the amount of graduates currently being produced,” said Richard Rhoda, Executive Director at THEC.

The report is a key feature of the institutional performance funding program and the 2010-15 Master Plan for Higher Education and can be accessed online at www.tn.gov/thec.

###
CONTACT:

Matt Murray, (865-974-6084, mmurray1@utk.edu)

Whitney Holmes, (865-974-5460, wholmes7@utk.edu)

David Wright (615-532-3862, david.l.wright@tn.gov)

For more UT news, visit http://www.utk.edu/tntoday/

Check out our faculty experts guide at http://www.utk.edu/tntoday/media/experts-guide/

See UT faculty, staff and students making news at http://www.utk.edu/tntoday/category/in-the-news/