

General Institutional Requirements

As an institution affiliated with the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association, Cottey College satisfies each of the General Institutional Requirements:

Mission

1. *It has a mission statement, formally adopted by the governing board and made public, declaring that it is an institution of higher education.*

The current Cottey College mission statement was adopted by the board of trustees in April 1998. The mission and its accompanying goals are published in the Catalog, and framed copies are hung in Main Hall, the Library, and the Rubie Burton Academic Center. It also appears in other publications and is frequently included in programs for major events such as Opening Convocation and Commencement. The mission clearly states that the College will educate women "to prepare them for transfer to programs beyond the associate's degree."

2. *It is a degree-granting institution.*

Cottey confers the Associate in Arts and the Associate in Science degrees.

Authorization

3. *It has legal authorization to grant its degrees, and it meets all the legal requirements to operate as an institution of higher education wherever it conducts its activities.*

Cottey is dedicated to fulfilling the purposes set forth in Article II of the Articles of Incorporation of Cottey Junior College:



"The purposes of this corporation shall include but not be limited to: to operate a nonsectarian educational institution for the promotion of educational, physical, intellectual, and moral development; to assist and guide students in formulating wholesome philosophies of life and to prepare them for the intelligent exercise of the duties of citizenship; to pursue scientific, literary, and educational research relative to teaching; to provide suitable facilities for carrying out those objectives; to give suitable diplomas under its seal and the signatures of such officers of the College as shall be deemed advisable, and in general to do whatever is necessary and incident to the carrying out of the objectives herein enumerated."

The certificate of incorporation was issued May 28, 1957. (A copy of the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of Cottey Junior College is available in the Resource Room.) The College was chartered by the state of Missouri as Cottey College in 1887.

4. *It has legal documents to confirm its status: not-for-profit, for-profit, or public.*

Cottey College is a not-for-profit corporation organized and operated exclusively for educational and charitable purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The College has documents to confirm its tax-exempt status from the Missouri Department of Revenue. (A copy is available in the Resource Room.)

Governance

5. *It has a governing board that possesses and exercises necessary legal power to establish and review basic policies that govern the institution.*

The Cottey College Board of Trustees is a seven-member governing body appointed by the Executive Board of International Chapter of the P.E.O. Sisterhood, acting as the Cottey Junior College Corporation. The trustees meet a minimum of three times a year, and have the legal power to establish and review the basic policies of the College. (A copy of the Cottey College Board of Trustees Handbook is available in the Resource Room.)

6. *Its governing board includes public members and is sufficiently autonomous from the administration and ownership to assure the integrity of the institution.*



Since the P.E.O. Sisterhood wholly owns Cottey, the executive board, serving as members of the Cottey Junior College Corporation, elects the seven members of the Cottey College Board of Trustees. The membership of the corporation is the Executive Board of International Chapter of the P.E.O. Sisterhood, whose members are elected by that organization according to its own bylaws and procedures.

7. *It has an executive officer designated by the governing board to provide administrative leadership for the institution.*

According to Article IV. Section 2 of the Bylaws of the Cottey Junior College Corporation, the trustees shall appoint the President of the College. The duties of the President are described in Article VI. Section 1. Helen Washburn, was appointed President in July 1986.

8. *Its governing board authorizes the institution's affiliation with the Commission.*

Cottey College has been accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools since 1941. The Cottey College Board of Trustees authorizes the College's affiliation with the Commission.

Faculty

9. *It employs a faculty that has earned from accredited institutions the degrees appropriate to the level of instruction offered by the institution.*

Cottey has a highly qualified faculty. Eighty-nine percent of Cottey's faculty in 2002-03 hold the terminal degree in their field. Sixty percent of the faculty have earned a doctoral degree, forty percent hold a master's degree. Faculty credentials are published in the Catalog.

10. *A sufficient number of the faculty are full-time employees of the institution.*

Cottey is committed to having the curriculum taught by a full-time faculty with limited use of adjuncts. Cottey has 35 full-time faculty and six adjuncts who, in most cases, teach specialized courses.

11. *Its faculty has a significant role in developing and evaluating all of the institution's educational programs.*

The Faculty Handbook states that the faculty of Cottey College are "the central body in carrying out the mission of the College." It further states that "the design and delivery of the curriculum of instruction is the primary and essential shared governance role for the faculty." The committee structure for carrying out this role is described in detail in the Faculty Handbook. In addition, faculty are actively involved on institutional committees. This is explained in Chapter 5.

Educational Program

12. *It confers degrees.*

Cottey College confers the Associate in Arts and Associate in Science degrees. Degrees are granted to students who complete the requirements described in the Catalog.

13. *It has degree programs in operation with students enrolled in them.*

Since the College began awarding two degrees in 1995, 561 students have received the Associate in Arts degree, 200 students have received the Associate in Science degree, and 182 students have received both degrees.

14. *Its degree programs are compatible with the institution's mission and are based on recognized fields of study at the higher education level.*

Cottey's degree programs are consistent with its mission to "educate qualified women in the arts and sciences to prepare them for transfer to programs beyond the associate's degree." The degree programs are firmly established in the liberal arts. As stated in the Catalog (p. 9), all graduates must complete a common core curriculum that includes basic skills and courses distributed among the fine arts, humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences.

15. *Its degrees are appropriately named, following practices common to institutions of higher education in terms of both length and content of the programs.*

The Associate in Arts and the Associate in Science degrees are awarded following standard practices for length and content consistent with accredited colleges in the region and the United States.

16. *Its undergraduate degree programs include a coherent general education requirement consistent with the institution's mission and*

designed to ensure breadth of knowledge and to promote intellectual inquiry.

The focus of Cottey's academic program is to provide a general education--the body of knowledge designed to prepare students for further study in a variety of academic fields.

17. *It has admission policies and practices that are consistent with the institution's mission and appropriate to its educational programs.*

The general policy of admission to the College is to encourage applications from students who are serious about enrolling in a women's college and who are well-prepared through a college preparatory program. This policy is consistent with Cottey's mission to educate women in the liberal arts and sciences in preparation for transfer. Admission policies and practices are described in the Catalog (pp. 70-73).

18. *It provides its students access to those learning resources and support services requisite for its degree programs.*

Learning resources provided for Cottey students include the services provided by the Library, i.e., access to a union catalog of approximately 14 million volumes, interlibrary loan, and electronic resources. Students also have use of computers and software in the Rubie Burton Academic Assistance Center and the residence halls. Learning resources related to tutorials and writing assistance are available in the Academic Assistance Center (AAC). The AAC also provides information on transfer institutions and selecting a major and career. Other support services include health services and counseling to assist students in the transition to college. Each student is assigned to a faculty advisor who assists her in planning her academic program. These services are discussed in more detail in Chapter 9, Chapter 10, and Chapter 12.

Finances

19. *It has an external financial audit by a certified public accountant or a public audit agency at least every two years.*

The College conducts an annual audit performed by an independent certified public accountant, BKD, LLP, Joplin, Missouri.

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20. *Its financial documents demonstrate the appropriate allocation and use of resources to support its educational programs.*

Over the last seven years, the allocation of resources to support educational programs has averaged 50.1 percent, ranging from 48 percent to 50.8 percent of educational and general overall expenditures.

21. *Its financial practices, records, and reports demonstrate fiscal viability.*

Cottery consistently demonstrates fiscal viability in annual financial statements as noted by the auditors in their annual audited reports. The College's internal accounting practices and reporting procedures are also reviewed by the audit.

Public Information

22. *Its catalog or other official documents include its mission statement along with accurate descriptions of*
- *its educational programs and degree requirements;*
 - *its academic calendars;*
 - *its learning resources;*
 - *its admission policies and practices;*
 - *its academic and non-academic policies and procedures directly affecting students;*
 - *its charges and refund policies; and*
 - *the academic credentials of its faculty and administrators.*

The mission statement appears in the Catalog and other brochures, on programs of campus events such as Commencement, and in the Student Handbook. The Catalog also describes the College's educational programs and degree requirements, its academic calendars, its admission policies and practices, its academic policies affecting students, its charges and refund policies, and the academic credentials of its faculty and administrators. The Student Handbook describes learning resources and non-academic policies and procedures directly affecting students.

23. *It accurately discloses its standing with accrediting bodies with which it is affiliated.*



The College discloses its standing with accrediting bodies in the Catalog (p. 2) and the Academic Program section of the Cottey Web site.

24. *It makes available upon request information that accurately describes its financial condition.*

Information on the College's financial condition is found in the President's Biennial Report. This report is developed for the members of the P.E.O. Sisterhood and is distributed to the delegates at the biennial meeting of the Sisterhood. Copies are also given to donors and employees. In addition, the College makes its annual financial audit available upon request.

Conclusion

The information presented in this chapter demonstrates that Cottey College satisfies each of the General Institutional Requirements.

