The College of Continuing Education and Distance Learning, through its four departments, strives to extend the services of the University to individuals and groups beyond the campus as well as meet the ongoing educational needs of the communities it serves.

The college manages all distance learning, off-campus, evening school, videoconferencing, and correspondence programs at the University, including the Adult Degree Completion Program (ADCP) and the Regents Online Degree Program (RODP). The college also administers the summer school program, providing support to faculty and staff. The Contracts and Public Service department works with state agencies to administer training programs throughout Tennessee and manages Faculty Public Service Grants. The Professional Development department manages hundreds of not-for-credit educational programs designed to meet specific needs of the public, corporations, state agencies, and other individuals and groups.

The overriding mission in all departments is to provide programs that meet the ongoing educational needs of adult and nontraditional students through various means that take into account time and travel constraints not typically faced by traditional students.