



ROBERT M. SMITH  
*Interim Executive Director*

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*Governor*

STATE OF TENNESSEE  
**HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION**  
**STUDENT ASSISTANCE CORPORATION**  
312 ROSA L. PARKS AVENUE, 9<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR  
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37243  
(615) 741-3605

MEMORANDUM

TO: Kimberly McCorkle, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academics  
East Tennessee State University

FROM: Julie A. Roberts, Chief Academic Officer  
Tennessee Higher Education Commission

SUBJECT: East Tennessee State University  
Letter of Notification: Master of Music, MM

DATE: May 1, 2023

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Thank you for the submission of the Letter of Notification (LON) for the Master of Music (MM) at East Tennessee State University (ETSU). Per THEC Policy A1.0 New Academic Programs: Approval Process, the LON is evaluated on the following criteria: alignment with state master plan and institutional mission, feasibility; institutional capacity to deliver the proposed academic program; and the program costs and revenues.

After reviewing the revised LON, I approve ETSU's plan to develop the New Academic Program Proposal (NAPP) for the Master of Music, MM. As ETSU continues to develop the proposed program, all concerns italicized on the attached LON evaluation must be reflected in the NAPP. It is understood the proposed program will be developed in accordance with the mission of ETSU and will meet the Master Plan for Tennessee Postsecondary Education 2015-2025 degree completion and workforce development objectives.

Attachment

cc: Robert M. Smith, THEC, Interim Executive Director  
Brian D. Noland, ETSU, President  
Bill Flora, ETSU, Associate Provost for Curriculum  
Joseph Bidwell, ETSU, Dean College of Arts and Sciences  
Alan Stevens, ETSU, Chair Department of Music  
Katherine Brackett, THEC, Director of Academic Affairs



The evaluation of the Letter of Notification (LON) is in accordance with the *THEC Policy A1.0 New Academic Programs: Approval Process*. The evaluation is conducted by interested parties and THEC staff. The LON is posted on the THEC website for a 15-day period of comment by interested parties. Based on the internal and external evaluation, THEC will make a determination to support, not to support, or defer a decision based on a revised LON.

<b>Institution:</b> East Tennessee State University	<b>LON Submission Date:</b> January 7, 2022 <b>Revised LON Submission:</b> December 7, 2022 <b>Revised LON Submission:</b> February 10, 2023 <b>Revised LON Submission:</b> April 11, 2023
<b>Academic Program, Degree Designation:</b> Master of Music (MM)	
<b>Proposed CIP Code:</b> 50.0901 (Music, General)	
<b>Proposed Implementation Date:</b> Summer 2024	
<b>Time Period Posted on Website for Public Comment:</b> January 10- January 25, 2022	

**Note: Comments in italics within this document should be addressed in the New Academic Program Proposal (NAPP).**

Criteria	Comments
<b>Letter of Support from President/Chancellor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A letter of support dated January 5, 2022 from President Noland is included in Appendix C of the revised LON.</li> <li>The East Tennessee State University (ETSU) Board of Trustees approved the LON and financial projections at its November 19, 2021 meeting.</li> </ul>
<b>Section I: Overview</b>	
<b>Academic Program Liaison</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kimberly McCorkle (<a href="mailto:mccorklek@etsu.edu">mccorklek@etsu.edu</a>), Provost and Senior Vice President for Academics</li> </ul>
<b>Section II: Background</b>	
<b>Background on Academic Program Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The department of Music at ETSU has grown substantially over the last five years. Current students, alumni, and community partners have requested a graduate option.</li> <li>A committee was convened in fall 2019 to research market areas for Master of Music degrees, finding that most successful programs offer flexible academic foci. Accordingly, ETSU proposes a Master of Music program with several concentrations.</li> <li>ETSU previously offered a Master of Music Education that was terminated in 1999 due to insufficient faculty to support graduate and undergraduate programs. Faculty in the ETSU music department has grown from 11 to 23 positions since 1999 making supporting multiple academic programs possible.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Purpose and Nature of Program</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The proposed Master of Music will allow students to pursue advanced study in specialized areas of music. Concentrations include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Choral Conducting</li> <li>○ Wind Band Conducting</li> <li>○ Orchestral Conducting</li> <li>○ Performance: All instruments and voice</li> <li>○ Music Education</li> <li>○ Composition</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ A Master of Music focuses on performance and pedagogical skills as opposed to the many areas of study in an undergraduate music program.</li> <li>▪ The primary delivery method will be on-ground at the ETSU main campus for the performance and conducting concentrations; however, the composition concentration will be a hybrid offering, while the music education concentration will be entirely online to accommodate working students.</li> <li>▪ The proposed program will meet a need for music educators to receive continuing education credits, allowing them an opportunity to hone their skills and become better educators. There are numerous music educators working in the region, including ETSU graduates, interested in continuing education in compliance with state requirements as well as in pursuit of advancement.</li> <li>▪ The proposed program at ETSU would be the only one easily accessible to educators in Eastern Tennessee.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Alignment with State Master Plan and Institutional Mission</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The program will serve students in distressed counties by making a Master of Music program accessible in the region as well as by providing professional growth opportunities for teachers in the region.</li> <li>▪ The proposed Master of Music also aligns with Master Plan goals to engage adult students, as it provides flexible learning opportunities for adult students while remaining in the workforce.</li> <li>▪ A goal of workforce development in the Tennessee Master Plan is to prepare for the workforce needs of 2030, and many employment opportunities (such as teachers, music directors, composers, etc.) associated with the proposed program are expected to grow exponentially in the next decade. The Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates that employment opportunities associated with this degree program include teaching (K12 and higher education), music directing, composing, and other positions in the area of performance. <b><i>Please incorporate more recent BLS data demonstrating job concentration in the music industry when drafting the NAPP. Data provided is from <a href="#">2018</a>.</i></b></li> <li>▪ The proposed program aligns with the ETSU Strategic Plan by enhancing the university's role as an academic leader in the region (there isn't currently a MM offered in the region) and expanding partnerships with Johnson City and the West Walnut Street Corridor Redevelopment by preparing students to work in the arts locally.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Institutional Capacity to Deliver the Proposed Program</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The proposed program will have a positive impact on the ETSU music program, developing deeper relationships with music educators throughout the region and expanding undergraduate enrollment.</li> <li>▪ The planning committee for the proposed program anticipates two additional hires as well as employing graduate teaching assistants to ensure that faculty load remains balanced.</li> <li>▪ A Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) has been approved by the administration to support the proposed program. The DGS as well as existing staff will manage student services.</li> <li>▪ Further, the new ETSU Martin Center for the Arts offers unique opportunities for professional development and performance to students. Rapid regional growth has expanded the market for live performance, including two orchestras.</li> </ul>																																			
<p><b>Existing programs offered at public and private Tennessee institutions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Masters’ programs are offered in the same CIP code at Austin Peay State University, Middle Tennessee State University, the University of Memphis, University of Tennessee – Chattanooga, University of Tennessee – Knoxville, and Belmont. The University of Tennessee, Martin has proposed a Master of Music, and will present the approved NAPP to the Commission in an upcoming Commission meeting.</li> </ul> <table border="1" data-bbox="560 913 1455 1213"> <thead> <tr> <th>Institution</th> <th>2020-21</th> <th>2019-20</th> <th>2018-19</th> <th>2017-18</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Austin Peay (MMU)</td> <td>14</td> <td>12</td> <td>14</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Middle Tennessee (MM)</td> <td>10</td> <td>7</td> <td>9</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>University of Memphis (MMU)</td> <td>23</td> <td>22</td> <td>20</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>UT-Chattanooga (MM)</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>UT-Knoxville (MM)</td> <td>28</td> <td>31</td> <td>28</td> <td>37</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Belmont (MM)</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The proposed program is unique due to geographic location and its hybrid format. The program also will provide opportunities for students to learn about Appalachian music.</li> <li>▪ There are no Master of Music programs offered within a 100-mile radius.</li> </ul>	Institution	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	Austin Peay (MMU)	14	12	14	6	Middle Tennessee (MM)	10	7	9	10	University of Memphis (MMU)	23	22	20	20	UT-Chattanooga (MM)	0	0	0	2	UT-Knoxville (MM)	28	31	28	37	Belmont (MM)	0	0	1	0
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<p><b>Accreditation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ETSU is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM). NASM reviews additional programs of study only after state and institutional approval.</li> <li>▪ ETSU has an accreditation visit scheduled for Fall 2023 and if approved at that time, the proposed program will be reviewed for accreditation. Otherwise, the program will be submitted at a later date and reviewed by NASM.</li> </ul>																																			
<p><b>Administrative Structure</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The proposed program will be administered by the Music Graduate Studies Director within the Department of Music and the department’s chair (Dr. Alan Stevens).</li> <li>▪ The Department of Music is housed in the College of Arts and Sciences.</li> </ul>																																			

**Section III: Feasibility Study**

<p><b>Student Interest</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ According to the department, faculty receive an average of 20 requests from people outside of the university each year interested in master's-level music training.</li> <li>▪ ETSU sends 15-20 percent of undergraduates each year to graduate programs at other universities. Another 25-30 percent of undergraduates who finish their studies at ETSU pursue graduate school later in their careers.</li> <li>▪ ETSU surveyed current undergraduates majoring in all music concentrations. The survey had 113 responses (100 percent response rate) 88 percent of whom indicated that they plan to pursue graduate degrees in music later in their careers. Additionally, 83 percent responded that they would strongly consider ETSU for graduate study in music.</li> <li>▪ Inquiries have increased since current students have heard about the potential for adding a graduate program. Demonstrated interest has been shown in the form of emails, phone calls, direct student conversation, and letters of support from former students.</li> <li>▪ Letters of support from students and alumni are included in Appendix B; student survey results can be found in Appendix C.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Local and regional demand</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Local music educators are required to take continuing education credits, and this degree could serve that population while keeping them in the region and state.</li> <li>▪ The <a href="#">US Department of Labor</a> predicts a 34.1 percent increase in the need for Musicians and Singers and a 13.8 percent increase in the need for Music Directors and Composers in Tennessee from 2020-2030. Growth in the music industry is also expected in neighboring states in the East Tennessee region (North Carolina and Virginia).</li> <li>▪ While not all of this growth will be in fields requiring a graduate degree, many of the jobs (such as educators, composers, performers, etc.) will.</li> <li>▪ According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Tennessee has the fourth-highest number of jobs in the Musicians and Singers category in the nation. The Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation sector is also projected to grow in the state by 60.18 percent from 2020-2030.</li> <li>▪ ETSU is at least 100 miles from other Tennessee institutions offering a Master of Music, and the proposed program can help serve the region's students and provide greater access to training.</li> <li>▪ Johnson City is experiencing significant population growth, projected to be up <a href="#">to 35 percent increase over the next decade</a>, and the proposed program will serve expanding demand for graduate-trained musicians in the area, including for the two orchestras in the area (Symphony of the Mountains and the Johnson City Symphony Orchestra).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Employer demand</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The concentrations in the proposed program allow students to pursue various job opportunities, including but not limited to: music</li> </ul>

	<p>education, solo careers in music, and other work in the music business.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Graduate study in music often leads to <a href="#">independent employment</a> that is not tied to a full-time employer, as well-trained musicians participate in the “gig worker” economy as performers, teaching lessons, etc. Students in the performance concentration would be well-prepared to work in this market, though it would not be for one employer, making it difficult to quantify. Students in the composition concentration would likely work on a commission contract system.</li> <li>▪ Graduates in the music education concentration will be especially in demand given the number of vacant music education positions in the state. Public schools in the Tri-Cities area (Johnson City, Kingsport, Bristol) have large secondary music programs and bands, increasing demand for music educators.</li> <li>▪ Conducting concentration graduates would also be in high demand as the population grows for churches, community music ensembles, and professional music ensembles.</li> <li>▪ Letters of support indicate employer demand for the Master of Music in the music industry in Tennessee--an industry that generates more than \$3.2 billion annually. ETSU students have had to seek the training at other institutions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community and industry partnerships</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Letters of support in Appendix A.1 demonstrate a desire and willingness to hire ETSU graduates of the proposed program. Letters of support in Appendix A.2 speak to a desire for the proposed program in the region to allow students to continue their studies locally as well as the positive experience with the department’s faculty.</li> <li>▪ Several local organizations have verbally committed to supporting the program by funding assistantships. Organizations interested in partnering include: Johnson City Symphony Orchestra, the Mountain Empire Children’s Chorus, the Knoxville Gay Men’s Chorus, The Symphony of the Mountains, the Civic Chorale of Johnson City, and Blair Music Academy. <b><i>Please provide letters of support from these employers that confirm their willingness to fund assistantships, where possible.</i></b></li> <li>▪ Letters of support were included from the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Robert Seebacher, Conductor of the Johnson City Symphony Orchestra</li> <li>○ Cornelia Laemmli Orth, Conductor of the Symphony of the Mountains</li> <li>○ J. Scott Eddlemon, Executive Director of the Symphony of the Mountains</li> <li>○ Ben Adamo, Associate Course Director at Full Sail University</li> <li>○ Alexander Jimenez, Artistic Director of Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp (Michigan)</li> <li>○ Steve Barnett, Superintendent of Johnson City Schools</li> <li>○ Eddie Dalton, Director of Tri-Cities Jazz Orchestra</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ivy Blair, Owner/Director of Education, Blair Academy of Music</li> <li>○ Dr. Jose Mendez, Associate Professor of Piano, Northwestern University</li> <li>○ Neeta Helms, President of Classical Movements</li> <li>○ Nick Routh, Band Director, West Ridge High School</li> <li>○ An additional 15 letters of support were received from music teachers, band directors, choir directors, and students and can be found in Appendix B.</li> </ul>
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**Section IV: Enrollment and Graduation Projections**

<b>Projected Enrollment and Graduates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The proposed program anticipates a minimum of five students will enroll in the first cohort, with subsequent cohorts growing by two each year to a total of 10-12 students by year five. Enrollment projections are as follows:</li> </ul> <table border="1" style="margin-left: 40px;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Projected Total Fall Enrollment</th> <th>Projected Attrition</th> <th>Projected Graduates</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2024-2025 (Y1)</td> <td>5</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025-2026 (Y2)</td> <td>12</td> <td>1</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2026-2027 (Y3)</td> <td>17</td> <td>2</td> <td>11</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2027-2028 (Y4)</td> <td>20</td> <td>2</td> <td>15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2028-2029</td> <td>22</td> <td>3</td> <td>17</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><b><i>Please adjust table to account for attrition (students leaving the program) in the total figures.</i></b></p>	Year	Projected Total Fall Enrollment	Projected Attrition	Projected Graduates	2024-2025 (Y1)	5	1	0	2025-2026 (Y2)	12	1	4	2026-2027 (Y3)	17	2	11	2027-2028 (Y4)	20	2	15	2028-2029	22	3	17
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**Section V: Projected Costs to Deliver Proposed Program**

<b>Faculty</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Two new tenure-track faculty lines are being requested for Year 1 and 4. Associated costs for each line are \$50,000 annually, plus benefits (\$25,000), for a total of \$75,000 in Year 1, An increase of 3.5 percent will be added annually for salary increases.</li> <li>▪ Total cost from Year 1 to Year 5 in faculty salary and benefits is \$558,810.</li> </ul>
<b>Non-Instructional Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A faculty member will be appointed Director of Graduate Music Studies and receive a one-third teaching load reduction and a stipend of \$4,000, plus \$400 benefits. <b><i>Are any increases in costs anticipated with this position?</i></b></li> </ul>
<b>Graduate Assistants</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The proposed program will offer five assistantships for full-time students in the first year and increase to eight by year four. Costs for each assistantship is \$16,484:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Tuition waiver: \$8,784</li> <li>○ Stipend: \$7,000</li> <li>○ Benefits: \$700 (employer portion payment of FICA, FICA Medicare, TN unemployment, and workman’s compensation)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Total assistantship costs from Year 1 to Year 5: \$560,456. <b>Are there any increases in cost anticipated? How will assistantships be funded?</b></li> </ul>
<b>Accreditation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No additional costs for NASM accreditation are anticipated</li> </ul>
<b>Consultants</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$1,000 is allocated for external review.</li> </ul>
<b>Equipment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A one-time expense of \$3,500 is requested for new computers for faculty and graduate students. <b>Please clarify if the cost is \$3,500 for both faculty or for each faculty member, as well as if computers will be purchased for all graduate students. If \$3,500 is not the total cost, please adjust the estimations in the THEC Financial Projections Form.</b></li> </ul>
<b>Information Technology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No information technology is requested.</li> </ul>
<b>Library Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No library resources are requested.</li> </ul>
<b>Marketing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No additional funds are needed for marketing. <b>Please revise to include a budget for marketing.</b></li> </ul>
<b>Facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No facilities funding is requested, as current space in Mathes Hall will suffice.</li> </ul>
<b>Travel</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No travel funds are requested.</li> </ul>
<b>Other Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$10,000 recurring costs are requested for paper, office supplies, recruiting, research funding, instruments, and venue and production costs.</li> </ul>
<b>Section VI: Projected Revenues for the Proposed Program</b>	
<b>Tuition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed program has relatively low start-up costs, but is not anticipated to be revenue generating in its first five years and will require annual institutional reallocations ranging from \$10,486 to \$64,664.</li> <li>Tuition and fees is estimated at \$8784 per student. <b>Please provide greater explanation for tuition estimations to account for assistantships. Do these estimates include part-time enrollment?</b></li> </ul>
<b>Grants</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No grants are anticipated.</li> </ul>
<b>Other</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnerships with local businesses are expected to fund two graduate assistantships in the first year, three in the second, and four from the third year forward. <b>Please clarify that these partnerships will cover stipends only.</b></li> <li>Smaller gifts to support the program are anticipated. These start in year one (15 gifts of \$1,000 each) to \$30,000 (15 gifts of \$2,000).</li> <li>Music class course fees will generate \$680 per student each year (\$3400 in year 1). <b>Will these fees be covered as part of an assistantship?</b></li> <li>Departmental reallocations will cover the remainder of costs.</li> </ul>
<b>Public comments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No public comments were received.</li> </ul>