



## TENNESSEE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

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CONSENT CALENDAR ITEM: II.E.

**MEETING DATE:** May 16, 2024

**SUBJECT:** Off-Campus Center  
Austin Peay State University – Innovation Academy Center

**ITEM TYPE:** Action

**ACTION RECOMMENDATION:** Approval

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### BACKGROUND

Pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-7-202(q)(3), the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) is to review and approve or disapprove all proposals for off-campus locations at public institutions. Per THEC Policy A1.4A Off-Campus Instruction for Community Colleges and Universities, an off-campus center is defined as a location that is geographically apart from the main campus where students can enroll and complete academic programs. Additionally, there must be a continuing administrative presence, evidenced by at least one (1) full-time or part-time administrator housed on-site.

Austin Peay State University (APSU) requests a center code for the Innovation Academy Center located at 715 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue W. Springfield, TN 37172. Following the conclusion of the collaboration with the Highland Crest location, Robertson County requested that APSU continue to offer the Associate of Science degree in University Studies to its high school students. Austin Peay State University began offering courses at the Innovation Academy location in January of 2023, but these courses did not lead to a degree. APSU completed the consortium agreement with Innovation Academy and began offering the coursework leading to the Associate of Science degree in Fall 2024. The proposed center will provide programming to high achieving, dual enrollment students. Upon enrollment, students can complete coursework to earn credits toward both their high school education and their Associate of Science in University Studies Degree.

APSU projects an annual enrollment of 88 full-time equivalent students based on previous enrollment at both the Innovation Academy location and the recently closed Highland Crest location. APSU's University Studies, Associate of Science, is the only degree offered at this location. The program consists of 42 hours of general education coursework and 18 hours of electives. Upon completion of the University Studies, AS degree, students will usually have 60 remaining credits left to satisfy the requirements of a bachelor's degree. As part of Tennessee's Drive to 55 initiative, the focus remains on degree completion and addressing critical workforce shortages. Through participation in this program, students notably shorten their time to degree completion and accelerate their transition into the workforce.

APSU will leverage a mix of delivery methods, including traditional and online modalities for instruction. This site requires no expenses pertaining to the building or resources. The only expense to APSU is associated with the staffing of faculty to provide coursework at the location. APSU has regularly scheduled visits conducted by the university's dual enrollment staff and other relevant personnel to ensure that the space is adequate for student needs and meets all necessary requirements.