



EMILY HOUSE  
Executive Director

BILL LEE  
Governor

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

TO: Maria Cronley, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Austin Peay State University

FROM: Betty Dandridge Johnson, Chief Academic Officer   
Tennessee Higher Education Commission

SUBJECT: Austin Peay State University  
Letter of Notification: National Security Studies, Bachelor of Science

DATE: September 2, 2021

Thank you for the submission of the Letter of Notification (LON) for the National Security Studies, Bachelor of Science (BS) program. 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, need, sustainable demand, program costs and revenues; institutional capacity to deliver the proposed academic program; and avoidance of duplication.

After reviewing the revised LON, I approve Austin Peay State University's (APSU) plan to develop the New Academic Program Proposal (NAPP) for the National Security Studies, Bachelor of Science (BS) program. It is understood the proposed program will be developed in accordance with the mission of APSU and will meet the Master Plan for Tennessee Postsecondary Education 2015-2025 degree completion and workforce development objectives.

The LON projects implementation of an approved National Security Studies, BS program in Fall 2022. Please be advised that the Letter of Notification will be posted on the THEC website for public disclosure.

Attachment

cc: Michael Licari  
Emily House  
Lynne Crosby  
Corey Gheesling

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 of the LON to support, not to support, or defer a decision based on a revised LON.

<b>Institution:</b> Austin Peay State University	<b>LON Submission Date:</b> August 16, 2021
<b>Academic Program, Degree Designation:</b> National Security Studies (NSS), Bachelor of Science	
<b>Proposed CIP Code:</b> 45.0902 National Security Policy Studies	
<b>Proposed Implementation Date:</b> Fall 2021	
<b>Time Period Posted on Website for Public Comment:</b> August 17, 2021 – September 1, 2021	

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

Criteria	Comments
<b>Letter of support from President/Chancellor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Letter of support from President Licari was submitted dated August 16, 2021.</li> </ul>
<b>Overall comments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>During the development of the NAPP, please include a narrative of the current relationship of APSU to national security agencies (e.g., Homeland Security, NSA, CIA, etc.) and how APSU plans to connect the program to these agencies in the future.</i></li> <li><i>Please provide more information related to the local and regional demand for the proposed program and what career opportunities would open up for students in the proposed NSS program that they currently have less access to majoring in the current Criminal Justice program at APSU.</i></li> <li><i>Please provide letters of support for the current LON.</i></li> <li><i>Please address the public comment provided by the University of Tennessee at Knoxville.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Background on academic program development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed Bachelor of Science (BS) in National Security Studies (NSS) is an effort to develop a degree program that appeals to military-affiliated students who have a desire to pursue a career in national security. Military-affiliated students represent twenty-five percent of the current student body and is a strategic enrollment focus group of Austin Peay State University (APSU).</li> <li>APSU contracted with Hanover Research to conduct a feasibility analysis and found a growing labor market need for individuals who possess expertise in domestic and foreign policy related to national security.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The proposal was originally submitted in January 2019, but had development paused while a graduate program in Criminal Justice was started. Due to this delay, the original LON would have expired before the proposed NSS program could have gained final approvals. As a result, APSU withdrew the original LON and submitted the current LON proposal.</li> <li>▪ The proposed NSS program will be an integral component of the recently established Institute for National Security and Military Studies at APSU. The institute will provide students in the proposed program with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ expertise and scholarship to bolster the curriculum and mentor students;</li> <li>○ greater community outreach and opportunities for students to have access to speakers, employment opportunities, and community service; and</li> <li>○ access to participate and learn from national subject matter experts and researchers in the field that will also inform curriculum development for the proposed program.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Purpose and nature of academic program</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed NSS program will cultivate analytical and critical thinking skills, open opportunities for career advancement, and prepare graduates for further academic endeavors in fields related to national security.</li> <li>• Students completing the proposed NSS program will be well versed in the areas of homeland security, international security, terrorism, and violent extremism - complex challenges facing the entire global community.</li> <li>• The proposed program will emphasize the application of theoretical perspectives to the multi-faceted security environment, as well as research methodologies to the analysis of real world problems.</li> <li>• Graduates of the program would be competitively positioned for careers in all sectors of national defense, homeland security, and criminal justice, as well as prime candidates for advancement in their military careers.</li> <li>• The proposed program seeks to primarily serve current undergraduate students, current employees of national security agencies, and military personnel who desire career advancement both while in and when they discharge from the military.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Alignment with state master plan and institutional mission</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The LON references graduate programs in the document “although this Plan places certificate training and undergraduate education at the center of the state’s college completion policy agenda for the decade 2015-2025, the state continues to acknowledge the critical need for academic programs of distinction at the graduate and professional level to fully address Tennessee’s economic</i></li> </ul>

	<p><i>development, workforce, and research need” – please update this section to align with the undergraduate program.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed NSS program will contribute to the state’s economic development, workforce development, and research needs as defined in the master plan through the addition of a unique and relevant program of distinction in an emerging field.</li> <li>• The proposed program will help nearly 400 soldiers a month who discharge from Fort Campbell have the opportunity to connect their military experience to an academic program that will help them develop the skills and knowledge necessary to be competitive in a growing employment field.</li> <li>• The proposed major emphasizes modern methodologies in national security and best practices in research proficiency and aligns with APSU’s vision to “create a collaborative, integrative learning community, instilling in students’ habits of critical inquiry as they gain knowledge, skills, and values for life and work in a global society”.</li> <li>• The proposed program aligns with the APSU mission of “raising the educational attainment of the citizenry, developing programs and services that address regional needs”. The NSS program will do this by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Producing professionals critical to the state and region to serve in careers related to national security and criminal justice;</li> <li>○ Increasing the number of students who possess critical science and technology skills; and</li> <li>○ Enhancing the scholarly research in this interdisciplinary field by further connecting faculty on campus with one another and the military professionals at Fort Campbell.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Institutional capacity to deliver the program</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The proposed NSS program will be housed in the Department of Criminal Justice (CRJ) and initially share faculty and courses from History, Political Science and Public Management, Sociology, Psychological Science and Counseling, and Criminal Justice.</li> <li>▪ The proposed program will consist of 39 credit hours which include seven courses (21 credit hours) of common coursework.</li> <li>▪ As the program expands, APSU anticipates NSS becoming a stand-alone department from the Department of Criminal Justice.</li> <li>▪ APSU anticipates the proposed NSS program will draw some students from existing concentrations and minors, however, the CRJ department currently has over 400 undergraduate students enrolled in the major that also includes a</li> </ul>

	<p>concentration in Homeland Security, minors in Homeland Security and/or Global Security Studies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Deans Tucker Brown (College Behavioral and Health Sciences), Barry Jones (College of Arts and Letters), and Karen Meisch (College of STEM) submitted a joint letter committing their support to offer elective courses for the proposed NSS program as necessary.</li> </ul>
<b>Existing programs offered at public and private Tennessee institutions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MTSU has the program most aligned with the proposed program with their Criminal Justice with a concentration in Homeland Security. The MTSU major averages 139 graduates a year.</li> <li>▪ The proposed program will be the first program with this CIP designation.</li> </ul>
<b>Feasibility Study</b>	
<b>Student interest</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Department of Criminal Justice has only one major – Criminal Justice – and nearly 440 students enrolled. Until 2018, Homeland Security was a required concentration of all students. Though no longer required, most students still enroll in the concentration.</li> <li>▪ A survey of current students in the department showed that 67.7 percent of students were interested in pursuing a career in national security and 74.2 percent were interested in the proposed major. <i>Please provide the number of respondents to the survey.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Local and regional need/demand</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Hanover Research feasibility study included a labor market analysis and found: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In 2020, there were 18,564 jobs posted in the southeast that contain the words, “national security” as part of the job description.</li> <li>○ Tennessee’s national security occupations are expected to grow slightly higher by 6.7 percent over the next seven years resulting in 8,270 anticipated total jobs.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <i>Please provide more information related to the local and regional demand for the proposed program and what career opportunities would open up for students in the proposed NSS program that they currently have less access to majoring in the current Criminal Justice program at APSU.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Employer need/demand</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ APSU cited a bachelor’s degree being a prerequisite for many managerial, state, and federal law enforcement or intelligence jobs.</li> <li>▪ APSU contracted with Hanover Research to conduct a feasibility study that included a labor market analysis. Hanover found: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ National growth rate for degree conferrals in homeland security disciplines have increased by 12.7 percent in the past five years.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Over the next seven years, employment in national security occupations is expected to grow by 6.4 percent in the southeast resulting in 89,780 anticipated total jobs.</li> <li>○ National growth is expected to be 4 percent for national security occupations resulting in 385,700 anticipated total jobs</li> <li>▪ <i>During the development of the NAPP, please include a narrative of the current relationship of APSU to national security agencies (e.g., Homeland Security, NSA, CIA, etc.) and how APSU plans to connect the program to these agencies in the future.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Future sustainable need/demand</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hanover Research reported that Tennessee has a higher projected growth rate for occupations finding over 18,000 jobs where national security was in the job description. Hanover projects 6.7 percent growth for jobs in the field.</li> <li>▪ No Letters of Support were received with the new submission of the NSS LON. The original LON had Letters of support from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ General Assembly members Jay Reedy, Jason Hodges, Curtis Johnson, and Bill Powers.</li> <li>○ Clarksville Mayor Jim Durrett</li> <li>○ Jeff Truitt of the Clarksville-Montgomery County Economic Development Council.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <i>Please include letters of support for the new proposal for the NSS program.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Program costs/revenues and THEC Financial Projection Form</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The major costs of this program are related to the hiring of faculty and support staff.</li> <li>▪ APSU plans to add a faculty line in year 1, adding a second faculty line in year 2, and adding a third faculty in year 4. APSU projects faculty salary costs to increase from \$97,300 in year 1 to \$307,822 in year 5.</li> <li>▪ Total expenditures are projected to increase from \$123,509 in year 1 to \$337,085 in year 5.</li> <li>▪ APSU is anticipating using institutional reallocations to fund the program and steadily decreasing this amount from \$53,251 in year one to \$33,572 in year five.</li> <li>▪ <i>In Section II: Revenue of the Financial Projection Form, the balanced Budget Line should reflect the sum of all sources of revenue and match the total listed on the Section I: Expenditures Total Expenditures (A+B) line. Please revise.</i></li> <li>▪ The footnote states" APSU anticipates about 20 students to enroll in the first year and additional student enrollment growth to about 72 total in future years." <i>Please revise to align 80 students projected in year 5 (see Table 8).</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Public comments</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ UT Knoxville provided public comment (see below) for the proposed program that supported the development and</li> </ul>

	<p>purpose of the program but also provided two recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ UTK recommended APSU clarify the plan to partner with other departments to deliver courses for the program.</li> <li>○ UTK recommended APSU consider adding a course(s) in Cyberforensics and Cybersecurity given their growing importance to National Security.</li> </ul> <p>▪ <i>Please address the UTK public comment below.</i></p>
<b>Other</b>	<p>▪ <i>Please remove pages 43-47 from the LON. These are blank pages.</i></p>

**From:** Hinde, Robert J <rhinde@utk.edu>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 1, 2021 7:02 AM  
**To:** Betty.Dandridge Johnson <Betty.Dandridge.Johnson@tn.gov>  
**Cc:** Zomchick, John P <zomchick@utk.edu>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Re: APSU National Security Studies BS (Public Comment Period Aug 17-Sept 1)

Betty:

I have shared APSU's proposal for a Bachelor of Science in National Security Studies with the faculty of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, for their review and comment.

The faculty members who reviewed the proposal describe it as "solid" and note that is likely to appeal to prospective students who are currently serving in the military or are veterans. The proposal indicates that there is a demand for college graduates with expertise in counterterrorism, intelligence, and national security law, and our faculty believe that the coursework for the proposed program is appropriate to prepare students in these fields.

One concern expressed by our faculty is that the proposal suggests that Criminal Justice will partner with other units, particularly History and Political Science, in delivering the program, but it is not clear whether this will be a permanent arrangement or if the other units' assistance will phase out over time.

Our faculty also suggested that the program could be strengthened over time through the addition of more technical courses on cybersecurity and cyberforensics, as these are increasingly important areas of national security.

I hope that these comments are helpful to APSU as they continue to develop the proposed bachelor's degree.

Best wishes,  
RJH

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Robert Hinde (he, him, his)  
Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and  
Professor of Chemistry  
**University of Tennessee**