

DATE: July 24, 2014**SUBJECT:** Middle Tennessee State University, Theatre, Bachelor of Science (BS)**ACTION RECOMMENDED:** Approval

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The proposed baccalaureate program in Theatre at Middle Tennessee State University is in response to recommendations from the agency that accredits Theatre programs, the National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST). The NAST has recommended that the established and successful Theatre concentration within the Speech and Theatre BS degree become a free-standing program to accurately reflect the degree title and content. Currently, NAST has deferred an accreditation decision pending a satisfactory response to the following concern: "It is not clear that the title 'Speech and Theatre' is consistent with curricular content, particularly with regard to the Speech component. It appears that the title of the major is linked to the title of the administrative unit as opposed to curricular content."

MTSU currently offers Speech and Theatre, BA and BS (with Teacher Licensure option) degree programs with concentrations in Theatre and Speech Language Pathology and Audiology. The proposed Theatre BS (with Teacher Licensure option) would elevate an existing, successful and productive concentration to a stand-alone degree program. Additionally, this delineation would better represent the academic program and respond to the accrediting agency concerns.

PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION DATE: Fall 2014

1.1.20A MISSION: The proposed program supports Middle Tennessee State University's mission of "promoting academic quality by enhancing learning, teaching, scholarship and service." The proposed Theatre program would continue the development of the Internship/Guest Artist Program in Theatre. Currently, the Theatre concentration sponsors residences by individuals with varying areas of expertise and engages students in active learning as they interact with working professionals.

1.1.20B CURRICULUM: The proposed program will prepare students in the theoretical, pedagogical, and historical aspects of theatre. The Theatre BS degree program is designed for students interested in the pre-professional training in theatre or theatre education. The program will require completion of 120 credit hours, including 41 hours in the general education core, 34 hours in the major field core and 18 credit hours in theatre cognate. Students will complete a 15 credit hour minor and 12 hours of general electives or a 27 credit hour option for students seeking teacher licensure.

1.1.20C ACADEMIC STANDARDS: The admission, readmission, retention, and graduation requirements are the same as those described in the MTSU *Undergraduate Catalog*. In accordance with the National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST), student performance, participation, and academic progress will be evaluated at the completion of 60 hours.

Projected Program Enrollment and Productivity

Enrollment projections were developed based on current enrollments in the existing Theatre concentration with some adjustments for students who may choose to remain in the current Speech and Theatre BA/BS program. Projections were further developed based on enrollment projections for new students (freshmen and transfer students) that will enroll in the proposed Theatre BS program.

Year	Headcount	Graduates
2014	42	--
2015	64	--
2016	86	20
2017	86	20
2018	86	20

1.1.20D FACULTY: The instructional workload for this program will be continued by 17 full-time, tenured/tenure-track faculty and seven adjunct faculty members. There will be no additional faculty or staff needed for the proposed degree program.

1.1.20E LIBRARY RESOURCES: The existing library resources for the Theatre program consist of an extensive collection of books, supported by electronic resources. These library resources are adequate for the proposed Theatre BS degree.

1.1.20F ADMINISTRATION/ORGANIZATION: No new organizational unit will be required. The Department of Speech and Theatre currently administers the existing Theatre concentration. The proposed Theatre program will be in the Department of Speech and Theatre within the College of Liberal Arts.

1.1.20G SUPPORT RESOURCES: The Theatre program will continue to utilize faculty and the college-wide advising coordinators to advise students on curricular and career issues.

1.1.20H FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT: Instructional facilities and equipment are adequate to support the proposed Theatre program. In the last five years, the instructional and performance facilities have been renovated to improve functionality, aesthetics, and American with Disabilities Act accessibility.

1.1.20I NEED AND DEMAND: The proposed BS degree in Theatre is a practical and marketable degree in today's economy and is enhanced by the teacher education option. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment projections for Art, Drama, and Music teachers are projected to increase by 21 percent from 2010 to 2020. Employment projections for occupations in theatre companies and the dinner theatre industry are projected to grow by 11.4 percent over the next 10 years.

In Tennessee, our capital city serves as a major center for the television, stage, and film industry. Prominent talent and casting agencies are located in Nashville, TN. These agencies regularly seek performing artists and technicians for national and regional employment. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Nashville ranks as the 4th largest metropolitan region with the highest concentration of jobs in the theatrical/performance area.

Recent graduates of the Theatre concentration program are currently working in numerous areas of the Theatre and entertainment industry in the state, nationally, and internationally. Additionally, 18 percent of Theatre concentration graduates from 2007-2012 have completed graduate degrees.

1.1.20J NO UNNECESSARY DUPLICATION: Program duplication among traditional liberal arts majors is common in higher education. Public institutions in Tennessee that offer Theatre programs are Austin Peay State University, East Tennessee State University, University of Memphis, University of Tennessee, Chattanooga and University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

1.1.20K COOPERATING INSTITUTIONS: None at this time.

1.120L DIVERSITY AND ACCESS: Middle Tennessee State University embraces diversity as a core value and the proposed Theatre program is consistent with the institution's Diversity Statement with a focus on student success, faculty recruitment, curricular content, and co-curriculum programmatic events and activities.

1.1.20M ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION: MTSU is currently seeking accreditation from the National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST). With a positive recommendation of the proposed Theatre BS program by the Commission, MTSU anticipates that NAST may be able to grant accreditation by a special meeting prior to the proposed Fall 2014 implementation.

Additionally, the Theatre program will continuously monitor program and student learning outcomes using multiple evaluation tools. Faculty will utilize assessment results to make on-going improvements in curriculum, programs and practices to ensure compliance with NAST accreditation standards and MTSU policies.

1.1.20O EXTERNAL JUDGMENT: THEC policy does not require external evaluators for a proposed new undergraduate degree program.

1.1.20P COST/BENEFIT: Current revenues and expenditures for the Theatre concentration will be shifted to the proposed Theatre BS program. This shift will result in no additional or decreased income or expenditures.

1.1.30 POST APPROVAL MONITORING: An annual performance review of the proposed program will be conducted for the first five years following program approval. The review will be based on benchmarks established in the approved proposal. At the end of this period, the campus, governing board, and Commission staff will perform a summative evaluation. The benchmarks include, but are not limited to, enrollment and graduation, program cost, progress toward accreditation, and other metrics set by the institution and agreed upon by governing board and Commission staff. If benchmarks are not met during the monitoring period, the Commission may recommend that the governing board terminate the program. If additional time is needed and requested by the governing board, the Commission may choose to extend the monitoring period.