



TENNESSEE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

REGULAR CALENDAR ITEM: II.A.

MEETING DATE: May 16, 2024

SUBJECT: New Academic Program
East Tennessee State University
Master of Music (MM)
CIP Code: 50.0901 (Music, General)

ITEM TYPE: Action

ACTION RECOMMENDATION: Approval

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

East Tennessee State University (ETSU) proposes a Master of Music (MM) with several concentrations and emphases, including: Conducting (emphasis in Choral, Wind Band, or Orchestral), Performance (Emphasis in Strings, Woodwinds, or Brass), Percussion Performance, Piano Performance, Vocal Performance, Music Education, and Composition. The proposed program will allow students to pursue an advanced study in specialized areas of music and will focus on performance and pedagogical skills.

The program was developed in response to significant growth in the undergraduate program over the past five (5) years and market research on the expansion of other Master of Music programs. Additionally, the program was designed to provide students the opportunity to gain workforce experience through graduate assistantships with community partners, as well as provide an avenue for students to hone technical skills prior to professional performance auditions. Furthermore, students interested in professional composition, performance, conducting positions, or music education, may seek continuing education credits to enhance their skills and their promotion possibilities. The proposed MM will require 32-36 hours of coursework and will be primarily on-ground at ETSU's main campus.

The proposed Master of Music at ETSU would be the only such program easily accessible to East Tennesseans and will appeal to students in bordering states as well. The proposed program will have a positive impact on the existing ETSU music program, develop deeper relationships with music educators throughout the region and expand overall enrollment in ETSU's Department of Music. Rapid regional growth has expanded the market for live performance, including two (2) orchestras. The new ETSU Martin Center for the Arts will offer unique opportunities for professional development and performance to students.

INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNING BOARD APPROVAL

The proposed Master of Music was approved by the East Tennessee State University Board of Trustees on November 19, 2021.

PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION DATE

August 1, 2024

ALIGNMENT WITH STATE MASTER PLAN AND INSTITUTIONAL MISSION/STRATEGIC PLAN

The proposed Master of Music aligns with the State Master Plan for Higher Education in several ways. The program promotes family prosperity by offering the program to students in distressed counties and

provides professional growth opportunities for teachers in the region while allowing undergraduate students to further their training and advance their career trajectories. The proposed program aligns with the state master plans goal to engage adult learners, as it provides flexible learning opportunities for adult students who would like to further their education while remaining in the workforce. The program also aims to prepare students for the workforce needs of 2030 as many employment opportunities associated with the proposed program (such as teachers, music directors, composing, musicians, and singers) are expected to grow in the next decade according to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The proposed program aligns with ETSU's Strategic Plan by enhancing the university's role as an academic leader 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.

CURRICULUM

The proposed Master of Music will require 32-36 hours of coursework, depending on the concentration, as well as 11 credit hours of a shared curricular core focused on real-world application. The program includes a symposium course that will bring in guest speakers currently working in the music industry. All students will complete a culminating project and the primary delivery method varies by concentration. The performance and conducting concentrations will be primarily on-ground at the ETSU main campus, the composition concentration will be a hybrid offering, and the music education concentration will be entirely online to accommodate working students. Plans of study are recommended to students by area of emphasis, but students can fulfill requirements with any of the courses listed for their concentration. Student learning outcomes align with requirements for accreditation by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM); ETSU's undergraduate programs are currently NASM accredited, and the proposed program will seek NASM accreditation if approved. At the completion of the program, students will be able to:

- Formulate a focused research question that can lead to discovery and new understanding in the music field.
- Develop research plans that are applicable to specific research questions.
- Demonstrate depth of knowledge that includes both historical background and current practices demonstrated through, performances, discussion, and technique demonstrations.
- Practice a high level of self-critique and analysis for musical ability and pedagogical strengths.
- Critique musical performances for strengths and weaknesses using terminology that is appropriate to the industry.
- Work collaboratively with other musicians to both perform and design a performance event.
- Design a teaching curriculum for either a private student or ensemble that is effective and adaptive to student needs.
- Defend a performance/conducting/compositional decision based on historical precedent, practical application, and musical integrity.
- Write program notes that are well researched and understandable to public audiences.
- Perform, conduct, and/or create music at a high level of musicianship, technicality, and expressiveness.

The proposed program is comprised of 68 new courses, most of which have previously been taught at the undergraduate level. All new courses have been built and approved at the institutional level.

PROGRAM PRODUCTIVITY

Projections for the Master of Music estimate that five (5) students will enroll in the first program cohort, with total enrollment growing to 27 in year five. The program anticipates 20 percent attrition which is typical of other graduate programs at the university. The figures below account for full and part-time enrollments. The program projects its first graduates in year two.

	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Enrollment	5	14	21	25	27
Graduates	0	4	9	10	12

PROGRAM DUPLICATION

Master of Music programs are offered at six (6) public institutions in Tennessee, including Austin Peay State University, Middle Tennessee State University, the University of Memphis, University of Tennessee, Chattanooga, and University of Tennessee, Knoxville and one (1) private institution (Belmont University).

The proposed program is unique, due to geographic location and hybrid format, as there are no MM programs offered at public institutions within a 100-mile radius.

EXTERNAL JUDGMENT

A virtual external review of the proposed program was conducted on September 20, 2023, by Dr. Randy Kohlenberg, Professor of Trombone, Director of Graduate Studies, and Assistant Director of the School of Music at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro. The site visit included meetings with campus administrators and faculty at ETSU, as well as community partners and current and potential students. Dr. Kohlenberg noted: “[t]he thoroughness of the New Academic Program Proposal and the enthusiasm and support based on the interviews [at the site visit] ensure that immediate approval and implementation is warranted.” He wrote that the “curriculum is well-planned to equip completers with the skills and dispositions to be successful in their music careers,” and was very complimentary of the degree of curriculum planning, faculty expertise, and administrative support and enthusiasm for the proposed program. Finally, Dr. Kohlenberg expressed confidence that the proposed curriculum will provide sufficient opportunity for graduates, writing: “[e]ach area in the program appears to prepare completers for employment and advancement in their prospective professions.”

STUDENT DEMAND

To assess demand, ETSU surveyed current undergraduates majoring in all music concentrations. The survey had 113 responses, 88 percent of whom indicated that they plan to pursue graduate degrees in music later in their careers. The survey data confirmed anecdotal evidence of interest in a MM program. According to the Department of Music, faculty receive an average of 20 requests from people outside of the university each year interested in master’s-level music training. Inquiries have increased since current students have heard about the potential for adding a graduate program, demonstrated by increased calls, conversations, and letters of support from former students.

In addition, 15-20 percent of ETSU music undergraduates attend graduate programs at other universities, while another 25-30 percent pursue graduate school later in their careers. ETSU received several letters of support from current and former ETSU music undergraduates speaking to a desire for the proposed program in the region to allow students to continue their studies, as well as speaking to positive experiences had while studying in the Department of Music.

The institution plans to market the program to current and former music undergraduates, as well as music educators in the region, through existing marketing strategies such as social media and print, conference tabling, music events tabling, and recruiting at local high schools. Additionally, as community partnerships grow and strengthen, the department anticipates an uptick from local organizations and school systems.

Recruitment efforts will vary by concentration, and the campus has developed concentration-specific recruitment plans.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROGRAM GRADUATES

The proposed program will prepare graduates for a variety of positions, including music educators, composers, performers, music business, and other music-adjacent positions. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, graduate study in music often leads to independent employment that is not tied to a full-time employer, as well-trained musicians participate in the gig economy or on a commission/contract system. The Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation sector is projected to grow by 60 percent from 2020-2030, while the US Department of Labor predicts a 34 percent increase in the need for Musicians and Singers and nearly a 14 percent increase in the need for Music Directors and Composers in the state. Growth in the music industry is also expected in neighboring states in the East Tennessee region (North Carolina and Virginia). While not all of this growth will be in fields requiring a graduate degree, many of the jobs will.

Opportunities are likely to vary by concentration. Graduates in the music education concentration will be especially in demand given the number of vacant music education positions in the state. Johnson City is experiencing significant population growth, projected to be up to 35 percent over the next decade, and as the population grows, so too will demand for graduate-trained musicians. Public schools in the Tri-Cities area (Johnson City, Kingsport, Bristol) have large secondary music programs and bands, increasing demand for music educators. Conducting concentration graduates would also be in high demand as the population grows for churches, community music ensembles, and professional music ensembles.

Letters of support indicate employer demand for the MM in the music industry in Tennessee—an industry that generates more than \$3.2 billion annually—as well as a desire and willingness to hire ETSU graduates. Several local organizations have expressed a desire to fund and hire graduate students, including Johnson City Symphony Orchestra, the Mountain Empire Children’s Chorus, the Appalachian Equality Chorus, The Symphony of the Mountains, the Civic Chorale of Johnson City, and Blair Music Academy. Additional letters of support were received from Full Sail University, Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp, Johnson City Schools, Tri-Cities Jazz Orchestra, Northwestern University, Classical Movements, and West Ridge High School.

INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY TO DELIVER THE PROGRAM

ETSU is confident that the Department of Music has the capacity to deliver the proposed MM program. The department currently has 31 faculty members of varying ranks, all of whom are eligible to serve on graduate committees. The planning committee for the proposed program anticipates two (2) additional hires in Music Theory and Composition as well as employing graduate teaching assistants to ensure that faculty load remains balanced. New faculty hires are planned in year two and year four.

The proposed program will include opportunities for graduate student assistantships, starting with five (5) in the first year and increasing to eight (8) by year four. Assistantships will provide students with applicable workforce experience with community partners. The ETSU Martin Center for the Arts also offers unique opportunities for professional development and performance to students.

Existing facilities are adequate for the addition of a Master of Music, and the university intends to add practice rooms to accommodate the increase in students.

Students enrolled in the program will have access to all support services by the university. The Director of Graduate Music Studies will provide advising and support for students, while faculty will work one-on-one with students to provide career counseling and hands-on learning support.

ASSESSMENT AND POST-APPROVAL MONITORING

An annual performance review of the proposed program will be conducted for the first five (5) years following program approval. The review will be based on benchmarks established in the approved proposal. At the end of this period, the campus, institutional governing board, and THEC 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 staff. If benchmarks are not met during the monitoring period, the Commission may recommend that the institutional governing board terminate the program. If additional time is needed and requested by the institutional governing board, the Commission may choose to extend the monitoring period.

PROGRAM COSTS AND REVENUE

The proposed one-time and recurring expenditures for the Master of Music program are listed in Table 1. Projected revenue is displayed in Table 2.

Table 1: Estimated Costs to Deliver the Proposed Program

Estimated Costs to Deliver the Proposed Program						
One-Time Expenditures						
Category	Planning	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Faculty & Instructional Staff						
Non-Instructional Staff						
Graduate Assistants						
Accreditation						
Consultants		\$1,000				
Equipment		\$3,500				
Information Technology						
Library resources						
Marketing						
Facilities						
Travel						
Other						
<i>Total One-Time Expenditures</i>	<i>\$0</i>	<i>\$4,500</i>	<i>\$0</i>	<i>\$0</i>	<i>\$0</i>	<i>\$0</i>
Recurring Expenditures						
Category	Planning	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Faculty & Instructional Staff			\$75,000	\$77,625	\$157,123	\$162,622
Non-Instructional Staff		\$4,400	\$4,400	\$4,400	\$4,400	\$4,400
Graduate Assistants		\$82,420	\$98,904	\$115,388	\$131,872	\$131,872
Accreditation						
Consultants						
Equipment						
Information Technology						
Library						

Marketing						
Facilities						
Travel						
Other: General Operating		\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
<i>Total Recurring Expenditures</i>	\$0	\$96,820	\$188,304	\$207,413	\$303,395	\$308,894
Grand Total (One-Time and Recurring)	\$0	\$101,320	\$188,304	\$207,413	\$303,395	\$308,894

Table 2: Projected Revenue

Projected Revenue						
Category	Planning	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Tuition		\$0	\$70,272	\$122,976	\$149,328	\$166,896
Grants						
Other: GA Stipend Partnerships		\$14,000	\$21,000	\$28,000	\$28,000	\$28,000
Other: Donations		\$1,000	\$1,500	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
Other: Course Fees		\$3,400	\$9,520	\$14,280	\$17,000	\$18,360
Other: Reallocations (Grad Assistant Tuition Waivers)		\$82,920	\$86,012	\$40,157	\$107,067	\$93,638
Total Revenue	\$0	\$101,320	\$188,304	\$207,413	\$303,395	\$308,894