



THEC

Expedited Letter of Notification (ELON) Checklist

Policy A1.6 - Expedited Academic Programs: Approval Process

An Expedited Letter of Notification (ELON) must be submitted to the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) to develop new high demand academic programs with a minimum of 24 semester credit hours as outlined in *THEC Policy A1.6 Expedited Academic Programs: Approval Process*. Items to be included in the ELON should follow the structure of the checklist below and must include a letter from the appropriate President or Chancellor signifying support for development of the proposed program. Submissions must be sent in a paginated PDF document and include page numbers, a table of contents, and appendices.

Academic programs eligible for an *Expedited Academic Program Approval Process* must:

- 1) Be a high-demand program (see criteria below);
- 2) Be either a bachelor's or master's degree program; and
- 3) Not be subject to a SACSCOC substantive change.

High-Demand Program Criteria

Examples of high-demand programs include:

- Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) programs as defined by federal 2020 CIP codes listed below:
 - o 01 - Agricultural/Animal/Plant/Veterinary Science and Related Fields
 - o 03 - Natural Resources and Conservation
 - o 11- Computer and Information Sciences and Support Services
 - o 14 – Engineering
 - o 15 - Engineering/Engineering-related Technologies/Technicians
 - o 26 - Biological and Biomedical Sciences
 - o 27 - Mathematics and Statistics
 - o 40 - Physical Sciences
- Selected highly specialized multidisciplinary programs in STEM, such as Data Science (CIP Code 30.70)
- High-demand programs by education level as established in the [THEC Academic Supply and Occupational Demand Report](#) or the [THEC Master Plan](#).
- High-demand programs created in response to demonstrated workforce needs, using documented data sources along with letters of support from employers. The letters of support must demonstrate clear commitments to invest or participate in the proposed academic program.

Expedited Letter of Notification Checklist

Overview

Institution name, proposed academic program, degree designation, proposed CIP code, and CIP code title.

- Provide each of the requested items.

Academic Program Liaison (APL) name and contact information

- The APL will serve as the information resource for the proposed academic program at the institution.

Implementation timeline – Provide a timeline that includes the following items:

- Proposed dates for the external judgment site visit
- Estimated date of submission of the external review report to THEC and the institution (within 30 days following the site visit)
- Estimated date of institution's response to external review (within 30 days of receiving the external reviewer's report)
- Estimated timeline for proposed programs that will seek programmatic accreditation
- Proposed date (month and year) of the institutional governing board's meeting to consider the proposed academic program for approval
- Proposed date (month and year) of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission meeting to consider the proposed academic program for approval
- Proposed implementation date (semester and year) when students will enroll in the proposed academic program

Background and Overview

Background narrative

- Provide a short narrative, describing the circumstances that initiated the need and development of the proposed academic program.
- Provide a general overview of the program, including a description of the nature of the proposed program, total credit hours, and modalities of course delivery.

Justification for consideration of expedited policy

- Provide clear evidence that the proposed program is in high demand in the region and the state.

Existing programs of study at the institution

- If the proposed program is emerging from an existing minor or certificate program, provide the previous three years of enrollment and graduation data for the existing program.

Community and industry partnerships

- Provide a minimum of two letters of support from regional, community, and/or workforce partners in the ELON appendix. Letters should be dated and appear on letterhead.

Accreditation

- If the proposed program has a programmatic accrediting agency, please describe plans, timeline, and associated costs to obtain accreditation.

Administrative Structure

- Provide an organizational chart that includes the college, department, administrative unit, and program director for the proposed academic program.
- If a new academic department will be required for the proposed program, the [THEC Academic Policy A1.3: New Academic Units](#) must be followed and should be noted in this section. The request for a New Academic Unit must be submitted concurrently with the Expedited Letter of Notification.

Enrollment and Graduation Projections

Using the *Projected Enrollments and Graduates* table, provide initial projections for the first five years of enrollment and graduates. Enrollment projections should be realistic and based on demonstrable student demand. Attrition calculations should be based on the average rates of similar programs or overall institutional attrition rates.

Table 1 - Projected Enrollments and Graduates

Projected Enrollments and Graduates				
Year	Academic Year	Projected Total Fall Enrollment	Projected Attrition	Projected Graduates
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				

Institutional Alignment and Demand

Alignment with State Master Plan and institutional mission profile

- Explain how the proposed program aligns with the [THEC Master Plan](#) and institutional mission statement or profile.

Student interest

- Provide compelling evidence of student interest in the proposed program. Types of evidence vary and may include, enrollment in related concentrations or minors; representative student and alumni surveys; and national, statewide, and professional employment forecasts and surveys.

Existing programs offered at public and private Tennessee universities

- List all academic programs with the same or similar CIP code offered at public and private universities in Tennessee along with the number degrees awarded for the last three years of available data.
- If there are current programs in Tennessee, provide a short narrative on how the proposed program will substantially differ from existing programs.

Articulation and transfer

- For proposed bachelor's programs, indicate all [Tennessee Transfer Pathways \(TTP\)](#) that may be acceptable for entry into the proposed program.
- Indicate any additional community college or technical college programs that may be articulated for transfer into the proposed bachelor's program.



Expedited New Academic Program Proposal (ENAPP) Checklist

Policy A1.6 - Expedited Academic Programs: Approval Process

An Expedited New Academic Program Proposal (ENAPP) must be submitted to the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) as outlined in *THEC Policy A1.6 Expedited Academic Programs: Approval Process*. The ENAPP is to be submitted in its entirety to THEC at the time the campus seeks to request an external judgment review and should follow the structure of the checklist below. Submissions must be sent in a paginated PDF document and include page numbers, a table of contents, and appendices.

Expedited New Academic Program Proposal (ENAPP) Checklist

Section I: Expedited Letter of Notification (ELON)

- The most current version of the ELON must appear as the first section of the ENAPP, followed by the institution's response to the ELON evaluation. The included ELON must incorporate responses to any concerns outlined in the THEC ELON evaluation and information included should align with subsequent sections of the ENAPP, as appropriate.

Section II: Curriculum

Provide an adequately structured curriculum that (a) meets the stated objectives of the academic program, and (b) reflects breadth, depth, theory, and practice appropriate to the discipline and the level of the degree. The curriculum should be compatible with disciplinary accreditation and meet the criteria for the general education core, as well as articulation and transfer, where applicable.

Catalog description

- Provide the catalog description for the proposed program.

Program learning outcomes

- Provide the program learning outcomes for the proposed program. Outcomes should reflect the specific knowledge and skills expected for students to acquire as part of their educational experience in the proposed program.

Student learning outcomes

- Outline the student learning outcomes for the proposed program. Outcomes should clearly state the specific and measurable outcomes students will display to verify learning has occurred. Every student learning outcome must directly align with and/or relate to one or more program learning outcomes.

Academic program requirements

- Include the required number of semester credit hours (SCH), courses, (course prefix and number, title, SCH) and any special requirements including thesis, internships, practicum, etc.

Existing and new courses

- List existing and new courses for the proposed academic program including a catalog description and credit hours for each course.

Program of study

- Provide a sample program of study for students completing the program full-time. The sample program of study should include all courses by semester and term for students to complete the proposed program.

Assessment and evaluation

- Identify who will be responsible for conducting program assessments and evaluations.
- Provide the schedule for program assessments or evaluations including program evaluations associated with Quality Assurance Funding, institutional program review, student evaluations, faculty review, accreditation, and employer evaluation. Include copies of relevant documents, rubrics, or other materials in the appendices of the ENAPP.

Section III: Students

Academic standards

- Clearly state the admission, retention, and graduation standards, which should align with institutional or governing board policy.

Marketing and recruitment

- Provide a plan that outlines how the proposed program will market and recruit a diverse population of students including underserved and historically underrepresented students and is aligned with the proposed implementation timeline.

Student support services

- Provide an overview of student support services that will be available to students in the proposed program (e.g., academic advising, tutoring, internship placement, career counseling, or others).
- Describe how the proposed program will ensure student success for all students, especially underserved and historically underrepresented students.

Section IV: Instructional and Administrative Resources

Faculty resources

Current and anticipated faculty resources should ensure a program of high quality. The number and qualification of faculty should meet existing institutional standards and should be consistent with external standards.

Current faculty

- Using the - *Current Faculty Roster* table, list the name, highest degree, rank, and primary department, full-time or part-time status, and percent of time to be devoted to the proposed program. If the proposed academic program is at the graduate level, designate graduate faculty status with an asterisk (*).
- Please identify the faculty member who will have direct administrative responsibilities for the proposed program as "PD" after the faculty member's name.

Table 2 - Current Faculty Roster

Current Faculty Roster					
Faculty Name	Highest Degree	Rank	Primary Department	Full-time or Part-time	% of Time Devoted to Program

Anticipated faculty

- Using the - *Anticipated Faculty and Instructional Staff* table, list the additional faculty likely needed during the next five years for successful implementation of the proposed program. For each proposed faculty hire, provide full-time or part-time status, anticipated salary (excluding benefits), anticipated start date, and any pertinent comments.

Table 3 - Anticipated Faculty and Instructional Staff

Anticipated Faculty and Instructional Staff				
Faculty Rank or Job Title	Full-time or Part-time	Anticipated Salary	Anticipated Start Date	Comments

Non-Instructional staff

- Using the - *Anticipated Non-Instructional Staff* table, list the additional Non-Instructional Staff needed during the next five years for successful implementation of the proposed program.. For each proposed non-instructional hire, provide full-time or part-time status, anticipated salary (excluding benefits), anticipated start date, and any pertinent comments.

Table 4 - Anticipated Non-Instructional Staff

Anticipated Non-Instructional Staff				
Job Title	Full-time or Part-time	Anticipated Salary	Anticipated Start Date	Comments

Section V: Institutional Capacity to Deliver Proposed Program

In assessing institutional capacity to deliver the proposed program, provide a narrative explanation of existing and needed resources. Additionally, provide the cost projections for one-time and recurring expenditures in the *Estimated Costs to Deliver the Proposed Program* table below. **Please note:** the narrative must align with the projected costs provided in the *Estimated Costs to Deliver the Proposed Program* table.

Accreditation

- Describe any costs associated with regional and/or programmatic accreditation during the planning and first five years for successful implementation of the academic program.

Consultants

- Provide a summary of anticipated consultant needs and associated costs during the planning and first five years for successful implementation of the academic program.

Equipment

- Assess the adequacy of the existing equipment available for the proposed academic program. Include physical equipment, computer facilities, special classrooms, etc.
- Describe additional equipment needed during the planning and first five years for successful implementation of the academic program.

Information technology

- Describe current information technology resources available to support the program.
- Describe additional information technology acquisitions needed during the planning and first five years for successful implementation of the academic program.

Library resources

- Provide an overview of the current library resources available to support the proposed program. This might include a summary or listing of the appropriate monographs, serials, databases, and online resources that are held by the campus or college libraries to support the proposed program.
- Describe additional library acquisitions needed during the planning and first five years for successful implementation of the academic program.

Marketing

- Outline any anticipated costs associated with the marketing for the proposed program during the planning and first five years.

Facilities

- Describe facilities that will support of the proposed program. For existing space and facilities, briefly describe the type(s) of space and facilities (e.g., a listing of the number and types of classrooms or labs, student offices or spaces, etc.).
- For new or renovated facilities, clearly outline them and include the amount and type of space, costs identified, and source(s) of funds to cover costs.

Travel

- Provide a summary of anticipated travel expenses during the planning and first five years.

Other resources

- Describe other support resources available to support the program.

- Describe additional support resources that may be needed during the planning and the first five years for successful implementation of the academic program.

Table 5 - 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
Accreditation						
Consultants						
Equipment						
Information Technology						
Library						
Marketing						
Facilities						
Travel						
Other						
Total One-Time Expenditures						
Recurring Expenditures						
Category	Planning	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Accreditation						
Consultants						
Equipment						
Information Technology						
Library						
Marketing						
Facilities						
Travel						
Other						
Total Recurring Expenditures						
Grand Total (One-Time and Recurring)						