



Letter of Notification (LON) Checklist

Policy A1.0 New Academic Programs: Approval Process

A Letter of Notification (LON) must be submitted to the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) to develop new academic programs as outlined in THEC Policy A1.0 – New Academic Programs: Approval Process. The LON should include all items in checklist below and must be accompanied by a letter from the appropriate President or Chancellor signifying support for development of the proposed program and confirming governing board approval.

Completed LONs will be uploaded as PDF files through the New Academic Program [Formstack](#). All documents should be continuously paginated (including all appendices) and should include a table of contents. Please format the document to include each element from the checklist as a heading.

Section I: Overview

Program information

- Provide the institution name, proposed academic program and concentration(s), degree designation, proposed CIP code, CIP code title, and CIP code definition.

Academic program liaison name and contact information

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

Proposed implementation date

- The proposed implementation date should provide a realistic estimate of when the program will have gone through all of the approval steps, including Commission approval, and be ready to enroll students.

Section II: Background

Background concerning academic program development

- Provide a short narrative describing the circumstances that sparked the initiation and development of the proposed academic program.

Purpose and nature of academic program

- Provide a general overview of the program including a description of the academic program, total credit hours, target audience, purpose, program outcomes, delivery method (on-ground, online, hybrid, etc.), and any other pertinent information.

Alignment with state master plan and institutional mission

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

Institutional capacity to deliver the proposed academic program

- Address how the proposed program will impact the overall capacity of the institution, including potential lost enrollment to other majors/programs, collaborative agreements between departments, etc.

Existing programs offered at public and private Tennessee institutions

- List all academic programs with the same or similar CIP code offered at public and private higher education institutions in Tennessee along with degrees awarded for the last three years of available data.

Accreditation

- If the proposed program has a programmatic accrediting agency, please describe plans, timeline, and any other information required to obtain accreditation.

Administrative structure

- Provide an organizational chart that includes the college, department, administrative unit, and program director for the proposed academic program. *Please note:* 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.

Section III: Feasibility Study

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.

Local and regional demand

- Provide evidence of a local and regional workforce need for the proposed program. Evidence should include anticipated job openings, labor market analysis, and workforce projections for at least five years after the proposed implementation of the program. If similar academic programs exist, how is the local and regional need/demand for the proposed academic program being met by these institutions?

Employer demand

- Provide an assessment of the statewide and national employment opportunities for graduates from the proposed program. Evidence can include the number of anticipated job openings, an employer needs assessment, labor market analysis, and workforce projections. Projections should be for the first three years for associate and certificate programs, five years for undergraduate and master's programs, or seven years for doctoral programs. Suggested resources include the [THEC Supply and Demand Report](#) and the [Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook](#).

Community and industry partnerships

- Provide an overview of existing and anticipated community and industry partnerships and how they will support the proposed program.

- Provide letters of support from regional, community, and/or workforce partners in the LON Appendix A. Letters should be dated and appear on letterhead and address how the partner will support the proposed program (job placements, internships, advisory board, etc.).

Section IV: Enrollment and Graduation Projections

Provide a brief narrative concerning projected enrollment, attrition, and graduates. Additionally, using Table 1 – Projected Enrollments and Graduates, provide initial projections for the first five-seven years of enrollment and graduates. Enrollment projections should be realistic and based on demonstrable student demand.

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				
6*				
7*				

*Year 6 and 7 projections are only required for doctoral programs.

Section V: Projected Costs to Deliver the Proposed Program

Provide a narrative related to all projected costs necessary to deliver the proposed program for both one-time and recurring expenditures for each category below. These costs should be reflected on the [THEC Financial Projections Form](#).

Faculty & Instructional Staff

- Describe any new costs associated with current and anticipated faculty and instructional staff including salary and benefits.

Non-Instructional Staff

- Describe any new costs associated with non-instructional staff including salary and benefits.

Graduate Assistants

- Describe any new costs associated with current and anticipated graduate assistants including tuition, salary, and benefits.

Accreditation

- Describe any costs associated with regional and/or programmatic accreditation.

Consultants

- Provide a summary of anticipated consultant needs and associated costs.

Equipment

- Describe any new equipment needed and summarize the associated costs.

Information technology

- Describe additional information technology acquisitions needed, including associated costs.

Library resources

- Describe additional library acquisitions needed and their cost.

Marketing

- Outline any anticipated costs associated with the marketing for the proposed program.

Facilities

- 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.

Other resources

- Describe additional resources that may be needed to support the program.

Section VI: Projected Revenues for the Proposed Program

Provide a narrative of anticipated revenues associated with the proposed program. These revenues should be reflected on the [THEC Financial Projections Form](#) which should be included in Appendix B.

Tuition

- Provide an overview of anticipated tuition revenue which aligns with enrollment and graduation projections.

Grants

- If applicable, identify any grants that will be used to support the proposed program.

Other

- Describe any other revenue sources that will be associated with the proposed program.

Appendix A: Letters of Support

Letters of support must be included regional, community, and/or workforce; should be dated; appear on letterhead; and address how the partner will support the proposed program (job placements, internships, advisory board, etc.).

Appendix B: THEC Financial Projections Form

The [THEC Financial Projections Form](#) must be completed with all anticipated new costs and revenues that aligned with Sections V and VI.