

DATE: July 23, 2020

SUBJECT: New Academic Program
Tennessee Technological University
Community Health and Nutrition, Master of Science
(CIP 51.3101— Dietetics/Dietitian)

ACTION RECOMMENDED: Approval

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The proposed Community Health and Nutrition, Master of Science (MS) program at Tennessee Technological University (TTU) is designed to provide advanced content knowledge in rural community health for nutrition and dietetics professionals who seek a graduate degree and Registered Dietitian/Nutritionist (RDN) certification. The program will target undergraduate students in nutrition and dietetics; professionals interested in a graduate degree; and will be offered completely online. The proposed program will require the completion of 30 – 42 credit hours and will offer an optional 12 credit experiential learning track. TTU was selected as a pilot institution by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) to implement the Future Education Model (FEM), a program aligned with the new Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics standards and requirements which will go into effect in 2024.

In response to the recent pandemic, TTU has decided to delay the implementation of the optional experiential learning track until fall 2021 due to the internship/clinical hours required for the completion of this track. The curriculum associated with the Community Health and Nutrition MS (without the experiential learning track) will be offered completely online and accessible for students without any anticipated interruption. TTU’s complete response to the pandemic questionnaire is included in Appendix A.

INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNING BOARD APPROVAL

The proposed Community Health and Nutrition MS program was approved by the Tennessee Technological University Board of Trustees on June 23, 2020.

PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION DATE

Fall 2020

RELEVANCE TO INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND STRATEGIC PLAN

The proposed program aligns with TTU’s mission and vision specifically aligned with their “Rural Reimagined” initiative to create new and unique ways to address the challenges of rural communities. The proposed Community Health and Nutrition, MS program will provide a unique focus on rural health to engage dietetics students in applying advanced nutrition knowledge directly to rural communities.

The proposed program aligns with the state’s master plan to develop professionals in high-needs areas such as health care and specifically addressing the need for professional Registered Dietitians.

CURRICULUM

The proposed Community Health and Nutrition MS program requires the completion of a minimum of 30 credit hours. Students that choose the experiential learning track will take an additional 12 hours (for a total of 42 credit hours) for a dietetic internship and will be eligible to sit for the Registered Dietitian/Nutritionist certification exam.

Graduates from the proposed program will be able to:

- Engage in critical inquiry through principal approaches or methods and through effective and ethical information search and evaluation strategies;
- Apply interdisciplinary learning across multiple contexts, integrating knowledge and practice;
- Reason ethically in evaluating various perspectives, policies and/or practices relevant to rural community health and nutrition; and
- Communicate effectively in presenting ideas/research orally and in writing.

PROGRAM PRODUCTIVITY

In response to the recent pandemic (see Appendix A), TTU adjusted enrollment and graduation numbers to reflect the delay in offering the experiential learning track option and in anticipation of more students pursuing the program part-time. The proposed Community Health and Nutrition, MS program projects an initial enrollment of eight students increasing to 25 students in the fifth year. Attrition rates are calculated at 10 percent. The proposed program projects a consistent 10 graduates a year starting in year four.

| | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Enrollment | 8 | 18 | 21 | 22 | 25 |
| Graduates | -- | 7 | 9 | 10 | 10 |

PROGRAM DUPLICATION

Currently, three public universities in Tennessee offer master’s degrees in Clinical Nutrition – East Tennessee State University, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and University of Memphis. The proposed Community Health and Nutrition, MS program at TTU will be unique due to the emphasis on rural health and will be the first program in the state to employ the ACEND Future Education Model.

EXTERNAL JUDGEMENT

On January 17, 2020, Dr. Gina Pazzaglia, Associate Professor in Nutritional Sciences and Director of Graduate Studies at Pennsylvania State University conducted a campus site visit to evaluate the proposed Community Health and Nutrition, MS program. Dr. Pazzaglia recommended approval and indicated that “the proposed program addresses a national

need (i.e., rural nutrition services) and an area of expertise in the profession that is currently lacking. The program is housed in a university that has expertise in this area and has taken strategic steps to provide impactful initiatives to promote health and well-being for rural communities in Tennessee.”

STUDENT DEMAND

The School of Human Ecology commissioned a feasibility study for the proposed program which was conducted by TTU faculty in the College of Business. The feasibility study included alumni and student surveys gauge interest for the proposed Community Health and Nutrition, MS program. Among the 35 alumni who responded to the survey, 60 percent were very interested in the proposed program and of the 28 undergraduate students surveyed 65 percent were very interested. Approximately 50 percent of alumni and current undergraduate students responded indicating a desire to enroll in the proposed program immediately.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROGRAM GRADUATES

According to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics (BLS) professionals in the sector of Dietitians and Nutritionists will see a 15 percent growth from 2016 to 2026. Possible employment opportunities for graduates of the proposed program is broad and with the largest employers for the sector in state, local, and private hospitals; government; outpatient care centers; and nursing and residential facilities.

Letters of support for the proposed program were provided from industry leaders including the Upper Cumberland Regional Health Office of the Tennessee Department of Health, University of Tennessee Extension, Commission on Dietetic Registration, and the Cookeville Regional Medical Center.

INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY TO DELIVER THE PROGRAM

The proposed program will be housed in the School of Human Ecology in the College of Agriculture and Human Ecology. Currently, this unit offers an undergraduate concentration in Nutrition and Dietetics within the Human Ecology Bachelor of Science degree which will serve as a pipeline into the proposed program. Existing resources such as the Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning, an administrative associate from the School of Human Ecology, and current faculty lines will be utilized to support the proposed Community Health and Nutrition, MS. The proposed program will require a new position for a clinical graduate faculty appointment. Furthermore, existing partnerships from the undergraduate concentration in Nutrition and Dietetics will be leveraged for required field experience hours for the proposed program. Appendix B outlines the five-year financial projections for the proposed Community Health and Nutrition MS program.

ASSESSMENT AND 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, institutional 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 Commission 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. It should be noted that the proposed Community Health and Nutrition, MS has been granted candidacy for accreditation by ACEND. The accreditation term ends June 8, 2024.

Tennessee Higher Education Commission
 Coronavirus Impact on New Academic Programs
 June 26, 2020



In light of the current Coronavirus pandemic, THEC is requesting additional information for new academic programs that are slated for the July 23, 2020 Commission meeting agenda. Please submit your response to the questions listed below by July 10, 2020. Any changes to expenditures and/or revenues will require a revised THEC Financial Projections Form.

Institution: Tennessee Technological University

Academic Program, Degree Designation: Community Health and Nutrition, Master of Science

Proposed Implementation Date: Fall 2020

Questions: Coronavirus Impact on New Academic Programs

Overall Program Need

- Is this academic program as relevant as before the pandemic?

TTU Response: Yes, this degree program focuses on rural community health and the preparation of nutrition professionals who can provide innovative programs and services with the goal of improving the health and wellness of rural communities with a special focus on geriatric residents. The Coronavirus is especially risky for individuals over the age of 65; and the nutrition content delivered in these graduate courses will prepare professionals to be skilled in recognizing and treating the unique nutrition challenges of the rural, geriatric population.

- Does this remain the most needed utilization of institutional resources in light of the pandemic?

TTU Response: Yes, this new degree remains a priority for Tennessee Tech. Because the needed infrastructure and campus resources are already in place (office space, library, Center for Teaching and Learning, etc) there is no strain on existing resources to offer this online degree.

Implementation Date, Admissions, and Enrollment

- Any projected change in the proposed implementation date for the program?

TTU Response: No, the degree is still proposed to begin enrolling students in August 2020, pending THEC approval.

- Will there be any adjustments needed in admission standards?

TTU Response: No, the admissions standards have been approved and vetted by both the Tennessee Tech College of Graduate Studies and the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) and are appropriate for the current enrollment of students.

- Have enrollment projections shifted for the proposed program? If so, please provide an updated enrollment and graduation table and include an updated financial projections form.

TTU Response: Yes, by making the decision to delay enrolling students in the Experiential Learning track and enrolling students to the degree only program, it is possible that enrollment numbers may change. It is also possible that more students will choose the part time option, rather than full time due to financial constraints in this uncertain economy. A revised enrollment table is found at the end of this document and updated financial projections form is attached.

Program Delivery

- What is the current delivery mode of the proposed academic program?

TTU Response: The MS in Community Health and Nutrition will be offered as a 100% online degree.

- Are there plans to change the delivery mode for this program in light of the pandemic?

TTU Response: No, the program will continue to be offered as a 100% online degree program.

- What percentage of the curriculum is devoted to online delivery?

TTU Response: The MS in Community Health and Nutrition will be offered as a 100% online degree.

Staffing and Placements

- What faculty and staff searches are planned prior to implementing the proposed program?

TTU Response: Only one faculty position is requested; the Clinical Coordinator position which is required for the Experiential Learning track of this degree. However, the degree only program can begin prior to the hiring of the Clinical Coordinator.

- Are any faculty and staff searches currently being advertised? If so, what is the anticipated hire date for these positions? Any challenges in hiring for these positions?

TTU Response: No faculty or staff positions are currently being advertised.

- If applicable, are there any special considerations that will need to be made for student placements in clinical and/or internship settings?

TTU Response: Dr. Hutson and I have made the decision to delay enrolling any students in the Experiential Learning track until next Fall 2021.

Accreditation

- Are there any accreditation considerations in light of the pandemic for the proposed program?

TTU Response: The MS in Community Health and Nutrition already had an accreditation site visit and was granted candidacy for accreditation status on June 12, 2020.

Fiscal

- If applicable, are there any renovation and/or equipment purchases that have been affected by the pandemic?

TTU Response: No, there are no renovation or equipment purchases that have been affected by the pandemic- renovations on office space were completed last summer.

- How equipped is the proposed program to endure any significant institutional budget cuts?

TTU Response: The program is well equipped to endure any significant institutional budget cuts due to being housed in the College of Agriculture and Human Ecology and specifically the School of Human Ecology. The School of Human Ecology has two foundation accounts which can be used to purchase teaching supplies and resources if needed. The operating costs of phone, copier, and postage are already included in the operating budget of the School of Human Ecology.

Other

- Are there any additional changes/considerations for the proposed academic program due to the pandemic?

TTU Response: As mentioned earlier, the degree is 100% online and students will not be on campus. There are no additional changes or considerations that are needed to enroll students in this graduate degree program.

Table 1. Full Time (FT) and Part Time (PT) Enrollment Projections
 Part Time Option is for MS Degree Only, FEM students must be Full Time*

| Cohorts | 2020-2021 YR 1 | 2021-2022 YR 2 | 2022-2023 YR 3 | 2023-2024 YR 4 | 2024-2025 YR 5 |
|---|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Cohort 1 begins 3 MS FT + 4 MS PT 3 MS FT + 5 MS PT 3 FEM | 6 FT (3) 4 PT (5) | 3 FT 4 PT** | | | |
| Cohort 2 begins; cohort 1 graduates 3 MS FT + 4 MS PT 3 FEM Cohort 1 (FEM) begins 2 MS FT + 4 MS PT 5 FEM | | 7 FT 4 PT | 6 FT 3 PT | | |
| Cohort 2 begins, Cohort 1 graduates 3 MS FT + 4 MS PT 5 FEM | | | 8 FT 4 PT | 7 FT 3 PT | |
| Cohort 3 begins; Cohort 2 graduates 3 MS FT + 4 MS PT 5 FEM | | | | 8 FT 4 PT | 7 FT 3 PT |
| Cohort 4 begins; Cohort 3 graduates 4 MS FT + 5 MS PT 6 FEM | | | | | 10 FT 5 PT |
| Total # enrolled | 10 8 | 18 | 21 | 22 | 25 |
| | 8 MS Only 3 FEM 30% FEM | 13 MS Only 5 FEM 28% FEM | 11 MS only 10 FEM 47% FEM | 12 MS only, 10 FEM 45% FEM | 14 MS only, 11 FEM 44% FEM |

*MS is 30 Credits; FEM (MS + Experiential Learning) is 42 credits **
 An attrition rate of 10% for each year was assumed.

Appendix B: THEC Financial Projections
Tennessee Tech Univeristy
Master of Science in Community Health and Nutrition

Seven-year projections are required for doctoral programs.
Five-year projections are required for baccalaureate and Master's degree programs
Three-year projections are required for associate degrees and undergraduate certificates.
Projections should include cost of living increases per year.
Planning year projections are not required but should be included when appropriate.

| | Planning Year | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| I. Expenditures | | | | | | |
| A. One-time Expenditures | | | | | | |
| New/Renovated Space ¹ | \$ 4,000 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Equipment | 5,000 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Library | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Consultants | 6,600 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Travel | 1,000 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Other | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Sub-Total One-time | \$ 16,600 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| B. Recurring Expenditures | | | | | | |
| Personnel | | | | | | |
| Administration/Graduate Coordinator | | | | | | |
| Salary | \$ 75,000 | \$ 76,500 | \$ 78,030 | \$ 79,590 | \$ 81,182 | \$ 82,806 |
| Benefits | 31,500 | 32,130 | 32,772 | 33,427 | 34,096 | 34,778 |
| Sub-Total Administration | \$ 106,500.00 | \$ 108,630.00 | \$ 110,802.00 | \$ 113,017.00 | \$ 115,278.00 | \$ 117,584.00 |
| Faculty/Clinical Graduate Faculty | | | | | | |
| Salary | - | \$ 60,000 | \$ 61,200 | \$ 62,424 | \$ 63,672 | \$ 64,945 |
| Benefits | - | 25,200 | 25,704 | 26,218 | 26,742 | 27,276 |
| Sub-Total Faculty | \$ - | \$ 85,200 | \$ 86,904 | \$ 88,642 | \$ 90,414 | \$ 92,221 |
| Support Staff | | | | | | |
| Salary | \$ - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Benefits | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Sub-Total Support Staff | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Graduate Assistants | | | | | | |
| Salary | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Benefits | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Tuition and Fees* (See Below) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Sub-Total Graduate Assistants | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Operating | | | | | | |
| Travel | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 800 | \$ 800 | \$ 800 | \$ 800 |
| Printing | 1,000 | 500 | 500 | 500 | 500 | 500 |
| Equipment | - | 2,000 | 2,000 | 2,000 | 2,000 | 2,000 |
| Other -software | 1,000 | 250 | 250 | 250 | 250 | 250 |
| Other- Accreditation Fees | 6,750 | - | 2,500 | 2,500 | 2,500 | 2,500 |
| Sub-Total Operating | \$ 8,750 | \$ 2,750 | \$ 6,050 | \$ 6,050 | \$ 6,050 | \$ 6,050 |
| Total Recurring | \$ 115,250 | \$ 196,580 | \$ 203,756 | \$ 207,709 | \$ 211,742 | \$ 215,855 |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURES (A + B) | \$ 131,850 | \$ 196,580 | \$ 203,756 | \$ 207,709 | \$ 211,742 | \$ 215,855 |

| *If tuition and fees for Graduate Assistants are included, please provide the following information. | | | | | | |
|---|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Base Tuition and Fees Rate | \$ - | | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Number of Graduate Assistants | - | | - | - | - | - |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | Planning Year | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 |
| II. Revenue | | | | | | |
| Tuition and Fees ² | | 74,652 | 194,995 | 249,378 | 269,003 | 311,448 |
| Institutional Reallocations ³ | 131,850 | 105,056 | (30,084) | (90,377) | (112,427) | (159,331) |
| Federal Grants ⁴ | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Private Grants or Gifts ⁵ | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Other ⁶ Spec Access Fees | - | 16,872 | 38,844 | 48,708 | 55,165 | 63,738 |
| BALANCED BUDGET LINE | \$ 131,850 | \$ 196,580 | \$ 203,756 | \$ 207,709 | \$ 211,742 | \$ 215,855 |

Notes:

(1) Provide the funding source(s) for the new or renovated space.

The funding source for renovating existing space came from the HEC operating fund.

Accreditation fees: The \$6750 has already been paid; ACEND waives the first year of accreditation fees for pilot programs.

(2) In what year is tuition and fee revenue expected to be generated? Tuition and fees include maintenance fees, out-of-state tuition, and any applicable earmarked fees for the program. Explain any differential fees.

Revenue is expected to be generated in Year 2. It should be noted however that the salary line for the Administrator is an existing line already being paid by the School of Human Ecology

FT - Base in state graduate tuition/fees for 9 credits in Year 1 is 5355.00 x 2 semesters = 10710.00 Summer school 6 credits = 3084.00 for total FT tuition 13,794.00

PT - Base in state graduate tuition/fees for 3 credits in Year 1 is 1785 x 2 semesters = 3,570 Summer school 6 credits = 3084.00 for total (part time PT) tuition 6,654

Year 1 total tuition includes 3 FT and 5 PT (0% FEM only); Year 2 includes 10 FT and 8 PT (28% FEM only) , Year 3 includes 14 FT and 7 PT (47% FEM Only), Year 4 includes 15 FT and 7 PT (45% FEM Only) Year 5 includes 17 FT and 8 PT (44% FEM only). See table 2 in the narrative; full time and parttime includes 2 cohorts

Tuition increase is assumed at 2% each year

(3) Identify the source(s) of the institutional reallocations, and grant matching requirements if applicable.

(4) Provide the source(s) of the Federal Grant including the granting department and CFDA(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance) number.

N/A

(5) Provide the name of the organization(s) or individual(s) providing grant(s) or gift(s).

N/A

(6) Provide information regarding other sources of the funding.

TTU currently allows departments to charge specialized student access fees to students. The School of Human Ecology will request to charge graduate students enrolled in the MS in Community Health and Nutrition Degree \$20 per credit hour each semester; the fees were assessed for fall, spring and summer semesters. On June 20, the TTU Board of Trustees approved a new university-wide online and alternative delivery fee for \$128/credit hour. This fee is tied to tuition so any future increase in tuition will result in a proportionate increase in this fee. The calculation in this line is a combination of the \$20.00/credit hour specialized student access fee and the new \$128.00/credit fee based on 36 credits (full time is 24 credits and parttime is 12 credits) per year x # of students estimated per year. See narrative for full details.