

Bachelor of Music in Contemporary Music Performance

Institution name: University of Central Oklahoma

Official Degree Designation and Program Title: Bachelor of Music in Contemporary Music Performance

Location(s) where program will be offered: Oklahoma City, OK campus of UCO

Method of Delivery: Traditional

Contact Information

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JUSTIFICATION FOR PROGRAM

Description of Proposed Program:

The purpose for the proposed B.M. in Contemporary Music Performance is to provide a four-year degree focused on contemporary music performance. The goal of this degree strategy is to use the flexibility of the A.A.S. degrees, B.A.T. degrees, B.M. degrees, and minors to expand student course choice while also adhering to the NASM accreditation requirements for four-year music degrees.

This curriculum was developed using NASM best practices and aligning these with our expertise in preparing students for careers in the music industry.

The contemporary music industry in the United States has matured to the point that it is ready to be supported by a rigorous academic program that focuses on crafting a new generation of industry-savvy, seriously trained musicians and business leaders who have had access to the civic learning available at a public university. In addition to teaching students how to succeed in the music industry, the Academy of Contemporary Music at the University of Central Oklahoma also serves to grow the local music infrastructure in Oklahoma City. Our students, instructors, and guest artists are all part of a growing artistic movement that connects our city to the vibrant global music industry and creates opportunities for our students and alumni.

Employment Demand for Proposed Program:

According to the National Endowment for the Arts, the projections for employment for the arts is growing. A report posted March 2023 stated that there are 38,965 arts related workers employed in the State of Oklahoma and the total compensation for those workers amounts to 2.4 billion dollars. The report states additionally that arts related workers make up .80 of the total workforce in the state. With those numbers, the students who complete the BM Contemporary Music Performance Degree have a great future ahead of them.

According to Oklahomans for the Arts 2016 Arts & Economic Prosperity 5, for fiscal year 2015 there were a total of 29,165 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) jobs supported by arts and cultural organizations and their audiences in Oklahoma. This information, combined with the National Endowment for the Arts Art Works Artist Employment Projection through 2023 shows the aggregate of musicians, singers, and related workers growing as fast as the average job growth across the country. These two data sets correlate with the Bureau of Labor Statistics listing of 16,830 Oklahoma jobs in Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations to show that Oklahoma has a growing contemporary entertainment and music industry that needs a trained workforce.

Unmet Need for Proposed Program:

No equivalent bachelor's degree programs exist in the state of Oklahoma.

When ACM@UCO was formed in 2009 there was an unexpectedly high internal demand for a Bachelor's program that could act as an internal 2+2 degree for students who graduated with their Associates in Applied Science from the ACM@UCO degree programs. The former Bachelor's in Applied Technology (B.A.T.) in Technology Application Studies, a degree originally formed for use as a 2+2 degree, was at the time unused and currently available. This degree, combined with some course substitutions, has been used as an imperfect solution to our problem for the last nine years. It has high demand and high enrollment, but the former degree sheet and title did not accurately portray the program as it should be run and make it almost impossible to market this degree. This high demand for an internal 2+2 is shown in Table 1, which depicts graduation numbers for the ACM@UCO A.A.S. and B.A.T. in Technology Application Studies degrees.

Table 1

	A.A.S. Graduates	B.A.T. Graduates
Fall 2010-Summer 2013*	227	18
*B.A.T. program began Fall 2012		
Fall 2013	34	11
Spring/Summer 2014	39	33
Fall 2014-Summer 2018	216	89
Total Graduates Since Program Launch	516	151

In 2018, 29.3% of A.A.S. Graduates in any of our three programs (Contemporary Music Performance, Contemporary Music Production, and Contemporary Music Business) went on to complete a B.A.T. in Technology Application Studies. Since the implementation of our two new B.A.T. programs, over 50% of our A.A.S. students go on to complete either a B.A.T. in Commercial Music or a B.A.T. in Audio Production. Since 2018, we have now gone from 516 to over 1000 A.A.S. graduates (as of 2024). A true change over the past 6 years was a change from only around 25% of our students declaring the

bachelor's degree as their primary goal to over 65% of our incoming freshmen declaring the bachelor's degree as their primary degree from the beginning of their college experience. This trend has tremendous value for stabilizing our credit hour production.

However, the lack of a four-year option in contemporary music performance for our A.A.S. in Contemporary Music Performance students has meant that our music performance students are still only hovering around 30% who go on to a bachelor's program due to the fact that there is not a music performance specific program available within our institution. Our projections show that a similar increase in both student enrollment and retention through a four-year degree would occur with the launch of the B.M. in Contemporary Music Performance.