

Master of Music in Audio Production

Institution name: University of Central Oklahoma

Official Degree Designation and Program Title: Master of Music in Audio Production

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

Method of Delivery: Traditional

Contact Information

Name of Chief Academic Officer: Dr. Charlotte Simmons

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JUSTIFICATION FOR PROGRAM

Description of Proposed Program:

The purpose for the proposed M.M. in Contemporary Music Performance is to provide the first graduate degree in Audio Production in the State of Oklahoma. The way the program is structured means that the A.A.S. in Contemporary Music Performance is an embedded degree within the B.A.T. in Audio Production, and 9 of the upper-division hours of the B.A.T. will count towards a master's degree as part of an accelerated degree path for students who declare it – students who complete the degree requirements for the B.A.T. in Audio Production will also have a head start towards their graduate studies if they stay with the Academy of Contemporary Music at the University of Central Oklahoma (ACM@UCO) throughout their educational experience.

The Master's in Audio Production promotes the University of Central Oklahoma mission and vision of a metropolitan university preparing future leaders to positively impact local, state, and global communities, namely the Oklahoma music, film, and fine arts communities. Additionally, the certificate demonstrates and provides institutional evidence of UCO Values, especially the values of 'Community' and 'Growth.' ACM@UCO post-production graduate students will provide value and service to the Oklahoma film industry, while engaging the campus community and broader metropolitan community in their creative endeavors. As graduates, students will support the growth and sustainability of the Oklahoma film industry and address the socio-cultural needs of the film community through creativity and innovation.

The proposed degree is part of an overall degree strategy developed as part of the Educators Leadership Academy Academic Leadership Fellows 2017-2018 program. The goal of this degree strategy is to use the flexibility of the A.A.S. degrees, B.A.T. degrees, B.M. degrees, M.M. degrees, M.F.A. degrees, and minors to expand student course choice while also adhering to the NASM accreditation requirements and create accelerated pathways for students who stay with UCO throughout their higher education pathway to receive a robust and complete education.

This program has been created to serve three student populations who have all expressed great interest in a program of this type. First are students who receive the A.A.S. in Music Production and the B.A.T. in Audio Production who can use the accelerated degree program to count 9 of their undergraduate hours towards this degree. Second are students who have graduated from other similarly structured music production four-year programs and wish to continue their graduate study in the field. Finally, the third population of students this degree will serve are students who are interested in audio production but received a bachelor's degree from a traditional music conservatory or university program.

This curriculum was developed using NASM best practices and aligning these with our expertise in preparing students for careers in the music industry. We used industry leaders Middle Tennessee State University, McGill, Southern Utah, New York University, and Columbia College in Chicago as examples of graduate degrees in North America in this field.

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.

Employment Demand for Proposed Program:

Oklahoma does not currently offer graduate study options in Audio Engineering. Conversations with our area business stakeholders, the increase in film production in our state, and the growth of the music industry in Oklahoma have made it clear to us that there is a workforce need in the field of audio for post-production projects (which includes films, television, advertising, online media, video games, interactive media, and immersive media), live sound recording, and studio recording. This program builds on the expertise in contemporary music education gained through the past fifteen years at ACM@UCO.

Unmet Need for Proposed Program:

Because Oklahoma does not currently offer graduate study options in Audio Engineering, we have been fielding greater numbers of inquiries and interest in a graduate program the past two years from both internal graduates and graduates of other Oklahoma programs. There is such a growing need for a program of this kind that if we do not take advantage of this opportunity, then we will lose these students to other states that offer the educational resources that they need to thrive in their careers.