



**Docket Item:**

University Program Approval: Portland State University, Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science in Sonic Arts and Music Production (B.A./B.S.).

**Summary:**

Southern Oregon University proposes a new degree program leading to a B.A./B.S. in Sonic Arts and Music Production. Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) staff completed a review of the proposed program. After analysis, HECC staff recommends approval of the program as proposed.

**Staff Recommendation:**

The HECC recommends the adoption of the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Higher Education Coordinating Commission approve the following program: Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science in Sonic Arts and Music Production (B.A./B.S.) at Portland State University.



**Portland State University seeks the Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission’s approval to offer an instructional program leading to a B.A./B.S. degree in Sonic Arts and Music Production.**

1. *Describe the purpose and relationship of the proposed program to the institution’s mission and strategic plan.*

The Sonic Arts and Music Production (SAMP) program at PSU will be the only degree offered in PSU’s School of Music to explore the artistic and musical possibilities that technology facilitates. With a firm foundation in music theory and acoustics, students will pursue new sounds, new instruments, and new methods of performance and composition. They will engage multiple creative contexts including recording arts, mixing and mastering, working with visual media, live interactive performance, sound installations, and online possibilities. In an environment that combines music, art, science, coding, and design, students will develop tools that prepare them for leadership in artistic, technical, educational, entrepreneurial, and research efforts.

*Broad* in its conception and inclusive in its content, this degree seeks to reach students from a wide variety of backgrounds and with a wide range of interests. This will be our first degree to reach students lacking a traditional background in music and literacy with music notation. Rather, students curious about how to combine their love of technology with their desire to create and facilitate sonic and musical projects will find a welcome place in this program. Our wide-ranging curriculum provides a foundation of music theory relevant to contemporary musical styles, rudimentary piano skills, ensemble experience, music history and culture classes, music business, and the heart of the program, six core classes which immerse students in music technology and the creative possibilities the technology enables.

PSU’s Mission states that we pursue excellence through accessibility; innovation; collaboration; engagement; sustainability; and transformation. The Sonic Arts and Music Production program will be highly accessible and will accommodate a wide variety of learners and interests. The learning outcomes of our program are broad enough to serve students who come from diverse technological and creative vantage points. The curriculum for SAMP values innovation and exposes students to possibilities which transform the way we think about creativity. Collaborations within and outside of the college will be encouraged, and the ability for students to bring their own creative voices into their scholarly and creative work will keep them engaged.

Under PSU’s strategic priority of “Elevate student success,” you will find the first initiative, “Put students first.” This program does exactly that by offering a program of study which meets students at the place of their greatest inspiration. Likewise, “catalyze new ideas” is

an initiative which speaks to the entire degree proposal and curriculum. We believe it will meet the strategic priority of “Innovate for long-term stability” by rethinking what kind of degree path we can offer in the School of Music. Students will be inspired by their ability to take an active role in the catalyst of new ideas.

2. *What evidence of need does the institution have for the program?*

In 2014-2015 the School of Music sent a survey to Portland area high school music teachers asking what new academic focuses they would like to see developed for their students. Music production was the number one requested focus, with Music Theater a distant second. Prospective students in the past ten years have consistently inquired about the possibility of a program in music production. Some have tried to enroll in our B.M. in Composition because it seemed the closest to their interests. The B.M. in Composition, however, is a music notation based program with an emphasis in concert music, and therefore it is not well-suited for students without a significant background in music performance. In addition, we currently have no degrees which admit students on the basis of a creative portfolio instead of a performance audition.

Last year we learned of PCC Cascade’s plan to offer a two-year degree in Music and Sonic Arts. Upon learning more about each other’s proposed plans, we decided to partner together to streamline a potential route for students to begin at PCC Cascade and transfer to PSU with an Associate’s Degree. Fall 2016 was the first term of the new Associate’s Degree in Music and Sonic Arts at PCC, and their enrollment in music increased by 40% this fall! We are very excited to learn of their enrollment as a partner institution because it is evidence of the high demand that students have placed on music production programs. We expect to gain many transfer students in two years’ time.

3. *Are there similar programs in the state? If so, how does the proposed program supplement, complement, or collaborate with those programs?*

The SAMP program at PSU will be the first baccalaureate degree in Portland offering a curricular focus in music production. Community colleges in the area offer certificates and Associate degrees, including Clackamas Community College’s Music Performance and Technology Associate of Applied Science Degree and PCC Cascade’s Music and Sonic Arts Degree. We are working closely with these institutions to develop appropriate academic pathways for successful students in their programs to continue at PSU and earn a B.A. or B.S. in our new SAMP program. We have an especially close working relationship with PCC Cascade whose faculty and staff is working with us on curricular content and advising to better ensure a smooth transition for students starting in their program and transferring to PSU to complete a Bachelor’s degree.

All appropriate University committees and the Statewide Provosts Council have unanimously approved the proposed program. The PSU Board of Trustees approved the program on June 6, 2017.

***Recommendation to the Commission***

The Statewide Provosts Council recommends that the Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission authorize Portland State University to establish an instructional program leading to a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science (B.A./B.S.) degree in Sonic Arts and Music Production, effective Fall 2017.

**Institution:** Portland State University

**Program:** B.A./B.S. in Sonic Arts and Music Production

Action: At the June 7, 2017 meeting, the Statewide Provosts Council approved a new program for Portland State University, B.A./B.S. in Sonic Arts and Music Production, to move forward to the Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission for its review and approval. The PSU Board of Trustees approved it at their June 6, 2017 meeting.

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**Eastern Oregon University**

Sarah Witte, provost

Approved

Opposed

Abstained



**Oregon Health & Science University**

Elena Andresen, interim provost

Approved

Opposed

Abstained

*No vote – absent from meeting*

**Oregon State University**

Ed Feser, provost

Approved

Opposed

Abstained



**Oregon Tech**

LeAnn Maupin, acting provost

Approved

Opposed

Abstained



**Portland State University**

Sona Andrews, provost

Approved

Opposed

Abstained



**Southern Oregon University**

Susan Walsh, provost

Approved

Opposed

Abstained



**University of Oregon**

Scott Coltrane, provost

Approved

Opposed

Abstained



**Western Oregon University**

Steve Scheck, provost

Approved

Opposed

Abstained

