

**TOPIC: PROPOSAL TO OFFER A MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN  
MUSIC EDUCATION AT ADAMS STATE COLLEGE**

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**I. SUMMARY**

Adams State College (ASC) submitted a proposal to offer a Master of Arts degree in Music Education (MA-MUED) for teachers who are already licensed and are returning for advanced study. The proposed degree program will be offered in an online or combined online/on-campus format, which will include one, three-day residency period. The structure of the proposed program will allow adult students to work full time while attending classes.

**II. BACKGROUND**

The following is summarized from Adams State College's request:

The majority of school districts in Colorado and most western states require K-12 teachers to progress beyond the baccalaureate degree to continue advancement on the salary schedule. In most districts, teachers stop receiving raises once they advance beyond year 14 on their respective salary schedules unless they pursue graduate studies or professional development classes. K-12 music teachers in the San Luis Valley and in other rural areas are at a particular disadvantage, as the nearest masters degree in music education is not within commutable distance. The proposed online Masters of Arts in Music Education would indirectly help preserve the unique character of the San Luis Valley and other rural areas, as K-12 teachers would not need to relocate in order to pursue graduate studies.

**ROLE AND MISSION SUPPORT**

This degree supports the role and mission of Adams State College. The statutory mission states:

*Adams state college shall offer undergraduate liberal arts and sciences, teacher preparation, and business degree programs, a limited number of master's level programs, and two-year transfer programs with a community college role and mission... Adams state college has a significant responsibility to provide access to teacher education in rural Colorado. Adams state college shall also serve as a regional education provider. In addition, Adams state college shall offer programs, when feasible, that preserve and promote the unique history and culture of the region. C.R.S. 23-51-101*

Adams State College adds:

Offering the MA meets the spirit of ASC's Regional Education Provider status as well, providing access and opportunity to rural populations in a content area not easily accessible in southern rural Colorado. The new degree offering will positively impact students, institutions of higher education, and businesses in rural communities of Colorado and the nation, where inaccessibility and isolation are factors. The opportunity to better prepare employed graduate students in this content area is an exciting challenge for the Department. Lastly, the new MA will continue the tradition of innovative delivery for distance education at ASC.

### **EVIDENCE OF STUDENT DEMAND**

The proposed degree program will attract individuals who want to continue to teach at the K-12 level while pursuing graduate study. According to ASC's proposal, there are currently only ten other online music education masters degree programs in the United States: Auburn University, Boston University, Canyon College, Duquesne University, East Carolina University, Kent State University, Steven F. Austin University, University of Florida (in development), University of Hawaii at Manua, and University of Southern Mississippi. The proposed MA-MUED program at ASC will have the lowest tuition of any similar accredited program. Furthermore, ASC has the distance learning infrastructure in place to deliver quality online courses and its current online music courses are among the ASC's most popular, with 120 student registrations in 2010 alone.

### **DUPLICATION/SIMILAR PROGRAMS IN THE STATE**

A search of similar programs in the SURDS database revealed a Master of Music Education degree at the University of Colorado Boulder. That program's website does not indicate that any of it is offered online.

### **III. STAFF ANALYSIS**

Pursuant to Colorado Revised Statutes 23-5-129 (6)(b), Department staff finds that the proposed graduate program fits the centrality of the institution's statutory role and mission to provide access to teacher education in rural Colorado.

### **IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Master of Arts in Music Education is consistent with Adams State College's campus role and mission. Staff recommends that the Commission approve this degree.**

### **V. SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION**

Copies of all relevant materials are on file in the Academic Affairs office and are available upon request.

### **STATUTORY AUTHORITY**

C.R.S. §23-5-129(6)(b)

(6)(b) Need not consult with nor obtain approval from the Colorado commission on higher education to create modify, or eliminate academic and vocational programs offered by the institution, so long as such creations, modifications, and eliminations are consistent with the institution's statutory role and mission. Institutions shall submit information to the department demonstrating that the creation or modification of an academic or career and technical education program is consistent with the institution's statutory role and mission. The Colorado commission on higher education shall have the authority to override the creation or modification of an academic or vocational program if the change made by the governing board is inconsistent with the institution's statutory role and mission.