



**TO:** The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents  
**FROM:** William P. Murphy *William P. Murphy*  
**SUBJECT:** Permission to Operate: Berklee College of Music  
**DATE:** April 23, 2020  
**AUTHORIZATION(S):** *Sharam L. Talbot*

## SUMMARY

### **Issue for Consent Agenda**

Should the Board of Regents grant permission for Berklee College of Music to operate a Master of Arts in Creative Media and Technology, as well as a semester away program for its undergraduate Music Production and Engineering students, at its BerkleeNYC location?

### **Reason(s) for Consideration**

Required by State statute and State regulation.

### **Proposed Handling**

This question will come before the Full Board at its May 2020 meeting, where it will be voted on and action taken.

### **Procedural History**

N/A

### **Background Information**

Berklee College of Music (Berklee), a private, nonprofit institution located in Boston, Massachusetts, has submitted an application for permission to operate with a physical presence in New York State, pursuant to Section 3.56 of the Rules of the Board of Regents. Additionally, pursuant to Section 3.56(c)(1)(i), the institution requested a waiver in order to be able to apply for permission to offer more than one program, and this waiver was granted.

Berklee has proposed two programs: A Master of Arts degree in Creative Media and Technology and a semester away program for its undergraduate Music Production and Engineering students.

### Master of Arts in Creative Media and Technology

Berklee has proposed a Master of Arts in Creative Media and Technology to be offered at its BerkleeNYC location. The institution states that the program is designed to equip students with knowledge and experience of current practices in artistic fields that have seen significant change and disruption in the last decade, and particularly in the past five years. The proposed program is designed to be completed in one year, consisting of three terms of study. It is a 30-credit program (or 31, with an optional one-credit internship), which will contain a core of 15 credits and a choice of one of three specializations. The core coursework will emphasize design thinking, storytelling, and prototyping in the development of new artistic ideas and projects, applying principles of entrepreneurship and prescient business practices in the creative industries, and using innovation and iterative processes to build students' own projects towards realization. In addition to the core coursework, students will choose to specialize in one of the following three tracks: Live Experience Design, Songwriting and Production, or Writing and Design for Musical Theater.

Students will attend the full degree program in New York, and Berklee College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts will award the Master of Arts degree upon completion of all program requirements. Berklee plans to admit students into this program beginning in fall 2021, and the institution projects annual enrollments of approximately 60 students in the program by the 2024-2025 academic year.

### Semester Away in Music Production and Engineering

Berklee has proposed an undergraduate semester away program at its BerkleeNYC location. The proposed program will allow students in the Music Production and Engineering (MP&E) major from Berklee's Boston campus to live and study in New York City for one semester. Students participating in this experience will have completed all but the final semester of their bachelor's degree program at Berklee's Boston campus. The proposed program incorporates in-studio classroom experience, hands-on project work, and exposure to resident and visiting industry professionals. The institution states that the choice of courses offered will prepare students to adapt to the changing demands of the music industry.

This program will not operate as a stand-alone degree program. Students will have the opportunity to earn between 12 and 16 credits. Credits earned will be applied to each student's academic record at the home institution. The proposed program would be offered in the fall, spring, and summer semesters. The institution projects annual enrollments of approximately 44 students in the program by the 2024-2025 academic year.

Berklee has indicated that the proposed programs will benefit New York by introducing students to New York City earlier in their careers, encouraging collaborations

and contributions to the New York arts and education scene, and matching these students to the employment needs of New York’s performing and recording arts industries. The institution used alumni surveys, data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, and news articles to support their assertion that there will be demand from students and employers for the proposed programs. The institution has researched similar programs in New York and finds that the proposed Master of Arts in Creative Media and Technology will not duplicate existing offerings. Finally, the applicant has indicated that approval of the proposed academic programs would allow BerkleeNYC students to enhance the institution’s established educational community outreach programs in New York.

Berklee is accredited by the New England Commission of Higher Education. A Department review has indicated that the proposed programs are comparable in quality to the standards for the registration of similar programs in New York.

The Department solicited input from existing colleges and universities concerning the impact of Berklee’s proposed New York program on the institutions and their programs. No New York State institutions lodged any objections or statements of negative impact regarding these programs.

**Related Regents Items**

N/A

**Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Board of Regents take the following action:

VOTED: That the Board of Regents grant Berklee College of Music permission to operate a Master of Arts in Creative Media and Technology and a semester away program for its undergraduate Music Production and Engineering students at its BerkleeNYC location. This permission will be effective May 5, 2020 and end on May 30, 2025.

**Timetable for Implementation**

Subsequent renewals of this permission to operate, if sought, will be subject to the terms of Section 3.56 of the Rules of the Board of Regents. If Berklee College of Music seeks to renew its permission to operate after its current term, it must notify the Department no later than May 30, 2024.