



News Release
Office of University Relations

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ETSU announces tryouts for new esports varsity team

JOHNSON CITY – Esports has become one of the fastest growing areas of collegiate and professional competition in the United States and around the world. Today, East Tennessee State University announced plans to form a varsity esports team and to begin competing in fall 2020. The team will be sponsored by ETSU Online.

Organized by the National Association of Collegiate Esports (NACE), esports are multiplayer online video game competitions viewed by spectators both in person and via livestream. Tryouts for the ETSU team are open to both men and women and will begin in January 2020. Some scholarship assistance will be available to students selected for the team.

The inaugural varsity team will compete in League of Legends and Overwatch, with plans to add more games in the future. ETSU will compete in tournaments hosted by NACE and Tespa, which is a network of students, competitors and club leaders.

ETSU's Culp Center, which is currently undergoing renovation and is expected to open in early 2020, will feature a new esports arena with a 32-foot video wall to display tournaments and other livestreaming esports events. Technology available to team members include machines with 9th Gen Intel i7 processors, 512 GB M.2 solid state drive, 25-inch G-sync monitors with 240Hz refresh rate and peripherals such as specialized keyboards, mice and headsets.

To be eligible to try out for the ETSU varsity team, the person must be a current student or will be a current student in fall 2020, maintain a 2.5 grade point average and be on a path toward graduation.

“Sport teams have existed on our campus and have been a rich part of our history, all the way back to the days when we were East Tennessee State Normal School,” said ETSU President Dr. Brian Noland. “We already have a strong gaming community on our campus that competes through our student organizations, and the creation of our own varsity team builds upon that foundation.”

During the news conference, Noland announced that the university is in the process of establishing a new graduate certificate program in esports management that will be offered by the Clemmer College's Department of Sport, Exercise, Recreation, and Kinesiology possibly as early as fall 2020.

More information about the varsity esports team is available at www.etsu.edu/esports/. Persons interested in the ETSU esports tryouts and schedule should contact Brad Engle, interim coordinator, at brad@etsu.edu or 423-439-4246. Those wanting additional information about the proposed esports graduate certificate should contact Dr. Natalie Smith, graduate programs coordinator, at smithn14@etsu.edu or 423-439-4382 or visit www.etsu.edu/coe/serk/graduate/esport.php.

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