



**ACADEMIC AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE**

May 8, 2025

SUSPENSION OF MINOR, COMPUTER INFORMATION SYSTEMS

REQUEST:

Approval for academic program suspension for the following program: **Minor in Computer Information Systems**.

FACTS:

The Program Faculty in the Department of Analytics & Information Systems in the Gordon Ford College of Business have decided to suspend this program. The faculty have created a new certificate in Artificial Intelligence & Analytics (AIA) that was approved in 2024 that replaces this minor. The AIA certificate contains three of the four required courses from the Computer Information Systems (CIS) minor, preserving the core curriculum of the minor while updating the curriculum to provide students with the opportunity to earn an additional credential.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS:

Closing this academic program to new admissions will have minimal impact on the University Budget because three of the required courses will continue to be taught as part of the new Artificial Intelligence & Analytics Certificate and the fourth is required in the Bachelor of Science in Business Data Analytics, so faculty will continue to make these courses available to students.

RECOMMENDATION & IMPLEMENTATION DATE:

President Timothy C. Caboni recommends approval of the suspension of the **Minor in Computer Information Systems** to be implemented Fall 2025.

MOTION:

Approval to suspend the following program: **Minor in Computer Information Systems** with implementation in Fall 2025.

SUSPENSION OF AA IN ORGANIZATIONAL SUPERVISION

REQUEST:

Approval of academic program suspension for the following program: **Associate of Arts in Organizational Supervision**.

FACTS:

The Program Faculty in consultation with the Director of the School of Leadership & Professional Studies in the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences have decided to suspend this program. This decision is due to changing student demographics and new students who have gravitated to the bachelor's degree programs rather than pursuing an associate degree. All delivery methods and all locations for this program will be closed.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS:

Closing this academic program to new admissions will have minimal impact on the University Budget because the faculty will continue to teach in the Work Force Administration program, AIS and BIS interdisciplinary studies programs, and the Real Estate Certificate.

RECOMMENDATION & IMPLEMENTATION DATE:

President Timothy C. Caboni recommends approval of the suspension of the **Associate of Arts in Organizational Supervision** to be implemented Fall 2025.

MOTION:

Approval to suspend the following program: **Associate of Arts in Organizational Supervision** with implementation in Fall 2025.

PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL WRITING GRADUATE CERTIFICATE

REQUEST: Approval of a Graduate Certificate in Professional and Technical Writing offered through the Department of English in Potter College of Arts and Letters.

FACTS: The Graduate Professional Writing Certificate offers graduate students and non-degree seeking professionals an option for building their professional practices and writing portfolio. Working professionals, such as those in healthcare, education, business, and the arts, will be able to gain experience to build their professional practices and writing skills and advance in their careers. Current WKU English graduate students who are pursuing an MA or MFA will be able to earn additional credentialing toward/experience with writing in professional contexts through this embedded certificate. Also, WKU graduate students outside of the English department will be able to complement their primary programs with credentialing in professional writing. Potential programs include those in healthcare, education, and business.

Graduates of this program will be competitive in a variety of public and private sector industries, such as technology, healthcare, technical writing, and non-profit or not-for-profit organizations. According to the Lane Report: Kentucky's Business News Source, "employability skills" tied to communication, teamwork, problem-solving, analysis, and interpersonal relations and "knowing how to learn" are valued as highly as "academic skills." With an emphasis on reading and writing, developing "soft skills" through textual study, an abundance of collaborative and high-impact practice activities, technical and rhetorical analysis assignments, and client-based projects, students of the program will acquire these high-value skills. This program is particularly effective at marrying employability and communication skills. The required Introduction to Professional and Technical Writing provides students with a foundation in these employable skills. Students then have the option to focus their studies through their selection of electives, allowing individuals to tailor the certificate to different areas of professional writing such as editing and publishing, writing technologies, or rhetoric and advanced composing. Students can select courses that best fit their professional goals and allow them to build a professional portfolio.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS: 9 HOURS*

*Complete curriculum and program requirements are in the Curriculum Program Proposal attached.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS: This graduate certificate uses existing faculty members, and some part-time faculty already involved in graduate English education at WKU.

RECOMMENDATION & IMPLEMENTATION DATE: President Timothy C. Caboni recommends approval of a **Graduate Certificate in Professional and Technical Writing** to be implemented Fall 2025.

MOTION: Approval to establish a **Graduate Certificate in Professional and Technical Writing** with implementation in Fall 2025.

: GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL WRITING

In Workflow

1. ENG Approval (alison.langdon@wku.edu;kimberly.nessler@wku.edu)
2. AR Dean (merrall.price@wku.edu)
3. AR Curriculum Committee (merrall.price@wku.edu)
4. Graduate Curriculum Committee (whitley.stone@wku.edu)
5. Graduate Council (jeremy.logsdon@wku.edu)
6. University Senate (mac.mckerral@wku.edu, daniel.clark@wku.edu)
7. Provost (beth.laves@wku.edu)
8. Board of Regents (all)
9. CPE (rheanna.plemons@wku.edu; beth.laves@wku.edu)
10. SACSCOC (beth.laves@wku.edu)
11. Program Inventory (jennifer.hammonds@wku.edu; jessica.dorris@wku.edu)

Approval Path

1. Tue, 03 Dec 2024 21:19:20 GMT
Alison Langdon (alison.langdon): Approved for ENG Approval
2. Tue, 03 Dec 2024 21:32:21 GMT
Merrall Price (merrall.price): Approved for AR Dean
3. Thu, 09 Jan 2025 18:57:50 GMT
Merrall Price (merrall.price): Approved for AR Curriculum Committee
4. Thu, 06 Feb 2025 22:03:05 GMT
Whitley Stone (whitley.stone): Approved for Graduate Curriculum Committee
5. Thu, 13 Mar 2025 18:14:53 GMT
Jeremy Logsdon (jeremy.logsdon): Approved for Graduate Council
6. Fri, 14 Mar 2025 11:48:56 GMT
Gordon McKerral (mac.mckerral): Approved for University Senate
7. Fri, 14 Mar 2025 20:11:42 GMT
Robert Fischer (robert.fischer): Approved for Provost

New Program Proposal

Date Submitted: Tue, 03 Dec 2024 21:15:55 GMT

Viewing: : Graduate Certificate in Professional and Technical Writing

Last edit: Wed, 16 Apr 2025 16:35:31 GMT

Changes proposed by: als04863

Proposed Action

Active

Contact Person

Name	Email	Phone
Alison Langdon	alison.langdon@wku.edu	270-745-5708

Term of Implementation

2025-2026

Academic Level

Graduate

Program Type

Certificate - Graduate

Department

English

College

Arts & Letters

Program Name (eg. Biology)

Graduate Certificate in Professional and Technical Writing

CIP Code

23.1303 - Professional, Technical, Business, and Scientific Writing.

Will this program lead to teacher certification?

No

Does the proposed program contain 25% or more new content not previously taught in another course at WKU? If yes, contact the Office of the Provost for additional SACSCOC proposal requirements

No

Catalog Content

Program Overview (Catalog field: Overview tab)

The Graduate Certificate in Professional & Technical Writing offers current graduate students and non-degree seeking professionals an option for building their professional practices and writing portfolio, emphasizing the kinds of thinking, reading, and writing skills necessary for today’s workplaces. The required introductory course, ENG 506: Introduction to Professional and Technical Writing, provides a foundation in the core theories and practices of technical and professional writing, culminating in a portfolio that showcases the student’s abilities as a professional and technical writer. Elective options will allow students to develop workplace-relevant skills and professional writing materials in areas such as editing and publishing, writing and technology, document design, and grant writing. The certificate requires 9 credit hours and can be completed in as few as 2 semesters and is completable fully online.

Admission Requirements (Catalog field: Program Admission)

- 1. Baccalaureate degree or higher, or equivalent international degree, from a regionally accredited institution of higher education.
- 2. Minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.75 or greater on baccalaureate degree or equivalent international degree or minimum GPA of 3.0 on a degree higher than a baccalaureate or equivalent international degree.
- 3. Evidence of English proficiency (international students only)

Curriculum Requirements (Catalog field: Program Requirements)

Program Requirements (9 hours)

Code	Title	Hours
Core Courses		
ENG 506	Introduction to Professional & Technical Writing	3
Electives		
Two graduate professional & technical writing electives		6
ENG 401G	Advanced Composition	
ENG 402G	Editing and Publishing	
ENG 412G	Theories of Rhetoric and Persuasive Writing	
ENG 415G	Writing and Technology	
ENG 549	Course ENG 549 Not Found (Approved for fall 2025- Special Topics in Professional & Technical Writing)	
Total Hours		9

Will this program be managed or owned by more than one department?

No

Does this program include courses from outside your department?

No

Relation to Mission and Strategic Plan

Explain how the proposed program relates to the institutional mission and academic strategic plan.

This certificate would help meet several of WKU’s institutional and academic objectives.

First, the certificate provides support for process-learning practices and collaborative learning, which are both essential in contributing to a culture of innovation. These are achieved through high impact practices, such as collaborative projects, writing-intensive courses, and engagement with subject matter experts (SMEs) and clients in both regional and national industries.

Second, students who complete this certificate are exposed to a variety of professional documents, technical writing research strategies, and digital writing technologies, which better prepares them for a competitive global workforce, a key to WKU's mission.

Third, the certificate contributes to the goal in the strategic plan of connecting campus and community by furthering "WKU's commitment to creating a well-educated citizenry and workforce" because the program offers a credential that prospective and established professionals can use for their work in industry, community organizations, and businesses. The certificate provides an avenue for "training and retraining, and to engage in ongoing meaningful learning experiences" by offering a quality program that is accessible for continuing education and "lifelong learning."

Explain how the proposed program addresses the state's postsecondary education strategic agenda

The certificate would contribute to the growth of postsecondary education in Kentucky, and counts as postsecondary graduate educational attainment. As stated in the strategic agenda, much of the progress over the last decade "is due to increases in short-term credentials, which include certificates and industry certifications. The state's current short-term credential attainment rate is 13.3%, of which 9.2% are certificates and 4.1% are industry certifications." With the focus on professional and technical writing, this certificate would be an affordable, robust credential that would be applicable to a wide range of working professionals.

The postsecondary strategic agenda includes indicators to determine "Talent Performance" as part of the overall goals. In particular, these indicators include the number of college graduates who remain in Kentucky for work or for additional education. This graduate certificate offers an additional educational opportunity beyond the undergraduate degree that encourages Kentucky graduates to remain in-state as they pursue their professional and academic goals. This certificate promotes our undergraduates to continue their education and to maximize students who might remain in the state, working and completing additional credentials to improve their career outcomes. Additionally, this certificate promotes the values of innovation and of business and community partnerships, ensuring that the academic offerings are high-quality, relevant, and inclusive. Developing and enacting these values for the graduate certificate opens opportunities for developing stronger business and community partnerships for graduate students that can also benefit our undergraduate programs and contribute to the 60x30 initiative.

Program Quality and Demand

Provide justification and evidence to support the need and demand for this proposed program. Include any data on student demand; career opportunities at the regional, state, and national level; and any changes or trends in the discipline that necessitate a new program.

Please insert one Learning Outcome per box. Click green plus sign for additional LO boxes

Learning Outcomes and Measurement Plan

	List all student learning outcomes of the program.	Measurement Plan
SLO 1	Identify professional writing theories that inform a variety of professional and technical writing genres and contexts	Summative and formative assessment by instructor of record in ENG 506. Evaluated by entire Professional Writing faculty on a rotating basis as the focal point of annual ASL reports under the direction of the Graduate Coordinator.
SLO 2	Develop rhetorical strategies for addressing both expert and lay audiences in professional writing documents and/or professional contexts	Summative and formative assessment by instructor of record in professional writing electives. Evaluated by entire Professional Writing faculty on a rotating basis as the focal point of annual ASL reports under the direction of the Professional Writing program coordinator.
SLO 3	Gain relevant workplace experience through composing contextually situated documents and deliverables	Summative and formative assessment by instructor of record in professional writing electives. Evaluated by entire Professional Writing faculty on a rotating basis as the focal point of annual ASL reports under the direction of the Professional Writing program coordinator.
SLO 4	Refine writing style for clarity, conciseness, coherence, cohesion, and emphasis	Summative and formative assessment by instructor of record in professional writing electives. Evaluated by entire Professional Writing faculty on a rotating basis as the focal point of annual ASL reports under the direction of the Professional Writing program coordinator.

Assessment Template: https://www.wku.edu/academicaffairs/ee/assurance_learning_resources.php

Upload Assessment Plan

ASLAP_NewProgram_GradPWCert_.pdf

Specify any distinctive qualities of the program.

The program prepares students to navigate the latest industry demands in professional writing. Through course offerings like ENG 415, students have access to cutting edge tools and trends, such as AI, UX/UI writing, or content management systems. Proposed courses include hands-on learning with software, platforms, or emerging technologies, making students more adaptable and competitive for workplace contexts.

The program also offers networking opportunities, access to industry professionals, and guidance for career development in professional writing. Students in our undergraduate concentration in professional writing already benefit from connections with alumni and local connections to job opportunities. These benefits would extend to students enrolled in the graduate certificate.

Does the proposed program differ from existing programs in terms of curriculum, focus, objectives, etc.?

Yes

Please explain

The program aims to serve working professionals and students looking for additional educational opportunities beyond graduate degrees. As a program that can be completed online, it also aims to serve students throughout the region.

Does the proposed program serve a different student population (i.e., students in a different geographic area, non-traditional students) from existing programs?

Yes

Please explain

This program would provide a stand-alone credential.

Is access to existing programs limited?

No

Describe how the proposed program will articulate with related programs in the state. It should describe the extent to which students transfer has been explored and coordinated with other institutions.

The proposed Graduate Certificate in Professional and Technical Writing at Western Kentucky University compares to graduate certificate programs at University of Kentucky and Northern Kentucky University.

Similar to the Graduate Certificate in Professional and Technical Writing at UK, the proposed WKU certificate is 9 credits, completable in as few as 2 semesters, and has one required introductory course. Although both programs have the option for completion online, WKU also offers several courses as face-to-face and includes a broader range of topics within professional writing, including publishing, advanced composition, and additional special topics. The WKU certificate also engages students in the development of a professional portfolio that is started in the introductory course and is strengthened by projects in elective courses.

The NKU Certificate in Professional Writing requires 18 credits of coursework compared to the proposed 9-credit certificate at WKU. Both programs include an introductory course, although NKU's emphasizes research methods, and the two certificates have some similar electives in new media and rhetorical theory. Although NKU offers the option to complete a portfolio as part of an internship in the program, the portfolio is not a core component. NKU's certificate is offered face-to-face whereas the WKU certificate will have flexible options for face-to-face and online delivery.

Compared to similar programs in the state, the proposed Graduate Certificate in Professional and Technical Writing at WKU distinguishes itself by emphasizing the creation of a professional portfolio, offering flexibility of face-to-face and online courses, and addressing the needs of students and professionals from a variety of career paths, including education, technical fields, healthcare.

Describe student demand data for this program.

Student demand data for this program is threefold. First, current trends in professional writing suggest particular growth in the healthcare and technology fields, particularly in technical writing, digital writing skills, and grant/proposal writing. This program addresses these areas of growth through an introductory course in professional and technical writing and focused elective courses on digital literacy and writing; technical writing; editing and publishing; and grant writing (a special topics course). The program also meets student demand through high-impact practices, and electives that focus on working with clients and SMEs external to WKU. There is potential to grow this program beyond these offerings with direct initiatives such as explicitly marketing courses on writing with generativeAI or collaborating with UX/UI design.

Second, the current English graduate programs include an MFA and MA. Students in these programs have expressed interest in earning additional credentialing to maximize their time in the program and to open a range of career opportunities. This graduate certificate allows current graduate students to further professionalize and prepare for the workforce. The certificate would also be a value-added credential, as courses would double as writing electives for the MA program and as electives for the MFA's concentration in rhetoric and composition (over the last five years, enrollment in the rhetoric and composition concentration has tripled).

The MPA program at WKU has expressed interest in the graduate certificate in professional & technical writing as an option for their students to complete as part of their elective requirements.

Finally, the Professional Writing program receives on average 6-8 inquiries a year from external parties looking for a professional writing credential. Many of these inquiries are from working professionals in the region (teachers, non-profit professionals, IT specialists, healthcare administrators, etc.) who want to further their education with a professional writing credential. Area industry leaders have also expressed interest in this certificate to enhance employees' skills. As writing technologies and professional standards shift and change in the coming years, we expect that this demand from working professionals will continue if not grow.

Graduates of this program are competitive in a variety of public and private sector industries, such as technology, healthcare, technical writing, and non-profit or not-for-profit organizations. According to the Lane Report: Kentucky's Business News Source, "employability skills" tied to communication, teamwork, problem-solving, analysis, and interpersonal relations and "knowing how to learn" are valued as highly as "academic skills." With an emphasis on reading and writing, developing "soft skills" through textual study, an abundance of collaborative and high-impact practice activities, technical and rhetorical analysis assignments, and client-based projects, students of this program acquire these high-value skills. This program is particularly effective at marrying employability and communication skills. The required Introduction to Professional and Technical Writing provides students with a foundation in these employable skills. Students then have the option to focus their studies through their selection of electives, allowing individuals to tailor the certificate to different areas of professional writing such as editing and publishing, writing technologies, or rhetoric and advanced composing. Students can select courses that best fit their professional goals and allow them to build a professional portfolio.

Moreover, as a credential for continuing education, the certificate program addresses current workforce needs and employment trends related to "microcredentials." According to a 2023 study by Collegis and the University Professional and Continuing Education Association (UPCEA), "76 percent [of leaders surveyed from 500 organizations] said pursuing microcredentials demonstrates an employee's willingness to develop their skills, 63 percent said it shows initiative and 60 percent said it's an easy way to communicate employee competencies and skills. Eighty percent of respondents said that stackable credentials leading to a degree enhanced their appeal" (Greenberg). When we combine these trends with the Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics (KCEWS) section on Future Employment Demand, there appear to be over 30,000 jobs on the horizon for which program students could compete.

Will this program replace or enhance any existing program(s) or concentration(s) within an existing program?

No

Program Demand Data and Support Documents

Technical Writers - Occupational Outlook Handbook- - US Bureau of Labor Statistics.pdf

Delivery Mode

Is 25% or more of this program offered at a location other than main campus?

No

Is 50% or more of this program offered by distance education (online asynchronous, online synchronous, connected classrooms, etc.)?

Yes

Do you plan to offer 100% of this program online?

Yes

Do you plan to offer 100% of this program face-to-face?

No

If no, enter the percentage of the program that is taught face-to-face

75%

Do you plan to offer at least 25% of this program as a direct assessment competency-based educational program?

No

See the SACSCOC Policy on Direct Assessment Competency-based Educational Programs.
<https://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/DirectAssessmentCompetencyBased.pdf>

Rationale for the program proposal?

The Graduate Professional Writing Certificate offers current graduate students and non-degree seeking professionals an option for building their professional practices and writing portfolio.

Potential audiences:

Initial audience: Current WKU English graduate students who are pursuing an MA or MFA and would like additional credentialing toward/experience with writing in professional contexts

Second audience: Current WKU graduate students outside of the English department who would like to complement their primary programs with credentialing in professional writing. Potential programs include those in healthcare, education, and business.

Third audience: Working professionals, such as those in healthcare, education, business, and the arts, who would like to gain experience to build their professional practices and writing skills and advance in their careers.

Budgetary Implications

Budget Template:

https://www.wku.edu/academicaffairs/pd/process_overview.php

Budget Spreadsheet

Graduate PW certificate-budget-spreadsheet-FINAL-AL.xlsx

Additional Attachments

WKU-new-program-notif-GCert-Prof-Wrtng.pdf

Additional information or attachments

SACSCOC notification for a new program (25 - 49%) has been submitted.

Key: 403

SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER UNDERGRADUATE CERTIFICATE

REQUEST:

Approval of an **Undergraduate Certificate in Substance Use Disorder** offered through the Social Work Department in the College of Health and Human Services.

FACTS:

The Substance Use Disorder Certificate is designed to prepare individuals with the skills necessary to become a substance use counseling professional. The curriculum in the program focuses on assessment, treatment, counseling skills, field practice, and referral and will serve students who have declared a major in many disciplines at WKU including social work, sociology, psychology, nursing and other health related majors

Addiction and substance abuse is one of America's top public health concerns, and there is a growing need for a well-trained workforce. Kentucky released the 2021 Drug Overdose Report which indicates that 2,250 Kentuckians died from drug overdoses in 2021, a 14.5% increase compared with the year prior. More than 107,000 overdose deaths were reported in the United States between December 2020 to December 2021. Kentucky is diligently working to provide wider and easier access to recovery, reduce addiction and prevent reincarceration of offenders. This requires having trained professionals available for this fight. As a bachelor's level counselor, you can offer direct services in agency settings where people are in dire need of care. Those already in the workforce also need continuing education in this field of work to adequately address substance use issues.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS: 18 HOURS*

*Complete curriculum and program requirements are in the Curriculum Program Proposal attached.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS:

This certificate uses existing faculty and some part-time faculty and existing courses from the Bachelor of Social Work program and should have minimal impact on the budget.

RECOMMENDATION & IMPLEMENTATION DATE:

President Timothy C. Caboni recommends approval of an **Undergraduate Certificate in Substance Use Disorder** to be implemented Fall 2025.

MOTION:

Approval to establish an **Undergraduate Certificate in Substance Use Disorder** with implementation in Fall 2025.

: SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER CERTIFICATE

In Workflow

1. SWRK Approval (patricia.desrosiers@wku.edu)
2. HH Dean (tania.basta@wku.edu; danita.kelley@wku.edu)
3. HH Curriculum Committee (danita.kelley@wku.edu)
4. Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (sheila.flener@wku.edu; alexander.olson@wku.edu)
5. University Senate (mac.mckerral@wku.edu; daniel.clark@wku.edu)
6. Provost (beth.laves@wku.edu)
7. Board of Regents (all)
8. CPE (rheanna.plemons@wku.edu; beth.laves@wku.edu)
9. Program Inventory (jennifer.hammonds@wku.edu; jessica.dorris@wku.edu)

Approval Path

1. Fri, 08 Dec 2023 16:43:36 GMT
Patricia Desrosiers (patricia.desrosiers): Rollback to Initiator
2. Thu, 05 Sep 2024 18:04:08 GMT
Patricia Desrosiers (patricia.desrosiers): Approved for SWRK Approval
3. Fri, 06 Sep 2024 17:48:01 GMT
Danita Kelley (danita.kelley): Rollback to Initiator
4. Wed, 11 Sep 2024 18:37:09 GMT
Patricia Desrosiers (patricia.desrosiers): Approved for SWRK Approval
5. Fri, 20 Sep 2024 14:17:46 GMT
Danita Kelley (danita.kelley): Approved for HH Dean
6. Fri, 04 Oct 2024 15:56:07 GMT
Danita Kelley (danita.kelley): Approved for HH Curriculum Committee
7. Fri, 25 Oct 2024 14:26:48 GMT
Sheila Flener (sheila.flener): Approved for Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
8. Fri, 25 Oct 2024 18:43:35 GMT
Gordon McKerral (mac.mckerral): Approved for University Senate
9. Fri, 25 Oct 2024 20:24:08 GMT
Robert Fischer (robert.fischer): Approved for Provost
10. Mon, 28 Oct 2024 13:53:23 GMT
Elizabeth Laves (beth.laves): Rollback to University Senate for Board of Regents
11. Fri, 22 Nov 2024 14:20:44 GMT
Gordon McKerral (mac.mckerral): Rollback to Undergraduate Curriculum Committee for University Senate
12. Tue, 21 Jan 2025 22:48:53 GMT
Sheila Flener (sheila.flener): Approved for Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
13. Fri, 14 Mar 2025 11:48:59 GMT
Gordon McKerral (mac.mckerral): Approved for University Senate
14. Fri, 14 Mar 2025 20:12:00 GMT
Robert Fischer (robert.fischer): Approved for Provost

New Program Proposal

Date Submitted: Tue, 10 Sep 2024 20:42:53 GMT

Viewing : Substance Use Disorder Certificate

Last edit: Wed, 16 Apr 2025 16:53:05 GMT

Changes proposed by: wht93704

Proposed Action

Active

Contact Person

Name	Email	Phone
Whitney Harper	whitney.harper@wku.edu	616-334-6493

Term of Implementation

2025-2026

Academic Level

Undergraduate

Program Type

Certificate - Undergraduate

Department

Social Work

College

Health and Human Services

Program Name (eg. Biology)

Substance Use Disorder Certificate

Will this program have concentrations?

No

CIP Code

34.0104 - Addiction Prevention and Treatment.

Will this program lead to teacher certification?

No

Does the proposed program contain 25% or more new content not previously taught in another course at WKU? If yes, contact the Office of the Provost for additional SACSCOC proposal requirements

No

Catalog Content**Program Overview (Catalog field: Overview tab)**

The Substance Use Disorder Certificate (SUDC) is designed to prepare individuals with the skills necessary to become a substance use counseling professional. The curriculum in the program focuses on assessment, treatment, counseling skills, field practice, and referral. Students will be exposed to ethical protocols and multicultural treatment with diverse populations. Courses in this certificate meet partial requirement for state certification as a Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor (CADC) and as a Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor Associate (CADCA I and CADCA II). According to the Kentucky Board of Alcohol and Drug Counselors, the CADC designation is a substance use credential for professionals with a bachelor's degree (in any field) who assess, develop, and provide substance abuse treatment services and plans. The CADCA I and II require a High School Diploma. Successful completion of this program fulfills 270 hours of educational requirements for these certificate levels. This certificate program is beneficial to students in sociology, social work, psychology, criminology, pre-med, nursing, and any closely related human service field. In addition, this is a stand-alone certificate serving professionals that are seeking continued education.

*It is the student's responsibility to ensure a specific credentialing organization approves of courses to count as continued education.

*Students are responsible for understanding all eligibility requirements for the certification they are seeking. More information on CADC and CADCA certifications in Kentucky is available at the KENTUCKY BOARD OF ALCOHOL AND DRUG COUNSELORS.

Curriculum Requirements (Catalog field: Program Requirements)**Program Requirements (18 hours)**

Code	Title	Hours
SWRK 433	Ethical Issues and Dilemmas in Social Work	3
SWRK 310	Introduction to Substance Use Assessment and Treatment	3
SWRK 313	Co-occurring Disorders	3
SWRK 320	Introduction of Substance Use Counseling Skills	3
SWRK 324	Opioid Epidemic	3
SWRK 420	Substance Use Professionals Capstone	3
Total Hours		18

Will this program be managed or owned by more than one department?

No

Does this program include courses from outside your department?

No

Relation to Mission and Strategic Plan

Explain how the proposed program relates to the institutional mission and academic strategic plan.

The proposed program is congruent with WKU's commitment to assuring quality of programs, competence of graduates, and opportunities for lifelong learning. Specifically, the certificate will provide students with the knowledge and skills to effectively provide services in a way that supports resilience, prevention, treatment, and recovery for those who struggle with substance use disorders. The proposed certificate is also congruent with the academic strategic plan to fully prepare our students to enter the workplace.

Explain how the proposed program addresses the state's postsecondary education strategic agenda

This proposed certificate serves to meet Kentucky's educational attainment goal—to raise the percentage of Kentuckians with a postsecondary degree or certificate to 60% by the year 2030. In light of opioid epidemic that Kentucky continues to face, this certificate serves our state by building a competitive workforce through a strong postsecondary education system so Kentuckians can thrive professionally and personally and meet the evolving needs of the economy and our communities.

Program Quality and Demand

Provide justification and evidence to support the need and demand for this proposed program. Include any data on student demand; career opportunities at the regional, state, and national level; and any changes or trends in the discipline that necessitate a new program.

Please insert one Learning Outcome per box. Click green plus sign for additional LO boxes

Learning Outcomes and Measurement Plan

	List all student learning outcomes of the program.	Measurement Plan
SLO 1	Comprehensively describe the roles/functions of substance use professionals.	Reflective Journals (SWRK 420)
SLO 2	Identify standard instruments (e.g., screening, assessment) for substance use disorders.	Reflective Journals (SWRK 420)
SLO 3	Describe current evidence informed approaches (e.g., theories, strategies, and/or techniques) shown to be effective when working with substance use clients.	Reflective Journals (SWRK 420)
SLO 4	Demonstrate cultural competency in adapting treatment services appropriate for substance abuse populations with attention to cultural diversity.	Reflective Journals (SWRK 420)
SLO 5	Analyze the substance use professional's obligations to adhere to standards of conduct (e.g., ethical, behavioral) in the helping relationship.	Reflective Journals (SWRK 420)

Assessment Template: https://www.wku.edu/academicaffairs/ee/assurance_learning_resources.php

Upload Assessment Plan

SWRK 420 Reflective Journals Rubric.docx
 SUPC Certificate Assessment Plan (2024-2025) Final.docx
 Copy of SUPC Budget 2024-09-05.xlsx

Change in Discipline (If the program is being proposed to meet changes in the academic discipline, please outline those changes and explain why they necessitate development of a new program.)

N/A

Specify any distinctive qualities of the program.

The proposed interdisciplinary certificate program will teach undergraduate students the knowledge and skills to be a substance use professional and have an opportunity to enter the workforce with completion of the certificate. Professionals in the substance use field can attain this certificate as part of their continuing education requirements.

Does the proposed program differ from existing programs in terms of curriculum, focus, objectives, etc.?

No

Does the proposed program serve a different student population (i.e., students in a different geographic area, non-traditional students) from existing programs?

Yes

Please explain

Serves professionals in the substance use field whether they are current WKU students or not.

Is access to existing programs limited?

No

Describe how the proposed program will articulate with related programs in the state. It should describe the extent to which students transfer has been explored and coordinated with other institutions.

This certificate courses are upper-level division and serve students who have declared a major in many disciplines at WKU including social work, sociology, psychology, nursing and other health related majors, and interdisciplinary studies. If students are transferring to institutions that offer the curriculum content in these disciplines, then the courses, according to history, will transfer. They most likely will also transfer as electives.

Describe student demand data for this program.

Three years ago, the BSW program began offering an elective course, Opioid Epidemic. The high demand across disciplines for this course, along with data suggesting workforce needs, the proposed certificate was developed. Increasing numbers of schools, hospitals, criminal justice, and behavioral health settings are actively recruiting prospective employees who have formal education in providing substance use training (SAMSA, 2023). The proposed Substance Use Professional Certificate (SUPC) is designed to prepare individuals with the skills necessary to become a substance use counseling professional. The curriculum in the program focuses on assessment, treatment, counseling skills, field practice, and referral. Students will be exposed to ethical protocols and multicultural treatment with diverse populations. Courses in this certificate meet partial requirement for state certification as a certified alcohol and drug counselor (CADC, CADCA Level I and CADCA Level II). According to the Kentucky Board of Alcohol and Drug Counselors, the CADC designation is a substance use credential for professionals with a bachelor's degree (in any field) who assess, develop, and provide substance abuse treatment services and plans. The CADCA Levels I and II require a High School Diploma. Successful completion of this program fulfills 270 hours of educational requirements for all certificate levels. This certificate program is beneficial to students in sociology, social work, psychology, criminology, pre-med, nursing, and any closely related human service field. In addition, this is a stand-alone certificate serving professionals that are seeking continued education. The Office of Drug Control Policy is tasked to coordinate Kentucky's response to substance abuse. Many policies are currently being used in many of Kentucky communities as the primary component of a comprehensive drug education/prevention, treatment, and law enforcement programs.

House Bill 148 Recovery Ready Communities is a bill expanding health care coverage and increasing treatment beds. The state has increased the number of treatment beds by 50% since the Governor took office in 2019. "We are committed to removing key barriers so that more Kentuckians battling opioid addiction can get help,

House Bill H.R.433 - was approved in 2021 establishing the Family Support Services for Addiction Act of 2021. This will expand service delivery within DCBS which will require more trained professionals in the field of substance use.

Kentucky Agency for Substance Abuse Policy (ASAP) will continue to focus actions and policy related to prevention, intervention, treatment issues, and law enforcement activities. The 7 counties region's strategic plan implementation involves collaboration with law enforcement, schools, health care providers, treatment providers, youth service providers, state and local organizations, and community prevention coalitions to address substance abuse issues in a comprehensive manner.

On February 25, 2022, Attorney General Daniel Cameron delivered on his promise to fight back against the opioid epidemic by announcing the finalization of the settlement from the nation's three major pharmaceutical distributors. Kentucky's \$478 million share of the settlement will be distributed pursuant to the terms of House Bill 427, which allocates 50 percent of all proceeds to local governments, with the Commonwealth receiving the other 50 percent.

Will this program replace or enhance any existing program(s) or concentration(s) within an existing program?

No

Program Demand Data and Support Documents

Copy of SUPC Budget 2024-09-05.xlsx
Supporting Data.docx

Delivery Mode**Is 25% or more of this program offered at a location other than main campus?**

Yes

Enter Location(s) and Percentage of Program Offered at Location(s)

Location	Percentage
asynchronous online	100%

Is 50% or more of this program offered by distance education (online asynchronous, online synchronous, connected classrooms, etc.)?

Yes

Do you plan to offer 100% of this program online?

Yes

Do you plan to offer 100% of this program face-to-face?

No

If no, enter the percentage of the program that is taught face-to-face

0

Do you plan to offer at least 25% of this program as a direct assessment competency-based educational program?

No

See the SACSCOC Policy on Direct Assessment Competency-based Educational Programs.

<https://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/DirectAssessmentCompetencyBased.pdf>

Rationale for the program proposal?

Addiction and substance abuse is one of America's top public health concerns, and there is a growing need for a well-trained workforce. Kentucky released the 2021 Drug Overdose Report which indicates that 2,250 Kentuckians died from drug overdoses in 2021, a 14.5% increase compared with the year prior. More than 107,000 overdose deaths were reported in the United States between December 2020 to December 2021. Kentucky is diligently working to provide wider and easier access to recovery, reduce addiction and prevent reincarceration of offenders. This requires having trained professionals available for this fight. As a bachelor's level counselor, you can offer direct services in agency settings where people are in dire need of care. Those already in the workforce also need continuing education in this field of work to adequately address substance use issues.

Budgetary Implications

Budget Template:

https://www.wku.edu/academicaffairs/pd/process_overview.php

Additional information or attachments

Course content for 15 of the 18 credit hours has previously been or is currently being taught. SWRK 433 was last taught in Spring 2023, SWRK 324 in Summer 2023, SWRK 313 is offered this Fall 2024. Content for SWRK 310 was taught under the SWRK 490 special topics course with relevant title in Spring 2024, and content for SWRK 320 was taught under the SWRK 490 special topics course with relevant title in Summer 2024.

Reviewer Comments

Patricia Desrosiers (patricia.desrosiers) (Fri, 08 Dec 2023 16:43:36 GMT): Rollback: edit for changes discussed

Danita Kelley (danita.kelley) (Fri, 06 Sep 2024 17:48:01 GMT): Rollback: Please address needed revisions.

Elizabeth Laves (beth.laves) (Mon, 28 Oct 2024 13:53:23 GMT): Rollback: November agenda item

Gordon McKerral (mac.mckerral) (Fri, 22 Nov 2024 14:20:44 GMT): Rollback: Rewording of program title.

Key: 383

EMERITUS APPOINTMENTS

REQUEST:

Approval of faculty emeritus status for Drs. Lauren Bland, Mark Ross, Paula Burt, Michael Stokes, Philip Lienesch, Thomas Richmond, Douglas Harper, Angela Jones, David LeNoir, Lawrence Rigby, Kenneth Payne, Anne Onyekwuluje, and Douglas Smith

FACTS:

Listed below are faculty members who have been recommended by tenured faculty, department chair and college dean to be awarded emeritus status. They have served the university for at least ten years and have had distinguished records of achievement and service.

College of Health and Human Services

Lauren Bland, Associate Professor, Communication Sciences & Disorders

Gordon Ford College of Business

Mark Ross, Associate Professor of Accounting, Emeritus

Paula Burt, Professor of Management, Emeritus

Ogden College of Science and Engineering

Michael Stokes, Professor of Biological Sciences, Emeritus

Philip Lienesch, Associate Professor of Biological Sciences, Emeritus

Thomas Richmond, University Distinguished Professor of Mathematics, Emeritus

Douglas Harper, Professor of Physics, Emeritus

Potter College of Arts & Letters

Angela Jones, Associate Professor of English, Emeritus

David LeNoir, Professor of English, Emeritus

Lawrence Rigby, Associate Professor of English, Emeritus

Kenneth Payne, Associate Professor of Media and Communication, Emeritus

Anne Onyekwuluje, Professor of Society, Culture, Crime, and Justice Studies, Emeritus

Douglas Smith, Professor of Society, Culture, Crime, and Justice Studies, Emeritus

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS:

No funds needed.

RECOMMENDATION:

President Timothy C. Caboni recommends awarding the above individuals emeritus status.

MOTION:

Approval of emeritus status awarded to the recommended individuals.

College of Health and Human Services

Dr. Lauren Bland, Associate Professor, Communication Sciences & Disorders

Dr. Bland joined WKU in 2004, earned tenure in 2009, and retired in 2024. She was unanimously recommended for emeritus status following a distinguished career in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders at WKU. A leader in curriculum development, accreditation, and mentorship, she was instrumental in launching and sustaining the PreSLP and graduate SLP distance cohorts. As Program Director, she expertly guided the program through multiple accreditation cycles and provided crucial leadership during departmental transitions. Dr. Bland served extensively at the department, college, and university levels, including roles on the CHHS Graduate Curriculum Committee, Interprofessional Working Group, Faculty Senate, and WKU reaffirmation review. Nationally, she contributed to the field through her service with the Council for Academic Accreditation and the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. A consistent scholar and mentor, she supported student research and doctoral pursuits. Her contributions were honored with the 2023 KSHA Honors Award. Dr. Bland's legacy of excellence and service has significantly advanced the department and profession.

Gordon Ford College of Business

Dr. Mark Ross, Associate Professor, Accounting

Dr. Mark Ross served Western Kentucky University with distinction from 1994 to 2024 as a dedicated educator, mentor, and leader in the Department of Accounting. Renowned for his award-winning teaching and student-centered approach, he inspired academic and professional excellence in one of the program's most challenging courses. Widely regarded as a transformative mentor, many alumni cite him as their most influential professor. As Department Chair (2019–2024), Dr. Ross led with vision and resolve through faculty transitions, curriculum updates, accreditation, and the COVID-19 pandemic. His enduring impact on students, faculty, and the institution fully merits Emeritus recognition.

Dr. Paula Burt, Professor, Management

Dr. Paula Burt served WKU for 23.5 years, making significant contributions as a teacher, mentor, and leader. A WKU alumna ('85, '88), she returned to join the Management Department as an Assistant Professor after earning her Ph.D. from the University of Kentucky. She taught both undergraduate and MBA courses, earning the 2003–2004 Gordon Ford College of Business Teaching Award and WKU's inaugural Faculty Mentoring Award in 2016. She chaired the Management Department (2015–2019) and served as Interim MBA Director (2019–2020). As co-chair of WKU's 2017–2018 Strategic Plan Steering Committee, she helped shape lasting institutional priorities. Known for her advocacy and mentorship, Dr. Burt fostered a supportive environment for junior faculty and championed professional development across the college. Her legacy is one of academic excellence, collaborative leadership, and institutional impact.

Ogden College of Science and Engineering

Michael Stokes, Professor, Biological Sciences

Dr. Michael Stokes served WKU from 1995 to 2024, advancing to the rank of Professor and earning distinction for his contributions to teaching, research, and service. He impacted thousands of students through rigorous coursework in ecology, wildlife, and anatomy, and mentored numerous Honors and graduate projects. He developed a transformative field course in African wildlife management and co-directed the Green River Preserve, a vital hub for research and conservation. A champion of study abroad and biodiversity, Dr. Stokes leaves a lasting legacy and is strongly endorsed for Emeritus status.

Philip Lienesch, Associate Professor, Biological Sciences

Dr. Philip Lienesch served WKU with distinction from 2001 to 2024, earning tenure and promotion to Associate Professor in the Department of Biology. A respected teacher and mentor, he impacted thousands of students through foundational courses in zoology, ichthyology, and fisheries management. His applied, theory-driven instruction supported both undergraduate and graduate success. He coauthored publications with twelve student researchers and advised numerous Honors CE/T and M.S. thesis projects. Dr. Lienesch also provided valuable institutional service through his long-term role on WKU's IACUC. His contributions merit the honor of emeritus status.

Thomas Richmond, University Distinguished Professor, Mathematics

Dr. Thomas Richmond served WKU with distinction for 38 years, from 1986 to his retirement in December 2024. A respected teacher, mentor, and researcher, he earned numerous honors, including the WKU University Distinguished Professor award (2016), the MAA Meritorious Service Award (2023), and recognition for excellence in teaching (2014) and advising (2009–2010). He published extensively, supervised many student research projects, and taught a broad range of courses. As the longest-serving faculty member in Ogden College, Dr. Richmond's legacy is marked by sustained excellence and service.

Douglas Harper, Professor, Physics

Dr. Douglas Harper served WKU for 33½ years (1991–2024) with distinction as the Madole Professor of Physics. A highly respected teacher, mentor, and advisor, he taught nearly every course in the physics curriculum and advised all first- and second-year physics majors in recent years. As University Physics Laboratory Director, he introduced computer-based data acquisition and transformed lab instruction through peer-reviewed reporting, real-world simulations, and integration of theory and practice. He developed advanced lab courses and secured WKU's designation as a National Instruments LabVIEW Academy site, enabling students to earn industry certification. Dr. Harper left a lasting impact on generations of physics majors. His department's uncontested nomination for Professor Emeritus reflects his enduring legacy.

Potter College of Arts & Letters

Angela Jones, Associate Professor, English

Dr. Angela Jones served WKU with distinction from 2005 until her retirement in December 2024. As the cornerstone of the Professional Writing concentration, she established the undergraduate internship program, connecting students with real-world opportunities and helping them translate their experiences into career readiness. Renowned for her rigor and deep investment in student success, she earned lasting praise from students and alumni alike. Dr. Jones also built strong partnerships with local businesses and alumni, enhancing program visibility and impact. Her colleagues valued her insight, humor, and collegiality.

David LeNoir, Professor, English

Dr. David LeNoir served the WKU English Department with distinction from 1993 until his retirement as Professor in December 2024. A gifted instructor and mentor, he guided students from first-year composition through graduate-level pedagogy, consistently challenging and encouraging them to succeed. His impact on future educators was profound, with many crediting him for their preparation to teach. Known for his humility and collegiality, Dr. LeNoir exemplified outstanding departmental service and commitment to higher education.

Lawrence Rigby, Associate Professor, English

Dr. Dale Rigby is a passionate and effective educator known for challenging students to develop their writing and critical thinking. In creative writing courses, he fostered exploration across genres and created inclusive, collaborative workshop environments. Students praised his enthusiasm, respect for their perspectives, and ability to inspire growth. One noted, “This class reawakened my interest in prose... Dr. Rigby values the thoughts and opinions of his students and treats us like equals.” He also played a key mentoring role, guiding graduate assistants in developing their teaching practices through sustained, hands-on support.

Kenneth Payne, Associate Professor, Media and Communication

Ken Payne is nominated for emeritus status following more than a decade of exceptional service to WKU. A 1983 graduate, Payne returned to his alma mater to teach after a groundbreaking career in digital communications, including leadership roles at AOL Time Warner. He was a pioneer in integrating new media into public relations and significantly advanced the university’s Public Relations program. Known for mentoring students, developing curriculum in digital PR and social media, and securing internship opportunities, Payne also provided vital cross-departmental support and leadership.

Anne Onyekwuluje, Professor, Society, Culture, Crime and Justice Studies

Dr. Anne Onyekwuluje served WKU from 1996 to 2024 and played a pivotal role in shaping the department’s Social Stratification and Inequality curriculum. She created two courses in this area, taught across all instructional formats, and mentored countless students. A passionate advocate for justice and equity, she described herself as a “cultural voice” against systemic inequities. Her scholarship includes the 2010 publication *Georgia Powers: An Unlikely Journey*. The faculty unanimously support her emerita recommendation.

Douglas Smith, Professor, Society, Culture, Crime and Justice Studies

Dr. Doug Smith served WKU with distinction from 1996 to 2024, playing a pivotal role in the Sociology curriculum and mentoring countless students. He taught a wide range of courses, culminating in the development of a new course on Negotiation and Conflict Resolution. He served as department head for eight years and one year as interim head. A leader in the discipline, Dr. Smith was editor-in-chief and president of *Southern Rural Sociology*. His publications include *Don't Burn it Here* (1997) and *Basics and Applications of Sociology* (2003). The faculty unanimously recommended him for emeritus status.