



ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

August 14, 2026

UNDERGRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN ETHICS APPLIED

REQUEST:

Approval of an Undergraduate Certificate in Ethics Applied offered through the Department of Political Science in Potter College of Arts and Letters.

FACTS:

The Ethics Applied certificate offers focused training in ethical theory and moral reasoning through 12 credit hours in Philosophy. Students explore enduring philosophical questions while applying ethical frameworks to real-world public, professional, and social dilemmas. The certificate strengthens analytical and decision-making skills and complements a wide range of majors. The Ethics Certificate advances WKU's mission to develop engaged, thoughtful, and socially responsible citizens. By grounding students in philosophical ethical reasoning, the program cultivates critical thinking, moral discernment, and ethical decision-making, skills that prepare students to navigate complex professional, civic, and personal challenges. It complements the university's commitment to interdisciplinary learning, allowing students from any major to integrate ethical reflection into their chosen field, enhancing both academic and career readiness.

Ethical reasoning is essential in virtually every profession, especially in education, healthcare, business, public service, and civic leadership, making this certificate a valuable complement to students' primary majors and future careers. By strengthening students' capacity for ethical reasoning, moral judgment, and principled decision-making, the certificate adds substantive intellectual depth to the learning outcomes of any major. These are skills increasingly valued by employers and critical in enabling graduates to thrive personally and professionally. The Ethics Applied certificate is particularly focused on developing students' ethical understanding and judgment so that they are better equipped to handle challenges that arise in the modern world, whether in digital spaces, workplaces, or their own communities and neighborhoods.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS: 12 HOURS**BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS:**

This certificate uses existing faculty members and consists of courses that are already offered. There should be no additional budgetary implications of this certificate program.

RECOMMENDATION & IMPLEMENTATION DATE:

President Timothy C. Caboni recommends approval of an **Undergraduate Certificate in Ethics Applied** to be implemented Fall 2026.

MOTION:

Approval to establish an **Undergraduate Certificate in Ethics Applied** with implementation in Fall 2026.

: ETHICS APPLIED

In Workflow

1. GOVT Approval (scott.lasley@wku.edu)
2. AR Dean (merrall.price@wku.edu)
3. AR Curriculum Committee (merrall.price@wku.edu)
4. Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (ashley.fox@wku.edu; kimberly.pharris@wku.edu)
5. University Senate (daniel.clark@wku.edu)
6. Provost (robert.fischer@wku.edu; rheanna.plemons@wku.edu)
7. Board of Regents (all)
8. Program Inventory (jennifer.hammonds@wku.edu; jessica.dorris@wku.edu)

Approval Path

1. Fri, 30 Jan 2026 19:29:44 GMT
Scott Lasley (scott.lasley): Approved for GOVT Approval
2. Mon, 02 Feb 2026 21:37:43 GMT
Merrall Price (merrall.price): Rollback to Initiator
3. Fri, 20 Feb 2026 16:07:31 GMT
Scott Lasley (scott.lasley): Approved for GOVT Approval
4. Tue, 03 Mar 2026 20:16:20 GMT
Merrall Price (merrall.price): Approved for AR Dean
5. Thu, 26 Mar 2026 17:49:45 GMT
Merrall Price (merrall.price): Rollback to Initiator
6. Tue, 31 Mar 2026 19:23:59 GMT
Scott Lasley (scott.lasley): Approved for GOVT Approval
7. Thu, 02 Apr 2026 20:26:44 GMT
Merrall Price (merrall.price): Rollback to Initiator
8. Wed, 08 Apr 2026 15:25:57 GMT
Scott Lasley (scott.lasley): Approved for GOVT Approval
9. Wed, 08 Apr 2026 19:05:33 GMT
Merrall Price (merrall.price): Approved for AR Dean
10. Fri, 10 Apr 2026 19:04:46 GMT
Merrall Price (merrall.price): Approved for AR Curriculum Committee
11. Tue, 19 May 2026 20:34:43 GMT
Ashley Fox (ashley.fox): Approved for Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
12. Thu, 21 May 2026 15:37:22 GMT
Daniel Clark (daniel.clark): Approved for University Senate
13. Thu, 25 Jun 2026 17:48:27 GMT
Robert Fischer (robert.fischer): Approved for Provost

New Program Proposal

Date Submitted: Wed, 08 Apr 2026 12:31:05 GMT

Viewing: : Ethics Applied

Last edit: Tue, 21 Apr 2026 21:30:47 GMT

Changes proposed by: Ind90577

Proposed Action

Active

Contact Person

Name	Email	Phone
Landon Elkind	landon.elkind@wku.edu	2704057501

Term of Implementation

2026-2027

Academic Level

Undergraduate

Program Type

Certificate - Undergraduate

Department

Political Science

College

Arts & Letters

Program Name (eg. Biology)

Ethics Applied

Will this program have concentrations?

No

CIP Code

38.0103 - Ethics.

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 Ethics Applied certificate offers focused training in ethical theory and moral reasoning through 12 credit hours in Philosophy. Students explore enduring philosophical questions while applying ethical frameworks to real-world public, professional, and social dilemmas. The certificate strengthens analytical and decision-making skills and complements a wide range of majors.

Curriculum Requirements (Catalog field: Program Requirements)**Program Requirements (12 hours)**

Code	Title	Hours
Foundational Course (choose one)		3
PHIL 211	Why Are Bad People Bad?	
PHIL 350	Ethical Theory	
History of Ethics (choose one)		3
PHIL 341	Plato and Aristotle	
PHIL 342	Skeptics, Stoics, and Epicureans	
PHIL 344	Early Modern Moral Philosophy	
Applying Ethics (choose one)		3
PHIL 102	Enduring Questions: The Good and the Beautiful	
PHIL 103	Enduring Questions: The Committed Life	
PHIL 202	Racial Justice	
PHIL 212	Philosophy and Gender Theory	
PHIL 315	Philosophy of Religion	
PHIL 322	Biomedical Ethics	
PHIL 323	Social Ethics	
PHIL 324	War and Peace	
PHIL 330	Philosophy of Science	
PHIL 334	Philosophy of Language	
PHIL 426	Philosophy and Old Age	
PHIL 427	Philosophy of Law	
Ethics in Practice (choose one)		3
ASL 402	ASL Professional Ethics and Issues	
CIS 205	Technology in Society and Business	
CRIM 361	Race, Class, and Crime	

CRIM 437	The Death Penalty in America
CRIM 446	Gender, Crime, and Justice
CSJ 200	Introduction to Social Justice
ECON 375	Moral Issues of Capitalism
EDU 250	Discover Teaching: Introduction to Teacher Education
FACS 312	Professional Ethics for Family Life
GEOG 344	Environmental Ethics
HIST 380	Human Rights in History
IDFM 321	Professional Ethics & Issues Seminar
LEAD 330	Leadership Ethics and Decision-Making
MATH 270	The Mathematics of Social Justice
MGT 305	Ethics and Critical Thinking
MIL 201	Army Leadership and Ethics
PH 447	Human Values and the Health Sciences
PHIL 490	Course PHIL 490 Not Found
PLS 200	Legal Ethics
PS 330	Introduction to Political Theory
PS 338	Government and Ethics
PSY 435	Moral Development and Education
SMC 301	Mass Communication Law and Ethics
SPM 310	Sport Ethics and Moral Issues
SPS 400	Foundations of Global Citizenship
SWRK 433	Ethical Issues and Dilemmas in Social Work
UX 310	Future Design

Total Hours

12

Note: at least two courses for this certificate must be 300-level or above.

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

No

Does this program include courses from outside your department?

Yes

Outside Courses Details

Who approved including these courses?	When were they approved?
Kristina Arnold	4/7/26
Audra Jennings	4/7/26
Marguerita Desander	4/8/26
David Zimmer	4/8/26
Ashley Fox	4/8/26
Grace Lartey	4/8/26
Paula Upright/Stacey Forsythe	4/8/26
Leslie North	4/8/26
Ron Demarse	4/8/26
Ray Blankenship	4/8/26
Kanita DuCloux	4/9/26
Sue Keesey	4/9/26
LeAnn Coder	4/9/26

Relation to Mission and Strategic Plan

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

The Ethics Certificate advances WKU's mission to develop engaged, thoughtful, and socially responsible citizens. By grounding students in philosophical ethical reasoning, the program cultivates critical thinking, moral discernment, and ethical decision-making, skills that prepare students to navigate complex professional, civic, and personal challenges. It complements the university's

commitment to interdisciplinary learning, allowing students from any major to integrate ethical reflection into their chosen field, enhancing both academic and career readiness.

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

Enhancing student success and degree quality:

By strengthening students' capacity for ethical reasoning, moral judgment, and principled decision-making, the certificate adds substantive intellectual depth to the learning outcomes of any major. These are skills increasingly valued by employers and critical in enabling graduates to thrive personally and professionally.

Supporting workforce readiness:

Kentucky's strategic agenda emphasizes producing a well-prepared workforce that meets the evolving needs of employers and communities. Ethical reasoning is essential in virtually every profession, especially in education, healthcare, business, public service, and civic leadership, making this certificate a valuable complement to students' primary majors and future careers.

Promoting rigorous, high-quality credentials:

Although the state agenda focuses on increasing attainment, it also emphasizes that credentials must be high-quality, and relevant. A certificate rooted in critical inquiry and ethical reflection supports those broader aims by preparing students to engage thoughtfully and responsibly in diverse workplaces and civic contexts.

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	Students will be able to demonstrate understanding of ethical theories	Assess students' written work and verbal participation in theory-driven courses in the ethics certificate
SLO 2	Students will be able to critically evaluate ethical problems in the modern world	Assess students' written work and verbal participation in application-driven courses in the ethics certificate

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

Upload Assessment Plan

AssessmentPlanEthicsCertificate4-8-26-revised.docx

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 certificate is aimed to give students an ethical understanding that should follow them and empower them in their daily and working lives long after they graduate. The particular focus in this certificate program is on developing students' ethical understanding and judgment so that they are better equipped to handle challenges that arise in the modern world, whether in digital spaces, work places, or their own communities and neighborhoods.

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

Yes

Please explain

There is no philosophy or ethics certificate at WKU. This certificate is aimed to give general understanding of ethical theories and how they are likely to apply to students' daily lives at and after WKU. The curriculum is shared by the philosophy program (major and minor) and many of the outcomes relating to critical thinking are shared.

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

Students who are not philosophy majors will find it helpful to job placement to have a certificate in ethics, particularly those interested in law, medical ethics, business ethics, administration, and policy-making.

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.

At the undergraduate level, University of Louisville has an ethics certificate: <https://catalog.louisville.edu/undergraduate/certificates/ethics/>. It has a similar structure to the one proposed here.

Northern Kentucky University has a website for a Healthcare Ethics certificate: <https://www.nku.edu/content/www/academics/artsci/programs/undergraduate/minors/healthcare-ethics-and-policy.html>. But when you click this page, it redirects to an archived page and a minor in that area. The certificate is not listed in their current catalog page.

Murray State University has an undergraduate certificate in Business Ethics: <https://murraystate.edu/catalog#/programs/Byl1GeewS?expanded=English%20and%20Philosophy&bc=true&bcCurrent=Business%20Ethics&bcGroup=English%20and%20Philosophy&bcItem=programs>

There are no others that I know of at public institutions in Kentucky. It is unlikely that any sort of sharing of program-related resources would bring this certificate offering to WKU through any online programs, as these other certificates are not offered online.

Describe student demand data for this program.

The spring 2025 academic program review of philosophy identified both interest among students in a certificate in ethics and also suggested adding certificates in philosophy would help the philosophy program retain a sustainable level of course enrollments and awarded credentials. Students surveyed in our spring 2026 courses have further expressed interest in ethics and genAI especially, and we are confident of workforce need and student demand for understanding ethical theories and their applications (as a crucial complement to professional ethics courses that are already offered on campus).

The workforce has never needed more urgently people who understand ethical issues, especially in digital spaces, medical fields, and business environments. The certificate will support job placement and career success for its certificate-seeking students.

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

No

Program Demand Data and Support Documents

APR Report.docx

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

No

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

Location	Percentage
Main Campus	100

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

No

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

No

If no, enter the percentage of the program that will be taught online.

0%

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

Yes

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

No

Are there any in-person on-campus requirements?

No

Does this program have experiential learning (practicum/internship/clinical)?

No

Does this program lead to professional licensure (excluding teaching certification)?

No

Rationale

Rationale for the program proposal?

The proposed ethics certificate fits within the institution's mission and strategic plan. It fits within the state's postsecondary education strategic agenda. There is student demand for this program. It will serve the ethical needs and demands of Kentucky's employers and workers, which are multiform, ever-present, and urgent.

Budgetary Implications

Budget Template:

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

Additional Attachments

APR Report.docx

Reviewer Comments

Merrall Price (merrall.price) (Mon, 02 Feb 2026 21:37:43 GMT): Rollback: See email. Thanks!

Merrall Price (merrall.price) (Thu, 26 Mar 2026 17:49:45 GMT): Rollback: As requested.

Merrall Price (merrall.price) (Thu, 02 Apr 2026 20:26:44 GMT): Rollback: Pending further discussion

Key: 426

UNDERGRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY AND CULTURE

REQUEST:

Approval of an Undergraduate Certificate in Digital Technology and Culture offered through the Department of English in Potter College of Arts and Letters.

FACTS:

The digital technology and culture certificate emphasizes thinking and practice at the intersections of digital technology and the humanities. Students within the certificate will utilize theories, methods, and methodologies for work across disciplines. They will use digital and computational tools in pursuit of humanities-based research questions, while also critically interrogating digital culture, data, and computational methods. They will develop research methodologies across disciplines as they pursue inquiry at the intersections of digital technology and culture.

Considering the impacts of Generative AI on education and culture, this certificate provides high quality, relevant, and inclusive instruction and student opportunities. This program is designed to provide students with experience with digital technologies and culture to develop as critical users of technology and with the skills to apply digital technology to a variety of situations and problems. The program is designed to supplement students by providing an in-demand credential that is applicable to a variety of professional contexts. As generative AI and other technologies are evolving, students need to learn how to critically, ethically, and effectively engage with them. By supplying ethical frameworks, awareness of cultural dynamics, and rigorous critique, the humanities help ensure that emerging technologies benefit society.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS: 19 HOURS**BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS:**

This certificate uses existing faculty members and is comprised of existing courses. Additional budgetary implications should be minimal.

RECOMMENDATION & IMPLEMENTATION DATE:

President Timothy C. Caboni recommends approval of an **Undergraduate Certificate in Digital Technology and Culture** to be implemented Fall 2026.

MOTION:

Approval to establish an **Undergraduate Certificate in Digital Technology and Culture** with implementation in Fall 2026.

: DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY AND CULTURE CERTIFICATE

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. Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (ashley.fox@wku.edu; kimberly.pharris@wku.edu)
5. University Senate (daniel.clark@wku.edu)
6. Provost (robert.fischer@wku.edu; rheanna.plemons@wku.edu)
7. Board of Regents (all)
8. Program Inventory (jennifer.hammonds@wku.edu; jessica.dorris@wku.edu)

Approval Path

1. Mon, 02 Mar 2026 15:36:14 GMT
Alison Langdon (alison.langdon): Approved for ENG Approval
2. Tue, 03 Mar 2026 18:53:16 GMT
Merrall Price (merrall.price): Approved for AR Dean
3. Thu, 26 Mar 2026 17:58:05 GMT
Merrall Price (merrall.price): Approved for AR Curriculum Committee
4. Tue, 19 May 2026 20:34:39 GMT
Ashley Fox (ashley.fox): Approved for Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
5. Thu, 21 May 2026 15:37:08 GMT
Daniel Clark (daniel.clark): Approved for University Senate
6. Thu, 25 Jun 2026 17:59:44 GMT
Robert Fischer (robert.fischer): Approved for Provost

New Program Proposal

Date Submitted: Mon, 02 Mar 2026 15:25:34 GMT

Viewing: : Digital Technology and Culture Certificate

Last edit: Wed, 22 Apr 2026 18:19:22 GMT

Changes proposed by: als04863

Proposed Action

Active

Contact Person

Name	Email	Phone
Michael Healy	michael.healy@wku.edu	270-745-3043

Term of Implementation

2026-2027

Academic Level

Undergraduate

Program Type

Certificate - Undergraduate

Department

English

College

Arts & Letters

Program Name (eg. Biology)

Digital Technology and Culture Certificate

Will this program have concentrations?

No

CIP Code

24.0103 - Humanities/Humanistic Studies.

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 digital technology and culture certificate emphasizes thinking and practice at the intersections of digital technology and the humanities. Students within the certificate will utilize theories, methods, and methodologies for work across disciplines. They will use digital and computational tools in pursuit of humanities-based research questions, while also critically interrogating digital culture, data, and computational methods. They will develop research methodologies across disciplines as they pursue inquiry at the intersections of digital technology and culture.

This certificate requires 19 credit hours and can be completed in as few as 3 academic terms, with some elective courses cross-listed between academic programs. Required courses are offered every year.

This certificate is available to students from any major and has been designed with consideration of transfer students and dual-credit students entering WKU with required courses. Additionally, the certificate is available to non-traditional students wishing to earn solely this undergraduate certificate. All classes must be completed with a "C" or higher.

Curriculum Requirements (Catalog field: Program Requirements)**Program Requirements (19 hours)**

Code	Title	Hours
Required Core Courses		
DTC 100	Introduction to Digital Technology and Culture	3
UX 220	Introduction to User Experience Design	3
DTC 400	Capstone in Digital Technology and Culture	1
3 hours in Logic chosen from the following:		3
CS 146	Introduction to Programming	
or CS 170	Problem Solving and Programming	
CS 170	Problem Solving and Programming	
CS 180	Computer Science I	
PHIL 214	Logic, Argument, and Practical Reasoning	
PHIL 215	Symbolic Logic	
3 hours in Digital Tools chosen from the following:		3
ADPR 230	Digital Tools in Advertising & Public Relations	
ART 243	Digital Media	
ENG 212	Introduction to Digital Texts and Media	
or COMM 212	Introduction to Digital Texts and Media	
FLK 430	Oral History	
HIST 375	Spatial History	
UX 330	User Interface Design	
UX 340	Introduction to Developing and Prototyping for Interactive Design	
VJP 261	Mobile Media Storytelling	
3 hours in Ethics chosen from the following:		3
PHIL 211	Why Are Bad People Bad?	
PHIL 323	Social Ethics	
PHIL 332	Philosophy of Mind: Minds and Machines	
PHIL 344	Early Modern Moral Philosophy	
PHIL 350	Ethical Theory	
PHIL 427	Philosophy of Law	
3 hours advisor-approved upper-level humanities elective chosen from one of the following disciplines: ANTH, ART, CHIN, DANC, ENG, FILM, FLK, HIST, MUS, PHIL, RELS, SPAN, THEA, VJP		3
Total Hours		19

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

No

Does this program include courses from outside your department?

Yes

Outside Courses Details

Who approved including these courses?	When were they approved?
Guanming Xing	11/19/25
Kristina Arnold	10/23/25
Ann Ferrell	1/22/25
Michael Seidler	1/25/26
Angela Jerome	2/17/25

Relation to Mission and Strategic Plan

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

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

First, the certificate provides support for process-learning practices and collaborative learning. These are achieved through high impact practices, such as ePortfolios and capstone experiences, and engagement with subject matter experts.

Second, the certificate engages in interdisciplinary learning and opportunities. The throughline of a sustained project and capstone experience enhance these interdisciplinary opportunities.

Students who complete this certificate are exposed to digital technologies and culture through experiential learning, interdisciplinary study, and strategies for approaching digital technologies in an increasingly interconnected global workforce.

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

The Kentucky post-secondary educational attainment goal is to increase degree attainment to 60% of working-age Kentuckians by the year 2030.

Considering the impacts of Generative AI on education and culture, this certificate provides high quality, relevant, and inclusive instruction and student opportunities. Given technological change this certificate also aligns with current and projected workforce demands for critical and prepared workers with emergent technologies.

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	Apply digital humanities theories and scholarship.	Summative and formative assessment by DTC 400 instructor of record. Evaluated by DTC faculty on a rotating basis as the focal point of annual ASL reports under the direction of the Digital Technology and Culture program coordinator.
SLO 2	Use computational methods/digital technologies for approaching humanities problems	Summative and formative assessment by DTC 400 instructor of record. Evaluated by DTC faculty on a rotating basis as the focal point of annual ASL reports under the direction of the Digital Technology and Culture program coordinator.
SLO 3	Use humanistic inquiry methods to approach digital/computational problems	Summative and formative assessment by DTC 400 instructor of record. Evaluated by DTC faculty on a rotating basis as the focal point of annual ASL reports under the direction of the Digital Technology and Culture program coordinator.

SLO 4	Apply appropriate methodologies for digital humanities research.	Summative and formative assessment by DTC 400 instructor of record. Evaluated by DTC faculty on a rotating basis as the focal point of annual ASL reports under the direction of the Digital Technology and Culture program coordinator.
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Assessment Template: https://www.wku.edu/academicaffairs/ee/assurance_learning_resources.php

Specify any distinctive qualities of the program.

This program would offer a stand-alone credential, but would also serve to complement many existing majors across the university. The proposed curriculum would allow degree-seeking students to count at least 9 hours in Colonnade (FW-1, F-AH, and F-QR categories) and as many as 12 hours, depending on what upper-level elective they choose.

The certificate would also bridge humanities and STEM disciplines, providing STEM students with an edge:

Differentiation: Pure CS/data science graduates are abundant; those who can also analyze cultural impact, communicate effectively, and think critically about technology stand out.

Human-Centered Design: STEM increasingly recognizes that technical solutions must account for human behavior, culture, and ethics.

Interdisciplinary Research: Many cutting-edge STEM fields (computational social science, digital health, smart cities) require bridging technical and humanistic expertise.

The certificate essentially creates "STEM+H" professionals—technically capable individuals who can also navigate the cultural, ethical, and human dimensions of technology work.

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

Yes

Please explain

This program is designed to provide students with experience with digital technologies and culture to develop as critical users of technology and with the skills to apply digital technology to a variety of situations and problems. The program is designed to supplement students by providing an in-demand credential that is applicable to a variety of professional contexts.

The 12-hour Artificial Intelligence and Analytics certificate (1783) is focused specifically on AI and analytics, helping students develop skills in working with these tools but without the emphasis on the context of human behavior, culture, and ethics. The two certificates would stack well together.

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

No

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.

Currently there are no similar programs offered in the state of Kentucky.

Describe student demand data for this program.

There has been substantial interest from students who have enrolled in design-themed sections of ENG 300 the last 3 fall semesters, from students with majors in Visual Arts and Visual Studies as well as Interior Design and Fashion Merchandising. There is significant potential cross-over with User Experience majors as well. In addition, PCAL majors in all disciplines have expressed high interest in ways to apply their humanities content knowledge via new technologies.

There is a wide array of career paths this certificate would help ensure skills for:

- Content strategists and digital communications roles
- UX/UI designers and researchers
- Digital humanities researchers in academic, museum, and cultural institutions
- Technical writers and documentation specialists
- Digital archivists and information specialists
- Digital marketing and social media strategists
- Generative AI design and implementation

API documentation writers
Technical content developers
Digital preservation specialists
Geospatial data analysts
Scientific data curators
Museum technology specialists
Educational technology developers

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

No

Program Demand Data and Support Documents

DTC certificate-budget-spreadsheet-082025.xlsx

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.)?

No

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

No

If no, enter the percentage of the program that will be taught online.

21%

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

Yes

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

No

Are there any in-person on-campus requirements?

Yes

Does this program have experiential learning (practicum/internship/clinical)?

Yes

Does this program lead to professional licensure (excluding teaching certification)?

No

Rationale

Rationale for the program proposal?

As generative AI and other technologies are evolving, students need to learn how to critically, ethically, and effectively engage with them. By supplying ethical frameworks, awareness of cultural dynamics, and rigorous critique, the humanities help ensure that emerging technologies benefit society.

Budgetary Implications

Budget Template:

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

Key: 425

**RESOLUTION ON KENTUCKY
HOUSE BILL 490**

REQUEST:

Approval of a Resolution related to compliance with Kentucky House Bill 490.

FACTS:

The enclosed Resolution establishes compliance with Kentucky House Bill 490 amending KRS 164.360, passed on April 14, 2026, by the Kentucky General Assembly.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS:

None.

RECOMMENDATION:

Provost, Bud Fischer and General Counsel, Andrea Anderson requests the Board of Regents approve the aforementioned Resolution.

MOTION:

Approval of a Resolution of compliance with Kentucky House Bill 490.

Western Kentucky University Board of Regents

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky enacted House Bill 490, an Act relating to employment at public postsecondary education institutions during the Regular Session in 2026 (“House Bill 490”) now codified in KRS 164.360;

WHEREAS, House Bill 490 states that in addition to removal for cause, public postsecondary education institutions may remove a faculty member for bona fide financial reasons, including but not limited to, (1) financial exigency; (2) low enrollment in a particular program or major; or (3) misalignment of revenue and costs in a particular college, department, program or major.

WHEREAS, the Board of Regents is required by House Bill 490 to establish a process for removal of faculty members for bona fide financial reasons effective by October 1, 2026 that includes a mandatory thirty (30) day written notice period as well as an opportunity to respond before the Board for affected faculty members;

WHEREAS, the Western Kentucky University (“WKU”) Board of Regents received a copy of House Bill 490 and understand the requirements therein;

WHEREAS, the current iteration of the *Faculty Handbook*, 32nd Edition, sets forth the process by which tenured faculty members may be removed for bona fide financial reasons at VII.A.3(b) Procedure for Termination Due to Financial Exigency and VII.A.3(c) Procedure for Termination Due to Changing Program Needs. The *Faculty Handbook* does not contemplate faculty termination for misalignment of revenue and costs in a particular college, department, program, or major.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the WKU Board of Regents hereby adopts and reiterates, as if set forth fully herein, the process for removing faculty members for bona fide financial reasons as set forth in the *Faculty Handbook*, 32nd Edition, VII.A.3(b) and (c) in compliance with House Bill 490.

This the 14th day of August 2026, by the Western Kentucky University Board of Regents.

Jan M. West
Chair, Board of Regents

Dr. Melissa Dennison
Secretary, Board of Regents