



March 14, 2025

Dr. Kevin Sightler
Substantive Change Office
SACS Commission on Colleges
1866 Southern Lane
Decatur, GA 30033

Re: Program Closure: Secondary English Education Graduate Certificate

Dear Kevin,

Please accept this letter as notification of the closure of an existing graduate certificate program in Secondary English Education, effective August 18, 2025.

Students will no longer be admitted to the certificate after August 18, 2025. One student was enrolled in the program in fall 2023 and spring 2024, and this student completed the graduate certificate. Another student was enrolled in fall 2024, and that student is currently enrolled for spring 2025. The enrolled student will be contacted by Dr. Jud Laughter, Secondary English Education advisor, to let them know that the graduate certificate will not be in the catalog beginning fall 2025, but that the student will be able to complete all required courses for the certificate. There will be no disruption or additional cost for the student to complete the program. Any prospective students seeking advising about enrollment in the program in spring 2025 or summer 2025 will be told that the program will not be offered after August 18, 2025.

The Department of Theory & Practice in Teacher Education faculty and staff were made aware that the program was being proposed for closure in fall 2024, prior to documentation being submitted at the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences' Curricular Review Committee meeting in December 2024. Since this is an online distance education program, Charles Swallow, Enrollment Coach for Digital Learning@UTK, was informed of the impending closure on December 9, 2024. UT Knoxville's Undergraduate Curriculum Committee approved the closure of the graduate certificate program in Secondary English Education on February 4, 2025; Undergraduate Council approved the closure on February 20, 2025; and Faculty Senate approved the closure on March 3, 2025.

Admissions will be informed of the graduate certificate program in Secondary English Education closure through the on-campus approval process described above. Dr. Joshua Kenna, the Director of Graduate Studies and advisor for the graduate certificate program in Secondary English Education, has been made aware of the program closure and will advise any prospective students accordingly.

Office of Institutional Effectiveness
5723 Middlebrook Pike, Suite 218, Knoxville, TN 37921
865-974-6964 IEDept@utk.edu ie.utk.edu

Marketing Director Doug Edlund is aware of the program closure, and as of February 21, 2025, there are no active marketing/recruiting efforts for the program. Community and industry partners will not be contacted about this program closure, as there was limited interest in the program since its inception in fall 2021 and there are no partners to contact.

There is no need for the department to provide options for student to complete the graduate certificate program in Secondary English Education at another institution, as the currently enrolled student will be able to complete the required coursework for the certificate at UT Knoxville. The coursework required for this program is included in other programs that will continue to be offered by the department, so no teach-out plan is needed. Therefore, faculty and staff employment will not be affected.

Should you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Heather H. Hartman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Heather" being more prominent.

Heather Hartman
SACSCOC Liaison

Cc: Donde Plowman, Chancellor
John Zomchick, Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor
Beth Avery Foster, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs
Ellen McIntyre, Dean, College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences