THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE KNOXVILLE

March 14, 2025

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

Re: Program Closure: Secondary Science Education Graduate Certificate

Dear Kevin,

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

Students will no longer be admitted to the certificate after August 18, 2025. One student was enrolled in the graduate certificate program in fall 2023 and spring 2024. This student has completed program. There were no students enrolled in this program in fall 2024, and no students have applied to the program for spring 2025. 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. If a student who has lapsed enrollment returns to complete the certificate, the courses required for the program are included in other programs that will continue to be offered; therefore, there will be no disruption or additional cost for students to complete the certificate.

The Department of Theory & Practice in Teacher Education faculty and staff were made aware that the graduate certificate program in Secondary Science Education 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 program 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 Science Education closure through the on-campus approval process described above. Dr. Joshua Kenna, the Director of Graduate Studies and advisor for the program, has been made aware of the program closure and will advise any prospective students accordingly. Marketing Director Doug Edlund is aware of the program closure and, as of February 21, 2025, there are no active marketing/recruting 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 teach-out options for student to complete the graduate certificate program in Secondary Science Education at another institution, as there are currently no enrolled students. The coursework required for this program is included in other programs that are continuing to be offered by the department; 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,

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