



March 14, 2025

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

Re: SC0290134– New Program Approval – Undergraduate Certificate in Public Policy Challenges – Request for Additional Information

Dear Kevin,

Please see requested information regarding the undergraduate certificate program in Public Policy Challenges.

- 1. Clarify whether the program requires approval by an institutional governing board (e.g., Board of Trustees). If so, provide documentation of any approval required. If not, provide the final internal approval required.**

Undergraduate certificate programs do not require the approval of an institutional governing board. The undergraduate certificate in Public Policy Challenges program was approved following the institution's curricular procedures, including review and approval by the faculty in the Baker School of Public Policy and Public Affairs (Baker School), and submission to the institution's graduate curriculum committee, Graduate Council, and Faculty Senate for review and approval. Minutes from the Faculty Senate meeting reflecting final internal approval are provided in Appendix A.

- 2. Provide the methods/measurements by which student learning outcomes will be assessed, such as exams, projects, etc.**

The learning objectives for the undergraduate certificate program in Public Policy Challenges have been further refined since the initial submission for program approval. The refined learning objectives, as well as the assessment plan for the program, can be found in Appendix B.

- 3. Provide the person(s) who will provide administrative oversight of the certificate.**

- Andrew Busch, Associate Director of the Institute of American Civics, Baker School
- Jonathan Ring, Director of Undergraduate Studies, Baker School
- Mary Beth Woodward, Director of Student Success, Baker School
- John Scheb, Interim Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, Baker School

Office of Institutional Effectiveness
5723 Middlebrook Pike, Suite 218, Knoxville, TN 37921
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- Marianne Wanamaker, Dean, Baker School

4. Provide the upward reporting structure of the administrative oversight person(s) and their duties/responsibilities.

Faculty teaching the courses for the undergraduate certificate in Public Policy Challenges program will meet periodically with the Associate Director of the Institute of American Civics (Andrew Busch). The Associate Director will work with the Director of Undergraduate Studies (Jon Ring), who is responsible for program development and curriculum management, and Director of Student Success (Mary Beth Woodward), who will be responsible for relevant data collection, to report on the program to the Institute of American Civics faculty committee and the Director of the Institute of American Civics.

The Associate Director of the Institute of American Civics, the Director of Undergraduate Studies, and the Director of Student Success all report up to the Interim Associate Dean of Academic Affairs (John Scheb). The Interim Associate Dean of Academic Affairs will ensure the Dean of the Baker School (Marianne Wanamaker) is kept informed and updated on topics concerning the undergraduate certificate in Public Policy Challenges program.

5. The Undergraduate Certificate in Public Policy Challenges is currently listed in the Academic Catalog. There is no indication on the webpage that this program has not yet been approved by SACSCOC. Is the program currently accepting students and in operation?

The undergraduate certificate in Public Policy Challenges program is not currently accepting students. There is a placeholder line in the 2024-25 Academic Catalog, but no information is available for the listing when clicked. This inactive placeholder was added due to the anticipated start date of spring 2025. However, with the program awaiting SACSCOC approval, the anticipated start date has been deferred.

The program is listed on the Baker School website with the following caveat:

The Baker School's Undergraduate Certificates will be available as add-on or stand-alone credentials for currently enrolled students, pending SACSCOC approval.

- 6. Provide a revised faculty roster, including:**
- a. Status (FT or PT) for each faculty member on the faculty roster, including the to-be-hired position.**
 - b. Qualifications required for the to-be-hired faculty position.**
 - c. In the top heading, the applicable academic terms (e.g., Spring 2025).**

A revised faculty roster, including faculty member status, qualifications required for to-be-hired positions, and the applicable academic terms, can be found in Appendix C.

7. Provide a description of physical resources that will support the online program, such as faculty offices/spaces/equipment and program-specific software.

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SC029134
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The undergraduate certificate in Public Policy Challenges program will be offered as an in-person program in the Baker School for Public Policy and Public Affairs. All physical facilities, equipment, and services that are needed for the Public Policy Challenges undergraduate certificate program are already in place.

The Baker School of Public Policy and Public Affairs has more than 52,000 square feet of space on three floors that includes a 140-seat auditorium and 3-story rotunda for public events, classrooms, state-of-the-art archives storage and research areas, an interactive museum, a boardroom, and the administrative spaces necessary for the Baker School's operations. The building also houses the Institute of American Civics and two research centers: the Center for Energy, Transportation, and Environmental Policy and the Center for National Security and Foreign Affairs. The building is currently undergoing construction to add two classrooms – one seating 52 students and one seating 25 students. Twenty-eight office spaces are also being added.

All faculty members have a private office space, averaging 169 square feet in size. In the Baker School, rooms 118 (~ 842 square feet), 204 (~ 679 square feet), and 205 (~ 683 square feet) will be utilized for instruction. All classrooms are equipped with smartboards, projectors, video players, and interfaces for instructors' laptops.

No program specific software is required to implement the undergraduate certificate in Public Policy Challenges program. Faculty will utilize Canvas, the institution's learning management system (LMS). Students who are actively enrolled at UT Knoxville have access to Canvas and log in using their institutionally issued NetID.

8. Provide a description of instructional technology available in classrooms, such as smartboards, etc.

Classrooms utilized for the undergraduate certificate in Public Policy Challenges program have smartboards, projectors, video players, and interfaces for instructors' laptops.

9. Provide pro-rated faculty and staff salaries for the certificate budget.

Pro-rated faculty and staff salaries for the undergraduate certificate in Public Policy Challenges program can be found in Appendix D.

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

Sincerely,



Heather Hartman
SACSCOC Liaison