

Kansas State University's Program Review Year 2022 Institutional Overview

The mission of Kansas State University (K-State) is to foster excellence in teaching, research and service that develops a highly skilled and educated citizenry necessary to advancing the well-being of Kansas, the nation, and the international community. The university embraces diversity encourages engagement and is committed to the discovery of knowledge, the education of undergraduate and graduate students, and improvement in the quality of life and standard of living of those we serve.

Review of selected degree programs each year helps assure that the university continues to offer rigorous and relevant curricula to meet the needs of students, faculty, the state of Kansas, and the Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR). Such reviews also ensure that the institution is heeding to its mission and strategic goals. For the 2022 cycle, K-State reviewed a total of thirty degree programs in the following disciplinary areas from the College of Arts and Science - Anthropology; Economics; Geography; History; Interdisciplinary areas of: Clinical Lab Sciences-Med Tech, Humanities, Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, Social Sciences; International Studies - Secondary Major; Mass Communication; Political Science; Psychology; Public Administration; Security Studies; Social Work; and Sociology. While American Ethnic Studies and Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies were scheduled for this review cycle, these programs were merged in 2021 as recommended by the regents during the 2020 KBOR Strategic Alignment Report process.

What follows provides significant highlights of each program. We recommend that all programs continue.

DESCRIPTION OF THE REVIEW PROCESS

The process began with each program examining its assessment of student learning. The Office of Assessment reviewed all reports with the Graduate School Assessment and Review committee additionally reviewing graduate programs' reports on the assessment of student learning. Reviewers provided feedback and recommendations for improvement. Each program examined the statistical data and drafted a summary report resulting from their program's self-review including information on: (1) Centrality of the program to fulfilling the mission and the role of the institution; (2) The quality of the program as assessed by the strengths, productivity, and qualifications of the faculty; (3) The quality of the program as assessed by its curriculum and impact on students; (4) Demonstrated student need and employer demand for the program; (5) The service the program provides to the discipline, the university, and beyond; and (6) The program's cost-effectiveness. In consultation with the College Dean's Office and/or the respective College or Program Committee on Planning, each department finalized the Program Review Report for its academic programs (by CIP code) as required by KBOR. The college dean then forwarded the reports to the Office of Assessment for review and comment. If necessary, the Office of Assessment returned the reports with suggested revisions to the college dean, which were returned with revisions for final approval. Summaries for all programs are attached. Where possible, the reports for degree programs within a given department were combined into a singular narrative.

SUMMARY OF THE PROGRAMS REVIEWED

Of the thirty degree programs reviewed, there are six doctorates, nine masters, fourteen bachelor's degrees, and one secondary major. Overall, the degree programs are in strong and viable academic disciplines. Each department and its academic programs provide opportunities for the advancement of education, research, and service for the state of Kansas, the nation, and the world.

Mass Communications: CIP code – 09.0401

A major area of growth over the past eight years has included developments in our graduate program, as we joined Communication Studies, Leadership Studies and Agricultural Communications as a partner in the Leadership Communication PhD program. At the master's level, we have enlarged our footprint through launching an online degree focusing on strategic communications. This specialty, which includes the fields of risk, crisis, and health communication, makes the Miller School's Master of Science program exceptional among mass communication graduate programs. Nationally, only 15 major universities list this specialty area. On campus, we are collaborating with other departments to create new certificate programs that will be extremely marketable and will enhance the centrality of our program to the campus. At the undergraduate level, we have merged our advertising and public relations sequences into one specialization, strategic communications. We have also developed new certificate programs that have resulted in new partnerships with programs on campus. Overall, with the media industries in a constant state of change, we have developed to reflect current trends, converting focus away from an industry once dominated by "legacy" media (newspapers, magazines, radio, and television) to digital platforms (internet, streaming and social media platforms). We have added several new courses to our curriculum that specialize in disseminating news and persuasive communications through these new channels, while still supporting writing, production, and creative strategies for legacy platforms.

Humanities: CIP Code -24.0103

The Humanities degree program is an interdisciplinary program involving 10+ departments in the College of Arts and Sciences. While each of the departments has its own major, there was a need to create a broader degree in humanities that would be attractive to students who were not interested in any single discipline. It offers the opportunity for students to expand their knowledge across disciplines. It also serves as a gateway for student success for those students who have tried several majors but are not satisfied with any specific one. The humanities degree program is a pathway to a degree for those students. Although the number of graduates and

majors is low, the degree program costs nothing to administer. There are no faculty dedicated to the program, nor a department with overhead costs. KBOR agreed to continue the program as part of the KBOR AY 2020 Strategic Program Alignment Review.

Social Science: CIP Code - 45.0101

Life Science: CIP Code - 30.1801

These interdisciplinary programs have been consistently performing with minimal administrative support and no faculty costs outside of existing programs and have filled important university and college needs. This is a major accomplishment. Enrollment has beaten or been consistent with A&S college trends. The programs have been updated since the last report, including addition of a BA option to both programs and the capstone to the Social Science major.

International Studies - Secondary Major: CIP Code – 30.2001

This secondary major has a new faculty director (appointed August 2021) who has identified an expanded list of elective courses across the university to count for the secondary major and to increase its reach across campus. Student learning outcomes (SLOs) and a new assessment plan for IAS have also been identified. We have done additional recruitment for the secondary major, making it more visible to advisors, faculty, students, and other program partners. The new faculty director has made major improvements to the IAS capstone course, including writing a descriptive rubric for evaluating projects, creating a lengthy resource guide for students completing the capstone and creating extensive additional scaffolding for the capstone projects to foster student success.

Physical Sciences, CIP Code—40.0101

The Physical Sciences degree is an interdisciplinary program involving eight departments in the College of Arts and Sciences and computer science in the College of Engineering. While each of the departments has its own major, there was a need to create a broader degree in physical sciences that would be attractive to students who were not interested in any single science discipline. It also serves as a gateway for student success for those students who may have tried several majors but are not satisfied with any specific one. The general sciences degree program is a pathway to a degree for those students. Although the number of graduates and majors is low, the degree program costs nothing to administer. There are no faculty dedicated to the program, nor a department with overhead costs. Graduates with a physical sciences major are qualified for many types of technical and engineering positions across many industries. Recent graduates have taken positions as project managers, associate engineers, and other related jobs. Their plan of study prepares them for a broad array of industry positions, as well as graduate studies in the sciences. KBOR decided to continue the program as part of the AY 2020 Strategic Program Alignment Review.

Psychology: CIP Code – 42.0101

Our most significant achievement was the receipt of a 5-year \$10.6M NIH Center for Biomedical Research Excellence grant to establish the Cognitive and Neurobiological Approaches to Plasticity Center. Budgetary challenges and meeting student demand remain our biggest challenge. Demand for our major and minor has grown. We maintain a GPA minimum of 2.5 to reduce the number of majors. Further investment would allow us to launch a new major or minor in neuroscience, an area in great demand nationally. We look forward to growing to meet demand including a new neuroscience minor or major, to increase undergraduate research experiences, and to grow our Ph.D. students' financial support.

Public Administration: CIP Code – 44.0401

The K-State MPA program continues the important work of preparing students to become leaders in the public and non-profit sectors. Since the last program review, our program has been reaccredited by NASPAA, an achievement that speaks to the quality of our curriculum, faculty, and students. Our assessments of student learning also demonstrate a student body that are mastering the core components of public administration. Further, our graduates are using what they learn in our program and serving their communities in administrative positions in federal, state, local and non-profit organizations. We see several areas of growth opportunity that our program will pursue soon.

Social Work: CIP Code – 44.0701.

In spring 2019, the social work program was also reaccredited by the Council on Social Work Education through 2026 – further evidence of our strong commitment to preparing future social workers. We have had many recent notable achievements in teaching, research, and service. Our excellent instructional methods are evidenced by receipt of several recent teaching awards, including the Global Campus Excellence in Online Teaching Award and University Honors Program's Teaching and Mentoring Award. Social work students were also mentored by faculty on several undergraduate research projects, in which students were awarded the Kirmser Undergraduate Research Award three years in a row along with several students receiving the College of Arts and Sciences' Undergraduate Research Award. Three social work faculty have time committed to research activities, in which the faculty received an external grant through the National Science Foundation, two University Small Research Grants, and a faculty enhancement grant from the College of Arts and Sciences. Research output remains strong. Our faculty provide considerable service to the university and social work profession, with 20% of each faculty member's time devoted to service. One faculty member is particularly engaged in social justice issues on campus and in the broader community, in which he coordinated a series of discussions through the Community Conversations on Race and Reconciliation along with offering anti-racism trainings and presentations. Other faculty members are involved in service to the social work profession through participation in the Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors, Kansas Organization for Victim Assistance, Riley County Domestic Violence Ally Network, and Korean American Social

Work Educators Association. The measure of a successful program is the impact of its graduates. Recently, two alums were recognized for their impact on the community. One alum was awarded Supervisor of the Year for the Kansas Department for Children and Families in the southwest region. Another alum received the Veterans Health Administration Under Secretary for Health Award for Excellence in Social Work Leadership; she was selected out of 17,000 VA social workers. Moreover, our program was recently recognized as a top baccalaureate social work program for earning potential, in which KSU students had the highest median salary one-year after graduation among Kansas baccalaureate social work programs.

Anthropology: CIP Code - 45.0201

Our students have won prestigious international scholarships and been accepted into the world's top graduate programs. The work and accomplishments of our students and faculty were centrally featured in the university's \$1 Billion Innovation & Inspiration Kickoff Event. However, the review period has also been difficult for our program as we lost 2.5 FTE faculty that were not replaced, dropping us from 7.5 FTE to 5.0 FTE. We patched this hole for 2 years by teaching additional online courses which brought in additional revenue to hire temporary faculty and continue to find ways to maintain our excellent program while working across disciplines to build new programs and offerings for students. Our recent creation of certificates in Religious Studies and Global Health highlight our strengths and are the seeds for robust interdisciplinary programs essential for our state, nation, and world in the 21st century.

Economics: CIP Code - 45.0601

The department of economics provides high-quality undergraduate and graduate instruction and has a research environment consistent with a top 50 public research university. In addition to teaching our own undergraduate majors and graduate students, we teach introductory economics classes to undergraduate students majoring in other disciplines, and graduate courses to students pursuing post-graduate degrees in business administration, agricultural economics, and other disciplines. One of the strengths of our graduate program is its diversity. We have one of the few majority female PhD programs in a field where 30% of PhD students are female. We are similarly more racially diverse than most PhD programs. We plan to use this as a recruiting tool to improve our PhD program. Another strength is our expertise in data analysis. The job market for economists continues to emphasize data skills, and we plan to push our students to upgrade their data skills by taking more econometrics courses and changing or adding classes as needed. The biggest change since the last review is the removal of the agricultural economics PhD program from the economics PhD program. In the process, we reviewed all aspects of our graduate programs and made changes to the curriculum as appropriate, resulting in what we consider to be a modern graduate program. Another important change is that our graduate programs now have a STEM classification, which helps with recruiting.

Geography: CIP code – 45.0701

Major achievements in the BA/BS program since the last review include upgrades to the department's geospatial teaching lab, seminar room, and earth system science/physical geography lab; the development of new course offerings in GIS, remote sensing, and earth system science/physical geography; the creation of a new major in Geographic Information Science and Technology (GIS&T); and the renaming of the department to reflect our growing emphasis on and expertise in geospatial teaching and research. We more than doubled the number of computer workstations in our geospatial teaching lab (from 15 to 35) after we moved to a large space on the third floor of Seaton Hall and added additional wall monitors and white boards to the lab. It is also physically integrated with the geospatial research lab, which facilitates a synergy between the teaching and research aspects of this rapidly growing subfield within geography. Our majors are now able to access innovative software and modeling applications 24/7 in the department's geospatial lab. We recently completed the Richard A. Marston Earth Systems Science Laboratory. The facility provides a "hands-on" laboratory experience for students in our upper-level earth system science/physical geography courses taken by our majors. Since the last review, we have developed new geospatial courses including programming for GIS (Python and R), internet GIS and distributed geographic services, remote sensing of water resources, and soil mapping. We restructured our introductory physical geography class by creating separate lecture and lab courses. This allows students who need a basic natural science course, but not the lab, to enroll in only the lecture. We also developed a course in the spatial analysis of surface water hydrology to further strengthen both our geospatial and earth system science/physical geography curriculum. In response to the growing market for GIS professionals, we created a new BS degree in Geographic Information Science and Technology (GIS&T). Graduates of this new major will find jobs in private companies and government agencies focused on consumer navigation technology, engineering consulting, environment and natural resources, disaster management, land surveying, transportation, geospatial intelligence, agriculture and biosecurity, socioeconomic analysis, business planning, public health and healthcare, and urban planning and design. Finally, following much discussion within the department and with our alumni advisory board, the department formally changed its name to the Department of Geography and Geospatial Sciences, which reflects the growing expertise within the department on the geospatial sciences (e.g., remote sensing, GIScience, and geospatial modelling).

Security Studies: CIIP code – 45.0901

The MA and PhD degrees in Security Studies, interdisciplinary endeavors with Political Science and the History departments, are built on successful collaboration with the US Army's Command and General Staff College (CGSC) at Ft. Leavenworth and thus are unique in the nation. Specific review of this program is found in the History review.

Political Science: CIP Code - 45.1001

We made several major changes to our curriculum during this evaluation period. At the forefront of this is the addition of a series of tracks that our undergraduate majors can enroll in. These include the following areas of emphasis: **Public Service** - for students interested in an administrative position in the public or nonprofit sector; **Global Politics & Security** -for students interested in international security, diplomacy, international organizations and related non-profit organizations; **Society & Environment** - for students interested in social and environmental problem solving, agricultural and food-related private business, and non-profit and political advocacy groups; **Politics of the Global South** - for students interested in careers that impact or involve the non-Western world and knowledge of African, Asian, Latin American, and Middle Eastern countries; **Law** - for students interested in the legal profession in any capacity, work in private business, or government and legal relations. We developed these tracks to modernize our major and offer students a credential that fits the typical career paths that they go into. We also developed a new interdisciplinary minor in Middle East Studies. Students were first able to enroll in this minor last academic year. This builds off a departmental strength in Middle East politics and one that has been supported by former Shell CEO John Hofmeister in his philanthropic giving. We have also engaged in efforts to reach more students through the development of new online programs. This includes the creation of a fully online graduate certificate in public administration. This is a 12-credit program that can be completed asynchronously. We also now allow distance students to enroll in the Security Studies M.A. program. However, that does require some synchronous coursework. To make graduate education more accessible and affordable to K-State undergraduates we developed two concurrent degree programs during the evaluation period. Both degrees combine our BA/BS with our MPA and MA in Security Studies. The programs allow students to take a semester's worth of graduate courses during their senior year that count towards both their undergraduate and graduate degrees. This allows students to complete a BA/MA in five years with careful planning. Finally, we also established a Model United Nations team. This is led by two of our award-winning teachers. Students can participate for credit and non-credit. The activity culminates with participation in a Model UN conference in Chicago each fall. We have seen multiple students win awards for their outstanding participation in the conference. The department has also seen several successes during the last five years that are indicative of its growing national and international profile. One faculty member serves as part of a team of editors for the journal *International Studies Review*. Even more prominently, the department currently serves as the home institution for the journal *International Interactions*. Both the lead editor and one of the associate editors are currently faculty members in the Department.

Sociology: CIP Code - 45.1101

Our award-winning faculty (e.g., National Faculty Teacher of the Year Award from the Victimology Division, American Society of Criminology; Presidential Award for Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching; Global Campus Development Grant Recipients) continue to contribute to KSU's quality education in both in-person and distance formats. Based on our internal assessments, we have made some significant changes to our curriculum including designing and implementing a five-year, B.A./M.A. program which will strengthen our undergraduate and graduate programs. Our Senior Thesis in Sociology will also prepare students for these programs as well as other graduate and professional schools. At the graduate level, we have had successful M.A. and Ph.D. with high job placement records, student retention, and ethical research standards. *Research:* We have increased our external funding (at almost \$5 million in the review cycle) and continue to publish in top-tiered disciplinary journals. Our faculty have also received significant research awards including Critical Criminologist of the Year from the American Society of Criminology. *Service:* Faculty members are also involved in a wide array of service activities, including: (1) editors/on editorial boards for national and international journals, (2) reviewers for scholarly journals and extramural grants (including serving on NSF panel reviews), (3) consultants for different organizations, (4) experts before the Kansas state legislature, (5) invited presenters on topics such as enabling conversations about inclusion, (6) members of committees across campus, (7) leaders and administrators (e.g., implementing and more than a dozen leadership programs at KSU and received the Higher Education Leadership Development Program Award, the INSIGHT into Diversity Award, and (8) organizers and executive board members for a variety of symposia and conferences.

Clinical Lab Sciences-Med Tech: CIP Code – 51.1005

This program name was changed to Medical Laboratory Science in 2017. It is an interdisciplinary program involving six departments in the College of Arts and Sciences. Completion of the program, including the clinical hours, prepares students to sit for the American Society for Clinical Pathology Board of Certification exam. Although the number of graduates and majors has been low, the numbers have increased in the past few years. One limiting factor is that there are only a limited number of spaces available for students at the clinical sites. Since it is taught across multiple departments using courses that are already offered, the degree program costs little to teach. There are no faculty dedicated to the program, nor a department with overhead costs. KBOR decided to continue the program as part of the AY 2020 Strategic Program Alignment Review.

History: CIP Code – 54.0101

The current review period has seen the department's most substantial curricular reform in more than 25 years, involving the restructuring of both the undergraduate History major and the Ph.D. program. This has been done with an eye to making both programs more attractive to students. Undergraduate majors have more flexibility in course selection, especially at the 300 level, and more courses are being offered at that level to attract non-majors who might be intimidated by offerings at the 500 level. At the doctoral level, the streamlining of examination fields and simplification of the exam structure should reduce the time to degree completion while also relieving some of the pressure on faculty time. Through an agreement with the Kansas Historical Foundation, the department has also been the institutional home of the journal *Kansas History* since 2014.