

Letter of Intent for Proposed
Undergraduate Certificate in Sales

Program Name: Undergraduate Certificate in Sales
Department: Marketing
School: College of Business
Implementation Date: August 1, 2022
Accreditation requirements: AACSB

The Interim Dean of the College of Business approves this Letter of Intent (LOI) and related financial commitments:



Sep 14, 2022

Jeff Guan

Date

Program Abstract (250 words or less). Describe the program’s focus and purpose, primary area of study, intended audience, academic level (undergraduate, graduate or professional), length of the program, goals/objectives, the rationale for the program, the skills or knowledge that students will acquire, and the relationship of the proposed program to the general field. This abstract may be used for external reporting and should provide a concise programmatic overview.

The College of Business is proposing that an undergraduate Certificate in Sales be created. This certificate will give undergraduate students the kind of competencies and credentials needed to be hired and to succeed in sales. Careers in sales are complementary to almost any degree an undergraduate student may earn, and companies are almost always looking for more quality salespeople to hire, locally and nationally, but they prefer hiring from universities that give clear indicators of competencies developed for sales, such as a certificate. This certificate will contain 12 required credit hours. All of these courses are pre-existing; no new courses need to be created. Currently, one of the required courses has an online delivery option. All courses will be offered at least once per year. If demand grows as expected, we will find additional instructors to meet the demand, but we anticipate demand to grow slowly at first. We already offer all of the courses needed to make a successful sales certificate. We will simply bundle them into a certificate so that students around campus can not only benefit from taking the classes, but also put the certificate on their transcript (and resumes, LinkedIn sites, and so on) to signal to potential employers that they are prepared to succeed as salespeople. Collegiate sales training also enables other organizations to reduce their training expenses.

Educational Program Objectives

- **Goals:** The undergraduate certificate in sales will prepare students to build trusting and trustworthy sales relationships, understand potential customers’ needs, come up with solutions that fit customers’ needs and build long-term relationships, develop sales strategies, lead sales teams, measure and manage sales performance, match the sales process to customers’ buying processes, situate these skills within a deep understanding of the marketing function, and develop complementary skills.
- **Admission Requirements:** During the first few years, any University of Louisville student in good standing may apply to take the courses required for a sales certificate, but students taking the certificate will be capped at 40 to prevent admitting more students than we have capacity to teach. As capacity grows, we will provide more classes, open the program to non-traditional students as well, and admit more students. Non-traditional students must take MKT 301 before taking the other classes and show that they can earn at least a C in that class before they will be allowed to complete the remaining classes in the certificate.
- **Graduation requirements:** Completion of four three-credit-hour courses with at least a 2.0 grade point average.
- **Curriculum:** No new courses will be developed for this certificate. All included courses are three credit hours. Required and elective courses include:
 - Required:
 - MKT 301 – Principles of Marketing
 - MKT 360 – Professional Relationship Selling (SPAD Majors may take SPAD 530 in lieu of this class)
 - MKT 401 – Strategic Sales Leadership

- MKT 465 – Consultative Sales

Linkage with the Mission and Strategic Plan. The University of Louisville Strategic Plan focuses on making the University of Louisville a great place to learn, work, and invest. A certificate in sales helps to make the University a great place to learn because it helps people develop immediately useful knowledge and skills, and helps students in any major to become more employable. This outcome is also consistent with the mission of the College of Business, which is to prepare students for responsible and rewarding careers, as well as to enhance the economic vitality of the city, the region, and the broader business community.

Student Demand. The three sales courses we offer in the College of Business are MKT 360, MKT 401, and MKT 465. In the past three years, we have had 556, 89, and 78 students in each of these classes, respectively (MKT 360 is required for the Marketing major). We estimate that 10% of these students took all three sales classes, Marketing 301, and one other sales-related elective, which means that approximately that number of students would have earned the equivalent of the sales certificate without getting a certificate. The question then becomes, how many new students would take the classes because they are re-packaged as a certificate? This is the answer we need to know to make revenue projections.

To estimate this, we look to external data. Based on external benchmarking and data from the [Sales Education Foundation](#), we have learned that 200 universities worldwide have either formal sales programs or some kind of sales initiative underway. This is up from approximately 10 universities in 2003. There is also significant growth within these sales programs. For example, at Ohio University, the program grew from 22 students in 2003 to approximately 600 students currently. If we assume that this kind of growth begins slowly and accelerates, a growth rate like this would happen at approximately 20%. This is an estimate, of course, but it is the estimate we can make from the data we have.

The reason programs and students within programs see so much growth is at least in part because of external employment demand. According to the [Sales Education Foundation](#), 90% of University Seniors who graduate with evidence of a sales education have jobs at graduation, the average number of job offers at graduation is 2.8. [The Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) estimated that the average starting salary for a non-technical sales representative was \$59,930 and \$103,900 for a technical sales engineer position, and that there will be continued growth in the sale of sophisticated products, services, and solutions.

Given these observations, we assume the initial infusion of new students would be small (say, 10 in the first year), with 20% growth each year. This would leave to a revenue projection for the certificate as follows:

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Full-Time	10	12	14	17	21
Projected tuition revenue (\$\$)	\$9,840	\$11,808	\$13,776	\$16,728	\$20,664

These numbers are somewhat arbitrary, but are based on a growth curve assumption, where student numbers are multiplied by the per-credit-hour money they would bring for enrolling.

Market Demand. This program is needed because data suggests that many graduates will get involved in sales when they finish their degree whether they intend to or not, student who wish to go into sales intentionally are more likely to get better jobs if there is a line on their resume indicated that they are qualified for sales jobs, and a sales certificate can increase the earning potential of our students, as indicated in the section above on “student demand.” [The Sales Education Foundation](#) has found that 50% of all graduating seniors take their first professional job in a sales or sales related role, and also that college graduates with a sales education hit the ground running, ramp up faster and have

better results their first year with far less turnover. The City Government of Louisville has launched [programs to train people as salespeople because of large numbers of unfilled positions](#).

Our intention is that this program will not replace another program on campus, but rather, that it will enable students in any program to be able to become a salesperson in a field directly or indirectly related to their major, and therefore to make any student more employable. Some students may earn the certificate without earning other degrees, but we expect this to be the exception and not the rule.

Another factor that can increase demand is for us to apply to be eligible as a program in which students can receive [work-ready scholarships](#). We will apply to become such a program as soon as we receive approval.

Employer Demand. Please see the table in Appendix A.

Academic Demand

1. This program is designed for students to enter the workforce immediately after graduation.
2. This program will not replace any existing programs or tracks, concentrations, or specializations. However, for those students who earn marketing degrees, it will make it easier for them to add a sales certificate with very few, if any, extra classes.
3. In the table below, we provide information about a similar program based on CIP codes. We conducted a search for similar programs at <https://dataportal.cpe.ky.gov/KYAcademicProgInventory.aspx>, and the only program identified was the one we report on below. There are other programs throughout the country, but this is the only comparable program in a 4-year public university in Kentucky.

Even the University of Kentucky program is not fully comparable. The description of Kentucky’s program reads: “The Sales Certificate Program is a non-transcripted credential for students interested in acquiring sales skills that are broadly applicable to a variety of careers. ... This is not a credit-bearing experience and it is not transcripted, but is a way for students in any major to build sales skills, which are very likely to be a part of the first jobs they will seek out of college.” Further, enrollment at UK is limited, so given this cap, and given the demand projected, competition for students with UK is highly unlikely.

There are over 150 sales programs that have been created in the country over the last 17 years and they still do not meet demand. Ken Hartung, one of our faculty members who teaches the sales classes, left a sales education program in Ohio in 2014 when there were 250 students. Now the program has 600+. The demand from the business world for students with a sales education in college far outweighs the supply. In Ohio, there are at least five universities with formal sales centers and more coming.

Similar Program 1:	
Institution: University of Kentucky	
Program Name: Undergraduate Certificate in Sales	
Comparison of Objectives/Focus/Curriculum to Similar Programs: <i>Explain the differences in curriculum, focus,</i>	UK’s program also involves four required classes, but requires an elective as well. Three of the required classes are nearly identical (i.e., Principles of Marketing, Professional Relationship Sales, Sales Leadership). For the fourth class, UK requires “Digital Marketing

<p><i>and/or objectives. If the proposed program curriculum does not differ substantially from existing programs, then <u>describe potential collaborations with other institutions.</u></i></p>	<p>Strategy and Sales,” while we require “Consultative Sales.” For the elective classes, UK options include Negotiations and Conflict Resolution or Entrepreneurship and Venture Creation, while UofL options include Marketing Internship, Supply Chain Management, Business to Business Marketing, Social Media Marketing I, or Services Marketing.</p> <p>The UK certificate is 100% face-to-face. The UofL certificate can offer the option of face-to-face or online for Principles of Marketing.</p>
<p>Comparison of Student Populations: <i>Describe how your target student population is different from those at other institutions and explain how your program reaches this new population (e.g. the proposed program is completely online while other programs are face-to-face or hybrid).</i></p>	<p>The UK option is only open to marketing majors. The UofL option is open to all students, including students who are not enrolled in the University of Louisville for any other purpose.</p>
<p>Access to Existing Programs: <i>Explain how/why existing programs cannot reach your target population and/or provide evidence that existing programs do not have the capacity to meet current student demand (e.g. the number of students on enrollment waiting list).</i></p>	<p>A marketing major could take each of the classes in this elective, but if s/he did so, his/her transcript and resume would still show no evidence of sales expertise on the job market.</p> <p>Also, a sales certificate makes it possible for students who do not want to major in marketing to earn credentials for a sales job.</p>
<p>Feedback from Other Institutions: <i>Summarize the feedback from colleagues at institutions with similar programs.</i></p>	<p>To: Dr. Ryan Quinn Assistant Dean, College of Business University of Louisville</p> <p>Dear Ryan,</p> <p>I am providing feedback per the request from Prof. Ken Hartung regarding the “Letter of Intent for Proposed Undergraduate Certificate in Sales” at University of Louisville.</p> <p>I am currently leading the sales program here at Ivy College of Business- Iowa State University. In the past, I chaired the taskforce to develop Iowa State’s Undergraduate Sales Certificate.</p> <p>It is vital that sales education is given to undergraduate students. Research studies suggest that approximately 80% of marketing majors accept a sales position on graduation and notably, 60% of all business students will take a job with at least some sales-related duties after graduation. Sales program graduates are likely to generate higher revenues and, lower retention costs for the companies that hire them. A recent article in the <i>Journal of Marketing Education</i> specifically states that a sales education allows</p>

companies to reduce the amount of time spent on training their salesforce, and increases the salesperson's time-to-productivity for the firm, generating an overall positive impact on firm profitability. Under such circumstances, it seems obligatory for business schools to prepare students for and expose them to these opportunities.

Undergraduate students will embrace such program to enhance their degree and employment possibilities. The certificate program can equip students with knowledge and skills related to developing and managing mutually beneficial relationships with customers. Such skills are desirable in every field and a sales certificate can cater to the educational needs of students irrespective of their majors.

At Iowa State University (ISU), we have seen a very strong and positive response from students as well as from business community. The strong experiential and applied components of the certificate support ISU's emphasis on "learning by doing". Students in this program apply the sales technology, skills and knowledge learned in the classroom by participating in role play exercises, sales presentations, industry-based cases studies and team projects, etc.

The future of sales education at the university level is bright. More universities are seeking to establish such programs as the need for sales talent is growing exponentially.

I will be happy to provide more information if you need.

Raj Agnihotri, Dean's Fellow in Marketing and Director of Ivy Sales Forum

Iowa State University

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Email: Raj2@iastate.edu

Thank you for asking me to comment on your consideration of a sales certificate at the University of Louisville.

You asked me to address the following questions:

1. Do you think it is a good idea to offer sales education to undergraduate students? Why?
2. Do you think undergraduates will embrace a sales education certificate? Why?
3. Do you think local and regional employers will want to hire graduating seniors for entry-level sales jobs who have a sales certificate in college? Why?
4. How your institution has benefited from having a sales education program and what it has meant to students.
5. Your outlook on the future of sales education programs at the university level. Is it increasing or declining?

6. Any other comments on the letter of intent; e.g. the courses being offered, the need for an internship, etc.

Basically, the answer to all of the questions you listed is YES!

We started the K-State Sales Program 10 years ago. We started with a certificate, and have since added a major in sales. Both programs have grown rapidly, with the growth driven by both company and student interest. The outlook for sales education is increasing. We don't see a drop-off in company demand or in student demand; in fact, we expect continued growth.

I've included some information that we use in recruiting, and also that I used when proposing the sales major, in case that information is helpful in the letter of intent.

Our stats include the following:

- 99% job placement rate (100% for the four years leading up to the pandemic).
- \$53,000 average starting salary
- 21 Corporate Partners recruiting our students and providing annual funding
- Roughly 200 students are involved each year

Students with education in professional selling are in high demand by industry, as evidenced by the outstanding placement rate enjoyed by Kansas State University students currently taking coursework through the Department of Marketing's National Strategic Selling Institute (NSSI). The reason for this placement rate is clear; sales talent is in high demand. According to a Manpower talent shortage survey and as reported in USA Today, sales representative is the second most difficult job to fill in today's workforce (Davidson 2013). Moreover, today's salesperson requires more technical knowledge and analytical skills to be successful. Demand is outstripping supply, and, consequently, the number of sales representatives making more than \$100,000 has increased 12% from 2010 to 2012, moving from 8% to 20% (Krogue 2013). This tracks with the excellent starting salaries received by our current NSSI graduates, which rank among the highest starting salaries in the college. Because of our success, the College considers the K-State National Strategic Selling Institute as one of its four spotlight programs designed to help the college achieve national recognition. Our program has also been identified as one of the top fundraising priorities for the college.

Sources:

	<p>Davidson, Paul (2013), "Bosses Lament: Sales Jobs Hard to Fill," USA Today, July 21, Accessed Online October 16, 2016: http://www.usatoday.com/story/money/business/2013/07/21/sales-job-openings/2568003/.</p> <p>Krogué, Ken (2013), "Inside Sales Jobs and Career Demand up 54%: But Most Leverage Comes with Dialer Software and Lead Research," Forbes, March 29, Accessed Online October 16, 2016: http://www.forbes.com/sites/kenkrogué/2013/03/29/inside-sales-job-and-career-growth-up-54-but-most-leverage-comes-with-dialer-software-and-lead-research/#70409e1560cb.</p> <p>The letter of intent seems quite reasonable. Companies do like a required internship; however, we only require the internship for our sales majors and simply recommend it strongly for our certificate students.</p> <p>Hopefully, this information is helpful; please let me know if you need anything else.</p> <p>Dawn Deeter-Schmelz Kansas State University</p>
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I. Funding Sources

1. **Will additional faculty be needed?** No.
2. **Faculty Workload** Initially, we do not expect changes in faculty workloads because all of the classes are already being offered. However, as the program becomes successful and the number of applicants grow, more classes may be added, increasing faculty workload. When this happens, the increased revenue from increased students will cover the cost of additional faculty workloads.
3. **Budgetary rationale.** As mentioned above, we anticipate no additional cost to run this certificate in the early phases, and we expect additional enrollment to cover the cost over time. We may invest some money in marketing/advertising, but this would be minimal and covered by the Dean’s office.
4. **Please provide a reasonable estimate of program expenditures related to marketing and outreach, as well as expenditures incurred by additional personnel needed to provide faculty training and/or assistance with instructional design.** We anticipate no initial costs other than, potentially, some marketing.
5. **Financial Resources and Program Impact.** The LOI should be developed without the expectation of special financial agreements with the Provost. If no internal allocation or reallocation has been committed to the new program, leave that row blank. Projected tuition revenues should go in the “Other revenues” row of the table (and label it as tuition). This certificate will be included on the UofL Online website and in materials used at recruiting events. Additionally, Delphi Center will include the certificate when

appropriate in paid ads for undergraduate programs. Delphi Center will not allocate program-specific advertising funds for the certificate due to the limited funds available.

Projected Revenues	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Five-year Total
General Funds (internal reallocation)	\$9,840	\$11,808	\$13,776	\$16,728	\$20,664	\$72,816
Grants or Gifts, list each one	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other revenues, list each one	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total Projected Revenues	\$9,840	\$11,808	\$13,776	\$16,728	\$20,664	\$72,816

6. New Resource Requirements – Describe the need for any new or additional resources necessary to implement the proposal. Document the expected cost/expenditures in the table below:

Projected Expenses	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5		Five-year Total	
	#	Cost	#	Cost	#	Cost	#	Cost	#	Cost	#	Cost
Faculty Lines (full-time, adjunct or part-time faculty)	0	0	0	0	0	0	3 (adjunct)	\$15,000	3 (adjunct)	\$15,000	6	\$30,000
Graduate Assistant Positions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Library Support		0		0		0		0		0		0
Facilities, technology or equipment		0		0		0		0		0		0
Other (please describe below the table)*		\$5,000		\$5,000		\$3,000		\$3,000		\$3,000		\$19,000
Total Projected Expenses		\$5,000		\$5,000		\$3,000		\$18,000		\$18,000		\$49,000

*Marketing

Online Delivery

At present, no online courses will be added for this certificate. As mentioned above, one of the courses is already available online.

Appendix A. Employer Demand.

This program is designed for students to enter the workforce immediately.

Type of Job (with CIP code)	Regional Avg Wage	Regional # of openings	Regional Growth Projections (%)	State Avg Wage	State # of openings	State Growth Projections (%)	National Avg Wage	National # of openings	National Growth Projections (%)
52.1801 - Sales/ Distribution/ Marketing Operations, General	\$70,371	818	0.2%	\$67,171	842	0.2%	\$70,342	83,751	0.2%
52.1804 – Selling Skills and Sales Operations	\$47,045	484	-0.1%	\$44,773	551	-0.2%	\$44,946	65,240	-0.2%

Employer Demand Resources:

Growth projections are for 10 years. Number of openings are yearly. Data come from [Gray Associates PES+](#)