



**NEW OPERATING AND/OR DEGREE-GRANTING AUTHORITY
FOR INDEPENDENT INSTITUTIONS**

Submitted for: Action.

Summary: New independent institutions, institutions planning to operate at a new location, including a location outside the higher education region of original operating authority, and out-of-state institutions planning to operate in Illinois for the first time are required to obtain authorization to operate. These institutions are also required to obtain authorization for each new degree program.

Action Requested: That the Illinois Board of Higher Education approves the recommendations to grant degree-granting authority and/or operating authority to the following institutions:

Proprietary

ATS Institute of Technology

- Operating Authority in the Chicago Region

DeVry University

- Operating Authority in the Western Region



STATE OF ILLINOIS
BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

**NEW OPERATING AND/OR DEGREE-GRANTING AUTHORITY
FOR INDEPENDENT INSTITUTIONS**

The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) has responsibility for administration of The Private College Act (110 ILCS 1005) and The Academic Degree Act (110 ILCS 1010). Under these statutes, new independent institutions, institutions planning to operate at a new location, including a location outside the higher education region of original operating authority, and out-of-state institutions planning to operate in Illinois for the first time are required to obtain authorization to operate. These institutions also are required to obtain authorization for each new degree program.

Applications for new operating and degree-granting authority submitted by independent Illinois institutions and out-of-state institutions are reviewed by the staff. Recommendations are developed by applying criteria for operating and/or degree-granting authority, which are defined in the rules adopted for administration of the statutes and Board policies on assessment of student learning and specialized accreditation requirements for student licensure. These criteria encompass educational objectives, institution and degree titles, curricula, facilities, faculty and administrator qualifications, student policies, publications, records, compliance with pertinent laws, and fiscal stability. Staff recommendations are based on analyses of application materials, responses to questions, and site visits. Out-of-region sites are defined as sites located within an IBHE approval region other than the region within which an institution's original operating authority was granted. There are ten IBHE approval regions; each is coterminous with one or more community college districts. Approval to operate within a new approval region entitles an institution to operate throughout the region, and not solely at the site at which the institution initially applied. In addition to the approval criteria in rules, each new program was reviewed for its contributions to the goals of *A Thriving Illinois: Higher Education Pathways to Equity, Sustainability, and Growth*, which sets forth new priorities to guide Illinois higher education. Staff recommendations are based on analyses of application materials and responses to staff questions.

Proprietary Executive Summary

ATS Institute of Technology

- Operating Authority in the Chicago Region

ATS Institute of Technology (ATS or the Institute) is seeking authorization to operate in the Chicago region. Established in 1997, ATS Institute of Technology is a private, proprietary institution specializing in nursing education and allied health programs with multiple locations in Georgia and Illinois. In 2011, IBHE granted ATS Institute of Technology authorization to operate and grant the Practical Nursing certificate in the Chicago region. Due to student interest and the long-term success of the practical nursing program, the Institute plans to expand its academic portfolio in Illinois by offering an Associate of Applied Science in Nursing (AASN) program. Graduates of the program



will be prepared to meet the increasing demand for registered nurses, especially in critical areas such as hospitals, outpatient centers, and home healthcare services. The proposed operation will enhance the educational outcomes for students and contribute to the development of well-trained nurses equipped to deliver quality patient care in a variety of healthcare settings. There are policies in place to ensure faculty possess the training, credentials, and qualifications to provide instruction. The Institute has sufficient library, technology, and financial resources to support the proposed operation.

Approval request summary, including staff conclusion, follows in Attachment xxx.

DeVry University

- Operating Authority in the Western Region

DeVry University (DeVry or the University) is seeking authorization to operate in the Western region. Founded in 1931, DeVry University has a long history of preparing learners to thrive in careers shaped by continuous technological change. Through innovative programs, relevant partnerships, and exceptional care, DeVry strives to close the workforce opportunity gap and address emerging talent needs by empowering students to upskill, reskill, and gain new competencies that advance their careers. The University plans to offer dual credit courses to students at Mercer County School District through DeVry University's Advantage Academy. This two-year dual credit program is designed for high school students to earn an Undergraduate Certificate in Programming Essentials. The certificate focuses on concepts in coding, programming, and computing concepts. There are institutional policies to ensure faculty possess the training, credentials, and qualifications to provide instruction. The University has sufficient library, technology, and financial resources to support the proposed operation.

Approval request summary, including staff conclusion, follows in Attachment xxx.

The staff recommends adoption of the following resolutions:

The Illinois Board of Higher Education hereby grants ATS Institute of Technology authorization to operate in the Chicago region subject to the institution's implementation and maintenance of the conditions that were presented in its application and that form the basis upon which this authorization is granted.

The Illinois Board of Higher Education hereby grants DeVry University authorization to operate in the Western region subject to the institution's implementation and maintenance of the conditions that were presented in its application and that form the basis upon which this authorization is granted.



ATS Institute of Technology
25 E. Washington Street, Suite 200
Chicago, IL 60602
Chief Executive Officer: Yelena Bykov

Seeking Operating Authority: Chicago Region

Institutional Accreditation: ATS Institute of Technology is accredited by the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES).

Background and History

ATS Institute of Technology (ATS or the Institute) is a private, proprietary institution seeking authorization to operate in the Chicago region. ATS was incorporated in the State of Ohio in 1997 and was approved in the same year by the Ohio State Board of Career Colleges and Schools as a Computer and Communication Center to offer a Diploma in Computer Programming. In 2000, the Institute changed its name to ATS Institute of Technology, and in 2009, the corporation changed its name to MDT College of Health Sciences, Inc. Over time, ATS expanded its academic offerings to include computerized accounting, business, and healthcare programs. The Institute is owned and operated by MDT College of Health Sciences, Inc. and specializes in nursing education and allied health programs with multiple locations in Georgia and Illinois.

In 2011, the Institute was approved by IBHE's Private Business and Vocational Schools division to operate in the Chicago region and grant the Practical Nursing (PN) certificate. The Institute transitioned its institutional accreditation from the Accrediting Commission of Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS) to the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES) in 2017 and, in 2020, designated Illinois as its main campus after completing a teach-out plan at the Ohio location. Recently, in 2023, the Institute added a new campus in Georgia offering diploma programs in medical assisting and dental assisting.

With this application, ATS plans to expand its academic operations in Illinois by offering an Associate of Applied Science in Nursing (AASN) program due to strong student interest and the long-term success of its PN program. Graduates of the program will meet the requirements for registered nurse (RN) licensure while addressing nursing shortages in critical areas such as home health, long-term care, and outpatient care. Thus, the proposed operation will enhance the educational outcomes for students and contribute to the development of well-trained nurses equipped to deliver quality patient care in a variety of healthcare settings.

Institutional Data

1030.30(a)(3)(F): Success in student progression and graduation across all existing approved programs, and success rates in programs preparing students for certification and licensure, shall be consistent with expectations in higher education and the appropriate related field of study. At a minimum, the Board shall consider the following factors, based on results for similar institutions: (i) Graduation rates, certificate and degree completion rates, retention rates, and pass rates for licensure and certification aligned with thresholds set by State or national regulatory bodies; and (ii) Success rate, which shall be, at a minimum, higher than that of the lowest quartile of these measures for similar Illinois institutions defined as open versus competitive enrollment institutions and primarily associate versus primarily baccalaureate granting institutions. Exceptions may be made to the lowest quartile if



an institution is above the national average for these measures using the same comparison categories of institutions.

1030.30(a)(3)(G): Additional student success measures shall be considered in the review of applications for authorization. The Board shall establish minimum rates of success based on results for similar institutions or thresholds set by State or federal regulatory bodies. i) At a minimum these data shall include student loan default rates, student indebtedness rates, job placement rates, student learning measures and other success indicators. ii) Institutions that participate in Federal Student Loan programs shall have 3-year Official Cohort Default rates no higher than 25 percent. Institutions with Federal Financial Responsibility Composite Scores shall have a score that is no lower than 1.0. Institutions that fail to meet these thresholds may be restricted from implementing new certificate or degree programs. iii) The success rate shall be, at a minimum, higher than that of the lowest quartile of these measures for similar Illinois institutions defined as open versus competitive enrollment institutions and primarily associate versus primarily baccalaureate granting institutions. Exceptions may be made to the lowest quartile if an institution is above the national average for these measures using the same comparison categories of institutions.

Undergraduate data is not provided for ATS Institute of Technology since the institution has not operated as a degree-granting institution in Illinois.

Need

1050.30(a)(6): A) The unit of instruction, research or public service is educationally and economically consistent with the educational priorities and needs of the State of Illinois. B) The unit of instruction, research or public service meets a need that is not currently met by existing institutions and units of instruction, research or public service.

ATS Institute of Technology's proposed operation reflects both external labor market demand and internal readiness to deliver an accredited nursing program aligned with the needs of Illinois' healthcare workforce. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects a five percent increase of RN employment nationwide between 2024 to 2034, resulting in an approximately 189,100 new positions each year over the decade. Locally, the Illinois Department of Employment Security estimates a 3.09 percent rise in RN openings from 2022 to 2032, adding 7,963 positions annually statewide. Furthermore, the Health Resources and Services Administration projects a continuing and significant RN shortage in Illinois through 2032, driven largely by retirements, an aging population, and persistent disparities in healthcare access across rural and urban regions. The data signals that the nursing workforce is facing a significant supply and demand imbalance. The proposed operation will play a pivotal role in addressing this shortfall by meeting the need for highly skilled RNs across various sectors. To gauge student interest, the Institute distributed a survey to 100 graduates from its existing PN program. Over 70 percent of respondents expressed a high level of interest in pursuing an AASN at the Institute if offered. This internal pipeline will ensure a consistent supply of candidates ready to meet market demand and provide an educational pathway for PN students to advance into RN roles.

A Thriving Illinois: Higher Education Paths to Equity, Sustainability, and Growth

Supportive of A Thriving Illinois: Goal 1, Equity, to close the equity gaps for students who have historically been left behind, ATS Institute of Technology is committed to offering a high-quality, accessible postsecondary education that supports the needs of working adults through flexible scheduling, targeted resources, and a curriculum that emphasizes practical, career-ready skills. As such, ATS utilizes inclusive practices and support systems including diverse recruitment strategies,



outreach programs, a culturally relevant curriculum, and dedicated support services. The Institute serves a large population of underrepresented students, including racially diverse groups and working adults. More than 90 percent of ATS students receive federal Pell grants, and approximately 60 percent of the student body is aged 30 or older. ATS removes barriers to educational access through open-enrollment practices, no application fees or entrance exam fees, and flexible scheduling options that include nights, weekends, and hybrid instruction. ATS tailors its programs to support adult learners, first-generation college students, and students previously unable to complete postsecondary credentials.

The Institute's retention policies and processes are structured to comprehensively support student success and program completion through several key initiatives. Student retention is driven by early and proactive interventions such as the Academic Monitoring Program with personalized support, including Focused Learning Seminar participation and continuous monitoring. The Focused Learning Seminar is a mandatory weekly session to discuss course content and exam preparation with a small group of students. Additionally, the Dean of Nursing monitors student progress throughout the semester, identifying areas of improvement and collaborating with instructors to support students in meeting their academic goals. ATS also offers a first-semester bootcamp along with success strategy sessions featuring topics on time management, test-taking, and stress management. The Institute has a Community Closet on campus to address students' basic needs by providing food and personal items.

ATS has developed a comprehensive onboarding process designed to promote inclusive hiring practices. The Institute provides clear, well-developed job descriptions tailored to attract qualified candidates from diverse backgrounds. New hires meet with key administrators and staff and participate in a structured mentorship period, shadowing experienced faculty and staff for one semester to ensure a seamless transition. Progress in these initiatives is continuously monitored through data collection on recruitment, retention, and promotion of faculty and staff of color. This data is regularly reviewed by leadership to identify trends, address challenges, and adapt strategies as needed. Through these efforts, ATS upholds a sustained commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion supporting the success of faculty and staff while enhancing the Institute's educational mission and community impact.

The proposed operation will contribute to *A Thriving Illinois: Goal 2, Sustainability, to build a stronger financial future for individuals and institutions by finding ways to reduce the financial burden of education on students and their families.* Financial support and counseling are provided to help students navigate funding options and manage educational expenses. The Institute assists students in applying for state and federal financial aid such as the Illinois Student Assistance Commission scholarship, Pell grants, and the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity grant. Financial literacy workshops are offered to help students make informed decisions about financing their education. These workshops cover topics such as budgeting, managing student loans, and finding additional financial aid resources. ATS also offers merit-based scholarships, employer tuition reimbursement matching, interest-free payment plans, and personalized financial aid counseling. Through these comprehensive financial services, the Institute ensures that students have the tools to succeed financially while pursuing their educational goals.

In alignment with *A Thriving Illinois: Goal 3, Growth, to increase talent and innovation to drive economic growth,* ATS Institute of Technology actively engages with business and industry through strategic partnerships with local, regional, and state stakeholders. The Institute's advisory board is comprised of representatives from local hospitals, clinics, long-term care facilities, and community



health organizations. The board offers invaluable insights into industry trends, workforce needs, and evolving skill requirements which directly inform curriculum development. ATS collaborates with healthcare systems across Chicago to secure clinical placements and employment opportunities for students. The proposed operation will help strengthen Illinois' healthcare ecosystem and promote workforce readiness in the nursing industry.

Comparable Programs in Illinois

Currently, several institutions in Illinois offer associate degree programs in nursing; however, only two institutions, Instituto College and Malcolm X College, are located in the immediate Chicago region. ATS Institute of Technology's proposed operation will provide hands-on clinical training that prepares graduates to meet the growing demand for nursing professionals in both hospital and community healthcare organizations. Additionally, ATS offers extensive academic and wraparound support services such as the Keep Inspiring Nurses Daily (KIND) program with a holistic retention model; nursing mentorship program for final-semester students preparing for the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN); proactive engagement monitoring and academic interventions; Learning and Study Strategies Inventory assessments with individualized learning plans; tutoring; intrusive academic advising; and weekly Focused Learning Seminars. These services have contributed to the success of the Institute's existing PN program, significantly reducing student attrition and improving completion and nursing licensure pass rates.

Comparable Associate Degree Programs Nursing			
Institution	Degree	Region	Sector
Ambria College of Nursing	A.A.S. in Nursing	North Suburban	Independent, For-profit
Instituto College	A.A.S. in Nursing	Chicago	Independent, Not-for-profit
Judson University	A.A.S. in Nursing	Fox Valley	Independent, Not-for-profit
Malcolm X College	A.A.S. in Nursing	Chicago	Public
Rasmussen University	A.S. in Professional Nursing	South Metro	Independent, For-profit (Out of State)
		Fox Valley	

Source: Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) Program Inventory and IBHE Program Inventory

Mission and Objectives

Criterion 1030.60(a)(1) provides that the objectives of the degree program(s) must be consistent with what the degree program title(s) imply.

Criterion 1030.60(a)(2) provides that the requested degree program shall be congruent with the purpose, goals, objectives and mission of the institution.

The mission of ATS Institute of Technology "is to create and provide a high-quality educational experience to each individual student seeking to establish a successful career. The



college is committed to offering health care programs designed to satisfy local and regional demands and equip students with a wide range of academic knowledge.” The proposed operation is consistent with the purpose, goals, objectives, and mission of the Institute.

Curriculum / Assessment

1030.30(a)(3): The caliber and content of each course or program of instruction, training or study shall be reasonable and adequate for achieving the stated objectives for which the course or program is offered. An undergraduate curriculum shall include general education in alignment with the degree level and objectives.

1030.60(a)(4): The caliber and content of the curriculum shall assure that the stated certificate or degree objectives for which the program is offered will be achieved.

Admission Requirements

Admission to the Associate of Applied Science in Nursing program requires Illinois residency with a valid state issued ID, a high school diploma or equivalent, a minimum score of 263 in Math and 250 in English and Writing on the Accuplacer exam, and a clear Health Care Worker Registry status in Illinois. In addition to the general admissions requirements for the AASN program, prospective Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN) who would like to enroll in the LPN Transition pathway must submit official transcripts for a completed Practical Nursing program from an accredited institution recognized by the U.S. Department of Education or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, with a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher at the time of graduation; have an unencumbered Illinois LPN license; and pass the NACE Foundation of Nursing exam before completing the Accuplacer exam.

Curriculum

The proposed operation aligns with the Institute’s mission of providing a high-quality education that meets the evolving needs of the healthcare industry and caters to diverse student populations. The AASN program is designed to prepare students for the NCLEX-RN exam and incorporates an evidence-based curriculum emphasizing patient-centered care, clinical judgment, interprofessional collaboration, communication skills, and cultural awareness. ATS provides students with hands-on learning opportunities under the supervision of experienced faculty that bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world practice. Students will gain extensive clinical experience across hospitals, outpatient centers, long-term care facilities, and community-based healthcare organizations. The program also integrates high-fidelity simulation experiences using adult, pediatric, and specialty-care simulation models to prepare students for real-world emergencies and complex care scenarios. Graduates of the program will possess the necessary knowledge and skills to practice successfully as registered nurses in a variety of settings with diverse patient populations.

ATS has established comprehensive student support systems including its KIND program which offers retention-focused wraparound services such as tutoring, academic advising, mental health support, study-skills coaching, structured mentoring, and targeted interventions for at-risk



students. The curriculum is mapped to current NCLEX test plans, and ATS utilizes systematic assessment practices including Program Effectiveness Plans guided by ABHES and aligned with Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) standards. Faculty receive ongoing training in assessment, simulation, and student engagement strategies, ensuring alignment between instruction and the program's learning outcomes.

Assessment of Student Learning

ATS Institute of Technology has established formal policies and procedures for measuring student progress and achievement through formative and summative assessments. Student learning is assessed using several methods including written exams, assignments, projects, comprehensive finals, clinical competency evaluations, and Mountain Measurement reports (NCLEX performance). Assessment tools are utilized within the the Learning Management System (LMS), Brightspace, and ExamSoft Software. Publisher platforms such as F.A. Davis are also used for formative assessments such as quizzes, student exercises, and case studies. Course evaluations, clinical affiliate surveys, advisory board meetings, graduate surveys, and employer surveys assess student preparedness and employability.

Program Assessment

Program assessment at ATS Institute of Technology is a continuous and systematic process of quality assurance. The Institute utilizes ABHES and ACEN criteria to establish annual program goals for retention, placement, and licensure outcomes. Program effectiveness is monitored through the Institute's Program Effectiveness Plan, and programs are revised based on feedback from internal and external stakeholders. Program assessment data is analyzed by the Dean of Nursing and the Exam Review Committee to improve student outcomes and program quality.

Facilities (space, equipment, instructional materials)

1030(a)(4) and 1030.60(a)(5): The institution shall have adequate and suitable space, equipment and instructional materials to support institutional programs.

The Institute's existing facilities are adequate for the proposed operation. To support implementation of the AASN program, ATS will continue operating at its current campus at 25 E. Washington Street and expand its facilities through a planned build-out and renovation of additional space within the building. The expansion will enhance instructional and simulation capacity while maintaining continuity of operations at the existing campus. The expanded campus space will enhance the overall student experience by providing larger classrooms, expanded labs, improved accessibility, and dedicated simulation suites for high-fidelity learning. The design prioritizes comfort, efficiency, and engagement, creating a campus that is more cohesive and student-centered. Key spatial highlights include multiple classrooms along the perimeter for natural light and flexible seating; two large skills labs with hospital beds; headwall mock-ups, equipment storage; a simulation suite with adult and pediatric high-fidelity simulators; control/debrief rooms; student resource room/library providing access to reference materials; a testing center; faculty offices and lounge; a student lounge; staff offices; and an expanded IT room to house servers, network equipment, and charging stations for laptop carts to support testing. The expansion and renovation are scheduled for completion in August 2026 prior to the launch of AASN instruction.



Current library collections, resources, and services are sufficient to support the proposed operation. The Institute possesses appropriate library resources including access to online databases, books, and journal holdings to support instruction and scholarly work. The AASN program will utilize various electronic databases such as ProQuest which features 17,000+ full textbooks, 700+ scholarly journal articles from multiple publishers, 350+ instructional nursing skills videos endorsed by medical professionals, and a broad spectrum of literature to support research efforts. ATS also utilizes specialized nursing education software such as Shadow Health and Virtual Assessment Technologies Institute for skills training and assessment. The Institute is a member of the Library and Information Resources Network with professional librarian support and LMS-integrated authentication.

Faculty and Staff

1030.30(a)(5) and 1030.60(a)(6): The education, experience and other qualifications of directors, administrators, supervisors and instructors shall ensure that the students will receive education consistent with the objectives of the program.

Existing faculty and staff will support the proposed operation. ATS Institute of Technology has established hiring policies to ensure faculty possess the appropriate training, credentials, and experience to provide nursing instruction. The Institute prioritizes diversity in recruitment practices, and onboarding includes a structured one-semester mentorship and shadowing program to reinforce instructional consistency. Faculty are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure quality of instruction. Leadership monitors recruitment, retention, and advancement data for faculty and staff of color to ensure equitable representation and professional growth. Ongoing professional development focuses on assessment, simulation pedagogy, and evidence-based instruction to support continuous improvement in teaching quality and student outcomes.

Fiscal / Personnel Resources

1030.30(a)(11): The institution should be financially stable and capable of assuring the revenues needed for meeting stated objectives and fulfilling commitments to students; and

1030.60(a)(8): Fiscal and personnel resources shall be sufficient to permit the institution to meet obligations to continuing programs while assuming additional resource responsibilities for the new certificate or degree program.

ATS Institute of Technology has adequate faculty, staff, and other instructional resources for the proposed operation. The Institute has submitted fiscal plans indicating revenue will exceed operating expenditures over the next five years. Operational costs will be shared with the Institute's existing PN program including staffing, space, equipment, facility maintenance, IT hardware and software, and digital subscriptions. As the program develops, ATS plans to pursue additional external funding opportunities such as employer partnerships and workforce development grants.



Accreditation / Licensure

ATS Institute of Technology is institutionally accredited by ABHES. Upon IBHE approval, the Institute will seek ABHES approval for the AASN program and apply for ACEN programmatic accreditation. The Institute will also file a new program application with the Illinois Board of Nursing as required for pre-licensure nursing programs.

Program Information

1030.30(e): Publications and Information. Institutions shall be scrupulously ethical in all communication with the public and with prospective students. School publications, advertisements and statements shall be wholly accurate and in no way misleading; and

1030.60(a)(7): The information the institution provides for students and the public shall accurately describe the programs offered, program objectives, length of program, schedule of tuition, fees, and all other charges and expenses necessary for completion of the course of study, cancellation and refund policies, and such other material facts concerning the institution and the program or course of instruction as are likely to affect the decision of the student to enroll. This information, including any enrollment agreements or similar agreements, shall be available to prospective students prior to enrollment.

Detailed information about the proposed operation, including a description of the admission policies, institutional policies, tuition, fees, and curriculum, will be published on the Institute's website.

Staff Conclusion

The staff concludes that ATS Institute of Technology meets the criteria in Sections 1030.30 and 1030.60 of the rules to implement The Private College Act (110 ILCS 1005) and The Academic Degree Act (110 ILCS 1010) and the relating Illinois Administrative Code (Title 23 Section 1030) pertaining to the assessment and licensure of a postsecondary institution.



DeVry University
4225 Naperville Road, Suite 400
Lisle, IL 60532
President: Elise Awwad

Seeking Operating Authority: Western Region

Institutional Accreditation: DeVry University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC).

Background and History

DeVry University (DeVry or the University) is seeking authorization to operate in the Western region. Founded in 1931 by inventor-educator, Dr. Herman DeVry, the University has historically focused on career-relevant, technology-infused education for working adults and non-traditional learners. DeVry operates online and onsite nationally and emphasizes partnerships with employers to help learners upskill, reskill, and gain new competencies that advance their careers. The University's approach to education combines technology, personalized support, and a career-focused curriculum crafted in partnership with industry leaders and faculty. Driven by a commitment to care and workforce relevancy, DeVry's curriculum extends beyond theory by building students' knowledge and skill sets to tackle real-world challenges and master new tools, shaping their success and driving workplace innovation. The proposed operation leverages the University's existing online capacity to extend dual credit access to students at Mercer County School District through DeVry University's Advantage Academy (DUAA). This two-year dual credit program is designed for high school students to earn an Undergraduate Certificate in Programming Essentials. Students will learn the skills needed to write code and create applications using the industry recognized Python programming language. Graduates of the program will be prepared for entry-level technology roles in coding, programming, and telecommunications.

DUAA has partnered with Chicago Public Schools (CPS) since 2004 to provide eligible students with the opportunity to earn both a CPS high school diploma and an associate degree in Information Technology and Networking (Network Systems Administration specialization) or Business Administration. DUAA maintains a 100 percent graduation rate with nearly all graduates continuing to four-year colleges or universities contributing to more than 66,000 early college credits and resulting in substantial cost savings for participating families. The program has been recognized by the U.S. News & World Report, Chicago Parent, and other outlets demonstrating the effectiveness of DeVry's early college, dual degree model in preparing diverse students for advanced education and careers in business and technology. The proposed operation will build upon this proven model and expand the dual credit program to the Western region.

Institutional Data

1030.30(a)(3)(F): Success in student progression and graduation across all existing approved programs, and success rates in programs preparing students for certification and licensure, shall be consistent with expectations in higher education and the appropriate related field of study. At a minimum, the Board shall consider the following factors, based on results for similar institutions: (i) Graduation rates, certificate and degree completion rates, retention rates, and pass rates for licensure and certification aligned with thresholds set by State or national regulatory bodies; and (ii) Success rate, which shall be, at a minimum, higher than that of the lowest quartile of these measures for similar Illinois institutions defined as open versus competitive enrollment institutions and primarily associate

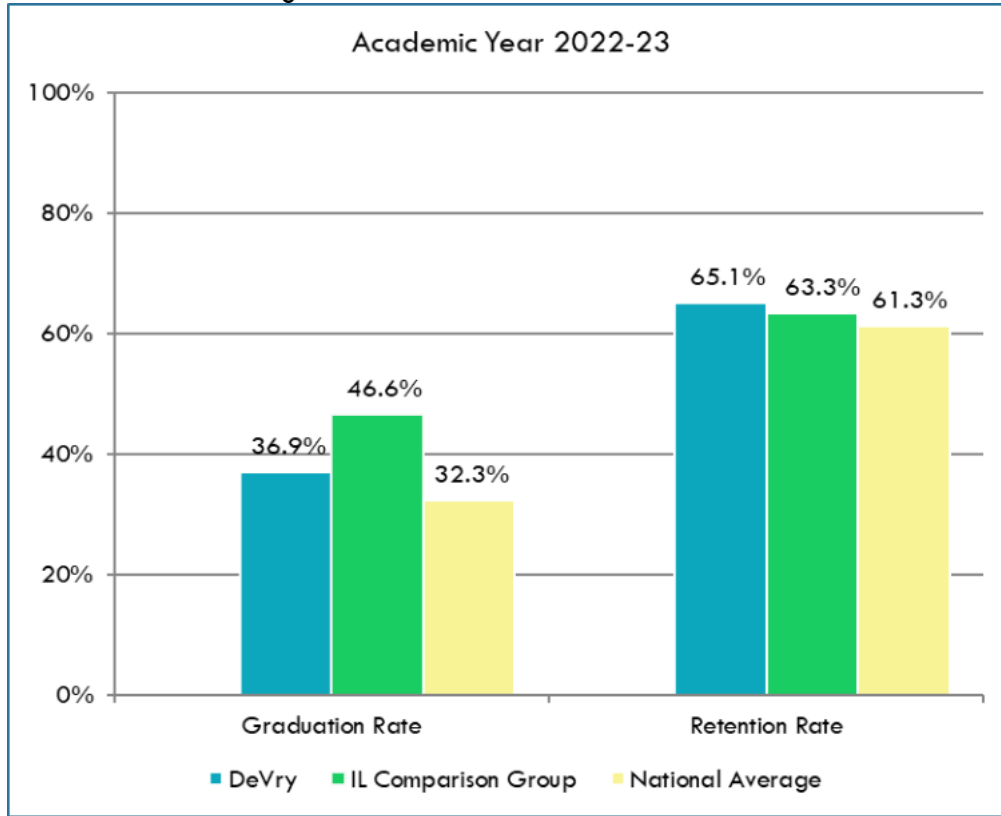


versus primarily baccalaureate granting institutions. Exceptions may be made to the lowest quartile if an institution is above the national average for these measures using the same comparison categories of institutions.

1030.30(a)(3)(G): Additional student success measures shall be considered in the review of applications for authorization. The Board shall establish minimum rates of success based on results for similar institutions or thresholds set by State or federal regulatory bodies. i) At a minimum these data shall include student loan default rates, student indebtedness rates, job placement rates, student learning measures and other success indicators. ii) Institutions that participate in Federal Student Loan programs shall have 3-year Official Cohort Default rates no higher than 25 percent. Institutions with Federal Financial Responsibility Composite Scores shall have a score that is no lower than 1.0. Institutions that fail to meet these thresholds may be restricted from implementing new certificate or degree programs. iii) The success rate shall be, at a minimum, higher than that of the lowest quartile of these measures for similar Illinois institutions defined as open versus competitive enrollment institutions and primarily associate versus primarily baccalaureate granting institutions. Exceptions may be made to the lowest quartile if an institution is above the national average for these measures using the same comparison categories of institutions.

This section includes information about institutional and student success measures for DeVry University. The institution's rates will be compared to Illinois institutions from within a select comparison group and against the national standards or averages. For a proposed undergraduate program, this section will include undergraduate graduation rates, first to second year retention rates, student loan default rates, and any applicable licensure passage rates. For a proposed graduate program, this section will primarily focus on student loan default data since this measure also includes graduate students in the calculation.

Undergraduate Graduation and Retention Rates



Source: National System for Education Statistics (NCES), U.S. Department of Education
 Note: DeVry University is in the four-year, inclusive Illinois comparison group.
 Higher percentages are positive indicators.

Undergraduate Graduation Rate

The graduation rate measures the rate at which entering freshmen graduate within 150 percent of normal program length. Data is provided for six-year graduation rates for first-time, full-time bachelor’s degree-seeking students and three-year graduation rates for full-time associate degree-seeking students. The national standard for graduation rates is reported annually by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

Undergraduate Retention Rate

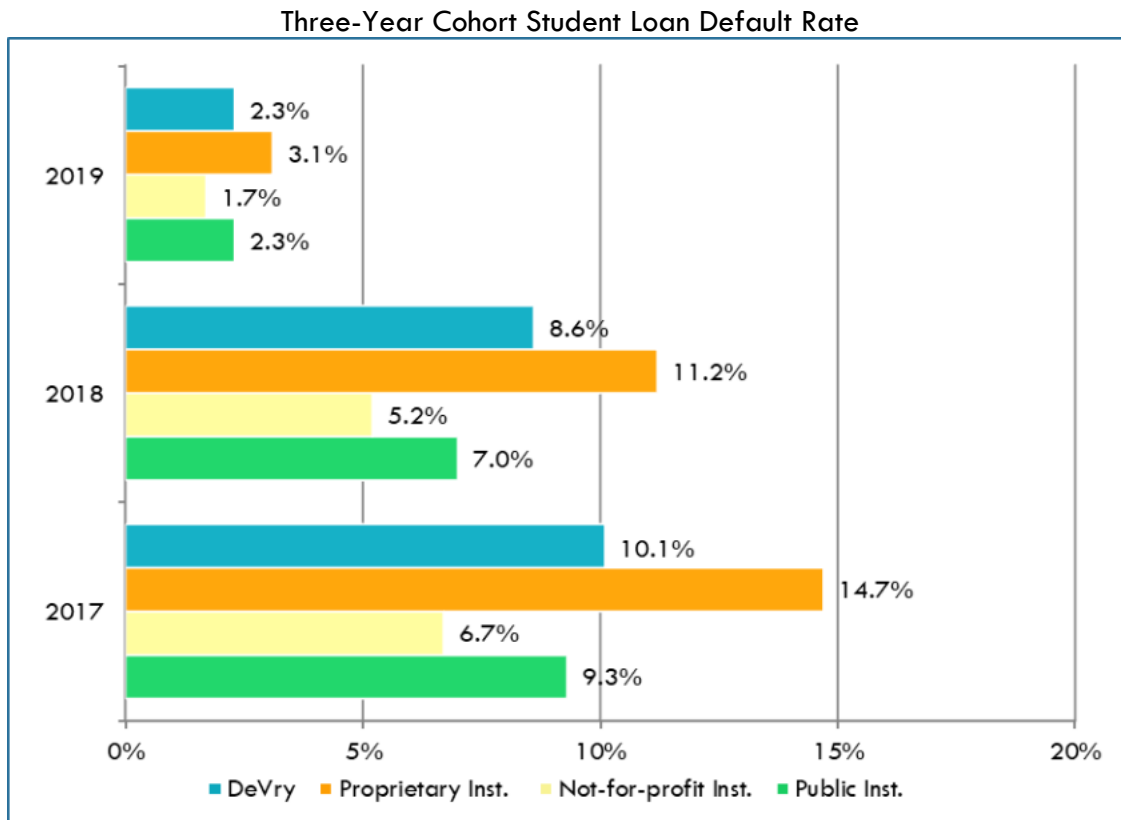
Retention rates examine the percentage of first-time, degree-seeking students enrolled in the fall of the prior year that are still enrolled in the fall of the current year. The national standard for retention rates is reported annually by NCES.

Undergraduate Completions per 100 FTE

Academic Year	DeVry University	Comparable Illinois Institutions
2022-23	42	32.4



The full-time equivalent (FTE) data is a unit of measurement intended to represent one student enrolled full time for one academic year. The calculation is based upon credit/contact hours offered at an institution divided by a standard minimum (12 credit hours) full-time course load. The completions per 100 FTE data are included to provide a holistic view of completion across different student populations.



Source: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), U.S. Department of Education

Note: Due to the pause on federal student loan payments that began in March 2020, the cohort default rate for fiscal year 2020 is zero percent for the institution and all institution types. The national cohort default rate for fiscal year 2019 was 2.3 percent and zero percent for fiscal years 2020 and 2021.

A lower number is a positive indicator.

The three-year cohort student loan default rate is the percentage of a school's borrowers who enter repayment on certain Federal Loan Programs during a particular federal fiscal year, October 1 to September 30, and default or meet other specified conditions prior to the end of the second following fiscal year.

Need

1050.30(a)(6): A) The unit of instruction, research or public service is educationally and economically consistent with the educational priorities and needs of the State of Illinois. B) The unit of instruction, research or public service meets a need that is not currently met by existing institutions and units of instruction, research or public service.

The proposed dual credit program responds directly to expressed interest from Mercer County School District to collaborate with DeVry to expand dual credit opportunities that provide



students with a structured, college-level pathway into programming and IT while concurrently earning their high school diploma. A minimum of ten high school students will participate in the program beginning in their junior year to provide a cohort-based experience that supports student engagement and academic success.

Driven by the need for cloud computing, cybersecurity, and artificial intelligence (AI), businesses are increasingly relying on technology, cloud services, and remote work infrastructure necessitating the demand for skilled professionals in the computer industry. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts an eight percent employment growth rate for computer occupations (all other) from 2024 to 2034 with approximately 38,500 new job openings projected over the decade. The 2024 median annual salary for computer and information technology professionals with a bachelor's degree was \$108,970. Locally, the Illinois Department of Employment Security estimates a 9.23 percent employment growth rate for computer occupations from 2022 to 2032 with 1,619 new job openings projected each year.

DeVry plans to partner with Mercer County School District to increase postsecondary access for high school students while closing workforce opportunity gaps and responding to the emerging talent needs of a technology-driven economy. The dual credit program will provide high school students with early, structured exposure to coding and industry-aligned training that will accelerate postsecondary attainment and workforce entry. Participating students will complete an Undergraduate Certificate in Programming Essentials, earning college credit in programming languages, operating systems, and databases. The certificate stacks directly into higher level technology degrees at DeVry, supporting pathways to entry-level roles such as a junior programmer, software tester, and Tier I help desk technician which will advance the state's goals of providing equitable access to rigorous dual credit programs in rural and underserved regions.

A Thriving Illinois: Higher Education Paths to Equity, Sustainability, and Growth

Supportive of *A Thriving Illinois: Goal 1, Equity*, to close the equity gaps for students who have historically been left behind, DeVry University seeks to empower learners to upskill, reskill, and gain new competencies that advance their careers. DeVry is a leader in providing educational opportunities to a variety of learner populations, as demonstrated through its enrollment of demographically diverse undergraduate and graduate students. While the majority of students enrolled at DeVry are female, the representation of women employed in IT was just 27 percent in 2023 according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. To address this gap in the tech sector, the University designed the Women+Tech Scholars Program which provides networking, scholarship, and mentoring opportunities to help empower students to excel in the IT workforce.

DeVry University specializes in supporting working adults (many of whom pursue stackable credentials in business and technology fields) by offering flexible online and hybrid programs, 24-hour tutoring, and career-focused curricula designed for busy schedules. With a focus on practical skills in tech, business, and healthcare, DeVry provides personalized academic advising and career services to help students balance their education with work and family commitments. To further support its student body, the University hired a Chief Belonging and University Relations Officer in 2022 to lead DeVry's efforts to foster a strong sense of connection among students, faculty, and colleagues. Under her leadership, DeVry increased its faculty diversity from 24 percent in 2022 to 35 percent in 2024. The Chief Belonging and University Relations Officer also expanded DeVry's business resource groups to assist with recruiting talent, increasing retention, and supporting student engagement.



The proposed operation will contribute to *A Thriving Illinois: Goal 2, Sustainability, to build a stronger financial future for individuals and institutions by finding ways to reduce the financial burden of education on students and their families.* To increase college accessibility and affordability for students, DeVry has frozen tuition rates since 2020 and launched the Amnesty Initiative in 2021, awarding approximately 7,200 students with financial benefits totaling \$21.4 million. Additionally, the University offers a per credit hour military tuition rate of \$250 for undergraduate students and \$575 for graduate students. Moreover, admissions representatives and advisors assist students and their families in navigating the complexities of financial aid by discussing tuition and fees, course prerequisites, and program outcomes. These affordability measures, paired with transparent consumer information practices, support students' financial stability and informed decision-making.

In alignment with *A Thriving Illinois: Goal 3, Growth, to increase talent and innovation to drive economic growth,* DeVry University develops partnerships with companies to create and adapt its technology, healthcare, and business programs to meet workforce needs. These collaborations allow DeVry to stay on the forefront of industry trends. In consultation with industry experts, the Undergraduate Certificate in Programming Essentials was reviewed in DeVry's 2024 and 2025 National Advisory Committee meetings to ensure that program outcomes match employer expectations. The University plans to establish a dual credit partnership with Mercer County School District to offer the Undergraduate Certificate in Programming Essentials to high school students through DeVry University's Advantage Academy. The program will build a regional talent pipeline in programming fundamentals and accelerate degree completion for students who wish to further their education. Graduates of the program will have access to Hire DeVry, the University's career preparation and job posting platform, which offers extensive career development resources, connects students with one-on-one career coaching, and provides students with a job board platform to view job postings and interact with recruiters from participating companies.

Comparable Programs in Illinois

Currently, three institutions in Illinois offer certificate programs in computer programming, but there are no comparable programs in the Western Region. DeVry University's dual credit program builds students' foundational skills in programming, operating systems, and related technologies. Rather than preparing learners for a single static job title, the Undergraduate Certificate in Programming Essentials emphasizes durable, transferable computing competencies that can be applied in a range of tech industries. The program's design also intentionally supports first-time college learners through DeVry's Culture of Care approach, which combines proactive advising, early alerts, and coordinated academic support from enrollment through completion. The dual credit course delivery format is fully online with integrated electronic labs which will provide students with hands-on experience in programming and IT tools. Students will have access to academic assistance, technology support, and a designated DeVry faculty chair or academic leader who will collaborate with Mercer County School District staff to monitor student progress and intervene early if challenges arise.

Mercer County School District and DeVry will offer annual information sessions for students and parents that explain the certificate requirements, highlight how the coursework aligns with Illinois' innovation and technology priorities, and emphasize the benefits of beginning a college-level credential in high school. These sessions, along with ongoing communication and outreach, are designed to encourage students to participate in the dual credit program who are interested in technology careers or who may benefit from developing digital and problem-solving skills across other fields.



Comparable Certificate Programs Computer Programming			
Institution	Degree	Region	Sector
Danville Area Community College	Certificate in Computer Programming	Prairie	Public
Kishwaukee College	Certificate in Computer Programming	Fox Valley	Public
South Suburban College	Certificate in Microcomputer programming	South Metro	Public

Source: Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) Program Inventory

Mission and Objectives

Criterion 1030.60(a)(1) provides that the objectives of the degree program(s) must be consistent with what the degree program title(s) imply.

Criterion 1030.60(a)(2) provides that the requested degree program shall be congruent with the purpose, goals, objectives and mission of the institution.

DeVry University's mission is to "prepare learners to thrive, providing an education crafted with exceptional care, innovative programs and technological advancements." The proposed operation is consistent with the mission, goals, and objectives of the University.

Curriculum / Assessment

1030.30(a)(3): The caliber and content of each course or program of instruction, training or study shall be reasonable and adequate for achieving the stated objectives for which the course or program is offered. An undergraduate curriculum shall include general education in alignment with the degree level and objectives.

Admission

Students will be selected by the Mercer County School District to participate in the dual credit program through DeVry University's Advantage Academy. To be admitted to the dual credit program, students must have a cumulative 2.5 GPA, a 90 percent high school attendance rate, meet the Mercer County School District course requirements equivalent to the junior level, attend an information session with their parent or guardian, commit to the two-year dual credit program, and complete a DUAA program application. Students must also have a minimum score of 97 (Reading), 104 (Arithmetic), 112 (Algebra), and 04 (Writing/WritePlacer) on the CPT test.

For successful participation and matriculation in DeVry University's Advantage Academy, students are expected to maintain 90 percent class attendance; complete all assigned coursework and other requirements; adhere to the rules, regulations, and policies of Mercer County School



District and DeVry; maintain a 2.5 GPA; and return all course materials (e.g., books and supplies) upon the conclusion of program.

Curriculum

DeVry University is partnering with Mercer County School District to offer dual credit courses to high school junior and senior students via online delivery through DeVry University's Advantage Academy. The 22-credit hour program features nine credit hours of tech core courses, eight credit hours of information systems and programming courses, four credit hours of mathematics courses, and a 1 credit hour career preparation course. The program is designed to provide students with basic coding skills to maximize their understanding and use of software. Students will develop initial expertise to implement computer-based business solutions in information systems and earn an Undergraduate Certificate in Programming Essentials.

DeVry utilizes the Canvas Learning Management System which reinforces active learning and offers centralized student resources including course syllabi, assignments, tutorials, discussions, weekly milestones, and grade updates. Students are required to attend an orientation that includes a session on how to access and navigate the software.

Students will have access to DeVry's tutors where they can make appointments with subject expert faculty and Tutor.com for academic resources and support. The University provides tiered academic interventions to students as needed, including direct outreach and one-on-one support from faculty and mandatory weekly study hall sessions. Additionally, DeVry's Career Services provides career advising, resume and interview preparation, job search resources, and online job and internship postings. Career Services maintains employer relations with organizations across technology and related industries to understand their talent needs, share job and internship opportunities, and host virtual career fairs and employer information sessions.

Assessment of Student Learning

DeVry University has established formal policies and procedures for measuring student progress and achievement through formative and summative assessments. Student learning is assessed using several methods, including graded participation in team activities, threaded discussions, course assignments, projects, quizzes, exams, and e-portfolios. Faculty evaluate student work weekly (typically 20 to 30 percent of course grades are tied to engagement), and multiple assessment modalities bolster academic integrity.

Program Assessment

Program assessment at DeVry University occurs regularly and includes the evaluation of performance metrics such as student learning outcomes, course technology, feedback from industry and national advisory committees, career advising, student satisfaction, and alumni surveys. Comprehensive program reviews are conducted on a three-year cycle. Faculty curriculum committees review data workbooks and performance metrics, compile their findings, and forward recommendations to the University Assessment Committee and the Program Enhancement Committee. Any substantive changes are then submitted to the Executive Committee and the Board for final approval. Key recommendations are implemented for continuous improvement to ensure program viability and quality.



Facilities (space, equipment, instructional materials)

1030(a)(4): The institution shall have adequate and suitable space, equipment and instructional materials to support institutional programs.

Existing facilities, technology, software, and instructional materials are sufficient to support the proposed operation. Although the dual credit program is fully online, students will have access to DeVry University's support services, including tutoring and career services. Instructional materials and technology include e-books provided by Cengage (MindTap platform); Wiley (Zybook platform); Microsoft AZURE Lab Environment; Python, SQL and C++ software; and Linux.

The University possesses appropriate library resources, including access to online databases, books, journal holdings, and other electronic resources to support instruction and scholarly work. The DeVry University Library provides 24-hour access to a digital collection of over 300,000 e-books and more than 100,000 electronic journals and databases such as EBSCOhost, ProQuest, HeinOnline, ABI/Inform, Plunkett Research, and IEEE Xplore. The library is staffed by an experienced team of library professionals, each with a master's degree from an American Library Association accredited program.

Faculty and Staff

1030.30(a)(5): The education, experience and other qualifications of directors, administrators, supervisors and instructors shall ensure that the students will receive education consistent with the objectives of the program.

Existing DeVry faculty will provide instruction in the dual credit program. The University has identified institutional policies that ensure faculty and staff possess the training, credentials, and other related qualifications to provide instruction. The Center for Teaching Excellence offers ongoing professional development, pedagogy training, and tooling for faculty (e.g., Kaltura, WebEx, and VoiceThread). The University has a formal faculty evaluation process, and faculty are reviewed regularly to maintain instructional quality. Course evaluations are conducted each semester, and the results are used to identify faculty strengths, recognize areas of growth and excellence, and address opportunities for further development.

DeVry has a long-standing commitment to inclusivity, which is an outgrowth of the University's mission as an access-oriented institution. In 2022, DeVry hired a Chief Belonging and University Relations Officer to lead efforts to foster a stronger sense of connection among students, faculty, and colleagues. Under her leadership, DeVry increased its faculty diversity from 24 percent in 2022 to 35 percent in 2024. The Chief Belonging and University Relations Officer also expanded DeVry's business resource groups to assist with recruiting talent, increasing retention, and supporting student engagement.

Fiscal / Personnel Resources

1030.30(a)(11): The institution should be financially stable and capable of assuring the revenues needed for meeting stated objectives and fulfilling commitments to students; and



The University has adequate faculty, staff, and other instructional resources to support the proposed operation. Operational costs will be mainly supported by tuition revenue. Tuition for the dual credit program will be paid directly to DeVry University by the Mercer County School District under a district-approved contract at \$250 per credit hour. Existing DeVry faculty and staff will provide instruction and administer the dual credit program.

Accreditation / Licensure

DeVry University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. Specialized accreditation or licensure is not required for the dual credit program.

Program Information

1030.30(e): Publications and Information. Institutions shall be scrupulously ethical in all communication with the public and with prospective students. School publications, advertisements and statements shall be wholly accurate and in no way misleading; and

Detailed information about the proposed operation, including a description of the admission policies, institutional policies, tuition, fees, and curriculum, will be published on the University's website.

Staff Conclusion

The staff concludes that DeVry University meets the criteria in Sections 1030.30 and 1030.60 of the rules to implement The Private College Act (110 ILCS 1005) and The Academic Degree Act (110 ILCS 1010) and the relating Illinois Administrative Code (Title 23 Section 1030) pertaining to the assessment and licensure of a postsecondary institution.

