COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION
Thursday, November 13, 2025

NEW BUSINESS ITEM C: **Academic Degree Programs for Expedited Action**

Staff Recommendation

That the Commission for Higher Education approve the following degree programs, in accordance with the background information provided in this agenda item:

Indiana University Bloomington

- Bachelor of Science in Sports Media to be offered by Indiana University Bloomington (On Campus Only)
- Bachelor of Science in Robotics to be offered by Indiana University Bloomington (On Campus Only)

Purdue University West Lafayette

- Master of Science in Strategy in Security and Defense Technologies (Online Only)

Background

The Academic Affairs and Quality Committee discussed these programs at its October 27, 2025 meeting and concluded that the proposed programs could be placed on the November 13, 2025 agenda for action by the Commission as an expedited action item.

Supporting Document

Academic Degree Programs on Which Staff Proposed Expedited Action on October 27, 2025

CHE 25-22 Bachelor of Science in Sports Media to be offered by Indiana University Bloomington

Proposal received on September 15, 2025

CIP Code: 9.0906

Fifth Year Projected Enrollment: Headcount – 426, FTE – 412
Fifth Year Projected Degrees Conferred: 100

The proposed Bachelor of Science in Sports Media will be offered on campus by the Media School in the College of Arts and Sciences at Indiana University Bloomington (IUB). It requires the customary 120 credit hours to complete.

The basis of the proposed program is the current Sports Media concentration option within the Bachelor of Arts in Media (B.A.M.), a large degree program enrolling over 900 students. Since its launch in 2016, the Sports Media concentration's enrollment steadily grew to over 300 students. It is the second most popular concentration within the B.A.M. and graduated 63 concentrators last year. A corresponding Minor in Sports Media is also popular; it would continue. The concentration would split off into a standalone degree with greater flexibility for more in-depth sports media coursework, including practica. Faculty plan to sunset the concentration. Given the signaling power and expanded curriculum enabled by a standalone program, faculty anticipate net new enrollment (over 400 students by Year 5) and more targeted employer interest. No new faculty or facilities are necessary. The establishment of this program is analogous to the Commission's recent approval of the IUB Media School's B.S. in Media Advertising, developed from a high-enrollment concentration within the B.A.M. set to sunset, and B.S. in Public Relations, which is a concentration in the Bachelor of Journalism program set to also sunset.

The current, in-state program provider market skews toward smaller private colleges/universities, totaling three. Earlier this year, a state institution's main campus established a similar program. National peer institutions, e.g., University of Iowa, Arizona State, Clemson, and the University of Nebraska have standalone sports media degrees.

The Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) categorizes "broadcast technicians," "news analysts," "reporters and journalists," "public relations specialists," "producers and directors," and "audio and video technicians" as 3-Star occupations. Additionally, "producers and directors" and "public relations specialists" are categorized by the U.S. Department of Labor's O*Net as national 'Bright Outlook' occupations based on faster than average national growth between 2024 and 2034. Other relevant and adjacent occupational areas are projected to grow, but not as rapidly.

Based on job placement rates of recent IUB B.A.M. graduates, the institution projects 90% will have secured full-time employment in their field within six months. For 2024 B.A.M. graduates specifically, 93.3% of 2024 B.A.M. graduates secured a position within six months. Using data from U.S. Census Bureau's Post-Secondary Employment Outcomes (or PSEO), the institution estimates

that IUB graduates in the 09. CIP code family will earn a median salary of $43,616, $57,349, $71,083, and $98,000 at the following respective milestones: starting, three years, 5 years, and 10 years.

Because the Indiana DWD has projected in-state growth in careers related to sports media, the institution projects in-state graduate retention at 25% after 5 years following graduation, and has potential for increased retention rates with the intentional connection of sports media students and potential Indiana sports media employment opportunities, which are expected to grow, whether journalistic (i.e., sports coverage across various mediums) or media content creation for teams, leagues, and conferences.

The proposed curriculum leverages preexisting coursework for the current concentration and framework of the IUB Media School. However, shifting sports media from a concentration within a B.A. to a standalone B.S. enables a more extensive, in-depth curriculum for a professionally applied discipline, increasing the credit hours in concentration-specific coursework from 42 to 54. Students must take introductory media coursework, including professional ethics, 3 credit hours in two, scaffolded career development courses, a 12-credit hour 'Sports Media Core,' and an additional 6 credits hours in upper-division level Media School electives. The degree requires completing a 15-hour concentration in 'Sports Production,' 'Sports Content,' or 'Sports Media Management.' Students have various opportunities to engage in experiential and work-based learning activities—spanning cocurricular, extracurricular, and part-time industry employment—through the Media School's partnership with Cream and Crimson Studios for collegiate sports and the Mark Cuban Center for Sports Media and Technology.

While there is no work-based learning requirement, students can pursue credit-bearing internships with the assistance of the IUB Media School. A Degree-in-3 format is not offered nor are embedded, stackable credentials. However, the faculty is very interested in exploring embedded, credit-bearing micro-credentials once a campus-wide policy is established soon. They envision three-course, 9-credit hour clusters in areas like broadcasting, live event production, studio-based production, sports writing, and social media content creation. The IUB Media School is currently proposing a new course focused on Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools to support Sports Media students in content creation, project management, and research. IUB has articulation agreements with Ivy Tech Community College and Vincennes University enabling students to transfer at least 30 credit hours through the 1+3 Indiana College Core.

CHE 25-23 Bachelor of Science in Robotics to be offered by Indiana University Bloomington

Proposal received on September 15, 2025

CIP Code: 14.4201

Fifth Year Projected Enrollment: Headcount – 123, FTE – 116
Fifth Year Projected Degrees Conferred: 30

The proposed Bachelor of Science in Robotics will be offered on campus by the Luddy School of Informatics, Computing, and Engineering (Luddy School) in the College of Arts & Sciences at Indiana University Bloomington (IUB). It requires the customary 120 credit hours to complete and is a cross-departmental degree program. The institution expects to hire 3-5 new faculty members over the next two years, in addition to having the school's existing 17 faculty members teach courses in this proposed program.

The program would be the state's first, standalone robotics degree program, spanning engineering, computer/computational science, artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, and other human-robot interaction disciplines. Preexisting in-state programs are focused more on traditional mechatronics and advanced, automated manufacturing, such as three similar programs at independent institutions and a state educational institution's main campus offering of a robotics concentration within a manufacturing engineering technology degree. Several national peer institutions, e.g., Carnegie Mellon University, University of Michigan, University of Connecticut, Arizona State University, Michigan Technological University, and University of California, Santa Cruz have standalone robotics or robotics engineering degrees.

The proposed degree program aims to meet an increasing workforce need for AI-driven robotics, and to provide enhanced educational opportunities to improve innovation and technological advancements across a wide spectrum of automating industries. Collegiate level training in robotics is applicable to a vast array of technical occupations and industries, particularly in computing and engineering. The Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) categorizes several careers in the robotics field as 5-Star "Top Jobs," including "industrial engineers," "data scientists," "software developers," "computer and information systems managers," among others. Other careers that are identified as 4-Star include "Robotics Engineer," "Mechatronics Engineer," "web and digital interface designers," "chief information officers," and "network and computer systems administrators." "Database architects" are the single 3-Star "Top Job." The Bureau of Labor Statistics notes that mechanical engineers, computer scientists, and other robotics-related occupations are poised for faster than average job growth from 2024-2034. Based on the "New York Federal Reserve's 'Labor Market Outcomes for Recent College Graduates", IUB projects approximately 92.5% of students with robotics-related degrees will have secured a career outcome within six months. Based on the Advanced Robotics Industry Workforce Study, over 10,000 job openings for technical workers in the field of robotics are expected this decade.

The projected completion rate for the proposed program is approximately 65% for 4-year graduates and 75% after 6 years. Return on Investment (ROI) for students is higher than many other degrees; the institution estimates graduates will earn a median income of $66,500, $78,900, $97,000, and

$111,500 at the following respective milestones: starting, three years, 5 years, and 10 years. The institution projects in-state graduate retention to be approximately 36% after 5 years. The Luddy Career Services Office helps students connect with employers in a number of ways, and the Shoemaker Innovation Center at Indiana University supports students' entrepreneurial efforts, such as startups.

The proposed curriculum leverages the Luddy School's interdisciplinary assets spanning Computer Science, Informatics, and Intelligent Systems Engineering faculty and preexisting courses. Its design was informed by ABET Engineering Accreditation Commission standards; faculty intend to seek accreditation by 2032. Students must complete a 30-credit hour 'Robotics Core,' which includes a 'Robotics 101' gateway course, a foundational human-robot interaction course, and a robotics ethics course; seven of the courses, including those mentioned are new. There is also a 27-credit hour 'Mathematics and Science Core' and 30 credit hours in specified 'Other Essential Courses,' which are mainly computer science, informatics, and engineering. The 'Robotics Core' requires a two-course, six-credit hour capstone experience sequence. This team-based design capstone sequence includes the study, planning, and execution of real-world solutions resulting in oral presentations, technical reports and resources, prototypes, and project reports. Finally, students must select one of the following 7 tracks/specializations: Autonomy, Computation, Embedded and Cyber-Physical Systems, Human-Centered Robotics, Robot Design and Building, Bio-Robotics, or Flexible Study. Most of the tracks lean on the Luddy School's emphasis and expertise on the AI-driven aspects of robotics.

There is no work-based learning requirement but students can pursue credit-bearing internships which are often paid. A Degree-in-3 format is not offered nor are embedded, stackable credentials. However, the faculty is interested in exploring embedded, credit-bearing micro-credentials once a campus-wide policy is established. AI content and tools are already integrated into the curriculum throughout all degree programs in the Luddy School. IUB has articulation agreements with Ivy Tech Community College and Vincennes University enabling students to transfer at least 30 credit hours through the 1+3 Indiana College Core.

CHE 25-24 Master of Science in Strategy in Security and Defense Technologies by Purdue University West Lafayette

Proposal received on September 19, 2025

CIP Code: 43.0301

Fifth Year Projected Enrollment: Headcount – 115, FTE – 69
Fifth Year Projected Degrees Conferred: 76

The proposed Master of Science in Strategy in Security and Defense Technologies will be offered online by the Office of the Vice Provost for Graduate Students and Post-Doctoral Scholars at Purdue University West Lafayette (PWL). Coursework will be delivered primarily from the Brian Lamb School of Communication within the College of Liberal Arts along with some offerings from Purdue Polytechnic Institute. It requires the customary 30 credit hours to complete. Current faculty are adequate to provide instruction, but adjuncts will complement teaching.

The curricular basis of the proposal is the current 'Strategy and Defense Engineering' concentration (12 credit hours) within the M.S./M.S.E. in Interdisciplinary Engineering, launched May 2024, and the Graduate Certificate in Strategic Defense Technologies, launched January 2025. These will continue, including a non-credit bearing professional development option for the certificate. This proposal extends this portfolio to include a liberal arts-grounded course of study with strategy and defense technologies fully integrated into the learning objectives and assessment. Program design was informed by PWL's Military Advisory Board, the sustained liaison work of PWL's Military Educational Partnerships' executive director, and the faculty-student collaboration of PWL's FORCES initiative, an innovation accelerator for social science research in strategy and security.

The workforce basis of the proposed program is to enable career progression and advancement for military personnel and civilian defense employees or contractors through a career relevant, interdisciplinary, online graduate degree. For example, the U.S. military seeks to bolster its pipeline of Foreign Area Officer positions, which require graduate study. Formal, intentional partnerships with the military are being explored. Additionally, the proposed program offers instruction to current military students at no out-of-pocket cost through the Military Tuition Assistance Program.

The first cohort would enroll in May 2026. Faculty anticipate the proposed degree program's enrollment and conferrals to reach 115 and 76, respectively, by year 5. (Enrollment for the current M.S./M.S.E. concentration is 28 after its first year.) Currently, only three state educational institutions offer graduate-level offerings in homeland security; however, these programs focus more on emergency management, not the intersection of national security strategy and technology. National peer institutions, such as American University, Georgetown University, or Johns Hopkins University, offer national and global security master's programs, albeit at considerably more expensive tuition rates. The faculty posit the program leverages online instruction, no-cost to low-cost accessibility for military and civilians, respectively, and PWL's significant technological strengths to provide a distinct national security strategy offering nationwide.

The target student population is largely national and military, enabling career advancement, advancement in rank, and salary increases. For civilians in comparable fields, the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) categorizes "Information Technology Project Managers," "General and Operations Managers," and "Engineering Managers" as 5-Star jobs. Additionally, "Information Technology Project Managers" are categorized by the U.S. Department of Labor's O*Net as national 'Bright Outlook' occupation based on projected faster than average national growth. Using data from the New York Federal Reserve's Labor Market Outcomes, the institution estimates that graduates in fields like homeland security (e.g., "Engineering Technology," "Information Systems and Management") have low unemployment rates ranging from 1.9% to 5.6%. Degree earners at the 50th percentile are expected to earn a median salary of $92,830, $99,087, $104,495, and $118,017 at the following respective milestones: starting, three years, 5 years, and 10 years.

It is difficult to estimate graduate retention given the military focus and online delivery. Military personnel are based across the world. However, familiarity with PWL and Hoosier employers may entice relocation to Indiana for retirement. However, Indiana's National Guard and various defense industries offer an in-state pipeline of graduates more likely to remain. Overall, Indiana institutions that offer programs with the 43. CIP code have a 49.8% retention rate after 5 years according to the U.S. Census Bureau's Post-Secondary Employment Outcomes (or PSEO).

The core curriculum leverages preexisting coursework for the current M.S./M.S.E. concentration and the corresponding Graduate Certificate. Four new courses have been developed while the electives draw from preexisting course work at the College of Liberal Arts and Purdue Polytechnic Institute. Students must complete an 18-credit hour, 6-course 'Core' and two courses (6 credit hours) in a 'Strategy Focus Area,' which includes topics spanning defense domains such as AI, Cyber, and Space. The new courses include 'Legislative Policy and Defense Technologies,' 'Ethical Reasoning in Technology,' 'AI Organizational Transformation for Security and Defense,' and a capstone. Finally, students must complete two courses (6 credit hours) amongst a total of 6 course options spanning Liberal Arts, Organizational and Leadership Science, and Computer and Networking Technology. The 'Core' requires a culminating capstone experience in which students will harness their coursework and professional experience to evaluate a defense or security strategy that focuses on a specific technology, e.g., AI or drones.

Given the targeted student populations, there is no work-based learning requirement. Instead, there is a strong experiential learning component of three "travel-and-learn" experiences to Washington, D.C., Europe, and/or to the United States Indo-Pacific Command (Hawaii and Taiwan). While optional and an out-of-pocket expense, faculty expect hosting entities to provide military students financial support.

The program was designed around the graduate certificate as an embedded stackable credential. Certificate holders can apply it toward the proposed master's or earn both credentials simultaneously. Opportunities for credit of prior learning include relevant military training, coursework, and industry certifications as well as individual assessments and portfolio reviews. The faculty will investigate potential military articulation agreements like other PWL programs already have with the U.S. Navy and Air Force. There are no accelerated delivery options, however students may take more than the typical 6 credit hours per semester if they wish to graduate in fewer than 5 semesters.