

South Dakota Board of **Technical Education**

October 22, 2026

Lake Area Technical College
1201 Arrow Ave. NE
Watertown, SD 57201

RE: Academic Affairs – Approval of Non-Substantive Program Application(s)

To whom it may concern:

After review, the Executive Director of the South Dakota Board of Technical Education (SDBOTE) has approved the following application(s):

Associate of Applied Science Option
Law Enforcement – Conversation Officer

Per Board Policy 303.3, the receipt of this letter completes the SDBOTE's approval process, and the technical college may proceed with program implementation.

The SDBOTE's approval is valid for three years upon the date of this letter. If a technical college does not implement an approved program within three years, approval is terminated.

A technical college must update the program's profile in the SDBOTE's Academic Program Database by June 30 prior to the year in which students are first enrolled or at least 30 days prior to enrolling students, whichever is first.

Sincerely,

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PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Institution	Lake Area Technical College
Program Identifier Code (If applicable)	
Program Title	Law Enforcement - Conservation Officer Option
Program Award Level:	☐ Short-Term Certificate ☐ Long-Term Certificate ☐ Diploma ☐ Associate of Applied Science ☒ Associate of Applied Science Option
CIP Code (6 Digit)	43.0107
Projected Implementation Date	11/2/2026
Approved Parent Program Title (If applicable)	Law Enforcement
Approved Parent Program Identifier Code (If applicable)	43.0107
Location	☒ Main Campus ☐ Other:

SUMMARY

Type of Non-Substantive Change	☐ Program created using subset of existing courses (B.1.1) ☒ Creation of associate of applied science option (B.1.2) ☐ Consolidation of existing programs (B.1.3) ☐ Program award level change (B.1.4) ☐ Other:
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Describe the change the institution is seeking approval of.

Lake Area Technical College (LATC) is seeking approval to combine its current Law Enforcement AAS and Conservation Law Enforcement long-term certificate into a single Law Enforcement - Conservation Officer Option. Currently, students who want both credentials must complete them separately, and the Conservation Law Enforcement Certificate is not eligible for federal financial aid on its own because it falls below the credit and length thresholds required for eligibility. This creates a financial barrier for students who want to pursue both the AAS and the certificate, since they would otherwise need to fund the 12 certificate credits without aid. By combining the two into a single, continuous enrollment pathway, the certificate coursework becomes part of an aid-eligible program of study, allowing students to receive federal financial aid for both the degree and certificate coursework together. Importantly, this change is structural only — students completing this option will still earn both existing credentials in full: the AAS in Law Enforcement and the Certificate in Conservation Law Enforcement. Combining them into one option does not eliminate, rename, or alter either credential; it simply removes the financial aid gap that previously separated them.

With advisement from law enforcement and the South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks, LATC has packaged the option to include 1 or 2 additional summer sessions. It is during those summer semesters that students will enroll in the 12 credits required for the Conservation Law Enforcement long-term certificate. Students enrolled in this option can complete the 4 Conservation Law Enforcement courses in the summer between the first and second year of their Law Enforcement AAS degree, the summer after completing their AAS degree, or split across both summer sessions. In every case, the certificate coursework remains distinct and is documented as its own credential — the combined enrollment structure changes only how financial aid is accessed, not what students earn.

This option is unique among Conservation Law Enforcement programs. Most programs train students in conservation and biological topics first, and then students are required to pursue law enforcement training. In South Dakota, this typically means attending the 13-week Law Enforcement Academy in Pierre and passing certification exams following college graduation. In contrast, students pursuing the Law Enforcement – Conservation Officer Option will receive Law Enforcement training, including full certification through the South Dakota Law Enforcement Training Commission, via the established AAS program and then add the specialized conservation law enforcement officer training.

Lake Area Tech has long offered both a Law Enforcement and a Natural Resource Management program, so the college has well-designed curriculums, well-trained faculty and the required facilities and resources to effectively offer this new option. By completing this option, students will be opening the door for additional career opportunities and will help public agencies who rely on LATC's graduates to fill skilled professional roles.

Mission and Demand:

The mission of Lake Area Technical College, as part of the South Dakota Technical College System, is to provide superior, comprehensive technical education that changes lives and launches careers. This proposed additional summer-semester(s) Law Enforcement – Conservation Officer Option will open the door to an additional career choice for LATC Law Enforcement students. The option provides a seamless and efficient path into Conservation Law Enforcement for those who have a passion for the outdoors and wildlife and fisheries practices.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, South Dakota has the second largest concentration of Fish and Game Wardens in the country (<https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes333031.htm>). In May 2024, South Dakota employed approximately 137 people in this field and that number was expected to increase 3% by 2030, according to the South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation. Along with this employment increase, the South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks Department provided LATC with a statement of need describing that 20% of their conservation officer workforce will be eligible to retire over the next four years.

Further, related fields such as First-Line Supervisors of Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Workers, as well as Compliance Officers show a predicted increase of 11% and 6.5% respectively, according to the South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation. With this certificate, graduates would be able to pursue these career fields as well.

CRITERION 2: DEMAND

The program leads to meaningful employment, adequate student enrollment, and/or fulfills needs not being met by existing education and training providers.

- 2.1. The program leads to high-wage occupations that have an average/mean wage greater than the median wage across all occupations.
- 2.2. The program leads to high-demand occupations that have project annual openings (a measure of demand for workers) greater than the average across all occupations or is shown as an economic and/or labor market emerging field for the state of South Dakota and its regions.
- 2.3. The program's student enrollment is adequate to justify program existence.
- 2.4. The program fulfills a demand not being met by existing education and training providers in the region and/or state.

2.1. Describe the wage projections for occupations associated with the proposed program by completing Appendix 2.A.

2.2. Describe the demand projections for occupations associated with the proposed program.

A. Complete Appendix 2.A.

B. If an emerging field for the state of South Dakota, describe the field. Letter(s) of support, detailing demand, should be attached as appendices.

This option is not an emerging field in South Dakota.

2.3. Describe projected student enrollment for the proposed program by completing Appendix 2.B.

2.4. Describe how the proposed program fulfills a demand not being met by existing education and training providers in the region and/or state.

A. Identify closely related program(s) that currently exist at other public higher education institutions in the system or state. If none, write "None."

South Dakota State University offers a Bachelor of Science Degree in Natural Resource Law Enforcement. Dakota Wesleyan University offers a Bachelor of Science Degree in Wildlife Management. According to their websites, both programs provide the conservation and biological training a conservation officer would need. However, students would need to pursue law enforcement training on their own after completing those degrees.

B. If applicable: Describe the ways in which the demand is not currently being met by the aforementioned program(s) and provide justification as to why the program should be approved by addressing the following conditions that warrant duplication ([BP 303.2](#)). Select all that apply.

☒ Unmet Demand (C.5.1.1)

☒ Industry Partnership (C.5.1.2)

☒ Increases Student Access (C.5.1.3)

☐ Other:

I. For each condition selected above, provide a brief justification.

Industry Partnership: South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (SDGFP) staff from the Law Section worked side-by-side with the Lake Area Tech team to plan this program option, from jointly developing program outcomes to shaping specific course syllabi, content, and activities. This close collaboration has ensured the option is designed to provide excellent preparation for students who wish to become Conservation Law Enforcement Officers.

Currently, the majority of new conservation officers are trained in-house through SDGFP's Wildlife Training Officer Program, a 16-week conservation training course led by current SDGFP officers. While this option will not replace those 16 weeks of training, it will better prepare individuals for many aspects of it.

This pathway also greatly expedites the traditional bachelor's degree route, which places Law Enforcement Training and Wildlife Training academies after graduation. According to the SDGFP Law Enforcement Training Supervisor, completing this option will not shorten the length of the wildlife field training program for new officers; it will, however, allow for greater focus on emerging wildlife enforcement topics, since much of the introductory content will already have been covered through the coursework in the Conservation Law Enforcement certificate. As a result, the option will provide SDGFP with highly qualified, ready-to-work individuals in a much quicker timeframe.

Unmet Need: May 2024 data showed that South Dakota employed approximately 137 people in this field and that number was expected to increase 3% by 2030, according to the South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation. Along with this employment increase, the South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks Department provided LATC with a statement of need confirming they expect 20% of their conservation officer workforce to be eligible to retire over the next four years. In addition to the SDGFP, a state agency, tribal and federal agencies also hire wildlife and fisheries officers and park rangers who are required to have a law enforcement background.

Increases Student Access: Currently South Dakota does not have a degree program option that combines law enforcement training and the wildlife and fisheries background needed to be work-ready in a conservation law enforcement officer role. LATC's unique program combination, capitalizing on established programs in Law Enforcement and Natural Resources Management, has the potential to efficiently help South Dakota fill its Conservation Law Enforcement Officer workforce needs.

CRITERION 3: DESIGN

The program's learning assessment strategy, program of study, and delivery methods are designed to provide students with the necessary competencies, as demonstrated through program learning outcomes.

- 3.1. The program is aligned to competencies, as demonstrated through program learning outcomes, that are developed with and continually validated by relevant stakeholders.
- 3.2. The program has a learning assessment strategy to validate student mastery of the program learning outcomes.
- 3.3. The program has an integrated program of study designed to develop and reinforce the program learning outcomes.
- 3.4. The program, when appropriate, includes a work-based learning component that develops and reinforces the program learning outcomes.
- 3.5. The program, when appropriate, offers flexible delivery methods to increase student access.

3.0. Describe the proposed program's alignment with the program award level requirements established in [BP 301.1](#).

A. Does the program align with the requirements?

- ☒ Yes
☐ No (Requesting Exemption)

B. If no: Provide a detailed rationale for program exemption. Specify which requirement(s) in BP 301.1 are not met; cite specific policy sections (e.g., B.3.4), when appropriate. If external organizations are involved (accreditation, regulatory, licensure, etc.), reference the organization name(s), specific requirements (including citations), and a justification for why the exemption should be approved.

3.1. Describe the program learning outcomes.

A. Provide a list of program learning outcomes for each proposed award level. Learning outcomes should be specific to the program.

The program learning outcomes for the Law Enforcement – Conservation Officer AAS Option contain outcomes from both areas of content concentrations.

Law Enforcement Program Learning Outcomes:

1. Demonstrate mastery of foundational law enforcement knowledge, skills, and certification competencies required for entry-level employment and South Dakota law enforcement certification.
2. Exhibit ethical and professional conduct consistent with constitutional policing and the protection of individual rights.
3. Apply critical thinking, problem-solving, judgment, and decision-making in law enforcement situations.
4. Identify, interpret, and apply South Dakota criminal law and constitutional principles to investigative and enforcement duties.
5. Demonstrate officer safety, situational awareness, and tactical proficiency appropriate for routine and high-risk law enforcement operations.
6. Communicate effectively—both orally and in writing—within law enforcement functions while building positive relationships.

Conservation Law Enforcement Certificate Learning Outcomes:

1. Identify regionally significant wildlife, fish, plants and grasses.
2. Interpret the principles of habitat, land and wildlife management.
3. Apply conservation and parks laws/regulations to conservation law enforcement scenarios.
4. Demonstrate the equipment maintenance, operation, and safety skills needed in the field.

B. Describe the how the program learning outcomes were developed and validated.

The program learning outcomes were developed through extensive industry and higher education research to ensure they include the necessary job skills and knowledge required by both Law Enforcement and Conservation Law Enforcement Officers. LATC representatives met regularly with members of South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Law Section, including several current Conservation Officers, throughout the planning process. These conversations guided the development of the program learning outcomes.

After the first year of the program and extensive assessment measures, the program learning outcomes will be revised, if necessary, by the Advisory Board to ensure all outcomes remain appropriate and relevant.

3.2. Describe the program's learning assessment strategy.

A. Describe how students will demonstrate mastery of the program learning outcomes. Description should be specific to the program's learning assessment plan vs. the institutional assessment plan.

All courses will contain assessment components. The assessments will be comprised of skills assessments, as well as formative and summative assessments, both in the classroom and field settings. All program courses leading to the degree will require a pass rate of at least 80% mastery. Post-graduation surveys conducted by employers and the college's placement report also help to determine the success of the program's graduates. All LATC programs use SPOL assessment software to map curriculum and gather institutional assessment data throughout the year. Annually, each department analyzes the assessment data. In addition, under the guidance of Lake Area Tech's Academics Department, each program creates an assessment and improvement plan annually. This assessment data is also reported to and monitored by the Higher Learning Commission.

B. Is the program preparation for a professional licensure and/or certification examination?

- ☐ Yes (Detail in Appendix 4: Section 3)
☒ No

3.3. Describe the program of study by completing Appendix 3.

3.4. Describe the program's work-based learning component.

A. Does the program have a work-based learning component? If so, select all that apply.

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| ☐ None | ☐ Clinical |
| ☐ Apprenticeship | ☐ Capstone |
| ☒ Internship or Externship | ☐ Other: |

B. If none, describe why.

All students who complete an AAS in Law Enforcement enroll in a 120-hour Law Enforcement Practicum. Students who plan to complete the Conservation Officer Option will be encouraged to complete this Practicum with a Conservation Law Enforcement agency.

3.5. Describe the program's delivery methods.

A. Select the program's primary delivery method(s)¹. Select all that apply.

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☒ On Campus | ☐ Apprenticeship |
| ☐ Online | ☐ Other: |
| ☐ Blended | |

B. Describe how flexible delivery methods are being leveraged to increase student access.

Lake Area Tech will start the program as a traditional program, offering face-to-face instruction. As the program develops, Lake Area Tech will consider offering Blended or Apprenticeship opportunities. Currently, LATC has a number of Blended programs and Registered Apprenticeships, which will make adding those delivery methods to this option relatively seamless.

¹ **In Person:** 100 percent of courses are available in-person. **Online:** 100 percent of courses are available via distance learning. Delivery is only via the Internet. **Blended:** Delivery includes a required combination of both in-person and online courses. If a student has the option to take courses online, but is not required to do so, the program is not necessarily considered blended.

CRITERION 4: ALIGNMENT

The program is vertically aligned to an education and training pathway.

- 4.1. The program is vertically aligned to an education and training pathway, reflecting efficient articulation of:
 - 4.1.1. Non-degree credential/industry certification
 - 4.1.2. Certificate to diploma
 - 4.1.3. Diploma to associate of applied science
 - 4.1.4. Associate of applied science to baccalaureate

4.1. Describe the alignment of the proposed program along an education and training pathway.

A. Complete Appendix 4.

B. Describe the projected alignment between the proposed program and existing academic programs within the technical college system.

The LATC Natural Resource Management program includes several classes that are also required in the Law Enforcement – Conservation Officer Option. Completers of this option could easily pursue further credentials in Natural Resources Management, if they want a stronger background in ecology, botany, mapping, water quality, and wildlife and fisheries management.

C. As applicable: Insert any additional comments here.

- To clarify, LATC will continue to offer the Conservation Law Enforcement long-term certificate as a stand-alone certificate, available for enrollment by current, licensed South Dakota law enforcement officers who would like this additional training.
- A note on total credits: We acknowledge that the total credit count for this option is high, at 87 credits. However, this reflects the combination of two full, separately-recognized credentials rather than one inflated program: the standalone AAS in Law Enforcement is 75 credits, and the standalone Conservation Law Enforcement certificate is 12 credits ($75 + 12 = 87$). Students completing this option receive both the AAS in Law Enforcement and the Conservation Law Enforcement long-term certificate, so the combined credit total matches exactly what a student would earn completing the two credentials separately — no additional credits have been added by combining them into a single option.

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION
Appendix 2.A: Labor Market Information

Lake Area Technical College
 Conservation Law Enforcement

SOUTH DAKOTA								
SOC* CODE	SOC* TITLE	AVERAGE ANNUAL OPENINGS	2020 EMPLOYMENT	2030 EMPLOYMENT	NUMERIC CHANGE: 2020-2030	PERCENT CHANGE: 2020-2030	MEDIAN: ANNUAL WAGE (2020)	AVERAGE: ANNUAL WAGE (2020)
00-0000	Total, All Occupations	62,664	491,588	526,251	34,663	7.1	\$36,823	\$44,961
33-3031	Fish and Game Wardens - US BLS		120				\$50,440	\$50,700
33-3031	Fish and Game Wardens - SD DLR		137	141	4	2.92%	\$53,845	\$54,123
45-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Workers - SD		551	612	61	11.07%	\$56,280	\$59,320
13-1041	Compliance Officers - SD DLR		1,086	1,158	72	6.63%	\$59,860	\$65,900

NATIONAL								
SOC* CODE	SOC* TITLE	AVERAGE ANNUAL OPENINGS	2022 EMPLOYMENT	2032 EMPLOYMENT	NUMERIC CHANGE: 2022-2032	PERCENT CHANGE: 2022-2032	MEDIAN: ANNUAL WAGE (2022)	AVERAGE: ANNUAL WAGE (2022)
33-3031	Fish and Game Wardens - BLS	6,530	6.9	6.5	-0.4	-6.3	\$59,500	\$59,860
45-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Workers - BLS		56.6	58.1	1.5	2.7	\$ 54,490.00	\$58,820
13-1041	Compliance Officers - BLS		377.5	394.7	17.2	4.6	\$ 71,690.00	\$76,980

SOURCE: South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation, Labor Market Information Center (LMIC) (<https://dlr.sd.gov/lmic/>)

NOTES: Occupational data is based on activity that happened in the labor market up to two years ago (and is projected forward from that point). Since the most recent South Dakota data was published, SD Game, Fish, and Parks has adjusted their pay structure for Conservation Officers and has made changes to their positions. These adjustments are not included in the published BLS or SD DLR data. To provide a more accurate understanding of the need for the Conservation Law Enforcement Certificate, SD Game, Fish, & Parks described their wages and projected need to LATC. Points of note include the following:

1. SD GFP Conservation Officers and Seasonal Park Rangers make up more than 2/3 of SD's workforce in this field (86 conservation officers and 12 seasonal park rangers).
2. Over the next four years, nearly 20% of conservation officers will be eligible to retire.
3. The starting salary for newly hired conservation officers is \$59,508 per year. A 5-year officer makes roughly \$63,517 annually and a 10-year officer makes \$68,047.
4. The labor market is competitive in this field among states, federal agencies, and tribal governments who have officers enforcing fish and game laws.

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
<https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes333031.htm>

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Appendix 2.B: Student Demand Projections

Lake Area Technical College

Conservation Law Enforcement

	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
Student Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)	4	4	4
Headcount: Full-Time	10	10	10
Headcount: Part-Time			
Headcount: Total	10	10	10
Total Program or Site Capacity	10	10	10

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION
Appendix 3: Program of Study

Lake Area Technical College
 Conservation Law Enforcement

MONTHS:	22
SEMESTERS:	4 semesters and 2 summer sessions
TOTAL CREDITS:	87

PREFIX AND NUMBER	TITLE	CREDITS	DESCRIPTION	EXISTING COURSE
I. GENERAL EDUCATION CORE				
MATH 100 or MATH 101 or MATH 114	Applied General Math, Intermediate Algebra, College Algebra	3	MATH 100 - This course will provide emphasis on the ability to understand and apply math skills to solve problems in the world of work. MATH 101 - This course will enhance students' problem-solving skills and prepare them for mathematical problems to be faced in future courses and careers. MATH 114 - This course includes a study of the theory and application of functions, including function notation, graphs, inverses, polynomial, rational, exponential, logarithmic, and other functions. May also include additional topics, such as sequences, series, the binomial theorem, linear systems, matrices, or complex numbers. *College transferable.	Y
COMM 101 or ENGL 101	Communications and Career Strategies, Composition	3	COMM 101 – Emphasis on the essentials of written and oral communication; also covers effective communication during the job search process. ENGL 101 – This course concentrates on all phases of the writing/ communication process. Prewriting, drafting, revising and editing are used to help students develop clear, concise and unified writing styles that will serve them well in their chosen career areas.*College transferable.	Y
CMST 101	Foundations of Communication	3	CMST 101 - The course introduces the study of speech fundamentals and critical thinking through frequent public speaking practice, including setting, purpose, audience, and subject. *College transferable.	Y
PSYC 100 or PSYC 101	Psychology of Human Relations, General Psychology	3	PSYC 100 - Human relations is a practical course that presents the interpersonal "people skills" that are important in the modern workplace. Topics include communicating effectively, assertive behavior, teamwork, conflict resolution, and work ethics. Students will gain awareness of their individual work styles and how to work effectively with people with different styles in a diverse workplace. Specific techniques for coping with job stress and managing anger will also be emphasized. Class activities and assignments will stress practical application of skills. Course is also applicable in personal settings, such as family, social, and school. PSYC 101 - This course is an introduction survey to the field of psychology with consideration of the biological bases of behavior, sensory and perceptual processes, learning and memory, human growth and development, social behavior and normal and abnormal behavior. *College transferable.	Y
CSC 105	Computer Software Applications	3	CSC 105 - Using a Windows-based microcomputer and related software, the students will gain an understanding and basic operational knowledge about the Windows operating systems, Microsoft Office word processing, spreadsheets, database management, and presentation software. The students will demonstrate this knowledge by scoring at least 80% on assignments and related objective and performance tests.	Y
CPR 112	Basic Life Support (BLS) for Healthcare Workers	0.5	Students will learn how to save lives of victims in cardiac arrest through high-quality cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and know how to perform CPR in and out of hospital settings. Students will be train to recognize cardiac arrest, give high-quality chest compressions, deliver appropriate ventilations, and provide early use of an automated external defibrillator (AED). The course also teaches how to relieve choking and includes adult, child, and infant rescue techniques. .5 credit	Y

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION
Appendix 3: Program of Study

Lake Area Technical College
 Conservation Law Enforcement

ECON 105 or ECON 201 or SOC 100	Leadership in the Global Workplace, Principles of Microeconomics I, Introduction to Sociology	3	ECON 105 - The study of traditional theories of leadership, as well as the most recently developed leadership philosophies. This course will focus on the application of leadership concepts through critical thinking and the development of critical leadership skills needed in the global workplace. Leadership traits, ethics, changing demographics, workforce diversity, and financial planning are also included. Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to relate to the importance of leadership both personal and professional. ECON 201 - This course studies the basic economic concepts as they relate to consumer, worker and business decisions. Emphasis is given to satisfaction maximizing behavior by individuals and profit maximization by firms. Market structures are thoroughly analyzed regarding their effect on price, output and competitiveness. SOC 100 - Comprehensive study of society, with analysis of group life and other forces shaping human behavior. *College transferable.	Y
SUBTOTAL OF GENERAL EDUCATION CREDITS:		18.5	TOTAL NEW COURSES:	0

II. PROGRAM CORE

LE 100	Fitness for Life I	1	An introductory course in methods for managing and evaluating one's physical fitness for a healthy lifestyle necessary for safely and effectively performing the duties of a law enforcement professional. There will be pre- and post-physical fitness assessments, which may consist of any of the following activities: 1 ½ mile run, flexibility, one minute sit-ups, one minute pushups, blood pressure, pulse, body composition, and waist circumference measurement.	Y
LE 105	First Responder	1.5	This course provides students with the basic knowledge and skills needed to assess injuries, provide first aid for acute medical problems, and ensure on-scene safety for rescue personnel.	Y
LE 110	Intro to Law Enforcement	3	This course covers the history of policing and the basic functions of law enforcement in America. This course also provides students with information and tools to aid in making proper decisions when faced with an ethical dilemma.	Y
LE 115	Diversity Training	1	This course covers the need for Law Enforcement Professionals to recognize and respect the complexities of cultural diversity and develop the skills necessary for identifying and responding to our changing communities. The student will also gain knowledge of illegal profiling and the characteristics of professional law enforcement.	Y
LE 120	Mechanics of Arrest	1	This course will introduce students to lawful detention and arrest and search procedures that support successful prosecutions. Students will gain an understanding of the Response to Resistance Continuum and proper hand-cuffing and transportation procedures for detainees.	Y
LE 125	Technology in Law Enforcement	0.5	Students are introduced to Zuercher Technologies Public Safety Software. This software includes Computer Aided Dispatch, Records Management System, Mobile and E-Ticketing used by law enforcement personnel which is used to combat crime and maintain civil order to enhance the quality of life in their communities. Students will also learn the significance of aligning information systems to support community policing initiatives and proactive problem-solving.	Y
LE 130	Constitutional Law	3	In this course, students are introduced to Warrantless Arrest Authority of Law Enforcement Officers and Citizens; Terry Stops of Vehicles and Persons; Terry Frisks of Vehicles and Persons, Warrantless Searches of Vehicles, and Persons in Vehicles.	Y

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION
Appendix 3: Program of Study

Lake Area Technical College
 Conservation Law Enforcement

LE 133	Intro to Firearms I	0.5	This course introduces the student to why law enforcement officers must know and practice all procedures for the safe handling of all firearms while on and off duty to include the following: how to identify the capabilities and limitations of ammunition and firearms in order to operate them safely and effectively. Students will demonstrate how to properly inspect, clean, and care for their firearms to ensure that they function safely and effectively. Students will also master and demonstrate the fundamental skills of firing firearms to be effective in reactive and precision situations during live fire exercises.	Y
LE 135	Criminal Law Procedures	3	This course covers the origins of current law in relationship to the role of law enforcement today. The criminal code from a constitutional basis as well as that found in South Dakota Codified Law Titles 22, 23, and 23A, will be also be covered. Students will become familiar with proper trial preparation, conduct, and demeanor as it relates to the law enforcement officer.	Y
LE 140	Fitness for Life II	1	A beginners course for managing and evaluating one's physical fitness for a healthy lifestyle necessary for safely and effectively performing the duties of a law enforcement professional.	Y
LE 145	Patrol Procedures I	3	This course introduces the student to the police officer's role in the community which includes working in partnership with community members to resolve or reduce problems for the benefit of those who live, visit, and work in that community. Students will also obtain certification in National Incident Management System training.	Y
LE 150	Interrogation and Documentation	3	In this course, students explore the legal issues that define the interviewing of subjects, either in consensual encounters or in custody. Various techniques to enhance information obtained including analysis of verbal and non-verbal actions and how they relate to truth or deception of persons during the interview process are also covered. Documentation of encounters to include field interviews will be addressed. Students will engage in practical exercises concerning proper report/statement writing skills. Emphasis will be placed on the gathering and documentation of pertinent information and construction of report narratives using clear, concise language.	Y
LE 155	Juvenile Methods	2	Students will study local and state policies and programs and services that comprise the juvenile justice system and provide a comprehensive overview of the processing and treatment of juvenile offenders, descriptions and definitions of offender types and the subsystems that play a role in the care and control of juvenile delinquents.	Y
LE 165	Intro to Firearms II	1	This course is a continuation of LE 133 and an in-depth look at why law enforcement officers must know and practice all procedures for the safe handling of all firearms while on and off duty.	Y
LE 200	Fitness for Life III	1	This is an intermediate course of methods for managing and evaluating one's physical fitness for a healthy lifestyle necessary for safely and effectively performing the duties of a law enforcement professional.	Y
LE 205	Law Enforcement Survival	3	Students are introduced to the escalation of force model and in basic offender confrontation concepts. Tactical techniques will be covered to include professional communication skills to gain an understanding of how to deal with physical situations and the ability to respond with swift and efficient solutions whether physical or verbal. Students will also demonstrate arrest, handcuff, control techniques, and how to conduct a safe and thorough search incident to arrest of compliant and non-compliant suspects. Techniques covered will include the proper use of handcuffs, police baton, and oleoresin capicum (OC) spray.	Y
LE 210	Accident Investigations	2	Students learn how to effectively investigate and manage traffic collision scenes to ensure their safety, the safety of others, and protect the integrity of the collision scene. Also covered are the basics of proper and lawful accident investigation which includes students being taught the applicable laws that pertain to accidents of a general nature and specifically as it relates to the laws of the state of South Dakota.	Y

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION
Appendix 3: Program of Study

Lake Area Technical College
 Conservation Law Enforcement

LE 215	Firearms Training	2	This course will enable students to learn why law enforcement officers must know and practice all procedures for safe handling of firearms while on and off duty. Students will also understand the capabilities and limitations of ammunition and firearms in order to operate them safely and effectively; demonstrate how to properly inspect, clean, and care for their firearms to ensure that they function safely and effectively; and successfully master and demonstrate the fundamental skills of firing firearms to be effective in reactive and precision situations during live fire exercises.	Y
LE 220	Criminal Investigations	3	This course covers the complex, sophisticated field of criminal investigation and the investigative aspects of police work. The major goals in a criminal investigation and the fundamentals of preliminary and follow-up investigations will also be covered. Students will learn the importance of conducting a thorough criminal investigation, recording information in their notes, and later taking the notes and turning them into a narrative that can be used to prosecute the suspect.	Y
LE 225	Evidence	2	This course provides a brief historical survey of crime scene investigation and familiarizes students with the methodologies and skills of crime scene evaluation, evidence collection, documentation, and preservation, as well as various forensic techniques used by investigators and lab analysts to evaluate such evidence. Students will learn how crime scene processing works within the criminal justice system and will explain and perform various crime scene techniques, citing key elements of such techniques. Students will also demonstrate the techniques to properly conduct a crime scene investigation, including locating, identifying, processing and documenting evidence.	Y
LE 230	Fitness for Life IV	1	This is an advanced course for managing and evaluating one's physical fitness for a healthy lifestyle necessary for safely and effectively performing the duties of a law enforcement professional.	Y
LE 235	Patrol Procedures II	3	This course will teach students how to safely and effectively fulfill their duties of public protection and service as police officers. Students will learn to develop appropriate law enforcement patrol strategies under a wide variety of circumstances and conditions	Y
LE 240	Advanced Firearms Training	2	Students will demonstrate and practice all procedures learned during firearms training for the safe handling of all firearms while on and off duty. Additionally, students will learn how to function in situations under low-light and/or nighttime and in combat conditions. Shooting a firearm under combat conditions requires the student to integrate all of the basic principles of shooting with the tactical and defensive techniques required for survival. It also requires both physical and emotional skills that must be established and practiced right along with shooting skills.	Y
LE 245	Emergency Vehicle Operations	3	This course teaches students the importance of defensive driving principles and techniques in order to develop safe driving habits. Students will learn how to recognize the emergency response driving that demands a high level of concentration and instant reaction. Students will also complete an EVOC course and demonstrate proficiency in the operation of the vehicle.	Y
LE 250	Corrections	0.5	This course will introduce students to Institutional and Community Corrections systems, the operation of jails and prisons, contemporary national and state issues and practices in probation, parole and community corrections alternatives. Students will be introduced to the history of corrections and its competing purposes of retribution and protection of the public.	Y
LE 255	Law Enforcement Practicum	2	This course gives students the opportunity to participate in hands-on experiences with various law enforcement/ criminal justice agencies covering a variety of duties. Each student will attend at least two shifts per week for a period of several weeks at the direction of the instructor. Students may be assigned a variety of law enforcement tasks working with officers during their duty shifts.	Y

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION
Appendix 3: Program of Study

Lake Area Technical College
 Conservation Law Enforcement

LE 260	Certification	1	This course will introduce and expose students to the South Dakota Law Enforcement Testing Study Guide to assist and prepare them for the South Dakota Law Enforcement Reciprocity Written Test and Skills Test, which will be administered prior to graduation from the program. The written reciprocity test will be proctored at Lake Area Tech by Law Enforcement Testing personnel. Students must have a passing score of 70 percent or better on the written test to be eligible to take the Skills Test, which is administered by Law Enforcement Testing personnel in Pierre, SD.	Y
LE 265	Law Enforcement Spanish	1	This course provides students with the basic communication skills in Spanish that enables them to communicate with the Spanish-speaking population they may encounter through their daily work in law enforcement.	Y
LE 270	Issues in Policing	2	This course exposes students to a variety of issues in policing which includes but not limited to liability areas of policing; building trust with the community; excessive use of force by the police; sexual misconduct by the police; perjury by the police; drug and alcohol misuse by police; police and suicide; other unethical behaviors by the police; and maneuvering successfully in the political environment.	Y
LE 275	Domestic Violence Certification	1	This course will provide students with tools and strategies about the dynamics of domestic violence, laws pertaining to domestic violence, officer and victim safety, holding the perpetrator accountable, and forming a community coordinated response.	Y
LE 280	Radar Certification	0.5	Students will gain an understanding of the association between speed offenses and motor vehicle accidents and injuries. This course also covers major types of speed regulations, including the origin, development, and scope of these regulations; safety benefits of effective speed enforcement; and the origin and history of RADAR equipment.	Y
LE 285	Impaired Driver Detection and Apprehension	2	The Standardized Field Sobriety Testing (SFST) training curriculum collectively prepares law enforcement students to conduct the SFST's for use in DUI investigations	Y
NRM 224	Equipment Use	3	Students are introduced to equipment operation, safety, and maintenance. Topics include boat, ATV/UTV, and snowmobile operation, maintenance, and trailering, and hand/power tools training. Upon completion, students will be able to safely operate equipment and perform the routine maintenance and repair required in a conservation career.	Y
NRM 226	Wildlife and Fisheries Identification and Management	3	This course covers the basic study of regional wildlife and fish species, which students will practice identifying in the field. Wildlife diseases, wildlife damage management, and wildlife educational programming are also covered. The student will also examine current issues and case examples related to wildlife conservation and management.	Y
NRM 220	Introduction to Wildlife and Fisheries Laws and Policies	3	This course provides a basic overview of conservation history and introduces students to conservation and parks laws and rules. The focus of the course is on South Dakota and Federal laws and regulations related to conservation topics. Students will also apply laws and regulations to conservation law enforcement field scenarios.	Y
NRM 222	Parks and Habitat Management	3	Parks and Habitat Management provides hands-on training in plant/grasses identification and an overview of major land-use practices and how these practices and conservation programs influence habitat quality. Land management tools such as fire, herbicides, biocontrol agents, mechanical treatment, and livestock grazing will be critically discussed, evaluated and practiced when applicable.	Y
SUBTOTAL OF PROGRAM CREDITS:		60.5	TOTAL NEW COURSES:	0

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION
Appendix 4: Alignment Projection

Lake Area Technical College
 Conservation Law Enforcement

TOTAL CREDITS IN PROPOSED PROGRAM:
 87

I. STACKABLE OPPORTUNITIES						
PROGRAM NAME						
Natural Resource Management		Short-term Certificate	x	Existing	If Forthcoming: Projected Timeline	Total Credits in Stackable Program
		Long-term Certificate		Forthcoming		
		Diploma				
	x	AAS				
						72
						24
PROGRAM NAME						
Associate of Social Work		Short-term Certificate	x	Existing	If Forthcoming: Projected Timeline	Total Credits in Stackable Program
		Long-term Certificate		Forthcoming		
		Diploma				
	x	AAS				
						67.5
						15
PROGRAM NAME						
		Short-term Certificate		Existing	If Forthcoming: Projected Timeline	Total Credits in Stackable Program
		Long-term Certificate		Forthcoming		
		Diploma				
		AAS				
PROGRAM NAME						
		Short-term Certificate		Existing	If Forthcoming: Projected Timeline	Total Credits in Stackable Program
		Long-term Certificate		Forthcoming		
		Diploma				
		AAS				

II. ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS (BACCALAUREATE)						
PROGRAM NAME	COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY					
			Existing	If Forthcoming: Projected Timeline	Total Credits in Bachelor's Degree	How many PROPOSED PROGRAM credits are projected to be accepted in the articulation agreement?
			Forthcoming			
PROGRAM NAME	COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY					
			Existing	If Forthcoming: Projected Timeline	Total Credits in Bachelor's Degree	How many PROPOSED PROGRAM credits are projected to be accepted in the articulation agreement?
			Forthcoming			
PROGRAM NAME	COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY					
			Existing	If Forthcoming: Projected Timeline	Total Credits in Bachelor's Degree	How many PROPOSED PROGRAM credits are projected to be accepted in the articulation agreement?
			Forthcoming			

III. LICENSURE AND CERTIFICATION OPPORTUNITIES		
<i>The PROPOSED PROGRAM will qualify students to pursue the following licensure and/or certification opportunities:</i>		
LICENSURE/CERTIFICATION: South Dakota Law Enforcement Standards and Training Commission Reciprocity Examination	OVERSIGHT ORGANIZATION: South Dakota Law Enforcement Officers Standards and Training Commission.	Will the licensure/certification require reporting per SDCL 13-1-61? Yes to the Office of the South Dakota Attorney General.
	OVERSIGHT ORGANIZATION	Will the licensure/certification require reporting per SDCL 13-1-61?
LICENSURE/CERTIFICATION	OVERSIGHT ORGANIZATION	Will the licensure/certification require reporting per SDCL 13-1-61?

GAME, FISH AND PARKS MEMORANDUM

STATEMENT OF NEED

In accordance with and support of Lake Area Technical College's S.D. Board of Technical Education New Program application outlining Conservation Law Enforcement Certification Plus One Option added to the LATC Law Enforcement program, we can attest to the necessity for more highly trained and certified Conservation Law Enforcement Officers required statewide.

The need is explained and justified in the following areas: (add a paragraph per item, and please add any other needs that will be filled with this new program.)

1. Number of current and upcoming Retirements.

Approximately 18 of our current officers will be eligible to retire over the course of the next four years which accounts for nearly 20% of our conservation officer workforce.

2. Lack of credentialed statewide programs to fill the need for Conservation Law Enforcement Officers.

While there are several colleges in South Dakota that offer degrees in the wildlife and fisheries field, there are currently no programs that combine a certification for law enforcement and a certificate in wildlife and fisheries law enforcement.

3. Number of trained conservation employees needed to fill all present and future office and park employment openings.

At full staff, South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks employs 86 fulltime conservation officers and 12 seasonal park rangers.

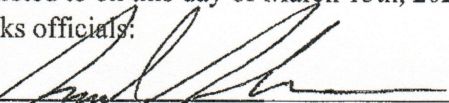
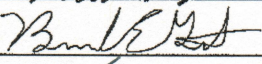
4. Other state government offices requiring similar official trainings or accepting the Game, Fish and Parks credentialing process.

Every surrounding state currently recruits and hires students from South Dakota for their conservation officer positions. Additionally, many of the tribal governments in South Dakota also have conservation officers enforcing the fish and game laws of their tribe. Most states no longer require a four-year degree to be hired as a conversation officer.

Starting salary for a newly hired conservation officer is approximately \$59,508.00/year. A 5-year officer currently makes \$63,516.96/year and a 10-year officer currently makes \$68,047.92/year working as a field level conservation officer for South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks.

Summary Statement:

Attested to on this day of March 13th, 2024, and supported by the following SD Game, Fish and Parks officials:

1.  Title LE Section Cheif
2.  Title LE Deputy Cheif
3.  Title LE Training Supervisor



DEPARTMENT of GAME, FISH, AND PARKS

Foss Building
523 East Capitol
Pierre, South Dakota 57501-3182

March 8, 2024

South Dakota Game Fish and Parks
Sam Schelhaas, Law Section Chief
43349 Hwy 52
Yankton, SD 57078

South Dakota Board of Technical Education
800 Governors Drive
Pierre, SD 575436

South Dakota Board of Technical Education Members:

South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (SDGFP) is excited to hear that Lake Area Technical College (LATC) is exploring the addition of a certificate for a conservation officer career. As we understand, this would be an add-on to the basic law enforcement certification they currently offer. SDGFP is charged with protecting the natural resources and state parks that are available to the citizens and its visitors of South Dakota. At full staff SDGFP employs 86 full time conservation officers and 12 seasonal park rangers. Our duties as a conservation officer coincide with standard law enforcement duties but are also very different. As a conservation officer we work in the outdoors with the sporting public on a daily basis. Conservation law enforcement requires the use specialized equipment that traditional law enforcement does not use. Conservation officers are also viewed by the public as area experts in the field of natural resources.

In the past many of the conservation officers hired possessed a Bachelor of Science degree with an emphasis in wildlife and fisheries. While this degree gives our officers a background in wildlife and fisheries, they are often lacking a background in law enforcement. Conversely, the law enforcement degree LATC offers to students provides a background in law enforcement for the position of a conservation officer but still leaves an educational gap in wildlife and fisheries. Combining the two as LATC is looking to do will give students the knowledge in law enforcement and the background in natural resources to be successful as a conservation officer. We have had several conversations with LATC regarding this new certificate and are excited to help develop the program.

There is a constant need for law enforcement officers in South Dakota and SDGFP is no exception to this. In 2021, we were down approximately 20 conservation officers statewide. Recently, the State of South Dakota evaluated the pay structure for conservation officers. Over the last two years, conservation officers have seen over a 20% increase in pay with starting salaries now at \$59,508.00 per year. While this increase in pay has helped SDGFP both recruit and retain conservation officers, we are anticipating a significant amount of turnover of officers in the next 3-5 years due to retirements.

In closing, SDGFP is excited that LATC is looking to add this one-of-a-kind certificate to their law enforcement program and we fully support this addition. We have engaged in several conversations with LATC to assist with development of what they are currently recommending and will continue to work with them to see the program succeed if implemented.

Sincerely,

Sam Schelhaas