UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS
GLOBAL CAMPUS
IT READINESS INITIATIVE

Project Background
The University of Arkansas Global Campus, in partnership with Bentonville Public Schools, Acxiom, Collective Bias, Field Agent, J.B. Hunt, Rockfish, Saatchi & Saatchi X, Tat Consultancy Services, and Wal-Mart Stores Inc., was recently awarded a grant from the Arkansas Department of Higher Education to develop information technology certificate programs in order to help fill skills gaps in Northwest Arkansas.

Project Scope
This program seeks to provide certificates to a number of employees in the IT sector. The IT Readiness program will encompass various levels of course offerings in order to meet the needs of high school graduates, employed IT professionals, career changers, and those looking to get a job in the IT sector. Different tracks will help people start or advance their careers.

Certificate Programs
Successful participants will earn University of Arkansas certificates in specific IT areas such as cyber security, cloud technology, or mobile app development. The University of Arkansas will work with industry partners to develop the most relevant and in-demand curriculum for certificate programs, and to identify industry experts to assist in the development and the teaching of certain courses. The IT Readiness Initiative will be focused upon the actual need of businesses in the Northwest Arkansas region.

Participant Support
The IT Readiness Program partners will provide participants with support beyond just classroom teaching. To align with the goal of creating a job-ready candidate at the end of the program, the Global Campus and its partners will provide participants with such support systems as networking opportunities, access to technology, resources for job placement, and guidance on IT career pathways. Industry partners have a vested interest in this program, as they are prime examples of businesses that have a need for highly qualified, well-trained employees.

Summary of Outcomes
The IT Readiness Program will identify specific needs of business in Northwest Arkansas and develop certificate programs in order to fill skills gaps. After working with partners to build relevant curriculum, the Global Campus will offer certificate programs to ensure high quality training of the IT workforce.

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