

Proposal
Establishment of the College of Extended Learning
Minnesota State University, Mankato

Rationale:

As a service unit of the University, Extended Learning provides support for the traditional academic colleges' outreach efforts. This is accomplished by bringing external educational needs to the academic college for consideration and possible action and assisting colleges in their outreach efforts. While these functions are essential, the current role of Extended Learning as a unit is limited. As a College, Extended Learning would continue to provide the academic college support and service functions but also would play a stronger and more active role in advocacy for adult learners and responding to personal and professional needs. Through the College of Extended Learning, the university would gain additional options and opportunities for responding to community and learner needs and demands there by increasing the opportunity for recruiting students who are currently underserved by Minnesota State University, Mankato. The College of Extended Learning would advocate for adult students to increase their retention possibilities. Additionally, the College of Extended Learning can provide a research and development function by identifying and establishing new markets without additional strain and burden on the existing academic areas. Revenues obtained from the new College will provide funds for supporting the delivery of educational programs to new underserved and diverse populations.

Comparison Universities:

A review of other universities indicates a College of Extended Learning or College of Continuing Education is not unusual. The following is a list of selected universities, similar to Minnesota State Mankato, that have such a college highlighting the particular college functions.

- San Francisco State College
Offers a wide variety of continuing adult education courses for career advancement, career change or personal growth. Students can be degree seeking or taking programs not offered as degrees. Faculty are campus faculty or expert practitioners. Programs respond to market demand.
- New Mexico State College
This college increases the number of pathways open to students. Degree plans and academic experiences are offered that do not fit a traditional mold as well as more traditional weekend and evening campus based programs. Examples of non-traditional programs include Certificate in Online Teaching and Learning, Bachelor of Applied Science, Bachelor of Individualized Study, Distance Education degrees.
- San Diego State University
This college offers lifelong learning classes, seminars, online classes, certificate programs in collaboration with campus faculty and also independently.
- California State University – San Bernardino
Provides access to university degrees, certificate programs, professional development and personal enrichment. Programs include executive format programs, university courses on a space available basis, international programs, online programs, customized training and non-credit learning opportunities.

- Kent State University
Provides continuing education programs for professional and adult learners using the university strengths in business, health and other areas to develop new programs.
- Middle Tennessee State University
The college offers correspondence, evening, off campus and online courses as well as adult and online degree programs. The college also offers non-credit courses and manages summer session.
- Kennesaw State University, University College
This College was created in 2004-2005 to provide an academic home for exploratory students and to provide greater visibility and significance to a variety of programs, academic support services and projects.

This list could be quite expansive but the commonalities would remain the same. All the Colleges of Extended Learning/Continuing Education work with and support traditional academic areas while providing programming geared for the adult/non-traditional student. Course/program delivery method variations are also a specialized function of Colleges of Extended Learning/Continuing Education.

Purpose:

Purpose of the Minnesota State University Mankato College of Extended Learning is to increase the visibility of the University through the College of Extended Learning for the recruitment and retention of new students; develop and manage programs for adult, non-traditional and diverse students and provide a College that is flexible and adaptable to short term educational needs. The College of Extended Learning supports the strategic priorities of the University including increased access for underserved and diverse populations.

University definition of a non-traditional student:

A student who is a parent; A student who is married, partnered, widowed or divorced; A student who is 24 years of age or older; A student who is also a military veteran; A student who waited 3 or more years after high school to attend college; A student who is returning to college after a leave or absence of 3 or more years; A student who commutes from over 15 minutes away

In addition, the College of Extended Learning serves students and potential students for whom time and distance pose barriers to higher education degree attainment.

Tactics – Operations:

- Create additional opportunities for creativity and innovation in teaching and learning
- Increase autonomy in responding to community and learner needs
- Increase opportunity for additional faculty lines while not diluting, but actually enhancing the resources that are directed towards meeting other current and planned commitments of departments
- Support lifelong learning opportunities (degree and non-degree)
- Provide a strategy that is flexible and adaptable to short term educational needs
- Manage admission/registration process for non-degree seeking undergraduate students
- Provide advocacy for non-traditional and adult students not attending courses and programs that are typically solely located on campus

- Develop assignment structure for faculty assigned to the College of Extended Learning
 - Academic departments assist the College of Extended Learning in identifying appropriate disciplined based faculty
 - The academic home of the faculty is within the academic department, the work assignment is through the College of Extended Learning
 - The assignment is annually renewable through the College of Extended Learning, faculty would not receive tenure through the College of Extended Learning
 - The assigned faculty serve a liaison role between the academic department and the College of Extended Learning
- Provide formal faculty development for teaching non-traditional students and teaching online
- Provide pre-major advising for off campus and online students
- Develop and implement curriculum for adult, non-traditional students
 - BS degree completion programs
 - Industry and profession oriented certificate programs
- Continue and enhance support of department based academic outreach
- Provide alternative course/program delivery modalities – off campus, online, and packaged
- Provide quality options for students interested in alternative curricular delivery through the use of technology

Outcomes:

- Increased responsiveness to community and learner needs:
By having programs and faculty focused on constituents' needs rather than discipline based issues, there is greater likelihood that the community and/or learner needs will take precedence. In addition, with faculty assignment in the College of Extended Learning there is a synergy and mutuality of goals that may otherwise be absent when faculty member(s) are housed and functioning in a milieu which is focused on the more traditional student and on-campus course and program offerings
- Increased non-traditional adult and diverse students served:
The primary focus of the College of Extended Learning is on meeting the educational needs of non-traditional students including those with time constraints as well as those who are place bound. With increased visibility and responsiveness, the College of Extended Learning will provide more opportunities for access of non-traditional and diverse students to high quality courses and programs offered by the university.
- Increased retention of non-traditional/adult students:
The College of Extended Learning will have a primary advocacy role for non-traditional students. The College can be more influential in policy development and implementation by providing input and equivalent consideration of the needs of the non-traditional student. This will result in increased retention of non-traditional students.
- Creation of innovative short term curricular learning opportunities:
Flexibility and innovation are characteristics of the College of Extended Learning. Commitments can be made for short term learning opportunities without the commitment

to tenured faculty lines, lessening the risk for the University. Providing full or partial assignment of department selected faculty members to the College of Extended Learning will allow for departmental outreach to non-traditional students, businesses and industries, and other constituencies within mutual areas of interest, while allowing for more structural means of enabling departments to avoid reduction of resources necessary to maintain on-campus commitments

- Increased revenue for faculty and the University:
A major challenge for the University is to have continued growth of off campus and online enrollments without overwhelming the traditional academic areas. This can be done with addition of new faculty lines assigned to the College of Extended Learning. This allows the new College to be responsive to external demand, with qualified faculty, vetted by the academic departments, with a commitment to the non-traditional student.

Comparison between College of Graduate Studies and Research and College of Extended Learning Responsibilities in Addressing Non-traditional/Adult Students Served by the University:

Graduate Studies and Research	Extended Learning
Manages admission to Graduate School for degree, certificate and non-degree seeking graduate students	Manages permission to register for non-degree seeking undergraduate students
Advocacy for graduate students	Advocacy for non-traditional/adult students being served online and at off campus locations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased access and responsiveness to underserved and diverse populations who would otherwise not be primarily involved in on campus courses and programs
Manage curriculum and program review through Grad sub meet	Manage online and off campus processes through Extended Learning sub meet; administrative oversight for non-traditional undergraduate degree completion program, curricular and program review is through UCAP
Faculty joint appointments	Faculty appointed to an academic department while work assignment may be fully or partially in the College of Extended Learning for short or extended periods of time
Manages graduate degree process and interdisciplinary degrees	Manages alternative delivery modalities – online, off campus; administration of non-traditional degree completion program
Shared governance through Graduate sub meet	Shared governance through Extended Learning sub meet

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