

Reimagining Institutional Models for Online Program Development and Support

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OLC Accelerate 2017 - November 16, 2017



Northern Illinois University
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Presenter

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Session Summary

When is it time to reevaluate the models for distance learning administration and support at your institution and how do you successfully implement recommendations for change? Learn from the experience of Northern Illinois University reimagining its distance learning support model as a result of a recent institution-wide program prioritization process.

NIU Online Education Background and Trends

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About NIU

- Main campus in DeKalb, IL located 65 miles West of Chicago
- Total enrollment: 19,015
- 1,174 Instructional faculty
- Student to instructor/faculty ratio: 13:1
- Online programs: 7 undergrad, 7 graduate, 7 certificates
- Off-campus programs: 17 graduate



**Northern Illinois
University**

History of Online / Off-campus Education at NIU

- The Division of Outreach, Engagement and Regional Development was founded, inheriting the course-delivery functions that had formerly rested with the College of Continuing Education;
- The regional centers were opened and their supervision was transferred to OERD
- A separate fee structure was established for courses offered through OERD
- As online courses and programs began to emerge, the choice fell to the offering unit whether to offer them through OERD or through the unit's normal channels.
- The fees charged for a course depended on whether or not the course was formally identified as an off-campus course. This meant that the off-campus fee structure applied to (almost) all courses with an off-campus face-to-face component. But, since fully online courses were sometimes designated as "off-campus" and sometimes as "on-campus", the fees charged for online courses varied from one course to another.
- Until very recently, tuition did not vary by location or modality. Recently, differential tuition has been introduced at the graduate level, typically in the form of a surcharge for students enrolled in a given program. There are a few programs that are offered in both online and face-to-face modes where a differential tuition was requested and approved for the online version only. Differential tuition at the undergraduate level being piloted in FY17 for the College of Engineering & Engineering Technology.

History of Online Strategy and Program Development

- One of the most significant consequence of the university's focus on main campus students has been that leadership on the issue of online, adult, and off-campus enrollment has defaulted to OERD.
- Absent the systematic and strategic engagement of Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, or Finance, OERD has been able to exert only modest influence, while colleges and academic programs largely followed their own trajectories.
- There has been no agreed-upon leadership with authority to mobilize assets across the institution to address the needs of the online and off-campus student environments.

History of Online Course Development

- Building on the residue of the College of Continuing Education, OERD developed eLearning Services into a unit capable of high-end course development. eLearning operated on a charge-back model, relying on contracts (either internal or external) to fund the unit, as there was minimal general revenue funding for it.
- Faculty Development evolved from a unit providing primarily expertise on instruction to also offer expertise on instructional technology. Faculty Development was tasked with providing comprehensive faculty support and was oriented more towards training, rather than instructional design, so it evolved more towards providing support and training in the faculty's own instructional design efforts, rather than providing course development services for the faculty.
- Many faculty took a do-it-yourself approach, creating their own materials and using their own expertise. The results varied accordingly, from award-winning designs to materials that were quite innocent of design standards or learning outcomes.

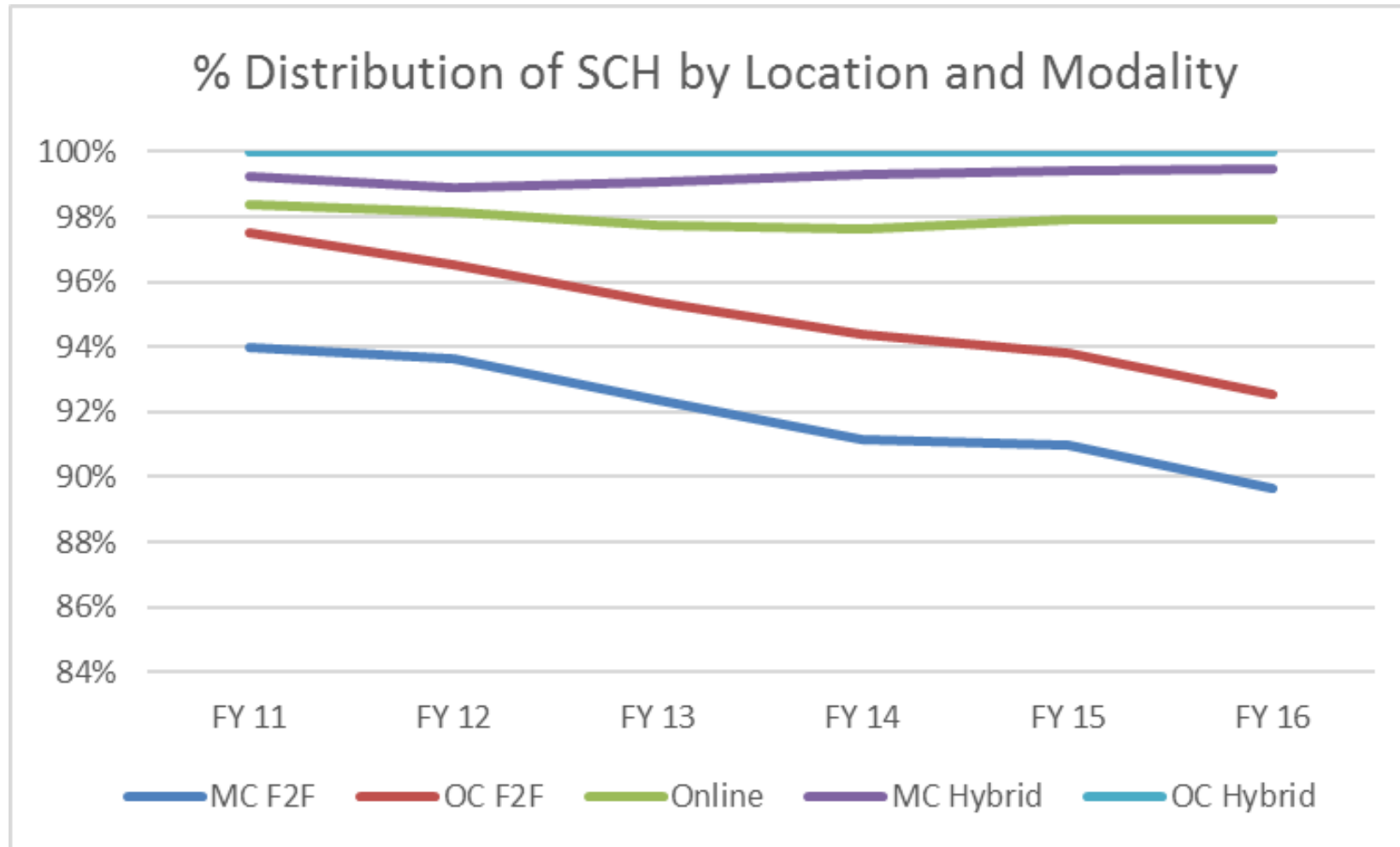
Financial Viability

- There has been no systematic structure in place to support the development or deployment of online or off-campus programs.
- Colleges and units have either used the Outreach fee structure to collect revenue, or negotiated ad hoc arrangements for cost recovery and revenue-sharing.

Summary of Recent History

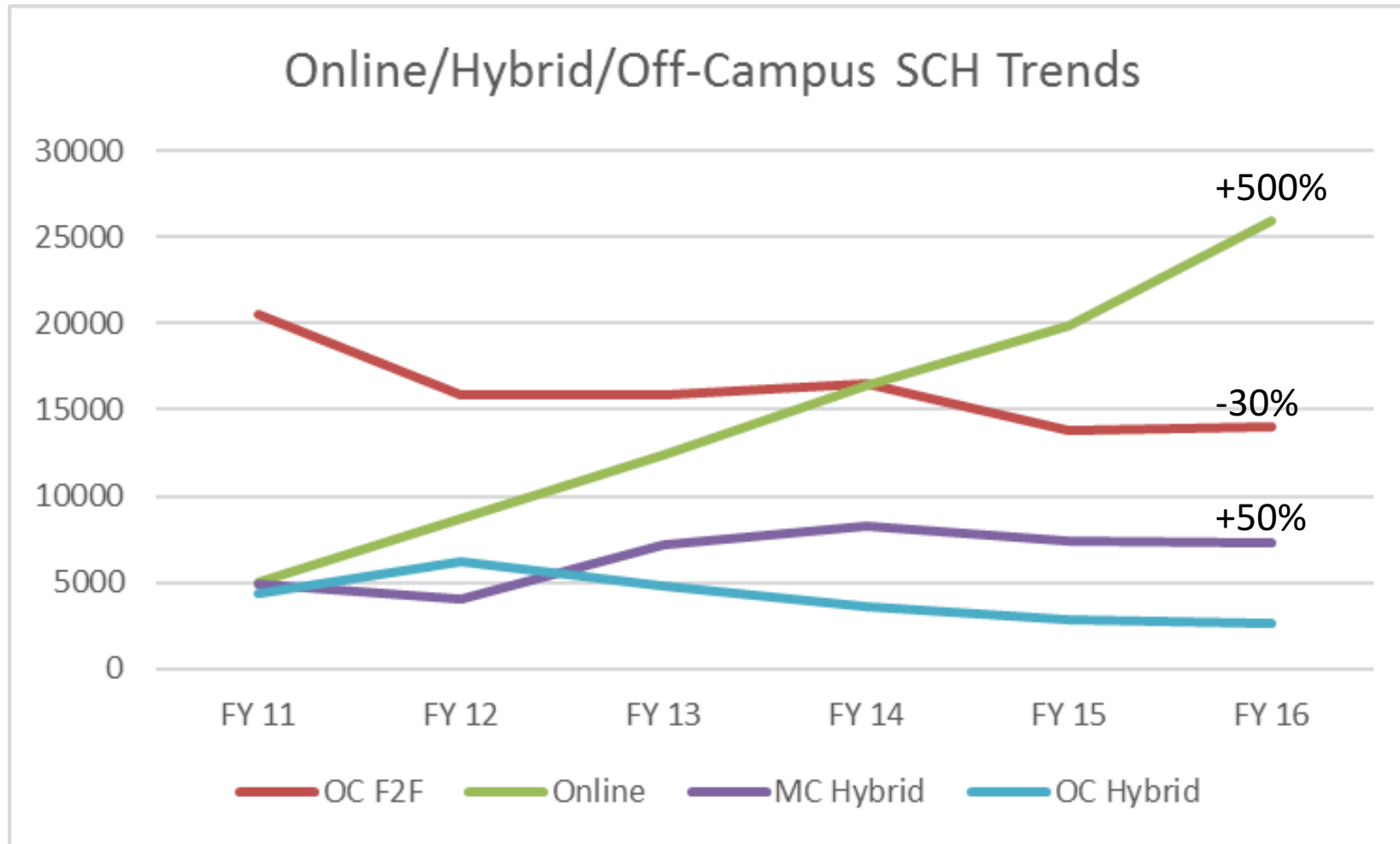
To summarize, the structure for serving the off-campus market was built around the regional centers and pre-dated the rise of online programming. It evolved in response to changes in the marketplace, especially in response to the rise of online education, but did so with a number of institutional constraints, so the evolution produced more of a platypus than a cheetah. There has been little to no institutional support or coherence across divisions, and just enough resources and opportunities to enable those who are particularly entrepreneurial to make modest penetration into the online market.

Enrollment Patterns



Well over 90% of NIU's instructional effort delivered in face-to-face on-campus.

Enrollment in Non-F2F Main Campus Courses



Role of Online / Off-campus Education at NIU

Enrollment Growth

- On-campus traditional-aged face-to-face enrollments will continue to remain low for the foreseeable future
- Online and off-campus enrollments are our most important and immediate growth opportunities

Serving the Region

- Reaching place-bound and/or working adults
- Providing direct services to businesses
- Partnering with community colleges, school districts, businesses & government agencies

Expanding our Reach

- Online programs as a means of reaching a global audience

Current Status Prompting Changes

- Division of Outreach, Engagement, & Regional Development (OERD) currently organizes most services for off-campus f2f courses
- NIU online/off-campus program offerings include:

Level	Online Degrees	Online Certificates	Off-campus Degrees	Off-campus Certificates
Undergraduate	7	1	7	0
Graduate	7	6	17	2

- Most online courses that are part of an online program flow through OERD, individual courses may not
- Outside of OERD, few student service functions are targeted to online/off-campus students
- Online & off-campus courses routed through OERD are subject to different fees; tuition is not differentiated by location/modality

Student Trends

Combination of Modalities	% Students using that combination
Main Campus F2F only	60%
Mix of Main Campus F2F & Online	26%
Online only	2%
Mix of Online & Off-Campus	1%
Off-Campus only	7%
Mix of Main Campus F2F & Off-Campus F2F	3%
Mix of Main Campus F2F, Off-Campus F2F, Online	1%

Conclusions:

- Biggest driver of growth in online enrollments has been “main campus” students opting for some online courses as part of their schedule.
- We have had limited success in using our off-campus and online programs to attract new students to NIU.

Online and Regional Student Services



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Online and Regional Academics

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If you have questions regarding NIU's Online or Regional courses, degrees or certificates, please contact Andrew Kopecky.

Andrew Kopecky
Credit Program Coordinator
(815) 753-8788
akopecky@niu.edu

If you need help getting reacquainted with the academic world or identifying strategies to integrate studies with work and life responsibilities, please contact Mandy Wescott.

Mandy Wescott
Student Success Specialist
(815) 753-5891
mandy@niu.edu



New degrees or professional credentials are closer – and more convenient – than ever!

Looking for educational opportunities close to home? Northern Illinois University offers a wide variety of academic programs, [undergraduate](#) and [graduate](#), which are delivered [online](#), at our state-of-the-art NIU Outreach Centers in Hoffman Estates, Naperville and Rockford, and other locations across the northern Illinois region.

Whether you're looking for certificate programs, bachelor's degree-completion opportunities, or full graduate degrees, NIU's off-campus offerings deliver the affordable, high quality courses you've come to expect and trust.



Interested in learning more about our academic programs?



eLearning Services

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eLearning Services

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Quality Matters

In 2014 NIU adopted Quality Matters ensure our courses are of the highest quality in serving our students. Learn more about working with eLearning Services in developing your quality online program or course.

NIU

ONLINE QUALITY

Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center

The screenshot shows the website for the Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center at Northern Illinois University. The header includes the NIU logo, the center's name, and the Division of Academic Affairs. Navigation links for A-Z Index, Directory, Calendar, Libraries, Make a Gift, and Quick Links are present, along with a search bar. A main navigation bar features links for Home, About, Programs, Services, Resources, and Information. The main content area is divided into three sections: 'Teaching Support Available' with links to Workshops and Institutes, Online Teaching Support, Blackboard Support, Clicker Support, and Blog; 'Upcoming Workshops' with a photo of a classroom and text describing monthly programs; and 'News' with links to OLC Accelerate Virtual Conference, Tips to Engage Critical Thinkers & Writers, 2016-2017 Annual Report, and November Faculty/Staff Program Schedule. A 'Contact Us' section provides the center's address, phone number, and email, along with social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.

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Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center
Division of Academic Affairs

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Teaching Support Available

- Workshops and Institutes
- Online Teaching Support
- Blackboard Support
- Clicker Support
- Blog

Upcoming Workshops

A wide variety of workshops and other programs are offered over each month for faculty, staff, and graduate teaching assistants. View the schedule of upcoming programs and sign-up today!

News

- OLC Accelerate Virtual Conference - November 15-17
- Tips to Engage Critical Thinkers & Writers – Fall Writing Workshop Series
- 2016-2017 Annual Report Now Available
- November Faculty/Staff Program Schedule

Contact Us

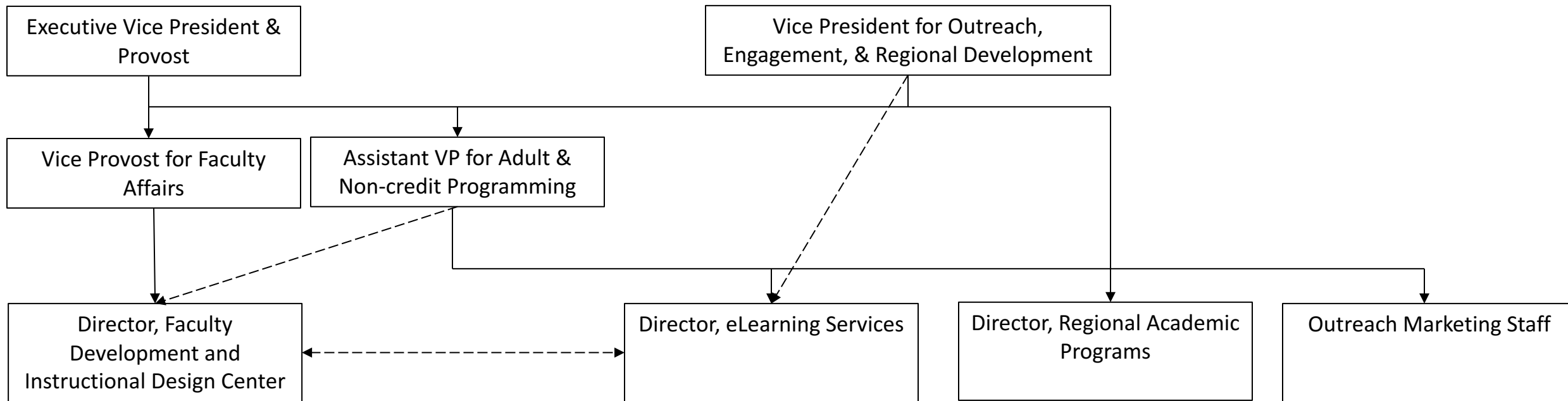
Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center
Adams Hall, Room 319
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facdev@niu.edu

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OLC Accelerate Virtual Conference

Organizational Chart (pre-2017)



Online Program Development and Support



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Online Program Development and Support

Outreach, Engagement, and Regional Development

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Online Program Development and Support

opds@niu.edu



Online Quality Standards

supporting faculty in the development and/or redevelopment of online courses and programs to reflect the best practices in online course quality reflected in current research



Online Program Development and Support

The Online Program Development and Support (OPDS) Office was formed to strengthen NIU's position as an institution offering high-quality online programs and courses. This office combines the talents of the professional staff in the **Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center** and **eLearning Services**. The office provides instructional design services, faculty development opportunities and quality assurance guidelines and strategies to create and support programs moving to online or blended delivery. The office also manages the promotion of NIU online

eLearning Services

Faculty Development



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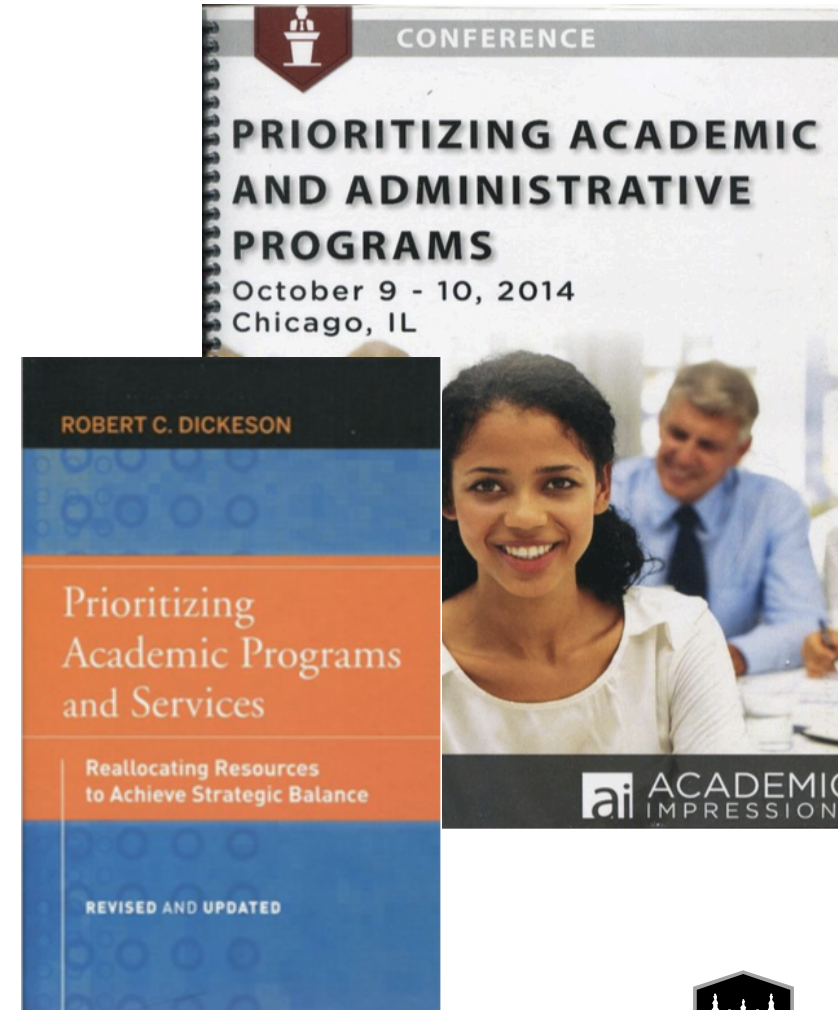
Program Prioritization

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About Program Prioritization

- Employed by more than half of public universities in the United States to redeploy assets through the process to reinvest in strong and growing programs and innovate through the development of new programs
- Effort toward assuring that programs reflect institutional mission and strategic goals
- In Fall 2015, NIU began a program prioritization process that will be critical to the growth of the university and our ability to deliver on our cornerstone goal of student career success.
- The goal was to build a strong foundation for maintaining and improving the quality of academic and administrative programs across NIU



Guiding Principles for Program Prioritization at NIU

1. All programs, academic and administrative, will be reviewed
2. Honor contracts with all employees
3. Guarantee students can finish their academic programs

Academic Program Criteria

1. Quality of faculty and faculty outcomes [16%]
2. Quality of students and student outcomes [16%]
3. Financial efficiency [11%]
4. Importance of the program to university mission [16%]
5. Program potential [11%]
6. External demand of the program [11%]
7. Internal demand of the program [4%]
8. Program's contribution to diversity [5%]

Administrative Program Criteria

1. Importance to university mission / operations [22%]
2. Quality / effectiveness [22%]
3. Productivity / efficiency [22%]
4. Internal & external demand [22%]
5. Opportunity analysis [12%]

Categories

1. **Enhance** – high importance & high performing, making efficient and effective use of their current resources; having unmet demand or potential for growth
2. **Sustain** – important & necessary & making good use of current resources; meeting demand & doing well with current resources
3. **Reduce** – underperforming or may have excess capacity or less potential for growth relative to other programs
4. **Transform** – must transform to improve importance, performance, and/or use of resources; appear to have greater potential than performance indicates
5. **Review** – lower performing & lower priority to the university's mission

niu.edu/program-prioritization



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Program Prioritization

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Latest News & Updates

President's May 2017 progress report posted
May 10, 2017

President's Program Prioritization progress report released
Nov. 28, 2016

Program Prioritization progress report to be issued Nov. 28
Nov. 17, 2016

Cultural centers to report to



Program Prioritization

[Progress Reports](#)



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Task Force Recommendations

“While the delivery of online or adult for-credit courses was once seen as an ancillary task, this has changed over time...It is critical that all students receive a consistent NIU experience, whether traditional/on-campus, online, regional, or adult learner. Efficiencies could be created by limiting the duplication of functions. The task force recommends moving online programs to Academic Affairs, utilizing Prospective Admissions Services and Graduate School Admissions for recruiting and admission, and utilizing Advertising in the Division of Marketing and Communications for promoting programs.”

Need for Revamping Existing Financial Model

“NIU’s online course fee model is dated and needs a substantial overhaul. There is no reason that an online, “on-campus” course should have different fees than an online, “off-campus course.”

Reimagining the Online Support Model

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Working Groups – “Complex Conversations”

Several working groups were established to discuss cross-divisional opportunities that require further exploration. The groups provided actionable recommendations related to the task forces' reports.

- Adult Learners
- Advising
- Educator Licensure and Preparation
- Institutional Effectiveness
- Marketing and Recruitment of Online and Adult Students
- Retention

Adult Learners Working Group

Academic Affairs Representatives

- Dean of the Graduate School
- Dean, College of Business
- Dean, College of Education
- Vice Provost for Resource Planning
- Director, Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center

Outreach, Engagement & Regional Development (OERD) Representatives

- Vice President for OERD
- Director, Outreach Operations, OERD
- Director, Center for Governmental Studies, OERD
- Asst. Vice President, Adult & Non-credit Programming
- Director, Regional Credit Programs

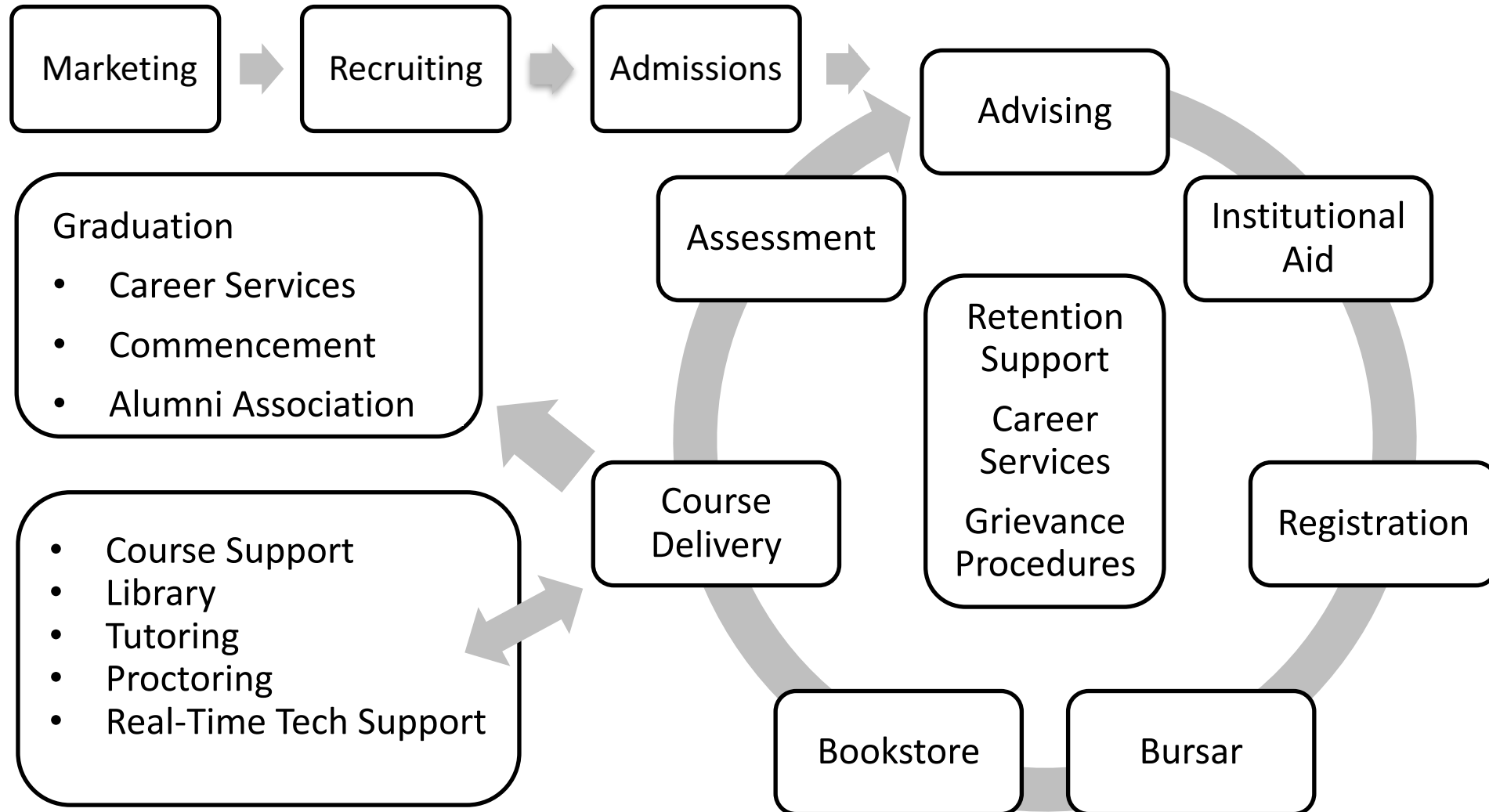
Formed by President, facilitated by the Dean, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences (now Acting Provost)

Charge to Adult Learners Working Group

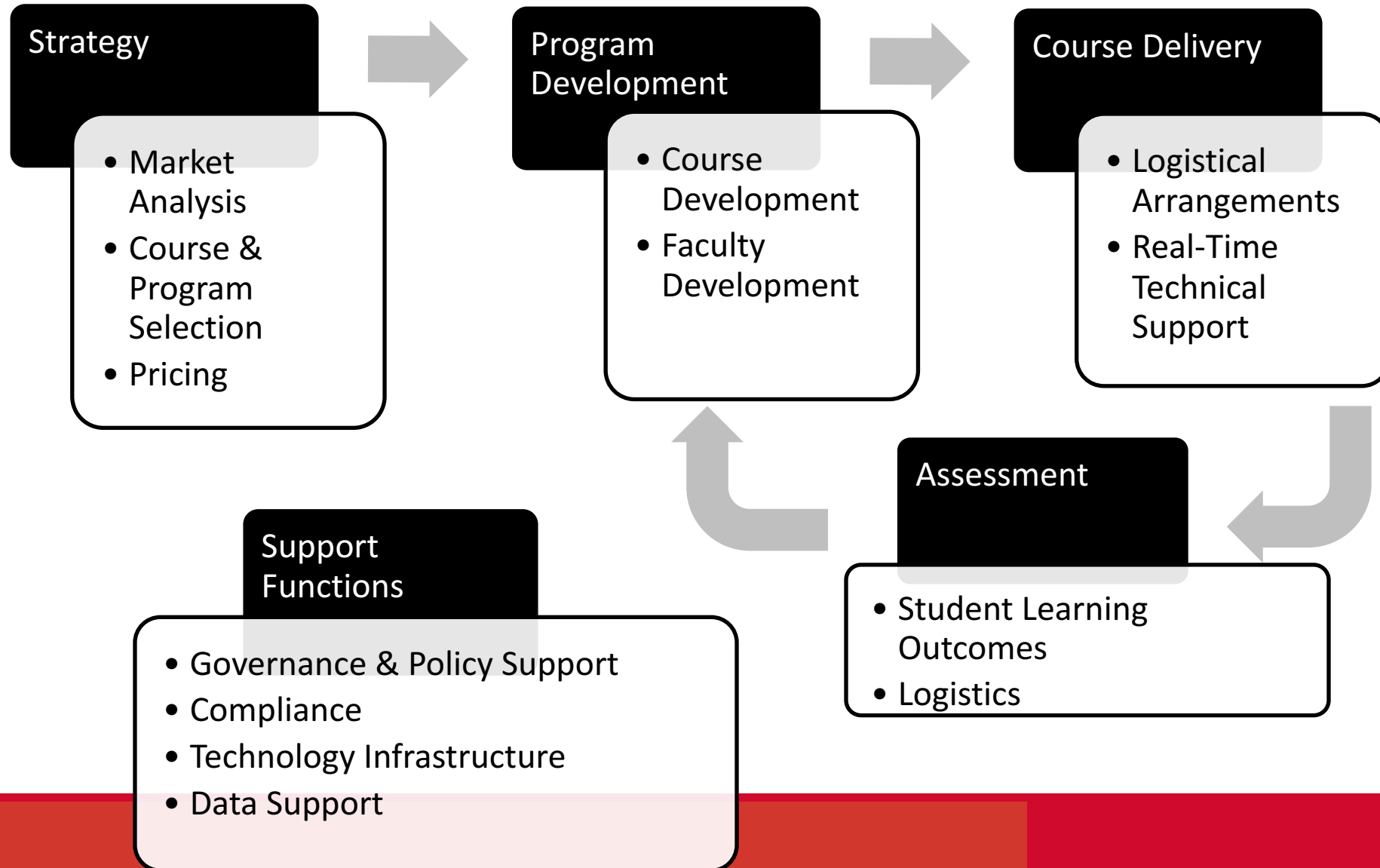
The working group was charged with developing and presenting a model for organizing and supporting the delivery of credit-bearing activities that fall outside of the traditional on-campus face-to-face. The proposed model should:

1. Improve **efficiency and minimize duplication of services** (while being open to the nuance between duplication of services and distribution of services);
2. Increase **enrollment and tuition generation** from these modalities/locations;
3. Provide a **sustainable financial structure**, including incentives and cost-recovery.

The Student Experience



Behind the Scenes Support



Benchmarking Support Models

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	Benchmarking Online / Adult Learning Support at MAC and Illinois Public Institutions							
2		Online / Adult Learning Support Unit?	Online / Adult Learning Support Unit Name	Support Unit Website	Key Services Provided	Title of Senior Leader Overseeing Online / Adult Learning	Whom Senior Leader Reports To	Org Chart
3	Institution							
4	Mid-American Conference Universities							
5	Akron U.	Yes	Instructional Services	https://www.uakron.edu/it/instructional_services/	instructional design, faculty training, instructional techsupport	Chief Information Officer	Provost	http://www.uakron.edu/provost/http://cms.bsu.edu/-/media/www/departmentalcontent/president/orgcharts/academic%20affairs%20org%20chart.pdf?la=en
6	Ball State U.	Yes	Online and Distance Education	http://cms.bsu.edu/academics/collegesanddepartments/online	program dev. strategy, marketing, instructional design, faculty training, student support	Associate Provost for Learning Initiatives	Provost	http://www.bgsu.edu/content/dam/BGSU/president/documents/university-administration.pdf
7	Bowling Green	Yes	eCampus	http://www.bgsu.edu/ecampus.html	program dev. strategy, marketing/recruitment, instructional design, faculty training, instruc. tech. support, student support	Assistant Vice Provost Online/Summer	Vice Provost for Academic Affairs	http://academicaffairs.buffalo.edu/files/academicAffairsOrgChart.pdf
8	Buffalo U.	Yes	Center for Educational Innovation	http://www.buffalo.edu/ubcei.html	instructional tech support, student support	Director, Center for Educational Innovation	Provost	http://academicaffairs.buffalo.edu/files/academicAffairsOrgChart.pdf

Benchmarking Chief Online Learning Officer Titles/Duties

Institution	Online Learning Support Unit?	Online Learning Support Unit Name	Title of Chief Online Officer
Mid-American Conference Universities			
Akron U.	Y	Instructional Services	?
Ball State U.	Y	Online and Distance Education	Associate Provost for Learning Initiatives
Buffalo U.	Y	Millard Fillmore College, Continuing and Professional Studies	Associate Dean
Central Mich. U.	Y	Academic Development	Vice Provost for Academic Development
E. Mich. U.	Y	EMU Extended Programs	?
Kent State U.	Y	Office of Continuing and Distance Education	Associate Vice President Continuing/Distance Education
Miami (OH) U.	Y	eLearning Miami	Assistant Provost for eLearning
Ohio U.	Y	Office of Instructional Innovation	Senior Vice Provost for Instructional Innovation
U. of Toledo	Y	UT Online	Associate Provost for Online Education
Western Mich. U.	Y	Online Education	Associate Provost for Extended University Programs
Illinois Public Universities			
Chicago State U.	Y	Center for Teaching and Research Excellence	?
Eastern Illinois U.	?	?	?
Governors State U.	Y	Center for Online Teaching and Learning	Director, Center for Online Teaching and Learning
Illinois State U.	Y	Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology	Associate Vice President for Academic Technologies
Northeastern Illinois University	Y	Center for Teaching and Learning	?
Southern Illinois U. Carbondale	Y	Center for Teaching Excellence / Extended Campus	?
Southern Illinois U. Edwardsville	Y	Office of Educational Outreach	?
U of I at Chicago	Y	UIC Extended Campus	Executive Director, Extended Campus
U of I at Springfield	Y	Center for Online Learning, Research, and Service	Associate Vice Chancellor for Online Learning
U of I at Urbana-Champaign	Y	Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning (CITL)	Associate Provost for Educational Innovation
Western Illinois U.	Y	School of Distance Learning, International Studies and Outreach	?

Additional Peer / Aspirational Institutions and Titles of Chief Online Learning Officers

Institution	Title of Chief Online Learning Officer
Aurora University	Dean of Online Enrollment and Continuing Education
Boise State University	Assistant Provost for Global Education
Columbia College Chicago	Vice Provost for Digital Learning
Columbia University, Teachers College	Vice Provost of Digital Learning
Cornell University	Associate Vice Provost of Online Learning
Delaware State University	Assistant Vice President for Distance Education
DePaul University	Associate Provost for Global Engagement and Online Learning
Fisk University	Vice Provost for Online Initiatives and Director of Distance Learning
Indiana University	Assistant Vice President/Director, Office of Online Education
Johnson University	Associate Provost of Online Education
Kansas State University	Dean, K-State Global Campus
Kennesaw State University	Associate Vice President, Technology Enhanced Learning
Northern Arizona University	Vice Provost for Teaching, Learning Design and Assessment
Northwestern University	Dean, School of Professional Studies
Norfolk State University	Dean, NSU Online
Oklahoma State University	Assistant Provost & Director, Institute for Teaching & Learning Excellence
Penn State University	Vice Provost for Online Education
St. John's University	Vice Provost for Digital Learning
Texas Tech University	Vice Provost for Worldwide eLearning
The Ohio State University	Associate Vice President, Distance Education
Touro College	Vice President of Online Education
University at Albany SUNY	Associate Provost for Online Learning
University of Arizona	Vice Provost for Digital Learning and Student Engagement
University of Central Florida	Associate Vice President, Distributed Learning
University of Idaho	Vice Provost for Academic Initiatives
University of Maryland	Associate Provost for Learning Initiatives & Exec. Dir., Teaching & Learning Transformation Center
University of Missouri-Kansas City	Vice Provost for Online Learning
University of Nebraska	Associate Vice President of Distance Education and Director NUOW
University of Northwestern Ohio	Dean of Online Programs
University of Rochester	Associate Vice President of Online Learning
University of South Florida	Assistant Vice Provost for Innovative Education
Utica College	Associate Provost for Online Learning
Washington State University	Vice President for Academic Outreach and Innovation
Western Kentucky University	Associate Vice President for Extended Learning and Outreach
Virginia Tech	Associate Provost for Technology-enhanced Learning & Online Strategies

Working Group Key Recommendations

1. Primary emphasis should be given to development and deployment of complete credentials (whether degree programs or certificates) for students who do not come to the main campus in DeKalb
2. Strategic leadership for online/adult learning should reside in the Provost's Office, Chief Online Learning Officer (COLO) to be hired
3. A central support unit should support the work of the COLO
4. Expertise is needed in marketing and strategy specific to the online/off-campus market
5. Support units that provide student services need to modify practices to provide access for students who do not come to DeKalb
6. A financial model for online/adult programs is needed that is rationally structured from the student standpoint and meets revenue requirements
7. Our estimates indicate that this model can be implemented in a financially responsible manner that will produce positive net revenue for the university

President's Progress Report, May 2017

“While I appreciate the work that OERD has done to promote online and off-campus academic programs at a time when few others in the university were attending to those needs, the proper home for those programs is Academic Affairs. There is consensus that the academic credit support functions in OERD should transition to Academic Affairs. Similarly, the marketing functions for online and off-campus credit programs have transitioned to the Division of Enrollment Management, Marketing & Communication.” (President's Program Prioritization Progress Report, May 10, 2017, p. 85)

Lessons Learned

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Lessons Learned

1. “Culture eats strategy for breakfast”
– Peter Drucker
2. Patience is needed – timeline will change
3. No need to reinvent the wheel
4. Working toward the institution’s best interests doesn’t go unnoticed
5. Senior leadership & strategy is needed for success

6. May need to compile metrics not previously examined
7. Financial model needed to be reimagined as part of restructure
8. Resistance is guaranteed
9. Not everyone can maintain a trustee mentality
10. External factors beyond your control will impact the process

Recommendations

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Recommendations

1. Treat others the way you want to be treated
2. Be aware of whom are influencers
3. Keep focus on students & quality, not on whom does what
4. Note what is working well, build on that momentum
5. Strike while the iron is hot

6. Don't burn any bridges
7. Expect deviations in the process
8. Lead through your influence, from within if needed
9. Look at overall program quality benchmarks
10. Be mindful of institutional climate