

Addressing a Need: Growing CMU's online student enrollment to improve Educational Attainment on the Western Slope

This document serves as a template for assisting CMU on its journey toward 15,000 students while focusing on educational delivery that seeks to make a significant impact on the attainment gap of Colorado's Western Slope.

In an effort to be responsive to changing student demographics, and serve broad-based regional needs, this plan outlines the role of distance education (i.e., online students) and graduate students will play. Because of the rural and isolated nature of much of Western Colorado, online modalities, in particular, offer great promise for non-traditional populations seeking to complete college degrees and credentials.

Increasingly, online education will involve:

1. Expansion of fully online programs;
2. Expansion of Essential Learning Courses offered in 8-week formats;
3. Reforming online overload pay rates; and
4. Expanding the pool of qualified online adjunct instructors.

Expansion of Fully Online Programs & EL Course Offerings in 8-week Formats

Because the target audience for online programs are non-traditional working adults, CMU will add online programs in an accelerated format and increase the availability of online 8-week mods and summer session offerings to align the online programs with our current calendar and registration dates. CMU will also need to provide associated courses in online accelerated formats (e.g. Pathophysiology and Statistics). See Appendix A.

The following programs have been recommended for an online, accelerated format.

B.B.A in Management	Summer 2018
B.B.A in Economics	Summer 2018
B.A. Liberal Arts	Summer 2018
B.A.S. (degree completion)	Summer 2018
M.B.A (w/ business undergrad)	Summer 2018
M.B.A (w/out business undergrad)	Summer 2018
MSN Leadership and Administration	Summer 2018
Grad. Cert. Health Informatics	Summer 2018
B.S. in Sport Management	Summer 2019
B.A. Criminal Justice	Summer 2019
M.S.N. Family Nurse Practitioner	Summer 2019
DNP-Education	Summer 2019

Adjusting Online Overload Pay Rates (to better align with best practice norms and support the Teacher-Scholar model)

CMU institutional directives regarding course comparability and online instruction derive from the Course Comparability Manual and communications from Academic Affairs and the Office of the President originating in 2013. These communications instructed that course overloads were limited to 5 credits/semester and 8 credits per academic year. Due to the additional guidance that online course caps and face-to-face course caps should be congruent, some online courses have grown with enrollment to a size that cannot be supported by best online teaching practices. While exceptions to the course congruency policy have recently been adopted for reasons of best practices and disciplinary norms, a cap on overload pay can assist in putting downward pressure on extremely large online courses in order to increase instructor-student interaction and student satisfaction and achievement.

CMU's recently adopted "Teacher-Scholar" statement also suggests that excessive overload teaching by individual faculty members could result in insufficient time for faculty to engage with their discipline and thereby remain current and vital in their teaching. The statement reflects:

Broadly defined, Teacher-Scholars engage in scholarship when they contribute to an on-going conversation within and across disciplines, building on and responding to what others have discovered, all with an eye on rigor and fairness.

Relevant literature in online education, as found in the document Colorado Mesa University Course Comparability & Online Instruction, approved by the President and provided to the Academic Council on 5/15/17 strongly supports the position that most online learning sections of courses should have no more than 50 students.

Sample overload payment policies from other institutions are found in **Appendix B**. CMU's current policy of \$55 X students X Credit Hour falls well above the range of any institution sampled when classes sizes reach above the 50 student mark. In response to best practice and regional norms, and our institutional mission, this document recommends:

online course overload pay to be limited to \$8000/semester or \$16,000/year including January term. Faculty will be also be paid \$2000 for creating a new online course and \$1000 for completing a Quality Matters certification for an existing course.

Using data from 2015-2016 from the Office of Institutional Research and Decision Support, more than 50% of full-time faculty earned overload pay (162/267). Using data from AY15-16, only 16 full-time faculty members will be affected by this change.

Expanding the Pool on Online Adjunct Instructors

In an effort to support online program expansion, the pool of qualified online adjunct instructors may need to be increased. Due to the isolated nature of the Western Slope, and the well-documented attainment gap, it is likely that to our current teaching cadre will need to be supplemented from areas beyond our campus and region.

With sufficient lead time, national advertising through HigherEdjobs.com in a manner similar to our current local adjunct advertisements, where one advertisement solicits applications for multiple classes could help create a pool of available adjuncts across disciplines. Additionally, we are looking into the option of contracting with Instructional Connections (this recruit firm will charge CMU a \$500.00/hired adjunct recruit fee) to provide a pool of qualified available adjunct instructors from which ADHs may recruit. This may be especially helpful relative to Essential Learning and health sciences instruction.

Lead time will be crucial, because new online adjunct instructors (like all CMU online instructors) will be required to pass Distance Education's Online Teaching Essentials course prior to teaching a fully online class.

Appendix A

Essential Learning Courses by Term and Type

		Summer (201701)		Fall (201702)			
		Mod or Full Term (3-8 Weeks)	Variable/Combined (11 Weeks)	1st Mod (8 Weeks)	2nd Mod (8 Weeks)	Full Term (17 Weeks)	Late Start (15 Weeks)
2017	ENGL 111	X		x		X	
	ENGL 112	X				X	
	ENGL 219					X	
	Fine Arts	X		X	X	X	X
	History	X		X		X	
	Humanities	X		X		X	
	MATH 110					X	
	MATH 113					X	
	MATH 119						
	MATH 151						
	MATH 205						
	Science w/Lab	X				X	
	Science w/out Lab	X	X		X	X	
	Soc/Behav Science	X	X	X	X	X	X
	ESSL 200						X
	ESSL 290	X				X	
	KINE 100	X		X	X		
	KINA Activity	X		X			
	Foreign Language	X		X	X		

Appendix B

Sample Overload Payment Policies

Institution	Online Rate	F2F Rate	Notes
N. Iowa	\$1500/CH	\$1500/CH	Limited to 20% of base
FL. Intl Univ.	\$1000CH	\$1250/CH	Addl. \$100/student over 50 students
Ohio University			Limited to 25% of base and generally \$2780/3cr. Course at 50 students
Fort Hays St.			20% of 1/9 th of base (\$1320 at 60K)
UNC W.-Salem			Cannot exceed 30% of base including summer
U. of Tenn.-Martin			\$605/CH
S. Utah	\$800/CH	\$800/CH	Bonus multiplier for 50 students
Univ. of WI online			Limit of \$12,000/yr
Univ. of WI LaCrosse			Limit of \$18,000/yr incl. summer
Appalachian State			Policy says that faculty should generally not be paid extra for teaching courses on top of normal course loads.
Cal State System			25% of full-time position
Kennesaw State			Overload pay may not exceed 20 percent of base base salary. "KSU faculty loads are considered too heavy by most faculty to justify the teaching of extra degree credit courses on an overload basis," the policy states. "Every effort should be taken to avoid assigning degree credit courses on an overload basis."
Penn State-Harrisburg			Tenure-eligible faculty members will not normally be considered for overload assignments.
St. Cloud State			Total overload shall not exceed 5 credits per academic year. Paid at the adjunct rate of \$1,200 per credit.
UW-Milw			Higher of 20% of base or \$18,000 (incl. summer)
U of GA			Extra compensation must be kept to an absolute minimum and be justified by circumstances that clearly warrant such action. Limited to no more than four credits during any one academic year.

-source: <https://www.universitybusiness.com/article/faculty-overloads-sample-policies-and-practices>.