

**Draft**

**Central Michigan University**

**Enrollment Management Plan  
for  
Off-Campus Programs**

**December 2006**

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## **Preface**

The Enrollment Management Plan for Off-Campus Programs describes opportunities and strategies for maintaining and building enrollment in off-campus programs through both recruitment and retention of off-campus students. It responds to the request of President Rao to see strategies for three levels of growth and summarizes approaches that are both established and state of the art in the education of working adults. Projections emerge from CMU's existing strengths and areas in which some development has occurred or is underway.

In its present draft form, this plan should serve as a starting point for analysis by university leaders, whose input will result in modification and/or endorsement of the strategies proposed herein. It is for this reason the document is labeled a draft. In order to achieve and maintain optimum recruitment, retention and graduation, the university must also be vested in the Off-Campus Programs Plan. Therefore, it is recommended that the final plan should be put forth by the president and vice-president for off-campus programs after endorsement by leaders at the highest levels of the institution.

## Central Michigan University

### Enrollment Management Plan for Off – Campus Programs

#### Executive Summary

This plan begins with an overview of the present status of CMU’s off-campus credit offerings. Strategies are then offered for achieving targets that sustain, moderately grow and aggressively grow enrollment. Below is a summary list of the strategies offered for the targets.

#### Target 1: Sustain enrollment

It is believed that Target 1 can be achieved by enhanced recruiting and internal process improvements in strategic planning, budget, the student information system, marketing, accountability communication, transfer credit and evidence surrounding quality. Retention can also play an important role in sustaining enrollments and the plan calls for new interventions with students and expanded services.

The first four strategies are the most important, the accomplishment of which should be an immediate priority.

- Conduct strategic planning for Off-Campus Programs
- Revise CMU’s Off-Campus Programs revenue distribution methodology
- Provide timely access to accurate information about students
- Strengthen marketing with research and new approaches

The remainder of the strategies to sustain enrollment, in no particular order, are:

- Reposition the MSA
- Streamline and improve the process for new and online program development
- Expand systematic examination and the continuous improvement of all processes supporting program development, recruiting and retention
- Revise bylaws to support departments’ interests in Off-Campus Programs
- Assure a robust learning management system
- Strengthen and broaden accountability for enrollment and academic standards
- Strengthen internal communications
- Strengthen communications with students
- Strengthen external communications
- Expand availability of transfer credit
- Challenge current cultural assumptions with evidence
  - Answer questions about quality with assessment of student outcomes
- Implement retention strategies
  - Intervene more proactively with all students and targeted groups
  - Strengthen access to student information for students and advisors

#### Targets 2 and 3: Moderate and Aggressive Growth

To achieve Targets 2 and 3, CMU’s portfolio of programs would need to be expanded in key areas and existing programs updated and moved increasingly to online and hybrid formats. Services to students would also need to be enhanced by providing: online access to interactive program plans; improved scheduling; career advising; aggressive faculty recruiting; richer professional development for faculty and staff; expanded human resources and marketing; tuition incentives; alternative transfer credit options for

students; more proactive financial management and reporting; sound evidence with which to evaluate suspicions about quality; and sustain and secure CMU's niche of quality programming.

#### Program Development and Revision

At the graduate level

- Increase the online and hybrid formats of the MSA, MPA, PMBA, MBA, EdD, MA Ed, MA Ed Tech, MA Ed Leadership
- Increase the locations and/or number of cohorts for MPA, PMBA, EdD, EdS, MA Ed Leadership, MA Reading & Literacy

At the post baccalaureate and undergraduate level

- Develop or revise these programs: Alternate route to teacher certification, Special Education Certificate, BS Public Administration, BS Health Administration, BS Community Development, BS Info Tech, BS in Psychology, BS Criminal Justice
- Offer these courses: Reading (post baccalaureate), Leadership (for high school dual enrollment)

Other strategies to support growth are:

- Provide online access to interactive program plans
- Improve scheduling and develop three-year schedules
- Expand the implementation of campus systems and procedures
- Enhance advising
- Expand faculty recruiting and professional development
- Enrich human resources
- Expand marketing media and partnerships
- Provide tuition incentives
- Reevaluate transfer credit options
- Enhance financial management and reporting

#### Costs

Accomplishing any of these strategies will mean reallocation and reassignment of existing resources. Additionally, there will likely be costs associated with each of the above targets; these are just now being calculated. Target 1 will likely require dedicated staffing to enhance the usefulness of SAP-CM in all aspects of enrollment management. Enhanced marketing research and web placement will likely require outsourcing. Targets 2 and 3 require \$2500 on average to launch each new program, and a smaller sum for each new cohort. Support for course development and conversion to online and hybrid formats will be required as faculty move to make these changes. Targeting specific industries or agencies may require dedicated personnel. New software may be required to support a powerful dashboard for use by on and off campus personnel actively managing enrollments. Instructional costs are not offered in the plan, but would be proportional to increase program offerings and enrollment.

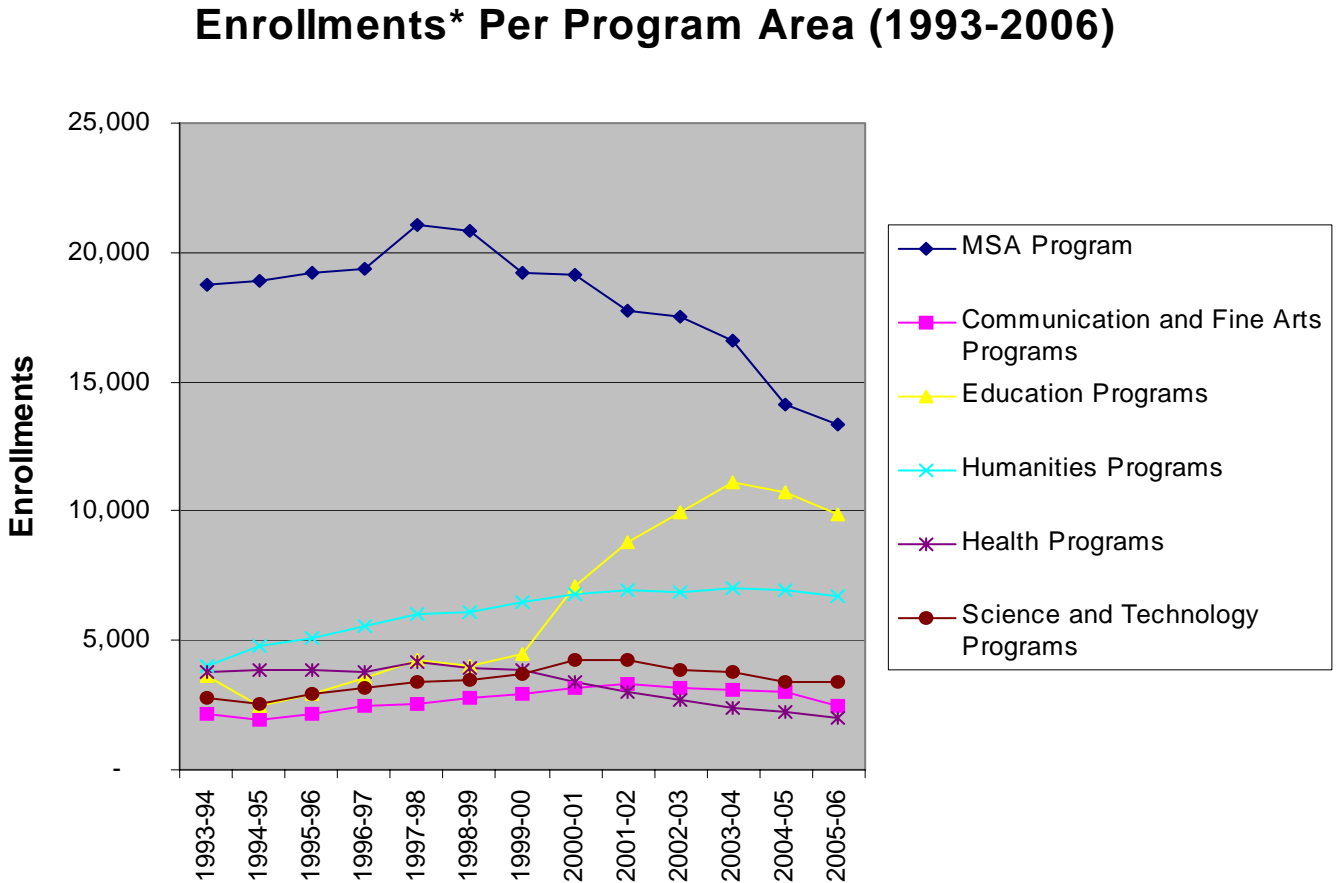
#### Conclusion

Each of the targets described in this plan is an ambitious target. **Even to sustain current enrollments a strategic plan, a new budget reallocation processes, an improved student information system and expanded market research must be established.** Beyond these first four essential strategies, work on all of Target 1 strategies should proceed or begin immediately. Investment of significant new resources in aggressive growth scenarios should await the adoption of a strategic plan for Off-Campus Programs and accomplishment of at least the first four Target 1 strategies. Accomplishing each of these objectives will require presidential support and true collaborative efforts between the campus and ProfEd.

### Context

CMU’s focus on education for the working adult spans over 35 years and has led to national prominence for CMU. Initially CMU’s innovative delivery format allowed it to respond to the needs of underserved populations. CMU sustained strong partnerships with the military and tailored many of its offerings to the needs of this country’s military personnel. After multiple quality reviews, CMU’s regional accrediting body has granted CMU authority to offer any of its masters and undergraduate degrees off-campus through Prof Ed.

Figure 1: Enrollments per Program Area (1993-2006)



CMU students and alumni are very positive about their academic and other experiences with CMU. A recent survey<sup>1</sup> of all enrolled students reflects a pattern of satisfaction with the extent to which CMU accommodates the needs of working adults through its student services, personalized attention and quality programs. Students and alumni especially appreciate the support for diversity, which is a strategic priority of the institution, realized at very high levels through its off-campus programs.

Establishing a separate division dedicated to offering CMU’s off-campus programs was the way CMU chose to support its off-campus offerings in 1971 and that organizational structure has continued over the years. The leader of the unit has held various titles, with the current leader holding the title of Vice

<sup>1</sup> CMU’s Off-Campus Programs—The Quality Story <http://www.cel.cmich.edu/quality-story>

President for Off-Campus Programs, and reporting to the Executive Vice President and Provost. The Vice President is a senior officer and a member of the President’s Senior Staff, University Budget Advisory Council, Council of Deans and Academic Senate. There are no other representatives of Off-Campus Programs on the Academic Senate.

Within Off-Campus Programs there are five units:

- Product Development is responsible for providing responsive academic leadership and project management in developing and sustaining high quality programs
- Enrollment Management is responsible for identifying, recruiting, enrolling, and retaining qualified candidates in order to meet institutional goals
- Budget and Planning
- Human Capital-Organizational Strategies
- Technology

Employees of Off-Campus Programs work from 41 centers and the main office on CMU’s north campus in Mount Pleasant. Figure 2 provides an overview of employees by employee category and demographics.

**Figure 2: Off-Campus Programs Employees (November, 2006)**

LEVEL		TOTAL	FULL TIME	PART TIME	MINORITIES	FEMALE	MALE
PS-6	Salaried	3	3	0	0	2	1
PS-5	Salaried	12	12	0	1	9	3
PS-4	Salaried	15	14	1	4	9	6
PS-3	Salaried	39	39	0	6	29	10
PH-3	Hourly	44	40	4	11	37	7
PH-2	Hourly	34	28	6	8	34	0
PH-1	Hourly	1	1	0	0	1	0
Sub Totals		148	137	11	30	121	27
OP-6	Office Prof	5	5	0	0	5	0
OP-5		20	20	0	1	20	0
OP-4		14	11	3	0	14	0
Sub Totals		39	36	3	1	39	0
ST-3	Superv/ Tech	2	2	0	0	0	2
ST-5		4	4	0	0	4	0
ST-6		1	1	0	0	1	0
Sub Totals		7	7	0	0	5	2
Totals		194	180	14	31	165	29
% of Totals			93%	7%	16%	85%	15%

Program development and expansion in recent years have resulted from close partnerships between the product development staff and individual faculty and departments. These partnerships are critical as all curricula and instructor approvals emerge from departments with responsibility for those courses and programs. This academic year, President Rao and Provost Storch have called upon the College Deans to

become more involved in their off-campus programs. This is to include overseeing the academic and financial integrity of those programs, as well as decisions surrounding the development of new programs for which there are markets and which are in line with CMU’s mission and historical leadership in programs for working adults.

**Recent Enrollments**

Until the past five years, enrollment in Off-Campus Programs has grown steadily over the years, with its largest program being the Masters of Science in Administration (MSA). Concentrations have been added to that degree over time to address particular needs of adult learners or organizations. More recently growth has been seen in CMU’s off-campus Education programs at the graduate level. Since its inception, graduate degrees have been the focus of Off-Campus Programs programming.

**Figure 3: Off-Campus Programs Student Headcount (Spring 2006)**

	Michigan		Outside Michigan		Other *	
	Number Students	Percent	Number Students	Percent	Number Students	Percent
<b>Graduate</b>	1969		2636		819	
<b>Undergraduate</b>	1401		25		647	

*\*Other: Learning Packages, ICFS, Undergraduate Admin Site Codes*

In the last 5 years, Off-Campus Programs has experienced an enrollment decline. The greatest declines, in absolute numbers and percentages have been in the MSA; between 2000 and 2006 the MSA program has gone from approximately 63% to 41% of Off-Campus Programs’ business. These changes are attributable in part to changes within the military. Overseas deployments and competition from other schools have affected enrollments in CMU’s bachelors and masters programs. But most importantly, today 85% of those in the service still need an associate’s degree, a degree CMU does not grant. Additionally, the Department of Defense and various branches have identified their needs as being: undergraduate degrees, languages, cultural emersion, and an MBA. Moreover, given the mobility of its personnel, the military is interested in online or hybrid, highly flexible formats. CMU does not have the depth of online components nor types of programs to be competitive with the current needs of the military.

Declines can also be attributed to increased competition from new as well as seasoned higher education providers. In the MSA market for instance, the number of institutions offering MBAs in formats suited to working adults has sky rocketed. Figure 4 shows the institutions offering an MBA in Michigan alone. Clearly, adult learners have many options within the market in which the MSA formerly held a leading position.

**Figure 4: INSERT TABLE OF INSTITUTIONS OFFERING MBA IN MICHIGAN**

During the time when CMU's MSA experienced market declines, Education programs have gone from 11% to 26% of the business. The Education programs are graduate programs, serving largely practicing educators in need of continuing education to sustain their credentials or expand their opportunities for advancement within the field.

CMU's undergraduate off-campus enrollments have grown slowing, constituting 28% of overall off-campus enrollment in Spring 2006. This is despite some very challenging societal trends. Michigan, where 99 % of undergraduate off-campus enrollment has been, has had a declining economy and tuition costs have become a greater challenge for companies and individuals. Advocacy for attending community colleges prior to starting the bachelor's degree has increased, although overall in the last ten years in Michigan, 18% fewer adults are attending college or technical schools, which is the opposite of national trends.<sup>2</sup> CMU has been further challenged to meet working adults' growing preference for complete programs and completion programs, that include the option of online and hybrid formats. Even despite the increasing expectations of adult learners for undergraduate programs tailored to their needs, the number of organizations ready to meet the needs of the adult learners grows each year.

Yet, at both the graduate and undergraduate levels, the belief that CMU can continue its leadership role in the delivery of quality, responsive to market programs is still strong within the Off-Campus Programs unit. The many linkages with a strong faculty who have made long term commitments to CMU distinguish CMU's off-campus programs in the market place and could become an even greater strategic strength for CMU. This would, however, require conscious planning and a refocusing of decision making processes to assure quality and innovation in response to the needs of today's working adults. Meeting the needs of those students with credible academic programs is also a tremendous contribution to the needs of society in this information age. The need for quality programs with strong linkages to qualified and committed faculty offered by experienced and stable institutions is greater now than it ever has been. Moreover, there is potential for CMU's on-campus programs to be significantly enriched through strong off-campus programs. CMU administrators are aware of the indirect impacts of revenue generated through the Off-Campus Program unit and the notoriety CMU receives because it is a leader in educational programs for the working adult and the granting of degrees to persons of color. On-campus faculty teaching for Off-Campus Programs acknowledge their own learning from their working adult students and the currency this brings to all of their teaching. Thus, there are compelling reasons for CMU to sustain its commitment to off-campus programs. This plan outlines some strategies that would allow CMU to be successful in this effort.

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<sup>2</sup> (National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education)

## The Plan

In this section, an enrollment management plan for Off-Campus Programs is outlined. In the absence of a larger strategic plan, this plan for Prof Ed enrollments is reflective of an evaluation of current environments, market position, traditional strengths and current capacity, as well as research on future employment growth. The enrollment projections are offered at graduate and undergraduate levels. The first section addresses strategies for shoring up declining enrollments: Target 1. It is believed that Target 1 can be achieved by enhanced recruiting and improvements in strategic planning, budget, the student information system, marketing, accountability and communication. Retention can also play an important role in sustaining enrollments and the plan calls for new interventions with students and expanded services.

The second section goes beyond sustaining enrollments to discuss two growth scenarios, moderate and aggressive, Targets 2 and 3, respectively. Assuming Target 1's strategies have been implemented, for Targets 2 and 3, growth is dependent largely on updating current program content and moving more programs to hybrid and online formats. The focus is on the two largest areas of need and growth in the education of the working adult: K-12 education and administration/business-related programs. CMU has an excellent capacity and reputation in both of these areas at the graduate level. Additional service and process improvements would be required to reach either Target 2 or 3, and those are outlined.

### Target I: Slow present enrollment declines

Shoring up recent enrollment declines will require immediate attention to planning budget, information systems and market research. Other improvements in marketing, student services and business process will be required. Some of this work is already underway. All of these strategies are described below.

#### Conduct strategic planning for Off-Campus Programs

There is no strategic plan for CMU's Off-Campus Programs. This is a limitation of this enrollment management plan, which should be spelling out how to achieve particular strategic enrollment objectives described in the plan. Moreover, although Off-Campus Programs' directions are consistent with the priorities and strategies within CMU 2010, ProfEd does not receive specific guidance from that plan. It is hoped current leadership transitions and evolving campus perspectives and understanding surrounding Off-Campus Programs may be creating fertile ground for the development of a strategic plan.

#### Revise CMU's revenue distribution methodology for Off-Campus Programs

A strategic plan is not the only impediment to coordinated action. The need for a different incentive or revenue model for the off-campus offerings has been identified in many reports over the past decade. The need for such a plan has become even more acute. A revised model in which CMU reinvests in its off-campus programs rather than in the university's general fund, and which provides more resources to academic colleges in the proportion in which they participate in Off-Campus Programs, is essential to progress. These discussions are underway and plans are being developed. Once presidential decisions are made in this regard, the details of implementing the chosen models will need to be addressed as soon as possible. As the distribution of revenue to participating colleges becomes more complex and the revenue more significant, the pressures for timely and accurate financial reporting will increase. Given the current status of SAP-CM and the evolving budget model, it may be the case that additional staff will be required to support a new revenue distribution methodology.

### Provide timely access to accurate information about students

Information systems are a strategic asset, critical to sustaining competitive advantage in the adult education market where “customer service” and quick response times are becoming the norm. CMU has struggled with its student information systems, moving only recently to the enterprise SAP-CM system which promises to offer richer information about and services to students, faculty and staff. To support the aggressive recruiting and retention efforts needed to curb enrollment declines, the university must enhance access to timely function- and program-specific information about students. Doing this will address concerns identified as critical in all Off-Campus Programs that have gone through CMU’s Academic Program Review, as well as one of the few weaknesses CMU’s off-campus students identify as weaknesses: course scheduling. Moreover, for enrollment management or any other strategic processes discussed above (planning, budget realignment) to be successfully sustained and desired outcomes achieved, this critical need for information about students must be addressed immediately. Stronger strategic collaborations must exist to support information access sharing among campus and college leadership, program directors, and academic departments. Implementation of a dashboard approach could be done in conjunction with the campus’ interest in moving toward a dashboard approach for its own Key Performance Indicators.

### Strengthen marketing with research and new approaches

**Market Research.** Many units within Off-Campus Programs are contributing to the market research effort, including professionals in the enrollment management and institutional research units. Identifying new opportunities for and assuring the currency and marketability of existing programs will require an expansion in CMU’s market research capacity. Outsourcing this research is the approach taken by a number of institutions as acknowledged by candidates for the off-campus programs vice president position. An example of sophisticated market research that would be very helpful today is the identification of opportunities for new and revised MSA concentrations, markets especially interested in the MSA, and the potential impacts of launching the MSA, PMBA and MPA in the same markets. Research is also needed to gain empirical evidence to evaluate the validity of anecdotal reports which suggest declines in the enrollment of the MSA are because of competition from programs offering an MBA in formats preferred by adult students. There is evidence that there are many MBA programs being offered by a variety of universities in the regions in which CMU has centers. (See Figure 5 for a list of MBAs in Michigan.) Labor force needs forecasting could be a valuable addition to this market research, which ProfEd should pursue immediately through hiring or outsourcing. Eventually, it is likely a blending of internal and outsourced expertise will be required, and it will be essential to coordinate these efforts, specifying leadership, roles and responsibilities, in order to achieve the desired impacts and minimize unnecessary duplication.

Emerging from this market research will be a focus on a new look in the marketing for particular programs. The first three projects, likely to yield the greatest enrollment gains are the MSA, MA in Ed, and the undergraduate Administration degrees. Choice of the latter programs reflects the greater market for undergraduate relative to graduate programs, as well as the recognition of CMU’s long track record of on-campus excellence in undergraduate education.

**Network Marketing.** The very positive experiences and loyalty of CMU’s Off-Campus Programs students have made network marketing a very effective strategy. To sustain enrollments, CMU could more actively seek referrals from its current students and then follow up more aggressively on those referrals. The Refer a Friend program has already been expanded to include all national centers and is seeing notable results. Special events, like a reception in Detroit for alumni and their guests could be a way to draw in more students or encourage alums to pursue additional programs. Additionally as new

programs are launched, referrals could be sought from current students and others involved in the program development.

**Response to Inquiries.** CMU is continuing to improve the work of its Call Center. A number of positive results have been achieved through application of the Six Sigma methodology. For inquiries that come online however, there is significant opportunity for quicker and more concise answers to requests. Again, as new programs are added, and growth occurs, additional call center staff may be needed. CMU should obtain the services of an outside firm to evaluate the Call Center to make sure it is appropriately staffed and maximizing its potential. Discussion of the pros and cons of outsourcing the call center function should be addressed in the evaluation as well.

**Web Marketing.** Off-Campus Programs has been making improvements in its web site, but to promote growth, there is a need to expand the integrated internet marketing going on to include national and international markets. Improving search engine placement and increasing search engine marketing would also be required to sustain enrollments. CMU must continue to be vigilant to opportunities in this regard. Off-Campus Programs is in the process of hiring a company to assist with web marketing efforts.

To curb enrollment declines, CMU could also expand connections with area schools via table top displays and sending staff to attend school and community events. CMU's connections with community colleges could be used to promote undergraduate enrollments, if the decision was made to expand undergraduate offerings. Additional staff may need to be hired if CMU significantly expanded its outreach efforts.

### Reposition the MSA

The MSA remains CMU's largest graduate program, despite recent enrollment declines. MSA leaders believe declines can be addressed by emphasizing a niche for the MSA program as 'the degree of choice' for adults who are working for government, health, education and related organizations in the nonprofit and government sectors<sup>3</sup>. "Not another MBA" is a slogan that is being tossed around and in fact a website has been purchased with that address. Movement into this new niche is in part a marketing initiative, but it also will require new and updated concentrations, at least some of which are offered in hybrid and online formats.

An ongoing challenge for CMU, which is sure to increase, is how to position the MSA relative to other CMU programs. For example, development of an MPA program for working adults is underway, a portion of which will be offered online. There is potential duplication or redundancy between the MSA Public Administration Concentration and the new MPA program. There are other examples of this kind of overlap, all of which should be examined for potential positive synergies, economies of scale, inefficient duplication, destructive competition and general confusion about how to market and advise students relative to these different options.

### Streamline and improve the process for new and online program development

The timely development and staffing of new, quality programs is essential to curbing enrollment declines and even more so to enhancing enrollments. As presently organized, program development is a complex, multi-stage process virtually unique to every program. Even if the process were improved, an online project management database and process would be needed and so one has been developed and will be launched in December 2006. Additionally, the approval process required for updating courses and programs and moving courses and programs to the online delivery format is perceived as very burdensome and extremely frustrating for the faculty and staff involved. Discussion of this and related

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<sup>3</sup> Response to Academic Program Review, memo of 10/xx/06

issues is a focus of a recently constituted joint task force on the future of Off-Campus Programs as well as a group outlining CMU's quality assurance processes as part of a change request to the Higher Learning Commission to allow expansion of its online program offerings.

### **Expand systematic examination and the continuous improvement of all processes**

Off-Campus Programs has a number of continuous improvement processes in place and these can be enhanced to curb enrollment declines. Surveys of students and alumni have been ongoing and are now being put on a regular schedule and the results circulated proactively. Presently there are no surveys to determine the level of internal customer satisfaction, i.e., the satisfaction of CMU departments, colleges and other units with the services of ProfEd. This situation will be corrected with a survey that will be distributed in January 2007 with the aim of identifying ways to strengthen essential linkages among on- and off-campus personnel. This and other conversations underway can be the foundation for promoting understanding and alignment of campus and off-campus interests.

There are already areas in which ProfEd leadership knows improvements can be made. One ripe opportunity is to further systematize and standardize ProfEd operations. This is an ongoing challenge for decentralized organizations like ProfEd, but one worthy of pursuing through process analyses, redesign and then training. Further standardization is likely to lead to immediate quality improvements and longer term efficiencies across the organization. The incoming vice president has strong credentials in this area.

### **Revise bylaws to support department's interests in Off-Campus Programs**

CMU's mission has evolved to recognize enhanced research as an integral part of a quality education at all levels and expanded graduate, especially doctoral, offerings. Whereas these enhanced research expectations have been formalized in expectations for faculty pursuing promotion and tenure, faculty members' contributions to off-campus programs are largely unrecognized in departmental bylaws. Recognition for contributions to off-campus programs is provided in FA-CMU Agreement (i.e., faculty contract), but not in ways that contribute to faculty professional achievement and success. If departments would engage in conversations leading to bylaws revisions to recognize faculty contributions to off-campus programs and teaching, it would go a long way to making Off-Campus Programs an integral part of the campus's operations.

### **Assure a robust learning management system**

For all of CMU's academic programs, a reliable online course management system has become essential. Right now CMU is using Blackboard for its course management on- and off-campus. Rapid growth in usage, both in terms of actual courses using Blackboard as well as the functions within Blackboard being used (e.g., online testing, drop box, Turn It In), has led to serious technical challenges. Significant investments in hardware, software and personnel have addressed the most serious and immediate challenges. An executive level group is now convening monthly to steer ongoing strengthening of CMU's course management system. Formalized responsibility for the support, maintenance and communication surrounding Blackboard are being revised and continuously improved. For the first time, OIT will have a staff member dedicated to Blackboard technical support and equipment is being purchased to enhance the testing environment in ways necessary for the successful deployment of this 24/7, mission critical system.

### **Strengthen and broaden accountability for enrollment and academic standards**

There is a growing awareness that enrollment is the responsibility of all Off-Campus Programs employees, regardless of their positions. The incentive system put in place to stimulate growth in

enrollment did not have the intended effects and was suspended. Off-Campus Programs employees will become part of CMU's performance management system. Within the acceptable range outlined by federal guidelines/laws, contributions to sustaining and growing enrollments must continue to be a part of the performance objectives and evaluations of employees. Strategic objectives beyond enrollment must also be identified and reflected in the system. These same objectives should be used to evaluate the relevant units.

The accountability for enrollments must also extend beyond Off-Campus Programs staff to particular campus staff and administrators if CMU is to continue with its current relationship to Off-Campus Programs. This should include collaboratively establishing programs and enrollment targets for departments and colleges where there is a market for programs CMU wishes to offer.

It is worth mentioning that pressures to grow enrollments or advance other strategic objectives must not undermine the academic standards and quality that are integral to CMU's programs, reputation, regional accreditation and permissions to offer programs in various locales. CMU invests significant time and resources of its faculty to build quality programs and this investment must not be compromised with decisions driven primarily by expedience and enrollment growth. As staff are incentivized for enrollment growth, their roles in upholding standards and policies must be affirmed and respected as well.

### **Strengthen internal communications**

Communicating within CMU about the work being done by Off-Campus Programs is absolutely essential at this point in time. An internal communications plan with implementation assignments and deadlines has been developed. New printed materials will be developed and the websites updated. To a greater extent, the web will be used to facilitate matching Off-Campus Programs' needs with available instructors. A theme in all of these communications will be how CMU's strategic priorities are being or could be achieved through the actions of Off-Campus Programs. An important focus that will be ever-present is enrollment, delineating specific enrollment goals, actual enrollments, and what faculty and staff might do to improve enrollment performance.

Regular updates to deans on items of interest to them will be an integral part of the communications. A schedule of regular online meetings with academic program directors and adjunct faculty is in place. A communication tree to ensure information flows from one level to another, in both directions, has been developed. The use of internet and intranet to share updates and other information will continue. Evaluations will be done on a regular basis to monitor and improve this more comprehensive communication strategy.

Off-Campus Programs has not in recent years prepared an annual written report designed for an internal audience. Presently an annual report is being developed for release late in 2007. The Center for Instructional Design has begun to develop educational workshops surrounding online course development, intended for faculty. This may be a model that should be considered for communication in other areas. It has been suggested that Off-Campus Programs-prepared white papers on subjects relevant to its mission might also be valuable; this likely would require additional staff hires or outsourcing. As internal communications are expanded, attention to the adequacy of existing staffing and experts will certainly be required.

Another strategy that has not been tried in the past that may be advisable is to work more closely with CM Life, purchasing advertising, possibly for summer and online course offerings, and promoting stories about Prof Ed accomplishments. This strategy has risks and would need to be evaluated and endorsed by senior academic leadership before going forward.

### Strengthen communications with students

Existing vigilant efforts to curb the enrollment declines have produced many communications with existing and potential students. To maximize its investment and impact, a strategic communication plan is being developed; the intent is to launch the plan in January 2007. The plan will help to assure effective, coordinated and nonredundant communications. Whether the implementation of the strategic communication plan will require additional staff is not known at this time.

The typical CMU off-campus student aggressively manages a full life in which part time education is a priority. Scheduling is essential and CMU must improve its development of schedules and communication about them. Access to detailed information about students' progress and programs as described above will be critical to making this improvement.

CMU on-campus students are taking courses from other colleges and universities in the summer session. Campus students receive an email in the spring encouraging those wanting summer school classes to enroll in one of CMU's centers in Metro Detroit, or to take CMU's online courses. It is not known how many on-campus students follow up on this advice and enroll in CMU's off-campus courses during the summer although these data would be useful to collect in the future. The CMU student portal too offers the opportunity to further market off-campus opportunities to students as they begin to plan their summers. Finally, CMU does not list any of its off-campus offerings in the course schedules it produces for on-campus students just prior to the registration periods. Listing the summer classes in that booklet would facilitate students' consideration of summer off-campus courses online or from a program center close to their summer residence.

Campus students taking their summer school classes through ProfEd has the potential to positively impact CMU's Key Performance Indicators of quality education and the length of time it takes students to achieve a degree. If on-campus students enroll in off-campus courses it increases the likelihood they will find good courses, developed by CMU faculty, and compatible with their academic programs. Enrollment in off-campus courses, could also address CMU's priority of engaging students in learning experiences that foster their preparation for life in a diverse world. Off-Campus Programs' student body is rich in diversity along a number of dimensions and could enrich CMU students' education in ways that cannot easily be attained in Mount Pleasant.

### Strengthen external communications

Over the past few years, CMU has launched very powerful print promotional campaigns in conjunction with its capital campaign and enhanced student recruiting efforts. Including more coverage of Off-Campus Programs in those publications or other promotional media, which have internal and external audiences, would promote a sense of shared identity internally and increase the impact of those publications through description of the many remarkable stories about Off-Campus Programs students and alumni. For this effort to be effective there may be a need for an additional staff member either on- or off-campus who is dedicated to identifying and preparing stories.

### Expand availability of transfer credit and reevaluate policies

Easing the transfer process is a strategic initiative at the leading for-profit undergraduate education providers. CMU may have to move in this direction in order to sustain enrollment and certainly to significantly grow the size of existing programs. Additional staff may be required if CMU significantly expanded offerings to include services like collecting transcripts for new students rather than asking them to collect their own.

The timely and valid allowance of transfer credit is also a competitive advantage in the higher education market. Presently CMU has some progressive approaches, including the MACRAO agreement covering general education requirements for undergraduate programs. There are areas however where CMU practices do not acknowledge nor are they flexible enough to take into consideration knowledge accumulated from the workplace when placing students into the appropriate courses or waiving particular requirements. Often this work is done on an ad hoc basis, independent of guidelines that could promote consistent and timely decisions. Guidelines, informed by the national standards in this regard<sup>4</sup>, should be developed and used to improve the processing of transfer credit and course placement.

As noted above, presently CMU has a conventional approach to providing transfer credit. This has limited its ability to become a major player in the Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges (SOC).<sup>5</sup> CMU should examine the requirements of the SOC to see if it might wish to readjust transfer credit policies and practices to allow it to significantly expand contributions to the education of active service members.

### Retention strategies

Retention figures for the largest off-campus programs, the MSA, MA in Education and undergraduate programs can be seen in Figure 5. There is an opportunity to increase the seven-year graduation rate for both undergraduate and MSA.

<b>Figure 5: Seven Year Graduation Rates for Selected Off-Campus Programs (1998 – 2005)</b>	
Undergrad	31.5%
MSA	61.5%
MA in Ed	80.1%

To better understand the reasons for attrition two comprehensive studies of retention in off-campus programs were done between June 2005 and January 2006. In Figure 6 below the main reasons are shown for undergraduate and graduate students separately. Percentages reflect the number of students who indicated that reason was ‘very important’ or ‘somewhat important’ in their decision to leave CMU.

<b>Figure 6: Reasons for Attrition from Off-Campus Programs (2005-2006)</b>		
	Undergraduate Students	Graduate Students
Issues affecting their work	50%	39%
Cost/Tuition	46%	31%
Issues affecting their home	40%	35%
Schedule did not meet needs	28%	25%
Program did not match needs	na	25%
Could not complete at one center	26%	na
Not enough on-line courses	24%	na

The retention strategies described below are predicated on trying to reduce unnecessary attrition. Obviously, the primary reasons for leaving school are ones about which CMU can do very little. The intent here is to systematically address the reasons over which CMU does have control and in doing so strengthen its programs and services.

### Intervene more proactively with all students and targeted groups

Communication that is early and often can be used to promote students’ continual registrations, i.e., retention. Some of this is going on already, but it would be possible to enhance the communications in all areas by further decreasing the time it takes to respond and in some instances enriching and tailoring the

<sup>4</sup> Al, can you supply a couple of references in this regard?

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.soc.aascu.org/>

actual substance of the reply. An additional approach beneficial in most areas would be to expand 'self-service' options and information readily available on the web. ProfEd is developing a Student Learning Portal, a major component of which will be such self-service options. Below are some additional student communication initiatives.

**Incoming Students.** Students' first experiences with a program can be critical to their later success. CMU offers orientation in face to face format at its off-campus centers. An online version is also available for students who cannot attend a face to face sessions.

Higher education providers, particularly those offering many online learning options for students, are recognizing the need for better advising for and understanding of incoming students. Presently, CMU does only a modest assessment of students' suitability for online learning or continuing education as part of students' orientation. To attract and retain more students, CMU could assess the background and skills of its incoming students and provide tailored advising, tailored skill-building programs (e.g., computer or study skills), remedial courses, or other prerequisite needs. Such assessment and follow-up could be a ways of helping students to better understand what is required of them and helping the university to better address the needs of incoming students.

**Enrolled Students.** Once students are enrolled, CMU could become more proactive in contacting each new student during his or her first or second course to check on progress and answer questions. Along similar lines, because of their previous records or recent performance, some students could be considered 'at risk' and benefit from additional phone calls or emails to check in on how they are doing.

Presently, registration reminder postcards and e-mails are sent. To promote interest a registration newsletter could be developed and delivered to students in print or electronic version two weeks prior to the registration period. As the registration period proceeds, additional reminders could be sent to those who have not registered and additional contact made with those who do not register.

All students are encouraged to have program plan in place by the time they enroll in their third course. However, presently no one is checking to be sure this is happening. SAP-CM offers an opportunity to automate this process, which could be a tremendous asset to off-campus as well as on-campus students.

Incomplete grades can also be a warning sign. Proactively following up with students receiving incompletes could help to address potential attrition risks and put students into contact with university resources that could be of assistance to them. This might be especially beneficial for incompletes received in the MSA or other capstone courses, for which some students do need additional support in order to complete their research projects.

Additional contacts with CMU personnel, particularly the program director, may help students to get questions answered quickly and have a greater connection to the institution. Classroom visits by the Program Administrators on the first day of class or regular visits to class to interact with students could promote students' connection to Cmu and allow CMU to learn about students' progress and perspectives.

**Policy Revision.** Given the busy lives of many adult working students, concluding masters or doctoral theses within seven years, particularly when the student has had to take semesters off to take care of family members or work commitments, can be extremely difficult. Establishing a policy by which students with these pressing needs could take a leave of absence so that time away from the program would not count against their seven years would facilitate degree completion without undermining the quality of the programs.

**Staffing.** The greater engagement of ProfEd in outreach to accomplish the above very intensive interactions with students may require reassignment of the time of existing staff and hiring of additional staff, probably some in the field, and some in a centralized advising function. To assure appropriate decisions in this regard, a comprehensive staffing analysis should be performed to better understand the current situation and what is needed to strengthen communications with students.

**Writing Support.** Many off-campus students like and would benefit from the kind of assistance presently being provided by the Writing Center. Off-campus students may submit their writing and receive formative critique and coaching from Writing Center staff. Presently, all of this is being done online. Unfortunately the need for writing assistance far exceeds the capacity of the Writing Center. Better supporting students writing, particularly graduate students' writing, could be instrumental in helping students weather common points of attrition from graduate programs (i.e., major writing assignments).

### Strengthen access to student information for students and advisors

An integral part of being effective with retention efforts will be the constant availability of up-to-date information at the program and center level on students' course taking patterns and academic plans. Regular, frequent reports in the hands of center directors and others doing course scheduling is essential to developing schedules that are reflective of students' program plans. If advisors had easier access to this information and were able to use all the information and technology available to them to understand what is being offered and when it is being offered, they could be more effective in supporting student retention. Advisor and mentor training, and enhanced communication will also be essential to improving scheduling.

### Targets 2 and 3: Moderate and Aggressive Growth

The approach to growth recommended to CMU in a recent report prepared by Eduventures consultants was to spin-off a separate continuing education unit. CMU has decided not to do this, but rather to pursue growth by enhancing services, and expanding program offerings and sizes of programs. This is to be done in stronger not weaker partnership with the campus.

The strong relationship between CMU and its off-campus program unit is and could be an even greater asset in the marketplace. The range of CMU's programs—particularly if more of them were offered in formats suitable for working adults—is also very attractive to the adult learner. With the guidance of a formal strategic plan and commitment to a common direction, CMU could parlay these assets, and CMU's distinguished record in adult education and graduate education of minority communities, to a real market advantage.

The next section of this plan addresses moderate and aggressive growth targets by a focus on program development/revision and additional strategies for improving services and processes.

### Program level enrollment projections

To begin a strategic conversation surrounding the future development of off-campus programs, the following tables are offered for graduate, post baccalaureate and undergraduate programs as well as a few individual courses that might draw significant enrollments. In its present form, the choice of programs listed here relies heavily on market research, inquiry data and environmental scans performed by ProfEd and Eduventures. It also relies on an analysis of CMU's existing strengths relative to the market place. The next step is for this market information to be considered in the context of university capacity and the campus's interest in moving in these various strategic directions. The initial conversations must include at

a minimum the provost, college deans, program directors for the programs listed, and ProfEd leadership. Each dean would consult with appropriate faculty as plans are created and would turn to them to develop and provide or oversee ongoing instruction and assessment of learning outcomes in the program.

It should be noted that some of the program development listed below (e.g., moving to online format for some programs) is already underway (Appendix A). There may be venture program proposals being negotiated for some of the programs; for others, the relevant department may not even be aware of the market for this program. A few of the programs have all of the approvals needed to move forward; others may not even have begun to seek them. Increasingly, college deans have been involved in these discussions at the request of the president and provost. In our current mode of operation these efforts are extremely labor intensive and—given the lack of a strategic plan—somewhat ad hoc. This is true despite the best efforts of campus faculty and Off-Campus Programs professionals who have persisted in spite of these institutional shortcomings.

For each program listed in this tables an effort was made to estimate possible enrollment increases. These numbers are rough estimates only. Many of the estimates, particularly in the education arena, assume the program is developed soon, before additional higher education providers move into these markets. The estimates are sure to fluctuate markedly and should be revisited frequently as planning develops. It should be noted that for almost every--if not every--program, additional growth will require additional faculty resources; for some programs the availability or affordability of the faculty may make the program impossible to offer successfully. These and many other issues are best addressed in conversation between the dean and ProfEd leadership.

In the tables, for some programs headcount is listed. The term “enrollments” refers to the number of individual course enrollments. It is not a headcount measure. Current programs, like the Doctorate in Health Administration and the Masters of Science in Nutrition and Dietetics, for which little growth is expected, are not listed in the Table 7. The highlighted text in the tables reflects issues that are still being resolved and thus are cautionary notes.

<b>Figure 7: Graduate Programs Expansion</b>		
	<b>Moderate Growth</b>	<b>Aggressive Growth</b>
<b>Administration and Business Programs</b>		
<b>MSA</b>	10% if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Core program online</li> <li>More concentrations online/ hybrid</li> <li>Vehicle Design &amp; Manufacturing Administration concentration re-worked to be general design &amp; manufacturing</li> <li>Software Engineering concentration updated (Little interest on campus in offering this )</li> </ul>	20% if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Online and hybrid offered</li> <li>Health Services Administration concentration updated</li> <li>International Administration concentration updated</li> <li>Public Admin accreditation issues resolved</li> </ul>
<b>MPA</b>	5% if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>new locations</li> </ul>	20% if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>program online</li> <li>Homeland Security concentration (new)</li> <li>accreditation issues resolved</li> </ul>
<b>PMBA (new)</b>	25 students if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>accreditation issues resolved</li> <li>competitive pricing established</li> </ul>	50 students if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>second cohort established</li> </ul>
<b>MBA</b>	50 students if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>online</li> <li>accreditation issues addressed</li> </ul>	
<b>Administration Doctorate (new)</b>		100 enrollments (Grad school and MSA question ability to recruit qualified faculty for this)
<b>Education</b>		
<b>EdD</b>	100% if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>one additional cohorts in Michigan and Georgia each year</li> </ul>	
<b>EdS</b>	5% if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>more online/hybrid courses</li> <li>additional faculty resources</li> </ul>	10% if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>new cohorts and new locations</li> </ul>
<b>MA in Education Technology</b>	100% if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>online</li> </ul>	
<b>MA in Ed Leadership</b>	2% if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>new locations</li> <li>more online/hybrid courses</li> </ul>	25% if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>school principalship concentrations-new cohorts and locations</li> <li>charter schools concentration launched online and hybrid</li> <li>all concentrations online</li> </ul>
<b>MA in Ed</b>	10 % if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidance and Development Concentration</li> <li>new locations/cohorts</li> <li>online/hybrid courses</li> </ul>	25% <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>new locations/cohorts</li> <li>online</li> <li>Program Director: New program addressing needs of returning troops</li> </ul>
<b>MA in Reading &amp; Literacy K-12</b>	25% if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>additional cohorts</li> </ul> (faculty shortages limit expansion)	100% if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>new locations</li> </ul>
<b>MS in Science Education (new)</b>	25 students	100 students

<b>Other</b>	
<b>MA in Public Health</b>	Grad School believes there is market for this and we have no masters degree in health; CHP sees possibility for 3+2 in Community Health in hybrid format

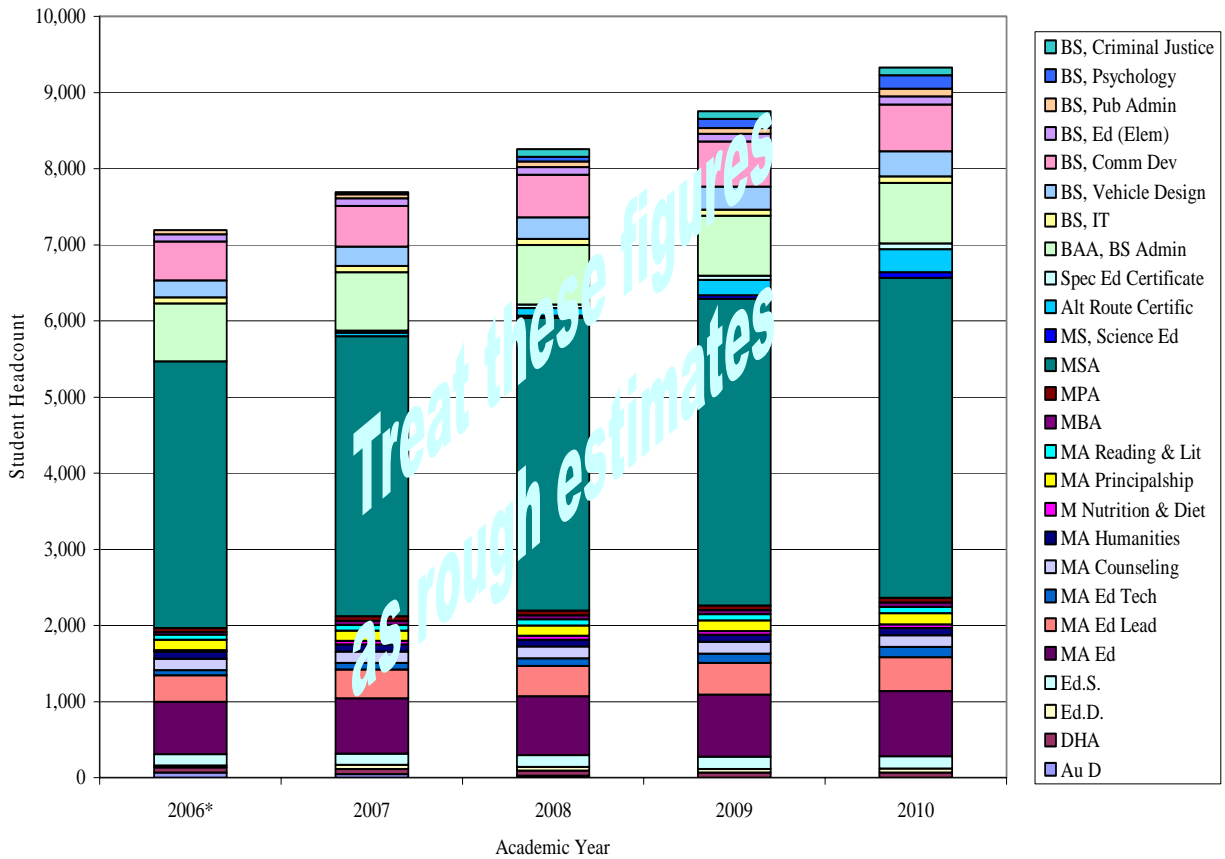
<b>Figure 8: Post Baccalaureate Programs Expansion</b>		
	<b>Moderate Growth</b>	<b>Aggressive Growth</b>
<b>Education</b>		
<b>Alternative Route to Teaching Certification</b>	1000 enrollments if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>weekend format</li> <li>compressed program (there is disagreement about the length and competitiveness of the existing program. Could it be compressed further?)</li> <li>offered outside Michigan</li> </ul>	3000 enrollments if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>online/hybrid format</li> <li>offered outside Michigan</li> </ul>
<b>Special Education Certificate (new)</b>	100 enrollments if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>offered online</li> </ul>	
<b>Courses</b>		
<b>Reading</b>	300 enrollments if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>F2F</li> </ul>	500 enrollments if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offered online</li> <li>Developed soon</li> </ul>

<b>Figure 9: Undergraduate Programs Expansion</b>		
	<b>Moderate Growth</b>	<b>Aggressive Growth</b>
<b>Administration and Business</b>		
<b>BS Business Administration</b>	Business is not interested in doing this because of the challenges it would present for accreditation	1000 enrollments if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online format</li> <li>• Accreditation/resources issues resolved</li> <li>• Cohorts outside Michigan</li> </ul>
<b>BS Entrepreneurship</b>	Suggested by Prof Ed, not discussed with CBA yet	
<b>BS Public Administration</b>		500 enrollments if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hybrid or online format</li> <li>• Accreditation/resource issues resolved</li> <li>• Cohorts outside Michigan</li> </ul>
<b>BS Health Care (new)</b>	100 enrollments if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compressed F2F format</li> </ul>	500 enrollments if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concentrations offered in needed areas (e.g., psychology, gerontology)</li> </ul>
<b>Education</b>		
<b>BS Ed (College sees alt route as more marketable)</b>		12-15% if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• elementary education offered</li> <li>• secondary education w/ math major</li> <li>• new locations outside MI</li> </ul>
<b>Other</b>		
<b>Community Development</b>		20% if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Regular program plan developed</li> </ul>
<b>BS Info Tech (updated)</b>	100 enrollments if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More community college transfer credit allowed</li> </ul>	300 enrollments if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online/hybrid format</li> </ul>
<b>BS Psychology</b>	100 enrollments if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• F2F cohorts</li> </ul>	500-600 enrollments if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hybrid/online format</li> </ul> (HSBS: There is one course that requires F2F format)
<b>Criminal Justice</b>	100 if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• F2F cohorts</li> </ul> (HSBS: existing program is not typical criminal justice program. Is there market for CMU's type of program?)	500-600 enrollments if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• online format</li> </ul>
<b>Leadership Course</b>	100 enrollments if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High School dual enrollment</li> <li>• Summer and online formats</li> </ul>	

Over the next five years, if academic program enrollments grew to the levels identified above in Target 3, enrollment in Off-Campus Programs would reach over 9000 students, with its largest programs still being the MSA, followed by the MA in Education, and two undergraduate programs. These hypothetical growth projections can be seen in Figures 10 and 11. At the present time, because of the difficulty getting

current enrollment statistics and translating the metric used off-campus (enrollments) to program level headcounts, these figures should be treated as rough estimates at this time. It goes without saying that Target 3 is an extremely optimistic and likely expensive scenario. It is displayed here to offer a perspective on the relative sizes and growth potential of the various programs, as well as to reveal a ‘best case’ scenario on total enrollment in off-campus programs.

Figure 10: Projected Aggressive Growth (Headcount)



**Figure 11: Aggressive Growth Projections for ProfEd (Headcounts)**

	<u>2006*</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<b>Growth</b>
<b>Au D</b>	70	50	25	0	0	to close
<b>DHA</b>	65	66	67	67	68	5%
<b>Ed.D.</b>	25	50	50	50	50	5%
<b>Ed.S.</b>	149	153	156	160	164	10%
<b>MA Ed</b>	685	728	771	813	856	25%
<b>MA Ed Lead</b>	354	376	398	420	443	25%
<b>MA Ed Tech</b>	68	85	102	119	136	100%
<b>MA Counseling</b>	149	151	153	155	156	5%
<b>MA Humanities</b>	89	90	91	92	93	5%
<b>M Nutrition &amp; Diet</b>	25	50	50	50	50	50%
<b>MA Principalship</b>	135	137	138	140	142	5%
<b>MA Reading &amp; Lit</b>	68	72	77	81	85	25%
<b>MBA</b>	28	56	56	56	60	47%
<b>MPA</b>	58	59	59	60	61	5%
<b>MSA</b>	3500	3675	3850	4025	4200	20%
<b>MS, Science Ed</b>			25	50	75	
<b>Alt Route Certific</b>	0	50	100	200	300	
<b>Spec Ed Certificate</b>		25	50	50	75	
<b>BAA, BS Admin</b>	761	771	780	790	799	5%
<b>BS, IT</b>	79	80	81	82	83	5%
<b>BS, Vehicle Design</b>	223	251	279	307	335	50%
<b>BS, Comm Dev</b>	510	536	561	587	612	20%
<b>BS, Ed (Elem)</b>	100	101	103	104	105	5%
<b>BS, Pub Admin</b>	50	50	75	75	100	50%
<b>BS, Psychology</b>		30	60	120	180	
<b>BS, Criminal Justice</b>			100	100	100	
<b>Total</b>	7191	7690	8257	8753	9328	77%

10-Dec-06

\*Headcount interpreted from IR report EDP Student Characteristics Spring 2006

MA in Public Health and BS Health Care not included

This next section describes additional strategies to promote moderate and aggressive enrollment growth in off-campus academic programs. It assumes the strategies in Target 1 and at least some of the new programs and program/delivery revisions listed in the table have been implemented. What follows is a summary of additional improvements, at least some of which would need to be made in order to achieve Target 2. Even more of these strategies would need to be accomplished in order to achieve Target 3, aggressive growth.

### Provide online access to interactive program plans

As noted above (page 9), access to information about students' programs and course taking patterns are essential to sustaining enrollments. CMU's new student information system offers the possibility of giving off-campus students and faculty better and more timely information. For students, on-line access to their program plan and schedules of courses would empower them to make sound academic plans and relieve some of the load on staff answering straightforward questions that could be answered quickly by students themselves. Such an automated degree audit system is becoming standard practice in higher

education and CMU's failure to move in this direction could put it at a disadvantage, particularly with adult learners who are very attuned to service levels.

### **Improve scheduling and develop three-year schedules**

Use of this same SAP-CM information is also needed by staff to develop robust and cost-effective course schedules. Presently it is very difficult to know which courses are needed by students who are not enrolled in a cohort. This means scheduling may not be done efficiently and responsively. In fact, course scheduling was one of the few areas in which CMU off-campus students had complaints in a recent survey of service quality.<sup>6</sup>

Presently, in many areas, course schedules are built on a semester by semester, center by center, basis. Developing course schedules for two and three year periods and making those readily available to students and advisors online would have many benefits. Students could do better planning. Advisors could do better advising. Faculty recruiting could be done proactively. In metro areas, course schedules could be built collaboratively to allow students to travel to alternate centers for courses not typically available in their immediate area.

Another use of this information would be to provide advisors regular reports on which students are delayed in completing various requirements. Advisors could then make contact with students to assist them in completing their program requirements. An example of an area where this might be particularly helpful would be tracking MSA students' progress on their final research projects, a place where some students get stuck. An advisor aware of which students are delayed in completing their projects could provide targeted assistance as needed.

An even more proactive approach that could be accomplished with strategic use of the information housed in SAP-CM would be to send students emails when particular courses that students need to complete their program become available in their area, surrounding areas, or online.

### **Expand the implementation of campus systems and procedures**

Assuming the model of a closer relationship between Off-Campus Programs and the campus, more of the campus systems, processes and procedures should be fully implemented off-campus. As these systems are implemented, it must also be recognized that ProfEd has needs for timeliness that are absolutely essential to sustaining its operations and which typically exceed the needs of the campus community. Along these lines, it has been said with respect to information systems, and might be true for many systems, that 'if we build it for Off-Campus Programs,' it will likely be a stronger/better system than we might build for the on-campus operations, resulting in a net gain for the institution.

Also required by the complexity of ProfEd is a nimble, responsive HR system. To promote quality and efficiency, many HR functions are centralized; being responsive to HR needs and decisions in the field is a challenge for any organization so organized. Attention to this matter continues and the exploration of means of improvement is being accomplished with continuous improvement strategies. These efforts however are not widespread nor common enough to sustain the staffing that will be needed to build significant enrollment growth. One recent innovation has successfully addressed the realities of CMU's many one-person or small offices: a 'floater' position has been established to cover planned vacations or absences that might otherwise mean the office would have to close temporarily.

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<sup>6</sup> ProfEd Quality Story (2006) <http://www.cel.cmich.edu/quality-story>

One campus procedure that is tapped heavily by off-campus program initiatives is the curricular process of the Academic Senate. Faculty developing new programs and moving courses and programs to an online format are consistently frustrated with extended timelines for approval and the lack of clear and consistent guidelines for the multiple Senate bodies that weigh in on a typical curriculum proposal. Often it is hard to see sufficient value being added at each stage of this process to warrant the investment of so much time and the delays in program launches it produces. This is particularly true when what is being changed is simply a course or the format of a course. Whether there is a more effective and efficient means of reviewing at least these more minor changes in courses should be investigated by the Senate. In the case of movement to an online format, for example, it is easy to see how a small committee of knowledgeable faculty could provide more constructive and more expeditious feedback than emerges from the current process.

### Career advising

Career advising for students or prospective students is not something that CMU formally provides at this point. Establishing a career services resource through which students could receive advice on which academic programs lead to which careers, consultation on their career plans and assistance when after they complete their degrees could further distinguish CMU in the marketplace.

### Expand faculty and staff recruiting and professional development

To expand CMU's off-campus offerings, off-campus recruitment will be absolutely essential. Qualified faculty wishing to teach off-campus as adjunct professors are scarce in some areas and the competition for good faculty is increasing daily. Advanced and collaborative course scheduling as described above, as well as greater use of online instruction, may help in this regard, but concerted effort to recruit faculty for hard-to-staff courses will certainly be needed. An immediate first step could be development of an on-line faculty development tool that would match faculty background with availability, location and schedules and allow speedier faculty review and approval processes.

CMU's faculty development for faculty teaching in off-campus programs has been strengthened over the years, in part through a Department of Education FIPSE grant. However, better faculty development is needed and should include training in pedagogy, technology, program curricula, advising and administrative responsibilities. Training could also be used to enlist the help of faculty in improving enrollment performance.

An updated new employee orientation offers the possibility of orienting new staff to the mission and values of ProfEd, as well as giving them essential information about the structures, policies and practices of Off-Campus Programs. Given the fluidity of the adult education market and CMU's services and programming, the new Off-Campus Programs employee orientation should be updated

### Expand marketing media and partnerships

**Expand Range of Media Used.** Presently, many media are used to market CMU programs, but an integrated marketing campaign is needed that would include broadcast media, internet, and connections with local community colleges. Components of this would be an increase in radio advertising and an identity piece for TV. It would include strategies for focus on new programming and new locations as they are launched.

**Direct Mail Campaign.** Presently ProfEd does not purchase highly targeted lists for direct mail campaigns, but this could be done to promote aggressive growth.

**Expand Partnerships.** CMU has worked with large organizations, particularly the military, to identify and offer programs to meet their needs. The military continues to be a prime partner and ongoing efforts are needed to sustain that partnership. Also needed if aggressive growth were the target would be a focus on new relationships with corporate partners, especially those in health care, and all those who are addressing the economic needs of Michigan's workers. At least one additional staff member would be required to build these additional partnerships with healthcare and other organizations. To build relationships in high tech areas, like Automation Alley, additional staff may also be needed.

### Provide tuition incentives

CMU provides financial aid advising for students interested in securing loans or grants for their education. CMU does not provide any scholarships or other tuition discounts for its off-campus students. Presently, the CMU Promise does not apply to students enrolled as off-campus students. It is believed however that offering students some incentive for completing their degrees within a specified time frame could help to attract, retain and graduate students. One such incentive that might work would be that if students take a course every semester, they would not have to pay future tuition increases.

### Enhance financial management and reporting

To support the enrollment management plan, more rigorous financial management systems should be put in place. Improving SAP processing procedures and all processing timelines will be needed to support both growth scenarios. A Center-by-Center ROI review and establishment of benchmarks would aid in the rapid scaling up of new programs as well as the ongoing evaluation and promotion of high levels of efficiency. Monthly forecasts and automatic feeds from SAP into EXCEL spreadsheets would aid decision makers tremendously.

### Cultural shift

CMU is desirous of moving toward a greater integration of Off-Campus Programs with the remainder of its operations. This desire will be frustrated if the 'us versus them' culture of exclusion, privilege and scapegoating continues. Making this cultural change will be a slow process, which will only succeed if the institution's leaders lead by example with their attention to off-campus programs--attention that presumes off-campus students, staff and faculty are equally valued members of the CMU community and calls for shared responsibilities and rigorous evidence gathering with respect to claims of quality.

The ambivalence of CMU's on-campus and off-campus communities toward each other is not unusual among traditional institutions with off-campus offerings. The concerns about quality expressed by some CMU faculty are also not unusual. It is peculiar, however, in CMU's case since initially all courses and programs are developed and reviewed periodically by on-campus faculty and all instructors teaching off-campus are approved by on-campus department chairs. What is missing from these conversations about quality is evidence gleaned from the systematic assessment of student learning. CMU's academic program review process has begun to call for this information, but to date no program has provided sound evidence of student learning in an off-campus (and many on-campus) programs. To make progress, faculty teaching and overseeing these programs must work with off-campus program directors to implement rigorous assessment plans that provide solid, ongoing evidence with respect to quality.

**Cost of the Three Targets**

The table below will eventually spell out costs for each of the three targets, above and beyond what can likely be accomplished with internal reallocations. At this time, figures in the table are very rough projections/estimates, and should be treated more like place holders or items for conversation. The items are largely costs to be incurred by ProfEd; faculty instructional costs are not listed in the table and would be proportional to the costs of program development/updating and the size/growth of the programs. In its final form, each column will assume expenditures have been made in the column to its left. Thus, to accomplish aggressive growth, cost totals for all three columns would be summed.

<b>Figure 12: COSTS (Still being determined)</b>		
<b>Target 1: Sustain</b>	<b>Target 2: Moderate Growth</b>	<b>Target 3: Aggressive Growth</b>
Increase advertising/promotion budget by 10%	Additional advertising budget added for each new program, cohort and location. (\$500-2500 per new cohort/location); \$500-2500 per new program launch)	Additional advertising budget added for each new program, cohort and location. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$2,500 for each new PMBA cohort</li> </ul>
Market Research	Faculty course and online development	Faculty course and online development
Newsletter production and distribution costs		Dashboard software
Direct Mail Costs		
Blackboard hardware		
<b>New Staff</b>		
1 SAP-CM	recruitment staff: health care	
	career advisor or contracted services	recruitment staff: high tech
1 web marketing expert or contracted services?	2 Communications experts (one in ProfEd and in PR&Marketing)	
1 Transfer credit evaluator & liaison	1 FTE Instructional Developer	1 FTE Instructional Developer

## Conclusion

Each of the targets described in this plan is an ambitious one. Even to sustain current enrollment a strategic plan, a budget reallocation processes, an improved student information system and expanded market research must be established. Each of these initiatives require true collaborative efforts between the campus and ProfEd and will be very challenging as each will require creativity, change in normal operating procedures, and tough budgetary decision making.

The comprehensiveness and difficulty of the first three tasks suggest they will require presidential support. This is occurring already in the case of the budgetary reallocation process. The development of a strategic plan would be a natural task for the new vice president to undertake in her first year with CMU. With respect to an improved student information system, the SAP Executive Committee which is overseeing the priorities in SAP development may be in the best position to develop a plan for how to proceed. Finally, movement on strengthening market research is already underway and should to be led by the incoming Vice President for Off-Campus Programs and responsive to needs of the colleges as they arise.

Beyond these first four essential strategies, some of the remaining strategies called for to sustain enrollments are being implemented already. Work on all of Target 1 strategies should begin and proceed while the strategic plan is being developed. The strategic plan, revised budget reallocation process, improved student information system and expanded market research will be needed as foundations for either the moderate or aggressive growth targets.

Once a strategic plan is finalized, CMU will be in a position to finalize development of an enrollment management plan for Off-Campus Programs. In the mean time, this draft plan reflects the immediate directions CMU should undertake to sustain enrollments, which should be the primary goal for at least the next six months. It also sets a course for moderate and aggressive growth with strategies for program development and revision that is aligned with current programs and initiatives. These may be valuable directions, but investment of significant new resources in moderate aggressive growth scenarios should await the adoption of a strategic plan for Off-Campus Programs and accomplishment of at least the first four Target 1 strategies.