# Contents

| List of Tables | ix |
| List of Figures | ix |
| List of Appendices | x |

## Acknowledgements

xi

## Members of the Self-Study Committee

xii

## Preface

1

## Overview of the Self-Study Process

2

### Process

2

### Report

3

#### Format

3

#### Organization

3

## Chapter 1 Overview

7

### CMU Background and History

7

### Organizational Structure and Governance

8

### Accreditation of CMU

10

## Chapter 2 Purpose of the Proposed Change

13

### Expected Outcomes

14

#### Increased Online Programming

14

#### Increased Enrollments

15

#### Enrichment of Campus Offerings

15

#### Recognition Beyond Michigan

15

### Impact

15

#### Impact on Mission

15

#### Impact on Students to be Served

16

#### Impact on Breadth of Educational Offerings

17

### Strengths

17

### Challenges

18

## Chapter 3 Rationale for the Proposed Change

21

### CMU’s Emphasis on Student Access

22

### Online Programs Serve an Important Segment of CMU Students

22

### CMU Has Built a Wealth of Resources That Support Online Programs

23

### Teaching and Learning are CMU’s Top Priorities

25

### Strengths

28

### Challenges

28

## Chapter 4 Approvals for Implementation

31

### Internal Approvals

31

### External Approvals

31

### Strengths

32

### Challenges

33

## Chapter 5 Impact on University Challenges

37

### Strengths

39

### Challenges

39

## Chapter 6 Implementing and Sustaining the Proposed Change

43

### Faculty

43

### Campus Faculty

43
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contents</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adjunct Faculty</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approval to Hire</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Professional Development</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Blackboard Task” Online Workshop</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Teaching Online” Workshop</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Course Development Workshop</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Workshops</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Evaluation</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengths</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum and Assessment</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curricular Documents and Process</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Course Syllabi</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approval of New and Modified Courses</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Programs and Courses</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Program Initiation</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Approvals</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Course Development</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Approvals</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program-Level Assessment</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program-Level Management of Assessment</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengths</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual Property</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengths</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Management</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proctored Exams</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Technology</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengths</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Services</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For Online Students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For Off-Campus Students</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-Campus Library Services (OCLS)</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Aid</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Center On-Line</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer Credit</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADA Compliance</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Satisfaction</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengths</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Policies</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedures for Addressing Complaints</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengths</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Tables

Table 2-1. Anticipated Changes in CMU’s Portfolio of Online Programs ........................................ 14
Table 2-2. Online Enrollments ........................................................................................................ 15
Table 4-1. State and Province Authorizations Required for Off-Campus Sites ............................... 32
Table 6-1. Instruction of Online Courses by Student Credit Hours (Fall 2006) .............................. 44
Table 6-2. Faculty Comments on Exit Survey for “Teaching Online” Workshop ............................. 47
Table 6-3. Quality of Teaching Data – Student and Alumni Surveys ........................................ 50
Table 6-4. Time Involved in Proposal Routing Through CMU’s Curricular Process .................... 59
Table 6-5. Summary of Items on the Online Course Readiness Checklist ..................................... 61
Table 6-6. Tuition Effective August 2006 ..................................................................................... 83
Table 6-7. Compensation for Teaching Online Courses at ProfEd (2/22/06) ................................. 84
Table 7-1. Overview of the Program Review Components .............................................................. 90
Table 7-2. Summary Ratings of Quality and Funding within Program Review ............................... 92
Table 7-3. Reasons for Attrition from Off-Campus Programs: 2005 & 2006 ............................... 93
Table 7-4. Types of Blackboard Calls Taken from April 2006 – April 2007 ................................. 96
Table 7-5. Blackboard Monthly Incident Summary (April 2006 – April 2007) ............................ 96
Table 7-6. Student Opinion Survey Questions Regarding Educational Quality ......................... 98
Table 8-1. Summary of Findings by Key Areas ............................................................................. 104

List of Figures

Figure 3-1. Seven-Year History of Off-Campus Enrollments ......................................................... 22
Figure 6-1. Quality of Teaching in MSA Programs: 2004 Alumni Survey and 2006 Current Student Survey .................................................................................................................. 51
Figure 6-2. Curricular Flow for Course Approval (Curricular Authority Document, 2003) ......... 54
Figure 6-3. Time Involved in Proposals Routing Through CMU’s Curricular Process ............... 58
Figure 6-4. CMU’s Information Technology System ................................................................. 66
Figure 6-5. CMU Blackboard Environment .................................................................................. 68
Figure 6-6. Proposal for Staffing the Learning Management Environment (2007) ...................... 69
Figure 6-7. Current Off-Campus Undergraduate Student Survey: Educational Climate 2006 ...... 79
Figure 7-1. Monitoring the Learning Management System at CMU (2006) ............................... 95
List of Appendices

Appendix A. CMU Online Degree Programs 2007 and CMU Online Courses
available online: www.cmich.edu/hlc-accreditation/2007/appendices/Appendix_A.pdf

Appendix B. Programs Offered Off-Campus and Their On-Campus Counterparts
available online: www.cmich.edu/hlc-accreditation/2007/appendices/Appendix_B.pdf

Appendix C. Planning Form I: Proposed New Program
available online: www.cmich.edu/hlc-accreditation/2007/appendices/Appendix_C.pdf

Appendix D. Contract for Development of Online Courses
available online: www.cmich.edu/hlc-accreditation/2007/appendices/Appendix_D.pdf

Appendix E. Process for Updating or Revising an Online Course
available online: www.cmich.edu/hlc-accreditation/2007/appendices/Appendix_E.pdf

Appendix F. Guidelines for Preparing a Master Course Syllabus Addendum for a Reformatted Course
available online: www.cmich.edu/hlc-accreditation/2007/appendices/Appendix_F.pdf

Appendix G. Course Request Form
available online: www.cmich.edu/hlc-accreditation/2007/appendices/Appendix_G.pdf

Appendix H. Guidelines for Preparing a Master Course Syllabus
available online: www.cmich.edu/hlc-accreditation/2007/appendices/Appendix_H.pdf

Appendix I. Online Course Readiness Checklist
available online: www.cmich.edu/hlc-accreditation/2007/appendices/Appendix_I.pdf

Appendix J. Student End-of-Course Survey
available online: www.cmich.edu/hlc-accreditation/2007/appendices/Appendix_J.pdf

Appendix K. Instructor End-of-Course Survey
available online: www.cmich.edu/hlc-accreditation/2007/appendices/Appendix_K.pdf
Acknowledgements

Central Michigan University is indebted to members of the committee that prepared this self study, as well as the many people who contributed to the self study through their reflections on the aspirations and realities of online learning at CMU. The committee worked over this past academic year to collect, review and evaluate evidence with respect to CMU’s current performance and the likelihood that CMU in the future would be able to grow the number of programs offered online at the same time we sustain the quality academic programs and student focus for which we are now known.

The result of these efforts is this self study--written as much for a CMU audience as for an accrediting body. The self study identifies many strengths as well as challenges to our desire to expand significantly in online learning. It candidly singles out actions that will be most helpful to lay a strong foundation for high quality online programs. This approach we hope will prompt immediate progress as well as valuable consultation from the Higher Learning Commission consultant evaluators.

The contributions of many units were invaluable to the self-study process and final report. First we acknowledge the strong support of CMU president Michael Rao and provost Gary Shaprio, including their commitment to a comprehensive and accurate self study and to assuring that CMU has already begun to build on the self study findings to further strengthen online learning environments for students. Second, even though newly arrived on campus, Vice President and Executive Director for Off-Campus Programs Merodie Hancock was responsive and expeditious in response to our every request. Third, institutional research and information technology functions play a significant role in any self study and this one is no exception; Roger Rehm, Gary Wroblewski, Jamie Slater and Mary Meier all have our gratitude for their ongoing assistance. Fourth, many staff and faculty with extensive experience with online learning and CMU’s off-campus programs contributed to the process, including Tim Brannon, Kendra Brown, Jennifer Cochran, Pam Eddy, Gail Scukanec, Jamie Slater, and Al Zainea. Fifth, the technological expertise of Jeremy Bonds, Mike Hinko, Rob Brown, Matt McElmurry, Dan Rademacher and Eric Welsby significantly contributed to the successful live web cast workshop available to on- and off-campus community staff and faculty.

Substantial credit for creation of this document goes to Peggy Hill, a former CMU employee turned professional writer who contributed much more than her excellent writing skill to the project. Peggy is an exceptional listener who can be trusted without reservation to pull facts and opinions together with integrity and balance.
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Last but not least, deserving of acknowledgement is the excellent self study committee. Each member made valuable contributions to the process and helped us to meet an aggressive schedule successfully. Three committee members to whom we are especially appreciative because they went above and beyond expectations from committee members were: Ming Dai, Monica Holmes, and Peter Ross. The debates and creativity generated through our deliberations have already born fruit beyond this self study: awareness, activities, and relationships that will strengthen our online initiatives.

Sincerely,

Catherine A. Riordan
Vice Provost, Academic Affairs
August 2007

Members of the Self-Study Committee

• Catherine Riordan, Chair (Vice Provost, Academic Affairs)
• Mingsheng Dai (Director, Center for Instructional Design, ProfEd)
• Ireta Ekstrom (Instructional Developer, Faculty Center for Innovative Teaching)
• Monica Holmes (Associate Dean, College of Business Administration)
• Anton Jensen (Faculty, Chemistry)
• Carole Richardson (Director of Special Projects, Academic Affairs)
• Del Ringquist (Chair, Political Science)
• Peter Ross (Director, MSA Program, College of Graduate Studies)
• Denise Webster (Director of Curriculum and Assessment, Academic Affairs)
• Mingyuan Zhang (Faculty, Teacher Education and Professional Development)
Preface

This document presents the results of a self-study undertaken by Central Michigan University (CMU) as part of a request for a change in our accreditation status. The university is seeking the authority to offer any of our bachelor’s and master’s degree programs online.

CMU was last reviewed and accredited by the Higher Learning Commission in 2005. During the two years leading up to the Commission’s last site visit, CMU undertook an intensive institutional self-study that included a special emphasis component.

Although smaller in scope, the present self-study developed in a similar manner; the process used was campus-inclusive and was organized by a steering committee representative of a broad cross-section of university faculty and administration. Institutional data were gathered and used to evaluate areas of strength as well as areas of challenge. The committee’s findings were disseminated in a report made available to all members of the university. Feedback was sought through two forums: the first held on campus and a second conducted via interactive web technology. Other meetings with key leadership groups also fostered valuable discussions.

As the result of this self-study, we find that CMU is well positioned to expand several of our programs to Internet-based delivery modes. This study has also served to make members of the CMU community more aware of the need for online programming in the future. We anticipate that the study findings will continue to impact the university in beneficial ways by initiating campus discussions and actions relevant to this important aspect of the university’s mission. Ultimately, we remain committed to providing students—particularly working adults—access to our academic programs.
Overview of the Self-Study Process

Process

A ten-member Self-Study Committee was appointed by Executive Vice President and Provost Thomas Storch in October 2006 to prepare a self-study in conjunction with CMU’s request for offering academic programs in online format. Committee members were drawn from different sectors of the university to ensure broad representation of campus perspectives. To maintain efficiency of operation, the committee size was limited to ten members.

Members of the Self-Study Committee

- **Catherine Riordan**, Chair (Vice Provost, Academic Affairs)
- **Mingsheng Dai** (Director, Center for Instructional Design, ProfEd)
- **Ireta Ekstrom** (Instructional Developer, Faculty Center for Innovative Teaching)
- **Monica Holmes** (Associate Dean, College of Business Administration)
- **Anton Jensen** (Faculty, Chemistry)
- **Carole Richardson** (Director of Special Projects, Academic Affairs)
- **Del Ringquist** (Chair, Political Science)
- **Peter Ross** (Director, MSA Program, College of Graduate Studies)
- **Denise Webster** (Director of Curriculum and Assessment, Academic Affairs)
- **Mingyuan Zhang** (Faculty, Teacher Education and Professional Development)

During organizational meetings held in November 2006, the committee established a timeline for gathering and evaluating evidence for the self-study. Beginning in December 2006 and continuing into April 2007, the committee met approximately twice each month, using the meeting times to gather and/or share information pertinent to the change request. Invited guests provided some of this information; committee members also collected information outside of meeting times and made reports on their findings to the group. The self-study report was developed concurrently and periodically reviewed by the committee.
Report

Format
The self-study report is available in both electronic and print formats. Supporting documents that serve as evidence for or substantiation of claims made in the self-study are not included directly in the report, but are available separately in both electronic and print formats.

Electronic Copy. An electronic copy of the report, available on CD and on the Web, provides links to supporting documents. In some instances, a password is required to access the supporting information.

Paper Copy. Paper copies of the self-study are provided for visiting HLC consultant-evaluators and are available to others for review in 312 Warriner Hall and the CMU Library in Mt. Pleasant. Supporting documents are on file at those locations.

Organization
The self-study report contains a preface and eight chapters. Chapter 1 provides an overview of CMU, including our history, organizational structure and accreditation history. Chapters 2 through 7 address the six questions posed by the Higher Learning Commission regarding the change request. We found it helpful during the course of our meetings to pull out particular strengths and challenges as a way of summarizing the information that was being gathered, and so these are included at various points in the self-study narrative as well. A summary and analysis of the major findings appears in Chapter 8.
Overview of Central Michigan University

CHAPTER 1
Chapter 1
Overview

CMU Background and History

Central Michigan University is located in Mt. Pleasant, a city of more than 25,000 people, near the center of Michigan’s Lower Peninsula. The university is recognized by the Carnegie Foundation as a doctoral research university and offers a wide range of baccalaureate programs and a more limited array of graduate degrees through the doctorate. Serving over 27,000 students (approximately 20,000 on-campus and 7,000 off-campus), CMU is the fourth largest university in Michigan and one of the 50 largest four-year public institutions of higher education in the United States. The university’s 480-acre main campus includes 51 major facilities. CMU’s operating budget for the 2005-06 fiscal year was $341 million, of which 60% came from tuition and fees and 24% from state appropriations.

CMU has offered off-campus study for working adults since 1971. Today off-campus programs are administered by ProfEd, a service unit within the university that makes courses and programs available at 68 sites in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. ProfEd also facilitates all online courses and programs. Off-campus students constitute about a third of the total student population that CMU serves. This off-campus population includes a significant number of students from underrepresented groups particularly interested in online programs.

Serving student needs is at the heart CMU’s mission. The founding institution, Central Michigan Normal School and Business Institute, was created in 1892 to fill a regional need for teachers and business professionals. Three years later, the school was placed under the jurisdiction of the Michigan State Board of Education as Central Michigan Normal School.

Status as a four-year college was achieved in 1918 when the first bachelor’s degree was awarded. The first graduate courses were offered in 1938, and the first master’s program initiated in 1954. There were several name changes during this period; the institution became Central Michigan University in 1959. By this time, the institution had already expanded our course options well beyond those needed to
prepare elementary and secondary teachers and business professionals.

This program expansion continued as did growth of the Mt. Pleasant campus, spurred on by steady increases in student numbers: from approximately 4,500 in 1960 to over 27,000 students today. The Specialist in Education degree marked CMU’s entry into training beyond the master’s degree level in 1963. The first doctoral degree, the professional Doctor of Psychology (Psy.D.), was awarded in May 1980.

CMU’s expansion into off-campus learning in 1971 made us one of the first institutions to significantly engage in distance programming. Our off-campus program unit, now known as ProfEd, was first called the Institute for Personal and Career Development (IPCD) and later named the College of Extended Learning (CEL).

Despite our tremendous growth over the last century, CMU continues to have a reputation as a school where students are easily able to engage with faculty and staff who meet their individual needs. It is CMU’s student-centeredness as well as our historical emphasis on excellence in undergraduate teaching that have sustained the institution’s capacity to accommodate student needs in personalized ways throughout our history.

Organizational Structure and Governance

The university is governed by an eight-member Board of Trustees appointed by the governor with the consent of the Michigan Senate and with authority granted through the state constitution. The board governs the business affairs of the university and sets university policy. The board is autonomous in its decision-making, although it is bound by the fiscal constraints of the state funding process, state and federal laws, and collective bargaining agreements with six employee groups, including the CMU Faculty Association (CMUFA).

The president is the chief executive officer of the university as well as an ex-officio member of the Board of Trustees. Four vice presidents — executive vice president and provost, vice president for governmental relations and public affairs, vice president of finance and administrative services, and vice president of development and alumni relations — report to the president. They also serve as
liaisons to standing committees of the board and, as such, are routinely involved in board business.

President Michael Rao came to CMU in July 2000 following the retirement of Leonard Plachta, who had guided the institution as president from 1992 to 2000. Executive Vice President and Provost Thomas Storch, appointed in July 2003, retired in 2007. Gary Shapiro, Dean of the College of Humanities and Social and Behavioral Sciences, is currently serving in this position during the interim as a search is conducted. Vice Presidents Michael Leto, Kathleen Wilbur, and George Ross were appointed in 1998, 2002, and 2002, respectively. Vice President George Ross recently announced his intent to assume a presidency elsewhere and a national search is underway to fill his position.

CMU’s academic structure consists of seven campus-based academic colleges and one unit devoted to off-campus programs, all reporting to the provost:

- College of Business Administration
- College of Communication and Fine Arts
- College of Education and Human Services
- The Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow College of Health Professions
- College of Humanities and Social and Behavioral Sciences
- College of Science and Technology
- College of Graduate Studies
- ProfEd (formerly College of Extended Learning)

The University Libraries, the Office of the Dean of Students and the chief technology officer also report to the provost as well as vice provosts/presidents for academic affairs, academic administration, diversity and research. Organizational charts for both the university\(^1\) and the academic division\(^2\) are available online.

CMU has a strong tradition of shared governance. The groups with the largest roles include the university administration, the Academic Senate, and the CMU Faculty Association. The Academic Senate’s purview is quite broad in scope, covering many issues of interest to faculty, both curricular and non-curricular in nature, as outlined in the Academic Senate Constitution. The CMU Faculty Association (CMUFA) is the agent that represents the economic and related interests of CMU’s faculty through collective bargaining. The latest contract to cover the 2005–08

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1. [http://www.hrs.cmich.edu/cmurog-chart_files/cmurog-chart_frames.htm](http://www.hrs.cmich.edu/cmurog-chart_files/cmurog-chart_frames.htm)
2. [http://www.provost.cmich.edu/viceprovost/Accreditation/OrgChart.pdf](http://www.provost.cmich.edu/viceprovost/Accreditation/OrgChart.pdf)
academic years was ratified on September 27, 2005. Individual academic departments have written policies and procedures that are referred to as department bylaws, and the CMUFA and CMU Agreement makes these the basis for particular departmental decisions, including faculty tenure and promotion.

Accreditation of CMU

Central Michigan University was first accredited under the name Central State Teachers College in 1915 by the North Central Association (NCA) and, with the exception of 1922-23, has been re-accredited every year since by the NCA or its subsidiary, the Higher Learning Commission. CMU was first accredited for a master’s degree program in 1957 and was granted preliminary accreditation for a specialist’s degree program in 1963. The first accreditation for doctoral programs was granted in 1976. The last comprehensive evaluation by the HLC took place in 2005. Since 1991, CMU’s Statement of Affiliation Status has allowed the university to offer extended degree programs in the U.S. or Canada without specific review of each new location.

A number of CMU’s academic programs are accredited by one or more professional organizations. The university’s teacher education program is accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and has held NCATE accreditation since its founding in 1954, making CMU one of the 174 charter members. CMU’s education programs are also reviewed and approved periodically by the Michigan Department of Education. Undergraduate programs in the College of Business have been accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International) since 1983 and the Master of Business Administration (MBA) since 1989. A complete list of other programs that hold national accreditations and the accrediting bodies is available on the Academic Affairs website.³

³ http://www.provost.cmich.edu/viceprovost/
Purpose of the Proposed Change
Chapter 2
Purpose of the Proposed Change

Central Michigan University’s current accreditation status with the Higher Learning Commission enables the university to offer undergraduate and master’s programs off-campus at sites within the United States or Canada. However, this stipulation does not extend to online offerings, each of which must be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Commission. Extension of CMU’s accreditation status to allow CMU to gradually expand the number of undergraduate and master’s programs delivered online will allow us to more efficiently proceed with our desire to increase our online program offerings to better meet the needs of our students.

For over 35 years, serving working adults has been an important part of CMU’s mission. Off-campus programs grew substantially during the 1970s and ‘80s as CMU established traditional classroom-based instructional locations at sites away from the Mt. Pleasant campus. At present, there are 68 CMU off-campus sites in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Off-campus students make up about a third of the total student population CMU serves.

Our students now have expectations that more and more instruction will be provided online. In response, CMU’s portfolio of online courses has been growing and continues to be incorporated into off-campus programs. With this greater demand, it has become clear that we must move into online program delivery in a significant way in order to best serve our working adult students. In addition, we recognize that online learning environments provide fertile ground for expanding the diversity of faculty and students, another key part of CMU’s mission.

In order to move ahead with our desire to expand online learning, Central Michigan University requests that our stipulation on accreditation status with the Higher Learning Commission be extended to include the online delivery of existing and future CMU undergraduate and master’s level degree programs. The proposed change relates to Commission policy 1.C.2.b.: “change in educational offering.”

4 http://wwwprovost.cmich.edu/viceprovost/Accreditation/HLC_AffiliationStatus.pdf
Expected Outcomes

As the result of our movement into greater online offerings, we expect a number of important outcomes.

**Increased Online Programming**

Over the next three to four years, we expect to significantly expand the number of programs that we offer online. At present, CMU offers 124 courses in a completely online format; these are listed in Appendix A. Also shown in the appendix are six degree programs that have been, or are being, developed for online delivery this year.

Table 2-1 shows our projected rate of online program additions. These programs will be selected based on marketing research and institutional capacity. For most programs that we expect to develop for online delivery, we do not expect to start from scratch, but rather expect to reconfigure existing programs. Some of these will maintain a small amount of face-to-face contact with students. For example, our MBA program culminates in a two-week session in which students receive SAP certification in a face-to-face format; this will continue to be a requirement, at least for the time being.

The programs currently under development for online delivery in a couple of years are:

- Master of Business Administration (MBA)
- Master of Science in Information Systems (MSIS)
- Master of Science in Nutrition and Dietetics
- Master of Arts in Educational Technology (MA in Ed Tech)
- Master of Arts in Educational Leadership with emphasis on Charter School Administration
- International Administration concentration in MSA
- Human Resource Administration concentration in MSA
- Bachelor of Science in Public Administration
- Bachelor of Science in Psychology
- Leadership minor in BS and BA

The programs identified above were selected based on projected student populations, which are significant. There is no plan to put all of CMU’s programs online. Initially, the two largest areas of development will occur in education and administration and business-related programs. CMU has strong traditions and an excellent reputation in both these areas at graduate and undergraduate levels. Programs in other disciplines are also under consideration.
**Increased Enrollments**

Since 1999, we have seen substantial growth in online course enrollments as shown in Table 2-2. Given the demand for Internet-based course instruction we expect this trend to continue.

**Enrichment of Campus Offerings**

CMU’s campus-based courses have the potential to be significantly enriched through off-campus activity. Faculty who are campus-based and who also teach in off-campus venues acknowledge that they learn from their working adult students and that those interactions help bring currency to their teaching. In addition, online technology can be expected to impact traditional classroom pedagogy as faculty recognize that instructional design and learning objects developed for their online courses also work well in their face-to-face classrooms. This incorporation of richer technology components strengthens all education at CMU.

**Recognition Beyond Michigan**

CMU stands to gain wider national recognition through our outreach to students beyond Michigan’s borders. CMU’s vision statement emphasizes that national recognition is an important institutional goal. The university is considered a regional leader in quality academic programming. Continued growth and outreach to students who reside far beyond the university’s traditional geographical impact are expected to further expand CMU’s reputation.

**Impact**

**Impact on Mission**

This initiative will serve several important aspects of CMU’s mission, providing students access to our programs is chief among those mission elements. Working adults are a vital component of our student body for whom we wish to make our programs available. Internet technology now allows us to substantially expand access to this segment of our student population.

In addition, the university has made a commitment to integrating our on- and off-campus operations in ways that ensure the same high quality course offerings no matter where or how a student accesses them. By doing so, we will stay true to our mission to maintain teaching and learn-
ing as our top institutional priority as set forth in our vision strategic plan,\(^5\) *CMU 2010,\(^6\) and our mission.\(^7\)

Additionally, we have a commitment to increase diversity at CMU, another of our institutional priorities. To date, the off-campus segment of the university has realized much greater success in achieving this goal than has the Mt. Pleasant campus. Online offerings can be expected to increase progress even further.

**Impact on Students to be Served**

This initiative will have the greatest impact on the adult learners who will benefit from the online programs that we develop.

Students in the military are an important example. Over the 35 years that CMU has been involved in off-campus programming, we have developed partnerships with the military and have tailored many of our off-site offerings to the needs of its personnel. Right now, students in the military make up a significant portion of some of our programs offered at off-campus sites. However, with the deployment of large numbers of these students to Iraq and Afghanistan, students have lost the ability to continue with CMU. Our online initiative should compensate by providing needed programs in an accessible, flexible format that will allow students serving overseas to continue with their education.

Other working adult groups, such as those interested in graduate degrees in business or in education, could be well served by having online access to CMU’s programs. Bachelor’s degree programs are also an area in which CMU can expand our services to students seeking education, business, and selected health degrees.

On-campus students also are expected to benefit from new online options. Many of our residential students go home for the summer where they enroll in summer courses at institutions in their local areas. Providing these students with the option to continue to enroll in CMU courses increases the likelihood that they will find courses that are compatible with their academic programs. Another benefit for on-campus students is their exposure to greater diversity than they typically find among their classmates and instructors.

\(^5\) [http://planning.cmich.edu/docs%5CVision_Plan_2010.pdf](http://planning.cmich.edu/docs%5CVision_Plan_2010.pdf)
\(^6\) [http://www.planning.cmich.edu/](http://www.planning.cmich.edu/)
\(^7\) [http://www.cmich.edu/mission-goals.htm](http://www.cmich.edu/mission-goals.htm)
For all of these student groups, we see that online access to CMU’s programs adds value to their academic experience. The fact that CMU is an experienced and stable institution that offers quality programs by a qualified and committed faculty makes us an extremely valuable resource for these students.

**Impact on Breadth of Educational Offerings**

It is important to note that we are moving to develop programs that best match student and societal needs with the expertise and knowledge base available within our faculty ranks. In some cases, programs are developed that have no counterpart on campus in order to meet the needs of a distinctly external student population. For example, the Doctorate in Health Administration was developed specifically for practicing health professionals and has no on-campus student cohort. The requirements of many assignments assume that students are already working in the health field and can use those experiences. Appendix B provides a complete listing of off-campus programs and indicates whether or not an on-campus counterpart exists.

While we have identified a number of programs for online development in the next two years (listed on page 14), we anticipate that additional new program concepts will emerge from market research findings and from departmental/college discussions. It will be critical to prioritize programs for development and determine how many students we can effectively serve through them. It is imperative that we assure expansion does not overwhelm the university’s capacity to deliver on our mission.

In order to move toward our goal of expanding our offerings to greater numbers of working adults, we request that approval decisions concerning future online offerings be entrusted to review within the university. The proposed change relates to Commission policy 1.C.2.b.: “change in educational offering.”

**Strengths**

1. Consistent with our mission, CMU is committed to providing working adults with access to the higher education they need.
2. CMU has a long history of successful implementation of off-campus programs, a factor that will provide a good base for handling the changes that lie ahead.
3. CMU has been offering online courses since 1999.
Challenges

1. In order to ensure quality in online services and programs, careful planning will be required.
2. Overseas deployment of CMU students in the military make it difficult for them to complete their degrees.
CHAPTER 3

Rationale

for the Proposed Change
Chapter 3
Rationale for the Proposed Change

CMU is positioned to expand our online courses and programs, most of which are based on counterparts currently offered on campus. Rather than having to seek the approval of the Higher Learning Commission for each launch individually, CMU requests that decisions concerning future online program offerings be entrusted to the university approval process.

Several factors help shape the university’s move toward this request. First, CMU’s historical emphasis on improving student access to education drives this initiative. For over 35 years, the university has been committed to offering educational opportunities to non-traditional students who do not live within commuting distance of the Mt. Pleasant campus and/or whose work schedules limit their participation in campus programs.

Second, CMU has recognized that in order to serve this working adult population, we must deliver our programs in the formats that best meet the needs of these students. Students are increasingly demanding online delivery formats.

Third, CMU has built a wealth of online resources, services, and infrastructure that serve our off-campus programs very well. This existing base provides a stable and competent foundation on which to build a successful repertoire of programs that utilize the Internet as our delivery system.

Finally, CMU has identified as our top priority the creation of an environment supportive of teaching and learning. In exercising this priority, the university does not distinguish between instructional environments that meet face-to-face and those that meet online. Regardless of mode of delivery, all educational offerings at CMU pass through the same comprehensive internal curricular review system and program review.
CMU’s Emphasis on Student Access

CMU came to be in this position through our long-standing commitment to improve student access to our programs: CMU recognizes that online courses and programs make it possible for many working adults to further their education in ways that traditional courses often cannot.

Beginning in 1971, CMU opened our first off-campus center to a handful of students in the military. Today, off-campus students make up just under a third of the total student population that CMU serves: Fall 2006 off-campus enrollment was 7,075 (1,842 undergraduate and 5,233 graduate). Over 40% of this population are students from underrepresented groups. The most recent seven-year enrollment history is shown in Figure 3-1.

To deliver off-campus programs during fall 2006, 65 full-time and 17 part-time on-campus faculty, and 338 off-campus faculty taught courses and 183 full-time and 20 part-time staff provided essential support services. Professional Education Services, or ProfEd, as it is now known, is the name of the administrative unit that oversees these operations.

The large proportion of CMU’s student body involved in off-campus programs shows CMU’s commitment to off-campus offerings, as does this claim included in the university’s mission statement updated in 2001:

“Through its off-campus delivery service, ProfEd, the university provides access to higher education programs and lifelong learning opportunities both nationally and internationally through a variety of innovative instructional methods and schedules designed to meet the demands of adult populations.”

Online Programs Serve an Important Segment of CMU Students

Until recently, enrollment in off-campus programs has grown steadily over the years. The largest program is the Master of Science in Administration (MSA), with concentrations added over time to address the particular needs of adult learners and organizations. We have also added off-
campus education and business programs at the graduate and undergraduate levels in response to student interest.

However, enrollment trends for the last five years have made us aware of important changes. We have seen declines in enrollment in the MSA: Between 2000 and 2006, the MSA program has decreased from 63% to 41% of off-campus enrollment. These declines are due in part to changes within the military and overseas deployments, which have taken a substantial toll on the numbers of students available to enroll at CMU’s off-site campuses. Decreases can also be attributed to increased competition from new and seasoned providers of higher education. Skyrocketing numbers of MBA programs are now becoming available in online formats. CMU stands to gain back a share of this market by creating online access to successful programs like the MBA.

During this period of MSA market decline, off-campus graduate education programs have grown. From 2000 to 2006, education programs have risen from 11% to 26% of off-campus enrollment. These programs largely serve practicing educators in need of continuing education to sustain their credentials or to expand their opportunities for advancement. Clearly, this is an area in which we can make our programs more accessible to target student populations by making them available in online delivery formats.

CMU’s undergraduate off-campus enrollments have also flourished, totaling 28% of overall off-campus enrollment in Spring 2006. By moving to include the option for online learning, CMU can expand on this growth. In doing so, it will be important to make full programs available online, so that students can go from admission to graduation within CMU.

In short, in order to maintain our competitiveness in the off-campus market, we must move to online delivery options. Students are demanding online programs, and a growing number of educational organizations are moving to satisfy this need. It is critical that we respond to this demand.

**CMU Has Built a Wealth of Resources That Support Online Programs**

CMU is well-positioned to expand into online programs because of our comprehensive services for off-campus
students offered through a well-developed infrastructure that has evolved over a 35-year history. That same level of support will be available for students involved in online programs and will be completely accessible through the Internet or by phone. From initial inquiries to admission, financial aid application, library access, and all other services that support students throughout their affiliation with CMU, ProfEd provides services that routinely receive high ratings from students and alumni. Particularly noteworthy is the Off-Campus Library Services unit (OCLS), which is nationally recognized for its services. ProfEd’s infrastructure also includes units that conduct institutional research and that handle issues relating to state licensing and responding to requirements of the military.

With respect to support for developing online offerings, departments within ProfEd provide critical resources. Through its Product Development unit, ProfEd has an established process to evaluate the need for and resources required to convert a face-to-face program to an online format. The Center for Instructional Design (CID) provides complete instructional design support for faculty needing assistance with online course development. Once initiated, overall project management is undertaken by Product Development.

CMU has also invested heavily in our learning management system, Blackboard, which supports all CMU courses. Multiple levels of support ensure that this system functions appropriately and that students and faculty have the knowledge they need to use it well. Planning for future changes and upgrades is regularly undertaken.

Despite this strong foundation, with the expansion into online programs and courses in mind, we anticipate that the proposed change outlined in this document will require expanding the capacity and in some cases the availability of our current support services and personnel. We also anticipate that there will be a need for all services to move in a coordinated fashion ahead of program roll-outs so that students do not encounter gaps in service as they proceed through their coursework. Making certain that we cover all aspects of all services will be a logistical challenge CMU is committed to meet.
Teaching and Learning are CMU’s Top Priorities

In carrying out our mission to provide adult populations access to higher educational opportunities, CMU commits to excellence in academic content and instruction. CMU has long held teaching and learning as our highest priority, and this is clearly evident in the university’s mission and plans. A campus-wide discussion carried out during the 2004-05 university planning process led to CMU’s vision plan, *CMU 2010.* Students, staff, and faculty ranked teaching and learning first in a set of five institutional priorities, and this direction keeps the university focused on issues of quality surrounding all of our academic offerings. Thus, curriculum review at CMU is designed to assure high quality in all courses and programs regardless of their delivery format.

It must be noted that while this emphasis on quality in all of CMU’s programs – on- and off-campus – has been constant, internal support for off-campus programs has substantially matured within the past twelve years. In 1996, the Higher Learning Commission took note of a lack of integration between on- and off-campus operations, and noted the following concern in our ten-year accreditation review: “*The extensive off-campus operations [of CMU], especially programs offered out of state and out of the country, continue to have a tenuous connection to the Central Michigan University mission statement and an uncertain place in campus faculty priorities and involvement.*”

Since 1995, numerous efforts have led to a greater integration of off-campus and on-campus programs. New arrangements have been formalized between ProfEd and on-campus college deans and faculty to encourage the initiation and smooth running of new programs and the expansion of online course offerings. Relationships between campus units and ProfEd are critical to success since all credit-bearing off-campus programs and courses require extensive, ongoing collaborative review and action.

The university’s president and provost have specifically called upon college deans to become more involved in their off-campus programs. This includes overseeing the academic and financial integrity of those programs, as well as the development of new programs for which there are

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9  [http://www.planning.cmich.edu/](http://www.planning.cmich.edu/)
markets and that are in line with CMU’s mission and our historical role as a leader in programs for working adults.

Policies and systems now assure closer links involving curricular matters and approval of instructors. Curriculum review processes at CMU seek to ensure high quality in all courses and programs regardless of how they are delivered. ProfEd staff play an active role on committees and in other campus activities. With funding from a FIPSE grant that ended recently, a faculty development program for both on- and off-campus faculty was created to bring faculty together in the area of instructional improvement. ProfEd has fundamentally changed from an independent academic college into a service unit for online and off-campus operations.

More recently, a joint presidential-academic senate task force, established in September 2006, reinforced the move toward greater connectivity of on- and off-campus programs. The task force was organized to consider options for the future of off-campus programs as proposed by an external consultant for evaluation.¹¹ One option was to spin-off the off-campus unit into a separate entity; another was to embrace off-campus programs as an integral part of CMU’s identity. In the task force final report,¹² the group strongly endorsed the second option and recommended that on- and off-campus programs be further integrated rather than separated.

Such assimilation, they felt, was necessary to ensure that admissions standards are identical for on- and off-campus students and that all curricula associated with CMU meet the same standards of quality. The committee felt that the only differences between on- and off-campus versions of courses should occur as a result of the specific format used for their delivery, or as a result of differences in the backgrounds and other characteristics of the students involved. “Assuring high quality,” they wrote, “is the fundamental factor that should be considered in course and program development and offerings.”

All CMU’s courses - on-campus, off-campus, and online - use the same master course syllabi, which are housed in the Academic Senate office.¹³ In addition, Academic Senate policy mandates that all courses have expected

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¹² Download report from: [http://academicsenate.cmich.edu/issues.htm](http://academicsenate.cmich.edu/issues.htm)
¹³ [http://personal2.cmich.edu/mcs/syllabi](http://personal2.cmich.edu/mcs/syllabi) (need CMU global ID and password for access)
learning objectives that are specified with each master course syllabus. Master course syllabi are approved by the appropriate curricular review committees and function as course standards, ensuring that the same course taught on-campus and off-campus has the same learning objectives regardless of the teaching format used.

All of this activity has led to a much tighter connection between off-campus programs and those on-campus. While this is still an ongoing process, lack of connectivity is no longer the major challenge of CMU’s off-campus operations. Today, the off-campus unit faces the broader and probably more difficult challenge of meeting the demands of a much more competitive and dynamic market place of adult learners.

In accordance with trends in adult learner preference for online courses, CMU is gearing up to make selected programs available through Internet-based formats. As this document will show, we have identified both strengths and challenges associated with this direction we have chosen. By using our strengths to our advantage and by identifying realistic plans for dealing with challenges, we expect to successfully expand the availability of selected high quality programs in online delivery formats to working adults throughout the United States and the world.

As we move forward, we anticipate sustaining a viable and healthy off-campus operation with full support from all levels of administration and faculty. As noted in a recent review prepared by ProfEd, there are “levels of support from the Board of Trustees, the president, the provost, the deans, and permeating deeply into the faculty that we have not seen before in our recent history.”

Supporting this move are policies and procedures that CMU makes open and available for public viewing. CMU has a history of openness and an emphasis on integrity; in fact, one of our institutional priorities is to continue to “strengthen the university’s culture of integrity.” CMU’s commitment to this ideal is illustrated by the candid approach used in this self-study.

14 Six Month Review: Off-Campus Programs
15 http://www.cmich.edu/gencounsel/manual/default.htm
Strengths

1. CMU is committed to access for a broad range of students including many students from underrepresented groups.
2. There is strong, internal support for extensive integration of on- and off-campus offerings in order to ensure quality instruction throughout the university.
3. CMU has built extensive online resources and services for students.
4. CMU has created extensive resources to support faculty teaching online and developing online courses.
5. Significant growth in CMU's undergraduate and education programs is occurring.
6. CMU is committed to make the necessary changes in off-campus operations in order to ensure a strong, viable off-campus system.
7. CMU's emphasis on integrity is made apparent through our policies and procedures, which are made available for public viewing.

Challenges

1. Enrollment in CMU's largest off-campus program has dropped significantly.
2. It will be a challenge to coordinate the growth of all infrastructure and services necessary to support the change proposed and to make certain that no student encounters any gaps in services.
CHAPTER 4

Approvals for Implementation
Chapter 4
Approvals for Implementation

Internal Approvals

The identification of programs to be developed and delivered online is handled jointly between ProfEd and the academic colleges. This process is discussed in more detail beginning on page 56. Before any program moves to an online format, the college, department, and faculty to be involved in the process must agree on its substance and purpose.

New program concepts are reviewed at the department, college, and university levels before time and effort are spent working out their detailed content. University-level review at this stage is handled by the Academic Planning Council (APC), which considers proposals for new programs according to a set of guidelines. The guidelines specify that the APC evaluate how programs align with CMU’s mission and institutional priorities, what resources they will require, and how many students will be impacted. The planning form submitted to APC for new undergraduate and master’s programs is shown in Appendix C.

Following a recommendation by the Academic Planning Council, approval by the provost, and development by faculty, each program is reviewed by its initiating department, by its college, and by a series of Academic Senate curricular bodies. Full discussion of this process can be found on page 58.

External Approvals

ProfEd maintains an office that is responsible for making sure that CMU meets state licensing requirements for our off-campus sites. Table 4-1 provides a summary of the states and provinces that have specific authorization requirements that CMU meets in order to offer classes at sites within their borders.

We also offer classes on military installations that require approval from the State Approving Agency (SAA) for Veteran’s Affairs; this licensure covers CMU operations in the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Kansas, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania. Two of our locations do not currently require any specific licensure, authorization or approval; they are Guadalajara, Mexico and the location in Manitoba, Canada (Red River College in Winnipeg).

As CMU moves into offering online programs throughout the United States and globally, additional authorizations will be pursued as necessary. As the licensing requirements stand in 2007, CMU does not need to seek additional authorizations for delivering online programs to students in states outside of Michigan provided that those programs are advertised from CMU’s home base in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan. If CMU plans to use local advertisements in newspapers or in flyers distributed at sites in other states and provinces, additional authorizations will apply, and CMU will pursue those authorizations before initiating any such marketing campaigns.

Strengths

1. Well-defined internal approval processes exist for development of new academic programs and offering of programs in an online format.
2. CMU has a history of and an infrastructure to support securing appropriate external approvals.

### Table 4-1. State and Province Authorizations Required for Off-Campus Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State/Province</th>
<th>Governing Body</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>Bureau for Private Postsecondary and Vocational Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>Nonpublic Postsecondary Education Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>Board of Regents of the State of Louisiana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>Maryland Higher Education Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Dakota</td>
<td>Department of Career and Technical Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>Ohio Board of Regents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>Tennessee Higher Education Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>State Council of Higher Education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Challenges

1. Monitoring a highly fluid regulatory environment will demand even greater levels of support, flexibility, and documentation.
CHAPTER 5

Impact on University Challenges
Chapter 5
Impact on University Challenges

In CMU’s last comprehensive self-study and visit, no challenges requiring formal follow-up actions were identified. In the self-study process, CMU had identified a number of areas we felt required follow-up. This prompted the Accreditation Self-Study Steering Committee to pursue the “special emphasis” option for the self-study in which CMU focused on issues related to the transformation we were undergoing. Early in this process, it became clear how much the university had changed and was continuing to evolve since our last review. CMU’s identity as a state school with regional impact and focus on undergraduate preparation was no longer accurate. More graduate offerings, increased research activity, and new industrial liaisons were stretching academic outreach beyond CMU’s traditional undergraduate focus. With those changes came challenges that we urgently needed to address. As part of that process, we questioned how we would be able to preserve quality education while expanding the emphasis on scholarship for our students and faculty.

Our interest in expanding CMU’s number of online programs heightens this challenge. Campus-based faculty will become more greatly involved in developing and reviewing online courses and programs, as well as teaching them during their initial debut. This necessarily increases faculty workload. Faculty workload was a key factor identified in discussions concerning the preservation of quality undergraduate education, as highlighted in the special emphasis section of the self-study.

Below are several other issues identified by CMU in our 2005 self-study that are related to this change request and that are in various stages of being addressed:

We need to allow income generated from off-campus efforts to flow back to those developing and overseeing those programs.

17 In some cases, faculty may continue teaching the courses they develop; in other cases, other departmental faculty and/or adjunct faculty will become involved in teaching the courses, particularly when multiple sections of the same course are offered.
Over the past decade, many reports within the university have called for changing the revenue stream coming from off-campus programs. Rather than directing this income into the university’s general fund as is done now, it is essential that a revised model be adopted in which CMU reinvests in our off-campus programs by funneling money back into the academic colleges that provide those programs and into ProfEd that provides essential services to students and faculty. For some time, there has been a general consensus among senior decision-makers that this change must occur in order to make progress. A “New Ventures” program model was introduced to address this, but has met limited success. Discussions concerning the most effective financial model to be adopted are ongoing. (This topic is discussed further in this self-study on page 82.)

Academic colleges and departments will express more interest and become more likely to participate off-campus if the revenue from off-campus programs is directed differently. Currently, academic departments have little incentive to participate in off-campus teaching. Changing this interest by modifying the financial reward structure for off-campus contributions will set the stage for handling problems with faculty workload.

**We need to consider how campus faculty contributions to online programs will be recognized with respect to workload and review for reappointment, tenure, and promotion.**

As mentioned above, faculty workload is a significant concern. Because CMU’s mission has evolved to recognize enhanced research as an integral part of a quality education at all levels, expectations for faculty scholarship have been formalized in faculty reappointment, tenure, and promotion considerations. Similarly, it would be appropriate that expectations and workload for campus faculty as creators and, in many cases, deliverers of off-campus courses (including online) be discussed and defined.

Department-level discussions will be essential. As the result of such discussions, departments may wish to revise language within their departmental bylaws to specifically address how faculty contributions to online (and more generally, off-campus) teaching are to be recognized as part of their professional achievement and success.

Such attention to this growing aspect of faculty workload could help off-campus programs become a more integral
part of campus operations. Although there are some departments where these discussions are taking place, this has not yet become a widespread occurrence. Part of the difficulty is that the financial incentives for departments to participate in off-campus teaching is poor. A pivotal change that will help propel departments to engage in these critical discussions is widely believed to be the change in revenue stream (see also discussion on page 84).

We must have efficient systems to support the curricular process.
While the current system of curricular review of new courses and programs promotes high quality in the offerings that are approved, the process itself is perceived by many faculty to be time-consuming and cumbersome. This is discussed at length in the next section of this document. With respect to faculty workload issues, it was concluded during the previous institutional self-study\(^\text{19}\) that the Academic Senate should investigate means by which review could be made more efficient while continuing to safeguard program quality.

Strengths

1. The previous full accreditation review did not result in any challenges being identified for follow-up.
2. Discussions of how participation in the development and teaching of online courses (and off-campus courses, in general) could be considered as part of faculty workload are taking place in some units.

Challenges

1. CMU’s broad and expanding mission creates workload challenges for faculty.
2. Revenue from off-campus courses, including online courses, does not flow to academic units responsible for those courses.
3. Few department bylaws recognize faculty contributions to online and off-campus teaching as part of reappointment, tenure, and promotion.
4. Inefficiencies in CMU’s curricular review processes contribute to faculty workload concerns.

CHAPTER 6

Implementing & Sustaining the Proposed Change
Chapter 6
Implementing and Sustaining the Proposed Change

CMU’s over 35 year history in serving adult learners and our gradual movement to online courses and services mean we are positioned well to offer selected academic programs offered completely or almost completely online. This chapter details current activities and performance relative to our faculty, curriculum and assessment, intellectual property, technology, student services, and financial resources. Each of these sections describes CMU's capacity to support the proposed change.

Faculty

Campus Faculty
CMU’s faculty are centrally involved in our online initiative. The majority of the courses and programs that we intend to deliver online will be developed by tenured or tenure-track faculty (i.e., “regular faculty”) based at the Mt. Pleasant campus. Many of these online courses will be taught by the regular faculty who develop them, particularly when initially launched; we anticipate that off-campus faculty will become more involved in teaching over time, especially as enrollments increase in our online courses. According to the CMU-Faculty Association contract, regular faculty are given first preference to teach whenever a teaching opportunity arises.\(^\text{20}\) Adjunct faculty are contracted to teach specific courses after departments have determined that there is a need for additional instructional staff.

CMU’s regular faculty govern the curricular review process. Review policies are set forth in the Curricular Authority Document (CAD),\(^\text{21}\) which stipulates that faculty hold the authority and responsibility for approving the creation, deletion and modification of all university courses and programs. Regardless of instructional delivery format, all courses pass through the same curricular review process. This strong level of faculty involvement in the development

\(^{20}\) http://www.fps.cmich.edu/documents/FA%20Agreement%202005-2008%20for%20website.pdf (pg. 49)
\(^{21}\) http://academicsenate.cmich.edu/CAD/Curricular_Authority_Document.pdf
and approval of online offerings are key aspects of CMU’s assurance that our offerings meet high standards.

**Adjunct Faculty**

CMU currently employs approximately 1,200 adjunct faculty who teach off-campus courses; about 350 adjunct faculty teach in any given semester. The majority of our adjunct faculty hold terminal degrees in their fields. As a specific program example, the 2005-06 MSA Program Review listed 305 approved instructors. Of that number, 247 (81%) held doctoral degrees, 35 (11%) had Juris Doctorate degrees, 18 (6%) held less than a terminal degree, and 5 (2%) were not tallied since their re-approval to teach was pending.

Online courses make up a subset of the entire off-campus course selection, so not all of our off-campus faculty are involved in online teaching. Table 6-1 provides an indication of the distribution of student credit hours among faculty groups involved in online courses. Regular faculty teach 32% and adjunct faculty teach 61% of student credit hours devoted to online classes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personnel Headcount</th>
<th>Student Credit Hours (% of total)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular Faculty (On-Campus)</td>
<td>27 126 (32%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary Faculty (On-Campus)</td>
<td>5 18 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional-Administrative (P&amp;A)</td>
<td>1 3 (1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Officer</td>
<td>1 3 (1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjunct Faculty (Off-Campus)</td>
<td>40 240 (61%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our initiative to add 20 online programs by 2010 will require that we help more of our current faculty learn to teach online and recruit new regular and adjunct faculty with such experience. Current adjunct and regular faculty will not be sufficient to cover all of the online courses that we plan to offer. We follow a standard process in the recruitment and approval of such new off-campus faculty.

**Recruitment**

Instructor recruiting needs are identified in program planning meetings. Although campus faculty members are given the first preference to teach courses, there are many instances when regular faculty either do not want or cannot take the opportunity to teach, and adjunct instructors are needed. Once this need is identified, the Assistant Director

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22 2005-06 MSA Program Review
of Faculty Resources in ProfEd works with the program director, department chair, or other department faculty to develop a posting that captures the specific requirements for the position and identifies appropriate recruiting resources such as websites, newspapers, professional journals, conferences, and professional organizations. Specific attention is paid to advertising in places that will attract a diverse faculty population. Potential applicants are directed to the recruiting web page\textsuperscript{23} maintained by the Faculty Resource Center\textsuperscript{24} and encouraged to submit their application.

\textbf{Approval to Hire}

Academic departments establish the experience, academic training, and scholarly activity that applicants need to demonstrate for each course. The Coordinator of Academic Services in ProfEd screens applicants according to these requirements. Final approval of individual instructors to teach particular courses is made by the academic department involved and also by the College of Graduate Studies if the course is at the graduate level. Every three years instructors of undergraduate courses are re-evaluated by the academic department. Graduate level instructors seek re-approval every three to five years depending on which graduate faculty membership category they hold or wish to obtain.

Hiring and selecting adjunct faculty is a challenge and a slow process in some departments. It is sometimes difficult to recruit individuals who meet all the criteria desired: expertise in a discipline, expertise in teaching, and satisfy CMU’s standards with respect to scholarship and creative activity.

Once adjunct faculty are hired, they are assigned a faculty mentor\textsuperscript{25} who helps orient the new member to CMU and provides advice as needed in getting the newcomer’s first class started. Mentors use an orientation checklist\textsuperscript{26} to be sure that all topics of importance are covered. Throughout the faculty member’s first semester, mentors continue to provide assistance as necessary, following up after courses are completed to help troubleshoot problems. Mentors are selected based on their success as teaching faculty, aptitude to serve in a peer-mentoring capacity, and ability to contribute to the diversity of needs within the program.

\textsuperscript{23} http://www.cel.cmich.edu/faculty/recruitment/default.html
\textsuperscript{24} http://www.cel.cmich.edu/faculty
\textsuperscript{25} http://www.cel.cmich.edu/faculty/support/mentors.html
\textsuperscript{26} New Faculty Contact Checklist
Currently, eight mentors are actively involved in this program.

**Faculty Professional Development**
The Center for Instructional Design and FaCIT run a number of workshops to support instructors of online courses.

- **“Blackboard Task” Online Workshop**
  Blackboard is the learning management system used throughout the university. This workshop orients instructors to the features and functions of Blackboard through an interactive, web-based format. Participants move at their own pace through a series of tasks that enable them to learn how to make use of tools available to instructors. At the conclusion, a checklist and self-assessment feature allow the user to determine their understanding of the lessons provided. During spring 2007 sessions, 21 participated in the “Blackboard Task” workshop. Additional training is available for Blackboard features, using plagiarism-detecting software within Blackboard, and deploying student response system.

- **“Teaching Online” Workshop**
  This workshop is based on best practices in online instruction and helps faculty gain pedagogical understanding of online teaching. Its design and delivery also put faculty in the position of online learner and so helps them to gain practical experience from a student perspective. The workshop covers online syllabus development, content design and delivery, communication strategies, and assessment methods. Participation includes both synchronous and asynchronous sessions. In each of four modules, users are expected to read posted notes, submit a written assignment, respond to questions in Discussion Board, take an online quiz, and participate in live chat with guest speakers. During spring 2007 sessions, 11 faculty participated in the “Teaching Online” workshop.

- **Online Course Development Workshop**
  Discussed earlier, this workshop moves participants through the steps to create an online course. Often faculty in the workshops are developing a course as they complete the workshops and receive timely feed-

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27 [http://www.facit.cmich.edu/workshops-training/blackboard/tutorials.html](http://www.facit.cmich.edu/workshops-training/blackboard/tutorials.html)
28 [http://www.facit.cmich.edu/workshops-training/turnitin/default.html](http://www.facit.cmich.edu/workshops-training/turnitin/default.html)
29 [http://www.facit.cmich.edu/workshops-training/respondus/default.html](http://www.facit.cmich.edu/workshops-training/respondus/default.html)
back from the instructor on their success at applying what they are learning in the workshop.

**Group Workshops**

Targeted workshops are prepared for specific groups such as those involved in MBA and in Recreation, Parks, and Leisure.

All new adjunct faculty hired to teach off-campus and who have no experience with teaching online are strongly encouraged to take the Teaching Online workshop. Campus regular and temporary faculty are encouraged to participate as well. However, there is no requirement for any faculty member to either participate in the sessions or to demonstrate their competency in online teaching prior to teaching online. Rather, workshop participation depends on faculty motivation and encouragement from the Center for Instructional Design and ProfEd staff. The workshop itself has received excellent reviews from former participants (see Table 6-2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6-2. Faculty Comments on Exit Survey for “Teaching Online” Workshop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>(Center for Instructional Design, ProfEd)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- I found this very helpful in setting up my current classes. I have already changed what I will be offering next fall in the face-to-face course to include more online aspects. When I first started this workshop, I had no idea it had so much homework involved and I thought at one point that I was over my head with all the other work I’m doing, but it was very intriguing and so I was able to remain interested and prioritize other parts of my life to keep on task. I’d like to have more information about the audio/video possibilities in online teaching. I feel we just touched on that briefly.
- For the most part, this workshop was organized very well. I truly learned a great deal about the online environment and believe this knowledge will improve my face to face classes as well.
- Thank you. I really appreciate the insights and the different points made. This has made me consider techniques and approaches that will be necessary to effectively teach online. I enjoy the online format, as well, so that I can put myself in the place of the student.
- I would make more of a distinction between classes that are taught exclusively online and those that may use one or several online components but are otherwise largely traditional face-to-face classes in the 15-week semester tradition.
- Thank you very much for this wonderful opportunity! As I indicated in Quiz 4, I am ‘somewhat comfortable’ teaching the online course this Fall. However, I still need your help and will be calling on you for help this Summer, as I continue to prepare for the Fall. But I feel that this workshop has opened my eyes to many ideas that I would not have know without participating in it. Please, let me know if you plan another Workshop similar to this one in the Fall. Sometimes, I felt like a few members of the workshop had participated in similar workshops in the past, and that gave them a headstart. I am aware that I did not do very well on the Quizzes, that too was due to the fact that this was the first time for me to encounter this ‘online language.’ But, I feel it is worth every time I spent on it. Thanks Again!
- Very helpful to a person new to teach on line.
- Thanks for the excellent opportunity to learn about the online teaching.
- Excellent materials and information.

As more faculty seek to enroll in these workshops, CMU will need to expand our instructional capacity to handle the increased numbers, as well as other services supporting development of quality online courses and programs.
In addition to the Center for Instructional Design, there are other units that offer professional development opportunities that are pertinent to online teaching. The existing supports that will need to be expanded include:

- Technical training guides are available through ProfEd’s web site.\(^{30}\) These deal with using electronic resources such as Blackboard, SAP-Campus Management, SAP, Microsoft software, Student Information System (SIS), etc.
- The Faculty Seminar Series.\(^ {31}\) They allow off-campus faculty to meet with local CMU faculty in face-to-face sessions to discuss issues and share techniques and strategies for teaching adult learners in nontraditional formats. Travel costs of faculty are not reimbursed.
- “Take 5 for Teaching,”\(^ {32}\) a series of short videos, are available at the FaCIT website. These provide, on-demand, anytime/anywhere, information that give faculty access to “bits” of information that can be directly and immediately applied to their teaching.
- There are a variety of on-site teaching and learning workshops at the Mt. Pleasant campus, which are targeted at both on-campus faculty and off-campus faculty alike.
- Periodic webinars bring current issues and best practices on online learning and teaching to campus. The webinars have included “Universal Design for Online Courses,” “Building and Maintaining Motivations in Online Classroom,” and “Quality Assurance in Online Courses.”

**Faculty Evaluation**

CMU makes the ongoing monitoring of faculty performance a part of our way of ensuring quality in our programs. The primary instruments used for evaluating faculty teaching through ProfEd are end-of-course surveys. Both students and instructors complete surveys. Example surveys for online courses are provided in Appendices J and K.

For online courses we currently use evaluation surveys that are designed specifically to measure the quality of online learning environments for adult learners. Because these are longer and different from surveys administered to classes that meet face-to-face, it is difficult to compare evaluations from multiple sections of the same course and

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30 [https://miscel1.cel.cmich.edu/training/guides/default.asp](https://miscel1.cel.cmich.edu/training/guides/default.asp)
31 [http://www.cel.cmich.edu/faculty/support/development.html](http://www.cel.cmich.edu/faculty/support/development.html)
32 [http://www.facit.cmich.edu/whats-on/archive.html](http://www.facit.cmich.edu/whats-on/archive.html)
taught using different delivery modes. Discussions are underway to modify evaluation instruments so that they provide sound evidence for comparative purposes.

ProfEd allows Internet access to data collected from these end-of-course surveys for appropriate personnel including the instructor, faculty mentor, administrators, and academic departments. Results from other instructors who have taught the same course are also displayed.

For all instructors, an aggregated value called the Instructor Effectiveness Rating (IER) is reviewed for each course. This value reflects an average of student responses to 15 questions. Students respond to each question with a numerical rating of 1, 2, 3, or 4; the best possible IER is 1.0. The average IER in face-to-face courses is 1.37 and 1.48 for online courses. Any IER from an online course over 1.4 prompts a review by the Assistant Director of Academic Program Quality at ProfEd. If there is a history of negative student response or other issues that surface during the review, the faculty member is asked to work with a mentor.

ProfEd provides additional customized comparisons for instructors seeking data for reflective purposes; for example, an instructor may want to compare student ratings for different sections of an individual course. Grade distribution data are also available through this system for comparison and trend analysis purposes.

Since 2004, ratings for 7,896 courses offered through ProfEd have been processed, of which 1,372 were online. The student response rate for face-to-face courses is 87% and 33% for online courses. Response rates for higher level courses are greater: 100-level courses have a 26% response rate whereas 800-level courses have a 70% response rate. ProfEd is currently working to improve the low response rates in lower level courses by going beyond the practice of sending students an email message asking them to fill out a response form. In the future, a web link will be made available directly on the CMU student portal web page prompting students to go to a site where they can complete the appropriate end-of-course forms.

All student and instructor end-of-course assessments are reviewed by ProfEd staff members for "comments of concern." A "comment of concern" is a reference to discrimination, violence, or other unacceptable aspect of the learning environment. These comments are forwarded to the Assistant Director of Academic Program Quality, who
evaluates them, examines past end-of-course surveys or other relevant documentation and seeks resolution. The Assistant Director of Academic Program Quality also helps resolve other instructor or academic issues such as non-compliance with contractual agreements, questions about systems, communications, processes, procedures, or forms that involve academic or instructor activities. In addition, the Vice President and Executive Director of ProfEd has the authority to stop any faculty member from teaching in off-campus programs if such action becomes necessary. Results from student and alumni surveys show very high satisfaction with the instruction received in off-campus courses. For instance, Figure 6-1 shows the level of student and alumni satisfaction with the quality of teaching in the MSA program. These data represent the responses of 411 MSA students (response rate of 18.2%) and 1,039 of alumni (response rate 15.5%) These survey results from a combination of online and classroom-taught courses illustrate a consistent finding across all our programs: Students are very positive about the instruction they receive.

Results are reported from students and alumni in other programs are similar and can be seen at links provided in Table 6-3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Web Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree Programs</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cel.cmich.edu/quality-story/undergrad/teaching.html">http://www.cel.cmich.edu/quality-story/undergrad/teaching.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA in the Humanities</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cel.cmich.edu/quality-story/ma-hum/teaching.html">http://www.cel.cmich.edu/quality-story/ma-hum/teaching.html</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 6-1. Quality of Teaching in MSA Program: 2004 Alumni Survey and 2006 Current Student Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Statements:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Overall, my instructors:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Understood and respected individual students’ differences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Communicated clear expectations for classes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Applied course content to real life, especially the workplace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Used a variety of teaching methods and learning activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Encouraged students to be responsible for their own learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Helped students achieve course learning objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Challenged students intellectually.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Encouraged students to summarize, synthesize, analyze and apply information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Provided feedback to help students keep track of their learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chose assessments of students’ knowledge which were relevant to course learning objectives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Strengths**

1. CMU regular faculty lead CMU’s online program and course development.
2. CMU has over 1,000 faculty experienced in teaching adult learners in compressed formats.
3. Faculty approval standards ensure that only qualified individuals teach in CMU’s programs.
4. CMU faculty teaching on- and off-campus hold terminal degrees.
5. CMU has established mentoring programs for faculty teaching off-campus.
6. CMU provides strong instructional design support for faculty developing online courses, including two full-time Instructional Designers and a Multimedia Specialist.
7. Instructional design is firmly rooted in best practices for online teaching and learning.
8. Workshops are available in face-to-face and electronic formats that enable faculty who are new to online teaching to gain a good understanding of pedagogy and techniques relevant to online learning.
9. There is a strong infrastructure in place to ensure the evaluation of faculty teaching is thorough and that immediate follow-up occurs when a problem surfaces.
10. Student satisfaction is very high with respect to instruction in CMU’s off-campus programs, which include online courses.

**Challenges**

1. Many CMU faculty have not taught online nor received specific training in how to teach online or develop strong online courses.
2. In some disciplines, finding faculty who meet the standards of the sponsoring academic department is very difficult.
3. Receiving approval for off-campus instructors is slow in some departments.
4. Some CMU faculty are not convinced that online courses can offer the same quality of teaching and learning as traditional formats. There are also concerns about the compressed 8-week format of online courses.
5. Faculty who are new to online teaching are encouraged but not required to take “Teaching Online” workshops developed by the Center for Instructional Design.
6. Online course quality is rigorously assessed by the Center for Instructional Design. However, if a faculty member develops an online course without assis-
tance from the Center, there is no requirement that the course be submitted for this quality assurance review.

7. Design of faculty evaluation instruments for comparative purposes is needed.
8. Low student response rates for online undergraduate instructor evaluations need to be improved.

Curriculum and Assessment

At CMU, the primary responsibility for the content, quality, and effectiveness of the curriculum resides with our faculty. CMU’s position is that this puts both the authority and responsibility for curricular decisions in the hands of the group best qualified to determine the course content, the strategies for teaching, and evaluation of student achievement with respect to the intended learning outcomes. Development, change, and assessment of curricula are governed by the policies in the Curricular Authority Document (CAD) of the Academic Senate. Figure 6-2 summarizes the process for establishing and modifying curricula.

Curricular Documents and Process

Master Course Syllabi

Master course syllabi (MCS) are standardized at CMU, a condition that helps ensure a certain level of quality within a course as well as consistency when multiple instructors are involved in teaching the same course. As stated in the Curricular Authority Document (CAD), a master course syllabus must be developed for each course; each master course syllabus designates the scope of the course, expected prerequisites, course content, learning objectives, suggested instructional formats, and suggested methods for student evaluation. Master course syllabi must also be updated every five years, a requirement that maintains their currency of content. The official master course syllabi are housed in the Academic Senate office and are available online to the CMU community.

33 http://academicsenate.cmich.edu/CAD/Curricular_Authority_Document.pdf (pg. 120)
34 http://academicsenate.cmich.edu/CAD/Curricular_Authority_Document.pdf (pg. 120)
35 http://personal2.cmich.edu/mcs/syllabi (need CMU global ID and password for access)
Figure 6-2. Curricular Process for Course Approval (Curricular Authority Document, 2003)

*Changes in MCS are reviewed by college and sent directly to Senate office.
Individual faculty members develop a class syllabus based on the master course syllabus. Although faculty may not substantially alter the scope of the course or the goals and objectives of the learning experience, they do have leeway in planning the sequence of topics, selecting instructional materials, methods, or evaluation procedures.

**Approval of New and Modified Courses**

When a course is new, a rationale describing the role of the course in the curriculum and its intended audience must be submitted along with a master course syllabus. Appendix G shows the *Course Request Form* used and Appendix H contains the guidelines for preparing a master course syllabus.

These documents are usually initiated at the departmental level and then forwarded as shown on Figure 6-2 and summarized as follows:

1. Department Curriculum Committee or Interdisciplinary Program Council
2. College Curriculum Committee
3. Senate Curricular Body (either the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, the Graduate Council, the General Education Council, or the Professional Education Curriculum Committee, as appropriate)
4. Academic Senate

Proposals for any modification in course title, number, description, or prerequisites go through the same process, beginning with a department. This document path is very similar to that used for new academic programs described on page 58.

**Approval of Courses to be Offered Online**

When an existing course is reformatted so that it can be delivered online, approval must be obtained for the reformatted master course syllabus. An addendum to the master course syllabus is prepared and submitted for approval. See Appendix F for the set of guidelines that aid faculty in preparing the paperwork. The requirement for full multi-stage review and the focus on an a priori review of the syllabus was questioned by some in the self-study process. Informal discussions among academic leaders of how we might better assure quality in online courses is occurring.
Online Programs and Courses

Delivery of online courses and programs is the responsibility of CMU’s off-campus unit, ProfEd. The name, ProfEd, is a shortened version of “Professional Educational Services.” Its mission statement reads:

*The mission of ProfEd is to deliver high quality, fiscally sound, responsive-to-market programs to adult learners.*

The leader of ProfEd has held various titles, with the current leader, Merodie Hancock, holding the title of Vice President/Executive Director for Off-Campus Programs. This senior officer reports to the highest academic officer, the Executive Vice President and Provost, and is a member of the President’s Senior Staff, University Budget Advisory Council, Council of Deans, and the Academic Senate. There are no other representatives of ProfEd on the Academic Senate, which is a source of concern for some.

Seven major units make up ProfEd, each of which is headed by a director:

- Product Development
- Technology
- Human Capital and Organizational Services
- Administrative Services
- Student Services
- Finance
- Enrollment Management

Online Program Initiation

ProfEd assumes leadership in the initiation of many new online programs as a part of its responsibilities off-campus operations. The Product Development department matches CMU faculty expertise and with its market analyses and financial projections. Deans can also approach ProfEd and request market research for programs they wish to grow. In either case, ProfEd proceeds to determine desired courses, course formats, and advising schedules taking into account the number of interested students, the availability of faculty, the availability of instructional and library facilities, and where pertinent, organizational work patterns.

The agreement to go forward with any off-campus program, including those that are destined to be delivered online, is made between ProfEd and the appropriate college dean. This process differs from the one previously in place, which required only the collaboration of ProfEd and the chair of the department. The recent change was instituted
to better align the broader priorities, plans, and resources of the university and college.

Once the dean and ProfEd agree that an online program is appropriate and the appropriate internal approvals are obtained, the initiating faculty and their departments control progress in course and program development. As discussed in the next section, ProfEd supplies strong support and assistance to faculty in designing and launching online courses.

**Current Limitations**

It has been a challenge for ProfEd to motivate some departments to take on online and other off-campus initiatives since those departments have little incentive to do so. Right now, most departments receive little revenue from off-campus courses for which they are responsible. Changing this pattern to funnel money back into departments would reward units for the work that they do and provide the needed motivation to sustain and improve off-campus offerings, of which online offerings will be a part. In addition, additional investment is needed to support the technology infrastructure needed to offer fully online programs and expand online courses. In process right now are discussions concerning the financial model we expect to result in a new model being adopted in early fall.

Another challenge for off-campus programs that will be exacerbated with growth in online programs is the handling of interdisciplinary programs. Since these do not have a single home department, their development and update must be orchestrated across departments by a program director outside the department. The program director has few incentives to offer faculty. Also, some interdisciplinary programs are perceived as direct competitors with department-based programs; one department has tried to constrain the interdisciplinary programs to advantage its own programs. Increasingly, deans and the provost are getting involved in solving these issues.

Other challenges that will have to be overcome in order for CMU to realize the full potential of online learning relate to faculty perspectives of online classes. While there is support for online course development within faculty ranks, there are some faculty members who are skeptical that courses delivered through the Internet can be done with the same level of quality as when a course is delivered in a traditional classroom format. ProfEd’s off-campus 8-week delivery format worries some faculty with concerns about
whether course learning outcomes can be achieved in eight weeks. A new position within ProfEd – an associate vice president of academic programs – will create a liaison between ProfEd and campus faculty with an emphasis on establishing quality in off-campus (including online) programs.

**Program Approvals**

When an idea for a new program is first conceived or when there is a desire to move a program to a completely online format, an initial proposal must pass through the Academic Planning Council (APC) and be approved by the provost. The council’s guidelines make it clear that new programs must: be consistent with CMU’s mission and institutional priorities; be able to show that quality instruction will characterize the program; be effective in using resources; and have a positive impact in terms of numbers of students served.36

Once the Academic Planning Council reviews and the provost approves a new program in concept, the initiating faculty members proceed with its development. Using guidelines and procedures outlined in the CAD, a proposal is created that is then passed for review through the same stages as courses and illustrated in Figure 6.2. New academic programs are also reviewed (but not subject to approval) by the Council of the State Universities of Michigan. CMU’s Board of Trustees approves new degrees.

**Current Limitations**

A concern that has been raised frequently is the apparent time-consuming nature of the curricular review process. Figure 6-3 and Table 6-4 provide data showing the time involved in moving proposals through the curricular process in recent years. Specifically, the cycle period represented by the data is the time from college approval to the end of the Academic Senate’s objection period.

The three-year trend shown in Figure 6-3 indicates that routing times, from departmental approval to the end of the Academic Senate’s objection period, are decreasing, with the median time at present close to four months. These data do not support the general perception that the curricular process is unduly time-consuming.

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However, there are constraints on proposal movement through the curricular process. As Table 6-4 shows, some proposals get through in under two months while others may take over ten months. Proposers of new curricular must be vigilant in order to move proposals through what is often a five-step process when things go well. When materials are returned for clarification is often when significant delays begin. Additional delays may result from the curricular review meeting schedule. Because no curricular committees meet during semester breaks, including three weeks at Christmas, one week in the spring, and twelve weeks over the summer, there are roughly sixteen weeks during a calendar year when the curricular process goes on hold. This contributes to perceptions that proposals spend long times in process which some faculty say deters them from developing and updating curriculum.

Another faculty perception that surfaced during this self-study pertains to the review process itself. Ideally, the same guidelines should apply to all proposals, regardless of who serves on the curriculum committees. However, there are concerns that no two consecutive committees use the same criteria to review proposals. This lack of standardization makes it especially frustrating for faculty whose proposals are not approved and who then revise and re-submit their proposals. By the time their revised proposal comes up for review, the committee membership has changed and so have some of the criteria for approval. A rectifying at least some of these shortcomings by for example, instituting a more consistent approach to review that remains operational throughout more of the year would be more supportive of our interest in responding to student needs in a timely manner. Some content areas change so rapidly that CMU may lag in keeping our programs up to date and targeted to student populations.

| Table 6-4. Time Involved in Proposal Routing Through CMU's Curricular Process |
|---------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Overall Days                    | 186      | 180      | 201      | 201      | 192      | 117      | 116      | 118      |
| Undergrad Days                  | 165      | 152      | 192      | 165      | 152      | 117      | 116      | 118      |
| Grad Days                       | 201      | 180      | 201      | 201      | 192      | 117      | 116      | 118      |
| Median Days                     | 174      | 153      | 209      | 137      | 131      | 159      | 111      | 111      | 116      |
| Average Days                    | 186      | 180      | 201      | 165      | 152      | 192      | 117      | 116      | 118      |
| Minimum Days                    | 32       | 32       | 36       | 26       | 26       | 36       | 48       | 64       | 48       |
| Maximum Days                    | 678      | 600      | 678      | 482      | 466      | 482      | 216      | 174      | 216      |
Online Course Development

ProfEd’s Center for Instructional Design\(^ {37}\) is the focal support center for online teaching and course design. The center is staffed by a Director and an Instructional Designer who work with faculty, both individually and in group workshop sessions, to assist them in developing online courses. A third staff member, the Coordinator of Multimedia Production, provides support with learning technologies as they are integrated into course designs. A fourth staff member, the Materials Production Specialist, coordinates the flow of course materials, including textbooks and exams, between the Center and Student Services at ProfEd.

The Center is located on the fourth floor of Park Library to make it easily accessible to campus faculty. Their location places these four staff members in close proximity to staff members of FaCIT (Faculty Center for Innovative Teaching), whose offices are also on the fourth floor of Park Library. Important learning technology equipment is shared between the two groups. The two groups regularly take advantage of one another’s expertise.

A quality assurance process\(^ {38}\) overseen by the Center provides a set of standards based on best practices in online learning. A comprehensive checklist is used to evaluate online course design, content, efficacy of interaction between participants, assessment of student learning, and the efficacy of the technology used. (The checklist is shown in Appendix I and summarized in Table 6-5.)

This checklist serves as a guide during course development and as a final assessment tool to determine whether a particular course meets standards of best practice. All courses developed with assistance from the Center pass through this quality assurance process; however, courses developed independent of the Center have no such required review.

\(^ {37}\) http://www.cel.cmich.edu/CID/default.html
\(^ {38}\) http://www.cel.cmich.edu/CID/quality-assurance-checklist.html
### Table 6-5. Summary of Items on the Online Course Readiness Checklist (Developed by the Center for Instructional Design, see Appendix I for Complete Checklist)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part I – Course Design, Content, and Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course Structure</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course follows guidelines and format of the Master Course Syllabus and its Addendum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course is as rigorous as a face-to-face course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course is presented to students in manageable segments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course is organized by weeks, by modules, by units, or by chapters in a logical progression.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course is easy to navigate and user-friendly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course is presented to students with different learning styles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course is developed as a Master course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Syllabus</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventeen statements are listed that specify the information to be included in the syllabus. with respect to online learning, the following are included in this list:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedures for submitting assignments and taking exams are stated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidelines for participating in discussion forums and chat sessions are specified.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods to communicate with students about updates and their progress in the course are stated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Gradebook is explained to students as a place to view feedback and grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear instructions for obtaining assistance through tech support/Helpdesk are provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content and Usability</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourteen statements are listed. Some examples are:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content is organized in a folder structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each module/unit is “chunked” to the appropriate number of content items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutorials are provided to help students learn necessary skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links are given to download free plug-ins and players if needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven statements are listed. Some examples are:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of assessments selected are consistent with course objectives and learning outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threaded discussions are a required/graded component of the week/module/unit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes/Exams are set up in a secured format to protect academic honesty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Community</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five statements are listed. Some examples are:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactions (faculty to students, students to faculty, and students to students) are facilitated in a number of ways in the course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students are given the opportunity to work in small groups through team activities to develop the online learning community.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Part II – Instructor Technical Skills

| Thirty statements are listed that specify the instructor’s ability to handle the technical aspects of teaching online. Some examples are: |
| I am able to assign grades and enter comments to submitted assignments. |
| I am able to set up and record chat sessions. |
| I am able to set up groups, add users, and monitor the progress of group work. |
| I am able to grade essay questions and tests in Bb. |
| I am able to create surveys and retrieve data in Bb. |
Whether they work with faculty individually, in a group setting, or online, the Center staff have established a set of guidelines that effectively steer instructors through initiating and preparing for high quality online learning environments. What is lacking, however, is an online course development tracking system. For various reasons, many faculty, even despite having made a formal agreement to develop a course progress within a specified time period, do not complete the process by the contracted deadline. Curricular process delays, lack of time to develop, and unexpected obligations are common reasons for delay.

**Course Approvals**

There are presently no commitments made to students for online delivery of a course until the entire program (and all of its courses) has been fully developed and approved in an online format. This delays launch of programs that could be made available to students much earlier; however, waiting until all materials have been developed and formally reviewed at all levels ensures that the full program will be available to students who enroll.

**Program-Level Assessment**

Assessment of student learning outcomes at CMU is being driven by a “design backward/deliver forward” paradigm. Faculty design curricula based on the outcomes they expect to see from students. Thus, student learning outcomes become a focus early in program development.

As stipulated in the Academic Senate’s *Policy on Student Learning Outcomes Assessment*, all academic programs must have an assessment plan that includes: intended student learning outcomes from the program; curriculum map showing alignment of courses with learning outcomes; strategies and methods to be used for collecting evidence of student learning; and plans for how findings will be used to improve the program.

This emphasis on articulation of student learning outcomes is reinforced by the Academic Planning Council through its expectation that new programs should have a set of student learning outcomes and plans for assessment in place before students first enroll in the program. Assessment

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plans for existing programs must be updated at least every seven years.

The Assessment Council is responsible for the approval of assessment plans. The Office of Curriculum and Assessment keeps approved materials on file. Both the Assessment Council and the Director for Curriculum and Assessment provide consultation and workshop opportunities to assist units developing or revising assessment plans. Outcomes Assessment Plans are available for viewing online for a number of off-campus programs\textsuperscript{41} and available in paper copy in the Office of Academic Affairs and reports on actual assessments. An example of a program that meets the standards expected for student assessment is the MSA-Vehicle Design program.\textsuperscript{42}

Despite CMU’s many successes on the assessment front, the somewhat sporadic compliance with assessment reporting across campus means we fall short of our aspiration. This is an area we continue to improve on.

\textit{Program-Level Management of Assessment}

CMU is currently exploring the use of a program-level management system through WEAVE Online (http://www.weaveonline.net/subscriber/cmich/). A pilot system is underway, which will be developed and tested over the next two years. Participating colleges and departments include the College of Business, the College of Health Professions, the Department of Art, the Department of English and Literature, the Department of Counseling and Special Education, two engineering programs, and the Integrative Public Relations Program.

This organizational tool is expected to streamline communication across campus with regard to reporting and using results from student learning assessment. It is expected that either WEAVE Online or a similar system will eventually be used to manage all of our academic program assessment.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
  \item[41] http://www.cel.cmich.edu/faculty/docs/outcomes.html
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
**Strengths**

1. CMU regular faculty review all curricula.
2. CMU has faculty-governed policies for curricular review and program-level outcomes assessment.
3. There is institutional-level review and provost approval for any academic program moving to online delivery.
4. Programs offered through ProfEd post assessment plans and reports and use assessment results for continuous improvement purposes.
5. Research conducted by ProfEd identifies potential off-campus student populations that could be served by programs derived from CMU faculty expertise.
6. CMU’s assessment effort is maturing with all programs having established student learning outcomes and formal assessment plans that are in various stages of implementation. Implementation of full assessment cycles is sporadic across campus.

**Challenges**

1. In the curricular approval process, there is need for additional clarification of review criteria used by curricular bodies and current quality standards for online courses.
2. The curricular review process is perceived by many to be lengthy and a deterrent to timely program additions and changes.
3. CMU uses a contract with faculty course developers to establish a timeline for online course development. In practice many deadlines are missed which delays launching of courses online.

**Intellectual Property**

With respect to intellectual property and online courses, CMU’s Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Policy\(^43\) establishes course ownership when a faculty member creates a new course under a ‘work for hire’ arrangement. According to section V.E.2.c, “The University will assert ownership of instructional materials developed at the request of the College of Extended Learning when the individual is paid for the development.” Faculty who contract with ProfEd sign a contract that makes this ownership clear. A copy of the contract is shown in Appendix D.

However, if a faculty member does not contract with ProfEd

\(^43\) [http://www.orsp.cmich.edu/pdf/ipr.pdf](http://www.orsp.cmich.edu/pdf/ipr.pdf)
and proceeds with development of an online course independently, no such contract is signed. Any disputes regarding ownership of such courses would need to be settled by the Intellectual Property Rights Committee through an appeals process. The committee would use the IPR policy to interpret the best course of action in each case. A weakness that needs to be addressed is the somewhat dated nature of the policy. The standing policy has not been updated since online courses were introduced at CMU and gaps exist in the policy as it applies to online course ownership.

The IPR issues surrounding faculty rights with respect to online courses are receiving attention. Some faculty have questioned intellectual property aspects of the contract online developers are signing with ProfEd. Discussions underway include these ownership issues and how those will be balanced by the need to ensure continuity in course offerings and programs.

Issues relating to course revisions are also relevant in this discussion about intellectual property. Because more elements of original work stay with an online course than stay with a traditional classroom-based course, faculty feel vulnerable if the course that they created is not revised in an appropriate and timely fashion. In response, ProfEd has developed policies for revising and updating online courses, outlined in Appendix E. Courses are slated for evaluation of revision on a regular basis.

**Strengths**

1. CMU has a clear policy concerning intellectual property rights in ‘work for hire’ situations.
2. CMU has policies concerning the revision and updating of online courses.

**Challenges**

1. Concerns about intellectual property related to online course development need to be aired, discussed, and resolved so that the university can update our Intellectual Property policy.
Technology

Infrastructure
CMU has adopted an integrated, university-wide Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system using SAP modules for SAP-Campus Management (our student information system), Finance, Human Resources, and Grants Management (Figure 6-4). A business warehouse component that will archive data from the other modules and assist in integrated reporting functions is being plotted in 2007-08.

SAP-Campus Management (SAP-CM) is currently under construction and once completed will provide one centralized system used by both the main campus and ProfEd for admissions, registration, and student academic information. The CMU Student Portal will eventually allow all students web access to these functions. ProfEd maintains its own web presence and provides links for its students to enter the CMU Student Portal for information on admission, registration, Blackboard, and library services.

ProfEd also maintains a shadow system known as Student Information System (SIS) which allows ProfEd staff access to data downloaded from SAP-Campus Management including essential online student enrollments. Plans are for SIS to be discontinued once SAP-CM can be used for enrollment tracking functions.

While SIS allows distance learning staff to follow online student enrollment on a daily basis, other types of student information are not so easily obtained. For example, no structures are in place to quickly determine how many students are enrolled in one program across CMU’s 60 off-campus sites or the number of students enrolled in a particular program at a particular site nor have program reviews for off-campus programs included critical student information. These limitations and others like them are expected to be resolved in the long term as SAP-CM matures; in the short run, they create temporary challenges to both on-campus and off-campus users of student information.

Learning Management
Blackboard is the learning management software used throughout the university. The Learning Management System Administrator provides technical support, administration, online course operations, and instructional design assistance. The Director of the Center for Instructional Design within ProfEd also provides functional support and faculty
support/training for Blackboard, as does the Instructional Developer within FaCIT. All three staff members answer faculty inquiries made in person, by phone, or through email. CMU Helpdesk staff have been trained to provide initial support to students and faculty using Blackboard.

Use of Blackboard has been growing steadily. At present, about 70% of on-campus faculty use Blackboard in their classes that meet on the Mt. Pleasant campus. All online courses are delivered through Blackboard, which allows students to access course materials, submit assignments, take quizzes, and communicate with their instructors and other students. Some classes also meet online at scheduled times for chat sessions. A variety of library resource pages have been created for Blackboard especially for use by off-campus students.44

Blackboard is our current choice for management throughout the university, and we continue to upgrade this system to meet changing needs. Rapid growth in use led to serious technical challenges in the last few years. At one point, the capacity of our server became overwhelmed as numbers of users grew. To address this issue, significant investments were made in hardware, software, and personnel. Additional servers have been purchased and equipment is being purchased to enhance the testing environment outside the production environment. In addition, an executive level group was organized that now convenes monthly to review and strengthen the learning management system as needed. Formalized responsibility for the support, maintenance, and communication of Blackboard operations is being revised and continuously improved. For the first time, CMU’s Office of Information Technology has a staff member dedicated to Blackboard technical support and FaCIT staff members have formalized responsibilities for Blackboard support and professional development.

The current Blackboard system is diagrammed in Figure 6-5. The hardware shown in red are either being purchased now or are planned for purchase in the future. This new hardware will handle the increased student load and allow us to run tests on new features and modules without disrupting normal functions. Our goal is to be able to do production updates at any time, allowing for the simultaneous delivery of service and the regular upgrading required to accommodate demand increases. In addition, to support our online program initiatives we are investing in more data

44 http://ocls.cmich.edu/bb/index.html
storage capacity to handle the increased numbers of users and their needs for data storage and retrieval.

What will remain a challenge is the coordination of Blackboard upgrades at appropriate points in the growth of our online initiative. The executive group will maintain general oversight of the learning management system and coordinate growth. This group, known as the Learning Management System Group, includes representatives from ProEd, Academic Affairs, and Information Technology. Represented in the top of Figure 6-5, this team takes an institutional-level view in making decisions about investments in new features and functionalities. Their work will be critical to expanding Blackboard for our new online programs.

As shown in Figure 6-6, a mid-tier group provides faculty support through training and materials development. A
committee known as the Blackboard Resource Group also functions at this level to provide ongoing monitoring of Blackboard’s performance and troubleshooting advice as needed. This group makes recommendations to the executive group concerning needs for change. They collect data from calls logged in to the Helpdesk, which is the first point of contact for any student or faculty member trying to resolve a problem. If the Helpdesk staff is unable to assist, questions are referred to the members of the Blackboard Resource Group, which answers questions within one business day. Summaries of the Helpdesk calls are also regularly reviewed by the LMS executive team.

The Helpdesk is maintained by the Office of Information Technology and its services have evolved as technical environments at CMU have grown. During the summer of 2006, Helpdesk hours were expanded into evenings and weekends to accommodate off-campus students and faculty. In the future, and especially as we expand our online programs, we expect that those hours will likely need to expand further to offer 24-hour/seven days a week service.
A topic under discussion at the executive level is how to better support the cross-functional Blackboard support group to maximize its effectiveness in solving problems. The need for frequent collaborative development of expectations for Blackboard support is clear. Another issue being addressed is the need for redundancy in staffing/expertise as the use and possibilities within the learning management system expand. Significant progress in all of these areas is expected to take place over the next few months.

Another topic undergoing periodic reexamination is CMU’s use of Blackboard for our Learning Management System (LMS). A consultant working over the summer and early fall will identify CMU’s needs for a LMS and help to craft an RFP for the next LMS. If Blackboard is not chosen, transition plans will be carefully developed and implemented to promote as best as possible a seamless transition for CMU students and faculty.

**Proctored Exams**

At this time we do not have the capability to offer proctored exams online, although we are pursuing this addition to our learning management system. Right now, students taking online courses that require proctored exams must designate a proctor to administer their exams. Students are asked to identify a proctor using an online form, who is then verified by ProfEd. At exam time, ProfEd mails the exams directly to the proctor. The proctor administers the exam and mails it back to ProfEd for grading. Acceptable proctors include school counselors, school/college administrators teachers, military/industry education or testing centers, or the librarian at a local library. In addition, any ProfEd center will proctor exams, as will the distance learning staff. Unacceptable proctors include, but are not limited to, family members, friends, coworkers, and other CMU students. CMU reserves the right to deny any proctor or assign proctors to students as deemed necessary by the distance learning staff.

**Future Technology**

Concerns were raised during this self-study about CMU’s technology status: Is CMU paying adequate attention to technology changes and growth that drive the evolution of e-learning? The projection of cutting-edge technology trends five and ten years into the future and integration of these trends into both our Internet-based and classroom-based learning environments is sporadic. Our strongest
unit in this regard is the College of Health Professions, which has a visionary technology direction and staff dedicated for that purpose. This could be a model to assure CMU’s ability to maximize our learning environments and satisfy the educational needs of our students.

**Strengths**

1. CMU has made a major commitment to the acquisition and implementation of state-of-the-art software and hardware we use to carry out essential instructional and administrative functions.
2. CMU has developed a comprehensive management system for overseeing functions of Blackboard, our learning management software.

**Challenges**

1. Certain types of student information are challenging to collect because SAP-Campus Management is still under construction.
2. CMU will need accurate information about changing enrollment patterns to make good judgments about staffing, services, hardware and software investments in the future.
3. Use of Blackboard, CMU’s learning management software, is growing rapidly, necessitating rapid staffing and hardware and software expansion.
4. Serving online students will most likely necessitate making technical assistance and some student services available 24-hours/seven days per week.
5. Growth in online programs will necessitate CMU’s investment in the technology required to offer online proctored exams.
6. Greater attention to long term trends in technology and learning will be needed to assure quality and competitiveness in online programs.

**Student Services**

**For Online Students**

Services specifically designed for online students are in place and easily accessible through the Internet. Beginning with ProfEd’s main web page, a main clickable heading, “Distance Learning,” takes both prospective and current
students directly to a welcome page.\textsuperscript{47} From here, prospective students may go to a site that gives them a feel for what distance learning involves\textsuperscript{48} and gives them the opportunity to preview an online course.\textsuperscript{49} Students already committed to enrolling in CMU’s programs find links to sites that allow them to go through student orientation, login to their classes, order textbooks, designate a proctor for exams, and locate other student resources.\textsuperscript{50}

Staff dedicated specifically to online learning includes 6.3 Full-Time Equivalent, or FTE (five full-time, one 0.8-time, and one 0.5-time). These staff members handle the following support services for students (excluding Blackboard support):

- The Distance Learning Course Support group allows students to speak to staff by telephone (toll-free) with questions and calls for assistance of any type. An email address is available that serves the same function. Currently, the Distance Learning Course Support desk is operational from 8 AM to 5 PM EST/EDT Monday through Friday with voicemail after hours. Calls after hours are returned within 24 hours, and student support information can be found online.\textsuperscript{51}

- Application for admission is handled online. Staff members follow up with personal contact through the admission process to provide assistance as needed and to make sure that students are ready when classes start.

- An online student orientation site\textsuperscript{52} and a Blackboard tutorial site\textsuperscript{53} are maintained, which students can complete at their own pace. As part of orientation, two self-administered tests allow students to determine that they are prepared to begin an online class. An admissions counselor follows up with a phone call to make sure that the student has what they need to start class. The tests include:
  - A Requirements/Systems Check\textsuperscript{54} function is available to assess whether the computer system being used by the student will properly interface with the technology used in CMU’s courses.
  - An online e-learning readiness assessment\textsuperscript{55} allows students to determine whether online course

\textsuperscript{47} http://www.cel.cmich.edu/ecampus/default.html
\textsuperscript{48} http://www.cel.cmich.edu/ecampus/aboutdl.html
\textsuperscript{49} http://www.cel.cmich.edu/ecampus/preview.html
\textsuperscript{50} http://www.cel.cmich.edu/ecampus/courses/default.html
\textsuperscript{51} http://ddlcampus.cmich.edu/courseitems/support.htm
\textsuperscript{52} http://www.cel.cmich.edu/orientation/
\textsuperscript{53} http://www.cel.cmich.edu/student/Bb_tutorials/default.html
\textsuperscript{54} http://www.cel.cmich.edu/orientation/default.html?del=online
\textsuperscript{55} http://www.cel.cmich.edu/future/ecampus/dlassess.html
formats are right for them. Presently, neither of these tests is required, nor are the responses collected and reviewed by the distance learning staff, which may be a weakness in our current screening/advising process.

- Information regarding courses and schedules and when students may register for them is available at the website. Students find information about setting up their email account, ordering books, and establishing a proctor through the website as well.
- Students use the CMU Student Portal (http://my.cmich.edu) to register for classes, make tuition payments, and to view their grades and academic history. Distance learning staff provide students assistance with dropping, adding, or withdrawing from classes.

Students involved in online programs receive advising from one of two advising professionals. One handles undergraduate student advising,\(^{56}\) the other advises graduate students.\(^{57}\) Advisors begin working with their advisees very shortly after students are admitted and do so using telephone and/or email contact.

Sound record keeping supports all phases of student recruiting and matriculation. Unfortunately these are not always timely. For instance, our internal processing procedure creates a delay of several days to a week in the withdrawal of a student from an online class. This procedure requires that paperwork requesting the withdrawal be passed through ProfEd’s Financial Services division, a process that could be more efficiently completed right away if the distance learning staff accessed the SAP-Campus Management system directly.

As CMU expands online programs, we expect overall enrollment increases. Current operations run smoothly for the existing student load; however, it will be necessary to increase staffing and/or invest in new technology to continue these services as student enrollments grow.

The graduate admissions process too will likely require adjustments with anticipated growth in enrollments. Policies and procedures used for admitting on-campus and off-campus graduate students are the same, and begin with the compiling of student application folders by the appropriate admissions unit. Folders are sent for review by the

\(^{56}\) http://www.cel.cmich.edu/student/advising.htm

\(^{57}\) http://www.cel.cmich.edu/advising/default.html
appropriate program director and then for review by the dean of graduate studies. In order to maintain this standard of review for larger numbers of student applicants, we may find it necessary to move to a paperless routing system that uses electronic means for tracking and processing student dossiers. More staff may also be required to handle the compilation tasks.

For Off-Campus Students

Off-Campus Library Services (OCLS)

CMU has a comprehensive set of services for all of its off-campus students. All of these are accessible online - at least in part - and many have telephone support components. A major challenge as we expand online and overall enrollment will be to coordinate the scale-up of services at each step. Additional personnel will be needed to handle the increased numbers of students as well as the 24/7 presence that comes with an online environment. Plans are underway to gradually expand these services.

This service provides students and faculty involved in any off-campus - including online - classes access to the library holdings on the Mt. Pleasant campus. For these patrons, OCLS also assists in obtaining non-CMU owned resources through interlibrary loan. OCLS librarians maintain a website through which users can search, request, and receive assistance locating and using reference materials. An online orientation allows first-time users of OCLS to become familiar with the library’s services and web site.

The CMU Libraries: contain over 1.3 million volumes and volume equivalents of books, periodicals, and other documents; maintain 3,663 periodical and newspaper subscriptions for print and electronic journals; and have contracted electronic access to about 43,000 additional full-text journals and other documents on the web. An online searchable database allows users to find books and journal, magazine, and newspaper articles by topic, keyword, author, or title. In addition, users may access over 120 online databases that index professional journals, magazines, and newspapers.

These include:

- ABI-Inform
- Lexis-Nexis
- S&P NetAdvantage

http://ocls.cmich.edu/help/overview/
Document Delivery Services provides books and copies of articles from periodicals owned by CMU libraries. This service also applies to resources owned by other libraries and obtained through interlibrary loan. When possible, materials are supplied electronically; otherwise they can be faxed or mailed to students. Students may check out up to 50 articles or books per class per week and make their requests by phone, fax, email, or online request form.

OCLS librarians provide reference and referral assistance including directions to appropriate information resources for research assignments, explanation of the use of print and electronic reference tools and databases, answers to specific questions, and assistance in using the databases accessible through the OCLS website. For these services, OCLS librarians are available by toll-free telephone numbers, fax, email, or online request. Librarian hours are Monday through Wednesday from 8 AM to 9 PM, Thursday and Friday from 8 AM to 5 PM and on Sunday from 1 PM to 6 PM, EST/EDT.

The Off-Campus Library Services unit also provides important support for faculty using copyrighted materials through its copyright support office. This office assists in securing permission for copyrighted material use. Faculty may submit a bibliography of materials to this office, and copyright staff will do the necessary legwork to obtain permission, scan the items into PDF files, and place them into an electronic course pack with the appropriate credit lines.

Financial Aid

ProfEd maintains a website that guides online students through the financial aid process. In conjunction with CMU’s Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid, ProfEd staff created a comprehensive Financial Aid Manual specifically for off-campus students and makes it available as a downloadable PDF file through this website. This document contains an overview of the information needed

59  http://ocls.cmich.edu/copyright/index.htm
60  http://www.cel.cmich.edu/financial-aid/default.htm
by students to understand what types of financial aid are available, how to apply for aid, and other information regarding student responsibilities with regard to maintaining their financial assistance.\(^6^2\)

For individual counseling, students may speak by telephone with a financial aid counselor within ProEd’s Financial Aid Department and/or within the main campus Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid.

**Writing Center On-Line\(^6^3\)**

CMU operates a Writing Center through which students can share their writing projects for constructive critique by a writing consultant. Students taking courses online also use this service. Students submit their work via email to the center, which then assigns a consultant for critique. A two-day period is allowed for return of feedback on a student’s work submitted.

At present, the Writing Center is open to all classes with online components. The center currently has the capacity to handle the student load. However, expanding the number of courses and programs online will require writing consultants and trainers of consultants.

Another way to assist students with their writing skills is to provide an online version of an open enrollment writing workshop-style course. One course, English 299, could fulfill this purpose, although presently it follows the same semester schedule as other courses. This timing becomes an issue when an instructor recognizes two weeks into a course that a student could benefit from English 299, but the student must wait until the next course enrollment period to enroll. A more flexible, open entrance-and-exit strategy would better accommodate student needs.

**Transfer Credit**

Any student seeking information about how to transfer to CMU’s off-campus programs will find several web pages that provide directions.\(^6^4\)

With respect to granting undergraduate students transfer credit, CMU uses a conventional approach. An undergraduate student transferring into an off-campus program arranges for his/her transcripts to be sent to ProEd. Copies

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62 http://www.cel.cmich.edu/financial-aid/contact.html
63 http://webs.cmich.edu/writingcenter/
64 http://www.cel.cmich.edu/services/transfer.html
are made for filing and the originals are then sent to the registrar’s office on campus for evaluation. That evaluation involves matching the student’s transcripted courses with existing transfer agreements, MACRAO agreement (see next paragraph), and established course equivalencies. This is the same process that is used for transfer students coming on campus. Automation of some of this process could improve accuracy and better optimize data storage for all students; we are discussing the possibility of moving in this direction.

CMU participates in the Michigan Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (MACRAO) Agreement. If a transfer student from one of Michigan’s community colleges presents a transcript indicating that student has met the MACRAO requirements, under the MACRAO Agreement that student is judged to have completed CMU’s general education requirement. More could be done to evaluate blocks of courses that might qualify for credit within our University Program. For example, if a student had completed courses that were similar or equivalent to the humanities subgroup of the University Program, they would be allowed credit for that “block” in lieu of taking specific courses at CMU.

In addition, CMU does not always consider students’ knowledge accumulated from the workplace. For example, we could evaluate whether a student coming in with technical certification could be granted credit for a minor in that area.

Our undergraduate transfer credit evaluations are much smaller in scope and are not yet working as well as they should. Ad hoc decisions too often characterize the waiving of undergraduate student requirements. There are mixed opinions on whether CMU should establish guidelines, informed by national standards to improve the processing of undergraduate transfer credit and course placement.

Processes used to establish transfer credit for graduate students do follow ACE guidelines in a consistent and fair fashion. Specifically with respect to providing students in the military with transfer credit, for example, advisors routinely ask students about military educational experiences and consult both the American Council on Education’s Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services and its National Guide to College Credit. The MSA Program’s Advisor Handbook includes a section on military transfer credit. CMU has a memorandum of un-
derstanding (MOU) in place with military schools such as the National Defense University and the Defense Acquisition University and ProfEd participates in the GoArmyEd process that supports graduate transfer.

**ADA Compliance**

CMU proactively works to comply with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Michigan law prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability. Every syllabus contains information calling for individuals with disabilities to contact ProfEd in order to seek any accommodations they need in pursuing their coursework.

**Student Satisfaction**

The Office of Organizational Research and Assessment (ORA)\(^65\) is responsible for collecting, analyzing, and reporting data for the purposes of assessing student outcomes and evaluating the quality of degree programs and services offered off-campus. As part of this, ORA staff implement semi-annual alumni surveys and current student surveys for each academic program. They also work closely with program directors to develop and implement cyclical seven-year plans to assess student learning and other student outcomes. They are increasingly reporting these findings in public forums.

Student satisfaction with off-campus programs has been very high. A comprehensive report on student response surveys from 2006 is available at the ProfEd website.\(^66\) Across the board, results show very high student satisfaction with all aspects of student services and with the quality of teaching and learning.

Worthy of note is the climate for diversity, which students report is very supportive. For example, Figure 6-7 shows the 2006 off-campus undergraduate student responses to survey questions concerning their experiences. The results indicate that students overwhelmingly recognize CMU’s commitment to diversity. Similar results were found for the two other programs studied in 2006: the MSA program\(^67\) and the MA in Education program.\(^68\) These data represent

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\(^{65}\) http://www.acenet.edu/AM/Template.cfm?Section=College_Service&CONTENTID=6038&TEMPLATE=/CM/HTMLDisplay.cfm

\(^{66}\) http://www.cel.cmich.edu/quality-story/

\(^{67}\) http://www.cel.cmich.edu/quality-story/msa/diversity.html

\(^{68}\) http://www.cel.cmich.edu/quality-story/ma-ed/diversity.html
the responses of 140 students at a response rate of 28.8% and are available online.\(^{69}\)

**Strengths**

1. CMU has a well-established and highly rated student services unit specifically for online students.
2. CMU has a well-established and highly rated Off-Campus Library Services unit.
3. CMU’s services support appropriate use of copyrighted materials in courses.
4. CMU makes writing services available to all students in our online courses.

\(^{69}\) http://www.cel.cmich.edu/quality-story/undergrad/diversity.html
Challenges

1. The procedure for student withdrawal from online courses creates a delay of several days to a week.
2. The current admissions process for graduate students may be too cumbersome for handling the anticipated increases in student numbers in the future.
3. There are limited hours during which the distance learning support desk and librarians are available. It will be critical to determine whether 24 hours/seven days a week availability for either or both of these services needs to be developed.
4. Concerns about consistency in CMU’s policies and practices pertaining to the evaluation of undergraduate transfer credit need to be addressed.
5. Achieving a coordinated scale-up of services to match needs of increasing numbers of students will be a challenge.
6. An online orientation and readiness checklists for prospective online students have been developed but presently are optional and the results not reviewed by staff with the aim of better understanding and supporting students.
7. Some students may have needs for additional writing instruction that are not served within the typical semester scheduling.

Academic Policies

Policies

Early in the online student orientation, students encounter a page that describes student rights and responsibilities. It is made clear that students are responsible for meeting the university’s degree requirements described in the CMU Off-Campus Bulletin and observing all of the university’s regulations and policies.

Links are provided to an electronic version of the CMU Off-Campus Bulletin where these policies and procedures are stated. Specific policies include the Policy on Academic Integrity for Off-Campus Students, which was created by the Academic Senate and the Code of Student Rights.

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70 http://www.cel.cmich.edu/celbulletin
Responsibilities, and Disciplinary Procedures, recently updated by the Dean of Students and the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies.

**Procedures for Addressing Complaints**

ProfEd has procedures in place for handling complaints from students. Online students may contact the distance learning staff at any time they feel a problem exists. Depending on the type of complaint, the distance learning staff will assist the student in rectifying the problem, or will refer the student to a more appropriate unit.

If the student complains about a grade, he/she is asked to discuss the matter with the instructor. If this does not resolve the matter, the student and instructor are brought together to discuss the issue in a three-way telephone conference with the program director, as described in the Off-Campus Grade Grievance Policy. Matters that are not resolved at this stage are referred to the appropriate council (MSA Council, MA in Education Council, MA in Humanities Council, or Undergraduate EDP Council), which reviews documentation submitted by student and instructor, as described in the policy.

If there is a complaint about a faculty member that does not involve grades, the distance learning staff notifies the Assistant Director of Academic Program Quality who, in conjunction with the appropriate program director, works with the student and the faculty member to assess the problem and find a suitable resolution.

CMU has technical personnel and a solid infrastructure that proactively works to solve complaints and other issues from online course. A student complaint from an online course typically falls under in one of two categories: (1) Instructor responsiveness (e.g., length of time it takes an instructor to respond to a student) or (2) technical issues (e.g., problem with Blackboard). Presently, there are ten or fewer complaints a semester, which we believe is a good record.

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73 [https://bulletins.cmich.edu/2006/cel/academic/policies.asp#Grading%20Policies%20(for%20both%20undergraduate%20and%20graduate%20students](https://bulletins.cmich.edu/2006/cel/academic/policies.asp#Grading%20Policies%20(for%20both%20undergraduate%20and%20graduate%20students)
**Strengths**

1. Students rate the climate for diversity to be very high in CMU’s off-campus classes.
2. CMU’s academic integrity policies are made clear to incoming students.
3. CMU has appropriate and well-functioning procedures for handling student complaints.

**Financial Resources**

CMU’s ability to support any substantive change is linked to the university’s overall financial health, which is sound. Like many state-supported universities, CMU has had to contend with decreasing state appropriations and call-backs in recent years. In meeting this budget challenge, CMU has made fiscally responsible adjustments that keep institutional focus on our primary mission to provide quality education. This was noted as a strength by the Higher Learning Commission consultant evaluators who visited CMU in fall 2005.\(^{74}\) CMU has also made substantial strides in garnering income from other sources: development funds, grants, contracts, and to some extent, tuition.

These adjustments have kept the university’s financial base secure, and our ability to support the online initiative proposed here is not problematic. There are established budgetary allocations to continue supporting the infrastructure for off-campus programs, with online programs fitting in as a part of this. It is also expected that tuition dollars coming in from enrollments will more than offset the costs involved in developing, supporting, and maintaining online programs. Tuition for online courses is similar to tuition for face-to-face courses, and is currently at rates shown in Table 6-6.\(^{75}\)

\(^{74}\) HLC final report 2006

\(^{75}\) Tuition fees are subject to variation according to program, although most programs follow this tuition schedule.
Table 6-6. Tuition Effective August 2006*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Tuition Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online Programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>$286 per credit hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>$373 per credit hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan Undergraduate</td>
<td>$251 per credit hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan Master’s Specialist</td>
<td>$366 per credit hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out-of-State Undergraduate</td>
<td>$584 per credit hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out-of-State Master’s Specialist</td>
<td>$678 per credit hour</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Some programs have tuition rates that vary from these shown here.

The Current Financial Model

There is a commonly perceived threat to CMU’s online aspirations: the lack of a fair financial model that shares off-campus tuition revenue with the departments and colleges responsible for the off-campus courses and programs. Presently less than $5 per credit hour is shared by the department. Individual instructors are paid at that rate for instruction. When the instructor is a regular faculty member, payment is usually as an overload.

For a few off-campus programs, a “New Ventures” funding model has been used. Although there are variations in the way that this funding model has been implemented, the basic agreement is that for each course it is responsible for, the academic college receives 60% of the tuition revenue and ProfEd receives 40%. Under the venture program model, academic colleges and departments are responsible for all faculty compensation costs for teaching the online courses, some marketing costs, and incidental instructional costs. Faculty compensation is shown in Table 6-7. Colleges and departments are also responsible for ensuring that all academic goals are being met, including curricular approvals, assessment, program review, and accreditations. ProfEd is responsible for maintaining the supporting infrastructure needed for offering online programs.

ProfEd also pays faculty to develop and revise courses: $1,600 per course credit hour developed and $600 per credit hour revised. Payment for services is initiated by Distance/Distributed Learning after completion of the services. Payments are processed through the University payroll system and are subject to normal payroll deductions.

Although this New Ventures model has been used for some programs, it is not being used for most. Rather, payments go to individual faculty with little off-campus tuition revenue
making its way back to the college and department. This does not provide the means for a department pulled in multiple directions by competing priorities to expand and encourage online and off-campus developments. For these and related reasons, ProfEd has a difficult time initiating program development even in cases where market research indicates strong needs.

In the past ProfEd has generated large profits that support general university budgetary needs. This incorporation into the university’s general operating budget of over a four million dollars was mentioned by the HLC 2005 visitors as a practice that should change. ProfEd also has needs to reinvest in its own infrastructure and campus-based infrastructure to assure high quality, reliable delivery of off-campus programs.

### A New Financial Model

There are ongoing discussions at the upper administrative levels concerning the best arrangement for administering the income coming from off-campus programs. The venture program model described above is being discussed, as well as at least two other models.

The university uses a decentralized approach to decision-making regarding budget and the final decision about how to handle off-campus revenue will need to fit reflect this reality. CMU’s decentralized budget process was originally implemented in 1998 and 1999, and was intended to give account directors and center managers greater flexibility

### Table 6-7. Compensation for Teaching Online Courses at ProfEd (2/22/06)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Students</th>
<th>Amount of Compensation per Credit Hour</th>
<th>A 3 Credit-Hour Course,</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to 5</td>
<td>$300.00</td>
<td>$900.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 12</td>
<td>$78.00</td>
<td>$234.00 x per student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 to 25</td>
<td>$980.00</td>
<td>$2,940.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25+</td>
<td>$980.00 with an additional $40 per student</td>
<td>$2,940 + $120.00 (per student)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For example:

- If six students enrolled and completed in a 3-credit course, the payment will be $234.00 x 6 = $1,404.00.
- If seven students, the payment will be $234.00 x 7 = $1,638.00.
- If ten students, the payment will be $234.00 x 10 = $2,340.00.
- If twelve students, the payment will be $234.00 x 12 = $2,808.00
- If twenty-six students, the payment will be $2,940 + $120.00 = $3,060.00
- If thirty students, the payment will be $2,940 + ($120.00 x 5) = $3,540.00
in and responsibility for generating income and managing expenses, i.e. it was to provide greater budget authority at lower levels of the university administration.

The basic model, known as ‘Responsibility Centered Management/Budgeting,’ is still in place although some components have yet to be implemented, while other components have been implemented inconsistently (e.g., withholding carry-forwards). The University Budgetary Advisory Council (UBAC) is currently evaluating whether modifications or changes are needed in the overall budgeting system. As part of that, UBAC has discussed and will recommend to the president this summer a model to be used for off-campus tuition revenues.

We anticipate that decisions regarding the university budgeting system and the system for handling tuition from off-campus programs will be made early in Fall 2007. Implementation of the new model will be during the 2009 fiscal year. This model will have a significant impact on the priority that many academic colleges and departments will place on online programming. Until there are financial incentives for departments to develop online offerings, departments will be reluctant to invest their own budgets and faculty time in such development. If the model is very favorable to colleges and departments the challenges will be to expand current services and assure quality in a new set of online offerings.

**Strengths**

1. The need for change in the distribution of revenue from off-campus courses is recognized and under discussion at the highest levels of administration.
2. CMU anticipates that our online initiative will be a net income producer.
3. CMU’s tuition for online offerings is similar to that charged to on-campus Michigan residents.

**Challenges**

1. Academic departments lack financial incentive to develop and update online courses and programs.
2. Although several financial models have been proposed, an effective means for revenue distribution derived from off-campus programs (including online) has not yet been established.
3. A portion of the revenue from online courses should also be reinvested in the infrastructure needed to support them.

4. The budget model for handling tuition revenues from off-campus programs that include online courses and programs has not been finalized. This will tend to slow progress in the development of online offerings by some departments.

Timeline for the Implementation of the Proposed Change

Central Michigan University is prepared to develop and deliver new online programs at a rate of approximately five per year over the next four years. By 2010, we expect to have added a total of twenty programs in completely or largely online format.
CHAPTER 7

Evaluation Strategies for the Proposed Change
Chapter 7
Evaluation Strategies for the Proposed Change

Through our online program initiative, we expect to increase the number of students who benefit from high-quality programs. In examining our progress in meeting this goal, we plan to use the following six strategies:

• The processes of assessment of student learning outcomes and program review will be used to determine the extent to which the educational quality of our programs meet the high standards set by the university.
• Retention and graduation statistics will be used to evaluate whether our online initiative delivers programs in a way that supports students through graduation.
• The diversity of student, faculty, and staff involved in our programs will be determined to measure progress toward our institutional priority of increasing diversity.
• The ongoing monitoring of our technical infrastructure will be used to evaluate whether it effectively supports our online programs.
• Online program planning processes will be monitored through both formal and informal processes that are tied to institutional-level planning to determine whether we are staying focused on our mission and institutional priorities.
• Student and alumni surveys will be used to assess how well our programs are meeting student educational goals.

Assuring Academic Quality and Assessment

The central role of learning objectives and assessments of student learning is described earlier on page 63. Articulation of student learning outcomes occurs in all programs, from initial conception and approval to ongoing annual assessment and regular program review.
Program Review

The university undertakes periodic review of all academic programs, including all majors, stand-alone minors, graduate, and interdisciplinary programs. Each program is reviewed on a seven-year cycle. In cases where an online program has an on-campus or a face-to-face off-campus counterpart, the two are considered and compared in one review.

As stated in the May 2004 guidelines, “Program Review is a cyclical and ongoing process.”76 It focuses on ongoing program improvement through measurement of student learning outcomes and the use of external reviewers. Table 7-1 summarizes the six-step sequence involved. (See also earlier discussion of assessment page 63 which is the foundation of program review guidelines.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Brief Overview</th>
<th>Examples of Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Audit</td>
<td>Departmental records and data, as well as institutional records (e.g., departmental data profile) are examined for evidence related to criteria</td>
<td>Master course syllabi on file; bylaws have been reviewed recently and include multiple measures of teaching effectiveness; current assessment plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Study</td>
<td>Program faculty create self-study in response to criteria</td>
<td>Goals of department; CVs; student learning and other student outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Review</td>
<td>External reviewer selected from list provided by department of academic leaders in same discipline, from similar or aspiration institutions</td>
<td>Self-study; interviews with faculty; interviews with graduating seniors; review of portfolios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWOT Analysis and Ratings</td>
<td>Program summarizes its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and makes overall summary ratings of quality and funding</td>
<td>Audit, self-study, external review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean Review</td>
<td>Responsible dean reviews all above materials and responds in writing, including ratings of quality and funding</td>
<td>Audit, self-study, SWOT, external review, ratings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provost Review and Recommendation</td>
<td>In conversation with program director (when applicable), department chair and dean (including graduate dean when applicable), provost comments on above materials, makes recommendations and group discusses plans for the future</td>
<td>Audit, self-study, SWOT, external review, dean review</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The review begins with an “academic audit,” which verifies that master course syllabi and assessment plans are current and that required annual assessment reports are filed. Additional checks determine whether departments have structures in place that support quality programs (e.g., multiple measures of faculty teaching effectiveness stipulated

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76 [http://www.provost.cmich.edu/viceprovost/APC/ProgramReviewRecommendationFinal.pdf](http://www.provost.cmich.edu/viceprovost/APC/ProgramReviewRecommendationFinal.pdf)
within department bylaws, assignment of key departmental responsibilities, appropriate diversity of faculty and staff).

The review requires the department to conduct a self-study in response to specific criteria, some of which were adapted from the institutional accreditation criteria of the Higher Learning Commission. Full descriptions of all criteria used for review can be seen in the Guidelines Program Review document. Programs that hold specialized accreditation may submit the self-study prepared for their discipline’s accrediting body along with feedback from that accrediting body instead of preparing a separate self-study. Otherwise the process is identical. Input from the accreditation site visitors is used in lieu of a separate external review.

The inclusion of an external evaluator in program review provides an independent, discipline-based evaluation of the quality of the program in accordance with current practices and future directions in the field. External reviewers must be accomplished educators and scholars, preferably from comparable or aspirational institutions. The external reviewers are asked to provide a review of the self-study, conduct interviews with program faculty, students, deans and others, and then prepare a final report.

The results of the audit, self-study, and report of the external reviewers serve as the basis for a “strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats” (SWOT) analysis carried out by the program faculty and then independently by the appropriate dean. Summary ratings of quality and funding are prepared according to the rubric shown in Table 7-2. The process culminates in a discussion among the program leadership, dean, and provost, in which the focus is on the future of the program.

**Program Review of Online Programs**

Program review for our online initiative will be the same as for other programs. When there is a face-to-face program as well, the two will be reviewed together. The same processes of assessments of student learning outcomes at the course and program level as well as assessments of instructor effectiveness will be used as the bases for evaluating the educational quality of programs. By also including the analyses and recommendations of external reviewers, we further strengthen the quality of our review process to ensure that the best interests of the students are being met. For online programs the external reviewer will be expected to review the course shells and artifacts from previous or current offerings of the online courses.
Table 7-2. Summary Ratings of Quality and Funding within Program Review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Dimension: Program Quality</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 = Exceptional Quality</td>
<td>Program quality is truly exceptional, constituting one of the top programs among comparator programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 = High Quality</td>
<td>Program is of high quality and needs few, if any, improvements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 = Needs Improvement</td>
<td>Program is a solid program, but needs significant improvement in one or more areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 = Low Quality Program</td>
<td>Program is of marginal or low quality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Second Dimension: Changes in Funding</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 = Top Priority</td>
<td>Program needs additional resources and should be a priority for new resources or reallocation of existing resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 = Secondary Priority</td>
<td>Program needs additional resources and should be a priority for new resources or reallocation after addressing top priority programs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 3 = No Increase                     | a. Program does not need additional resources beyond those that are available at the department level  
b. Program does not warrant additional resources beyond those that are available at the departmental level |
| 4 = Reduction                       | Program resources should be reduced and reallocated to higher priority programs |

**Supplementary Review of Off-Campus Programs**

Programs offered off-campus are subject to review beyond that normally required for their on-campus counterparts. For example, those offered outside Michigan are reviewed and monitored for quality by relevant agencies within those states and provinces. Programs offered on military installations are also reviewed by the Department of Defense through its Military Installation Voluntary Educational Review (MIVER) process.

CMU Off-campus programs are reviewed every five years by a “Board of Visitors” of CMU’s Academic Senate. The most recent report of the Board of Visitors focused on grading and called for more monitoring of programs by the on-campus faculty who developed and have responsibility for them.⁷⁷

**Retention and Graduation Rates**

One of CMU’s five institutional priorities is to provide service for the public good. As part of this commitment, CMU seeks to provide students access to its programs. Student enrollment numbers will be monitored in online programs.
to determine how many students we reach and where students are located geographically. It is our expectation that the development of online programs will greatly expand our ability to impact student populations nationally and internationally.

Keeping those students enrolled is another goal. We currently monitor enrollment statistics within individual online courses. Distance learning staff monitor student numbers in order to pinpoint areas of concern so that they can provide assistance to individual students where needed. The facility to interact directly with SAP-CM for these data and for course retention data is an aspiration for the future.

We also plan to make use of retention statistics in conjunction with satisfaction survey data to look at the bigger picture of program strengths and weaknesses. Previous retention studies can be seen on the Office of Organizational Research and Assessment website. Table 7-3 shows an example of the kind of satisfaction survey data collected for evaluating reasons behind attrition in off-campus programs. The high percentage of students requesting more online courses shown in this table is one of the things driving our online initiative.

Likewise, we are moving toward a student information system (SAP-CM) that will allow program directors to follow graduation rates from online programs as a measure of student progress. Used in conjunction with other data including student surveys and program review, graduation rates provide broad feedback concerning the overall success of our programs. We currently track graduation figures for most off-campus programs and will be tracking online programs as they are launched.

Deans are expected to play an increasingly important role in reviewing enrollment, retention, and graduation statistics and proposing ways to promote retention. As information becomes more readily available through SAP-CM, ProfEd program directors and marketing professionals and distance learning staff will monitor and respond to real-time trends that might be influenced by course scheduling, advising, cohort attrition, and other factors.

Table 7-3. Reasons for Attrition from Off-Campus Programs: 2005 & 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Undergraduate Students</th>
<th>Graduate Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Issues affecting their work</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost/Tuition</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues affecting their home</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule did not meet needs</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program did not match needs</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Could not complete at one center</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not enough online courses</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages reflect the number of students who indicated the reason was ‘very important’ or ‘somewhat important’ in their decision to leave CMU.

78 http://www.cel.cmich.edu/faculty/docs/recent-studies.html
Diversity of Students, Faculty and Staff

CMU’s mission leads us to seek ways to meet the needs of underrepresented student populations. ProfEd, in particular, has had notable success in doing this well, which we feel makes our programs attractive to students.

Additionally, as part of CMU 2010, we have committed to provide educational experiences and programs that enhance diversity and global perspectives as one of our top five institutional priorities. We regard this as an integral part of what an excellent academic experience: Students need exposure to perspectives, customs, and beliefs different from their own.

One way to foster this exposure is by having a diverse university – a community that includes persons having diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, geographical, gender and sexual perspectives as well as representing different age groups. Our move into online programs encourages greater diversity in the students, faculty and staff participating.

Overall Numbers and Retention Rates

Key performance indicators with regard to our institutional priority to enhance diversity are the headcounts of students, faculty, and staff from underrepresented groups and their retention rates. At the level of online programs, these numbers will be monitored as part of that larger effort. They will also serve at program levels to assess the extent to which our goal of creating a diverse mix of individuals within specific learning communities is achieved.

Climate for Diversity

The climate for diversity in online classes will be assessed through student and faculty opinion surveys. The Office of Organizational Research and Assessment within ProfEd already routinely conducts and reports on such surveys as mentioned earlier (page 80). As shown from these surveys, students have found an overwhelmingly positive and welcoming atmosphere in our courses.

External Evaluations

We also collect information reported by external evaluations of our programs. For example, Black Issues in Higher Education regularly lists us in the top three institutions based on the number of graduate degrees we award to persons of color. CMU has also been rated as one of the most hospitable institutions for same sex couples.
Monitoring of the Technology Infrastructure

Learning Management System
A three-tiered monitoring system is in place that regularly evaluates our learning management system. Currently, we use Blackboard throughout campus and in all off-campus courses. Blackboard is supported and monitored by the IT-Helpdesk which handles student and faculty questions and complaints, the Blackboard Resource Group (which monitors specific software needs), and the Learning Management System Executive Group (which considers Blackboard functions from an institutional perspective). As shown in Figure 7-1, the information flow between these three groups allows regular communication of Blackboard’s status to be heard and evaluated by personnel who are in a position to bring about changes in its infrastructure.

Both the executive and resource groups regularly review problems reported by the Helpdesk to identify problem areas that require intervention (e.g., a technical fix, training, or communication). Data from calls logged into the Helpdesk over the past year are shown in Tables 7-4 and 7-5. The Blackboard Resource Group interacts daily as they manage problems forwarded to them by the Helpdesk. They also meet every other week to discuss systemic issues, patches, updates, scheduled downtimes, and other issues.

Figure 7-1. Monitoring the Learning Management System at CMU (2006)
The LMS Executive Group does long term planning in conjunction with the Technology Planning Board. Right now, the executive group is developing a method for evaluating our learning management system, looking into such questions as: is Blackboard meeting our needs now and is it prepared to meet future needs; is Blackboard the best choice; what are the implications of continuing to use Blackboard; and what software are we going to invest in? A needs analysis will be produced as part of this effort.

Valid and Timely Student Information
Critical to our initiative is CMU’s student information system, SAP-CM. In order to access the kinds of data needed to design effective retention strategies, our student information will need to be available at both the program and center levels in daily updated form. Regular, frequent reports in the hands of center directors and others doing course scheduling are essential to developing schedules that are reflective of students’ program plans. To support this, an executive level group of budget managers and technology administrators meets regularly to evaluate SAP-CM operations and to make planning choices for improvements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Problems Opened</th>
<th>Problems Resolved</th>
<th>Average Days until First Activity</th>
<th>Average Days to Close</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>2.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>2.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>6.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>2.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>4.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>3.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>2.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>3.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>10.62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Efficiency and Effectiveness of Program Development Processes
We strive to make sure our online programs are mission-driven and tied to institutional-level planning. Joint efforts of ProfEd and academic colleges to produce plans for new programs and to develop the courses involved are underway. The extent to which these efforts will be successful
and the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the program development process are areas we know we need to monitor closely to assure we meet our online objectives.

**Tracking of the New Program Development**

The timely development and staffing of new, quality programs are essential and we plan to be doing ongoing evaluations of progress so as to adjust our approach as needed. As presently organized, development is a complex, multi-stage process unique to every program. A project management database has been developed and was launched in December 2006.

An annual analysis of plans for program development will be instituted. The involvement of college deans is expected to promote more focused and timely responses to high priority needs. We also anticipate that a strategic plan for off-campus programs will be developed in the next year that will serve as a guide.

The provost has moved to streamline some of the processes for approving online programs by expediting Academic Planning Council review for existing programs seeking to go online. This is an experiment to see if key quality concerns are adequately addressed within the department. College and Senate curricular reviews are still necessary.

As mentioned in earlier sections, the curricular approval process required for updating courses and programs and moving each to the online delivery format is perceived as very burdensome and frustrating for the faculty and staff involved. Discussion of this and related issues has been the focus of several discussions within the self-study group that produced this document.

Curriculum committees and the Academic Senate are beginning to discuss some of the issues that contribute to the complaints about the curricular approval process. In particular, discussions address the questions of what role each committee plays in the approval process and what standards they use to judge the quality of the courses and programs they review. While these discussions have started, there are other pressing issues that prevent the Academic Senate from spending more time on curricular process review. Revising CMU’s general education program, for example, is a major undertaking and is seen as a much higher priority item for Senate discussion at this time.
Student and Alumni Satisfaction

It is important that students meet their own personal educational goals. ProfEd’s Office of Organizational Research and Assessment (ORA) regularly surveys both current students and alumni to assess whether programs meet student expectations. Table 7-6 shows an example of the types of statements and questions used; this particular set of questions was posed to the 2006 students in the MA in Education program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Options</th>
<th>Overall Educational Quality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>• I am satisfied with the quality of the curriculum and programs at CMU.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Agree</td>
<td>• Tuition at CMU is a worthwhile investment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly Agree</td>
<td>• Considering the cost and quality, CMU is a good value.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly Disagree</td>
<td>• I am satisfied with my overall experience at CMU.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Disagree</td>
<td>• I would recommend CMU programs to others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Options</th>
<th>Quality of Teaching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>Overall, my CMU instructors:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Agree</td>
<td>• Understood and respected individual students’ differences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly Agree</td>
<td>• Communicated clear expectations for classes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly Disagree</td>
<td>• Applied course content to real life, especially the workplace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Disagree</td>
<td>• Used a variety of teaching methods and learning activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>• Encouraged students to be responsible for their own learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>• Helped students achieve course learning objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Challenged students intellectually.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Encouraged students to summarize, synthesize, analyze and apply information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provided feedback to help students keep track of their learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Chose assessments of students’ knowledge which were relevant to course learning objectives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Options</th>
<th>Quality of Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Substantial Improvement</td>
<td>To what extent did your MA-Ed program help you improve your ability to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Improvement</td>
<td>• Evaluate current issues and trends influencing the field of education?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Improvement</td>
<td>• Design and conduct a study of an issue or problem in the field of education?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Improvement</td>
<td>• Interpret and apply findings of the study to the problem or issue?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Design curriculum that reflects accepted teaching and learning theory?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Design learning strategies that reflect accepted teaching and learning theory?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Utilize educational technologies that enhance student learning?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Communicate effectively in writing to the intended target audience?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Communicate verbally in an effective way to diverse audiences?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ProfEd posts its survey results on a public website. Program directors use the information to assess strengths and weaknesses and then recommend appropriate changes in their programs. These surveys have been a very effective research tool and we plan to continue annual surveys of similar effort.
We also plan to administer NSSE\textsuperscript{79} to off-campus undergraduate students in 2008. The NSSE will be administered by the Office of Institutional Research on campus at the same time NSSE is administered to campus students. The results will be shared with campus and ProfEd leaders and program directors will review them for strengths and weaknesses.

Since we regularly engage employers and business leaders in our program evaluation process, we are also building a database of those whom we regularly survey and invite to participate in focus groups.

Faculty surveys are an important part of our current data collection process. These were discussed on pages 48-51, and are reviewed by staff within the Faculty Resource Center and program directors. The ongoing monitoring of faculty opinion, particularly when a large number of adjunct faculty are not present on campus, is critical to maintaining the quality of our online programs.

**Strengths**

1. CMU’s academic program review process makes use of both internal student learning assessment data and external peer review to analyze the quality of programs.
2. Student retention statistics with respect to online courses are already routinely collected and acted upon by ProfEd staff.
3. ProfEd’s history of surveying its students and alumni provides a good precedent for continuing to collect opinion data necessary for evaluating whether diverse learning environments are being maintained.
4. CMU has a comprehensive evaluation system for ensuring that Blackboard operations run effectively.

**Challenges**

1. Our information system lags behind our need for detailed information on students in our programs, including diversity and graduation rates.
2. The Academic Senate committees have had many high priority issues (e.g., general education) under discussion this year and changes in the curricular process have not received much attention.

\textsuperscript{79} The National Survey of Student Engagement
CHAPTER 8

Summary
Chapter 8
Summary

The movement to offering online undergraduate and master’s programs is a natural next step in CMU’s over 35 year history of offering quality educational degree programs to working adults. In fact, as this self study demonstrates, CMU’s services for students have been moving to online delivery for quite some time—and we have been reasonably successful in meeting student needs in this new format. More recently, CMU faculty have begun to develop online courses and now entire programs online. Progress in this area has been deliberate and closely monitored by multiple levels of internal and external review. Support for faculty moving to these new learning environments for working adult learners is comprehensive and has been a model for other institutions. CMU remains committed first and foremost to providing quality academic programs to our off-campus students. Accordingly, attention and resources across the institution are being directed in greater proportion to assure this next step in our evolution will be true to CMU’s traditions for integrity and quality education.

CMU has fulfilled its objective to construct a self study that candidly and fairly captures our preparation and plans for this significant expansion in our educational offerings to include selected undergraduate and graduate programs in online formats. This comprehensive self study is important not only for the Higher Learning Commission, but also for the CMU community. For both groups we have taken the findings from the various chapters, summarized and categorized them, and presented them in Table 8-1. For the Higher Learning Commission, we hope this summary will further aide evaluators to acquire a comprehensive understanding of the institution and to provide valuable consultation. For CMU, we hope this summary will serve to reaffirm the solid foundation we have already developed and to highlight areas we most need to strengthen. We must assure that as we grow, CMU will continue to provide the high quality programs and services for which we are known to all our students who elect to pursue their educational goals online.
As described in our mission, CMU is committed to providing working adults with access to the higher education they need. CMU has a long history of successful implementation of off-campus programs which is a sound basis for the changes we propose. CMU’s emphasis on integrity is apparent through its policies and procedures, which are made available for public viewing. There is strong, internal support for extensive integration of on- and off-campus offerings in order to ensure quality instruction throughout the university.

CMU is committed to access for a broad range of students, including many students from underrepresented groups. Students rate the climate for diversity in CMU’s off-campus classes to be very high. Significant growth in CMU’s undergraduate and education programs is occurring. Enrollment in CMU’s largest off-campus program has dropped significantly. Overseas deployment of CMU students in the military makes it difficult for them to complete their degrees. Research conducted by ProfEd identifies potential off-campus student populations that could be served by programs derived from CMU faculty expertise. CMU has been offering online courses since 1999. CMU is making the necessary changes in off-campus operations to ensure strong, viable off-campus programs, including extensive online resources and services for students.

CMU’s broad and expanding mission creates workload challenges for faculty. How participation in the development and teaching of online courses (and off-campus courses, in general) could be considered as part of faculty workload is being discussed in some units. Few department bylaws recognize faculty contributions to online and off-campus teaching as part of reappointment, tenure, and promotion. Inefficiencies of CMU’s curricular review process contribute to faculty workload concerns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREA</th>
<th>FINDINGS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mission &amp; Vision</td>
<td>• As described in our mission, CMU is committed to providing working adults with access to the higher education they need.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• CMU has a long history of successful implementation of off-campus programs which is a sound basis for the changes we propose.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• CMU’s emphasis on integrity is apparent through its policies and procedures, which are made available for public viewing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• There is strong, internal support for extensive integration of on- and off-campus offerings in order to ensure quality instruction throughout the university.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rationale for Change</td>
<td>• CMU is committed to access for a broad range of students, including many students from underrepresented groups.</td>
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<td>• Students rate the climate for diversity in CMU’s off-campus classes to be very high.</td>
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<td>• Overseas deployment of CMU students in the military makes it difficult for them to complete their degrees.</td>
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<td>• Research conducted by ProfEd identifies potential off-campus student populations that could be served by programs derived from CMU faculty expertise.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• CMU has been offering online courses since 1999.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• CMU is making the necessary changes in off-campus operations to ensure strong, viable off-campus programs, including extensive online resources and services for students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMU’s Expanding Mission and Expectations for Faculty</td>
<td>• CMU’s broad and expanding mission creates workload challenges for faculty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How participation in the development and teaching of online courses (and off-campus courses, in general) could be considered as part of faculty workload is being discussed in some units.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Few department bylaws recognize faculty contributions to online and off-campus teaching as part of reappointment, tenure, and promotion.</td>
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<td>• Inefficiencies of CMU’s curricular review process contribute to faculty workload concerns.</td>
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<td>AREA</td>
<td>FINDINGS</td>
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</table>
| Faculty                         | • CMU regular faculty lead CMU's online program and course development.  
• CMU uses a contract with faculty course developers to establish a timeline for online course development. In practice many deadlines are missed which delays launching of courses online.  
• CMU has over 1,000 faculty experienced in teaching adult learners in compressed formats.  
• CMU regular faculty review all curricula.  
• Academic departments lack financial incentive to develop and update online courses and programs.  
• CMU has created extensive resources to support faculty teaching online and developing online courses.  
• Many CMU faculty have not taught online nor received specific training in how to teach online or develop strong online courses.  
• Faculty approval standards ensure that only qualified individuals teach in CMU's programs.  
• In some disciplines, finding faculty who meet the standards of the sponsoring academic department and securing timely approvals is difficult.  
• The vast majority of CMU faculty teaching on- and off-campus hold terminal degrees,  
• CMU has established mentoring programs for faculty teaching off-campus.  
• Faculty who are new to online teaching are encouraged but not required to take “Teaching Online” workshops developed by the Center for Instructional Design  
• There is a strong infrastructure in place for off-campus programs to ensure that evaluation of faculty teaching is thorough and that immediate follow-up occurs when a problem surfaces.  
• Student satisfaction is very high with respect to instruction in CMU's off-campus programs.  
• Design of faculty evaluation instruments for comparative purposes is needed.  
• Low student response rates for online undergraduate instructor evaluations need to be improved.  
• Some CMU faculty are not convinced that online courses can offer the same quality of teaching and learning traditional formats. There are also concerns about the compressed 8-week format of online courses.  
• Online course quality is rigorously assessed by the Center for Instructional Design. When a faculty member develops an online course without assistance from the Center there is no requirement the course undergo this quality assurance review. |
| Curriculum and Assessment        | • There is institutional-level review and provost approval for any academic program moving to online delivery.  
• CMU has faculty-governed policies for curricular review and program-level outcomes assessment. There is a need for additional clarification of review criteria used by curricular bodies and current quality standards for online courses.  
• The curricular review process is perceived by many to be lengthy and a deterrent to timely program additions and changes.  
• Programs offered through ProfEd post assessment plans and reports and use assessment results for continuous improvement purposes.  
• CMU’s assessment effort is maturing with all programs having student learning outcomes and formal assessment plans that are in various stages of implementation. |
### Intellectual Property
- CMU has a clear policy concerning intellectual property rights in ‘work for hire’ situations.
- CMU has policies concerning the revision and updating of online courses.
- Intellectual property rights for online courses clarified and codified in an updated policy.

### Technology
- CMU has made a major commitment to the acquisition and implementation of state-of-the-art software and hardware to carry out essential instructional and administrative functions.
- CMU has developed a comprehensive management system for overseeing functions of Blackboard, our learning management system.
- Use of Blackboard is growing rapidly, necessitating staffing, hardware and software expansion.
- Growth in online programs will make investment in the technology required to offer online proctored exams a must.
- Certain types of student information are challenging to collect because SAP-Campus Management is still under construction.
- CMU needs more accurate information about changing enrollment patterns to make sound judgments about staffing, services and hardware and software investments.
- Serving online students is leading to consideration of how and when we will make technical assistance and some student services available 24-hours a day, seven days per week.
- Greater attention to long term trends in technology and learning will be needed to assure ongoing quality and competitiveness in online programs.

### Student Services
- CMU has a well-established and highly rated student services unit specifically for online students.
- Achieving a coordinated scale-up of infrastructure and services to match needs of increasing numbers of students will be a challenge. It will be critical to determine when 24 hours/seven days a week availability is needed.
- The current admissions process for graduate students may be too cumbersome for handling the anticipated increases in student numbers in the future.
- The procedure for student withdrawal from online courses creates a delay of several days to a week.
- Concerns about consistency in the evaluation of undergraduate transfer credit need to be addressed.
- An online orientation and readiness checklists for prospective online students have been developed but are optional; the results not being reviewed by staff.
- CMU has a well-established and highly rated Off-Campus Library Services unit.
- CMU’s services support appropriate use of copyrighted materials in courses.
- CMU makes writing services available to all students in its online courses. Some students may have needs for more intensive writing instruction that are not being served.

### Academic Policies
- CMU’s academic integrity policies are made clear to incoming students.
- CMU has appropriate and well-functioning procedures for handling student complaints.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREA</th>
<th>FINDINGS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Financial Resources | • CMU anticipates that its online initiative will be a net income producer.  
• CMU’s tuition for online offerings is similar to that charged to on-campus Michigan residents.  
• Revenue from off-campus courses, including online courses does not flow to academic units responsible for those courses.  
• A portion of the revenue from online courses and programs should be reinvested in the infrastructure needed to support them.  
• The budget model for handling tuition revenues from off-campus programs that include online courses and programs has not been finalized. |
| Evaluation | • CMU’s academic program review process makes use of both internal student learning assessment data and external peer review to analyze the quality of programs.  
• ProfEd has a history of surveying its students and alumni and for evaluating quality and assuring diverse supportive learning environments are being maintained.  
• Our student information system lags behind our need for detailed information on students in our programs.  
• Data on student retention in online courses is routinely collected and acted upon by ProfEd staff.  
• The Academic Senate has many high priority issues under discussion this year (e.g. general education) which may delay consideration of curricular process changes called for in this and other recent reports. |
| Internal and External Approvals | • Well-defined internal approval processes exist for development of new academic programs and offering of programs in an online format.  
• CMU has a history of and an infrastructure to support securing appropriate external approvals.  
• The HLC 2005 full accreditation review did not result in any required reports. |

**Our Request for Change in Stipulation on Accreditation for CMU**

With this institutional change request we have addressed the Commission’s six key questions in ways we hope will convince the Higher Learning Commission that online learning is an appropriate next step for CMU and worthy of an extension of our accreditation to include online programs. We seek the Higher Learning Commission’s modification of CMU’s current stipulation on accreditation to allow us to adapt and offer undergraduate and master’s degree programs online. Our carefully selected portfolio of online programs will be those that are consistent with our mission, have satisfied all internal and external approval processes, and are regularly assessed, reviewed and equivalent to CMU’s other educational programs.
Index and Acronyms
Index

A

Academic Administration 9
Academic Affairs 9, 10, 63, 67
academic colleges 9
Academic Planning Council (APC) 31, 58, 62
Academic Senate 9, 26, 39, 53, 55, 56, 59, 92, 97
academic structure 9
Accreditation 10, 13, 25, 91
  Accreditation Self-Study Steering Committee 37
addendum 56
adjunct faculty 43
Adjunct faculty 37, 43, 45, 47, 98
admissions standards 26
adult learners 16
Advisor Handbook 77
assessment 46, 49, 53, 60, 62, 63, 64, 72, 78, 83, 89, 90, 91, 93, 98
  Assessment Council 63
  assessment plan 62, 90
assessment of student learning outcomes 89. See also assessment
Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International) 10
attrition 93

B

Blackboard 24, 46, 66, 67, 68, 69, 72, 95. See also Learning Management System (LMS)
  Blackboard Resource Group 68
Black Issues in Higher Education 94
Board of Trustees 8, 27, 58
Board of Visitors 92
**Index**

**C**

Center for Instructional Design 24
Center for Instructional Design (CID) 46, 60, 66
Central Michigan University 7
CMU 2010 16, 25, 94
CMU Off-Campus Bulletin 80
CMU student portal 49
Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Disciplinary Procedures 80
collective bargaining 8
College of Graduate Studies 45
comment of concern 49
copyrighted materials 75
course ownership 64
Course Readiness Checklist 61
course revisions 65
culture of integrity 27
Curricular Authority Document (CAD) 43
curricular review 21, 25, 26, 27, 39, 43, 58
curriculum map 62

**D**
decentralized budget process 84
departmental bylaws 38
disability 77
Distance Learning 71
  Distance Learning Course Support 72
distance learning staff 70, 72, 80, 93
diversity 9, 89, 94
Doctorate in Health Administration 17
Document Delivery Services 74

**E**
e-learning readiness 72
electronic course pack 75
electronic reference tools 75
end-of-course surveys 48
Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) 65
evaluating faculty 48
external reviewers 90, 91
F

FaCIT (Faculty Center for Innovative Teaching) 48, 60, 66
Faculty Association (CMUFA) 9
faculty development 26
faculty performance 48
Faculty Resource Center 45, 98
Faculty Seminar Series 48
faculty workload 37
financial aid process 75
financial incentives 39
financial model 38, 57, 82, 84, 85
FIPSE grant 26
first right of refusal 43

G

general education 77
general fund 38
global perspectives 94
Governance 8

H

Higher Learning Commission 1, 10, 13, 21, 25, 82, 91
HLC Change Request Self-Study Committee 2

I

information resources 75
Instructor Effectiveness Rating (IER) 49
intellectual property 64
Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Policy 64
interdisciplinary programs 57, 90
interlibrary loan 74

L

lack of standardization 59
Learning Management System (LMS) 24, 67, 69, 95. See also Blackboard
Learning Management System Group 67
learning outcomes 53, 62, 89, 90, 91
library 24, 57, 66, 67. See also Off-Campus Library Services (OCLS)
locations 32
M
MACRAO 76
MA in Education 50
MA in the Humanities 50
market research 17
master course syllabi 26, 55, 90
Master of Science in Administration (MSA) 22
mentor 45
Michigan Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (MACRAO) 77
military 16
  military transfer credit 77
mission statement 7, 22, 25, 31, 38, 56, 58, 89

N
National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) 10
New Ventures 38, 83
NSSE 98

O
off-campus enrollment 22, 23
Off-Campus Grade Grievance Policy 81
Off-Campus Library Services (OCLS) 24, 73, 75. See also library
off-campus revenue 38, 84
Office of Academic Affairs. See Academic Affairs
Office of Curriculum and Assessment 63
Office of Organizational Research and Assessment (ORA) 78
On-campus students 16
Online Enrollments 15
online learning 13, 23, 48, 52, 71
  online learning environments 48, 62
Online Programming 14
online student orientation 72

P
pedagogy 15
Policy on Academic Integrity for Off-Campus Students 80
Presidential-Academic Senate task force 26
proctored exams 70
Product Development 24
ProfEd 7, 22, 23, 26, 27, 31, 45, 49, 52, 56, 66, 75, 80, 84
  Professional Educational Services 56
program review 44, 89
project management database 97

Q
quality assurance 60
R
reference and referral assistance 75
Regular faculty 43
Regular Faculty 44
research 9
Responsibility Centered Management/Budgeting 84
S
SAP-Campus Management 65, 71
SIS 66
specialized accreditation 91
standards of best practice 60
State Approving Agency (SAA) for Veteran’s Affairs 32
strategic plan 16. See also CMU 2010
strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) 91
Student Access 15, 21, 22
student credit hours 44
student learning outcomes 89. See learning outcomes
T
Take 5 for Teaching 48
technical infrastructure 89
Technical training guides 48
Technology Planning Board 96
Temporary Faculty 44
Tenured or Tenure-track faculty. See Regular faculty
transcripts 76
transfer credit 76
U
underrepresented student populations 94
University Budgetary Advisory Council (UBAC) 84
University Program 77
V
Vehicle Design program 63
W
WEAVE Online 63
work for hire 64
workshops 46
Writing Center 76
Acronyms

Academic Planning Council (APC)
American Council on Education (ACE)
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International)
Center for Instructional Design (CID)
Central Michigan University (CMU)
CMU Faculty Association (CMUFA)
College of Extended Learning (CEL; see ProfEd)
Curricular Authority Document (CAD)
Doctor of Psychology (Psy.D)
Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)
Faculty Center for Innovative Teaching (FaCIT)
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)
Institute for Personal and Career Development (IPCD)
Instructor Effectiveness Rating (IER)
Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)
Learning Management System (LMS)
Master Course Syllabi (MCS)
Master of Business Administration (MBA)
memorandum of understanding (MOU)
Military Installation Voluntary Educational Review (MIVER)
National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)
National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)
North Central Association (NCA)
Off-Campus Library Services (OCLS)
Organizational Research and Assessment (ORA)
Professional Education Services (ProfEd; formerly known as College of Extended Learning)
SAP-Campus Management (SAP-CM)
Student Information System (SIS)
State Approving Agency (SAA)
Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)
University Budgetary Advisory Council (UBAC)
CMU, an AA/EO institution, strongly and actively strives to increase diversity within its community (see http://www.cmich.edu/aaeo/).