

**NCA-HLC Change Panel Review
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
Additional Questions/Requests for Clarification**

- 1. Background:** The “Confirmation of Institutional Eligibility for Distance Delivery Approval” lists seven programs as being “available via distance delivery...” (See page 6. Part 2. 11. E.) However the materials only discuss two degree completion programs, Health & Wellness Management (HWM) and Health Information & Technology (HIMT) which are “coordinated by the University of Wisconsin Extension.”

Question: Please provide a list of programs available via distance education from UW-Stevens Point in addition to HWM and HIMT. If available, please submit any materials and/or correspondence which relate to any previous approvals for UW-Stevens Point to offer these programs via distance education.

Answer:

Actually, our initial response to Part 2. 11. E contained a typo: we have ten programs available via distance education, not seven. In addition to the recently added HWM and HIMT programs, the Organizational Profile for UW-Stevens Point maintained by HLC lists the following programs.

1. Bachelor - 13.1210 Early Childhood Education and Teaching (BA/BS Early Childhood Education) offered via Interactive TV or video; Internet;
2. Bachelor - 24.0101 Liberal Arts and Sciences/Liberal Studies (BA/BS American Studies) offered via Interactive TV or video; Internet;
3. Bachelor - 52.0201 Business Administration and Management, General (BA/BS Business Administration) offered via Interactive TV or video; Internet;
4. Master - 03.0101 Natural Resources/Conservation, General (MS Natural Resources, emphasis in Environmental Education and Interpretation) offered via Interactive TV or video; Internet;
5. Master - 03.0101 Natural Resources/Conservation, General (MS Natural Resources, emphasis in Environmental Education for K-12 Teachers) offered via Interactive TV or video; Internet;
6. Master - 03.0101 Natural Resources/Conservation, General (MS Natural Resources, emphasis in Leadership and Administration) offered via Interactive TV or video; Internet;
7. Master - 13.0101 Education, General offered via Internet;
8. Master - 13.0101 Education, General (MS Education, General with emphasis in early childhood/early childhood special education) offered via Interactive TV or video; Internet

These programs were approved in February 2011 and added to our Organizational Profile later that spring through the Annual Institutional Data Update (AIDU). I have appended our initial request and a series of emails providing approval of the

request to this response. They should be self-explanatory. Please let us know if you need additional information.

2. **Background:** From the materials submitted, it is not clear how UW-Stevens Point has institutionalized specific policies and procedures supporting distance delivery courses/programs.

Question: Please submit any formal UW-Stevens policies and procedures that specifically relate to and/or support distance delivery courses/programs.

Answer:

We have only a few formal UW-Stevens Point policies that specifically relate to and/or support distance delivery courses/programs. They include the following:

- Online courses are noted in the Timetable to inform students fully of the course format in which they are enrolling.
- A teaching evaluation form for online course has been developed for use in this format.
- A Curricular Redesign Workshop takes place each summer to assist faculty in developing online and hybrid courses.
- All UW-Stevens Point online/hybrid courses are taught using Desire2Learn, a UW System supported platform for online teaching. A dedicated staff person in Information Technology has been hired to support this platform and to work with faculty in course development.
- A rubric has been developed for the peer review of faculty teaching online courses. (See the attached.)

As already noted in our earlier response, we have recently created a Distance Education Task Force to develop a university handbook for online courses and programs, and to offer recommendations for planning, budgeting, and other aspects of course management. We expect to receive these recommendations by fall 2013. (See the attached charge to this group for further information.)

3. **Background:** Planning for distance delivery appears to follow the same institutional procedures as planning for traditional courses/programs.

Question: Does UW-Stevens Point have any unique policies or procedures related to planning for distance delivery courses/programs. If so, please provide those policies and procedures.

Answer:

To date there are no unique campus policies or procedures related to planning for distance delivery courses/programs. The lone caveat to this statement is the recent addition of state authorization costs for offering online programs out-of-state. We are currently in the process of determining from which states we will seek permission and how we will budget for these costs. The results of this process will likely affect our planning for current and future online offerings.

There are distinct pricing policies related to planning distance education programs at the UW System level, which can be found at the following link:

<http://www.uwsa.edu/acss/planning/depricing.htm>.

- 4. Background:** Part. 4. Question 15. (page 7) refers to a “focused visit by the HLC to evaluate our assessment of student learning.” The answer to 15. says that the visit was successful, but it also says a progress report is due by January 2015. There is no discussion of assessment instruments specifically designed for assessment of student learning in distance delivery courses/programs.

Question: Were there any concerns expressed in the focused visit that specifically deal with distance learning? If so, what steps has UW-Stevens Point taken, or plan to take, to address these concerns? And finally, are there assessment instruments specifically designed for assessment of student learning in distance delivery courses/programs.

Answer:

There were no concerns expressed in the focused visit that dealt specifically with distance learning. See the following link for a copy of the HLC Focused Visit Report:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/AcadAff/Documents/HLC%20Focused%20Visit%20Report%202012.pdf>

On the question of assessment, as noted in our earlier response, we do offer an annual Curricular Redesign Workshop aimed at assisting faculty to move courses into an online or hybrid format. As part of this workshop, participants receive training in backward design, the creation of learning outcomes, and assessment from the university’s Assessment Coordinator. However, we do not employ university-wide assessment instruments specifically designed for distance delivery courses or programs. Selection and design of instruments is left to individual faculty and academic departments in accordance with the department’s comprehensive Assessment Plan, which is reviewed regularly by the Assessment Subcommittee.