General Guidelines for Assessing Collaboration for Proposed Online Programs

Office of Online Education • Office of Collaborative Academic Programs

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The following document provides general parameters that are used by the Office of Online Education (OOE) and the Office of Collaborative Academic Programs (OCAP) when evaluating a proposed online program for multi-campus collaborative development. The review for collaboration is part of the program approval process managed through University Academic Affairs.[1]

When reviewing programs, OOE and OCAP expect that collaboration extend beyond sharing coursework. OOE and OCAP review each campus' potential to participate in full delivery of a program (e.g., adequate faculty support, a commitment to student services). Campuses that cannot participate in the full delivery of a collaborative program may instead contribute online courses through separate course-share agreements.

Given the diversity and complexity of IU's current and future online programs, the procedures outlined in this document are not strict rules, but rather operating guidelines. These guidelines are not intended to supersede the principles outlined in prior documents approved byt the Board of Trustees, particularly *Moving Forward 2.0* and *A Collaborative Model for Online Education at Indiana University* (see Appendices A and B). OOE and OCAP continue to expect that collaboration will the be the default expectation when capacity and demand will support it.

Certificates—General

In general, proposed certificates do not require collaboration, though the campuses should be conscious that if they stack into a degree, collaboration may be required. Collaboration is not required due to the brevity of certificates (usually 3–6 courses only) as well as the limited course options needed for such credentials. Save for some specific instances, demand for certificates has proven to be low, thus enrollments are generally not substantial enough to support multi-campus participation—especially when the numbers of courses involved are also small.

1   For details of the university program approval process, visit https://uaa.iu.edu/academic-affairs/approval-process/index.html.

Undergraduate Certificates

Given the low enrollment potential for most undergraduate certificates, stand-alone undergraduate certificates will not generally be approved. Only undergraduate certificates which are directly linked to employment certifications (e.g., Dental Hygiene, Histotechnology) will be approved. Area certificates, which require students to be enrolled in another degree program, do not require collaboration. These will be approved by OOE but will not be marketed or supported by OOE since those students otherwise are enrolled in an on-campus program.

Bachelor's and Master's Degrees

For bachelor's and master's degrees, the default will be to create a collaborative degree. For the purposes of determining a campus's ability to participate in a program, OOE and OCAP reviews the following attributes—among others as appropriate—of the campuses interested in participating:

- Degrees currently offered by interested discipline
- Numbers of permanent faculty currently employed in the subject area
- Existing online courses at the appropriate level in the subject area
- Qualified faculty with a terminal degree in the discipline or a degree higher than the level of the program being offered
- Current available capacity in applicable coursework
- Current advising, career services, and other forms of student services available to support the degree
- In the case of undergraduate degrees, the consistent availability of online general education coursework to guarantee students access to genereal education coursework.

The above is not meant to be an exhaustive list of requirements. Please note that a campus's ability to participate in a degree is based on current instructional and student services capacity. Future hires of faculty and staff are not considered in the evaluation for collaboration to ensure that program start-up costs are kept to a minimum for new online programs.

Doctoral Degrees

Under agreement with the State of Indiana (ICHE Policies—https://www.in.gov/che/3151.htm; See Regional Campus Roles and Missions "item 2"], professional practice doctoral programs offered through Indiana University must involve at least one of the two core campuses. As a result, at least one core campus must be involved in the development and delivery of doctoral programs. Otherwise, OOE and OCAP utilizes the expectations outlined above for the bachelor's and master's degrees in the review of doctoral degrees.

Appendix A: "Curricular Clearinghouse Guiding Principles" from *Moving Forward 2.0*[2]

- Each campus has its own unique mission and responsibility to serve the needs of its region; at the same time, each campus is part of Indiana University and is therefore bound to the systems, structures, policies, and procedures of the university.

- No campus can keep another campus from offering any online program that is within the mission of the campus. Each campus must respect the curricular authority of other campuses, in recognition of the same rights for every IU campus.

- Given the various missions of the campuses, and given that faculty have oversight of the curriculum at Indiana University, the faculty in the same disciplinary areas across the seven campuses of IU must be in communication, and in collaboration when appropriate, regarding the design, development, delivery, and administration of online academic programs that support the missions of multiple campuses.

- For academic programs that fit within the missions of multiple campuses, all eligible campuses have an opportunity to participate in an online academic program, though universal participation of all eligible campuses is neither expected nor required.

- If an academic unit has concerns that an online program in development or offered by another campus may have adverse impact to the academic unit, academic administrators from the involved campus should work together to resolve such concerns, or may ask the Office of the Executive Vice President for University Academic Affairs to convene a meeting of interested parties to develop a collaborative agreement.

- The processes for approval of academic programs, online programs, and collaborative academic programs that are documented on the website of the Executive Vice President for University Academic Affairs will guide the Curricular Clearinghouse.

- Campuses may agree that a single campus will deliver a program in lieu of a collaborative arrangement; in some cases, agreements may be made that the single campus which delivers an online program that could be delivered by multiple campuses will provide a revenue share to the campuses that release their rights to deliver the program.

- Every academic program is unique and has its own business model, and therefore each program will have its own unique marketing plan, curricular framework, student services plan, and collaborative memorandum of agreement.

- The Office of Online Education has authority to bring degree programs to table for consideration, complementing campus authority to do the same. OOE works with UAA to convene collaborative academic groups and to facilitate the development of memoranda of agreement for program design, development, and delivery, and mediates or arbitrates between campuses and programs as necessary.

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2   For the full text of *Moving Forward 2.0*, see https://teachingonline.iu.edu/about/staff/moving_forward_2.0.html.

Appendix B: IU Online: "Operating Principles for IU Online" from *A Collaborative Model for Online Education at Indiana University*[3]

1. **Collaboration is the standard.**

   a. There will be no internal competition between, or duplication of, fully online degrees unless they are readily distinguishable by potential students on terms such as price, subject matter, admission requirements; most fully online degrees will be collaborative among campuses that choose to participate.

   b. The collaboration requirement applies to fully (i.e., 80% or more) online degrees only; campuses may offer independent hybrid degrees (21% or more in-person) and individual online courses. Campuses are encouraged to consider a portfolio of deliver formats.

   c. Participation in fully online degrees is open to all campuses with capacity to offer relevant course; participation is required for none.

   d. No campus shall prevent another campus with capacity from offering or participating in a fully online degree.

2. **Use normal university processes.**

   a. Students are assigned a home campus of enrollment for the purposes of registration, enrollment data, general education requirements, tuition and fees, and the granting of the degree. Online students may transfer among campuses on the same terms as other students.

   b. OOE works with the campus academic officers to develop the administrative elements of collaborative programs.

   c. OOE works with the academic officers to convene the faculty of participating campuses to develop the shared curriculum. The disciplinary curriculum for fully online degrees is developed by the disciplinary faculty of the participating campuses; students meet the general education requirements of their home campuses.

   d. Collaborative online programs go through the normal curriculum approval processes in place at each participating campus. The Academic Leadership Council will grant final approval of online curricula, subject to further approvals by the Board of Trustees, Commission for Higher Education, and Higher Learning Commission, as needed.

3. **Commitment to quality**

   a. Online students will receive a seamless, user-friendly experience in a shared services environment supervised bythe Office of Online Education; OOE will use existing campus administrative and support capacity whenever feasible.

   b. OOE has established and will maintain a system (Quality Matters) of assuring a quality, highly engaging educational experience and transferability among campuses; online courses with the same course name and number are equivalent to in-person courses for the purposes of academic credit and inter-campus transfer.

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3   For the full text of *A Collaborative Model for Online Education at Indiana University*, see https://teachingonline.iu.edu/about/staff/collaborative_model.html.