

**The Higher Learning Commission/NCA
Additions and Revisions**

**Missouri Southern State University - Joplin
February, 2004**

Changes in Educational Offerings (policy 1.C.2.b)

1. Program offerings at a new degree level

EVALUATING INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

1. What is the change being proposed?

- State the specific change that is proposed.

Missouri Senate Bill 55 (see Appendix), passed by the 203rd General Assembly, provided that Missouri Southern State University-Joplin be allowed to offer graduate degree programs through cooperative agreements with Missouri institutions that have established programs. After discussions with Northwest Missouri State University, a Memorandum of Understanding (see Appendix) was signed by the presidents of both institutions to establish the two programs described below:

- Master of Science in Education, Teaching:
Early Childhood Education
 - Master of Science in Education, Teaching:
Instructional Technology
- State the expected outcomes of this proposed change.

With the passage of Missouri Senate Bill 55, Missouri Southern State University-Joplin has an expanded mission which includes offering master's degrees jointly with other public Missouri state universities. These programs will expand the availability of graduate degrees to residents in the region, thus increasing enrollment with a minimal financial investment.

- Project the impact of this proposed change on the institution's current mission, the numbers and types of students to be served, and the breadth of the institution's educational offerings.

Each of these two master's level programs are expected to enroll 5-17 students per year during the next five years with a projected maximum combined enrollment of 30. The students will most likely be part-time graduate students and take the courses via distance delivery mode. These projections were developed in part from survey data, which are reported in the appendices of the two formal Academic Program Proposals (see Appendix) which were filed with the Missouri Department of Higher Education on December 12, 2003. This addition serves the expanding need for efficient delivery of graduate level programs to southwest Missouri. It will build on our strong undergraduate programs in collaboration with another Missouri institution that is currently offering the program.

- Identify the Commission's policy(ies) relevant to this change:
 - Change in educational offering (policy 1.C.2.b)

New master's level degree programs will expand our offerings to a new degree level. Senate Bill 55 will allow us to be partners in providing master's level degrees to our immediate geographic area.

2. What factors led the institution to undertake the proposed change?

- Describe the relationship between the proposed change and ongoing institutional planning.

During the early 1990s, the Missouri legislature passed a bill allowing Missouri Southern to offer a Master's in Accountancy. Missouri Southern developed plans for a Master's in Accountancy and a Master's in Education. Missouri Department of Higher Education (DHE) staff requested that we put the plans aside, but promised future support

for changes in the university's status. Missouri Southern agreed to defer plans to facilitate state goals. Thus recent institutional planning did not include graduate programs. The inclusion of the provision of cooperative graduate programs for Missouri Southern in Senate Bill 55 was written with input from DHE. The staff of the Department of Higher Education has expressed a need for Missouri Southern to aid in provision of increased graduate opportunities in southwest Missouri. Now that we have legislative authority and support from DHE staff to develop cooperative master's programs, ongoing planning is shifting to include this new capability. We are developing goals and implementation strategies related to these and other planned programs.

- Describe the needs analysis related to this proposed change.

Surveys were conducted of area school superintendents to determine their assessment of need for these programs (as well as future additional programs). Data collected included a measure of their encouragement of teachers in their school districts for the programs, numbers in potential audience for these programs, and preferred modes of delivery. Similar questions were asked of MSSU student teachers in Fall 2003 to determine their level of interest in specific master's programs. A third survey was given to recent alumni of our Education Department. All three groups indicated a strong interest in these and other master's level programs. Twenty-three people expressed interest in the instructional technology program, while twenty-eight expressed interest in enrolling in the early childhood education program.

- Describe the involvement of various constituencies in developing this proposed change.

As the previous paragraph attests, important feedback from our alums, our current student teachers, and superintendents in our region was helpful in documenting a need for

these new master's level programs. The Dean of the School of Education and the Teacher Education Department worked with our central administration and Board of Governors to prepare and submit the appropriate information in our program proposal. They also worked to develop the Memorandum of Understanding. Discussions took place between MSSU administrators, administrators at our partner institution, and the Department of Higher Education (DHE) staff. Under DHE sponsorship, meetings including the chief academic officers from several state universities were held. All this was done to ensure a common understanding and consensus for the exact structure of these graduate programs.

3. What necessary approvals have been obtained to implement the proposed change?

These are established programs that are being extended to a new site with the inclusion of a collaborative teaching arrangement. Joint ownership of these programs required a unique approval process.

- Identify the internal approvals required and provide documentation confirming these actions.

With the support of the Teacher Education Department, the Dean of the School of Education worked with the Vice President for Academic Affairs to prepare the Memorandum of Understanding. Our President signed the Memorandum of Understanding with Northwest Missouri State University for the master's programs. Our Board of Governors endorsed the new opportunity for shared master's level programs.

- Identify the external approvals required and provide documentation confirming these actions.

The 2003 Missouri General Assembly passed Senate Bill 55 authorizing the development of joint programs as described above. The Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the President of Northwest Missouri State University as well as our

President. The Coordinating Board of Higher Education is authorized by statute to promote and encourage the development of cooperative agreements between Missouri public four-year institutions of higher education which do not offer graduate degrees and Missouri public four-year institutions of higher education which do offer graduate degree programs. These programs would be offered on campuses of those institutions who do not otherwise offer graduate degrees. The Department of Higher Education approved these two off-site cooperative degree programs on February 2, 2004 (see Appendix).

4. What impact might the proposed change have on challenges identified by the Commission as part of or subsequent to the last comprehensive visit?

- Identify any challenges directly related to the proposed change.

These programs were not a foreseeable possibility at the last accreditation visit in spring 1998.

- Describe how the institution has addressed the challenge(s).

Not applicable

5. What are the institution's plans to implement and sustain the proposed change?

- Describe the involvement of appropriately credentialed faculty and experienced staff necessary to accomplish this proposed change.

The courses in these programs will be taught by Missouri Southern State University - Joplin as well as Northwest Missouri State University faculty.

The existing curriculum developed by Northwest will be used in this program. All faculty who teach in these programs will meet Northwest Missouri State University qualifications for eligibility as graduate faculty members.

Northwest Missouri State University policy states that graduate faculty status is reserved for full-time faculty members who have earned the terminal degree in

the appropriate discipline. Associate graduate faculty status may be given to full-time or part-time academic appointment faculty members who have 60 or more graduate hours of work, suitable experience, and specific qualifications for teaching primarily 500 level courses (Northwest Missouri State University Graduate School Policies and Procedures Manual).

Only one course for each of the two programs per semester will be taught by MSSU faculty. It is envisioned that virtually 100 percent of graduate courses will be taught by full-time faculty, with adjunct faculty hired to teach the undergraduate courses that full-time faculty will relinquish.

Faculty at both institutions will be involved with the Board of Advisors to evaluate and to continue to access the program.

- Describe the administrative structure

The Teacher Education Department at Missouri Southern will manage this program at the Joplin site. This department is an academic unit within the School of Education which is under the authority of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the President, and the Board of Governors (see MSSU's organizational chart in Appendix).

A Board of Advisors for each program will be appointed with equal representation from each institution to oversee, periodically evaluate, and facilitate graduate courses and programs. Corporate representatives may be invited to participate when appropriate.

- Describe how the institution will make learning resources and support services available to students.

Northwest Missouri State University policies for admission, registration, retention, and program completion will be applied to students in these joint degree programs. In consultation with Northwest, Missouri Southern's Support Services will be

available to students in both these programs. These services include financial aid and counseling that would be available for these distance learning students. The library resources, including on-line resources, will be available on-campus and through the proxy server to these students. Academic advising will be done by faculty from the Teacher Education Department. Responsibility for the technology to support the distance education delivery of these programs will be shared by both institutions.

- Provide financial data/information that documents the institution's capacity to implement and sustain the proposed change.

The following financial projections have been developed to show the impact of these programs on the institutional budget. The table shows these programs will be self-supporting from tuition revenues.

Appropriately credentialed, full-time faculty will teach these graduate courses. They will be replaced in their undergraduate teaching loads by part-time faculty.

Financial Projections

| | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Expenditures: | | | | | |
| Total for Recurring Expenditures | \$5,400 | \$5,400 | \$5,400 | \$5,400 | \$5,400 |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURES | \$5,400 | \$5,400 | \$5,400 | \$5,400 | \$5,400 |
| Revenues: | | | | | |
| Tuition/Fees | \$20,857 | \$20,857 | \$20,857 | \$20,857 | \$20,857 |
| TOTAL REVENUES | \$20,857 | \$20,857 | \$20,857 | \$20,857 | \$20,857 |

Facilities and equipment for the existing undergraduate teacher education program are sufficient to accommodate these additional courses.

Financial sources for Missouri Southern include tuition and fees, state appropriations, government financial aid grants, private gifts, gains from investment income, and auxiliary income. The dollar amount and percent contribution of each of those sources for the fiscal years of 2002 and 2003 are shown in the table below.

Educational and General Revenues by Category

| | FY 2002 | | FY 2003 | |
|--|---------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Operating Revenues: | | | | |
| Tuition and Fees | \$10,783,855 | 27.0% | \$13,626,171 | 30.6% |
| Governmental Grants | 6,931,431 | 17.4% | 7,867,595 | 17.7% |
| Other operating revenues | 2,514,745 | 6.3% | 2,836,292 | 6.4% |
| Non-Operating Revenues: | | | | |
| State Appropriations | \$17,664,560 | 44.3% | \$17,988,593 | 40.4% |
| Other non-operating revenues | 2,002,726 | 5.0% | 2,252,401 | 5.1% |
| Total Revenues: | \$39,897,317 | 100% | \$44,571,052 | 100% |
| Tuition Rates in Dollars per Credit Hour: | | | | |
| Resident | \$90/102 | Note 1 | \$124 | |
| Non-resident | \$180/204 | Note 1 | \$248 | |

Note 1. Due to withholding of state appropriations during FY 02, a surcharge of \$12 for residents and \$24 for non-residents was implemented for Spring 2002.

Beginning in FY 2002, the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) implemented changes in the reporting requirements for colleges and universities. These changes are reflected in how tuition and fees are reported (net of scholarship allowances and bad debts) and the reporting of state appropriations as non-operating revenues. As the numbers for FY 2002 and 2003 reflect, MSSU has the capacity to sustain the proposed change. The most recent audit report is included as part of the documentation for this report (see Appendix).

Alumni and friends of the university provide some financial support. The Missouri Southern Foundation receives gifts from community members and alumni of

both the original Joplin Junior college as well as Missouri Southern. In September 2001, an endowment and capital campaign entitled, “Building a University for the 21st Century,” began and will continue through June 2005. The goal of the campaign is \$7.6 million. The campaign is structured around four themes: enhancing the international programs, providing up-to-date technology equipment, providing quality athletic and student recreational facilities, and providing support to the various departments. To date, \$3,600,000 has been raised.

In addition to the capital campaign, the Missouri Southern Foundation provides general support from their normal operating budget to the university. For the fiscal year 2003, the Foundation transferred \$1,140,000 to the university. These funds have been used to help with scholarships, faculty and departmental support, facilities improvements, cultural activities, and general university support.

- Specify the timeline used to implement the proposed change.

Spring 2003--Legislation was passed allowing shared master’s programs.

July 12, 2003--Governor signed Senate Bill 55 into law.

August 28, 2003--Effective date for this Missouri legislation. It included a provision to limit additional approvals required for agreements in place by August 28, 2003.

December 12, 2003--Program Proposal was submitted to Coordinating Board for Higher Education.

February 2, 2004--Programs approved by the Missouri Department of Higher Education. The Coordinating Board for Higher Education received that report at their February 2004 meeting.

Fall 2004--First classes offered for Early Childhood Education and Instructional Technology master’s programs.

Summer 2006--The first cohort should complete their degrees.

6. What are the institution's strategies to evaluate the proposed change?

- Describe the measures the institution will use to document the achievement of its expected outcomes.

Entrance exams will be benchmarked and compared with those of other Missouri graduate programs. Early Childhood Education graduates will be required to take the ETS Praxis II examination. Completion rates of the program will be benchmarked and then monitored annually. Employment placements of graduates will be benchmarked and monitored as well. Surveys of employer satisfaction with our graduates are planned as well as current and alumni graduate student satisfaction surveys.

- Describe how the assessment of student learning is integrated into the institution's assessment program.

Students in this program will fulfill assessment requirements by answering surveys as they complete their program. Plans for other assessments are in development that will coordinate with our extensive undergraduate assessment program.