



David H. Monk, Dean
College of Education
The Pennsylvania State University
275 Chambers Building
University Park, PA 16802-3206

814-865-2526
Fax: 814-865-0555
E-mail: dhm6@psu.edu
www.ed.psu.edu

DATE: November 7, 2012

TO: Henry Foley, Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate School and
Craig Weidemann, Vice President for Outreach

FROM: David H. Monk 

RE: Proposal for an Experimental Approach to the Offering of World Campus
Graduate Programs in the College of Education

The College of Education would like to make a number of administrative changes to the operation of its World Campus graduate programs on an experimental basis. Following a College administrative retreat in August 2012 that included leaders from the World Campus, the College responded with an October 1, 2012 memo outlining plans for 13 new programs and 4 revisions of current programs. To enact these programs and to compete effectively in the current education online market, the College wishes to address three major constraints: the level of tuition; limits on the availability of World Campus courses for full-time resident graduate students; and lag time from conceptualization to implementation of program design and redesign. To make this progress, the College proposes the following changes on an experimental basis for a five-year trial period:

1. An across the board tuition discount for all World Campus graduate programs in the College of Education.

We face price competition that seriously limits our enrollments. For example, Indiana University charges \$297/credit hour for its graduate program in Adult Education in sharp contrast to the \$736 being charged by the World Campus. We are in a period where teachers and other educators are facing budget cuts and other restrictions on funds for professional development. Our sense is that educators are increasingly price sensitive as they explore degree and certificate opportunities. We seek the assistance of the World Campus marketing professionals to determine what kind of discount would be most advantageous since our goal is to make up the loss in tuition per student revenue with an increase in the number of students being served.

2. The ability to enroll full time resident graduate students in the College of Education in World Campuses courses without any additional tuition charge.

We see this as a mechanism that will encourage tenure-line faculty to participate in the World Campus as part of their normal instructional duties, a very desirable result.

Currently, our resident graduate students are not enrolling in World Campus courses because of the additional cost. Thus, the change we are proposing would not reduce revenues. If enacted, this change would increase enrollments modestly, but with no additional revenue. On balance, we think this change would be advantageous, despite the burden the additional students would create since these are students who are already known to the tenure-line faculty. Indeed, our sense is that the tenure line faculty would like to have these students in their World Campus classes. In our view, this as an important selling point as we seek to involve larger numbers of tenure line faculty in our World Campus offerings.

3. Permission to operate new and revised College of Education World Campus graduate programs with provisional approval from the Graduate School.

According to our conversations with administrators at the World Campus, our competitors are able to launch new programs quickly and adjust rapidly to market needs. In order for us to become more nimble, we wish to operate programs with provisional approval following an expedited review (taking no more than four months) by the Graduate School. We will simultaneously pursue the normal review and approval process and agree to discontinue any program that fails to secure the normal approval.

These proposed new ways of organizing graduate education through the World Campus constitute an opportunity for gaining new understanding about how to design, implement, and evaluate on-line instruction, consistent with the mission of a research university. The College will draw from its own expertise in institutional research, under the leadership of John Cheslock, the Director of the Center for the Study of Higher Education. Annual evaluation reports will be used to modify the course of the College's programs based on relevant evidence. A summative report will be available at the end of the five-year experimental phase to be used by the College and University to evaluate the merits of the experiment and for further decision making regarding on-line programming.

I will be happy to respond to any questions you might have about this proposal, and I will plan to follow-up to discuss these matters further with you and/or your designee. Thank you for your interest, and I hope we can reach a common understanding about how best to strengthen the College's offerings through the World Campus.

xc.: Robert Pangborn, Interim Executive Vice President and Provost