

2019-2020
Unit Assessment Report
Division: Academic Affairs
Unit: School of Graduate, Online and Continuing Education

Amended to reflect changes and disruptions due to the pandemic

*There are amended instructions throughout this document to reflect the special circumstances of this academic year (AY19-20). You will find these in **red**. As an institution and as departments we have learned that we can use our creativity to deliver services and learning even in the most difficult of circumstances. This year's annual report should also serve as a memorialization of the lessons learned.*

I Mission and Goal/Outcomes Statement:

To work collaboratively across University departments to provide quality programming to students that is responsive and accessible to workforce and community needs and delivers quality services to support agreed upon student and university outcomes.

(Provide overall Mission/Goal Statement and then provide summary of goals for 19-20.)

II Personnel:

Administrative Staff:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>
Nicole Chelonis	Director of Digital Learning
Amber Deschenes	Assistant Director of Enrollment
Erin Turchetta	Director of Enrollment
Jennifer Murray	Coordinator of Student Advising
Kathleen Craigen	Coordinator of Recruitment and Outreach
Lisa Moison	Associate Dean of SGOCE
Dani Langdon	Associate Director of Center for Professional Studies

Support Staff:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>
Diane Fors	Administrative Assistant for GCE (GCE Budget, Faculty assignments, Graduate Council and all faculty/staff services)
Cathy Montague	Administrative Assistant for Extended Campus
Tracy McGrath	Administrative Assistant for CPS
Open Position	Administrative Assistant for GCE – (Course Scheduling and student services including student dismissals/probation standing)

(Note all personnel changes that occurred during 19-20.)

III Facilities/Equipment:

(List any new facilities/equipment/software etc. acquired during 19-20.)

IV Budget Expenditure Analysis:

GCE has requested that \$50,000 of the current budget given to marketing for SGOCE related work is kept within the SGOCE unit so we can focus those resources on key programs and initiatives to help meet our enrollment goals. SGOCE does not currently have input into the marketing that takes place for our programs so we repurpose some of the funds for specific SGOCE marketing so we can be accountable for the outcomes and can see the direct correlation to our recruitment work.

In relation to the pandemic, Digital Learning worked with more departments to implement online proctoring. This is a service that Academic Affairs paid for as it relates to the Pandemic however as we expand this service to more departments we should consider charging a student fee in the future to cover this service.

In the final stage of the budget review for 2019-2020, we learned that TOG (Teach Out Graduate Students) revenue that had been part of the GCE budget is now being counted as budget dollars that Academic Partnerships has earned for the University. Academic Partnerships does not collect revenue for these students and these students were enrolled in the MBA and Nursing programs before the contract with Academic Partnerships. Academic Partnerships does not provide service to these students. This change impacted the final budget numbers for GCE as it was a deduction in our budget plans that brought the overall earnings down.

V Action Plan for 2019-20:

(List Objectives for 19-20)

VI Programs/Activities:

(List major campus activities, events etc. that the office participated in/supported; committees served; community outreach; etc. List events provided to current and prospective students. Also provide professional development of all staff. Please note which, if any, of these activities occurred specifically as a result of, or in response to, the pandemic)

The staff within SGOCE participated in many University wide events and committees, for example 4 SGOCE staff members participated in the committees for the University's Strategic Planning process, we began a transfer student committee that now meets bi-weekly to plan recruitment activities, a corporate/community partnership community was created and the staff from the CPS participate in this University wide group to talk about external partnerships and our Extended Campus and CPS units continued to build new partnerships throughout the state as well as maintaining existing relationships.

Student events included:

- o October 2019 Graduate Fair
- o Three Open House events including our first online open house

- o Approximately 8 Program Specific Webinars/Info Sessions
- o First virtual Admitted Student Day Webinar
- o Virtual meeting with community college transfer counselors in partnership with the admissions office
- o Mass Council on Aging conference on campus
- o Attended Approximately 7 Community College Fairs
- o Attended a workforce conference at MWCC and made many regional contacts. This event will be held at Fitchburg in the future as a result of the connections made.
- o Sent a program chair to an international conference in AZ for recruitment (Forensic Nursing)
- o Ongoing visits to community partners and organizations

Professional Development/Other Staff Specific Activities Included

1. Kathleen Craigen and Amber Deschenes both completed their MBA Degrees.
2. Amber Deschenes also completed the Fitchburg Chamber of Commerce Yea Long Leadership program and attended the National Virtual Noel Levitz conference on marketing and recruitment.
3. Jennifer Murray, Erin Turchetta and myself also attended the National Virtual Noel Levitz conference on marketing and recruitment.
4. Nicole Chelonis completed her Ph.D. program, served on a committee to co-lead the MCO conference and serves on the organization’s board, also attended the National OLC conference in Florida.
5. Lisa Moison continued her participation on the MASS Councils on Aging and also served as a speaker and panelist for the annual conference

VII Accomplishments 2019-2020:

(Please note which, if any, of these accomplishments are related specifically to your department’s response to the pandemic.)

New Credit Based Programs
Added 4 new 4+1 Programs (Moderate, Moderate Pre-K, Elementary and Early Childhood)
Online MS Computer Science
Online 7 week Accelerated Business Admin
Online Guided Studies Masters/ ABA
Graduate Certificate Special Issues in Counseling
Supply Chain Management, Marketing and Healthcare Management Concentrations Added to MBA)
New Online Certificate MBA Programs Added (Accounting, Healthcare Management, Human Resource Management, Supply Chain Management and Marketing)

New Non-Credit Programs
Supporting LGBTQIA+ Students in K-12 Setting
Delivering High Quality Training on a Limited Budget - Online Self-Paced
Traveling the Road of Insulin Resistance through the Body and Brain Feb 4-13
Introduction to Cultural Competency for Educators
Intercultural Competency Training for Real Estate Professionals
Back to Business During COVID-19 webinars
**MindEdge Programs See new Partnerships - Over 100 online cert programs to support career professionals.
Grants
Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Grant---Supporting Positive Behavior in an Inclusive Setting
Workforce Training Fund Grant---Certified Leader Program---Leominster Credit Union
Faculty Training
15 of the faculty completed the certificate program
21 trainings provided after COVID Response - 15 more scheduled for this summer
New training developed in response to COVID
<u>PROMOTE STUDENT SUCCESS</u>
Services/ Improved Policy Updates
Updated the Credit for Prior Learning (LECAP) process to allow for an online portfolio submission option and a self-paced support course to assist student.
Added Stop Out Stop Outs Campaigns Each Semester to help with retention
Successful completion of the RFP process for Online Proctoring/PSI has been selected
Developed and held our first Admitted Student Webinar to assist with Matriculation/retention of newly admitted students
Completed planning for the first Online New Student Orientation to be held in August
Completed the 2nd Noel Levitz Adult Student Priorities Survey to collect information on student perceptions of service.

CONTRIBUTE TO GLOBAL AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
New External Partnerships
MindEdge - This partnership allows us to offer Mindedge's online certificates designed for working professionals to our students for a low cost. The University receives a portion of the revenue for every registration confirmed.
Leominster Credit Union - Secured a workforce training grant to support employee training at the credit union.
Signed LOA with MA School Administrators Association as a new Extended Campus Partner
Signed LOA with Thea Durling Educational Consultant
International Recruitment
Confirmed locations of focus for the International Recruitment Plans/Securing Agents for 2020-2021
Secured email list of TOEFL takers in spring 2020 for recruitment focused email campaign.
GROW AND STRATIGICALLY ALIGN RESOURCES
Admissions/Enrollment
Implemented the team restructure of by redesigning the Associate Dean role, creating an associate director of CPS role, hiring the Director of Enrollment position, Replacing a Coordinator position and aligning all education program duties to this position and adding an Assistant Director of Enrollment position.
Updated enrollment plans and goals for 2020-2021 credit based programs
Revised admissions communication plan
Held the first shared Community College Counselor Webinar/review session with Admissions
Held the first virtual Open House
Added request for information button inquiry forms on each web program page
Process/Procedure Improvements
CPS collaborated with Payroll to pilot a new contract and payroll voucher Docusign process that eliminated the need for physical signatures while still maintaining proper oversight.

Finished moving extended campus partners from a paper course registration system to the university's Web4 system.
CPS collaborated with multiple offices across campus to better align our corporate partner response.
COVID Related Response
Successfully offered training and immediate assistance to all University faculty in converting their courses to remote learning modality within 2 weeks.
Developed and offered training throughout the summer with a collaborative group of IT and Library Representatives to support faculty that had to move summer courses online and are planning for remote or hybrid courses in the fall.
Successfully worked with ALFA to move all Spring ALFA programming online in a very short amount of time.
Successfully moved all non-credit programming online in a short amount of time
Worked with all 35 Extended Campus Partners to offer assistance for their services and programming that had to move online.
Advanced Placement Summer Institute (APSI) - Worked with College Board to successfully move this online for Summer 2020.
Successfully moved all AUJA courses online for Summer 2020.
Team members all made an amazing pivot in a short amount of time to assist in anyway necessary with the COVID 19 Pandemic and the changes that had to take place in programming and service.

VIII Assessment Report:

(Were the Action Plan objectives met? Provide in list format that parallels item V.)

Goal 1 – Objective - Strengthen and build programs and processes that align with continuous improvement practices.	
2019-2020 Objective	Status of Objective
Develop processes for program development, prioritize program development initiatives and work to establish incentives.	Digital Learning made some updates to guide the development of online courses, however program development protocols are still in progress. The summer course incentive program proposed in 2018 was placed on hold.
Identify and operationalize opportunities to expand or build on	The 4+1 MBA program pathway and 4 new education 4+1 pathways were

additional student pathways to existing programs.	developed. In addition, all of the MBA concentrations were made into certificate programs to help expand options for MBA Alums or others looking for learning options covered in the specific content areas. Students beginning in the certificate programs can move into the masters program.
Develop and maintain resources for GCE chairs and faculty related to processes/policies and student resources.	There was a workshop conducted in the summer of 2019 providing chairs with resources and training related to courses scheduling and faculty hiring. The resource guides were shared with all dept. and GCE chairs and deans. Digital Learning also created and updated all of the resources related to online learning,
Define, implement processes to support transfer/degree completion programs.	A bi-weekly transfer recruitment team meeting was established to include all staff that work with transfer admissions to include GCE. This group is responsible for processes/support for prospective students. A new taskforce group will be developed for next year to expand this work to include current student review and implementation.

Goal 2 – Objective -Improve and streamline processes to assess and support SGOCE student success.	
2019-2020 Objective	Status of Objective
Review student service assessment data and processes to identify gap areas and develop plans of action to address. create a continuous improvement model of service.	The Noel Levitz Adult Student Priorities Survey was conducted to help identify gap areas and see where we improved. It was clear the 2-year course rotations are making a positive difference however there were some challenges related to course availability and scheduling that were identified and we will work on in the next year.

Define, track, analyze student success goals by program in collaboration with the academic chairs/deans.	The work on program specific retention data did not take place this year. It is something we hope to get to when we are fully staffed again.
Implement retention strategies to assist with goals including pro-active advising.	This work was not started as the retention assessment did not take place. More work did continue however in reaching out to students that had stepped out including the implementation on a semester “Stop Out Stop Outs” day event.
Work with career services and alumni for career connections and tracking.	More connections were made with career services and alumni. There are now regular points of communication with both offices.

Goal 3 – Objective - Increase regional partnerships and expand international student base	
2019-2020 Objective	Status of Objective
Work with International Services to build more pathways for international students and create specific enrollment goals.	A bi-weekly meeting has been established that focuses on international recruitment. We did establish an annual recruitment plan and will assess the plan each year to assist with continuous improvement.
Create greater awareness of ALFA, Graduate, CE and Degree Completion programs.	GCE officially became the School of Graduate, Online and Continuing Education. The plan is to move forward using the new school name to bring attention/awareness about all GCE departments.
Coordinate and expand community partnerships related to GCE programming (Credit and Non-Credit).	This work has continued as demonstrated through the new trainings developed this year.
Define, implement and assess community outreach roles.	Some progress was made in this area as a University represented group came together to form regular meetings to discuss community and corporate partnerships at the University. CPS/GCE is represented at this meeting.

Goal 4 – Objective - Implement a foundation to support on-going assessment and strategic planning	
2019-2020 Objective	Status of Objective
Create a process for conducting on-going market research and build program development resources/processes to support efforts.	We did not get to this objective this year.
Increase professional Development/Non-Credit Option in Fields outside of education to align with community need.	We did add a number of new trainings including the contract with MindEdge adding 100+ new online options, a COVID 19 return to work option and several options related to equity and inclusion in the work place. Also, a leadership training program with Leominster Credit Union was created through the first University workforce grant.
Streamline processes/policies related to GCE marketing, recruitment, admissions, service, community outreach and enrollment planning.	<p>Progress was made in this area. We have a monthly meeting with marketing and admissions, we also have a member of the admissions team attend all of our team meetings which helps to keep us connected. In addition, we CPS attends our monthly meeting with Marketing/Admissions to share information and maintain connections.</p> <p>The Director of Enrollment position was hired and the Director has created a number of new protocols including a weekly meeting with the staff coordinators/program liaisons related to enrollment.</p>
Bring visibility to the digital learning department and increase training and resources available to faculty from the digital learning department.	Progress was made due to the COVID 19 planning as Digital Learning was responsible for leading many of the training efforts. New resources were created for both faculty and students.

IX Future Directions:

(Provide general summary of goals to be included in Action Plan for 20-21, due Aug 1)

SGCOE will focus on program development and designing recruitment and outreach strategies to grow the new programs that were added in 2019-2020. We will also continue to use continuous improvement methods to update recruitment and outreach plans for current programs.

SGOCE will work on improving and updating faculty resources by restructuring the faculty resource webpage and providing more information for adjunct faculty and new faculty. In addition, SGOCE will begin this year holding at least one virtual meeting each semester with the SGOCE program chairs, department chairs and deans within each school. The purpose of this meeting is to assess how things are going, identify areas of process improvement needs and share enrollment goals/enrollment status information.

The school will also work on continuing to build the portfolio of programs within the Center for Professional Studies and seek out opportunities to increase workforce ready related certificates, courses or other programming that aligns with the University mission and meets the needs of the regional community.

The school will continue to work in collaboration with Admissions and the International Education Office to develop strategies to increase the enrollment of international students. SGOCE will also continue its work on improving processes and services for transfer students.

Two areas of focus this year in SGOCE are reinvention and equity and inclusion. With reinvention, we are looking at programming to fit the changing needs of our community brought on by COVID 19 and also at ways of improving what we do in terms of online and digital services. In relation to equity and in inclusion, we plan to assess our services, policies and processes to improve access and develop and maintain an action plan for the purpose of transparency and accountability in this area. Adding academic and community programming on topics related to equity and inclusion will also be considered.

X Reflection:

This was a challenging year for SGOCE. We had five staff transitions this year (Brian Bercier, Marylyn Gainen, J.M. Grenier, Diane Thibodeau and Sonya Prince all transitioned out of the school) which has impacted our ability to focus on new initiatives. The office is still down three positions and is working to replace those. Also, the work completed by Brian Bercier has transitioned to the Dean as the new position, Director of Enrollment has new and different responsibilities focused mainly on GCE recruitment planning and management. The staff changes have also impacted the planning for COVID 19 as Digital Learning only had one staff member to manage the regular semester work in addition to the training work that was required to assist

faculty and students in moving to remote learning. Also, the ALFA admin position previously served by Diane Thibodeau would have normally helped to support the communication to ALFA members about the move towards online learning and also in the transition to online/remote learning for all of the spring activities.

Additional work with faculty communication and courses scheduling that would normally take place with the open admin position has temporarily moved to the Dean for so there has been less time for strategic /program development and improvement work. Despite the transitions, the team was still able to accomplish a lot including adding new programs, updating services, on-boarding two new staff members and making various process improvements.

In March, when the pandemic prompted the University to move all courses remote, the entire staff pitched in and worked as a team to assist students and faculty through this difficult time. The CPS division moved all non-credit and ALFA courses online in a short amount of time, they worked to offer the Advanced Placement Institute courses online this summer for this first time ever and this took some work with the API group, Digital Learning and CPS. The Director of Digital Learning also worked collaboratively with the CTL, Library, IT and Academic Affairs to provide on-going support to faculty throughout the transition. The GCE team did outstanding work through all of this given the reduced staff resources.

This transition to remote learning has made it clear that more departments are becoming comfortable with online. Also, we now have more resources in place to support faculty so we have foundational components in place as a result of COVID to create new online programs. The pandemic has created new programming opportunities as it expands the need for skills (Safety/COVID planning, healthcare and other.)

Report on how the department adapted to the mid-semester disruption caused by the pandemic. Reflect on actions that surprised you and on lessons learned that will help in the future.