

1. Proposed Change

Specific Change Proposed

Lawrence Technological University proposes to offer selected existing degree programs through distance learning methods, specifically the delivery of degree programs using Internet-based asynchronous and synchronous techniques. Permission to offer online degree programs falls under Commission policy 1.C.2.b (“Change in Educational Offering”).

The LTU Online initiative was established by President Dr. Lewis Walker¹ and operates under the leadership of Provost Dr. Maria Vaz.² The mission of LTU Online is to administer, design, develop, and deliver high quality asynchronous online courses, using the extensive educational technology capabilities already developed by the University and its faculty. Lawrence Tech requests Commission approval to offer the following degree programs in a totally online format through LTU Online:

1. Master of Business Administration
2. Master of Engineering Management
3. Bachelor of Science in Information Technology

Lawrence Tech also proposes to offer these graduate certificate programs in a totally online format through LTU Online:

4. Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Management
5. Graduate Certificate in Project Management
6. Graduate Certificate in Architectural Management

Courses supporting these degree and certificate programs are under development for delivery in fall 2006 and spring 2007. Feedback on the processes used to develop these courses is used to improve the processes and develop additional courses in support of these programs. Lawrence Tech may request approval for offering additional online programs in the future based on the success of the initial programs included in this request.

¹ Dr. Lewis N. Walker was appointed president and CEO of Lawrence Technological University on July 1, 2006. He served as interim president and CEO of Lawrence Technological University since February 1, 2006. Dr. Walker was named executive vice president and provost in 2003, serving as chief academic officer and also overseeing student services and business activities. He had served as provost since 1994 when he came to Lawrence Tech.

² Dr. Maria Vaz was appointed provost of Lawrence Technological University on July 1, 2006. She previously served as interim provost, associate provost and dean of graduate programs since 1998, as associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences from 1994 to 1998, and as department chair of the Natural Sciences department from 1992 to 1994. She came to Lawrence Tech in 1983.

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LTU Online is designed to build on Lawrence Tech’s existing technology infrastructure and instructional technology capabilities, and to integrate existing best practices for the development and delivery of instruction and student services in support of online programs. Appendices A and B summarize the linkage between the design of the LTU Online initiative and the Commission’s accreditation criteria and crosscutting themes. Appendix C documents the features of LTU Online that have been informed by best practices documented by the Commission and by Sloan Consortium. Appendix G provides an inventory of existing student services of special importance to online students.

LTU Online is a collaborative venture, requiring purposeful and coordinated planning and execution by many academic, administrative, and support units. Of particular importance to the success of LTU Online are the efforts of Lawrence Tech’s four colleges, the Edward Donnelly Computer Center, the Lawrence Tech Library, the Veraldi Instructional Technology Resource Center, the Marketing department, the Office of Admissions, and the Office of the Registrar. LTU Online actively collaborates with these units to ensure provision of totally online student services.

Quality online instruction presents a considerable time management challenge for faculty members in several areas, but most particularly in developing online instructional materials and in maintaining the 7x24 availability required by online students. LTU Online provides Lawrence Tech with the opportunity to hire additional adjunct faculty members to bring online experience and diverse academic perspectives to Lawrence Tech. LTU Online provides an opportunity to engage our own doctoral and graduate students as instructional developers, online learning producers, teaching assistants, and technical support specialists. LTU Online can also provide research and publication opportunities for our doctoral students and can provide research opportunities for full-time faculty members who choose to participate in or to study the processes used by or the outcomes of the initiative.

All LTU Online courses fit within the standard Lawrence Tech semester schedules for fall, spring, and summer, and follow the same semester schedule used by traditional or hybrid classes within the sponsoring college. Courses comprising an academic program are scheduled to allow students to advance through a graduate curriculum in as little as 24 months or to periodically “stop out” and enroll in required courses in future semesters. In addition to students enrolling in totally online programs, we anticipate that many students will enroll in both on-campus and online courses. We therefore do not designate students as “campus-based” or “online” as part of an admission decision, nor do we designate academic programs as “campus-based” or “online.” LTU Online courses are designated in Lawrence Tech’s Banner™ registration system as delivered on the “OL” campus rather than at the “M” (main) Southfield campus.

The first LTU Online courses are being developed and delivered in support of the proposed degree and certificate programs as follows:

1. The first 11 classes are scheduled for delivery in Fall 2006;
2. An additional 14 classes are scheduled for delivery in spring 2007; and
3. An additional 10 classes are scheduled for delivery in summer 2007.

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By spring 2007, students will be able to complete less than 50% of the courses required for the proposed online degree programs. With Commission approval, we will continue to develop the remaining courses in these degree programs to enable students to complete the programs in a totally online format.

Based on enrollment in these six initial online programs, Lawrence Tech may consider requesting authorization to offer additional online degree programs in the future. Online coursework to support on-ground programs may be developed in advance of future requests to the Commission, but students will not be able to take more than half of their required courses online until Commission authorization has been received.

Objectives and Expected Outcomes of Proposed Change

The objectives of the LTU Online initiative are to:

1. Increase overall enrollment in all Lawrence Tech programs through a combination of online enrollment, improved name recognition, and geographic reach
2. Increase net enrollment and generate positive net revenue in targeted online programs
3. Provide increased educational opportunities to Lawrence Tech students, especially to working professionals with heavy work schedules, travel, and family responsibilities
4. Develop a robust “virtual campus” to enhance our portfolio of online services to all students

With the offering of online degree programs through LTU Online, Lawrence Tech can attract new students by providing additional academic opportunities to new students outside our traditional geographic market of southeast Michigan. The accompanying enrollment and revenue growth will contribute to additional investments in Lawrence Tech’s technology infrastructure, use of academic information technology, and provision of digital library resources. LTU Online will also support the creation and dissemination of reusable learning objects into its traditional and hybrid academic programs, and will provide training in online delivery techniques to new and existing faculty members.

The influx of new online faculty members from across the country will infuse new academic and teaching ideas into the Lawrence Tech community. New faculty members also provide opportunities for Lawrence Tech to develop new academic programs that can be economically viable in an online environment but perhaps not supportable in a traditional on-campus environment. Doctorally qualified online adjunct faculty can develop research and collaborative relationships with existing Lawrence Tech faculty members and doctoral students. These outcomes help support Lawrence Tech’s evolution from a primarily teaching institution to an institution that balances teaching and applied research.

These major benefits (increased enrollment, greater academic opportunities for students, increased investment opportunities, new academic program opportunities, and additional faculty members) will enable Lawrence Tech to expand the “reach” of our program delivery area.

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LTU Online also enables Lawrence Tech to better serve its regional and national business partners by providing a combination of on-ground and online instruction to employees. Active collaboration between LTU Online and Lawrence Tech’s Professional Development Center will provide opportunities to serve industry on three levels: contracted consulting and program development services, delivery on non-credit and CEU-based programs, and delivery of credit programs via LTU Online. This expanded “reach” will increase Lawrence Tech’s name recognition and reputation both within and outside the metropolitan Detroit area.

Impact of Proposed Change

LTU Online does not alter the mission of Lawrence Tech. Rather, LTU Online provides new opportunities for prospective students to be served by Lawrence Tech. LTU Online is not established as a separate academic department, and collaborates with existing academic departments to assist them in moving selected academic programs online.

Lawrence Tech expects to serve over two hundred new degree-seeking students within the first two years of online degree operations by expanding the reach of our Master of Business Administration, Master of Engineering Management, and Bachelor of Science in Information Technology programs. New graduate students will be recruited from outside Lawrence Tech's traditional enrollment area, and in some cases on national and international levels. New BSIT students will be recruited through articulation agreements with Michigan community colleges that would not be possible without moving the program online.

In addition, Lawrence Tech expects to attract a number of new students who seek graduate certificates in Nonprofit Management, Project Management, and Architectural Management. The Nonprofit Management program is one of a small number of programs throughout the country, and can serve a number of nonprofit professionals in Michigan and throughout the Midwest. The Project Management program is particularly compelling for both industry-based and knowledge-based workers, and includes coursework in managing outsourced projects. The Architectural Management certificate program is unique and has the potential to serve a national audience.

LTU Online also enables Lawrence Tech to expand our course offerings at our course delivery sites and to new sites as they are developed. Lawrence Tech presently delivers traditional and hybrid courses on the Southfield campus and other locations as shown in Figure 1:

Sites	Course Locations	Out-of-USA Course Locations
Clarkston	Detroit Studio	Toronto, Canada
Detroit (Focus: HOPE)	Madonna College	Vancouver, Canada
Detroit (Daimler Chrysler)		Windsor, Canada (Ford Windsor)
Livonia (Schoolcraft College)		Shanghai, PRC (SUES)
Macomb (University Center)		
Petoskey (University Center)		
Traverse City (University Center)		
Warren (TACOM)		

Figure 1 - Lawrence Tech Course Delivery Locations

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Lawrence Tech also expects to see an increase in student persistence and retention due to the availability of online degree programs. Many prospective students are not able to commute on a regular basis to the Southfield campus or to an existing course delivery site. The anticipated long-term cost of gasoline and the lack of public transportation options in Michigan contribute to the transportation challenge. In some cases, a course may be cancelled at a delivery site due to low enrollment. Offering online classes provides students with the additional flexibility in designing their program of study. Students at all course delivery locations are better served by being able to enroll in fully online classes leading to a degree or certificate.

LTU Online can address student needs in regions underserved by Michigan universities, thereby contributing to the competitiveness of the regional workforce. LTU brings a great reputation to the existing online market, and we can address underserved areas of northern Michigan, the “thumb” region (Huron, Tuscola, and Sanilac counties), southern Michigan, northern Indiana, and northwest Ohio, thereby increasing our name recognition in these areas.

Increased enrollment through LTU Online will enable Lawrence Tech to buffer the demand for on-campus classroom space, potentially alleviating facilities-related cost components of future tuition rates. At the same time, increased institutional capabilities resulting from improvements in technology infrastructure, academic information technologies, digital library resources, and online student services can improve Lawrence Tech’s support for all of its students.

The combination of increased name recognition, increased enrollment in targeted programs, increased faculty collaboration, establishment of new programs, and improved academic and online services to all students should help increase overall enrollment in many Lawrence Tech programs – both on-ground and online – over time. These long-term benefits are possible only by authorizing Lawrence Tech to offer fully online degree programs.

Relevant Commission Policies

The proposed change relates exclusively to Commission policy 1.C.2.b (“Change in Educational Offering”). Lawrence Tech proposes to offer selected existing degree programs through distance delivery methods, specifically via asynchronous and synchronous delivery of instruction via the Internet and videoconferencing.

2. Factors Leading to Proposed Change

Relationship of Proposed Change to Ongoing Planning

The LTU Online initiative is consistent with Lawrence Tech’s vision as articulated in the current institutional strategic plan:

“Lawrence Tech is the recognized regional leader in focused technological and professional education.”

Dr. Lewis Walker has stated his personal vision for Lawrence Tech becoming “the preeminent private university in the metropolitan Detroit area.” LTU Online reinforces this vision by providing additional reach and depth to Lawrence Tech’s academic programs and by positioning Lawrence Tech as a leader in the delivery of high quality online academic programs.

The LTU Online initiative is also consistent with the mission of Lawrence Tech as articulated in the current institutional strategic plan:

“Lawrence Tech develops leaders through innovative and agile programs embracing theory and practice.”

Providing online degree programs is certainly both innovative and agile. Furthermore, the course development methodology established for LTU Online courses is built around Lawrence Tech’s motto of “theory and practice.”

Lawrence Tech’s motto of “theory and practice” and its long-standing commitment to providing education to adult working professionals make the LTU Online initiative particularly well suited to Lawrence Tech’s mission, vision, and values. LTU Online is built on Lawrence Tech’s institutional values of integrity, excellence, trust, and teamwork. These values are reflected in the level of collaboration outlined in this proposal, on the extension of existing capabilities for information technology and instructional technology, on the capabilities of our faculty members, and on the linkage of LTU Online methodologies and procedures to acknowledge best practices.

Current Strategic Plan Objectives

Lawrence Tech’s current strategic plan³ articulates a number of objectives grouped into five thematic areas. The LTU Online initiative supports each of these themes as discussed below:

- 1. Growth and Market** – “Prior plans helped create an enrollment management infrastructure that focused the Admissions Office on building the traditional undergraduate student base, including residential students, strengthening student life, and providing ‘seamless’ and quality student services. Tremendous progress has already been made in these areas. This plan refocuses the University on a market that represents a key

³ See http://www.ltu.edu/community_k12/strategic_plan.asp for a copy of the strategic plan.

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element of its founding mission and where future market opportunities exist – the non-traditional student. The plan also seeks to more closely align the Colleges with the University’s enrollment management infrastructure.”

LTU Online evidence: LTU Online supports this strategic planning theme by targeting development of online programs to appeal to non-traditional students who may be attracted to a Lawrence Tech education but who cannot commute to campus on a regular basis to attend on-ground classes. LTU Online also reinforces the continuous evolution of a “seamless” and high quality student services environment through its collaboration with student services offices.

- 2. Program and Delivery** – “The focus of Lawrence Tech’s Strategic Plan 2004-2005 is overwhelmingly on the core business of the University – the academic program. While the Admissions Office focused on building the traditional student base, the Colleges’ emphasis on enrollment resulted in the creation of new programs – typically graduate programs. This has reinforced the hybrid nature of Lawrence Tech, almost equally divided between traditional and non-traditional students. This plan seeks to ensure equity in service to those constituencies, address the increase in graduate programs, and underscore the strategic intent of the University to be innovative and agile in its programs and delivery. Objectives and initiatives center on faculty development and expectations including the creation of a new Center for Teaching and Learning to promote innovation and excellence; comprehensive analyses of and approaches to adjunct faculty and applied research; improving the use of technology to support instructional delivery; and sustaining a culture to promote student development in and out of the classroom.”

LTU Online evidence: LTU Online addresses many of the objectives mentioned in this thematic area. Lawrence Tech’s online programs are explicitly aligned with academic programs developed by colleges and academic departments. “Equity in service” has been a key objective of LTU Online since its inception, and Appendix G describes the virtual capabilities of Lawrence Tech’s student services units to support both online and on-ground students. LTU Online actively collaborates with the Veraldi Instructional Technology Resource Center, the Educational Innovation Collaborative (EIC) initiative, the University Assessment Committee, and professional organizations to foster a spirit of innovation and excellence in both on-ground and online instruction. LTU Online has also established a comprehensive program to recruit, select, train, mentor, and evaluate adjunct faculty members, and to support applied research projects related to online instruction.

- 3. Constituency Centered Culture** – “Tackling the most challenging objective, this action team worked very hard to develop objectives and initiatives that address the fundamental culture of the institution and how to continue to transform that culture to enable the University to achieve its mission and vision and live its values. This plan addresses staff development and advancement, formalizing a continuous improvement program, the integration of functions, and further engraining strategic thinking into the life of Lawrence Tech.”

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LTU Online evidence: LTU Online is designed from a continuous improvement perspective, with considerable consultation among internal and external stakeholders, extensive use of formative and summative evaluation methodologies, integration with campus-wide academic assessment initiatives, and ongoing collaboration with campus technology and student services providers to continuously improve their processes.

- 4. Educational Campus Environment** – “The prior plan resulted in the creation of a comprehensive Campus Master Plan. This plan maintains that path but stresses the need for the continual updating and connection of the Campus Master Plan to strategic and financial planning. This plan remains focused on the improvement of the technology infrastructure and service and calls for the creation of a Strategic IT Plan.”

LTU Online evidence: A high quality online program requires a continually improving and sustainable campus and external IT infrastructure. LTU Online actively collaborates with the Edward Donnelly Computer Center, the Lawrence Tech Library, the Veraldi Instructional Technology Resource Center, and the Vice President for Business and Finance to develop coordinated long-term technology improvement and budget plans. LTU Online holds the potential for providing increased budgetary flexibility for Lawrence Tech resulting from increased enrollment and reduced need for future classroom facilities.

- 5. Institutional Support/Reputation and Financial Base** – “The plan acknowledges the impressive progress in branding and fund raising and seeks to continue that path through appropriate investments and strategies. In addition, this plan refocuses the University on matters related to financial health, and administrative controls and efficiencies. Finally, the leadership determined to change the way it labels the Strategic Plans. The new plan is identified by the academic year in which it was developed and approved by the Board of Trustees. This Strategic Plan, detailed in the pages that follow, is created once again to challenge and guide the University over the next few years in its quest to become an ever greater center of teaching and learning.”

LTU Online evidence: LTU Online can dramatically increase the reach and reputation of Lawrence Tech. Increased reach and reputation will increase tuition revenues and open new fundraising opportunities through additional business and alumni contacts. These factors contribute to Lawrence Tech’s long-term financial viability.

Rationale Supporting the Proposed Change

Online learning has finally entered the mainstream of the higher education enterprise. The National Center for Education Statistics report, “Adult Education Participation in 2004-05,” shows that 44 percent of U.S. adults participated in formal adult educational activities in the twelve-month period ending in spring 2005.⁴ These programs focused on improving existing

⁴ National Center for Education Statistics, “Adult Education Participation in 2004-05,” May 2006. <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2006077>

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skills, learning new skills, getting or keeping certification, or participating due to employer requirements. Approximately one-third of adults who participate in educational activities reported that they used some type of distance education.

The report from the Sloan Consortium, “Growing By Degrees: Online Education in the United States, 2005,” reports that over half of higher education institutions view online programs as a key long-term strategy, and three of four public university leaders believe that the quality of online programs equals or exceeds that of traditional classroom education (Allen and Seaman 2005).⁵ Over two million students are enrolled in online courses in the United States, and the online market is growing at a rate of 25 percent per year (Ruth 2006).⁶

Lawrence Tech Capabilities

Over the past few years, Lawrence Tech has made significant investments in both information technology infrastructure and instructional technology services over the past few years, and has developed significant capabilities in the development and delivery of hybrid and online instruction. These investments include:

1. Established the first wireless campus in the state of Michigan;
2. Implemented a student laptop computer program for all undergraduate students;
3. Established the Veraldi Instructional Technology Resource Center to provide instructional technology training and services to Lawrence Tech faculty members;
4. Established the Educational Innovation Collaborative to build a community of practice among faculty members in developing innovative approaches to educational delivery;
5. Adopted the Blackboard™ course management system;
6. Implemented the Banner™ enterprise resource management system from Sungard Higher Education;⁷
7. Implemented videoconferencing and web-based conferencing services;
8. Implemented a new web content management system;
9. Implemented a new digital library catalog system; and
10. Established comprehensive technology training programs for students, faculty, and staff.

All Lawrence Tech courses are provided with a Blackboard™ course shell and students are automatically rostered into these shells via integration with Lawrence Tech’s Banner™ system. All faculty members are expected to make use of Blackboard™ and other instructional technologies for their courses, and the Veraldi Instructional Technology Resource Center tracks the use of these technologies.

Lawrence Tech faculty members have developed a number of successful hybrid courses (partly delivered on-ground and partly delivered online) using Blackboard, streaming video,

⁵ Allen, E., and J. Seaman. 2005. Growing by degrees: Online education in the United States, 2005. Needham, MA: Sloan Consortium. <http://www.sloan-c.org/resources/survey.asp>

⁶ Ruth, Stephen, “E-Learning – A Financial and Strategic Perspective, *EDUCAUSE Quarterly*, Volume 29 Number 1, 2006. <http://www.educause.edu/apps/eq/eqm06/eqm061.asp>

⁷ See <http://www.sungardhe.com/> for more information.

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videoconferencing, web conferencing, and other tools. Lawrence Tech faculty developed and delivered several fully online courses, and the success of these initiatives led to a proposal for a fully online MBA program in early 2005.

The use of instructional technology tools at Lawrence Tech is significant. In fall 2004, over 30 classes were taught in hybrid or online format, serving over 350 students in both graduate and undergraduate programs. Synchronous web conferencing was used to support 18 courses serving over 175 students. In spring 2005, streaming video was used in 100 instances supporting eight courses. Video conferencing and webcasting services were also implemented. In fall 2005, Blackboard™ course shells were actively used in 827 Lawrence Tech courses.

Given Lawrence Tech's capabilities and significant progress in developing and delivery hybrid and online courses, Dr. Walker determined in the fall of 2005 that Lawrence Tech was prepared to implement a structured approach to develop fully online degree programs and to distinguish itself in the online market. Three initial degree programs were selected to convert into fully online programs: the Master of Business Administration, Master of Engineering Management, and Bachelor of Science in Information Technology. These programs were selected due to their potential to attract new students, their current enrollment levels, and the level of work already invested to develop hybrid and online courses. In October 2005, Dr. Walker commissioned Dr. Alan McCord¹ to prepare a proposal for a University-wide online initiative, the tasks needed to launch the program, and the long-term budgeting and staffing needs for such a program. The proposal was delivered in December 2005, thoroughly reviewed with stakeholders in early 2006, and was approved in February 2006.

Lawrence Tech is capable of developing and delivering online courses in several formats including:

1. Complete asynchronous delivery using course management systems, streaming video and audio, simulation software, and other technologies;
2. Complete synchronous delivery using videoconferencing with an instructor at one location who communicates directly with individuals or "mini-classes" located in one or more remote locations via videoconferencing hardware and software;
3. Complete synchronous delivery using web conferencing with an instructor at one location who communicates with a number of individual students via the Internet; and
4. A mixture of the above technologies coupled with on-ground activities, often referred to as "hybrid" instruction.

Lawrence Tech opted to offer its first online degree programs in a 100% asynchronous manner using Blackboard™, streaming video and audio, simulation software, and other web-based tools. Lawrence Tech decided to develop and deliver asynchronous degree programs for several reasons:

1. Lawrence Tech's existing technology capabilities and its long experience of using Blackboard™ to support traditional, hybrid, and online classes;
2. The temporal flexibility needed by our target student market, which consists largely of working professionals with heavy work, travel, and family responsibilities;

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3. The flexibility needed by our target student market, which consists largely of working professionals with heavy work schedules, travel, and family responsibilities.

Lawrence Tech is also capable of delivering online courses in synchronous format using videoconferencing or web conferencing, and the course development methodology described in Appendix D accommodates these alternate delivery formats.

Professional Organizations and Best Practices

Lawrence Tech chose to design LTU Online around its technology and service capabilities, its relationships with professional organizations, and acknowledged best practices for delivering online programs. See Appendix C for detailed information on the linkage between the design of LTU Online and acknowledged best practices for online programs.

Lawrence Tech participates in the activities of several professional organizations that have interests in online and distance learning including:

1. **EDUCAUSE** – The nation’s premier organization addressing the use of information technology in higher education. Lawrence Tech is an institutional member of EDUCAUSE and Dr. McCord has actively participated in EDUCAUSE activities for over 20 years.
2. **Sloan Consortium** – A nonprofit organization focused on course redesign and deployment. Lawrence Tech is an institutional member of the Consortium.
3. **American Society for Training and Development (ASTD)** – A professional organization with representatives from business and education. Dr. Pam Lowry, Director of the Veraldi Instructional Technology Resource Center, is an ASTD member.
4. **Educational Teleconsortium of Michigan (ETOM)** – A program of the Michigan Community College Virtual Learning Collaborative focused on developing online learning resources and tools. Lawrence Tech is an institutional member of ETOM, and Mr. Bill Drummond, lead producer of LTU Online, serves as the president-elect of ETOM.
5. **National and Michigan Blackboard™ User Groups** – The user group is an initiative of Blackboard™ to link customers with the corporation. Lawrence Tech administrators, faculty members, and support staff are active in this organization. Lawrence Tech will host the Michigan™ Blackboard User Group meeting in September 2006, and LTU Online staff members will deliver two presentations to the conference on course development methodologies and outcomes assessment, and will participate on a panel discussing online student services.

During the design of LTU Online, Lawrence Tech consulted the documents, “Best Practices for Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs,”⁸ “Achieving Success in Internet-Support Learning in Higher Education,”⁹ the Sloan Consortium’s collection of effective

⁸ Higher Learning Commission. See http://www.ncahlc.org/download/Best_Pract_DEd.pdf

⁹ Alliance for Higher Education Competitiveness, 2005.

See http://www.a-hec.org/IsL_orig_study.html

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practices,¹⁰ the Distance Education Training Council’s “Accreditation Handbook,”¹¹ and the United States Distance Learning Association’s “Principles of Best Practice for Distance Learning.”¹² These documents outline accreditation criteria and best practices in these areas:

1. Institutional context, leadership, and commitment
2. Focus on full academic programs
3. Curriculum, pedagogy, and instruction
4. Faculty Support and student services
5. Evaluation, measurement, and assessment

Based on our thorough planning and considered review of accreditation guidelines and institutional best practices, LTU Online has incorporated a number of best practices in several areas including:

1. **Orientation and Student Support** – LTU Online provides an extensive orientation program to online students, and supports each student individually during their Lawrence Tech experience. This support is provided in addition to academic advising provided by colleges and departments.
2. **Comprehensive Web Information** – LTU Online provides online students with an extensive web site including information about academic programs, use of technology tools, student services, and technical support.
3. **Faculty Training** – LTU Online includes an extensive program for training faculty members who develop and deliver online courses. Training is provided through the ETOM online learning course, through existing seminars offered by the Veraldi Instructional Technology Resource Center, and individually by LTU Online staff.
4. **Course Development Methodology** – LTU Online has a rigorous course development methodology informed by professional organizations such as the Association for Educational Communications and Technology.
5. **Marketing and Promotion** – Marketing plans for LTU Online were developed in cooperation with the University Marketing Department.
6. **Library Resources** – LTU Online has collaborated with the Lawrence Tech Library to integrate Lawrence Tech’s digital library resources into the design of LTU Online courses.
7. **Tuition Pricing** – Tuition and fees for online degree programs are sometimes more expensive than their campus-based counterparts at the same institution. Lawrence Tech determined that high quality online programs could be priced at the same or slightly lower tuition rates than equivalent on-campus courses. This is possible due to the lower facility costs associated with online learning, leveraging of existing University technology and service infrastructures, and careful consideration of how full-time faculty are involved with online course development and teaching as documented by Ruth (2006).

¹⁰ See <http://www.sloan-c.org/effective/>

¹¹ See <http://www.detc.org/accreditHandbk.html>

¹² See <http://www.usdla.org/html/resources/accreditation.htm>

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Identification of Candidate Programs

Academic programs for LTU Online development were identified in fall 2005 in consultation with the senior academic leadership team, including the deans of the four colleges. The candidate programs offered potential to attract new students, and faculty members teaching in the programs had made considerable progress in developing and delivering hybrid and online courses in these programs. The six initial programs identified in fall 2005 were:

1. **Master of Business Administration** – Offered by the College of Management, the MBA program has seen significant development of hybrid and online classes over the past four years. Two fully online classes – Management Information Systems and Leading Organizational Change – were offered during the 2005-2006 academic year with great success. A proposal for a fully online MBA program was developed within the College in 2005. A number of full-time and adjunct faculty teaching in the MBA program are skilled with hybrid and online instructional technologies and techniques.
2. **Master of Engineering Management** – Offered by the College of Engineering, the MEM program shares several courses with the MBA program. A number of MEM students are located at course delivery sites and in industrial facilities, making the MEM program an ideal candidate to appeal to the target market of working professional students with significant travel and personal responsibilities.
3. **Bachelor of Science in Information Technology** – Offered by the College of Management, the BSIT program is offered as both a four-year program on the Southfield campus and a “2+2” completion program in collaboration with community college partners. The BSIT program has also seen significant development of hybrid and online classes over the past three years. Both asynchronous and synchronous online classes are offered to students at the Macomb delivery site. A number of full-time and adjunct faculty teaching in the BSIT program are skilled with hybrid and online instructional technologies and techniques, and program director Dr. Richard Bush has established an online learning community of practice for BSIT and other faculty members to collaborate on improving their teaching skills.
4. **Graduate Certificate in Architectural Management** – Offered by the College of Architecture and Design, this new certificate program is nationally unique and blends architectural coursework with management coursework to prepare architectural practice managers. Three courses comprising this program are drawn from the MBA program, reducing the number of new courses needing development. This program has the potential to attract new students throughout the region and the nation.
5. **Graduate Certificate in Project Management** – Offered by the College of Management, the project management certificate is a popular choice for students enrolled in the College’s MBA, Master of Science in Information Systems, and Master of Science in Operations Management degree programs. Due to the broad applicability of project management coursework across all College of Management programs, the potential exists for attracting new students from outside Lawrence Tech’s traditional geographic area to these courses, either as a certificate program or as an elective concentration within the MBA.
6. **Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Management** – Offered by the College of Management, this unique certificate program has attracted considerable interest in the

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metropolitan Detroit area and from across Michigan. The potential exists to serve new students with an online certificate program aligned with service and collaboration activities coordinated through the Southfield camps. Nonprofit management courses can also serve as a concentration for the MBA program. Opportunities exist for collaborative development and external funding for online nonprofit management courses.

The success of the development of hybrid and online courses in support of the MBA and BSIT programs addressed the need for a flexible delivery system that addresses the needs of working adults who need to commute significant distances to the classroom, or whose work schedule precludes significant travel. These efforts helped develop a cadre of instructors experienced with and committed to the use of hybrid and online delivery systems.

Lawrence Tech may explore offering additional online programs in the future, subject to future Commission approval. Decisions to request approval for additional online programs will be based on the uniqueness of the academic program, the pedagogical potential to develop the program online, the availability of qualified teaching faculty, and opportunities for collaboration with other institutions.

Regional Competition

A marketing program was designed in collaboration with the University's Marketing Department and the Office of Admissions to address LTU Online program objectives:

1. Increasing enrollment
2. Maintaining academic quality
3. Increasing geographic reach and name recognition
4. Improving public relations and image
5. Contributing to the overall health of Lawrence Tech finances

An initial market analysis focused on demographics of prospective students, geographic markets, and regional competition. The findings reinforced the selection of the six candidate programs:

1. **Master of Business Administration** – Lawrence Tech is accredited by the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP) and the International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education (IACBE). The University of Michigan-Dearborn, Davenport University, and Baker College offer the only regional online MBA programs. National online competitors include the University of Phoenix, Capella University, and Walden University. Despite the existence of regional and national competition for online MBA students, we believe we can compete for online students who may otherwise choose to enroll in traditional or hybrid programs.
2. **Master of Engineering Management** – Lawrence Tech's MEM program one of two programs in the region. Eastern Michigan University also offers an online Master of Science in Engineering Management degree through its College of Technology. Lawrence Tech's College of Engineering offers professional engineering programs at the undergraduate level, and its regional reputation will attract a number of students from southeast Michigan's industrial base

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3. **Bachelor of Science in Information Technology** – Lawrence Tech’s BSIT program is unique in the region, with no regional online competitors. Several national competitors exist but they do not have existing articulation agreements with regional community colleges. Lawrence Tech’s BSIT program has existing articulation agreements with Macomb Community College, Oakland Community College, Schoolcraft College, and North Central Michigan College. Additional articulation agreements can be established with other Michigan community colleges with the availability of the online BSIT program.
4. **Graduate Certificate in Architectural Management** – Lawrence Tech’s architectural management certificate is nationally unique with no regional or national online competitors.
5. **Graduate Certificate in Project Management** – Lawrence Tech’s project management certificate is unique in the region with no regional online competitors. National online competitors include Boston University, Duquesne University, George Washington University, University of Maryland, University of Texas-Dallas, and Villanova University. Lawrence Tech can leverage the reputation of its College of Engineering to attract regional students into the project management program.
6. **Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Management** – Lawrence Tech’s nonprofit management certificate is one of a few such programs in the region, with only Indiana University offering an online certificate program. Other national competitors include the University of Central Florida, Northeastern University, the University of Maryland, Capella University, and the University of Phoenix. Lawrence Tech’s program will be unique within Michigan and will be marketed statewide.

3. Approvals Obtained to Implement the Change

Involvement of Constituencies in Developing Proposed Change

Starting with a dialog between Dr. Walker, Dr. Vaz, and the four college deans, an initial proposal for a University-wide online initiative was prepared in the fall of 2005. Many academic and service unit administrators, faculty members, and staff members were consulted during the development of the initial proposal:

1. The Lawrence Tech Board of Trustees was engaged through a presentation to its strategic planning committee
2. College deans and academic administrators were consulted in individual meetings.
3. Ms. Sue Slack, Lawrence Tech's strategic planning consultant, was consulted to review and comment on the proposal as it was being developed
4. A number of academic program directors and individual faculty members were consulted in individual and group meetings.
5. Mr. Bill Wachob of the Edward Donnelly Computer Center and Dr. Pam Lowry of the Veraldi Instructional Technology Resource Center were consulted in individual meetings to determine the infrastructure and instructional technology support requirements for the online program
6. Mr. Gary Cocozzoli, director of the Lawrence Tech Library, was consulted to determine additional digital library resources
7. Mr. Bruce Annett, Director of University Marketing, and his staff were consulted to identify necessary marketing activities to support the initiative.
8. Assistant Provost Lisa Kujawa and Director of Admissions Jane Rohrback were consulted to identify the range of activities needed to support admission of new online students.
9. University Registrar Holly Diamond and her staff were consulted to identify necessary support services for online students enrolling in classes.
10. Dean of Students Dr. Jerry Webster and his staff were consulted to identify necessary student services for online students not visiting the campus.
11. Vice President for Business and Finance Linda Height and her staff were consulted to evaluate financial and costing models.

Several working meetings were held to review the proposal and ensure that the proposal reflected executive and stakeholder concerns. Dr. Vaz approved the final proposal and submitted it to Dr. Walker, who approved the LTU Online proposal in February 2006 for program startup on March 1, 2006.

Dr. McCord was appointed Executive Director of LTU Online, while retaining his faculty position within the College of Management. Mr. Bill Drummond was transferred from the Veraldi Instructional Technology Resource Center to LTU Online in the capacity of Lead Producer. Vice President for Business and Finance Linda Height allocated office space and an operating budget for the remainder of the 2005-2006 fiscal year. Dr. McCord and Mr.

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Drummond collaborated to develop administrative procedures and hired two part-time producers, Ms. Diane Cairns and Mr. Kamal Kakish, effective March 1, 2006.

LTU Online was formally announced to the Lawrence Tech community on March 13, 2006. LTU Online staff immediately began collaborative work with academic administrators and faculty to finalize early online programs and to identify online faculty members. Dr. Vaz and Dr. McCord visited each college faculty to introduce the LTU Online initiative and to discuss its impact on full-time faculty members. Dr. McCord also made presentations to the Faculty Senate and to University administrators and staff members.

Internal Approvals Required

The LTU Online initiative was developed in response to a request from Dr. Walker, and was approved by Dr. Walker in February 2006. A copy of the proposal is available on request. The Board of Trustees was involved in the initiative through its strategic planning subcommittee.

No additional internal approvals were required since the online programs are already delivered by the University. Faculty members teaching in these program areas were consulted during development of the proposal and their input was incorporated in the proposal.

External Approvals Required

In addition to the proposed approval by the Commission to offer online degree programs, no other external approvals are required prior to offering online degree programs. We plan to inform our professional accrediting agencies of the LTU Online program for their records, including:

1. **ACBSP** – accreditation of management programs offered by the College of Management
2. **IACBE** – accreditation of management programs offered by the College of Management
3. **ABET** – accreditation of undergraduate engineering programs offered by the College of Engineering
4. **National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB)** – accreditation of the Master of Architecture program