

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM: 4.C (1) (a)

DATE: April 3, 2013

SUBJECT: New Site Requests – USD, M.A. in Interdisciplinary Studies, Online

The University of South Dakota seeks approval to offer the Master of Arts Interdisciplinary Studies (MAIS) online with select courses offered at University Centers in Sioux Falls, Rapid City, and Pierre, South Dakota and in Sioux City, Iowa.

The site request notes that M.A. in Interdisciplinary Studies graduates have a variety of careers and have gone on to graduate and professional degree programs.

Delivering the M.A. in Interdisciplinary Studies online supports the system goals of expanding graduate education and contributing to workforce development.

Delivery will be supported by self-support tuition. The University will not need new state resources or student fees to implement online delivery.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Authorize the University of South Dakota to deliver the M.A. in Interdisciplinary Studies online as described in Attachment I.

**South Dakota Board of Regents
New Site: Request to Offer an Existing Degree Program**

Use this form to request authorization to deliver an existing degree program at a new site or by distance delivery. The Executive Director or the Board may request additional information.

University	The University of South Dakota
Degree(s) and Program	Master of Arts Interdisciplinary Studies
New Site(s)	Online, select courses at University Centers
Proposed Implementation (term)	Summer 2013

University Approval

To the Board and the Executive Director: I certify that I have read this request, that I believe it to be accurate, and that it has been evaluated and approved as provided by university policy.

President of the University

Date

After approval by the President, a signed copy of the proposal should be transmitted to the Executive Director. Only after Executive Director review should the proposal be posted on the university web site and the Board staff and the other universities notified of the URL.

1. What is the need for this program in this site (these sites)? What is the expected demand for graduates in the site(s)?

The University of South Dakota seeks approval to extend its existing Master of Arts Interdisciplinary Studies (MAIS) online with select courses offered at University Centers in Sioux Falls, Rapid City, and Pierre, South Dakota and in Sioux City, Iowa.

Online delivery will be supported by self-support tuition; no new state resources or student fees will be required for implementation.

Careers of Program Graduates

MAIS graduates are engaged in a variety of careers and have pursued additional/advanced degrees. Depending upon the design of the customized major, graduates are prepared for unique careers or if they so choose, for continued graduate study in PhD or professional programs. Between the years of 2007-2012, there were 42 graduates from the program. Recent graduates are employed in higher education, business and industry, healthcare and mental health facilities, or have opted to enroll in PhD or professional programs. Specific examples follow:

- This student studied Native and tribal issues and natural resource management. Upon graduation, the program graduate obtained a tribal position working on alternative energy and natural resources. The graduate is currently employed at a higher education institution working as a 4H Extension Counselor serving Native populations.

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- This student enrolled in addiction studies, administration, and psychology courses. While completing her program, she was employed as a Behavioral Specialist at a behavioral center in the region. Her program of study uniquely prepared her for career advancement; she now serves in an administrative role at the center.
- This student selected coursework to build upon her interest in American Indian Studies. She was able to enroll in courses to deepen her knowledge of American Indian art, history, government, politics, philosophy, law, and justice. This program graduate is currently employed as a full-time lecturer at a higher education institution where she teaches courses in Hawaiian Studies and Native American Studies.
- This student blended courses in adult and higher education, administrative studies, and political science. Her paraprofessional background, master's degree, and internship experience as a program participant aided in her securing a position in higher education as a Residence Hall Director at an institution in the state of Alabama.
- This program graduate went on to pursue a JD at a law school in New Mexico.
- This graduate has been accepted to USD's PhD program in Political Science. She will begin her program in fall 2013.

The on-campus, MAIS program is among USD's fastest growing graduate programs with a 13% headcount increase from fall 2011 to fall 2012. The on-campus program currently enrolls 31 students, 8 of whom are working professionals who specifically chose the program a means of better preparing themselves to meet their employers' needs.

Extending the M.A. in Interdisciplinary Studies online supports the Board of Regents' Strategic Goals (Policy 1:21) in that it expands graduate education and contributes to workforce development.

According to the estimates released in 2009 by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment Projections: 2008-2018*, there will be an 18% increase in jobs requiring a master's degree by the year 2018. The Council of Graduate Schools article entitled "The Path Forward" provided a comprehensive overview of trends in graduate education that highlighted a gap in knowledge about the relationship between students, university, and employers. The Council of Graduate Schools has encouraged further research and policy analysis in the following recommended areas: developing a better understanding of student aspirations, preparing students for desired careers, signaling career pathways within industries and individual corporations, and strengthening graduate education system that aligns with student success and development of a highly skilled workforce.

Accordingly, the University of South Dakota proposes leveraging the MAIS program's flexible design by offering it online in addition to the traditional classroom environment. Adult learners interested in attaining a graduate degree tailored to meet their unique educational goals and interests, as well as skilled workers looking to facilitate their career advancement with advanced

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learning will find this online program particularly appealing – moreover, viable for those planning to enroll on either a full-time or part-time basis.

The MAIS program requires at least 32 credit hours, with courses taken from a minimum of 2 academic disciplines. As the university already offers a significant number of graduate level coursework appropriate for programmatic inclusion, the online offering would have negligible resource impact. These factors, in combination with the popularity of the on-campus MAIS program bode well for the success of the MAIS online and at our satellite campuses.

2. Is any regental university authorized to offer a similar program at the new site(s)? Is any non-system institution offering a similar program at the new site(s)? If either answer is “yes,” identify the institution(s) and program(s) and explain why authorization is requested.

No other regental university has a similar program offered online.

A similar degree is offered by the following institutions nationwide: University of Central Florida, Western New Mexico University, and Northern Kentucky University.

- The University of Central Florida’s Interdisciplinary Studies MA’s program requires 33 credit hours beyond the bachelor’s degree. Students are required to take a research methodology course, interdisciplinary studies course, and at least 9 credit hours in two separate divisions.
- Western New Mexico University’s MA in Interdisciplinary Studies program requires a minimum of 36 credit hours with up to three areas of concentration. A minimum of 18 credit hours must be taken in one area and at least 9 credit hours in the additional areas.
- The MA in Integrated Studies at Northern Kentucky allows students to personalize their program of study; the program requires at least 36 credit hours with two required courses (research methods capstone and course on interdisciplinary studies).

3. Are students expected to be new to the university or redirected from other programs or both? Complete the table and explain how the estimates were developed. How will the new site(s) affect enrollments in other campus and off-campus programs in the regental system?

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	Fiscal Years*			
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
Estimated	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17
New to the university	8	10	15	15
Redirected from other programs				
Continuing Students		7	16	29
= Total in the program at the site	8	17	31	44
Credit hours, majors in program courses**	72	153	279	368
Graduates				7

* Do not include current year.

** This is the total number of credit hours generated by the majors in the required or elective program courses. The same numbers are used in Appendix B – Budget.

Development of Estimates

New student numbers are a conservative estimate of potential students based on the number of inquiries the recruitment team receives. Statistics for the on-campus program indicate a prospective to applicant conversion rate of 20%, an applicant to accepted conversion rate of 80%, and an accepted to registered conversion rate of 90%. While the conversion rates for the online program may be somewhat lower, the Graduate School is confident it can meet or exceed these goals.

Impact on Existing Programs

The University believes this program will attract a different population of students and does not anticipate an impact to the on-campus MAIS program. However, like the on-campus MAIS program, if a new student is interested in an established degree program (MBA, MSA, EMPA, etc...) over a customized degree after the first semester of his/her MAIS studies, the advisor/program director will encourage the student to apply for admission to a degree program with an established curriculum.

4. Complete the table and explain any special circumstances. Attach a copy of the program as it appears in the current catalog. If any program modifications are requested, attach that form. Explain how the new courses will be delivered. Attach the new course request forms.

A copy of the program as it appears in the current catalog is provided as Appendix A.

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Degree and title	Credit hours	Courses currently available from this university at this site	Courses currently available from other universities available at this site	Courses currently available via distance	Courses new to this university
System General Education Requirements					
Institutional Graduation Requirements					
Information Technology Literacy Requirements					
<i>Subtotal, Degree Requirements</i>					
Required Support Courses					
Major Requirements --Customized	32	32	9	32	none
Major Electives or Minor		*		*	*
<i>Subtotal, Requirements of the Proposed Major</i>					
Free Electives					
Total, Degree with Proposed Major	32 cr hrs	*32	9	*32	*

Explanation of Special Circumstances

The MAIS program requires at least 32 credit hours, with courses taken from a minimum of 2 academic disciplines (12 credit hours each). This is the customized portion of the MAIS and it is designed in consultation with the Director of the MAIS program. Moreover, the program requires an internship of 3-6 credit hours and a research statistics class. Per USD's Graduate School policies, students may transfer up to 9 credit hours from other, regionally accredited universities, but the transfer coursework must be applicable to the customized program of study.

USD's Graduate School currently offers courses in a variety of disciplines. The student will choose courses from disciplines currently extended online. Numerous choices in business, political science, administration, and health services administration are available.

5. How will you provide student services comparable to those available for students on the main campus?

Student services will be provided by the Division of Continuing and Distance Education (CDE) and the Graduate School. Initial information about the program will be provided by CDE, but once the student is accepted into the MAIS program, he/she will be advised by the Director of the MAIS program. The MAIS Director will guide and support accepted students through degree completion.

The University of South Dakota I.D. Weeks Library has long served graduate students engaged in coursework away from the main campus in Vermillion. Finally, technical support will be

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provided by USD's Information Technology Services department. Help Desk services are available to online learners 24/7.

6. Is this program accredited by a specialized accrediting body? If so, address any program accreditation issues and costs related to offering the program at the new site(s).

No, this program is not accredited by a specialized accrediting body.

7. Does the University request any exceptions to Board policy for delivery at the new site(s)? Explain requests for exceptions to Board policy. If no exceptions are requested, enter "None."

None.

8. Costs, Budget & Resources Related to New Courses at the Site: Explain the amount and source(s) of any one-time and continuing investments in personnel, professional development, release time, instructional technology and software, other O&M, facilities, student services, etc needed to implement the program at the new site(s).

A program budget is not provided because the courses required for the MAIS are already offered online. Online delivery will be supported by self-support tuition.

The University does not request new state resources or new student fees.

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Appendix A

Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies:

Please note that the curriculum reflects a proposed modification in progress (Board action expected in April).

Prefix	Number	Title	Credit Hours
The MAIS program requires at least 32 credit hours, with courses taken from a minimum of 2 academic disciplines; 2-3 is standard, coursework should be advisor/director-approved. Fifty percent of course work must be completed at the 700-level or above with no more than 12 credits in one academic discipline.			
Required Course: (3 credit hrs.)			
Research Methods/Statistics course (academic discipline selected in consultation with advisor/director).			3
Must complete at least one of the following: (1-6 total credit hrs.)			
MAIS	791	Independent Study	1-6
MAIS	794	Internship	1-6
Elective (for those with the thesis option)			
MAIS	798	Thesis	1-6
Total number of hours required for degree			32