0. Form NP – New Program Proposal Form

NEW PROGRAM PROPOSAL FORM

Sponsoring Institution(s):   Northwest Missouri State University

Program Title: MA in Strategic Communication

Degree/Certificate: Master of Arts

Options:

Delivery Site(s):   Maryville Campus
online
Northwest - Kansas City Center

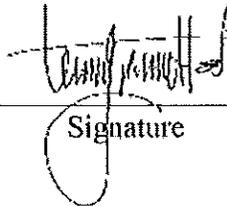CIP Classification: 09.0901 (Please provide a CIP code)

Implementation Date: Fall 2016

Cooperative Partners:

Expected Date of First Graduation: December 2017

AUTHORIZATION

Timothy Mottet, Provost   January 25, 2016
Name/Title of Institutional Officer   Signature   Date

Gregory Haddock, Vice Provost   (660) 562-1145
Person to Contact for More Information   Telephone

1. Form OS - Off-Site Delivery of an Existing Program

OFF-SITE DELIVERY OF AN EXISTING PROGRAM FORM

Sponsoring Institution (s):   Northwest Missouri State University

Program Title: MA in Strategic Communication

Degree/Certificate: Master of Arts

Institution Granting Degree: Northwest Missouri State University

Delivery Site(s):   Northwest - Kansas City Center

Mode of Program Delivery: face-to-face, online, blended

Geographic Location of Student Access: Northwest Missouri State University-Kansas City
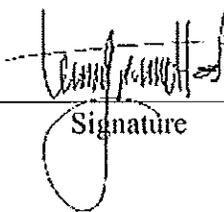
6889 North Oak Trafficway

Gladstone, Missouri 64118

CIP Classification: 09.0901 (Please provide a CIP code)

Implementation Date: Fall 2016
(Semester and Year)

Cooperative Partners:

AUTHORIZATION

 Timothy Mottet, Provost   January 25, 2016
Name/Title of Institutional Officer   Signature   Date

 Gregory Haddock, Vice Provost   (660) 562-1145
Person to Contact for More Information   Telephone

2. Need (Form SE - Student Enrollment Projections)

Student Demand:

i. Estimated enrollment each year for the first five years for full-time and part-time students (Please complete Form SE.)

Year	1	2	3	4	5
Full-time	5	5	5	5	5
Part-time	5	10	15	20	20
Total	10	15	20	25	25

ii. Will enrollment be capped in the future?

No, there are no plans to cap the enrollment. This will be offered as an exploratory and experimental competency-based format that we will also request specific approval from the Higher Learning Commission (substantive change). Additionally, we will seek approval from the US Department of Education to offer financial assistance eligibility for this experiential format of learning, (January 2017).

What method(s) or data were used to project student enrollment for this proposed program?

The department has invited a professional advisory board on campus for many years. Most recently this group has met in Kansas City and has focused on some of the communication programs in addition to the mass media studies which it had focused on originally. On March 20, 2015 the Vice Provost met with the advisory group, accompanied by the visiting Dean of the Booth College of Business and Professional Studies. We had a brief time to discuss this proposed program with that group of employers and it was well received.

As mentioned in the grant proposal, while teaching a Strategic Leadership course at Ft. Leavenworth we were able to gage potential interest from mid-career prospective students. We do not have hard numbers, but roughly 1 in 5 students indicated they did not yet have a masters degree and one like this would be suitable for them.

As an awardee of the state-level Hawthorne Grant to explore and develop this program, a specified amount was set aside in the grant budget to offer scholarships. We will use this to offset costs and attract students in our first cohort in the semester before it is approved for federal financial assistance eligibility.

2. Need (Form SE - Student Enrollment Projections)

A. Market Demand:
- National, state, regional, or local assessment of labor need for citizens with these skills

According to Education Advisory Board, market demand for employees with skills in strategic communication rose 31% from 2010 to 2013. Additionally,Swerling (2014) noted the top ten skills needed for communication professionals, both within the United States and also other nations. Of those ten, our program will include nine of them within our curriculum as major subdomains.

Using an online delivery and a competency-based evaluation system, we foresee the opportunity for a more streamlined and efficient educational process. The reduction of seat time and opportunity to demonstrate competency in a prior learning assessment facilitates a quicker path to degree completion, which would be favorable in a competitive work environment. The use of competency-based education also allows the student-faculty mentor relationship to develop in a way that specifically meets the needs of the student more efficiently than some traditional models of higher education.

Since there are no state-related institutions in Missouri that use competency-based education, we are also creating a program that could possibly be a framework for other institutions to model.

B. Societal Need:
   i. General needs which are not directly related to employment

The opportunity for enrolled students to earn a degree in an accelerated fashion makes this program attractive to many students who might already be in the workforce. By not having to "attend" classes on specific days and times, it can allow schedule flexibility for families and those with work schedules that may not be during typical university hours. Additionally, the focus of the program lends itself well to many different industries and organizational contexts, so as to improve communication across many different population groups. Part of the curriculum focuses on ethics, and traditionally, that has been viewed as an important area to consider in graduate programs.

C. Methodology used to determine "B" and "C" above.

Research in various media and discussions with current users and providers of competency-based education.

3. Duplication and Collaboration: (Form CL – Collaborative Programs)

If similar programs currently exist in Missouri, what makes the proposed program necessary and/or distinct from the others at public institutions, area vocational technical schools, and private career schools?

There are no other programs similar to the current proposed program in this part of the state. Maryville University of St. Louis has a MA in Strategic Communication and Leadership that is described as project-based in a face-to-face environment. The University of Central Missouri has a certificate program, and not a full graduate program of study. With the online opportunity for this proposed program at Northwest we aim to serve a large portion of the state that does not have access to the Maryville campus as well as students outside the state.

Does delivery of the program involve a collaborative effort with any external institution or organization?

No (If yes, please complete Form CL.)

3. Program Structure: (Form PS - Program Structure)

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

A. Total credits required for graduation: <u>32</u>

B. Residency requirements, if any:

C. General education: Total credits:

Courses (specific courses OR distribution area and credits):

 D. Major requirements: Total credits: <u>32</u>

<u>29-610 Foundational Domain in Strategic Communication (3 credits)</u>

<u>29-620 Core Domain in Organizational Dynamics (6 credits)</u>

<u>29-630 Core Domain in Strategic Communication Management (6 credits)</u>

<u>29-640 Core Domain in Project Management (7 credits)</u>

<u>29-650 Core Domain in Strategic Communication Skills and Techniques (7 credits)</u>

<u>29-660 Capstone in Strategic Communication (3 credits)</u>

E. Free elective credits: <u>0</u> (Sum of C, D, and E should equal A.)

F. Requirements for thesis, internship or other capstone experience:

<u>29-660 is the capstone experience for the program</u>

G. Any unique features such as interdepartmental cooperation:

5. Program Characteristics and Performance Goals: (Form PG).

PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS AND PERFORMANCE GOALS

Institution Name: <u>Northwest Missouri State University</u>

Program Name: <u>MA in Strategic Communication</u>

Date: <u>January 25, 2016</u>

(Although all of the following guidelines may not be applicable to the proposed program, please carefully consider the elements in each area and respond as completely as possible in the format below. Quantification of performance goals should be included wherever possible.)

Student Preparation

- Any special admissions procedures or student qualifications required for this program which exceed regular university admissions, standards, e.g., ACT score, completion of core curriculum, portfolio, personal interview, etc. Please note if no special preparation will be required.

  <u>Admission will be based on undergraduate GPA and a scored writing evaluation as part of the application process.</u>

- Characteristics of a specific population to be served, if applicable.

  <u>The intended student is the working professional, typically with 3-5 years work experience and job functions that begin to use and need heightened organizational communication skills.</u>

Faculty Characteristics

- Any special requirements (degree status, training, etc.) for assignment of teaching for this degree/certificate.

  <u>Faculty will be terminally degreed in the academic discipline of Communication or Media Studies.</u>

- Estimated percentage of credit hours that will be assigned to full time faculty. Please use the term "full time faculty" (and not FTE) in your descriptions here.

  <u>100% instruction by full-time faculty</u>

- Expectations for professional activities, special student contact, teaching/learning innovation.

  <u>Faculty will be engaged in reporting requirements of the Hawthorne grant which includes professional conferences.</u>

Enrollment Projections

- Student FTE majoring in program by the end of five years.

5. Program Characteristics and Performance Goals: (Form PG).

    <u>25 at five years</u>

- Percent of full time and part time enrollment by the end of five years.
    <u>75% will be part-time, expectation is 20 part-time, 5 full-time at five years.</u>

Student and Program Outcomes

- Number of graduates per annum at three and five years after implementation.
    <u>12-15 graduates per year at three and five years.</u>

- Special skills specific to the program.
    <u>Students do not need undergraduate preparation in Communication.</u>

- Proportion of students who will achieve licensing, certification, or registration.
    <u>No licensing or certification.</u>

- Performance on national and/or local assessments, e.g., percent of students scoring above the 50th percentile on normed tests; percent of students achieving minimal cut-scores on criterion-referenced tests. Include expected results on assessments of general education and on exit assessments in a particular discipline as well as the name of any nationally recognized assessments used.
    <u>All assesment will be internal to the program.</u>

- Placement rates in related fields, in other fields, unemployed.
    <u>Most of the students will be employed. Expectation is that more than half will use their new credential of this masters program to increase their work title or salary within six months of completion.</u>

- Transfer rates, continuous study.
    <u>N/A</u>

6. Program Accreditation

- Institutional plans for accreditation, if applicable, including accrediting agency and timeline. If there are no plans to seek specialized accreditation, please provide reasons.
    <u>no plans for accreditation</u>

Alumni and Employer Survey

- Expected satisfaction rates for alumni, including timing and method of surveys
    <u>Graduate completers are surveyed at the end of the degree. A specific question does ask what the current position is and what position they seek upon graduation, or have already earned as a result of the degree. As part of the five year evaluation of all programs on campus reports on alumni satisfaction will be studied.</u>

- Expected satisfaction rates for employers, including timing and method of surveys

5. Program Characteristics and Performance Goals: (Form PG).

The five-year review of the program should also include employer information, including satisfaction. Expectation is high satisfaction for employers, especially those that are subsidising partially or fully the student cost.

7. Institutional Characteristics: Please describe succinctly why your institution is particularly well equipped or well suited to support the proposed program.

Northwest Missouri State University has received a sizable grant ($385,000) to create this program. It has the backing of the school faculty, our Graduate Council, and Board of Regents. All of the faculty who will act as student mentors have taught courses online, and are familiar with this delivery method. We are in process of finalizing the degree program by late spring, and will be ready for delivery in the fall.

8. Any Other Relevant Information:

Appendix A - Catalog language of program and course list

Appendix B - Course Descriptions

Appendix C - Hawthorne grant narrative

Appendix D - Hawthorne grant agreement

Appendix A – Catalog language of Program and course list

SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION AND MASS MEDIA

MASTER OF ARTS IN STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

Program Admission Requirements

1. A minimum overall grade point average (GPA) of 2.75 on the undergraduate transcript.
2. Submit with the application a two-page, double-spaced Statement of Purpose submitted with the application for admission. Faculty teaching in the Strategic Communication program in the School of Communication/Mass Media will evaluate the Statement of Purpose as part of the application process, and a score of 3.5 or higher must be met. The scoring guide used by the GRE Analytical Writing Measure will be used. If the applicant does not successfully complete the Statement of Purpose, the applicant's application will be submitted conditionally, with remediation assigned in the applicant's first semester.

Portfolio Requirement/Comprehensive Assessment

A requirement for the successful completion of the degree program is the portfolio. Each student will also write a reflective statement for their portfolio.

Research Component Requirement

Each student will complete the Capstone Domain at the conclusion of the first five domains. While each student will have a unique capstone activity, the majority of the work will be research-based, and will be under the supervision of the student's faculty mentor.

Courses (32 credits)

29-610 Foundational Domain in Strategic Communication (3 credits)

29-620 Core Domain in Organizational Dynamics (6 credits)

29-630 Core Domain in Strategic Communication Management (6 credits)

29-640 Core Domain in Project Management (7 credits)

29-650 Core Domain in Strategic Communication Skills and Techniques (7 credits)

29-660 Capstone in Strategic Communication (3 credits)

Appendix B – Course Descriptions

<p align="center">**NORTHWEST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY**
SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION AND MASS MEDIA
MASTER'S PROGRAM IN STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION</p>

Domain Number and Title:
29-610 Foundational Domain in Strategic Communication

Domain Description:
This domain will introduce the student to the expectations of the graduate program and will orient the student to foundational concepts and skills that will permeate the core domains. It is a compulsory domain for each student.

Domain Objectives/Sub-Domains:
Ethics
--Critiques an action and/or advocates a position from the perspective of multiple ethical systems (e.g. Utilitarianism, Categorical Imperative, Distributive Justice, 60 Minutes test).
--Considers the culture and values of communities in the development of policies, programs, and practices that may affect them.
--Identifies typical ethical issues in a student's particular profession and relevant fields.

Decision Making
--Identifies the underlying issues, problems, and opportunities in a given situation.
--Generates and evaluates possible solutions that are aligned with organizational mission and vision and that see beyond the immediate solution to potential improvements. (Emory)
--Understands effective processes through research and information gathering (e.g. logical assumptions, facts, available resources, constraints, organizational values) in decision making.

Professional Writing
--Demonstrates through research and writing an analytical ability such that ideas are not presented merely in a simplistic summary but provide an original analysis.
--Uses evidence and illustrative examples appropriately and effectively, providing sufficient and convincing support for its main ideas, critically evaluating as necessary, and showing clear comprehension.
--Writes using a logical structure appropriate to the subject, purpose, audience, and profession.

Oral Presentation Skills
--Delivers regular, consistent and meaningful information, ensuring important matters are shared in an appropriate manner with the appropriate audience, utilizing available technology when necessary.
--Refines active listening skills to understand and evaluate the information shared by others.

Applied Research
--Locates, differentiates (compare and contrast) and incorporates numerous forms of reliable and valid information/data to support a course of action. (Application/synthesis)
--Demonstrates knowledge of practices, behaviors, applicable laws, rules, and regulations governing proper research.

Appendix B – Course Descriptions

Advocacy and Argumentation
--Compares and contrasts multiple points of view to construct a cohesive argument to formulate strategies balancing the interests of diverse stakeholders, consistent with desired policy change.
--Evaluates a problem and advocates for a given proposal to convince relevant stakeholders of the merits of the proposal in comparison to other possible outcomes, utilizing refutation and argumentation skills.

Prior Learning Assessment availability:
Students will not be able to submit materials to show competency for this domain. The different assessments will provide the student and faculty mentors with a baseline for work production within the program. Essentially, the work done in this domain will help develop the relationship between the student and their faculty mentor.

Appendix B – Course Descriptions

NORTHWEST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION AND MASS MEDIA
MASTER'S PROGRAM IN STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

Domain Number and Title:
29-620 Core Domain: Organizational Dynamics   6 credits

Domain Description:
This domain will address the areas of organizational culture, organizational communication, conflict resolution and management, and power dynamics. Students will learn theories, concepts, and advanced techniques in these subdomains.

Domain Objectives/Sub-Domains:
Organizational Culture/Communication

- Discuss the historical and contemporary theories and concepts in organizational communication.
- Assess the current culture and communication structure, comprising both formal and informal networks, of an organization recommending appropriate changes as necessary.

Conflict Resolution/Management

- Develop an understanding of the characteristics of conflict and how it manifests itself into professional and organizational contexts.
- Apply models of conflict to cases and assess their utility.
- Recommend conflict interventions based on analysis.
- Produce policy recommendations for conflict resolution.

Power Dynamics/Networks

- Understand theory and research regarding power, influence, and political skill as it applies to the contexts of individual, community, and organizational leadership.
- Explores the ethical use of power, politics, and influence.
- Assess power relationships from their description/observation, and recommend changes that will make meaningful improvements in the relationships and organizational culture.

Prior Learning Assessment availability:
Students will be able to submit materials for competency completion in this domain. There will be no test-like assessments to achieve competency, however students should consider submitting portfolio items such as a series of self-authored conflict resolution plans, a communication plan for an organization, or an analysis of the power relationships within an organization. If a student has a certificate from another institution that relates to any of the subdomains, it may also provide proof of competency.

NORTHWEST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION AND MASS MEDIA
MASTER'S PROGRAM IN STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

Domain Number and Title:
29-630 Core Domain: Strategic Communication Management   6 credits

Domain Description:
This domain will address the areas of brand management, public relations, and crisis communication. Students will learn theories, concepts, and advanced techniques in these subdomains.

Domain Objectives/Sub-Domains:
Brand Management

- Understands theories and concepts related to brand management.
- Implements plans to maintain or improve brand.

Public Relations

- Implements purposes, methods, paradigms, and theories of effective public relations.
- Utilizes appropriate channels and methods by tailoring messages to audiences with different levels of education, interest, and points of view.

Media Relations

- Demonstrates ability to communicate clearly with the media.

Campaign Development

- Analyzes and develops components of public relations campaigns.
- Critically evaluates communication campaign processes, uses, and effects.

Crisis Communication

- Understands differences between crises and major events.
- Critically evaluates a crisis communication plan.
- Utilizes strategic messaging in each of the five phases of a crisis communication – signal detection, preparation and prevention, damage control and containment, business recovery, and reflection and learning.

Prior Learning Assessment availability:
Students will be able to submit materials for competency completion in this domain. There will be no test-like assessments to achieve competency, however students should consider submitting portfolio items such as a series of self-authored press releases that dealt with an organizational crisis, a communication plan for an organization, or a media kit prepared for a planned event. If a student has a certificate from another institution that relates to any of the subdomains, it may also provide proof of competency.

NORTHWEST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION AND MASS MEDIA
MASTER'S PROGRAM IN STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

Domain Number and Title:
29-640 Core Domain: Project Management   7 credits

Domain Description:
This domain will address the areas of data analysis, project management and decision-making/problem solving. Students will learn theories, concepts, and advanced techniques in these subdomains.

Domain Objectives/Sub-Domains:
Data Analysis

- Demonstrates the ability to analyze qualitative and quantitative data.
- Assesses the accuracy, validity, reliability, and integrity of data.

Project Management

Leadership

- Formulates and articulates clear and concise vision and mission statements.
- Motivates teams to realize organizational goals.
- Identifies and manages project stakeholders.

Management

- Demonstrates a clear understanding of the theory and fundamental concepts of management including planning, organization, and control.
- Breaks down projects into constituent parts.
- Identifies and manages prevention of scope creep and missed deadlines, the scheduling process, and the prevention of problems.

Advocacy

- Understands social structures and systems as they influence the process and practice of advocacy.
- Creates strategies for forging meaningful and useful alliances with stakeholders to enable goal completion.

Communication Strategies

- Demonstrates familiarity with a variety of strategic principles by developing messaging recommendations for an organization.

Decision Making/Problem Solving

- Demonstrates various problem solving methods that explain how people perceive and process information to make judgments and decisions.
- Identifies one's own problem solving style and its relative strengths and weaknesses.
- Identifies specific techniques to engage others to participate in decision making on the basis of situational factors.

Prior Learning Assessment availability:

Appendix B – Course Descriptions

Students will be able to submit materials for competency completion in this domain. There will be no test-like assessments to achieve competency, however students should consider submitting portfolio items such as a statistical report with attached conclusions, authored decision making procedures, or a proposal which advocates a certain position, and includes a plan to achieve a particular goal for that position. If a student has a PMP certification, this may also provide evidence to meet some or all of the competencies in this domain.

Appendix B – Course Descriptions

NORTHWEST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION AND MASS MEDIA
MASTER'S PROGRAM IN STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

Domain Number and Title:
29-650 Core Domain: Strategic Communication Skills & Techniques   7 credits

Domain Description:
This domain will address the areas skills and techniques as they relate to written communication in strategic communication settings, oral communication with an emphasis in training, intercultural strategies, and negotiation. Students will learn theories, concepts, and advanced techniques in these subdomains.

Domain Objectives/Sub-Domains:
Written Communication

PR/Marketing

- Create a message for a target audience that either enhances or is consistent with the brand/image or the product/service.
- Select appropriate tools and writing structures/formats for message construction and delivery.

Technical/Policy

- Demonstrate the contextual awareness of audiences and situations to prepare a variety of documents required for common business and technical writing circumstances.

Oral Communication

- Deliver regular, consistent, and meaningful information in an appropriate manner with the appropriate audience.
- Solicit and utilize feedback to improve subsequent/future presentations.

Training

- Design and present training modules as a process that engages learners in a variety of ways.

Intercultural Strategies

- Use knowledge, diverse cultural frames of reference, and alternative perspectives to think critically and solve problems.
- Develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes that foster understanding of how cultural identities, patterns of inequities, and power relations shape particular issues.
- Demonstrate an awareness of language that indicates gender, racial, religious, ethnic, or sexual orientation bias.
- Cultivate cultural self-awareness through careful observation and analysis.

Negotiation

- Develop an understanding of central concepts in negotiation as they apply to various contexts and situations.
- Identify interests and goals of relevant parties within a negotiation.
- Demonstrate the ability to work with others to achieve common/complementary objectives while effectively advocating positions.

Prior Learning Assessment availability:

Appendix B – Course Descriptions

Students will be able to submit materials for competency completion in this domain. There will be no test-like assessments to achieve competency, however students should consider submitting portfolio items such as self-authored documents that dealt with messaging to target audiences, training modules for an organization, or a negotiation plan and resolution. If a student has a certificate from another institution that relates to any of the subdomains, it may also provide proof of competency.

Appendix B – Course Descriptions

NORTHWEST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION AND MASS MEDIA
MASTER'S PROGRAM IN STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

Domain Number and Title:
29-660 Capstone in Strategic Communication

Domain Description:
This domain will consist of a project that utilizes competencies from all four major domain areas (Organizational Dynamics, Strategic Communication Management, Project Management, Strategic Communication Skills and Techniques). The student, with the assistance of their faculty mentor, will design a project that will provide solutions to a simulated or real organizational problem. Prerequisites: Successful completion of the five other domains in the program.

Prior Learning Assessment availability:
Students will not be able to submit materials to show competency for this domain. The different assessments will provide the student and faculty mentors with a baseline for work production within the program. Essentially, the work done in this domain will help develop the relationship between the student and their faculty mentor.

Appendix C – Hawthorne Grant narrative

Missouri Campus Collaborative – Competency Based Education Grant
Submitted November 2014 to Dr. Mike Nietzel, Senior Policy Advisor, State of Missouri Governor's Office.
Submitted by Northwest Missouri State University, Dr. John Jasinski, President.

Establishing Competency-Based Education at Northwest Missouri State University

OVERVIEW
Northwest Missouri State University (Northwest) is proposing to partner with the Missouri Department of Higher Education to develop both the framework for competency-based programs of study and a specific graduate program to be delivered exclusively through a competency-based model. This program, along with the infrastructure necessary to support competency-based education, will directly benefit graduate and undergraduate students seeking to reduce the time and cost to a post-secondary degree. The proposed project will address the following Missouri Campus Collaborative components:

1) <u>Graduate Degree Designed to Meet the Needs of Working Adults</u> - Northwest is proposing to establish a competency-based applied graduate program: *Strategic Communication and Leadership in STEM Fields.* The primary audience for this degree is proposed to be executive leaders with an emphasis on members of the military completing advanced strategic training at Fort Leavenworth's Command and General Staff College. Non-military business leaders, who desire to increase their leadership and organizational communication skills to impact change and improve effectiveness, will also be likely candidates for this new graduate degree.

2) <u>Undergraduate Major Delivered Through Competency-Based Curriculum</u> – In support of the above graduate program, and in an effort to establish future competency-based undergraduate degree programs, Northwest is proposing to develop the staff, faculty and physical infrastructure to support a competency-based initiative that awards credit for prior learning experiences (PLEs). The targeted population for this new initiative is non-traditional, mid-career professionals seeking a bachelor's degree. Northwest is particularly interested in developing competency-based programs to support a future school of allied health where high-demand health fields – including dental hygiene and RN-to-BSN completion degrees – can be delivered to students quicker and at a lower cost than traditional four-year degree programs.

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1. Project Narrative

STATEMENT OF GOALS AND OUTCOMES
Northwest will develop the personnel and physical assets required to support competency-based programs. These programs, when fully realized, will assist participating students in reducing both the cost and time to degree completion. Project success will be defined by meeting the following two overarching goals and associated outcomes:

1) <u>Northwest will develop a 30-hour competency-based graduate program in communication and leadership.</u>
   One of the most effective methods to advance through a professional career is in the acquisition of a master's-level degree. For many business executives and other corporate leaders, however, taking 18- to 24-months out of a career to pursue an advanced degree is neither feasible nor

financially prudent. These potential students, then, are faced with a stark choice of sacrificing an earned position and title to attend school full-time, taking classes over an extended period of time in piecemeal fashion or simply not pursuing an advanced degree while other, more-credentialed persons earn promotions and rank.

By utilizing an innovative, competency-based model, students working full-time have an option to demonstrate core skills ("competencies") gained through years of professional training and experience. These competencies are transcripted, recognized, and treated identical to college credit. The outcome, then, for this second goal is the establishment of a Master of Arts graduate degree that is both more affordable and quicker to complete than a traditional graduate program. Rather than taking a series of prescribed courses or credit hours, students will utilize a subscription-based model where core competencies can be demonstrated and credited. Northwest intends to investigate various subscription models through this project, including: (a) "All you can learn", where a student may complete as many competency sets as possible; and (b) Focusing on a single competency set, where learning would take place at a slower, less intensive pace at a lower price point.

2) Northwest will develop the infrastructure to support the creation of undergraduate competency-based education programs.

The proposed project will pilot a competency-based general education program on the Northwest campus. Competency-based learning is an emerging trend in higher education that allows students to progress through certain courses at an accelerated pace by demonstrating mastered skills ("competencies"). These competencies may be assessed in a number of ways and encourage non-traditional students with significant work experience the option to progress through general education courses without sitting through classes that teach skills already mastered. The proposed project will create the Competency Assessment Center, which will support faculty in developing, assessing and teaching selected general education courses in a competency-based environment.

Outcomes for this goal include the establishment of a physical assessment center where staff identify, write and manage course competencies as well as design and test assessment instruments for reliability and validity. Additionally, faculty and staff members would administer assessments based on prescribed protocols as well as code student artifacts and behaviors determining competency.

Appendix C – Hawthorne Grant narrative

DEVELOPMENT OF COMPETENCY-BASED CURRICULUM

Northwest will draw from over 100 years of experience in educating the leaders of tomorrow to develop a new competency-based model that can be replicated across degree programs and higher education institutions throughout the state in an effort to reduce the cost and time to a post-secondary education. As one of the leading professional education schools in the nation, Northwest in uniquely positioned to blend traditional classroom pedagogy with the emerging field of competency-based education. To wit, Northwest's educational faculty will utilize a five-step process to develop competency-based curriculum for both graduate and undergraduate degree programs:

1) Identify client needs: Northwest will consider the unique needs of an ever-changing student population in designing a new competency-based delivery method. Particular attention will be afforded to working, career professionals seeking post-secondary education;
2) Validate client needs with content specialists: After identifying the needs of student populations, Northwest will turn to on-campus content specialists to confirm both needs and gaps in understanding;
3) Identify competencies and sub-competencies to meet needs: Content specialists will utilize the validated needs list to determine the appropriate competencies and sub-competencies required to make up specific graduate/undergraduate courses;
4) Develop valid and reliable instruments to assess competencies: Assessment specialists will develop instruments that will code and evaluate a portfolio of work for student achievement in a given set of competencies;
5) Develop self-paced content modules designed to develop competencies: Curriculum and instruction specialists will utilize the assessment instruments and competencies list to structure courses within the competency-based framework in a module format, such that course-specific sub-competencies can be demonstratively reviewed even if the full competency is not complete.

FRAMEWORK AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

To foster growing competency-based program needs, Northwest is proposing to develop the infrastructure resources to support faculty developing competency-based courses, facilitate the assessment of students taking those courses and provide feedback to institutional administration that will be charged with developing the processes, policies and fiduciary models associated with a new content delivery methodology. The infrastructure to be developed as a result of this project is generally categorized into staffing and physical plant.

The staffing needed to successfully develop the groundwork for competency-based education at Northwest involves several existing faculty members with the experience and desire to pilot a new content-delivery model on campus. Six assistant professors, in three teams of two, will be charged with researching, proposing and implementing competency-based education at Northwest. Each faculty member will be engaged for one-half (50%) of their time during the project period to address one of three areas:

1) Two **content specialists** will develop the competencies and sub-competencies for each course;
2) Two **assessment specialists** will develop the coding and evaluation protocols for student work to ensure transferability of credit and to maintain program accreditation levels; and
3) Two **curriculum and instruction specialists** will subdivide courses into modules and provide a framework to allow students to learn sub-competencies not yet mastered in a timely, online format.

These six faculty positions will report to the Director of Competency-Based Learning, a new position assigned to an existing faculty member who will serve as not only the director of this project, but also as the connection to competency-based education campus wide. The director will be the champion for competency-based learning and be instrumental in expanding this content-delivery mechanism to other courses and programs on campus.

Also proposed in this project is the development of a physical Competency Assessment Center (CAsC). The center will provide the real-world hub for all competency-based interactions on campus and will support faculty and students alike. The Director for Competency-Based Learning will office in the CAsC, along with the faculty serving as content, assessment, and curriculum and instruction specialists. These faculty will write and manage course competencies as well as design and test assessment instruments for reliability and validity. In addition, staff members will administer assessments based on prescribed protocols and code student artifacts and behaviors to determine appropriate competencies. The CAsC is proposed to be physically located in the B.D. Owens Library, as part of the existing Teaching and Learning Center. A small portion of the proposed funding would help establish the CAsC, including furnishings, computing and network support, office supplies and student assessment portfolio software. Funding for two graduate students is also proposed, who will serve as assessment coders and CAsC front-office support.

COURSES, CURRICULA AND COMPETENCY-BASED EXPERIENCES

In developing the new Strategic Communication and Leadership graduate program, Northwest will approach course development in two ways. Primarily, existing courses will be selected from a number of existing programs – Organizational Communication, Public Relations, Leadership Studies, etc. – and redeveloped using the competency-based framework. In addition, entirely new courses that support the new graduate program will likely be proposed, vetted and offered through the competency-based format. Students will be expected to demonstrate communication and leadership competencies by completing an applied work-based project that the student is responsible for leading and managing as a part of his or her job responsibilities. This degree program will replace the traditional thesis and comprehensive assessment process with the competency-based assessment model. The Strategic Communication and Leadership program will not only be interdisciplinary, but also completely grounded in competency-based learning, allowing students with a significant work history to potentially progress rapidly through the field of study towards a master of arts degree.

As a critical component of this project, Northwest will begin drafting general education competencies to build the framework for completing undergraduate courses through a competency-based model. The work completed during this phase will undergird all future undergraduate competency-based offerings.

IDENTIFICATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF KEY COMPETENCIES

The identification of key competencies lies at the root of a competency-based content delivery method and will be the first step in any course modification or creation. Content experts will work to identify core and sub-competencies in the area of strategic communication and leadership, which is an interdisciplinary degree that blends content from organizational communication, public relations, social media and digital communication, communication design and leadership studies.

Content Specialists working within the CAsC will develop a number of competencies and sub-competencies for the Strategic Communication and Leadership graduate degree, likely including:

- Staffing
- Informing
- Delegating
- Networking
- Monitoring
- Work Entrepreneurship
- Supporting Others
- Motivating and Inspiring
- Developing and Mentoring
- Strategic Planning and Action
- Preparing and Evaluating Budgets
- Leading and Managing Change
- Clarifying Roles and Objectives
- Managing Conflict and Team Building
- Developing an Organizational Vision,
- Monitoring and Controlling Resources.

Similarly, general education competencies will be developed and aligned to specific courses, so as to allow undergraduate students the opportunity to demonstrate mastered skills through previous work

experience, education or some combination thereof. As Northwest explores the competency-based courses associated with allied health, competencies will be developed that support both program-specific assessments (i.e. healthcare) and general education requirements, including oral communication and composition.

EVALUATION OF TARGETED COMPETENCIES

Assessment specialist faculty members will develop assessment instruments, processes, and protocols to evaluate key competencies for both the graduate and undergraduate programs. During the development of assessment instruments, the assessment specialists will pay particular attention to maintaining academic rigor and appropriateness, so as to maintain institution and program-specific accreditation.

In addition to developing instruments and processes faculty will train graduate assistant assessment coders in administering the instruments, processes and protocols to evaluate student artifacts and behaviors for competency. To have a valid assessment process, coders,—working independently—will assess student artifacts and behaviors in a consistent manner. These graduate assistants, under the supervision of faculty members, will be able to fully administer assessments upon full implementation of the CAsC.

Appendix C – Hawthorne Grant narrative

DEFINITION OF FACULTY ROLES AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

As noted previously, the CAsC will be comprised of six faculty members, each contributing one-half load towards this project, and one Director of Competency-Based Learning. Faculty members will be in three teams of two, each focusing on a specific element of competency-based education:

1) Two content specialists will develop the competencies and sub-competencies for each course;

2) Two assessment specialists will develop the coding and evaluation protocols for student work to ensure transferability of credit and to maintain program accreditation levels; and

3) Two curriculum and instruction specialists will subdivide courses into modules and provide a framework to allow students to learn sub-competencies not yet mastered in a timely, online format.

Four faculty members from the Department of Communication and Mass Media at Northwest have expressed interest in developing this online, competency-based graduate program in strategic communication and leadership for business leaders and the military. These faculty members will be serving as content specialists and curriculum and instruction specialists. To be fully prepared to implement the project on day one, these four faculty members will be attending a professional development opportunity offered by Western Governors University focusing on competency-based learning on November 14, 2014 in Kansas City, Mo.

Two additional faculty members with expertise in Educational Psychology will be tapped to serve as the assessment specialists and one faculty leader with extensive higher education leadership experience will serve as Director of Competency-Based Learning and project coordinator.

SELECTION, ENROLLMENT AND EVALUATION OF STUDENTS

Northwest is presently providing a one-week Strategic Leadership Seminar to military personnel through the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth. These students, who are military leaders progressing into significant leadership roles both within and outside of the armed forces, represent a population of career individuals from throughout the country that have indicated an strong interest in an accelerated, competency-based graduate degree. Many of the initial competency-based students at Northwest will likely come from this pool of students. Beyond the military, the Strategic Communication and Leadership graduate degree program will be marketed to business executives, Northwest alumni and professional trade organizations as a time-conscious, cost-effective solution to achieving a graduate degree without interrupting their career track.

Northwest is also in the early stages of discussion with St. Luke's Health System in Kansas City, Mo. to develop allied health-related degree programs through a competency-based model. A number of programs, including a RN-to-BSN completion program, are proposed to be vetted and examined for feasibility through this proposal.

Enrollment processes for both the graduate and undergraduate competency-based programs will be similar to existing enrollment procedures at Northwest, though likely streamlined to address the unique needs of career professionals returning to earn additional educational degrees. Student evaluations will be completed through the CAsC utilizing student-submitted artifacts and video files uploaded via online portfolio software that will be evaluated by trained coders. In addition, a reciprocal course/competency and instructor evaluation survey system will be utilized by competency-based students.

METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS TO EVALUATE OUTCOMES

Project outcomes will be assessed continually throughout the project period through a variety of means and methods:

Goal #1: Northwest will develop a 30-hour competency-based graduate program in communication and leadership.

The outcomes for the first goal are centered on the creation of the *Strategic Communication and Leadership in STEM* graduate program. To be measured successful, the program will be developed in an interdisciplinary environment, drawing from many different existing programs and modified into a competency-based evaluation format. Being approved by the various academic program committees

and the Northwest Board of Regents as a new program of study will also indicate success. The most substantial indicator of meeting the outcomes of this goal, however, is simply the transference of graduate degrees to students in this new program, at a cost and time that is less than a traditional graduate program of similar nature.

Goal #2: Northwest will develop the infrastructure to support the creation of undergraduate competency-based education programs.

The outcomes for this second goal will be achieved by the successful establishment of the Competency Assessment Center (CAsC), including the reassignment of faculty to the center, the training of graduate assistants and the physical creation of the space. Additionally, the outcomes of goal #2 are successful with the CAsC personnel completing the competency identification, assessment instrument creation and protocol development and course division into modules for online instruction. Finally, goal #2 will be realized when students begin uploading artifacts and video evidence of competencies to the CAsC, which are evaluated by assessment coders and granted graduate or undergraduate credit towards degree completion. Concurrently, competencies not yet mastered are administered through an online system allowing only needed course modules to be taken by the students.

TIMELINE FROM INCEPTION TO IMPLEMENTATION

Project implementation will begin immediately in December 2014 and continue throughout the project period, ending grant activities on September 30, 2016. Northwest is currently in the planning stages of a significant redesign and expansion of its outreach programs in North Kansas City. This project will become a cornerstone of the offerings provided at the new Northland Innovation Center in Gladstone, Mo., initially serving the military students from Fort Leavenworth and potentially nursing students of St. Luke's, and growing substantially to include other competency-based programs in the near future. An approximate timeline of project milestones is included here:

Appendix C - Hawthorne grant narrative

Proposed Timeline, Establishing Competency-Based Education at Northwest			
Milestone	Jan15 – Jun15 (FY15)	Jul15 – Jun16 (FY16)	Jul16 – Sep16 (FY17)
Competency-Based faculty recruited	X		
Competency Assessment Center (CAsC) established; furnishings/computers purchased & installed	X		
Graduate Assistants recruited and trained	X		
Director of competency-based learning and content specialists begin competency identification and curriculum development	X	X	
CAsC personnel attend competency-based professional development/conferences and benchmarking trips to out-of-state universities implementing competency-based models	X	X	
Graduate assistants recruited/retained		X	
Assessment specialists develop assessment instruments, protocols, procedures		X	X
Curriculum and instruction specialists develop course modules and prepare online course instruction		X	X
Tk20 Portfolio software purchased for competency-based students; students trained on use		X	X
Promotion/marketing of new graduate program		X	X
Graduate assistants recruited/retained			X
First students enrolled in new graduate program			X

2. Number of Students to be Enrolled

As a pilot program, the number of students to enroll in the new competency-based degree programs is difficult to estimate. Currently, over 700 soldiers are annually completing the Strategic Leadership Seminar hosted by Northwest at the Fort Leavenworth Command and General Staff College. Upon full implementation, as many as 20% (140) may choose to enroll in the competency-based graduate program.

Appendix C - Hawthorne grant narrative

Determining the number of undergraduate students to enroll in new competency-based courses is more difficult to ascertain, although Northwest leadership is confident that non-traditional, mid-career professionals will take advantage of the new programs in an effort to reduce the cost and time to a post-secondary degree.

3. Source and Amount of Any Matching Funds

Northwest is proposing to directly match $40,400 in support of the Competency Based Education project, as follows:

- Competency-based professional development and conferences:
  - $6,400
- Travel to support professional development and benchmarking trips to other universities:
  - $24,000
- Marketing and promotion of the new graduate program:
  - $10,000

4. Priority Occupational Clusters

The graduate program, *Strategic Communication and Leadership in STEM*, certainly cuts across all seven occupational priorities and most closely aligns with <u>Financial and Professional Services</u>. The undergraduate programming proposed through this project to support a new school of allied health directly aligns with the *Missouri Strategic Initiative for Economic Growth* priority occupational cluster <u>Health Care Sciences and Services</u>.

5. Organizational Capacity

Northwest is a state-assisted, four-year regional university that offers over 150 undergraduate and graduate degrees in a range of subjects and emphasis areas. The University, established in 1905 and headquartered in Maryville, Mo., is fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Many Northwest programs are individually accredited by various institutions and boards of governance, including the Accreditation Council of Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP). A nine-member Board of Regents serves as the governing body of the University, with all members nominated by the Missouri Governor and approved by the Missouri Senate. The University averages 7,000 total students across its various programs. For additional information about Northwest, please visit www.nwmissouri.edu.

Upon award, Northwest will dedicate all necessary faculty and staff positions to support this project, as noted in the project narrative section. In addition, the administration of Northwest is fully supportive of this project and anxious to establish competency-based learning on campus.

6. Sustaining and Expanding the Project

Northwest views this project as the launching point for a new, comprehensive, competency-based education model that will better meet the needs of both traditional students and mid-career professionals. After the infrastructure for the project is established by this grant project, recurring costs – including faculty and the Competency Assessment Center – will be maintained through the tuition and fees paid by students participating in the program. Moving forward, this project will create the framework for additional courses and entire degree programs to be offered in a competency-based format. In doing so, career professionals, dual-enrolling high school students and on-campus students alike will enjoy a faster, more cost-effective post-secondary education without sacrificing rigor or academic content.

7. Project Budget

The project budget for this Missouri Campus Collaborative – Competency Based Education Grant proposal can be found in on the following page.

MISSOURI CAMPUS COLLABORATIVE

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (this "MOU") is entered into effective as of March 5, 2015 by and between The Hawthorn Foundation, a Missouri not-for-profit corporation ("Hawthorn") and Northwest Missouri State University (the "University").

WHEREAS, Hawthorn is engaged in activities with the Missouri Governor's office, the Missouri Department of Economic Development and Higher Education and other local and regional economic development organizations for the creation and support of cutting-edge initiatives that are focused on expanding economic opportunities for individuals and business in the state of Missouri;

WHEREAS, the Missouri Governor's office launched in 2012 the Missouri Innovation Campuses ("MIC") for the purpose of developing well-articulated pathways to increase college enrollment and graduation rates, shorten time to degree completion and better prepare graduates for employment, at lower costs than traditional degree programs;

WHEREAS, the Missouri Campus Collaborative ("MCC") has been formed to build upon this work by expanding the MIC program and adopting Competency-Based Education ("CBE") programs at a range of colleges and universities;

WHEREAS, United Student Aid Funds has provided a grant of $2,000,000 to Hawthorn, which will in turn provide sub-grants to Missouri colleges and universities to fund efforts to work with high schools, secondary school districts, higher education providers and the business sector to create and expand dual enrollment programs, competency-based curriculum and alternative credentialing, and by increasing access to apprenticeships and internships;

WHEREAS, the University has requested that Hawthorn provide a sub-grant to the University in support of its MCC projects, and Hawthorn has agreed to provide such sub-grant; and

WHEREAS, the parties hereto desire to formalize their participation in the MCC on the terms set forth in this MOU, for activities planned between December 1, 2014 and September 30, 2016 (the "Term").

NOW THEREFORE, the parties hereto agree as follows:

Section 1.   Grant. Hawthorn agrees to grant $385,000 to the University to be used to support and expand the University's CBE projects, and $450,000 to support and expand the University's MIC program, as more particularly described on Exhibit A to this MOU (the "Project"). Grant funds will be disbursed to the University in February and August each year of the Term upon submission of activities and measurement updates.

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Section 2.   Required Reporting and Recordkeeping.

(a)   The University agrees to prepare and submit to Hawthorn, on each of July 15, 2015, January 15, 2016, July 15, 2016, and October 15, 2016, written progress reports describing Project activities, outcome measures, budgets, and achievement of milestones. All such reports will be in the forms provided as Exhibit B (Activities Report), Exhibit C (Outcome Measures), and Exhibit D (Budget Report).

(b)   The University shall keep all records, receipts, and documents as may be necessary to enable Hawthorn to determine whether or not the funds disbursed pursuant to the University have been or are being used in compliance with all requirements and policies relating to the MCC program. At Hawthorn's request, the University shall furnish a copy of any record maintained by the University pursuant to the terms of this MOU and the University's grant award letter. The University shall maintain all such records for at least two (2) years after completion of the Project.

Section 3.   General Provisions. This MOU, including the Exhibits and Schedules hereto, along with the grant award letter between Hawthorn and the University, contains the entire agreement of the parties with respect to the subject matter herein. No provisions of this MOU may be changed or modified except by written instrument signed by the parties. The terms of this MOU will remain in force at all times during the Term. Any party may terminate this MOU by notifying the other party within 30 days of its intended termination date. By signing this MOU, each party represents and warrants that it has all requisite power an authority to enter into this MOU and to carry out its obligations hereunder. This MOU may be executed in multiple counterparts, each constituting one and the same instrument.
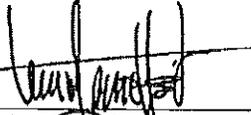
[Signature page follows]

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The parties have caused this MOU to be executed by their duly authorized signatories as of the date first above written.

The Hawthorn Foundation
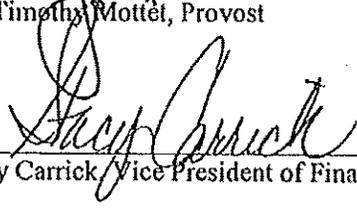
By: _____
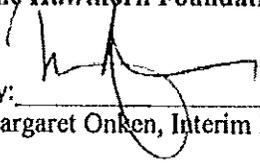
Margaret Onken, Interim Executive Director

Northwest Missouri State University

By: _____ 3-4-15

Dr. Timothy Mottet, Provost

By: _____ 3-5-15

Stacy Carrick, Vice President of Finance

By: _____ 3-5-15

Dr. John Jasinski, President

EXHIBIT A

Project Description

NORTHWEST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY

LEADERSHIP	GRANT COORDINATION
Dr. John Jasinski, President Office of the President Northwest Missouri State University 143 Administrative Building 800 University Drive Maryville, MO 64468-6001 660-562-1110 johnj@nwmissouri.edu	Tye Parsons, Grants Coordinator Northwest Missouri State University 263 Administration Building 800 University Drive Maryville, MO	64468-6001 (660) 562-1147 parsons@nwmissouri.edu

PROJECTS
Strategic Communication and Leadership in STEM: Competency Based Education
$385,000
Northwest Missouri State University (Northwest) is proposing to partner with the Missouri Department of Higher Education to develop both the framework for competency-based programs of study and a specific graduate program to be delivered exclusively through a competency-based model. This program, along with the infrastructure necessary to support competency-based education, will directly benefit graduate and undergraduate students seeking to reduce the time and cost to a post-secondary degree. The proposed project will address the following Missouri Campus Collaborative components:

1) Graduate Degree Designed to Meet the Needs of Working Adults - Northwest is proposing to establish a competency-based applied graduate program: *Strategic Communication and Leadership in STEM Fields*. The primary audience for this degree is proposed to be executive leaders with an emphasis on members of the military completing advanced strategic training at Fort Leavenworth's Command and General Staff College. Non-military business leaders, who desire to increase their leadership and organizational communication skills to impact change and improve effectiveness, will also be likely candidates for this new graduate degree.

2) Undergraduate Major Delivered through Competency-Based Curriculum – In support of the above graduate program, and in an effort to establish future competency-based undergraduate degree programs, Northwest is proposing to develop the staff, faculty and physical infrastructure to support a competency-based initiative that awards credit for prior learning experiences (PLEs). The targeted population for this new initiative is non-traditional, mid-career professionals seeking a bachelor's degree. Northwest is particularly interested in developing competency-based programs to support a future school of allied health where high-demand

health fields – including dental hygiene and RN-to-BSN completion degrees – can be delivered to students quicker and at a lower cost than traditional four-year degree programs

Growing Northland CAPS into a <u>Missouri Innovation Campus $450,000</u>

The proposed project will build upon the recent designation of the Northland Center for Advanced Professional Studies (Northland CAPS) as a Missouri Innovation Campus to create a premier career preparation program for high school students focusing on workforce needs through profession-based experiences while decreasing costs and time for completion of a college degree. As you will note in reviewing the program proposal, STEM and business-related offerings are key strands moving forward. Further, competency-based education will be used to help accelerate the time to post-secondary certificate and degree completion. Increasing competency-based programming – secondary and post-secondary in nature – is one of our long-term goals. Northland CAPS develops career pathways for students with an interest in pursuing a field of study in one of four broad academic areas, known as "strands": medicine and healthcare, global business and entrepreneurship, engineering and advanced manufacturing as well as technology solutions. The benefit of offering experiential learning in these four areas is two-fold. First, juniors and seniors in high school have the opportunity to try different strands in an effort to identify aptitude, interest and passion. Second, upon choosing a broad academically-based strand, Northland CAPS students may take a series of dual-enrollment courses specifically designed to be used towards a degree program in that field of study, minimizing the amount of courses to be taken at a subsequent post-secondary institution and thus reducing time and cost to degree.