



SUBJECT: Lifelong Learning

Policy: 801.1 Lifelong Learning

Effective: November 2006

Revised: October 2012

Reviewed: January 2017

It is understood that all Lifelong Learning Policies are in addition to and/or in accordance with all relevant Board of Regent and College policies and procedures.

I. General

An integral and growing part of the College's outreach mission are those activities termed "professional and continuing education" (workforce preparation, employee training or re-training, business support) and "Community Enrichment" (arts, crafts, hobbies, cooking, health & wellness, music, dance, culture, and travel). In addition, this includes customized training (specialized training for small to large groups of employees). These educational activities are offered through the Center for Lifelong Learning and may be organized under varying instructional formats -- workshops, seminars, conferences, institutes, symposia, colloquia, short courses, online, etc.; however, they are aligned in their focus on imparting information to community members, employers, employees, and other groups in a high-quality, results-oriented manner. These activities are a major component of the community development mission extending the College's resources throughout the community.

This Policy assigns academic, administrative, and fiscal responsibility for all Lifelong Learning activities at Great Falls College MSU and outlines those policies and procedures that govern the conduct of these activities.

The Center for Lifelong Learning is the administrative and operational entity responsible for promoting and supporting the Lifelong Learning activities of the College, except for those specifically assigned to individual departments or other units. Except in these latter instances, the Center for Lifelong Learning coordinates for the on- and off-campus community and works with and through appropriate academic departments to meet selected educational needs of adults and other nontraditional learners.

The operational functions include: development of classes, contacts with prospective instructors and students, needs assessment surveys, publication and marketing of program offerings, creation and review of course evaluation instruments, designing customized training, relationship building, and the development of procedures aimed at creating high quality in the Lifelong Learning activities of the College and assuring their financial viability.

II. Purpose

The purpose of the Center for Lifelong Learning at Great Falls College MSU is to provide non-academic and non-standardized coursework to both the on- and off-campus communities.

The activities are generally considered educational programs that digress from the traditional academic paradigm in one or more of the following ways:

- The activity is of short duration (15 or fewer contact hours);



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- The activity, if of longer duration than 15 hours is offered to test feasibility or demand, or offered to meet a short-lived need;
 - The activity is intended primarily for non-degree seeking students (e.g. community members);
 - The activity is delivered in a place, timeframe, or manner differing substantially from the traditional academic offerings of the College (e.g. satellite campus, place of business, weekends, accelerated, "chunked," etc); and/or
 - The activity is customized for a specific industry, business or group (i.e. customized training).

Lifelong Learning courses may be offered for credit, for Continuing Education Units (CEUs), for industry-specific certifications, for Office of Public Instruction (OPI) Renewal Units or for no credential.

Lifelong Learning activities normally involve off-campus and part-time, non-degree seeking students and are planned, specific educational experiences designed to achieve one or more of the following objectives:

1. To develop and deliver programs that improve skills and productivity in the workforce;
2. To support attainment of education credentials that respond to the needs of the workforce;
3. To provide an array of learning opportunities and a range of delivery modalities that respond to the needs and interests of a broad spectrum of the public;
4. To provide information about new techniques or technologies;
5. To search for solutions to existing problems within the economy or community; and/or
6. To achieve learning for personal enrichment.

III. Key Program, Service and Activity Classification

Lifelong Learning on the Great Falls College MSU campus typically occurs within five (5) main categories of programs, services and activities. These include:

Seminar

A seminar is a presentation on a topic covering some facet of knowledge or skill. Seminars tend to be a blend of lecture and discussion, but may include hands-on participation. Most seminars are non-credit, but can be credit-bearing if they have a minimum of 15 contact hours (which equals one credit).

Workshop

A workshop is similar to a seminar but has a greater degree of attendee participation, interaction, and hands-on exercises. Workshops vary in lengths of time, but typically range from three to 15 hours. Most workshops are non-credit but can be credit-bearing if they have a minimum of 15 contact hours (which equals one credit).



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Customized Training

Customized Training refers to seminars/workshops conducted for a private client, usually a business or organization, specifically for a group of its employees. Customized trainings personalized it to the target population's working environment, tasks or responsibilities.

Institutes

Institutes are especially for the instruction of technical subjects and are generally comprised of numerous workshops/seminars geared towards a specific industry, occupation or demographic. Institutes deal with current topics in a field, updates on current thought or specialized areas of a larger topic, or application of emerging research or technologies. Institutes may yield credits, CEUs and/or OPI Renewal Units.

Conferences

Conferences are meetings or gatherings of individuals within a specific expertise, industry or occupation invited to consult with, discuss and/or present information on a particular topic or set of topics in a related field or subject for the purpose of information exchange or education of the participants. Conferences are usually of short duration with specific objectives. Conferences may yield credits, CEUs and/or OPI Renewal Units.

IV. Academic Oversight, Standards and Controls

While administrative and operational responsibility for the Center of Lifelong Learning at Great Falls College MSU fall under the Lifelong Learning Division, it is essential that academic oversight ensure academic integrity and quality within all offerings. For that purpose, the Joint Directors and Advisory Committee are utilized to assist in the monitoring and evaluation of specific activities related to the member's respective discipline and professions to make certain that the offerings are high-quality, student-centered, and responsive to community needs.

V. Educational Planning, Evaluation and Assessment

The Center for Lifelong Learning at Great Falls College MSU has established a process for the planning, evaluation and assessment all activities (**Process: Planning/Needs Assessment**). The elements and procedures are included in the process.

VI. Awarding of Continuing Education Units (CEUs)

Non-credit offerings through the Center for Lifelong Learning may qualify for Continuing Education Units (CEUs) and OPI Renewal Units. Students successfully completing Lifelong Learning courses or activities can request for them to be transcribed. Those requesting OPI Renewal Units will receive the appropriate form, completed and signed by the Center for Lifelong Learning, for them to submit to OPI for their Renewal Units. The award of these will adhere to the Continuing Education Unit (CEU) Procedure (**See Policy 801.4 Awarding of Continuing Education Units**).



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VII. Professional and Continuing Education and Community Enrichment Activity Approval Procedure

Lifelong Learning offerings at Great Falls College MSU must meet certain standards. For quality assurance purposes and record keeping, offerings follow the Activity Approval process (**Process: Activity Approval**). The process provides clear guidelines and supporting forms for the development of Lifelong Learning activities.

VIII. Program Evaluation of Lifelong Learning

Program evaluation of Lifelong Learning offerings and activities through the Center for Lifelong Learning is conducted on an annual basis and is used to identify needed improvements for the goal-setting processes of both the College and Division.

The strategic plan is evaluated annually. Results are analyzed at the end of each academic year and reported to administration.

Benchmarks for program success are identified on an annual basis and become the goals and objectives for the following year. This process involves input from Lifelong Learning staff members, Advisory Committee and others as needed.

The division promotes continuous quality improvement by measuring and collecting data from various sources. This data is used to plan and implement the strategic plan, as well as make decisions on offerings.

IX. Minors in Lifelong Learning Classes

The Center for Lifelong Learning offers summer camps for children in a range of ages. Children are considered to be anyone under the age of 18. In order to enroll in a summer camp, children must have their parent/guardian signed permission.

If a child would like to register for a Lifelong Learning class geared towards adults, it is left up to the discretion of the instructor. If the instructor agrees to allow the child in to the class, then a parent/guardian must provide signed permission.

Children are not permitted in Lifelong Learning activities unless the activity falls under one of the instances above.

For more information about working with children and minors see policy 402.25. For more information about minors on campus see policy 605.1.