



Request for Institutional Change
**Change in Educational Site and in
Relationship with the Commission**

CHAPTER TEN: REQUEST FOR INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE - CHANGE IN RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COMMISSION

Introduction

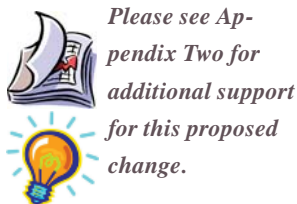
The mission statement of the university reads: “MidAmerica Nazarene University is a comprehensive liberal arts university offering undergraduate and selected professional and graduate degrees. Sponsored by the North Central Region of the International Church of the Nazarene, the University is committed to serving the church and its global missions”.

A Christian community in the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition, MidAmerica Nazarene University seeks to transform the individual through intellectual, spiritual, and personal development for a life of service to God, the church, the nation and the world.”¹

Currently, undergraduate students are recruited primarily from a seven-state educational zone which includes Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Iowa, South Dakota, North Dakota and Minnesota. Graduate students generally matriculate from the Kansas City metropolitan area and surrounding communities into curricula designed primarily for the convenience of full-time working professionals. Programming for MidAmerica Nazarene University is currently authorized by The Higher Learning Commission to be delivered through on campus, off campus and limited online means.

Proposed Change

MidAmerica Nazarene University requests permission amend restrictions relative to off campus degree sites so that the Commission’s Streamlined Approval Process currently available for the B.A. degree completion program and the Master of Education degree is also available for the bridge from R.N. to BSN for registered nurses, the Master of Business Administration (MBA), the Master of Arts on Organizational Administration (MAOA) and the Master of Arts in Counseling (MAC) at off campus sites within the approved 60-mile radius from the Olathe campus and within the greater Kansas City metropolitan area. As part of this plan, the University seeks authorization to further develop its educational site in Liberty, Missouri to include the R.N. to B.S.N., M.B.A., M.A.O.A. and M.A.C. degrees.



Please see Appendix Two for additional support for this proposed change.

The University is currently authorized by The Higher Learning Commission and the Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE) to offer the Master of Education and the B.A. completion program at its Liberty, Missouri educational site.² MNU is also approved by the Department of Education to offer federal aid at the Liberty site.

¹ 2008-2009 MNU Catalog, p. 4
² Appendix 2A - Approvals of HLC and MDHE

All of the proposed additional programs have operated successfully for a number of years on the main campus in Olathe, Kansas and at off campus sites approved by The Higher Learning Commission.

Off-Site Initiatives

It is worth noting that MidAmerica Nazarene University has successfully offered approved programming through off-site initiatives previously. Innovative Adult Education offered the Management and Human Relations (MHR) program at three off-site locations from 2000 to 2005. With all three locations, the IAE division recruited, matriculated, and educated students with the exact same degree program as offered on the main Olathe campus.

The first off-site initiative was at Sprint North Supply in Gardner, Kansas. Sprint offers a generous tuition benefit to their employees. We offered three groups at the SNS location. We discontinued offering the program at SNS after Sprint laid off a considerable portion of their work force. The classes at SNS were dwindling in size. There just were not many employees left who did not have a bachelor's degree. This was a successful endeavor that had run its course.

In 2002 IAE offered one group at the Honeywell plant in Lawrence, Kansas. Shortly after the first group started, Honeywell experienced lay-offs as well. Once again the recruiting pool dwindled. Honeywell also has a generous tuition benefit for their employees. Shortly after our initiative with Honeywell in Lawrence, the plant closed.

The last off-site initiative was to hold classes for city employees at the city of Olathe municipal building. The intent of this effort was to build positive relations in the MNU community. We had many city employees going through our program and they asked if we would be willing to offer MHR at their location. IAE held one group at the city building, just down the street from MNU. The effort was successful in building relationship with our neighbors. We discontinued the off-site offering when we discovered that most of the students would rather come to the MNU campus for classes to be a part of the MNU experience.

In addition, Graduate Studies in Education has been offered since 2002 in a blended format through an approved partnership with the North Kansas City School District.

While each of the above initiatives was successful and ran its full course, the University learned from these experiences that its identity in the distance education community could be cloaked by the larger presence of its corporate partners. By contrast, the Liberty, Missouri educational site has a separate presence in the North Kansas City community which is uniquely MidAmerica and serves numerous employers and students in that educational market.

Expected Outcomes of Proposed Change

Expected outcomes of the proposed change are continued enrollment growth in off campus courses through the specific programs, increased access to educational opportunities for candidates in the university's denominationally affiliated educational zone, and expanded opportunities for consumers in the greater Kansas City metro to enhance professional skills through both basic and advanced training. Ultimately it will allow MidAmerica Nazarene University to continue to be a best-practice institution in the use of innovative instructional and information technology. The expected enrollment increase will drive a source of revenue that will enable the programs to be fully self-sufficient and will generate a return rate that will have a positive affect on the total financial picture of the school.

Enrollment in the programs on the Olathe campus has maintained consistent enrollment. Table 10-1 shows the growth in the number of students during the past three academic years in the programs for which the change is being requested.

Table 10-1: Enrollment Patterns for MBA, MAOA, RN to BSN, MAC

Program	2006	2007	2008
MBA	85	95	86
MAOA	30	20	48
MAC	47	63	67
RN to BSN	0	6	27

There is every reason to believe this growth will continue in the future as the trend toward working adult students enrolling in off campus and/or online learning courses and degrees continues nationwide and throughout the Midwest. The university anticipates continued enrollment growth in its existing course offerings and additional enrollment from master's degree course offerings initiated in 2006 – 2007.

MidAmerica Nazarene University's Master of Arts in Organizational Administration, Master of Business Administration, Master of Arts in Counseling and RN to Bachelor of Science in Nursing are financially self-supporting³. The university anticipates this financial situation will continue and improve by offering programming through an off campus site. Cost-comparison analyses revealed that MidAmerica Nazarene University's fees are below market when judged against those of other universities in the region. Furthermore, the income-generating potential of operating these programs from an off campus site is significant. A sample income model based on conservative enrollment is included and projects a first-year profit in excess of \$14,000 and averaging over \$322,000 annually for the next five years.

³ Appendix 2B

Impact of Proposed Change

The proposed change will have two primary results. First, educational access for place-bound professionals will be significantly increased. As shown in Table 2 below, the number of students enrolled in the last two years from geographic areas away from the greater metropolitan Kansas City area has increased. Degree programs offered only on the Olathe campus limit the number of matriculating students because of distance, schedule of classes, and current professional and personal responsibilities carried by potential enrollees.

Commission Policy Relevant to Proposed Change

Two commission policies are relevant to this request. First, the Streamlined Site Approval Process (The Handbook of Accreditation, Commission Policy 3.2(d)3a) is relevant because the institution is seeking extended eligibility for its existing streamlined site approval authorization. Second, the Changes in Educational Sites policy (The Handbook of Accreditation, Commission Policy 3.2(d)3) is relevant because MidAmerica is seeking permission to add additional degree programs to its Liberty, Missouri educational site. Currently, the University is authorized to offer the B.A. completion program and the Master of Education degree in Liberty, Missouri. MidAmerica Nazarene University seeks approval to offer 100% of the following degree programs at its Liberty site: Master of Business Administration, Master of Arts in Organizational Administration, Master of Arts in Counseling and the RN to BSN bridge program for registered nurses.

Factors Leading the Institution to Undertake Proposed Change

Relationship Between Proposed Change and Ongoing Institutional Planning

The Mission Statement of MidAmerica Nazarene University challenges administration, faculty, staff and students to develop a local, regional, national and global mind set. Understanding the Christian heritage in light of reaching others with an important life changing message, this challenge also seeks to prepare students, who will contribute positively to a cosmopolitan society. Through the Church of the Nazarene denominational structure, MidAmerica Nazarene University is assigned an educational zone labeled the North Central Region to recruit, provide services, and gather support for programs. This opportunity to reach a larger professional population with MidAmerica Nazarene University's mission with an effective implementation of a multi-disciplinary off campus site fulfills the strategic initiative of providing services to a salient group of our primary stakeholders in the greater Kansas City metropolitan area as well as to those on the region and beyond who may not be denominationally affiliated.

A Likert-scale interest survey was sent to 2,000 carefully selected homes in the Liberty target area including the city of Liberty, Missouri, and surrounding towns. Care was taken to match the de-

mographics of graduate students who had enrolled in programs on the main campus in Olathe. The results are shown in the following tables:

*Interest in which program:

Table 10-2: Needs Analysis for Liberty site

Program	% Interested
Undergraduate degree completion	34.2%
Master of Education	28.6%
Master of Business Administration	34.2%
Master of Arts in Organizational Administration	11.4%
Master of Arts in Counseling	20.0%
RN to BSN	5.7%

*Percentages equal more than 100% as several respondents indicated interest in more than one program.

Table 10-3: Needs Analysis for Liberty site

Impact of program(s) being offered by Christian school		Importance of program being geared to working professional		Interest in attending MNU in Liberty	
No impact	40.0	No importance	5.7	No interest	11.4
Minimal impact	11.4	Minimal importance	5.7	Minimal interest	17.1
Some impact	40.0	Some importance	14.2	Some interest	48.6
High impact	5.7	High importance	71.4	High interest	20.0

The data indicates stronger interest in the degree completion program offered by the Innovative Adult Education division, the Master of Business Administration and the Master of Education degrees. Less interest was demonstrated in the Master of Arts in Counseling and the Master of Organizational Administration degrees. The least interest was shown in the RN to BSN degree completion program. However, a separate instrument has been deployed specifically in the medical community to better ascertain interest in the RN to BSN option.

The impact of the various programs being offered through a specifically Christian perspective was about evenly divided with roughly half indicating that it did matter and the other half indicating that it did not. This has been consistent with the findings on exit surveys given at the Olathe campus.

Respondents were overwhelmingly supportive of the convenience factors of the programs being centered around the schedules of working professionals and having them offered through the Liberty campus. Almost 90% endorsed the schedule being formulated for the convenience of working professionals and nearly 70% liked the idea of offering courses in Liberty.

According to the U.S. Department of Education, total fall enrollment at member campuses of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU) grew significantly more than enrollment

in other segments of higher education from 1999-2004. CCCU campuses grew 70.6 percent, from 134,592 students in 1990 to 229,649 students in 2004. All public four-year campuses grew 12.8 percent in the same time frame; all independent four-year campuses grew 28 percent; and all independent religious four-year campuses grew 27.5 percent. The CCCU reports that while the latest numbers from U.S. Department of Education are from 2004, many CCCU campuses report record enrollment for the fall of 2005 and 2006. As a member of CCCU, MidAmerica Nazarene University continues to explore information and data from CCCU membership to help increase enrollment opportunities. An off campus site is one component of an overall plan to help the University grow in enrollment and subsequent revenue.

Involvement of Various Constituencies in Developing Proposed Change

Whenever a decision is made to offer a course or degree by alternative means, a deliberative and collaborative effort involving the academic department chairperson and faculty, an advisory council, the president's cabinet, university graduate and adult council, the associate dean of graduate and adult studies, and faculty assembly is required. The formal and necessary steps in the process are outlined in the governance structure.

The development of an off campus site has been approved by the Graduate and Adult Council, Faculty Assembly, President's Cabinet and the Board of Trustees.

Necessary Approvals Obtained to Implement Proposed Change

Internal Approvals Required and Confirming Documentation

A formal process is followed to obtain internal approvals. It begins at the department faculty level and progresses to an advisory council, division committee, associate dean for adult and graduate studies, graduate and adult council, faculty assembly, president's cabinet and finally where required, the board of trustees. This process is outlined in the attached governance structure.

External Approvals Required and Confirming Documentation

Under Missouri law, MidAmerica Nazarene University is eligible for exemption from the requirements of the Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE) Proprietary School Certification Program Approval because MNU is a not-for-profit religious institutions accredited by a U.S. Department of Education recognized accrediting commission. None of the programs under discussion are certificate issuing therefore, no external approvals are required. However, in the spirit of open cooperation, MidAmerica Nazarene University has sought and obtained such approval for all programs to be offered at the Liberty, MO site. Prior approval from the Missouri Department of Higher Education for the Bachelor of Arts in Human Relations and the Master of Arts in Education had been previously granted.⁴

⁴ Appendix 2A - Confirmation of final approval for proposed Liberty site degree programs by MDHE

Possible Impact of Proposed Change on Challenges Identified by Commission

In its February 1999 Team Report, The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) identified institutional challenges and provided advice and suggestions for improvement which are related to and may be affected by this proposed change.

First, the Commission encouraged MidAmerica Nazarene University to “develop and implement recruitment strategies that will allow the institution to achieve its admission goals in today’s highly competitive environment.” This Request for Institutional Change is one of several new ways that MidAmerica Nazarene University is responding to the Team Report by developing new program delivery mechanisms which will, in turn, aid in the recruitment of students and further allow the university to achieve its admission goals in a highly competitive environment. This report shows a trend analysis in the demand for an off campus site at MidAmerica Nazarene University and makes the case that the proposed change will positively impact recruitment.

Second, HLC recognized that MidAmerica Nazarene University had a “high percentage of debt” which needed to be reduced. This Request for Institutional Change is one measure to address the commission’s concern by providing new streams of revenue which will assist the University in meeting its budget and retire existing debt. This report makes the case that MidAmerica Nazarene University’s off campus site offerings are financially self-supporting and will help the institution’s balance sheet rather than hinder it.

Third, the commission encouraged MidAmerica Nazarene University to “develop a plan to strengthen the image of the university in Olathe and the surrounding area.” On page 23 of the team report, the evaluators cite comments from community members who said “that the University was the ‘best kept secret’ in town” and then go on to recommend that “there could be more attention given to developing closer ties with the community.” MidAmerica Nazarene University has responded to this concern in a variety of ways since its last self-study. There are several current initiatives underway to strengthen MidAmerica Nazarene University’s “brand” identity and it is suggested that this Request for Institutional Change plays an important role in the overall strategy. An off campus site will help to lift the veil of secrecy surrounding the University and make the University’s offerings more accessible to Olathe and the surrounding area.

Finally, in its 1999 report, the evaluation team identified other institutional challenges and provided additional advice and suggestions. These other items are not directly connected to the Request for Change and would only be impacted tangentially.

Institution's Plans to Implement and Sustain Proposed Change

Faculty and Staff Involvement to Accomplish Proposed Change

Included in this request for change are maps detailing various processes engaged as the initiative has been developed.⁵

Full-time faculty members from MidAmerica Nazarene University who carry the proper credentials and who are content experts may apply to teach courses offered through the off campus site. When adjunct faculty members desire to teach at an off campus site, their credentials are reviewed by the appropriate program director and associate dean of adult and graduate studies to ensure they meet these guidelines and that there is a clear mission fit with the institution. Once approved, the appropriate program director, associate dean for graduate and adult studies and the vice-president for academic affairs issue contracts for faculty to teach in the off campus site programs. Faculty vitas for additional Liberty educational site programs are included in the virtual resource room.⁶

Curriculum Development

Department faculty, program director, the associate dean for graduate and adult studies and the graduate council approve all curriculum decisions. As is the case with all courses and programs, faculty ensures that the demonstration of skill development in analysis, comprehension, communications, and research is an essential part of curriculum design. In each of the respective programs, curricular course development is accomplished by means of a curriculum committee of content experts with appropriate credentials and degrees. Current degree programs have been developed using accepted standards⁷. The courses and total number of hours for the programs and degrees to be offered at the off campus site are identical to those of the existing on campus degree programs.

Evaluation of Instruction and Programs

The same methods and process for outcomes assessment detailed previously in this document will be used to evaluate Mid America's on campus and off campus site courses. Students in each course will evaluate faculty teaching and program qualities. The evaluation will tabulate the results which will be reviewed by the respective program director and site developer. Instructors are also evaluated regularly through observation of their course activities with written feedback provided to instructors for each course.

Administrative Structure Necessary to Support Proposed Change

The management of courses and degrees is a collaborative effort between Graduate Studies in Management for the Master of Arts in Organizational Administration (MAOA), and the Master of Business Administration (MBA); Graduate Studies in Counseling for the Master of Arts in Counseling (MAC); the Nursing Division for the RN to BSN, and the Office of the Associate Dean for Graduate and Adult Studies. The content and development of curricula and courses within the program is the

⁵ Appendix 2D

⁶ <http://resourceroom.wiki.zoho.com/Faculty-roster-and-teaching.html>

⁷ Appendix 2E

prerogative of the respective academic unit. The same administrative procedures used for developing on campus courses are used for developing courses delivered at an off campus site⁸. The office of the Associate Dean for Graduate and Adult Studies in collaboration with the Site Developer administers the admission and enrollment management of the various programs for which this specific change is being requested.

The Site Developer in collaboration with the specific Program Director will be charged with performing the primary advising function for courses and programs. Online advising information is readily available for all graduate students both through the MidAmerica Nazarene University website and through its course management system, Blackboard. Additional assistance is provided as needed through the respective program office, director and other full time faculty members assigned to this program.

Leadership Role

The overall administrative leadership of off campus site learning at MidAmerica Nazarene University is currently the responsibility of the Associate Dean for Graduate and Adult Studies. Supervisory leadership for off campus site learning is the collaborative responsibility of the Site Developer and the respective program director. This includes general advising, registration, receipt of payment, and issuance of Blackboard passwords to off campus site students. The Site Developer's staff comprises of one full-time professional and one full-time support staff. The off campus site also is responsible for establishing and scheduling classes, initiating contracts with approved instructors, and monitoring the contracts of faculty for teaching courses.

The Site Developer for the off campus site is a full time, eleven month administrative position responsible for managing the programs to be delivered at this facility.

Support Services and Learning Resources for Off campus Site Students

Student Support Services

Student eligibility for and admission to an off campus site course is governed by the same requirements governing on campus courses.

Library Resources

MidAmerica Nazarene University's Mabee Library provides access to a variety of library resources and services to electronic distance education students online, by telephone, and through the mail. Services include:

- Electronic delivery of articles in the library's collection
- Electronic & postal delivery of articles and books from the collections of other institutions

8 Appendix 2E

- Postal delivery of books in the library's collection
- Research assistance via online chat, e-mail, and telephone
- Online access to the library's catalog
- Online access to a variety of research databases and indexes, including full-text periodical articles
- Online access to reference guides

Mabee Library also provides information to faculty on copyright protocols in the creation of instructional materials for electronic distance education courses.

Academic Advising

Off campus site students receive advising for the degree program through the respective program faculty throughout their degree program. Off campus site students have access to advisory information through the Blackboard course management system as well as the respective program office.

Financial Aid Counseling

Information concerning financial aid is readily available to online learning students through MidAmerica Nazarene University's web site⁹. Counseling services also are available by e-mail and telephone.

Financial Capacity to Implement and Sustain Proposed Change

Delivery of an off campus site for MidAmerica Nazarene University is not without precedent. In conjunction with local enterprises, the Innovative Adult Education Division has delivered its entire curriculum sequence at off campus sites in partnership with Sprint and Honeywell. Additionally, Graduate Studies in Education has delivered its Master of Education Technology (MET) degree for the last several years through the North Kansas City School system.

MidAmerica Nazarene University has always been willing and able to locate funding for new programs which it deems viable. The Master of Educational and baccalaureate Management of Human Relations have been in existence for nearly twenty years. Each was subsidized out of operating expenditures and both have consistently returned 50% to the institution over annual operating costs. Similarly, the Master of Arts in Counseling, Master of Education Technology and Master of Arts in Organizational Administration have been part of graduate programming for nearly a decade. The graduate and adult arm of MidAmerica Nazarene University consistently demonstrate financial self-sufficiency and return 50% or more to the university's operating budget¹⁰.

9 www.mnu.edu/services/sfs/

10 Appendix 2B

Strategies to Evaluate Proposed Change

Measures for Documenting Achievement of Expected Outcomes

Each academic year as required by The Higher Learning Commission, the National Council on the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), and by MidAmerica Nazarene University's outcomes assessment department, all programs collect course assessment data. Data are analyzed annually and summary reports of results are created. The director of each specific program and faculty review the results and make appropriate adjustments as needed for program improvement according to the prescribed system as described earlier.¹¹ Liberty, Missouri degree programs will be accountable to the same respective academic units as their counterparts on the Olathe, Kansas campus and will follow the same assessment protocol as the Olathe campus. The Site Developer of the Liberty campus will assist the respective academic units in the collection of data.

Integration of Assessment of Student Learning into Assessment Program

The measurement of student performance in its off campus site courses is the responsibility of the respective program. The individual unit assessment plans indicate the specific methodology to be used. In most instances, student performance in off campus site classes is measured in the same way it is measured in on campus classes. Students enrolled in MidAmerica Nazarene University's off campus site offerings are engaged in assessment initiatives comparable to those of their on campus counterparts. The direct and indirect assessment of learning by off campus site students is clearly integrated into the institution's comprehensive assessment program.

For all courses, the assessment emphasis is focused largely on student created work. Through various means, students are asked to implement learning activities in their classroom settings and write in approved writing styles and methods the results of their lesson implementation. An overall objective of the each of the programs is acquisition and implementation of best classroom practices. All final projects or written papers are a compilation of course objectives and best practice concepts learned throughout the class. Assessment also occurs through discussion questions developed for each course. All written and discussion forum assignments are assessed against each programs' internally developed rubrics.

Selected predetermined assessment assignments have been designated for the overall program assessment. These are collected from program instructors, evaluated and submitted to the University Outcomes Assessment System as evidence of the quality work accomplished in each course. The Outcomes Assessment System committee periodically reviews with each program progress and quality suggesting revisions or improvements as needed.

11 The university assessment plan is available at www.assesslearningatmnu.wiki.zoho.com.