

LAURENTIAN UNIVERSITY GUIDELINES STATEMENT ON NON-CREDIT PROGRAMMING

Preamble

The Centre for Continuing Education views non-credit programming as an ideal means by which Laurentian University can increase its participation in and contributions to the external community. Non-credit activities and courses provide innovative and flexible programming, professional training and opportunities for specialized retraining of the workforce.

The Laurentian University Strategic Plan states that "priority will be given to courses and programmes in the development of learning skills, in executive development, in the management of small businesses and the health sector, and to those who complement and support other regional academic programming (in close consultation with the appropriate faculties and schools)". Given this strategic direction, Continuing Education through non-credit activities can participate in achieving this objective.

In the last five years a variety of non-credit programmes have been mounted by Continuing Education. Activity levels increased in this area over the last two years as a result of close working relationships established with community organizations.

As stated in the report of the Senate Executive Committee dated April 1982, it is the wish of the Senate Executive that "all such courses or activities should be channelled through the academic unit involved and co-ordinated by the Centre for Continuing Education". To meet this objective, guidelines are being proposed to assist the Centre and academic units in the programming of non-credit activities at the University.

Non-Credit Programming

The Centre for Continuing Education strives to develop and implement a variety of quality, culturally sensitive, lifelong learning opportunities. The Centre's goal is to increase accessibility to the university for an ever increasing diverse population and to foster the ongoing upgrading of personal and professional skills.

The non-credit activities, through strong internal partnerships and carefully nurtured community and professional partnerships, provides leadership, human and material resources to respond in a flexible and timely fashion to the educational, social and economic challenges facing Northeastern Ontario residents.

Mandate of the Centre for Continuing Education

As the unit responsible for coordinating non-credit programmes at the University, CCE views its role as encouraging and enabling the development of activity in this area. These guidelines are not to be restrictive or stifling to faculty and department initiatives, but rather to be enabling.

The Centre for Continuing Education has expertise in conference and workshop programming, management, funding and proposal writing. The Centre has many community links, partnerships and connections in all sectors in Northern Ontario and across the country. It is committed to supporting and fostering internal partnerships and sharing its resources and expertise in delivering interdisciplinary, culturally sensitive programmes in both official languages. Coordinating all non-credit activity through Continuing Education would facilitate accurate and complete documentation, reporting and accounting of all activities which is becoming increasingly required by the provincial government.

From a client's perspective a coordinated and central service would be more convenient and present a more favourable image to the public. It would facilitate information dissemination and improve customer service.

In non-credit programming all activities must cover direct costs and may not represent a financial burden to the university. A contribution to overhead for facilities and services used will be implemented by the University but all profits over and above the direct and indirect costs will be returned to the departments initiating the activity.

Benefits to Faculty

Faculty are encouraged to work on non-credit programmes, proposal writing and funding application preparation in collaboration with staff members of the Centre. Benefits to this approach for faculty are numerous and include reduced share of the workload and duplication of effort.

The Centre for Continuing Education offers extensive experience in the planning, co-ordination and presentation of professional development activities. Promotion, reservation of physical space and parking areas are just a few of the operations that the Centre facilitates. This collaboration would also give faculty increased ability to make their work known to a wider circle of clients, and increased potential for greater return. Additional benefits include access to innovative and creative course designs and materials, increased opportunities for closer partnerships with agencies and other organizations in Northern Ontario, increased personal profile and greater potential to access external funds.

Development Process

Normally, non-credit programming would fall into one of the following four areas:

1. professional upgrading - with emphasis on interdisciplinary programming;
2. conferences, workshops, seminars, lectures, etc.
3. economic and social development support programming;
4. outreach programming.

There are several ways in which an educational and training need might be identified. In some cases, programme ideas may be brought forward by a faculty member or a department. The Centre for Continuing Education may initiate a request based on an appeal from a specific community stakeholder which may require the input and support of one or several departments and/or disciplines. A third option is that a proposal for co-sponsorship is received by the centre for Continuing Education from one of the community partners or another university. Examples of these partnerships include Science North, the Ontario Worker Cooperative Federation, Network North, the Institute of Canadian Bankers, Cambrian College, and Collège Boréal.

In deciding which initiatives to undertake, the Centre for Continuing Education will apply the following criteria:

- * demonstrated community need
- * availability of appropriate resources
- * exclusiveness of programming to the University
- * opportunity for co-sponsorship exists
- * sound working relationship established or possible between the co-sponsor and Laurentian University
- * complete budget information and capacity for full funding
- * demonstrated benefit to Laurentian University

All proposals for non-credit programme activities should be presented to the Director, Centre for Continuing Education, for consideration and possible coordination. The Director will subsequently send it to the Senate Committee on Continuing Education for information. Programmes will be developed by a team or with input from an Advisory Committee comprised of both internal and external community representatives. All departments affected, both academic and service, will be consulted, and invited to participate on the Advisory Committee.

Programme Evaluation

An annual cost benefit review will be undertaken.

Each programme will be evaluated by advisory committee members, participants, instructors, CCE personnel, and other service unit personnel as necessary. A full report will be presented to the Director, Centre for Continuing Education within two months of each event and annually to the Senate Committee on Continuing Education.

Approved by Senate: April 20, 1995