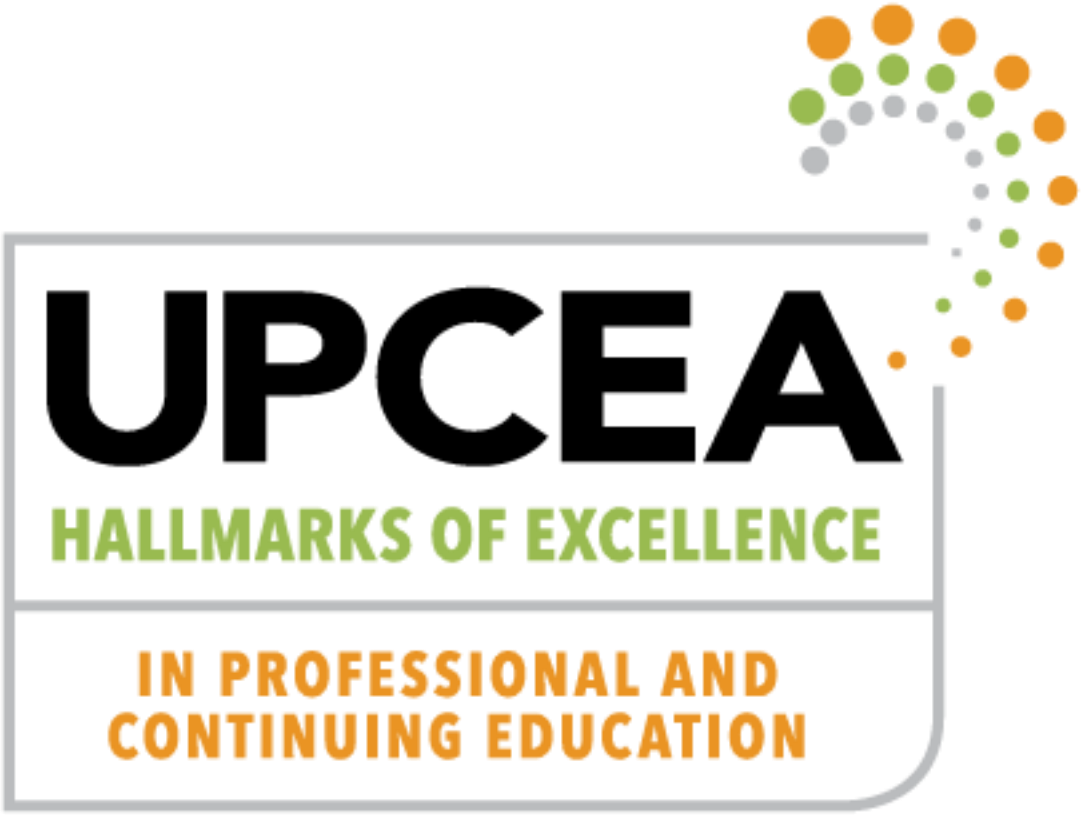

Introduction

Professional and continuing education (PCE) can mean something very different from institution to institution. Some schools of professional and continuing education encompass both credit and noncredit programs, some only noncredit programs—and still others are degree-granting entities within their universities. Some oversee their own full-time faculty, while others depend on faculty throughout their institutions and adjunct faculty drawn from local industry and professions. Some focus exclusively on older, part-time learners; others are multi-generational. Some PCE units serve their local communities, while others reach far beyond their regions within the United States and abroad. Some reside entirely on their main campuses; others extend to corporate and satellite locales as well. Some oversee their institution's distance learning efforts; others are clients to other organizations on campus.

No other academic entity in American university structure is as elastic or as varied in its portfolio and purpose as the PCE unit. But these variances should not mask the commonalities of professional and continuing educators. These Hallmarks of Excellence seek to define and develop these commonalities—and advocate an all-encompassing view of this increasingly critical component of higher education in the

United States. The authors presume that those institutions that extend and empower their PCE leaders are all the richer for this faith and commitment.

Above all else, professional and continuing education is dedicated to the adult learner. While few PCE leaders are responsible for all programming that targets older, part-time students, their resounding voice on campus is critical. Professional and continuing education leaders extend the reach of their institutions through new audiences, programs, and means of delivery. Their passion for innovation disrupts the status quo. Their spirit of generosity branches out across their institutions and offsets the fragmentation and isolation that can jeopardize coalitions and collaboration, undermining common purpose. Their multidisciplinary perspective embraces campus partnerships and the pursuit of new fields of study, which often transcend their university's current capabilities. They combine idealism and pragmatism. They offer entrepreneurial instincts, marketing savvy, and business acumen that allow new initiatives to flourish.

These Hallmarks of Excellence presume that professional and continuing education is central, pervasive, and critical within institutions of higher learning—crossing internal boundaries and extending external ones, promoting change, and responding to current dynamics that convert challenges into opportunities. Wiser leaders of higher learning inevitably turn to their PCE units to uncover new possibilities for their institutions. Academia's current crises could—and should—bring a renewed focus on professional and continuing education as a source of solutions. This is a key inflection moment where professional and continuing education will either move more into the spotlight or retreat into the shadows. The success of the nation's academic institutions depends on the paths that are taken.

These Hallmarks of Excellence are an opportunity to define a set of standards that reflect the ambitions, potential, and importance of the PCE unit's work—standards few achieve often enough to be complacent. Commitment to mission, enrollments, innovation, and academic excellence are the inseparable aspirations of professional and continuing educators.

Mission: A Prelude to Hallmarks of Excellence

A mission is *the* critically important statement where a professional and continuing education unit proclaims its very reason to exist—*this is what we are here to do*. The mission should reflect the overarching values and brand of the institution—and, at the same time, define the motivating vision for professional and continuing education. This statement helps faculty and staff understand their contributions within the larger objectives, and enables prospective students, employers, and partners to assess their fit within the enterprise. The mission provides the foundation and guiding principles for determining strategic priorities, organizational structure, resources, and bases for assessment.

This mission must also align with contemporary societal and economic realities, as well as changes within the university community. Thus, this statement should be revisited

and reimagined periodically to be able to measure success and ensure that the enterprise is meeting its objectives. The PCE mission can expand, contract, or evolve to accommodate internal and external drivers of change.

There are several components unique to the PCE mission:

- *Function* describes the directives of the school (i.e., professional or executive education programs, liberal arts, or technical training).
- *Target audience* identifies the learner population served by PCE programs or services.
- *Values* articulate the basic beliefs and priorities of the unit: how and why it conducts its work and pursues its vision.
- *Public image* defines how the PCE unit sees itself within the parent college or university and among its peers and competitors, its target audience, and its key constituents.

When formulating the mission statement, consider the following:

- Is the institution public, private, nonprofit, or for-profit? How does this impact the mission, goal setting, strategic planning, and decision-making?
- What are the perspectives of university leaders, current students, alumni, faculty, staff, and external partners? How should these perspectives impact the mission of professional and continuing education?
- How agile should this statement be? Should new educational models, emerging needs, and external changes impact the resilience of the mission?

Excellent Practices—Seven Pillars

Our goal is to articulate the purposes of a professional and continuing education enterprise, not to dictate how it should be organized. We focus on function, less so structure. We define seven pillars of these Hallmarks, as well as several themes that cross these pillars. We challenge current PCE leaders to measure their progress within these various dimensions. We challenge their institution's leaders to do likewise. And we encourage both to raise their expectations for what is possible—and achievable.

1. **Internal Advocacy:** Recognizing that professional and continuing education, by its very nature, reflects all facets of the institution, its leaders must build credibility, alliances, and partnerships that further its mission and purpose.
2. **Entrepreneurial Initiative:** Recognizing that professional and continuing education must embrace innovation, experimentation, and new initiatives, its leaders must have the skills and imagination to facilitate responsible change.
3. **Faculty Support:** Recognizing that academic excellence is the lifeblood of any educational enterprise, leaders in professional and continuing education must build a strong cadre of faculty enveloped with the tools to succeed.
4. **Student Support:** Recognizing that student diversity requires a deep understanding of the adult learner and the various populations that professional and continuing education serves, its leaders must be strong advocates for those

services that foster learning and student success.

5. **Digital Technology:** Recognizing that technology is integral to the modern PCE unit, its leaders must provide a technological environment that is current, dependable, and capable of enhancing education, administration, and outreach.
6. **External Advocacy:** Recognizing that professional and continuing education extends its mission and message far beyond campus walls, its leaders must serve as an authoritative voice to external stakeholders in government, industry, local communities, and elsewhere.
7. **Professionalism:** Recognizing that dynamic organizations are grounded in professional integrity, leaders in professional and continuing education must exemplify an unwavering commitment to high standards of excellence, ethics, and ideals that elevate their units to the level of respect and renown expected of a thriving academic institution.

Excellent Practice 1: Internal Advocacy

Goal

Professional continuing education (PCE) units must advocate for causes that are not necessarily mainstream issues for colleges and universities, and lead advocacy efforts on behalf of those less visible to the rest of the campus. The challenge is to bridge the various components of internal advocacy and create a system where the larger institution truly understands what PCE units do and why they do it, while recognizing and supporting the student body they serve.

Key Elements

- Advocate on behalf of PCE units and their work.
- Advocate for underserved populations.
- Advocate for innovation in curriculum development and delivery.
- Advocate for policies and procedures that support the needs of all students, especially the adult learner.

Why?

PCE leaders advocate for those who do not often have a voice on campus—an audience of post-traditional learners who are distinct from traditional on-campus, full-time students. PCE students often carry multiple responsibilities, from families to jobs to community work, and they are well on their way to becoming the new majority at colleges and universities. To serve these students, PCE units must lead the effort to find alternative ways of providing access to programming and services. Whether concerning the operational hours of student support offices or deciding when and how

classes are made available, the default is often to serve only the "traditional" 18–22 year-old student population. In many ways, it is the responsibility of professional continuing educators to champion the unique needs of this growing but still overlooked population of PCE students.

What?

Advocating on Behalf of Our Own Units

The campus-wide community may not share a passion and dedication for the work that PCE leaders undertake. Professional and continuing education units often find themselves operating under different budgetary models than the more traditional academic colleges and departments on campus. The fact that these units must be budget neutral, if not revenue generating, is often lost on the campus administration. As a result, an understanding of the models that are used to identify, promote, and implement quality programing can be rare across campus. The need to maintain and grow units with minimal or no base funding is a common challenge for PCE leaders; as a result, they need to advocate for the financial, human, and physical resources critical for quality programs to thrive.

Advocating for Post-Traditional Populations

Understanding the unique needs of PCE constituents demands an unrelenting "fire in the belly" to ensure the entire campus is cognizant and appreciative of the importance of these students to the mission and sustainability of the university. While strides are being made to make higher education more accessible with the use of new technologies and programming, there continues to be a gap in degree completion by race and socioeconomic levels. One of the most important roles of professional and continuing educators is to advocate for those who are not being served well by higher education. The data continues to show an undisputed return on investment for completing an undergraduate degree: those with a four-year degree have an earning potential far greater than those without a degree. As learned in the Great Recession, those with a degree are also less likely to be unemployed.

Degree completion programs play a very important economic role for students. Even more importantly, they help to create an educated citizenship. For example, those with a four-year degree are more likely to vote and be engaged in the community. Helping underserved populations achieve career and academic goals underscores the PCE unit's advocacy for well-informed and educated citizens to lead their communities.

Advocating for Innovation in Curriculum Development and Delivery

Meeting the needs of stakeholders pushes PCE leaders to think differently about the why-and-what of program delivery. The debates between brick and mortar versus technology-mediated course delivery and instruction are no longer the focus. Instead, units are exploring new ways of delivering content in terms of competency-based credit, credit for experience, and credits delivered in meaningful clusters that build

upon one another. Credit hours are no longer bound by "seat time," but are constructed from various experiences and opportunities for demonstrating the mastery of knowledge and skills. PCE units must advocate for imagining new ways of learning, and accepting that learning comes in packages and forms never before envisaged.

Advocating for Policies and Procedures that Support the Needs of All Students

Just as concepts of instructional delivery must change, so too must the policies and procedures that have guided institutions on how to recruit, register, and retain students. To address PCE students' circumstances, leaders must advocate for technologies, systems, policies, and procedures that support and speak to the work and lifestyles of students whose lives do not follow a five-day, 40-hour-per-week calendar.

Who and How—Implementation

Advocating on Behalf of Our Own Units

Professional and continuing education units that have successfully advocated for their units and those they serve share many common elements. First, successful PCE units are good university citizens. One of their strengths is that they draw on the full breadth of the university's academic resources, while also investing in emerging fields not represented within the university. Because of this PCE leaders have the opportunity and the obligation to work with other colleges to help them meet their goals and address the needs of a wider student constituency. Successful professional and continuing education units find mutually beneficial ways to work with other colleges on their campuses, not just replicating campus offerings in a new modality but building programs that fulfill the educational needs of working professionals.

Advocating for Post-Traditional Populations

The "how" in advocating for underserved populations is embedded within the PCE mission and the growing need for innovation in curriculum development as well as policies and procedures that support all students' needs. PCE leaders must remind the institution of the needs of underserved populations, so that remote or part-time students are fully represented in discussions related to the curricula, policies, procedures, and long-term goals of the institution.

Advocating for Innovation in Curriculum Development and Delivery

One of the best ways to advocate for an innovative curriculum is to insure that the educational product excels academically. Maintaining high-quality programming is critical for credibility among other academic and support units. Designing and implementing a strong assessment process for PCE programs demonstrates a commitment to quality. Data from assessments should drive decision-making that results in improved learning experiences for students as well as continued innovation in curriculum design and delivery—ensuring that the PCE unit becomes a role model

for more conventional programs on campus when it comes to adapting new approaches to teaching and learning.

Advocating for Policies and Procedures that Support the Needs of All Students

Systems, policies, and practices in higher education have typically been adopted and implemented based on the needs of a traditional 18–22 year-old student body. Modifying such systems can be expensive and time consuming, and requires the support of administrative units across campus, from the registrar to the finance and information technology offices. Such a process requires reframing the thinking of those professionals who are too comfortable with the current modus operandi.

Part of advocacy is finding ways to work constructively with others on campus to make change appealing rather than threatening, and to ensure that what is best for adult students—whose needs for recruitment, advising, registration, and financial aid differ vastly from those of traditional on-campus students—benefits *all* students.

Changing the system is expensive and takes a long time. Therefore, it is critical that PCE units assist their students in navigating existing systems. Support staff may be necessary to provide comprehensive, user-friendly advising and representation when needed.

Key Performance Indicators

Advocating on Behalf of Our Own Units

The mission of the professional and continuing education unit must be integrated with the university's strategic plan and daily operations. Are the PCE unit and the students it represents marginalized or mainstream within the larger institution?

Decisions at institutions of higher education are made in many different ways. Does the PCE unit have a seat at the table when discussions take place and decisions are made? Is the PCE unit visible and represented in the conversations and coalitions that occur across academic colleges and within administrative units that support PCE students?

Advocating for Post-Traditional Populations

Among the measures used to determine the quality of higher education institutions are graduation rate and time to graduation. They, too, are indicators of effective advocacy for PCE programs and their students—as well as other learners.

Advocating for Innovation in Curriculum Development and Delivery

Advocating for innovation in curriculum development and delivery can model behavior throughout the university by introducing tools and techniques that enhance the experience of all students on campus. Other academic colleges benefit from creative, research-based practices in development and delivery of coursework.

Advocating for Policies and Procedures that Support the Needs of All Students

Student support, library materials, registration, and other services must be readily accessible to PCE students. Strong advocacy should result in institutional recognition of the needs of non-traditional students and the availability of services online and on campus with extended hours.

While large-scale change in the student information system may be financially unfeasible, PCE leaders can find ways of supporting learners through the student lifecycle, while also demonstrating strong customer-service values to other units. Understanding that many institutions are held captive by lack of flexibility in their student information system, and recognizing the challenges of investing in new systems, it is critical to establish processes that help students navigate the existing system. The values, practices, and commitments of professional and continuing educators must lead to a strong voice on campus to benefit not only adult learners, but all those served by the institution.

Excellent Practice 2: Entrepreneurial Initiative

Goal

Professional and continuing education (PCE) units offer a variety of professional programs to learners in an environment characterized by:

- the rapid invention of new jobs and categories of work,
- careers that can span sixty years and involve numerous job changes across many distinct areas,
- knowledge that provides immediate value in jobs, and
- regionalized and localized occupational needs.

To serve this dynamic market in a sustainable manner, PCE units must develop and exert their entrepreneurial skill and commit to continuous innovation in new and constantly evolving offerings.

PCE units employ a distinctly different business model than seen elsewhere in traditional higher education. In order to offer the optimal value proposition to the appropriate audience, PCE providers must excel at recognizing local emerging needs, developing new offerings and new formats, and retiring outdated curricula.

Important issues such as institutional brand, faculty governance and culture, and program identification are easier to manage in a noncredit space than in the university's for-credit realm, making PCE units prime laboratories for innovation and experimentation. Because their units will ultimately test concepts or build brand for the university's for-credit offerings, PCE leaders must support a mindset for

entrepreneurial thinking, make time for innovation within the organization, and work to earn the trust of the university by disseminating their findings.

Key Elements

- Build a unit that thrives on entrepreneurship and contributes to innovation; create dedicated capacity in that unit for finding, creating, and executing new ideas.
- Take action, and risk, on ideas that are often unplanned.
- Determine desired geographic reach and understand local needs within that area by studying existing offerings and working directly with employer leadership.
- Figure out where local presence and brand allow for competition with national providers who have scale advantages in marketing, program development, and national certification agencies.
- Expand programs online only when those remote learners can be supported.
- Articulate a value proposition and test it on customers who have employer support or a budget for professional development.
- Project workforce trends over five years, and begin new product development with the goal to always have about a third of annual revenue come from offerings launched in the past five years.
- Assess campus infrastructure and resources available outside of the traditional academic calendar.
- Mobilize marketing, business development, public relations, recruitment, and enrollment teams. Expect to spend almost a third of revenue on these outreach and support areas, depending on the power of the institutional brand.
- Set aside an annual operating budget expressly for new ventures, and require ongoing commitment to risk-taking and innovative programming.

Why?

For most colleges and universities today, the revenue curve from tuition, research grants, endowment yields, and public support is negative. Costs continue to rise faster than inflation, particularly in expenses for faculty and campus facilities. The challenge is to deliver educational opportunities continuously over the lifetime of the learner—especially in response to dynamic changes in the job market—that forecast reliable revenue.

Furthermore, national credentialing organizations in finance, technology, sustainability, and other sectors are developing more of their own courses and certifications. Navigating this realm requires communication and partnerships with professional and industry associations, receptivity to market changes and new credential needs, and an understanding of the competitive position of the academic institution, its reputation, and its power to capitalize on new opportunities.

What?

Goal Identification

What does the institution wish to achieve?

If the primary goal is to improve relations with local employers, then strategies for business development and custom programs are needed. However, if the primary goal is to grow revenue and surplus, a scalable set of public programs defined by a finite set of topics will be paramount. Furthermore, if the goal is to extend the institutional reach into new markets or expand existing markets, the creation of flexible offerings that can easily be adapted to different markets should be considered.

For whom is the institution creating value?

As part of goal setting, it is important to understand how a new audience will be similar or dissimilar to existing audiences. Consider partnerships and programs targeted at corporations, nongovernmental organizations, other universities, governments, industry associations, and foundations.

Is campus leadership aligned, explicitly or implicitly, with the goal?

Institutional leadership buy-in is essential—even in noncredit professional offerings—as PCE programs impact the institution's brand and important relationships between institutional leaders.

Brand Alignment

What are critical brand attributes needed for an entrepreneurial project?

It is not necessary that every undertaking reflect the full brand identity of the institution; however, each should have enough brand alignment to be recognizable to internal stakeholders. Ventures that fail to align with the institutional brand and understood domains of the school run the risk of internal resistance, marginalization, or eventual elimination. Complement existing offerings across a college, school, or university, but be wary of cannibalization. Complement programs at other schools with their consent, to serve learners and markets they do not plan to serve.

How does the institutional fit influence the selection and design of a project?

The scope of a PCE unit should influence the type of programming chosen, as well as how an initiative is designed and marketed. For example, a liberal arts-focused school might be cautious in considering a professional engineering program, unless there is a specific niche (such as environmental policy) where the new offering can be mapped back to the brand.

Market Research

What type of market research is necessary?

Consider the following:

- Trends—what is occurring in the workforce in particular regions?
- Competitor analyses—who already serves given areas, and is the market saturated?
- Size of perceived market—is demand big enough, even if a program is successful?
- Workforce demographics—chasing the past or serving the future?
- Insights from existing networks—what are colleagues seeing in industry, where are faculty conducting research, and what types of consulting are adjunct faculty providing?
- Local industry associations—are there opportunities to address the needs of their members?

How much market research is needed?

Different types of innovations require different levels of market research. If the cost and risk to launch a new, short noncredit program (or a new concentration within an existing degree program) is minimal, a basic market analysis will most likely uncover enough research to make a decision and launch a trial effort. If a new program concept is a multi-year commitment, especially if a new academic degree is awarded, it will be important to invest in more data and a more detailed analysis. With emerging tools and vendors, market research is not nearly as costly or time consuming as it once was. The goal is to be directionally correct, not statistically perfect.

Idea Generation

How does a unit organize to develop new ideas?

Ideas for new offerings can come from:

- Internal stakeholders—faculty, staff, and campus leaders, by virtue of their deep understanding of the organization, have ideas that could become new ventures.
- External stakeholders—alumni, employers, and external partners possess unique perspectives.
- Market research—compelling data can inform program development and indicate gaps in either an underserved professional arena or a demographic population ill-served by other institutions.

Ideas are easy to generate, but vetting and evaluating them requires discipline and focus. Entrepreneurial universities that excel in PCE have a screening and planning system that resembles a stage-gate approval process. Ideas are highly malleable and should be subject to criticism, modification, and improvement. This iterative process typically advances the initial concept while recruiting internal champions and opinion-makers willing to support an idea. An organization open to hearing ideas and perfecting them will be more likely to successfully launch new ventures.

What kind of ideas should be generated?

As many ideas as possible should be generated to go through an assessment process.

Initially, there are neither bad ideas nor an excess of possibilities. Ideas should always address a specific problem, serve a growing market need, reflect (but not be constrained by) current resources and expertise, and encompass everything from redesigned existing programs to completely new programs and product categories.

Idea and Opportunity Assessment

What attributes are used to evaluate ideas?

Many entrepreneurial tools exist to help evaluate ideas. Key questions to ask:

- Who is the market and what is the value proposition?
- How does this proposal fill a gap in current offerings?
- How will the unit deliver an offering? Face-to-face, or partially or entirely online?
- Will the relationship with the learner be ongoing through a B2B partnership, or one-time through public enrollment?
- What is the projected revenue and expense? At what point should a program generate a significant contribution margin?
- Who will participate in leading this program? Are there faculty or subject-matter experts who can teach a new concept?
- What key activities are needed to service this venture? What staff skills and capabilities are required?
- What other resources will this venture need to tap, and perhaps strain, to support student information systems, classroom needs and facilities, and instructional technology?

When does an idea become an opportunity?

Simply identifying a viable idea is not enough to green-light a project. Once an idea has been vetted and fully envisioned, evaluating it from a market-fit perspective may be necessary. Focus groups, discussions with potential employers, and further labor-market studies can all lead to vital information. This may be enough for a low-cost, low-risk initiative, but as stakes, investment, and entrenchment increase, so, too, should self-scrutiny and caution.

What is the strategic differentiator of a new endeavor? Does it resonate with the intended target audience? Does it fit the brand leaders are trying to build?

Beware of chasing short-term revenue for its own sake: know the difference between good and bad revenue.

Program Planning

An idea that has been given the green light should meet baseline brand and goal criteria. The next phase is to develop a project plan that will anticipate the various steps necessary for launching the new offering.

Marketing

Every good idea needs a story. The marketing plan should address basic messaging about the program and express the value proposition to the intended audience. Determining target markets—and the respective strategies and venues to reach those markets—is critical.

University/Division Readiness

The eventual success of an initiative is often predicated on momentum created by the initial steps. A number of questions should be answered: Will new faculty need to be recruited? Will the curriculum be ready to enroll students by launch date? How will inquiry management and advising be handled? Initial success often determines long-term viability—and initial failures can undermine what otherwise might have been a sustainable new venture.

Enrollment Management and Student Recruitment

Enrollment management and recruitment are critical, especially when scale and new markets are at play. Lead generation and cultivation are essential for meeting enrollment targets.

Other University Services

Services across the university need to be incorporated into new initiatives. A project plan should have a communication protocol that notifies others on campus of the particulars within a program and how they will be handled.

Launch Date

Putting a date on a calendar and committing to it are powerful management tools that allow energy to be harnessed and focused. Sometimes a soft launch of a program or its course components can prepare those involved for its eventual initiation in the marketplace. It is important to manage expectations within the institution so that a modest launch is not interpreted as a failure.

Resource Allocation and Business Planning

Capital is essential for success. Underfunding a project can result in degradation of programmatic quality or an anemic marketing plan. The long-term budget should anticipate future resource needs (which can be funded by program income). All new ventures have an opportunity cost, which must be considered in how an enterprise will spend its finite time and money. Finally, every new venture risks failure, which needs to be anticipated with an agile strategy for either a teach-out or a scaling back to a more modest undertaking. Even the most promising new initiative requires an exit strategy.

Who and How—Implementation

Dedicated Program Team

Each new initiative needs a small group of expert and highly regarded individuals

tasked with bringing the project to fruition. This team should represent a cross-section of stakeholders. It is helpful to have individuals on the team who share an excitement about launching a new venture and savvy about navigating potential university roadblocks. Whether ad hoc or more regularized, the project team should be formally charged, motivated, and empowered to work expeditiously through the normal protocols of the university's daily operations. They should be given ownership of day-to-day decisions, while remaining nimble enough to modify plans as a situation demands. The project team is ultimately responsible for orchestrating all moving parts of the initiative from concept development to launch. As a program assimilates into the infrastructure of the institution, this team can relinquish oversight to an area management team or corresponding unit.

Marketing and Communication

The marketing and communication team needs to be mobilized to develop a marketing strategy, copy, materials, and promotions for the new initiative—as well as to prepare for, and execute, its launch. Too often, good ideas falter because of an inadequate effort to promote the program.

Faculty

Teaching staff must be able to see the vision of any new opportunity and support its pilot offering. Sometimes these instructors are involved in the design process, and other times they are provided direction and an outline for teaching only. Regardless, their creativity and pedagogy will be the most critical factor in the success of a new program.

Program Recruitment and Registration

Marketing alone will not enroll participants. Recruitment should also include targeted outreach to various markets—including organizations, businesses, and other specialized populations. The recruiter's role is to leverage leads generated by marketing campaigns and deliver completed applications for admission consideration. In new program ventures it can be especially important to involve faculty in the recruitment and selection process, while a system for customer relationship management (CRM) can help maximize yield. An interested prospect who does not hear back quickly is probably buying from someone else.

Specialized Vendors

An institution may not have the necessary infrastructure to meet the ambitious goals of a new initiative. If that is the case, a range of educational vendors can serve as capacity-building agents on an institution's behalf. Advertising agencies can design campaigns. Enrollment coaching services can manage high-volume lead and application generation. Online-enabling companies can help develop courses for online consumption. In contracting external services, measurable goals, realistic durations, and exit strategies should be incorporated. Shorter service contracts are typically more expensive. Many services operate on a longer-term revenue-sharing

model, where vendors provide their own investments in exchange for a portion of a school's revenue stream.

Campus Leadership

Depending on the size and ambition of a particular initiative, key campus leadership can be active supporters and ambassadors of a new venture, particularly in securing campus cooperation and external advocacy.

Key Performance Indicators

Performance indicators for entrepreneurial initiatives depend greatly on stated goals determined prior to program launch. Affirmative answers to the following questions would indicate success:

- Did the project meet its desired goals within the allotted time? Was the institution able to garner additional financial resources? Has the initiative expanded the institution's market share? What were the immediate lessons learned from the initial launch?
- What market intelligence emerged to apply to other programs? What lessons were learned that could help propel future initiatives?
- Did infrastructure cooperation and expansion occur?
- Did the initiative increase institutional capacity to take on additional projects?
- Was the institutional brand protected and even enhanced? Did the project over time:
    - Increase the institution's visibility in targeted markets?
    - Create positive media attention?
    - Result in conference presentations, published papers, or other forms of public scholarship?
    - Produce reputational gains?
    - Show unexpected, positive outcomes that accrued to the institution or other programs?
    - Generate enthusiastic, supportive students to carry the message forward for future enrollees?
- Were there enrollment gains or other benefits across the institution that resulted?
- Were faculty and staff engaged effectively in an online initiative that produced internal community and collaboration?
- Did faculty and staff skills increase as a direct result of the project?
- Did the initiative reveal new funding opportunities for the units involved?
- Did the initiative generate other new ideas or projects?

Excellent Practice 3: Faculty Support

Goal

Professional and continuing education (PCE) units should intentionally design and continuously improve the faculty experience in support of high-quality student learning. PCE faculty are as diverse as the students they teach. In order to be effective, services should be explicitly designed with the unique characteristics of PCE faculty in mind.

Faculty support can be two-way. Unlike a unidirectional model—where the PCE unit delivers support to the faculty—the two-way model recognizes that "support" is most effective as a mutually beneficial relationship in which faculty share their best practices with the unit so the unit can better support the faculty. This model can lead to greater faculty engagement, a deeper and more ongoing relationship with the unit, and better student learning outcomes.

Key Elements

- Provide new and continuing faculty with training modules on new technologies and pedagogies.
- Provide quality support services targeted and responsive to PCE faculty needs.
- Develop a mutually supportive system for deeper faculty engagement.
- Advocate within the university for the needs of PCE faculty.
- Focus on how faculty services increase faculty satisfaction and retention.
- Evaluate effectiveness of faculty support services on an ongoing basis.
- Evaluate instructional performance and recognize faculty excellence.
- Clarify intellectual property rights in faculty contracts.

Why?

Effective faculty support is critical to the success of a PCE unit and, ultimately, impacts the student learning experience.

PCE faculty possess unique characteristics that differ from those of full-time campus faculty. They are often industry professionals with demanding "day" jobs. Some may teach in multiple locations or online. Others are subject-matter experts who have strong presentation skills but little experience teaching. Support needs will vary for faculty who teach undergraduate or graduate courses, professional-level or noncredit courses, international or domestic students, corporate training programs or other intensives. Similar to well-designed PCE student support models, faculty services need to be available in flexible, convenient, and accessible formats.

PCE faculty are motivated to teach professional and continuing education students for a variety of reasons. They often wish to give back, sharing lessons learned in their professional lives with students entering, or advancing in, similar fields. In such cases, it is not only the support services that the PCE unit provides that make a difference,

but opportunities to mentor, network, serve on advisory boards, and advise leadership. This two-way, mutually beneficial support model can be richly rewarding for both the faculty and the unit, and can result in better student learning outcomes.

What?

Two-way faculty support systems can meet the needs of faculty at different stages of engagement with the PCE unit. A two-way relationship means that PCE program directors and staff are also accountable for helping faculty have an optimal teaching experience.

Recruitment/Hiring/Onboarding

Faculty support begins with the recruitment and hiring process. During this stage, it is important to review instructor candidates not only for their teaching experience but also for their fit with the PCE unit's mission. This is the time to listen, inform, and clearly communicate policies and expectations related to performance, teaching load, time commitment, course development and course instruction, grading standards, compensation and benefits, intellectual property rights, and available resources. Prospective faculty who come from industry and professions may have little experience in front of a class; others might be seasoned instructors who have not taught the unique PCE audience; and still others are just launching their academic careers and seeking a real-world opportunity to hone their teaching skills.

Orientation

Even if faculty are not new to course development or teaching, every PCE unit is different—and policies and practices are highly variable between institutions. Orientations designed for PCE instructors can be offered onsite or virtually, providing a welcome introduction to the unit and key staff. Orientation is not the time to relay detailed policies and procedures; instead, point faculty to a directory of key contacts, websites, online training, and other resources where information can be referenced as needed. Orientation can then be a more interactive session focused on highlighting the most important policies (e.g., FERPA) and immediate action items (e.g., signing the instructor agreement, setting up accounts, learning the LMS, etc.), while emphasizing how much the unit values its faculty and supports them. As stewards of the reputation of the institution, new faculty must understand their impact on the student experience and thus on the image of the institution.

During the Course

Faculty Meetings

It is important to have a venue where instructors within a discipline or program can meet onsite or virtually. These meetings should have a pre-determined agenda while providing the opportunity to discuss pedagogical approaches, plan curricula, consider prerequisites and student preparation, address potential content overlap, talk about use of texts and other course materials, collectively design desired learning outcomes,

build community, and benefit from networking opportunities as well as a built-in, peer group support system. Some PCE faculty welcome a broader on-campus affiliation; others do not have the time to devote to activities beyond their teaching. Some welcome more formal faculty development; others prefer informal interaction. No single approach for faculty engagement is likely to be all-inclusive.

Technology

Some faculty are more familiar with technology than others. As PCE units move to more automated administrative processes (e.g., payroll systems, online grading, online course evaluations, etc.) and introduce greater use of educational technology (e.g., learning management systems for both on-ground and online courses, auto-grading, data analytics, adaptive learning tools, accessibility tools, etc.), training and support infrastructure must exist or be developed for faculty. Real-time student performance data is readily available on learning management systems, and many instructors may need to be trained on how to interpret and utilize the data to improve their teaching. As busy professionals, PCE faculty should receive clear instruction on the availability and use of digital technology.

Library

PCE faculty need full and electronic access to main campus libraries. In addition to doing research in their disciplines and identifying resources for their students, faculty rely on library staff for guidance on copyright and fair use, and to point out materials that might be integrated into their courses.

Student Issues

Faculty may find themselves dealing with issues involving students with disabilities, grade grievances, misconduct, academic integrity (i.e., plagiarism and other forms of cheating), mental health, sexual harassment claims, and discrimination claims, among others. While it is not possible to fully train or prepare faculty for every possible challenge that may confront them, they need to have read the PCE unit's policies on such matters. It is essential that faculty know what resources are available and whom to contact should the need arise. Staff should be identified who can listen, guide, and facilitate the appropriate next steps; investigate the matter; and escalate as necessary.

Professional Development/Faculty Engagement and Retention

Teaching Evaluation and Feedback

While course evaluations are far from ideal or thorough in assessing teaching effectiveness—and it is unlikely that faculty view them as a form of support—they should still be universally mandated, and compiled in a timely fashion. Evaluations can often be a useful asset to faculty who use the feedback to improve their teaching. Rather than waiting until the end of a course, some academic program directors and faculty might ask for student feedback early so that adjustments can be made along the way.

Mentoring Peers and Students

Many faculty find it richly rewarding to mentor junior faculty and students who are interested in exploring or advancing their careers or education. The mentoring/advising relationship benefits both mentor and mentee, and strengthens the PCE community. There are ways to actively create formal structures that support these interactions, but they should also be encouraged to happen organically. Most faculty, even those with prior experience in industry or the classroom, welcome the availability of someone who can be a sounding board for their teaching ideas.

Community Engagement

Providing faculty with opportunities to participate in the life of the PCE unit and the campus supports their engagement as important members of the academic community. PCE faculty can often feel disengaged when they come in to teach a course and then promptly depart, a superficial transaction leaving both the faculty and the unit feeling less than satisfied, as opposed to a more meaningful relational experience. To counter this, PCE units can offer a variety of experiences outside of the classroom and within the community, including formal or informal mentoring programs, service on advisory boards, participation in information sessions, volunteering on career panels, attendance at campus lectures and events, among others.

Recognition/Teaching Awards

It is important to recognize and honor PCE faculty for excellence in teaching. Awards should set high standards for teaching and service, and provide opportunities to appreciate and celebrate outstanding efforts. Honored faculty inspire new instructors and staff, and are in demand by students.

Who and How—Implementation

It takes a village to support PCE faculty. Throughout the stages of engagement that faculty have with the PCE unit, many staff are called upon to provide support both at the individual level and, most often, in collaboration and coordination across functional units.

Faculty can be supported by key staff in their respective departments and in the following ways:

Recruitment/Hiring/Onboarding

Academic department staff recruit and make hiring decisions; payroll and human resources staff ensure agreements are signed and entries are made into the information system.

Orientation

A general, comprehensive, and—ideally—interactive orientation is offered through the

coordinated efforts of both academic and administrative staff who highlight important academic and administrative policies and provide clear channels of communication for any issues that arise.

During the Course

Faculty Meetings

The academic program director should determine the frequency and establish the agenda for onsite or online meetings.

Technology

IT staff and online department staff develop and provide technology training, and set up systems for responding to support requests.

Library

There should be designated campus library staff who understand the needs of PCE faculty.

Student Issues

Key staff are available as resources for faculty, such as the PCE academic program director and staff, PCE registrar, dean's office, registrar, student conduct officers, health center staff, student disabilities office, campus police, and legal counsel.

Professional Development/Faculty Engagement and Retention

Teaching Evaluation and Feedback

The PCE program director is responsible for evaluating faculty using course surveys and in-person observation, and for discussing this feedback with faculty in a constructive manner to support continuous improvement in their teaching.

Mentoring Peers and Students

The academic program staff can set up formal or informal structures to encourage and facilitate peer and student mentoring.

Community Engagement

The academic program staff needs to engage faculty in the various activities that are an integral part of life in the PCE unit. Also, in-person or online training, courses, lectures, workshops, and seminars on a wide range of topics (e.g., teaching non-traditional students, classroom management, teaching online, etc.) can be offered, oftentimes, by peer faculty, staff, and campus experts.

Recognition/Teaching Awards

The nomination process and selection criteria need to be transparent, and staff should

recognize the importance of the awards and take pride in their instructor nominations. The awardees can be honored at a special reception and featured on the website or in other marketing material.

Key Performance Indicators

- Conduct surveys to benchmark and measure faculty satisfaction with each of the various faculty support services the PCE unit offers, and utilize the feedback to adjust and improve the services.
- Track faculty retention and identify patterns that can be analyzed and used to inform retention strategies for high-performing instructors.
- Track faculty complaints and identify patterns that can be analyzed and used to improve, for example, staff responsiveness or other issues of concern.
- Consider staff feedback on faculty to measure "community engagement" and effectiveness of a two-way faculty support model.
- Consider course evaluation feedback and student satisfaction as a reflection of the effectiveness of faculty support. Ultimately, student learning is the most important and relevant measure.
- Establish a fair and equitable means of replacing faculty who cannot perform at university standards of excellence.

Excellent Practice 4: Student Support

Goal

Professional and continuing education (PCE) units offer a variety of programs to students of all backgrounds, ages, and interests. Although there is rarely a common theme among the programs, there is one commonality among all of the students—their need for student services. A PCE unit must provide services to enable students to enroll, persist, and complete. The adult learner often has a complex background, limited time, and high expectations on how customers should be treated; they expect and demand service excellence in every interaction with an institution of higher education. PCE units must therefore design and execute high-quality support and service resources throughout the lifecycle of the student experience. Responding efficiently and effectively in all administrative matters allows students to focus on their learning—and their lives.

Key Elements

- Increase admissions, retention, and persistence of enrolled students.
- Provide targeted student support services proactively as well as reactively.
- Ensure that student support services provided throughout the institution are designed to meet the needs of adult students in a convenient and accessible

manner.

- Ensure that all courses, web pages, and other publicly available materials and services comply with accessibility standards.
- Develop and implement student support services for the lifecycle of students, beyond a single learning episode in their lives.
- Serve as a university advocate for the needs of part-time adult learners.
- Maintain a level of commitment and availability to students regardless of their modality or their proximity to campus.
- Offer support (informal and formal) that is responsive to a student request.
- Create successful and engaged graduates who become committed alumni and remain involved with the institution over time.

Why?

Adult learners want their academic work and their services packaged in a way that provides the opportunity to complete their specified program in a flexible, convenient, and customer-focused manner. They attend PCE programs in off hours, at a variety of locations, and often in an online or blended modality. Therefore, consideration must be made to provide services that engage students with the university and their fellow students before, during, and beyond program coursework in the manner that is best for the student's situation.

Effective student support systems and community engagement increase PCE student retention and satisfaction, and must be designed in a manner that meets their particular needs. Students who receive the support they need experience success and become more invested in completing their program.

What?

Depending on the program (graduate, undergraduate, noncredit), student support systems can take various forms. Institutions should consider where support is needed at every potential touchpoint with the student, identify key triggers for intervention, and consider how to design and develop the services that meet student needs. The goal of student services is not simply to respond to problems, but to anticipate them before they occur. In that way, PCE professionals can create and sustain relationships that provide the context for a total educational experience and beyond. Key areas to consider include:

Enrollment Services

Inquiry to Admissions

The initial support provided to prospective students upon inquiry will enable the student to make the right decision, while providing the institution with an opportunity to identify those who will succeed. Welcoming all inquiries will aid the university in attracting the diversity desired within the student body. Virtual or in-person open

houses offer those interested a chance to discover what education and support services are provided to aid them in successful completion of their courses or programs. Assisting students promptly in the application and registration processes will help them feel comfortable and enable them to transition quickly into the learning environment.

Initial Registration

Regardless of the type of program, start dates must be convenient, registration processes must be efficient, and time, location, costs, and prerequisite requirements of the program must be easy to locate. The institution should consider the timing of classes and the availability of the adult learner when designing schedules. PCE units do not exist in a vacuum—and often must advocate within their university structures on behalf of the adult learner to ensure that systems are inclusive and conducive to the success of this important population of students.

Prior Learning Credit Considerations

A program may permit students to obtain prior learning credit in a variety of ways, including transcript evaluations. The policies and procedures that are applied to this assessment should be fully disclosed and include the process for appeal. Those in PCE student services play a pivotal role in interpreting and assessing past learning credentials, balancing the student's need for an efficient educational program with the academic integrity of the institution. Alumni often cite their first advisors, even more than their professors, for the difference they made in helping them take the next critical step in their academic lives.

Finance Practices

Program costs are often a top question for interested participants, and they should be clearly stated in marketing materials. All accounting and finance practices should be convenient and easily accessible. When possible, specific individuals should be assigned to work directly with the adult population. Prospective students should be made aware of possible scholarships and financial aid support.

Orientation

The PCE unit has a responsibility to help students become familiar with the institution by providing both virtual and in-person orientation. This should include an introduction of key players and their roles and functions, a review of core policies, a tour of the support locations on campus and online, and an opportunity for students to connect with faculty, staff, and each other. The transition back to part-time study is often unsettling and challenging, and PCE student services play a vital role in creating momentum for academic success. Providing online demonstrations, particularly of learning management systems and other technological tools, helps prepare the new student for success. Likewise, international students might require orientations, advising, and ongoing services (logistical, academic, cultural, and social) that are unique.

Ongoing Support

Academic Advising

Degree-seeking students on campus and online will need academic guidance on course selection, degree progression, academic progress, and career implications. This can be provided by appropriate faculty or a professional academic advisor, though their roles should be clearly articulated so that students understand the benefits of utilizing all types of academic advising. A professional advisor can become a "success coach," monitoring student performance and helping to provide additional support as needed. Frontline staff are also critical in informing students authoritatively. This matrix of support requires information systems that provide a record of all prior communication and relevant data to all of those in contact with students. Because adult learners rarely exhibit the behavioral issues of traditional college-age students, their needs might be less apparent—but these needs can be just as critical and worthy of institutional attention. Occasionally, expertise and sensitivity are required for handling troubled or disruptive students. Also, PCE units are accountable for accommodating the needs of students with disabilities in and beyond the classroom.

Bookstore

Students should have easy access to textbooks in both a printed and online capacity during convenient operating hours. Student services include advocating for access to course materials and ensuring their affordability. Student pride in the institution will also result in requests for gear (t-shirts, caps, cups, etc.) that have the logo of the program, school, and institution.

Career and Internship Support

Even those with jobs and other adult commitments often seek support as career changers and employment seekers. Students may wish to experience a new career through a short-term internship, and may need help finding the right opportunity. Career services should include job research techniques, résumé writing, interviewing skills, and networking resources. Because PCE units often cover a multitude of disciplines and vocations, they cannot always exhibit concrete expertise in specific career paths. But they need to identify resources (at their institutions, online, and elsewhere in the community) that can assist students in reimagining their futures.

Library

As needed for the academic program, identify available library resources (journals, books, reserves, and digital items) and services (library instructions, research guidance) to ensure that students, including exclusively online learners, will have access to them and to the help of professionally trained library staff. Be sure to consider the location and operating hours of the library in discerning the best manner in which support can be offered.

On-Campus Services

Depending on the student, other campus services may be required to support and enhance the student's participation in, and successful completion of, the program. These services could include food service, public safety and parking, disability services, counseling, and health services. In each case, students must know that the service is available and the manner in which they can access support. It is well worth the time of professionals in PCE student services to advocate in their own institutions for ongoing systems and practices that ensure their students receive the appropriate attention and respect they deserve as fully enfranchised students at that school. PCE professionals need to own responsibility for systemic issues that arise, even if they do not have the immediate authority and resources to rectify those issues.

Peer Support and Social Aspects

Providing peer support for students ensures a greater sense of belonging within the community of learners, and aids in persistence and retention of the individual. At the same time, having an opportunity to participate in social events, extracurricular activities, or service-focused events can provide students with a sense of the larger academic community and enable them to meet fellow students, faculty, and staff in an informal setting. Too often, PCE students are mistakenly seen as having a more transactional relationship with their institution—but their engagement with their school and fellow students is vital to their satisfaction and success.

Tutoring and Writing Center

Ensure that students have access to tutoring and writing support when needed. These services need to be offered year-round, in both seated and online modalities when possible.

Retention and Persistence

A defined process needs to be established to measure and monitor persistence and retention of adult learners. Recording when students stop out, tracking their projected return dates, and including outreach plans to contact them about returning to the program typically happens within the student information system.

Veteran Services

Veterans transitioning to education require additional support. This may include providing a student services member dedicated to military and veteran students, organizing a student veterans association, and/or creating a one-stop veteran's center where students can find help with tuition benefits, career placement, child-care, counseling, and VA benefits.

Support after Graduation or Completion

Continued Engagement

Determine how students will remain connected and engaged with the institution after program completion. Communication and outreach can foster a productive and

engaged alumni base. Alumni from all types of programs should receive communications and be incorporated in efforts to recognize their successes and milestones. They should be solicited in fundraising efforts, supported in their career advancement, and encouraged to participate in future educational opportunities tailored to their career trajectory. Satisfied, successful alumni are among the best marketing channels for future students. Use of customer relationship management (CRM) software will help connect marketing outreach efforts to potential students.

Who and How—Implementation

It is critical to map the student lifecycle by identifying every potential interaction with the student from admissions through graduation—a task accomplished through coordinated collaboration with representatives from multiple functional areas across the university.

Once the student lifecycle has been mapped, ensure consistent communication efforts at every step, linked together through information systems that track progress. These touchpoints must have an owner who functions as a partner of student support across campus. A best practice is to have one primary point of contact—a "success coach," "concierge," or "one-stop shop" located in the PCE unit—to serve as the student's advocate. The goal is to avoid students being forced to call multiple departments around the university—a telltale sign of institutional failure.

Student success depends on a variety of interwoven units and student support processes. Effective student support is the responsibility of every individual who touches the student experience, and must be an ongoing conversation across an institution. It is important that every office on campus understands the needs of adult students—and that they are every bit as important as residential students to the success of the institution. The relationships that students have with those who provide student support can be just as important in their satisfaction, persistence, and success as their relationships with faculty.

Key Performance Indicators

- Demonstrated increase in retention and persistence rates of enrolled students, and re-enrollment of stop-out students.
- Periodic student surveys to measure satisfaction with the support services provided, with the results shared among students, faculty, and staff to allow a mutual understanding of support and the changing needs of the student populations. These surveys are opportunities to get to know the overall student population—their characteristics, backgrounds, values, work environments, financial situations, and aspirations—along with their assessment of the academic and non-academic features of their school and program.
- Benchmarking for customer service by asking a standard question (e.g., "Would you recommend this support service to a friend?") can determine if student support is consistently being provided within any unit.
- Formal monitoring of complaints and concerns expressed by students in every

student support center, as well as their usage of the support, to aid in determining what students are finding useful and essential. Complaints are often early-warning signals of systemic issues that need to be addressed.
- Alumni satisfaction surveys sent shortly after completion (and then periodically every few years) to determine their assessment of program outcomes, job success, and overall satisfaction with their experience at the institution.

Excellent Practice 5: Digital Technology

Goal

Leaders in professional and continuing education (PCE) units are driven by the needs of part-time and online students, and thus must be leaders in digital deployment. Technology is often the singular point of interaction. The PCE leader needs to be aware of new and emerging digital technologies, and how best to assess the value of these developments for their enterprise. Even those PCE units that do not provide oversight for online programs or their institution's information technology are typically even more dependent on the sophistication, reliability, and ease of use of IT than other units on campus. Deciding what should be coordinated internally within the PCE unit, centralized at a university-wide level, or outsourced to external service providers is critical to organizing the use of digital technology.

Key Elements

Excellent practice in the area of digital technologies requires PCE leadership to:

- *Budget* for reserve funding for applied research, experimentation, capital expenditures and upgrades, and demonstration projects.
- *Invest* in professional development for staff and faculty.
- *Integrate* new and emerging technologies into the delivery of student support services.
- *Balance* needs to ensure reliability while promoting experimentation and innovation.
- *Maintain* membership and participation in relevant professional associations.
- *Employ* instructional designers as well as technologists.
- *Engage* regularly in consultations and collaborations with institutional IT, teaching and learning centers, and legal counsel office authorities.
- *Assure* that PCE unit planning processes align closely with institutional goals.

Why?

In digital technology, a toy can evolve into a learning tool, a fad might become a trendsetting application, and a start-up in a garage can become the next leading

technological application vendor. Having the judgment to make informed technology decisions is a critical responsibility of PCE leaders, who are most likely to provide the space for experimentation and integration of technology.

Senior administrators must exercise cautious, responsible stewardship in ensuring the continuity and quality of their learning environments. In the flurry of change, a PCE unit will more likely be a "fast follower" than risk suffering on the bleeding edge. For example, MOOCs were rolled out by some of the most prestigious faculties in the nation, promising a still-unrealized revolution in access and equity—but the fervor surrounding them gave way to the realities of implementation, state and accreditation regulations, consumer and employer demand, and traditional structures and values. PCE leaders must balance prudence and innovation, caution and experimentation, skepticism and idealism.

What?

Given the potential pace of change, administrators and policy leaders must focus on certain overarching principles and practices when implementing new and existing technology, the interconnectivity of systems, and data integrity and security. These include:

Collaborations with IT, Teaching and Learning Centers, and Legal Authorities

Digital technologies are complex and challenging to implement. It is all too easy to let enthusiasm for a new tool lead to unilateral action, only to later learn that there are expenses, personal and institutional safeguards, and contractual and procurement regulations that should have been anticipated. Gathering an ongoing coalition of technology, legal, and pedagogical experts to think through ideas and plans can save money, assure regulatory compliance, and encourage a focus on applications of digital technologies most effective for teaching and learning.

Planning Processes that Align with Institutional Goals

Even small colleges are complex organizations, and variation of mission brings even more complexity. Regardless of size and mission, it is critical that PCE administrators reflect their institution's strategic plan and contemplate all of the ways potential digital technologies are likely to fit within institutional priorities involving facilities, expenditures, prevailing and planned instructional delivery methods, student support strategies, and academic program development.

Funds for Research, Experimentation, and Demonstration

Most continuing and distance education units are self-supporting, and therefore leaders in those units must understand and integrate investment and reinvestment as a legitimate cost of operation. To engage faculty in technology research, development, and demonstration projects, funds will be needed for equipment purchases and to facilitate research and partnership efforts. Organizing, naming, and promoting a systematized research and development program provides both a safe space for

experimentation and a way to position the continuing and professional education unit as a locus of digital technology leadership on campus.

Professional Development for Staff and Faculty

There are fewer new faculty and staff that could be described as technophobic. More see mobile devices as pathways through which they live and learn. Training is crucial for encouraging operational competency and developing an understanding of how digital technologies can be applied in the classroom. Everyone in a PCE unit is a potential help-desk resource, for one another and for students. Professional development is also critical for integrating digital literacy into professional thinking. Even for those with high levels of operational capability, training presents an opportunity to develop greater sensitivity to the promises and pitfalls of digital technology—which increases the possibility that technological literacy will be emphasized in learning opportunities.

Student Support Services

While it might seem easier and more critical to focus on teaching and learning, it is also important to explore how digital technologies can improve the delivery of student services, adding tremendous value to the continuing and professional learning experience. Leading-edge institutions are using digital technologies to improve the quality and delivery of customer relationship management (CRM) activities, career services, student success and retention, academic coaching, and even counseling and mental health services that target the typical barriers to adult learner participation and success. As leaders and policymakers consider the possibilities of digital technologies for teaching and learning, they should also focus on digitizing those services beyond the formal classroom.

Utilization of Producers, Instructional Designers, and Instructional Technologists

Digital technologies are merely toys unless they are deployed in a way that allows for their use as tools for quality teaching and learning. Instructional designers are pedagogical experts who have a sense of how to use and understand technology in a learning environment—as such, they are a key point of contact for faculty. Instructional technologists, on the other hand, are technology experts who have a sense of how teaching and learning occur. Technologists often collaborate with IT professionals and instructional designers to assure that learning objects are constructed in stable and sustainable ways. There is a growing awareness among leaders in continuing and professional education units that if they are to make real the promise of digital technologies, teams of instructional designers and technologists must figure more prominently into unit staffing plans.

When and How—Implementation

Implementing these leadership and management practices is not a one-time event but a continuous process that should be guided by a number of key principles. Leadership and management practices should be implemented:

- *Knowledgably*—Keeping up with digital technology requires continuous and active involvement in professional associations, particularly in those professional associations that are known for their leadership in, and management perspective of, the PCE field.
- *Collaboratively*—Implementing these practices should be done in collaboration with technologists, instructional designers, teaching and learning center staff, and IT administrators as well as academic faculty and administrative leadership.
- *Consistently*—Selecting a few standard tools at a reasonable cost, and with proper support in place, will create confidence while future options continue to be explored.
- *Holistically*—In an age when university leaders are encouraged to unbundle teaching and learning functions in one breath, and combine and consolidate in another, PCE leadership must avoid looking at the "either/or" and embrace the interconnectedness of the university enterprise. No one single unit alone can deploy digital technologies in an organizational safe harbor, cocoon, or silo. Principles of good pedagogy, smart contracting, lean organizing, and regulatory compliance deserve consideration when implementing digital technologies.

Key Performance Indicators

When considering implementing new technology, performance indicators should be applied in both formative and summative contexts. Perhaps the ultimate performance indicators deal with the central question of how to determine whether students are learning. Service quality indicators can also help address the satisfaction of students, staff, and faculty. Leadership can insure that a PCE unit has a defined program of performance metrics, which can be used internally and shared with external audiences. Possibilities for metrics that gauge the success of leadership and management practices include:

- A ratio of staff to instructors per term, over time, and benchmarked to regional and national comparators.
- The maintenance of a list of student support services delivered through technologies. PCE leaders should refresh their commitments to providing digital solutions to institutional challenges.
- The periodic review of both the institutional and unit strategic plans for the budgeting and deployment of digital technologies.
- Tracking the presence of professional development opportunities for frontline staff, professionals, instructors, and leadership in a PCE unit.
- Budgeting for research and development, experimentation, and demonstration of digital technologies. This should mirror the conventional wisdom and research on the percent of gross proceeds units should be spending on marketing. PCE leaders must develop an explicit budgetary model for their own units, and consider the cost of technology as an investment in program delivery.

Excellent Practice 6: External Advocacy

Goal

Professional and continuing education (PCE) units extend the intellectual assets of the university to immediate and extended communities and their learners by providing civic, social, and economic value. Each PCE member is a potential ambassador providing a similar message to the external public. PCE units are uniquely situated to connect the community with their universities through traditional and non-traditional programs and partnerships. They often:

- serve as the gateway to the many resources and programs at their institutions;
- connect members of the community to the promise of higher education through advocacy and innovation;
- create and offer far-reaching programming that fosters achievement, builds skills, develops the economy, and adapts to the ever-changing needs of the community; and
- empower local employers to be more successful.

PCE units serve a variety of external stakeholders: prospective students, alumni, community members, donors, corporations, public officials, nonprofits, tribal communities, remote communities, school districts, underserved populations, international communities, and military personnel, to name a few. Leaders in PCE must represent their institutions in those environments, and advocate for the needs of their students and institutions alike. PCE units hold tremendous responsibility and possess enormous opportunity for broadly connecting community and campus beyond traditional or mainstream stakeholders.

PCE units transcend barriers to put their institutions within reach of expanding and changing populations. They encourage people of all ages to imagine possibilities, and guide them towards the mentors, programs, and resources they need to realize those possibilities. Through high-impact credit and noncredit courses and programs, cutting-edge technology, and seamless and excellent service over a lifetime of learning, PCE units are advocates for their students and their institutions.

Key Elements

- Connection to, and programming for, multiple population sectors in the community—including tribal populations, underserved populations, rural communities, military, prisons, school districts, and international audiences.
- Targeted, entrepreneurial, and agile programming—along with flexible and varied modalities of course offerings—to meet changing community needs.
- Utilization of non-traditional methods to reach non-traditional audiences.
- Clearly developed K–12 pathways to serve as a point of access for potential students.

- Targeted services and programs for professional development and certification.
- Partnerships with public, private, and non-profit sectors, as well as community organizations and campus partners.
- Deep commitment to engaging with, and advocating for, the needs, interests, and assets of the community and the institution.
- Engagement in branch campus and rural outreach efforts, where appropriate.
- Strategic international presence.
- Incubation, cultivation, convening, and implementation of new campus and community ideas, collaborations, and programs.
- Deliberate and ongoing engagement of returning students, alumni, and lifelong learners.
- Fostering wellness and improving the quality of life in the community.
- Strategic and ongoing communication with external constituents.

Why?

Although it can be difficult to find two PCE units that look exactly the same across the nation, there is one commonality—the important connections that are drawn between these units, their institutions, and their communities. PCE units must advocate for their students and their institutions, and must nurture the critical relationships that build healthy communities and an educated workforce.

Community experiences can sometimes feel uncomfortably dictated by institutions of higher education. As a result, community members expect and prefer collaboration, advocacy, and asset-based interaction as the core foundation of their relationships with institutions. PCE units must connect to, and engage with, external constituents in every way—not just to serve as advocates and ambassadors for their institutions and their communities, but to create funding models that promote agility, innovation, responsiveness, and faculty engagement.

What?

External advocacy has many dimensions, and exists at multiple levels of interaction. The goal is to responsibly engage with the community in ways that address issues and needs, honor the strengths of the community, fulfill the social mission of the institution, and foster economic and workforce development. Institutions can look to the examples below when developing and evaluating their PCE programs through the lenses of external advocacy.

Who and How—Implementation

Through targeted, entrepreneurial, and agile programming as well as flexible and varied modalities of course offerings, PCE units work to advocate for and meet changing community needs while reaching non-traditional audiences.

Community Members

Commit to engaging with, and advocating for, the needs, interests, and assets of the

community and the institution. This includes strategic and ongoing communication with external constituents as well as targeted programming to meet the community at locations and through modalities that fulfill that commitment.

Donors, Alumni, and Post-Traditional Learners

Ensure deliberate and ongoing engagement of returning students, alumni, and lifelong learners through events, communication, programs that reach seasoned learners, and a variety of learning formats.

Public, Private, Military, and Nonprofit Organizations

Set up targeted services and programs for professional development and certification that span sectors and professions. Examples may include academies for first responders, on-base degree programs, or technology courses that result in certification.

Tribal Communities

Provide education pathways and college access through close work with tribal education coordinators and strategic partnerships with organizations that serve American Indian students in a K–12 setting.

Remote Communities

Engage in branch campus and rural outreach efforts, where appropriate, to ensure that the resources of the institution are available in alternative locations.

School Districts and Prospective Students

Utilize clearly developed K–12 pathways as a point of access for potential students, including integrated programming in Community Learning Centers for both community members and post-traditional learners.

Underserved Populations

Devote resources to developing strategic educational pathways and ongoing connections with communities that are traditionally underrepresented in higher education. Examples include college access advisors working with students in K–12 settings, or working specifically with families in community settings on personal, professional, and educational development.

International

Develop strategic programming in international locations, and serve international communities on U.S. campuses through English language institutes, partnerships with international centers, and community-based language courses. PCE units can also play a key role in hosting international students on their campuses and at sites abroad.

Lifelong Learners

Foster wellness activities that improve the quality of life in the community. For example, lifelong learning programs and centers provide many opportunities for incredible enrichment across the lifespan.

Data Collection around Advocacy

Map advocacy and engagement efforts to ensure a coordinated, consistent effort at every step of the lifecycle. Data collection must have an owner who functions as a repository for information, and also as a dedicated campus partner who can utilize the data to tell stories on behalf of the institution.

Key Performance Indicators

- Expansion in partnerships that explore and respond to emerging community needs.
- Benchmarking with other institutions to identify best practices, similarities, and differences between peer institutions.
- Increase in numbers of engaged populations across the lifespan.
- Surveys to measure student, community, and alumni engagement.
- Staff members in PCE units dedicated to advocacy, access, and communication.
- Development of new programs and possibilities to reach youth, international, community, post-traditional, traditional, underrepresented, professional, military, or rural communities.
- Clear commitment from campus leadership around the importance of external advocacy.
- Increased recruitment, retention, and graduation of underrepresented populations.
- Demonstrated evidence that first-interaction students go on to matriculate—resulting in great contributions to the institution.
- Growth in reengagement of alumni.
- Development of collaborative and coordinated mapping strategies and a campus impact report to identify the various ways PCE units connect with, and serve as, external advocates.
- Enhanced visibility and increased support for institutional efforts.
- Visible marketing, communications, and public relations efforts focused on advocacy.
- Sharing of knowledge with the community through research, application, and presentations designed to inform and improve.
- Financial contribution to the university at large.

Effective external advocacy is critical to the success of PCE units, their institutions, and the communities in which they reside. PCE leaders must foster a culture of external advocacy within their units. However, a single entity does not independently or exclusively fulfill external advocacy needs. External advocacy must become an ongoing and collaborative conversation across an institution and be the responsibility of every individual who touches the work.

Excellent Practice 7: Professionalism

Goal

Today's academic administrators, including those in professional and continuing education, face many challenges. Waning state legislative support, media criticism of increasing student debt, revelations about questionable college recruitment practices, skepticism about once-revered traditions (such as tenure and academic freedom), legislative and journalistic scrutiny of research endeavors, and anger over rising costs has eroded the esteem once widely enjoyed by higher education. A primary issue, as always, is funding. When institutional budgets are threatened, higher education leaders often turn to their professional and continuing education (PCE) units for remedies. Higher education's frantic search for new revenue streams in an era of waning public support and greater competition makes the very issue of continuing education professionalism particularly critical and complex. Because of this, it becomes incumbent upon continuing education administrators to exhibit a high level of professionalism as they carry out their roles in transformational times.

Key Elements

- Establish and sustain a consistent professional persona that fosters ongoing communication and builds linkages with all constituents: students, faculty, staff, funders, regulators, political leaders, media, the public, and others.
- Exemplify high academic standards of excellence and program integrity that reflect positively on the image and reputation of the university and the profession.
- Support administrators who have set career goals in the PCE field.
- Offer professional development programs for administrators who regard their work life as more than simply a job.
- Set high standards of competency in all areas.
- Demonstrate core values such as respect, civility, social responsibility, stewardship, cultural inclusion, trust, and continuous improvement in all business and professional interactions.
- Provide mentoring for young continuing educators who aspire to PCE leadership.
- Exhibit high regard for lifelong learning and advocate for the needs of adult learners and those pursuing new disciplines and career paths.
- Demonstrate the highest level of integrity and trustworthiness in dealing with campus and community colleagues.
- Create an engaged community of PCE professionals, and promote their own lifelong learning and engagement in the larger professional community and within the scholarship of their field.

Why?

Professionalism helps build champions for PCE within and beyond the campus community. Professionalism also creates ideals for excellence and ethics, fosters a climate of competence, and underscores the high quality and value to be found in the institution's professional and continuing education enterprise. At the same time, professionalism engenders confidence among PCE practitioners that they are fully engaged with lifelong learners in ways that make a difference in these learners' lives. Professionalism requires that PCE leaders put the needs and aspirations of their students, clients, and participants first and foremost in all of their efforts.

What?

Professionalism must be exhibited throughout the PCE enterprise, starting at the top and filtering throughout the organization based on knowledge of, and commitment to, the higher education institution, the field of professional and continuing education, and commonly held core values. Leadership is demonstrated through example, as well as via policies and practices.

Higher Education

Higher Education Knowledge

Successful continuing educators thrive in the broad academic milieu, and must be more generally knowledgeable about higher education. Their understanding should fully take in the institutional context, the politics and economics of higher education, and the contributions that higher education makes to the local, regional, and state economies. This knowledge of, and respect for, this sense of purpose are more important than ever. Continuing educators must be keenly perceptive scanners who can anticipate their local and national higher education environments. Effective analysis is particularly critical. Astute continuing educators will be plugged into professional associations that monitor trends and devise awareness programs for members' consumption and consideration. The professionalism of PCE leadership requires consistent learning and engagement to assess the needs of constituents as well as new opportunities and challenges that might be emerging.

Campus Politics

Professional continuing education administrators must be politically savvy regarding central administration trends, capable of building effective alliances and a sound case for trust and support, and able to work within the agenda of their campus leadership. Carried out appropriately, political activity is a strength that helps the continuing education administrator support a unit's effectiveness.

Academic Credibility

Strong academic credibility requires a comprehensive understanding all of the academic processes that face departments and faculty members as they engage in

cooperative efforts with the PCE unit. These include issues such as shared tuition or administrative support for the departments, supplementary pay or release time for faculty members, and agreed-upon use of facilities and equipment. At the same time, the PCE administrator must have sufficient knowledge of academic processes to anticipate implications for faculty and academic departments—particularly those performance indicators that might impact tenure and promotion. Academic partnerships require alliances based on trust, mutual respect, and sensitivity to the variety of pragmatic issues others in the university face.

PCE Skills

Collaboration

There are very few continuing education activities that do not require collaboration either with academic units or with community partners. Whether the PCE administration is centralized or decentralized, it still must work with other elements on campus to achieve its programmatic goals. Likewise, many programs offered by PCE units are developed in cooperation with community groups or public and private business entities. Having the skills and integrity to broker cooperative agreements is critical to the professionalism of a continuing educator.

Entrepreneurship

Typically PCE organizations are self-supporting or only partially supported by campus allocations—and must be capable of creating programs that attract intended audiences and generate their own revenue streams. Often, the PCE unit is expected to contribute a significant financial margin to its parent institution, which needs to be top-of-mind in proposing, executing, and evaluating new initiatives. The professional continuing educator should be tapped into various communities and ready to enlist the assistance of marketers to enhance this knowledge.

Budgeting

A corollary of entrepreneurial expertise, and a bedrock skill, is to be very effective in managing budgets, negotiating contracts, developing costing strategies, and creating incentives for staff and partners. The finances of a PCE unit—which are often dispersed across many programs, entities, and even locations—must be regularly monitored and beyond reproach. The institution at large must have confidence in the responsible use of resources, the reliability of financial projections, and the honesty and transparency in evaluating performance.

Marketing

Another aspect of professionalism in PCE is understanding integrated marketing practices. Effectiveness in marketing begins with digital marketing strategies but includes social media marketing, search engine optimization, print-based promotion, and relationship marketing. More often than not, the PCE unit leads the entire institution in marketing expertise. The overarching goal in marketing is to reflect well

on the institution as a whole, and never put the parochial needs of the PCE unit ahead of the greater good.

Advocacy

In most colleges and universities, post-traditional students will have few voices to represent them within the institution. The PCE administrator must become that champion in all of the policies and practices throughout the university. Older students, part-time students, and others pursuing a non-traditional path towards their education need to be seen as more than just a revenue stream—they are part of the diversity and richness of the institution at large.

Passion and Mission

A key professional characteristic of continuing education administrators is passion for their field, their purpose, and their lifelong learning constituency. For many communities, the continuing education unit represents the place where a working adult, a single parent, a small-business person, or a nonprofit association can approach the institution for services that provide cutting-edge knowledge and innovative, high-quality pedagogy and andragogy. Having this passion and vision for the role of continuing education—that fire in the belly—is a critical part of the professionalism of a continuing educator, and helps to demonstrate the necessity and vitality of the enterprise within the broader academic community.

Core Values

To commit to professionalism requires value-centering one's work life to the following ideals:

Lifelong Learner

This individual is at the heart of every activity in which PCE units are engaged. A professional remembers this daily.

Lifelong Learning

A commitment to the lifelong learner necessitates a concomitant allegiance to the educational process that instructs that learner. Those in professional and continuing education must be educators first, learners themselves, and exemplars of personal growth, self-improvement, and constant curiosity.

Change Agent

Professional continuing educators engage in societal change by enhancing and enriching their communities. The very nature of this domain is forward thinking, focusing on how to improve the world through individual and collective change.

Respect, Civility, Social Responsibility

Fundamental to all interpersonal interactions are the values of respect, civility, and social responsibility. The professional and continuing educational enterprise is often the most diverse on its campus—in terms of its variety of students, faculty, professionals, and programs—and this diversity is a strength that requires ongoing civility and support. The PCE leader provides a milieu that celebrates the strengths of that diversity and promotes mutual respect and collective engagement.

Stewardship

The professional strives to be an effective, honest, and open steward of the resources he or she manages. This is an obligation to state and federal requirements, to one's university, to professional standards, and, even more importantly, to one's personal and professional integrity.

Cultural Inclusion

All PCE activities, programs, and initiatives reflect the high value placed on cultural inclusiveness. Professional and continuing education extends the reach of an institution to include a greater span of cultures, nations, ethnicities, ages, and occupational interests—this is a virtue and a challenge that needs to be nurtured and elevated to the highest level of the PCE mission.

Trust

Trustworthiness and cooperation are characteristic of all professional relationships—demonstrated by actions, tested daily, and threatened by any lapses in judgment.

Knowledge Sharing

The professional values the sharing of knowledge and information that enables administrators to transcend organizational barriers and conventional wisdom to communicate ideas, and to better serve constituents.

Continuous Improvement

In response to changing environments, and in pursuit of opportunities to serve constituents better, professionals strive for continuous improvement in staff development, corporate capacity, and service to others.

Who and How—Implementation

A culture of professionalism begins at the top of an organization through its leaders—determined by how those leaders exemplify ethical and professional behavior through their actions. They are accountable daily for the standards they set and the opportunities they create for personal and collective growth. The infrastructure of professionalism is embedded in the organization's policies and procedures, how new employees are selected and onboarded, and how strategies and expectations are built into individual performance appraisal. Success in professionalism is measured through receptivity to constant feedback and new information, the ability to integrate new

knowledge into practice, the willingness to put ethics before expediency, and the courage to demonstrate responsible leadership.

Key Performance Indicators

Professionalism entails metrics, accountability, and control systems that cover both the academic and the small-business dimensions.

- Seek opportunities to illustrate and enhance a culture of professionalism and identify metrics to measure and monitor progress that can be conveyed both within and beyond the PCE unit.
- Enhance collaboration with the campus at large.
- Expand community-based partnerships and ties to other outside agencies.
- Increase the number of academic and administrative departments with which the PCE unit is engaged.
- Use discretionary revenue to develop innovative programming and altruistic offerings to underserved, public-service audiences.
- Mentor young members of the PCE profession, stress the idealistic, mission-driven purposes of the field, and model conduct on what best promotes these virtues.
- Exemplify the same humility, inquisitiveness, and ability to learn and change that is expected from students.

The PCE unit can sometimes confront skepticism and lack of clarity of its place within its own institutions. This puts even greater pressure on its leaders—along with aspiring leaders and those who contribute specialized roles in these units—to exemplify professional standards that promote the vitality and reputations of their operations and their ability to serve as part of the mainstream of their universities. The very nature of the PCE field is often at odds with conventional wisdom and common practices. The ultimate hallmark of excellence is to demonstrate leadership that is not only loyal to the purposes and reputation of the institution but forward-thinking, challenging, and innovative in ways that advance that institution. Professionalism in that context is ultimately measurable by the academic success that results for an ever-growing range of students whose lives are forever enhanced.

Additional Areas of Practice that Advance the Mission of Professional and Continuing Education

Given the vast variation in the portfolios of professional and continuing education (PCE) units, there are several important opportunities for entrepreneurship and innovation. We identify four such areas:

- International Education
- Summer Sessions, Youth Programs, and Conference Services
- Online Leadership
- Economic Development

International Education

International education, in all its dimensions, is the new frontier for continuing and professional education. A surge in global ambitions at universities, ever-improving online and mobile technologies that extend the reach of the classroom, greater domestic competition, and a growing foreign appetite for a U.S. education are all factors in the drive to offer professional and continuing educational opportunities to an international audience. Leaders in PCE units are looking at international education in a variety of different forms, including:

- Recruiting international students to U.S. campuses, typically for pathway programs such as ESL, degree preparation, and shorter professional development or for-credit summer programs. Increasingly, international students segue from these pathway programs into full degree offerings.
- Creating destination programs abroad for U.S. students to attend as part of their academic program.
- Enrolling international students into MOOCs and fully online professional development or degree programs.
- Attracting foreign students to blended programs, in which online study from home complements intensive learning experiences on U.S. campuses.
- Offering degree, executive-format, and professional development programs to students in their own countries or within easy traveling distance, in partnership with local institutions or through satellite campuses and centers.
- Delivering customized on-ground and online professional development programs to public and private employees in partnership with international governmental and corporate entities.
- Licensing course materials to international partners to deliver in other languages, and otherwise providing consultative or evaluative services and guidance in institution-building abroad.

The goal is to create a strategic vision, tap existing internal capacity, establish regulatory and technical expertise, and develop the international reach and presence to deal with the issues and opportunities that arise when providing an educational experience to foreign and domestic students in the U.S. and abroad. Because universities often have limited experience in the international arena, establishing PCE global initiatives requires an entrepreneurial effort, the flexibility to adapt existing processes to new business models, and a willingness to incur risk responsibly.

Key Elements

The strategic international vision of the PCE unit must align with that of the larger university, serving the interests of the institution and protecting its reputation and standards of excellence. The PCE unit must have the capacity to manage the following potentially unfamiliar factors:

New or Different Business Operations

- Understand regulatory, legal, labor, and tax issues at home and abroad where business is conducted.
- Assess partnership risk.
- Manage foreign contractors, and negotiate and execute contracts.
- Research risk related to international payments and foreign exchange.
- Negotiate academic accreditation standards and approval in both the U.S. and the host country.

Time-and-Space Challenges

- Accommodate different time zones, work weeks, holidays, and academic calendars.
- Locate campus, satellite, or partner space, as well as virtual online space and associated support.

Cultural Differences

- Develop literacy around differing norms related to gender, religion, custom, language, dress, communication, and the classroom, among others.

Marketing and Recruitment of International Students

- Utilize international recruitment fairs and agents, marketing vendors, direct digital marketing abroad, alumni networks, marketing through partner institutions, and website customization.

Language Differences

- Clarify language of education, support materials, and services.
- Standardize acceptable tools for translation and educational support.

Technology Needs

- Align online delivery with local bandwidth and student technology usage abroad, optimize student/faculty interaction in online design, and provide 24/7 support for different time zones.

Academic Support

- Evaluate foreign degrees, English-language proficiency, faculty and staff cultural orientation, institutional presence abroad, availability of learning materials, and access to traditional institutional services (i.e., registration, finance, student services, library).
- Assess requirements for faculty recruitment and support, academic integrity, freedom of expression, interactive online learning communities, customized curriculum and format, proctoring, and graduation ceremonies.

Non-Academic Student Services Support

- Implement services for visas, immigration, travel, housing, pre-departure and post-arrival needs, health and wellness, vaccination requirements, safety, community-building, social activities, and ongoing English-language support.

International education requires institutional commitment, a robust infrastructure designed around the needs of a unique audience, comfort with the new and different, and the ability to deliver a high-quality education experience to an international audience that may be accustomed to different pedagogies and learning methods. While international engagement inevitably involves risk, it also presents opportunities to expand an institution's reach and reputation, find new audiences eager to engage with universities in the United States and be on the vanguard of bringing higher education to other parts of the world.

Summer Sessions, Youth Programs, and Conference Services

Hosting a wide range of summer activities has become the norm on college and university campuses. Many of these offerings fall under the inventive and nimble oversight of units responsible for professional and continuing education (PCE). Adept with flexible scheduling, familiar with campus policies and procedures, and regularly engaged with academic departments and faculty, the leadership and staff in PCE areas are well equipped with business and marketing savvy to manage the campus during the summer months.

Key Elements

Summer Sessions

Summer sessions designed to serve degree students are now a priority for most institutions. These programs enable faster progress toward degree completion and make good use of campus facilities during the summer. Visiting students—at both the high school and college level—add to enrollment and revenue while serving as ambassadors of the institution to their peers.

Summer programs range from intensive short programs to full-term schedules of 10 or more weeks. These credit-bearing programs often offer open enrollment, enabling students to register without an application process. Courses count toward students' degree programs (even as pre-college students), advance their progress to degree completion, help them catch up on missed credits, and offer personal satisfaction.

Standard institutional processes apply to faculty appointment, course approval, and credit registration, ensuring quality. Fewer student services and activities during the summer can mean tuition is often less than during the fall or spring semesters. The challenge with summer sessions is the zero-based nature of the effort: each year is a fresh start in recruiting students who are matriculating, international, in high school, or from other academic institutions.

Benefits:

- Improve student retention and progress towards degrees.
- Attract visiting domestic and international students, and other prospective students for the institution.
- Provide additional compensation for interested faculty.
- Create opportunities for pedagogical experimentation and nonconventional courses and formats.
- Offer graduate student teaching opportunities that provide valuable experience, vitae credentials, and earnings.
- Enhance students' college experiences through research or other work with faculty.
- Generate a lively campus community and appeal for visitors.
- Increase opportunities for students to work in volunteer and paid positions and take advantage of arts, entertainment, and retail offerings near campus.
- Collect revenue from tuition, campus fees, and auxiliary services.

Challenges:

- Availability of faculty to teach, particularly for courses most in demand.
- Finding classroom space for summer courses that require long hours of instruction.
- Offering laboratory courses in compressed sessions.
- Sponsoring and budgeting extracurricular and cultural offerings that appeal to students and draw ample attendance.

Pre-College Programs

College campuses are ideal for safely housing young people and delivering quality education. The demand for summer educational options for high school students has grown steadily over the past three decades. Summer courses enable pre-college students to sample the demands of college academics and campus life, learn independent time management, expand academic choices, and enhance readiness for future studies. Credit-bearing content can often transfer to a degree program later, while noncredit programs offer learning exploration toward higher-level study.

Benefits:

- Tap into an audience of pre-college students who are often self-selecting, high-achieving learners.
- Expand awareness of the school among high school students, their peers, and their communities.
- Groom well-qualified applicants for undergraduate admission.
- Provide employment for interested faculty.
- Increase teaching opportunities for full-time faculty and graduate students.
- Collect revenue from tuition and campus fees.

Challenges:

- Appointing strong faculty and other instructors who offer classes and instruction that is appealing and appropriate for this population.
- Availability of classroom and residential space.
- Implementing adequate supervision to provide the proper balance of guidance and freedom.
- Engaging students with co-curricular activities.
- Managing risks through program design, staffing, and training.

Conferences, Events, and Campus Rental to External Organizations

The PCE enterprise is often a logical business unit to oversee conference services and events that facilitate collaborative use of the campus for multiple populations, generate revenue, and extend campus events within the PCE unit's not-for-profit mission. Objectives, priorities, and guidelines should be established when renting the campus to organizations or groups outside the institution. Balancing the objective of creating a revenue stream with issues of reputation, appropriate facility use, and external relationship building requires sophisticated awareness and insight.

Benefits:

- Contribute to revenue and reputation, and produce positive community engagement by hosting other organizations and groups.
- Deploy underutilized, appealing campus space and buildings to good purpose for the institution.

Challenges:

- Renting real estate, which is not a natural priority or talent for most campuses.
- Over-emphasizing revenue generation, leading to inappropriate use of campus space.
- Accounting fully for the costs and impact on buildings, equipment, staffing, and overhead for utilities to avoid low or negative revenue outcomes.
- Balancing priorities for optimal deployment of campus space to avoid unnecessary inter-unit competition or less-beneficial outcomes.
- Avoiding external vendors whose educational content or products do not meet the standards of the institution, which can dilute the brand.
- Providing accommodations, meal services, and recreational amenities suitable to the expectations of corporate or alumni retreats or senior citizens.

Athletic Camps

Enabling athletic coaches to offer camps in the summer can attract students who might eventually become team recruits, while augmenting coach incomes and utilizing fields and athletic facilities effectively.

Benefits:

- Attract future undergraduate athletes.
- Enhance salaries for coach and other athletic staff.
- Generate revenue for the institution and athletic department.

Challenges:

- Accounting for wear-and-tear on facilities and fields that is not integrated in revenue/expense models.
- Managing risk, especially for injuries, health issues, and student supervision.

Online Leadership

Online education, in its many forms, has become a key modality for professional and continuing education (PCE) units. PCE leaders are leveraging online education to expand the reach of their programs, provide new opportunities for student learning, integrate technology and teaching, and address long-standing, all-important issues of access, affordability, and scheduling flexibility.

An online PCE enterprise is a microcosm of an entire university. As such, online PCE leaders are tasked with a college president's portfolio of responsibilities—overseeing finance, marketing, recruitment, academic affairs, student support, faculty development, technology resources, advancement, strategic partnerships, and more.

Online education is inevitably about innovation, experimentation, risk, and imagination. PCE leaders of online programs must have the skills and creativity to respond to market demand and lead responsible change—all while exemplifying the highest ideals and contributing to a growing professional community on an international scale. These administrators can lead by example, inspiring other deans at their institution to enter the online arena. *The UPCEA Hallmarks of Excellence in Online Leadership* is a critical guide that applies to the PCE enterprise itself.

Key Elements

Entrepreneurial Initiatives

- Identify and articulate institutional brand and reputation.
- Understand the market and proper use of market research.
- Produce targeted, market-driven programs.
- Proactively eliminate under-performing offerings.
- Introduce differentiated programs with unique attributes in an increasingly crowded online education marketplace, as well as market-driven alternative credentials.
- Explore strategic partnerships within both the institution and industry.
- Mobilize marketing, recruitment, and enrollment teams with data-driven goals.
- Recognize the need for improvisation in the pursuit of solutions, and be willing to take risks and respond to both success and failure.

Faculty Support

- Envelop faculty with the tools to create education equal to, if not exceeding, that of the traditional classroom.
- Establish scalable practices for program and enrollment growth.
- Develop compensation policies.
- Clarify intellectual property rights and faculty responsibilities for online authorship.
- Inspire faculty creativity and continuous enhancement of the online experience.
- Maintain ongoing technical support for faculty.
- Cultivate quality instructional design and development.
- Ensure ongoing assessment of faculty support services.

Student Support

- Nurture a culture where PCE faculty and staff advocate for online students, remove obstacles, and provide the highest quality experience at every virtual touchpoint from application to graduation, 24/7.
- Foster community engagement and cohort diversity.
- Provide targeted academic and technical student support services.
- Create a student learning experience through intentional instructional design.
- Develop student success/retention initiatives.
- Ensure ongoing assessment of student support services.
- Establish an ongoing schedule for student satisfaction surveys, data analysis, and related plans for improvement.

Digital Technology

- Keep abreast of educational technology tools and leading practices that support online student success and program integrity.
- Develop current and dependable technical infrastructure.
- Explore new technologies and optimize their use.
- Implement processes for technology review and improvement.
- Guarantee information security and system integrity.
- Ensure that technical requirements for online course consumption are readily available and accessible to students.
- Adopt and/or build online learning tools and experiences that enhance and support student learning.
- Maintain a data-driven culture focused on learning analytics to continuously improve student success.

Professionalism

- Establish a professional voice that creates ongoing credibility with all constituents including students, faculty, and staff as well as external funders, regulators, political leaders, media, and the public.

- Develop practices that ensure trust among faculty, staff, and other constituents.
- Work to establish metrics that provide measurements of success and accountability for faculty, staff, and students.
- Drive commitment to a comprehensive self-evaluation and a virtual cycle of ongoing improvement and innovation.
- Ensure regulatory compliance.
- Meet professional and regional accreditation standards.
- Formulate and sustain the ethical aspects of online programs—particularly academic honesty.
- Demonstrate continuous receptivity to improvement in operations, innovation, and new approaches, concepts, and technologies.
- Exemplify the ongoing quest to achieve even higher ideals by putting educational quality and student success above all else.

Economic Development

The goal of university outreach is to engage with the regional community as a catalyst for innovation and economic growth. University outreach is rooted in a long history and tradition of service, from the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890 and the formation of land-grant universities, to the development of Agricultural Experiment Stations at land-grant universities through the Hatch Act in 1887 and the founding of the Cooperative Extension Service through the Smith Lever Act of 1914. Tangible benefits from university research were available to communities, creating a public system for connecting citizens and universities in the shared purpose of building a stronger democratic society. Research in agriculture advanced food production and helped to improve public health. Education and training prepared professional workers for an increasingly industrial and technology-based economy. This notion of service and engagement extended over time to include private universities and colleges as well.

Professional and continuing education (PCE) units have inherited, and built upon, this legacy and mission as part of outreach and economic development. The concept, programs, and impact of outreach have continued to evolve, consistent with market-based, entrepreneurial activity that is responsive to societal needs and demands.

Key Elements

Varied Models

Some land-grant universities have merged their extension and PCE activities into one unit, underscoring the connection between extension and outreach, and acknowledging society's transition from an agrarian economy. Others have adopted the language and framework of "engagement"—rather than the more unidirectional "outreach"—to underscore the active partnership between the university and the public and private sectors. Some mechanisms for achieving engagement include advisory bodies, collaborative projects, joint grant submissions, student internships and service learning, and expert resource sharing. These varied models are informed by, and respond to, regional differences.

Impact Statements

PCE units are best served by demonstrating the impact of university outreach on socio-economic development through extensive annual accountability reports. Many universities have adopted such reporting as an institutional strategy, revealing the full financial benefit that the university brings to the local economy.

Culture of Innovation

In a global economy driven by innovation, the university's role has expanded beyond knowledge transmission. PCE units exemplify and support the culture of innovation. For example, some PCE units have developed and manage "makerspaces," fostering outreach to K–12 schools and businesses to boost regional economic development. University PCE can help bridge the gap between the old economy and the new innovation economy.

Credentialing and Building an Educated Workforce

PCE units play a key role in regional economic development by assisting with the training and credentialing of an educated workforce. Multi-modal training and education programs that result in certificates, badges, and other alternative credentials or academic degrees are all part of university efforts to grow regional economic development.

Changing Nature of Jobs

Universities are educating students for jobs that do not yet exist. PCE units can be active partners in that education by training displaced workers for different jobs in different industry sectors. PCE units provide intelligence on industry clusters, demographics, and regional business environments. PCE units also have the service model that accommodates adult learners who have many demands on their time. Finally, PCE outreach efforts serve economic development by providing key workforce literacy skills needed for effective performance in today's workplace: communications, mathematics, technology, reading, problem solving, and critical thinking.

Developing an Outreach Mission

A vital and energetic outreach mission depends upon the PCE unit's capacity to adapt to changing knowledge needs as well as its alignment with the university mission. As society undergoes rapid and transformational change, PCE units must constantly adapt to be relevant and engaged. This adaptation is built upon strong connections to the external community (as well as strong ties internally to marshal support for regional engagements); deep market research on trends, demographics, and demand; an orientation to the agility and responsiveness of the PCE unit; and a strong commitment to serve the region.

From its humble origins in the nineteenth-century agrarian economy, university outreach has broadened, developed, and matured to be equally at home in a

knowledge-based economy, the future of which is built upon innovation. University outreach can also help raise the level of discourse within the community, helping to sustain the principles of democracy. Through the work of scholars within universities, outreach and engagement can address major societal challenges, including climate change, community planning for smart growth, transportation and infrastructure optimization, agriculture and food production to help alleviate food insecurity, training for government workers to promote safer and more efficient communities, promotion of professional and technical skills needed for career advancement, and much more. Along with reinforcing the heritage of service and demonstrating the value of higher education—both for taxpayers, who provide a measure of public funding, and for students, who provide tuition—PCE outreach and engagement has the power to create better communities for all.

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