

Selected Practices in Satellite Campus Course and Faculty Approval

Prepared for the University of Alaska Anchorage

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In the following report, Hanover Research examines the guidelines governing course, faculty, and distance education approval at universities with multiple campuses. The University of Alaska Anchorage will utilize this research as it reviews policies governing its own approval processes in these areas.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS

In the following report, Hanover Research (Hanover) examines the processes that universities with multiple campuses have instituted to coordinate the scheduling of courses, faculty, and distance education across several sites. This research has been conducted to aid the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) as it reviews courses and instructor approval criteria across its community campuses. Hanover has based its findings on a review of secondary literature on the topic, an examination of information available on institution websites, and interviews with four representatives of three institutions that are similar to UAA.

This report is divided into two sections:

- **Section I** provides an overview of the secondary literature on multiple campus administration. In particular, it engages with the opportunities and challenges in centralized and decentralized management systems.
- **Section II** examines the policies in place at three institutions of similar size and classification to the University of Alaska Anchorage. Based on a series of interviews with representatives of these institutions, Hanover describes their approval processes for branch campus faculty, courses, and distance education in detail.

KEY FINDINGS

- **Because multi-location universities vary so widely in structure and goals, there is no specific set of best practices that can be applied to their administration.**
- **There are benefits and challenges in both centralized and decentralized course/faculty approval processes.** A decentralized system allows branch campuses to respond more quickly to the needs of local communities, while a more centralized system ensures that university resources are used most efficiently by preventing the duplication of instruction. When adopting a centralized approval system, it is important to implement policies that ensure regional campus representatives will not be excluded from the course planning process.
- **Universities coordinate distance delivery of courses across multiple campuses in a variety of ways.** Distance education is most often housed in a specific area of the university's administrative structure, such as an office of distance learning. However, the decision to offer courses online rather than face-to-face is generally the prerogative of the chair of the appropriate department. While branch campus facilities at the institutions surveyed for this report sometimes originate distance courses, they do not do so on their own initiative.
- **Among the institutions profiled, curriculum decisions tend to be highly centralized.** At each institution profiled in this report, the chairs of the academic departments on the main campus are responsible for deciding which courses will be offered and where. Although other institutional stakeholders, such as college deans or regional

campus chancellors, may play some role in the process, the ultimate power to approve course offerings is delegated to the department chair.

- **Decision making authority regarding faculty is likewise vested with the academic department heads.** Although regional representatives sometimes participate in the hiring and scheduling process, they are not able to determine which faculty members are assigned courses at regional campuses. Faculty members, whether full-time or part-time, are employees of the university rather than the campus, and as such they answer to the departmental chair and the college dean rather than local campus administrators. This process is the same regardless of whether the faculty member will be teaching upper-division or lower-division courses.
- **The minimum degree and experience requirement for teaching at branch campuses is usually the same as the requirements for teaching on the main campus.** These requirements include at least either a master's degree or an equivalent level of experience. Moreover, it appears that it is very rare for multi-site universities to make exceptions regarding faculty degree and experience requirements for instructors at rural campuses, if it ever happens.

SECTION I: ISSUES IN REGIONAL CAMPUS ADMINISTRATION

In this section, Hanover Research offers a general overview of the available secondary literature on multiple campus administration. This section focuses specifically on the debate in the literature as to whether it is preferable for branch campuses to be centrally administered from the main campus or to have a significant amount of decision-making autonomy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There is a considerable amount of variation among different multiple-location universities. Differences exist in size, funding, and location. Moreover, regional campuses are developed for a number of different reasons. Some, for example, house specialized programs or focus on a particular level of education, such as general education. Others cater to a specific student population, such as non-traditional students or those enrolled in degree completion programs.¹

Over the past decade, one of the most remarkable trends in higher education has been the growing desire of colleges and universities to expand their footprint by offering courses away from their main campus site. Universities have expanded within their own regions, into different states, and even into different countries. It is even not uncommon to see the development of “twigs,” described by education scholars James Fonseca and Charles Bird as “branches of branch campuses served by branch campus faculty commuting from nearby sites.”² This growth trend is clear and appears likely to continue in the foreseeable future. However, despite the increased visibility of branch campuses, issues of their administration remain, to quote Fonseca and Bird, “largely ignored in the academic literature.”³

The theme that is most apparent from the literature is that there is no set structure to multi-campus universities and no clear nomenclature in place to describe them. In the early 1990s, Aimes C. McGuinness proposed a tiered naming system, based on the complexity of the university’s structure and the level of centralization in its operations. As described by McGuinness, universities with multiple locations fall into one of the following categories:⁴

- **Multi-site Universities** are those systems in which the different university locations are linked through a common set of programs and administrative systems. In this form branches are primarily understood to be geographic extensions of the parent

¹ Fonseca, J. and C. Bird. “Under the Radar: Branch Campuses Take Off.” *University Business*, October, 2007.
<http://www.universitybusiness.com/article/under-radar-branch-campus-take>

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ For a modern outline of this structure see Dengerink, H. “Successful Organization of Complex Universities.” In *Leading America’s Branch Campuses*, 2009. p. 17.
<http://books.google.com/books?id=jiABDHKXGXUC&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false>

institution. An example of this type of organization is the University of Southern Maine.

- **Multi-campus Universities** are those systems in which multiple campuses all act as their own “independent academic entity,” usually with “one large flagship research university with one or more additional four-year campuses that are clearly differentiated from the main campus.” An example would be the University of Illinois.
- **University Systems** are universities that operate within a loose common structure, but in which the multiple campuses vary considerably in mission and prestige. For McGuinness, “many of these systems resulted from consolidations of single institutions rather than from evolution of branches from the base of a major university.” The University of North Carolina is an example of a university system.

CENTRALIZATION AND BRANCH AUTONOMY

There is little consensus regarding the benefits of a centralized system compared to a decentralized one.

For example, in a recent review of its multi-campus system, officials from the University of Illinois came to the conclusion that “functions do not benefit from centralization across a multi-campus system... The closer you get to the laboratory or classroom, the better that decentralization works and the more likely that high quality research and instruction will result.”⁵ On the other hand, a similar review process at Canada’s Wilfrid Laurier University (WLU) resulted in an entirely different conclusion. While recognizing that “local innovation in programming is critical to a successful multi-campus university model,” WLU’s multi-campus review task force favored centralized curriculum administration which would facilitate the university’s operation as “one institution operating in multiple locations.”⁶

The advantages and disadvantages of different patterns of centralization were tracked by education scholar Gregory Timberlake in his 2004 study “Decision-making in Multi-campus Higher Education Institutions.”⁷ Based on a series of interviews with officials and former officials from multi-campus institutions, Timberlake’s report concluded that both centralized and decentralized systems present risks and opportunities (summarized on the following page in Figure 1.1.). Successful leadership in a multi-campus setting thus

⁵ Diehl, P. et. al. “Working Group on Integration of Multi-Campus Universities.” University of Illinois Ad Hoc Committee on the Integration of Multi-Campus Universities. March 16, 2011. p.5. http://www.senate.illinois.edu/multicampus_report.pdf

⁶ “Report of the Presidential Task Force on Multi-Campus Governance.” Wilfrid Laurier University Presidential Task Force on Multi-Campus Governance. March 3, 2011. p. 4. https://www.wlu.ca/documents/47004/Multicampus_Task_Force_Report_Final.pdf

⁷ Timberlake, G. “Decision-making in Multi-campus Higher Education Institutions.” *The Community College Enterprise*, Fall, 2004. <http://classnotes-org-gov.wmwikis.net/file/view/decision+making.pdf>

effectively amounts to managing the tension between the regional campus' local goals and the university's need to efficiently administrate its pool of resources.

Figure 1.1: Benefits and Challenges of Branch Campus Autonomy and Multi-campus Centralization

	AUTONOMY	CENTRALIZATION
Benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Faster decision making ■ Greater responsiveness to local community ■ More frequent opportunities for staff participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Improved efficiency ■ Limited duplication of services ■ Increased student access and transfer opportunities ■ Less opportunity for misuse of institutional resources at the local level
Challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Inadequate alignment of goals between campuses ■ Student difficulties in transferring credits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Slower decision making/increased red tape ■ Employees at the center too far removed from important stakeholders ■ Difficulty in maintaining relations between center and campuses ■ Problem resolution takes longer

Source: Gregory Timberlake, p. 94-96

Although the appropriate level of centralization in a multi-site university's curriculum planning is often determined by particularities in institutional culture, there is an important additional consideration that must be made regarding accrediting. Institutions that share accreditation across campuses "need to meet the same standards as far as student and faculty quality."⁸ This likely makes centralization more necessary so as to guarantee that the students' educational experiences do not fluctuate greatly between sites.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are differences of opinion in the literature concerning the value of centralization versus autonomy. The interviews Hanover conducted with campus officials indicate that a centralized process for curricular decision making can be a benefit to multi-site universities. Consolidation and centralization can save a university in administrative and teaching costs by limiting the duplication of courses throughout the system. More importantly, according to Troy University Montgomery Campus Vice Chancellor Ray White, the simplified process can stand as a benefit to students who will have fewer centers of authority to interact with and more assurance of receiving an education that meets the same standards across all sites.⁹

⁸ Kiley, K. "Pruning the Branches." *Inside Higher Ed*, May 31, 2012.

⁹ Ray White. Vice Chancellor, Troy University Montgomery Campus. Telephone interview conducted May 5, 2014.

The formalization of that process is important. Several sources note that ad hoc systems of course scheduling and faculty administration are not ideal. For example, Sally Ray, Regional Chancellor of Western Kentucky University (WKU)-Glasgow, reports that unclear lines of authority at WKU's regional campuses have resulted in confusion among the faculty regarding the authority structure at the branch campus.¹⁰ As importantly, the relationship between the regional campuses and the decision makers on the main campus at WKU is highly personal, resulting in problems if individuals do not work well together.¹¹ A clear and effective process for resolving disputes over program offerings would likely improve that situation by increasing the amount of collaboration and understanding between the regional and main campuses.

As importantly, all stakeholders should have a role in the course and faculty approval process from the beginning rather than just at the end. Timberlake notes that the most effectively governed satellite campuses are those in which university leaders "establish participatory processes within the institution that provide employees with opportunities to make operational decisions locally as well as participate meaningfully in instructional strategic decision-making processes."¹² Ray also suggests that such a structure would improve buy-in among the regional campus administrators and faculty. She asserts that the regional campuses should "be part of the mainstream conversation when decisions are being made. Whether it is about budget, whether it is about academic programming opportunities, initiatives with regard to research and economic development, those kinds of things."¹³ This more collaborative relationship would help meet the resource needs of the regional campuses while still providing the main campus with the oversight to guarantee that they are efficiently utilized.

An additional factor that can shape the success of multi-site university centralization is university culture. Ray believes that some of the main campus department heads "do not fully understand the role of a regional campus."¹⁴ This system can lead to problems when administrators prioritize the needs of the main campus over those of the regional branches. A system that reinforces the value of the regional campuses throughout the university would discourage these conflicts.

¹⁰ Sally Ray. Regional Chancellor, Western Kentucky University – Glasgow. Telephone interview conducted May 9, 2014.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Timberlake. Op. cit. p. 98.

¹³ Ray interview. Op. cit.

¹⁴ Ibid.

SECTION II: INSTITUTIONAL PROFILES

In this section, Hanover Research profiles the course, faculty, and distance education approval processes of three multi-site universities in depth. The section begins with an overview of the methodological approach used to identify relevant study participants for this report.

METHODOLOGY


To ensure that the institutions profiled in this report are similar to the University of Alaska Anchorage, Hanover used the institution classification system developed by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.¹⁵ Hanover sought institutions that resemble UAA in that they are public, 4-year or above, larger master's colleges and universities. Based on that list, we narrowed our potential contacts further by focusing on institutions that have multiple locations, with a preference toward those that have a rural/urban split between the branches and the main campus.

Based on these criteria, Hanover developed a list of 16 institutions, listed below, that represented the best possible matches for UAA. From there, Hanover approached institutional leaders in the positions of provost, vice president of academic affairs, regional chancellor, or similar positions to schedule interviews. Ultimately, interviews were held with four individuals representing three different institutions.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ■ Arkansas State University | ■ Clarion University of Pennsylvania |
| ■ East Central University | ■ Eastern Kentucky University |
| ■ Edinboro University | ■ Emporia State University |
| ■ Ferris State University | ■ Morehead State University |
| ■ Northeastern State University | ■ Southeast Missouri State University |
| ■ Sul Ross State University | ■ Tarleton State University |
| ■ Troy University | ■ University of Mary Washington |
| ■ University of Southern Maine | ■ Western Kentucky University |

¹⁵ "The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education." Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. <http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/>

SOUTHEAST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY¹⁶

	
Main Campus	Cape Girardeau, Missouri
Regional Campuses	Kennett Malden Sikeston
Unduplicated Enrollment, 2011-2012	11,811 Undergraduate 1,846 Graduate
Distance Education Enrollment*, Fall 2012	30% Undergraduate 41.6% Graduate
Website	www.semo.edu

Source: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System¹⁷

*Percent of students enrolled in at least some distance education

Southeast Missouri State University (SEMO) is an institution of over 10,000 undergraduate students pursuing bachelor's degrees in over 200 areas of study. It also offers master's degrees in 25 disciplines as well as Specialist in Education and Doctor of Education degrees.¹⁸

Students at SEMO's extensive regional campus system have multiple degree options to choose from. On several campuses, students can earn an associate's degree while deciding whether or not they want to continue their education at the bachelor's level.¹⁹ Moreover, students throughout the regional campus system are able to complete general education requirements as a prelude to transferring to the main campus. The regional campuses also offer complete degree programs that are "targeted to community need." These programs tend to belong to one of four categories: education, agriculture, criminal justice, or health and social services.

COURSE APPROVAL

Regional campus course offerings are driven largely by academic need. Because courses that satisfy general education requirements are in highest demand, they are offered most

¹⁶ Unless otherwise noted, the information in this section is from: Gerald McDougall, Associate Provost for Online and Extended Learning, Southeast Missouri State University. Email correspondence conducted between May 1, 2014 and May 4, 2014.

¹⁷ "Integrated Postsecondary Educational Data System." National Center for Education Statistics. <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/datacenter/InstitutionProfile.aspx?unitId=acb0b2b4b0ac>

¹⁸ [1] "Areas of Study." Southeast Missouri State University. <http://www.semo.edu/gradschool/study/>

[2] "Areas of Study (Graduate)." Southeast Missouri State University. <http://www.semo.edu/gradschool/study/>

¹⁹ "Associate'sPlus." Southeast Missouri State University. <http://www.semo.edu/regionalcampuses/associates-plus/index.html>

regularly. More advanced degree courses are provided by regional campuses “on a rotation,” according to Associate Provost for Online and Extended Learning, Dr. Gerald McDougall. These degree courses may also be provided based on learning cohorts, which would also help to determine when and where they are offered.

Regional campus directors do not have autonomy in determining which courses are held at their site. Instead, **course offerings are planned by the Office of Extended Learning along with the academic departments on the main campus.** However, regional directors are not completely excluded from this process, and generally work with the Office of Extended Learning and the main campus academic departments to decide which courses would be best to offer at regional locations. Courses at the regional campuses are subject to annual evaluation by the Office of Extended Learning.

FACULTY APPROVAL

“Staffing decisions,” says McDougall, “are the responsibility of the academic departments” at SEMO. This rule applies both to hiring and to deciding who will teach a given course. The department head may consult with the Office of Extended Learning to decide whether it would be appropriate to assign a given faculty member to a regional campus course, but it is ultimately the department’s decision. Regional directors will occasionally participate in searches for adjunct faculty that will be assigned to their campus, but again, final hiring decisions are made by the appropriate academic department.

Teaching on regional campuses may be done by adjuncts, full-time faculty that are assigned to the regional campus, or full-time faculty from the main campus. However, main campus faculty are rarely assigned to teach at regional locations. Regional campus courses can also be taught through interactive television (ITV, described more fully below), which “can originate on the main campus or one of the regional campuses.”

Staffing decisions are the responsibility of the academic departments.

Faculty are required to have a master’s degree or equivalent experience. This policy is shared across all campuses, and, as far as McDougall is aware, SEMO does not make exceptions to it. The institution rarely hires instructors who do not have at least a master’s degree, and a recently completed review of the few individuals who do fit this category found that they all possessed equivalent experience.


APPROVAL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

Distance education at Southeast Missouri State University is primarily conducted online or through ITV, which broadcasts synchronous classes to multiple locations.²⁰ Distance education is coordinated by the Office of Extended Learning, in conversation with the

²⁰ For more on SEMO’s online program see “Southeast Online.” Southeast Missouri State University.
<http://online.semo.edu/content/>

academic departments and the regional campuses. Although there is some collaboration with regional campuses in determining how these courses will be delivered and who will teach them, the primary decision making authority rests with officials on the main campus. In some circumstances, ITV courses will be broadcast from a regional campus, but, according to McDougall “this is determined by the academic department working with the Office of Extended Learning.”

WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY²¹

	
Main Campus	Bowling Green, Kentucky
Regional Campuses	Glasgow Owensboro Elizabethtown
Unduplicated Enrollment, 2011-2012	21,080 Undergraduate 4,303 Graduate
Distance Education Enrollment*, Fall 2012	31.8% Undergraduate 65.1% Graduate
Website	www.wku.edu

Source: Integrated Postsecondary Educational Data System

*Percent of students enrolled in at least some distance education

Western Kentucky University (WKU) is a mid-sized institution based in Bowling Green, primarily offering degrees at the baccalaureate level and above.²² In addition to its main campus, the institution has three regional campuses as well as a satellite of the Elizabethtown campus located at Fort Knox. According to the WKU website, the student population based on these campuses accounts for nearly one-quarter of the institution's total enrollment.²³ Students are able to enroll in classes freely among the campuses, and main campus students frequently fulfill requirements at the closest regional campus (Glasgow).²⁴

Two of the three primary regional campuses (Elizabethtown and Owensboro) are associated with nearby community and technical colleges. These two only offer advanced undergraduate (300 and 400 level) and graduate courses. The Glasgow Campus, on the other hand, is a stand-alone institution that offers a full complement of courses, from

²¹ Unless otherwise noted, the information in this section is from Dean May. Interim Regional Chancellor, Western Kentucky University – Elizabethtown. Telephone interview conducted May 5, 2014.

²² “Western Kentucky University, General Information.” Integrated Postsecondary Educational Data System. <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/datacenter/InstitutionProfile.aspx?unitId=acb0b2b4b0ac>

²³ “WKU Regional Campuses.” Western Kentucky University. <http://www.wku.edu/regionalcampuses/>

²⁴ Ray interview. Op. cit.

undergraduate general education to graduate. The regional campuses all provide a variety of degree programs, but they do not necessarily offer the same programs or courses as one another or the main campus.

COURSE APPROVAL

Western Kentucky University's process for deciding what courses will be offered on which campus is fairly informal. Generally, the process begins with the regional chancellors requesting that certain courses or majors be offered on their campus, based on their understanding of the needs of the nearby community. From there, the chair of the appropriate academic department on the main campus decides whether or not they want to allow that course or major to move forward at the regional site. Although the academic deans on the main campus officially have some authority in the process, in practice their actions are limited to persuading the department heads to adopt their suggestions. The "critical piece" in the process is the main campus department head, according to Dean May, head of the Department of Social Work and interim chancellor at WKU-Elizabethtown. "Everything we do as a regional campus is very, very much locked in to what that department is willing to do on the main campus," May says.

Much of how well this process works is determined by the professional relationships between the regional chancellors and the department heads on the main campus. They are meant to collaborate with one another in regards to scheduling, and that is often what happens. However, there are no guarantees. Regional chancellors begin the process of adding courses, but department heads can and do stop it. Moreover, on occasion the main campus department will decide to offer courses at the regional level without the prior approval of the regional chancellor.

FACULTY APPROVAL

The full-time faculty on the regional campuses is small compared to the main campus. For example, the Elizabethtown Campus only has 6-7 full time faculty members while the Glasgow Campus (the largest of the regional branches) has 30.²⁵ That said, the regional campus faculty is of the "same caliber" as that on the main campus; instructors in all locations have the same degree and experience requirements and the same research and service expectations. The same is also true for adjuncts. Hanover's contacts at WKU do not report exceptions being made to allow instructors on regional campuses to teach without having earned at least a master's degree.

It is unlikely that a regional campus could make such an exception even if it wanted to, because **faculty hiring and scheduling authority is primarily vested in the academic department on the main campus**. As with the course approval procedure, the regional chancellors may begin the hiring process. They have the ability to open searches for part-time faculty, and can even select a preferred candidate and forward them to the main academic department for approval. However, the actual credentialing is done by the

²⁵ Ray interview. Op. cit.

academic department in Bowling Green, which effectively means that the departmental administrators there make the final hiring decisions.

Although the regional campuses pay for the faculty that teach there, neither full-time nor part-time instructors report to the regional chancellor. Instead, all faculty members report to the department head on the main campus. The department head also has the authority to refuse to schedule faculty requested by the regional chancellor, although May asserts that he has not known of a faculty member being removed from a regional campus course without the chancellor's consent once they have previously been approved to teach it. Actually, May suggests that the opposite problem is more prevalent at WKU: department heads sometimes continue to hire instructors that the regional chancellor would like to see removed.

"There is not a lot of independence here. Everything here is run through that academic unit on the main campus, for good or bad."


APPROVAL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

As at Southeast Missouri State, distance education at WKU consists of courses taught either online or through interactive video (WKU's version of ITV). Students from any campus can access all of the same resources as any other. The distance education classes generally originate from the main campus, but according to May "we do have some of our full-time regional campus faculty that offer online courses, so technically that online course is originating from the regional campus." In these instances, distance courses that originate from a regional campus are available throughout the system, just as if they were main campus offerings.

The department head on the main campus is responsible for scheduling and regulating these presentations. It is the department heads who decide which courses will be offered in a distance format, and it is they who assign the instructors for those courses. This decision making process is supposed to involve communication between the regional and main campuses, regarding the needs and available resources of each. However, whether or not the department head follows the regional chancellors' recommendations is entirely up to the department head.

According to May, who has seen the system from both the department head and the regional chancellor positions, "there is not a lot of independence here. Everything here is run through that academic unit on the main campus, for good or bad." In his final estimation, WKU's regional campus course and faculty approval process is somewhat too centralized. He believes that a perfect system would have aspects of centralization while at the same time allowing for slightly more flexibility at the local level.

TROY UNIVERSITY²⁶

	
Main Campus	Troy, Alabama
Regional Campuses	Montgomery Dothan Phenix City
Unduplicated Enrollment, 2011-2012	25,182 Undergraduate 8,211 Graduate
Distance Education Enrollment*, Fall 2012	67.3% Undergraduate 73.1% Graduate
Website	www.troy.edu

Source: Integrated Postsecondary Educational Data System

*Percent of students enrolled in at least some distance education

Troy University (Troy) is at the forefront of higher education's trend toward national and international expansion. Troy maintains four campuses within approximately 100 miles of one another in Alabama, including its parent campus in Troy and branch campuses in Montgomery, Dothan, and Phenix City. In addition, Troy University has also developed facilities in seven other states in the southern U.S. as well as four Asian countries.²⁷ Although Troy offers courses worldwide, it should be noted that the information in this report pertains particularly to the administration of the facilities within the state of Alabama.

Prior to 2005, each of Troy University's campuses had its own accreditation. They all maintained their own courses, some of which were not transferrable between campuses, and they had different admission policies and tuition rates. In the past decade the institution has undergone a process of centralization meant to cut costs and simplify things for students. Troy's Alabama campuses are now all jointly accredited, and students can move freely between locations to take the courses they want.

"All campuses," according to Montgomery Campus Vice Chancellor Ray White, "have their own inventory of complete degree programs from the associate's degree to the master's degree." Some of those programs overlap, but administrators believe that the campus locations are far enough removed from one another that there is little potential for conflict between them. The main distinction between the campuses is the markets they serve. The parent campus is mostly for traditional students, while the branch campuses within Alabama are primarily meant to serve "the non-traditional working adult student."

²⁶ Unless otherwise noted, the information in this section is from White interview. Op. cit.

²⁷ "Locations." Troy University. <http://www.troy.edu/locations/locations.html>

ACADEMIC PROGRAM CONSIDERATIONS

The course approval process at Troy University is highly centralized. As recently as two years ago, the branch campuses had some autonomy in selecting which courses they would offer, but that is no longer the case. Currently, all academic decisions – including courses, programs, and delivery methods – are made from the parent campus.

The college deans are the ultimate arbiters of the curriculum. However, most of the day-to-day decisions are made by the main campus' departmental chairs. **The department chairs choose what courses will be offered throughout the university, and they also determine on which campus classes will be held. The same policies are in effect for faculty.** All faculty, both full-time and part-time, are employed by Troy University. Therefore, although instructors are assigned to a specific campus for their primary teaching duties, the department chairs can require them to teach wherever they are needed. "The bottom line," according to White, "is the colleges run the academic side of the house, regardless of where that side of the house is located around the globe. All decisions involving programs, courses, and faculty are determined at the college level at the parent campus."

"The bottom line is the colleges run the academic side of the house, regardless of where that side of the house is located around the globe. All decisions involving programs, courses, and faculty are determined at the college level at the parent campus."

The branch campuses do play a consulting role in these decisions. Each campus has a senior representative from each department who is in frequent contact with the departmental chair on the main campus. More importantly, the branch campus vice chancellors, the highest administrative officials away from the parent site, coordinate closely with the department heads. Campus vice chancellors, for example, develop their branch's schedule by providing the department heads with timeslots for classes and by shifting scheduled classes to different rooms to maximize campus resources.

The vice chancellors also exercise their input through the Chancellor's Cabinet and other administrative committees that make major university decisions. Thus, there is no chance that a parent campus department can decide on its own to stop offering a program at a given campus. Similarly, vice chancellors can initiate the development of new academic programming for their campus working through the university's Academic Steering Committee and the deans. This process has led to the creation of approximately 30 new programs in the past two years.

APPROVAL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

None of the branch campuses nor the parent campus manages or offers online courses. Instead, Troy University's online programming is run through eTROY, the institution's centralized distance learning hub. eTROY is run like a branch campus; it administers itself and has its own assigned faculty. However, like the other branch campuses, the academic decisions that apply to eTROY's online courses are made on the parent campus by the department chairs. The chairs decide which courses will be offered online, and they schedule the teaching faculty.

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