

MARYLAND HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION
ACADEMIC PROGRAM PROPOSAL

PROPOSAL FOR:

- NEW INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM
 SUBSTANTIAL EXPANSION/MAJOR MODIFICATION
 COOPERATIVE DEGREE PROGRAM
 WITHIN EXISTING RESOURCES or REQUIRING NEW RESOURCES

Stevenson University

Institution Submitting Proposal

Literacy Education

Title of Proposed Program

Post Baccalaureate Certificate

Fall 2017

Award to be Offered

Projected Implementation Date

0830.00

13.1315

Proposed HEGIS Code

Proposed CIP Code

School of Graduate and Professional Studies

Joyce K. Becker, JD

Department in which program will be located

Name of Department Head

Dr. Susan T. Gorman

Contact Name

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Contact email

443-344-2205

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Clare O'Keeffe 4/1/17

President/Chief Executive Approval

Signature and date

09 March 2017

Date Endorsed/Approved by Governing Board

Date

Stevenson University
School of Graduate and Professional Studies
Proposal for New Academic Program
Post-Baccalaureate in Literacy Issues in Education

New Academic Programs, Degrees and Stand-Alone Certificate Programs

A. Centrality to institutional mission statement and planning priorities:

- 1. Provide a description of the program, including each area of concentration (if applicable), and how it relates to the institution's approved mission.*

Program Description

The School of Graduate and Professional Studies at Stevenson University is proposing a new Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Literacy Education consisting of five courses, three credits each, for a total of 15 credits. Topics include foundational theories in literacy; assessment and evaluation of literacy; digital and media literacy; and culturally responsive literacy.

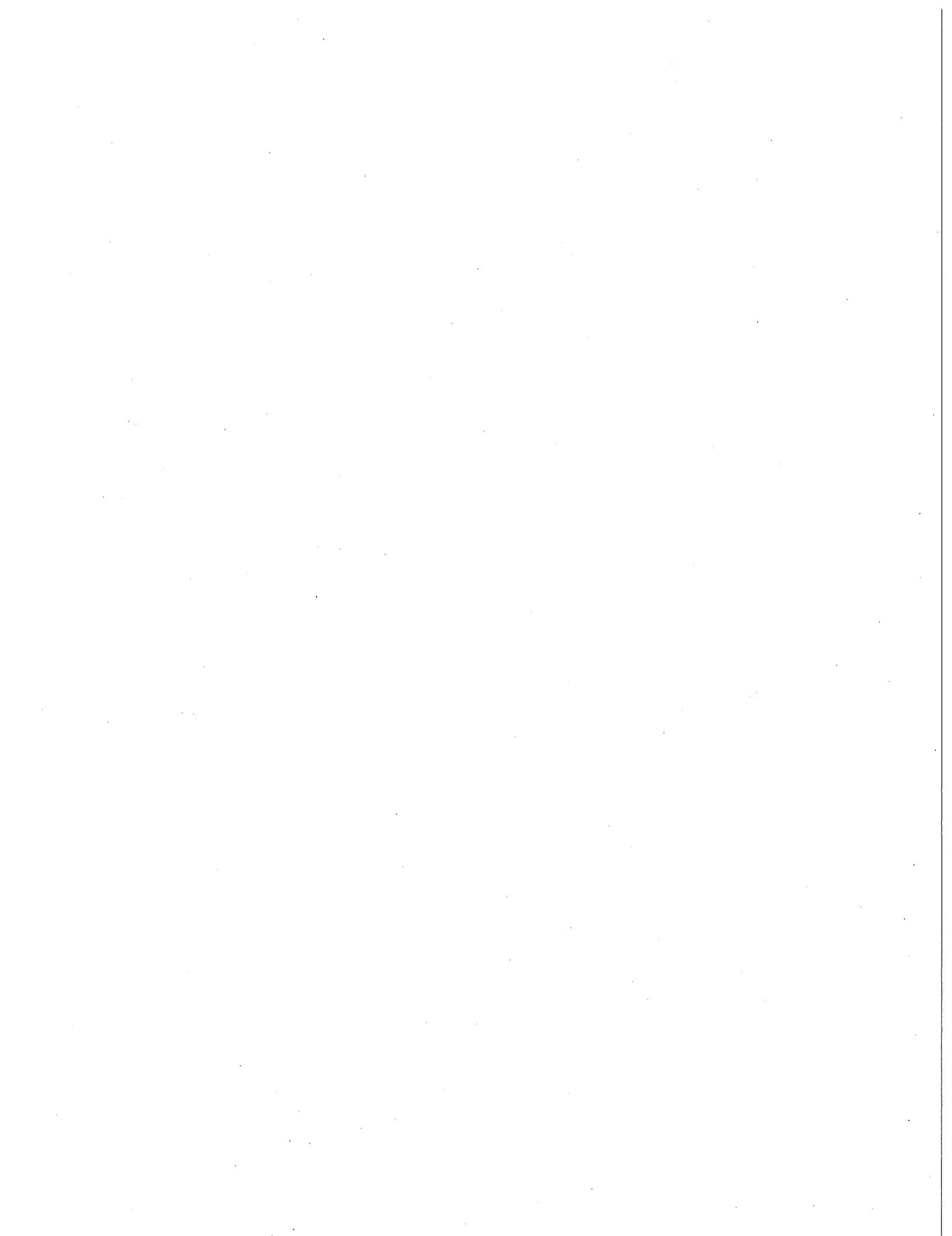
The purpose of the Literacy Education Certificate is to bolster elementary and secondary teachers' literacy skills so they can implement more robust literacy strategies within their classrooms and be more competent in diagnosing and addressing students' literacy gaps to enhance student success. The intended audience for this certificate is elementary and secondary teachers who want to be more effective in their current classrooms. The Literacy Education Certificate is structured to meet the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) requirements for adding a "Reading Teacher" endorsement to a teacher's professional certification. It does not prepare teachers to become reading specialists.

Relationship to Stevenson University's Mission

The institution's core values of community, learning, integrity, and excellence are particularly well matched with the Certificate's focus on enhancing the skills of teachers so that they can help close literacy achievement gaps in underserved populations. In addition, this Certificate is well-aligned with Stevenson's mission to provide innovative and career focused graduate programs that will help professionals advance in their careers. The Certificate advances the professionalism of teachers by enhancing their instructional skills along with providing the necessary credentials for successful completers to obtain a Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) Reading Teacher endorsement on their teaching certification. Hence, the University's Board of Trustees has affirmed that this proposal is central to the University's mission.

- 2. Explain how the proposed program supports the institution's strategic goals and provide evidence that affirms it is an institutional priority.*

The proposed Literacy Education Certificate supports Stevenson University's strategic goals and is an institutional priority. The University's 2017-2018 Business Plan, which flows directly from the University's Strategic Plan, includes the following goal and objective within the strategic area of Academic Affairs. The proposed program directly supports this goal.



Strategy 1: Academic Affairs

Goal 5: Increase enrollment across all schools of the University.

Objective A: Increase enrollment by establishing new cost effective degree programs that align with the mission and values of the University and reflect career trends and market demands.

This Certificate will meet Goal 5, Objective A, by addressing a critical market need and helping to advance the career of teaching professionals. As a key component of the new certificate program, students will engage in literacy practices within their professional teaching setting, putting theory into practice throughout their coursework. The certificate's focus on the importance of literacy in advancing 21st century skills and closing achievement gaps in underserved populations is well-aligned with current educational trends and Stevenson's mission. Further, the online design of the programs makes it accessible to a large number of teachers who may not otherwise have access to convenient graduate level training.

The University's Board of Trustees has affirmatively concluded that Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Literacy Issues in Education central to the University's priorities.

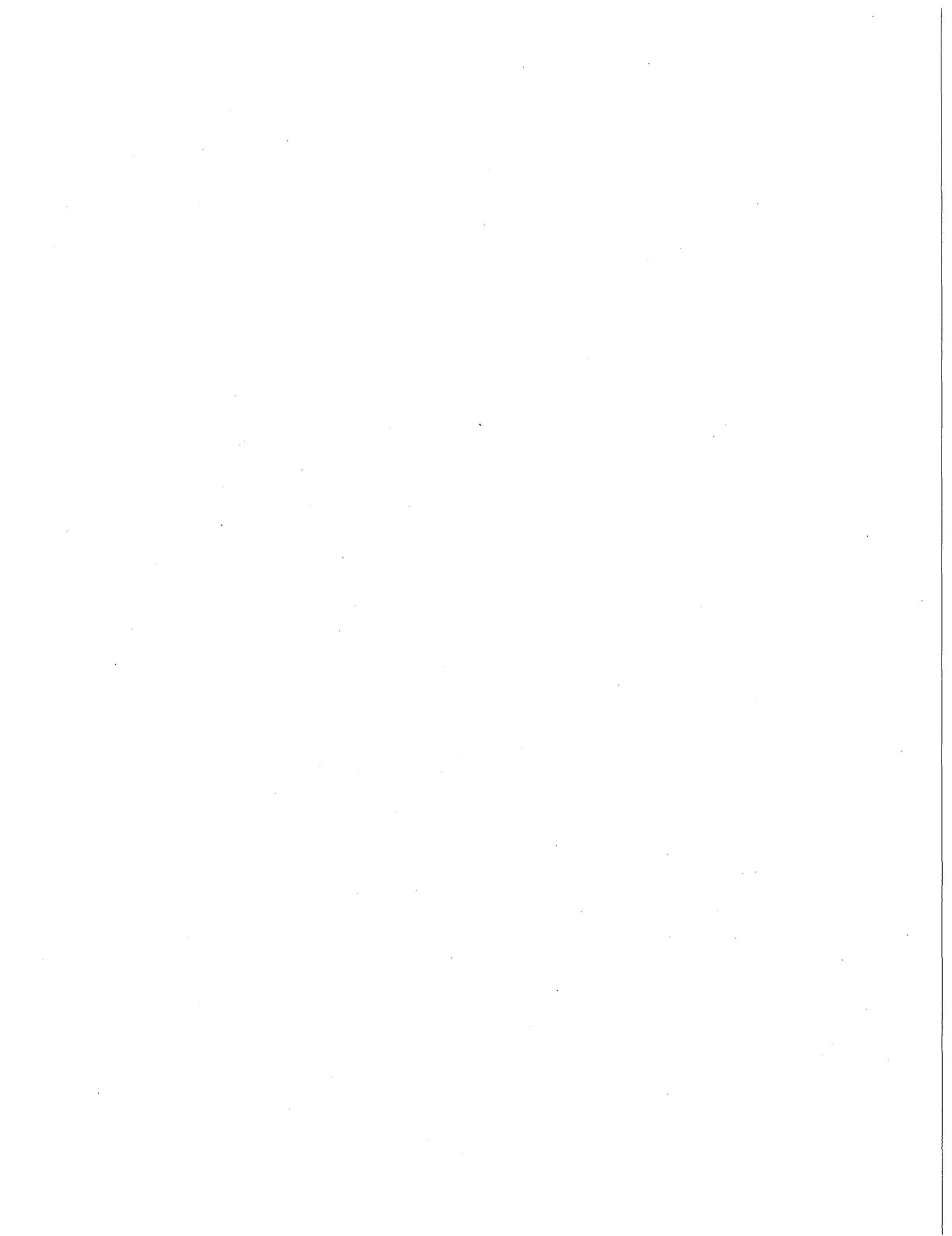
B. Critical and compelling regional or Statewide need as identified in the State Plan:

1. Demonstrate demand and need for the program in terms of meeting present and future needs of the region and the State in general based on one or more of the following:
 - o The need for the advancement and evolution of knowledge;
 - o Societal needs, including expanding educational opportunities and choices for minority and educationally disadvantaged students at institutions of higher education;
 - o The need to strengthen and expand the capacity of historically black institutions to provide high quality and unique educational programs.

The 21st century knowledge economy requires a re-thinking of our educational conceptions to meet the evolving needs of today's students. In a 2008 editorial in the Harvard Education Review, literacy's importance in modern education is characterized as follows: "If knowledge is power, then literacy is the key to the kingdom" (p.1). Literacy is essential to unlocking access to the vast amount of information available in the digital age. Classroom teachers face a confluence of factors driving the need for advanced knowledge and ability in literacy education. Curricula must align with newly adopted Common Core State Standards and the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015. Digital technologies are changing the modes by which students learn; more robust intervention strategies for struggling readers are needed; and pressures of high stakes testing is mounting (International Literacy Association [ILA], <https://www.literacyworldwide.org>). Classroom teachers must concurrently advance their skills and develop new strategies for addressing the emerging issues in literacy education.

2. Provide evidence that the perceived need is consistent with the Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education (pdf).

The proposed Certificate is well-aligned with Goals 1 and 3 of *Maryland Ready, the 2013-2017 Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education*.



Goal 1: Quality and Effectiveness

This certificate program aligns with Maryland's goal to enhance "its array of postsecondary education programs" towards fulfilling the "evolving needs of its students" (p. 17). In the current educational landscape, K-12 classroom teachers are tasked with helping learners develop 21st century skills of critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration. Enhancing the literacy skills of students is seen as an essential key in increasing student success in these essential skills. By training educators in Maryland on effective literacy strategies for the digital age, Stevenson's Literacy Education Certificate will be at the forefront of advancing 21st century learning.

Goal 3: Diversity

This Certificate aims to arm classroom teachers with the knowledge, skills, and strategies to increase student success with particular attention to how literacy can support diversity and equity. One of the key tenets of the International Literacy Association Standards for educators is finding ways to engage learners in literacy through issues of diversity and equity. Research posits that culturally relevant pedagogy ultimately enhances the educational outcomes for all learners. Further, literacy is critical to closing achievement gaps in underserved populations.

C. Quantifiable & reliable evidence and documentation of market supply & demand in the region and State:

1. Present data and analysis projecting market demand and the availability of openings in a job market to be served by the new program.

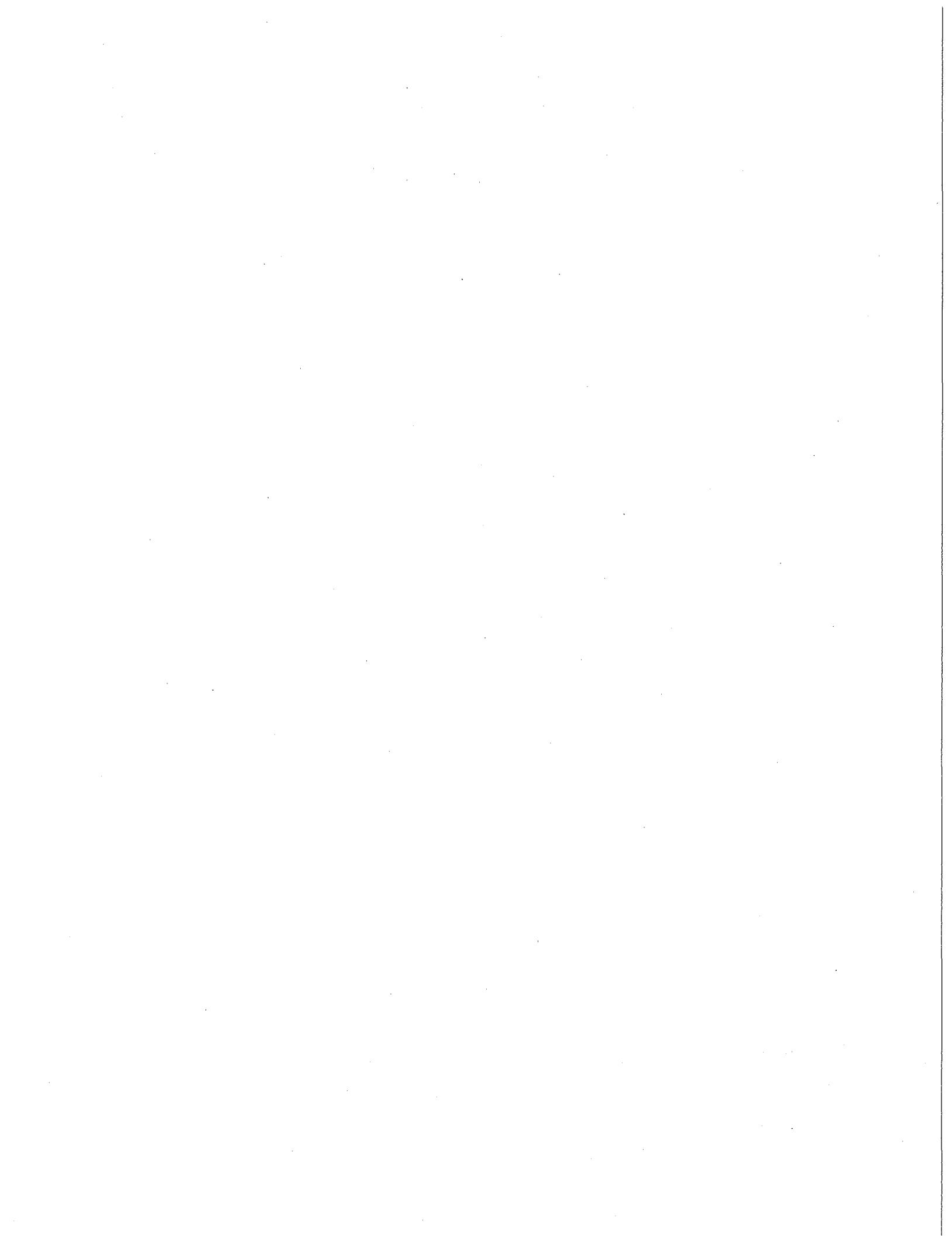
Carroll County Public Schools (CCPS) reached out to Stevenson's GPS Teacher Education Department with an interest in partnering to provide a Post Baccalaureate Certificate in Literacy Education that would align with MSDE Reading Teacher endorsement requirements and provide teachers with advanced literacy skills. The intent is to launch the program initially with a cohort of teachers from Carroll County Public School (CCPS) with plans to then expand to additional school systems within the region. Further, given the fully online mode of delivery, this Certificate provides access to literacy training for teachers in regions of the State where access to graduate programs is otherwise limited.

Results of an internal survey sent to all CCPS Elementary teachers suggest a robust demand for additional training in literacy. CCPS elementary teachers were asked if they would be interested in obtaining a Certificate in Literacy Education, which also leads to a MSDE Reading Endorsement, within the next three years. Of 153 respondents, 135 indicated that they would be interested (see Table A).

Table A. Survey Results indicating interest of Elementary Teachers in obtaining a Certificate in Literacy Education over the next three years.

School System	Number of respondents to the survey	Interested	Not Interested
Carroll County Schools (23 Elementary Schools)	153	135	18

Further evidence of market demand is the financial incentive for teachers to obtain continuing professional development (CPD) or graduate credits so that they might advance in on their salary scales. Teachers move to higher pay scales when they reach certain points that are equated to 30 and 60 CPDs or graduate credits (see Table B). In Carroll County Public School System, of the 30 credits that teachers



complete to move to the next pay scale, only 6 credits may be obtained through CPD courses presented through the school system; the remaining 24 must be graduate credits. The Literacy Education Certificate (15 credits) will help teachers meet their graduate credit requirements to both maintain their professional teaching certification and to advance in pay level. Table B below shows the economic benefit to teachers for obtaining 30 credits (Mid level) and 60 credits (Maximum).

Table B. Salary Progression for 10-month teachers in Central Maryland County School Systems

County	Beginning	Mid level (Master's or Adv. Prof. License)	Maximum ("Master's plus 30")
Baltimore	43,000	56,959	90,419
Carroll	40,400	58,000	81,335
Harford	41,583	59,286	83,905
Howard	47,351	65,612	98,523

*The Maryland FACT Book Retrieved from www.marylandpublicschools.org

2. Discuss and provide evidence of market surveys that clearly provide quantifiable and reliable data on the educational and training needs and the anticipated number of vacancies expected over the next 5 years.

In collaboration with Carroll County Public School's Elementary Supervisor of Reading and English/Language Arts and Coordinator of Teacher Induction, the following educational and training needs were identified as rationale for completing a Certificate in Literacy Education through a cohort at Stevenson University:

- For STEM or Humanities teachers: the Certificate provides strategies for integrating reading and writing in Science and Social Studies.
- For elementary classroom teachers: the Certificate promotes professional growth and focus for reading and writing instruction.
- For special educators: the Certificate provides current trends in reading instruction and strategies for teaching reading with Individualized Education Plan (IEP) goals in mind, as well as strategies for effectively analyzing local and state assessment data to inform IEP goals.
- For aspiring administrators: the Certificate provides current trends in reading instruction and strategies for teaching reading as well as strategies for effectively analyzing local and state assessment data to inform School Improvement efforts. The added Reading Teacher endorsement improves marketability as an administrator candidate.
- For current administrators: the Certificate provides current trends in reading instruction and strategies for teaching reading as well as strategies for effectively analyzing local and state assessment data to inform School Improvement efforts. This series would better prepare administrators for evaluating ELA, Humanities, and STEM instruction.
- For all certified employees: the Certificate fulfills the MSDE requirement of 6 credits every 5 years to renew teaching certification.

In addition to need in CCPS, all Maryland teachers are required to continue their professional education through obtaining graduate credits. Table C shows the projected employment outlook for Maryland's elementary, middle, and high school teachers over the next 10 years. Across all categories, over 20 - 30% increase in job openings is expected. These new hires will be looking to continue their professional growth; and literacy will be a major focus for all disciplines and grade levels (International Literacy Association).



Table C. Maryland Occupational Projections 2014-2024

Occupational Title	Employment Outlook			
	2014	2024	Change	% Change
Kindergarten Teachers, Except Special Education	4,294	5,594	1,300	30.27%
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	48,214	62,738	14,524	30.12%
Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	27,008	35,146	8,138	30.13%
Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	37,538	45,862	8,324	22.17%

<https://www.dllr.state.md.us/lmi/landoproj/maryland.shtml#>

3. Data showing the current and projected supply of prospective graduates.

Based on the survey data (see Table A) provided by Carroll County Public Schools, Stevenson expects to be able to enroll a cohort of 20 students in the first year, and two cohorts of 20 the subsequent year (see Table D). After which, enrollments are projected to stabilize with the expectation that there will be a drop off in enrollment from CCPS, but increased enrollment from other area school systems. Graduation projection are based on a 90% retention rate, which is consistent with cohort certificate programs.

Table D. Stevenson University Enrollment Projections Years 1-5 for Issues in Literacy Post-Baccalaureate Certificate

Certificate Enrollment & Projected Graduation	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Enrollment	20	40	40	40	40
Graduation		18	36	36	36

D. Reasonableness of program duplication:

1. Identify similar programs in the State and/or same geographical area. Discuss similarities and differences between the proposed program and others in the same degree to be awarded.

As shown in Table E on the following page, there are a number of reading and literacy programs offered in the State. However, none of these programs has the same objectives and audience as the Literacy Education Certificate proposed by Stevenson. Only one other Post-Baccalaureate Certificate relating to literacy is actively being offered (Johns Hopkins University has two Post-Baccalaureate Certificate literacy programs that do not appear to be active). The one active program, offered at UM at College Park, targets middle and secondary teachers only, and provides the training to be a literacy coach, as opposed to a reading teacher endorsement. All other programs are at the master's level or beyond and most are geared to qualifying graduates to be Reading Specialists. The Certificate Stevenson is proposing

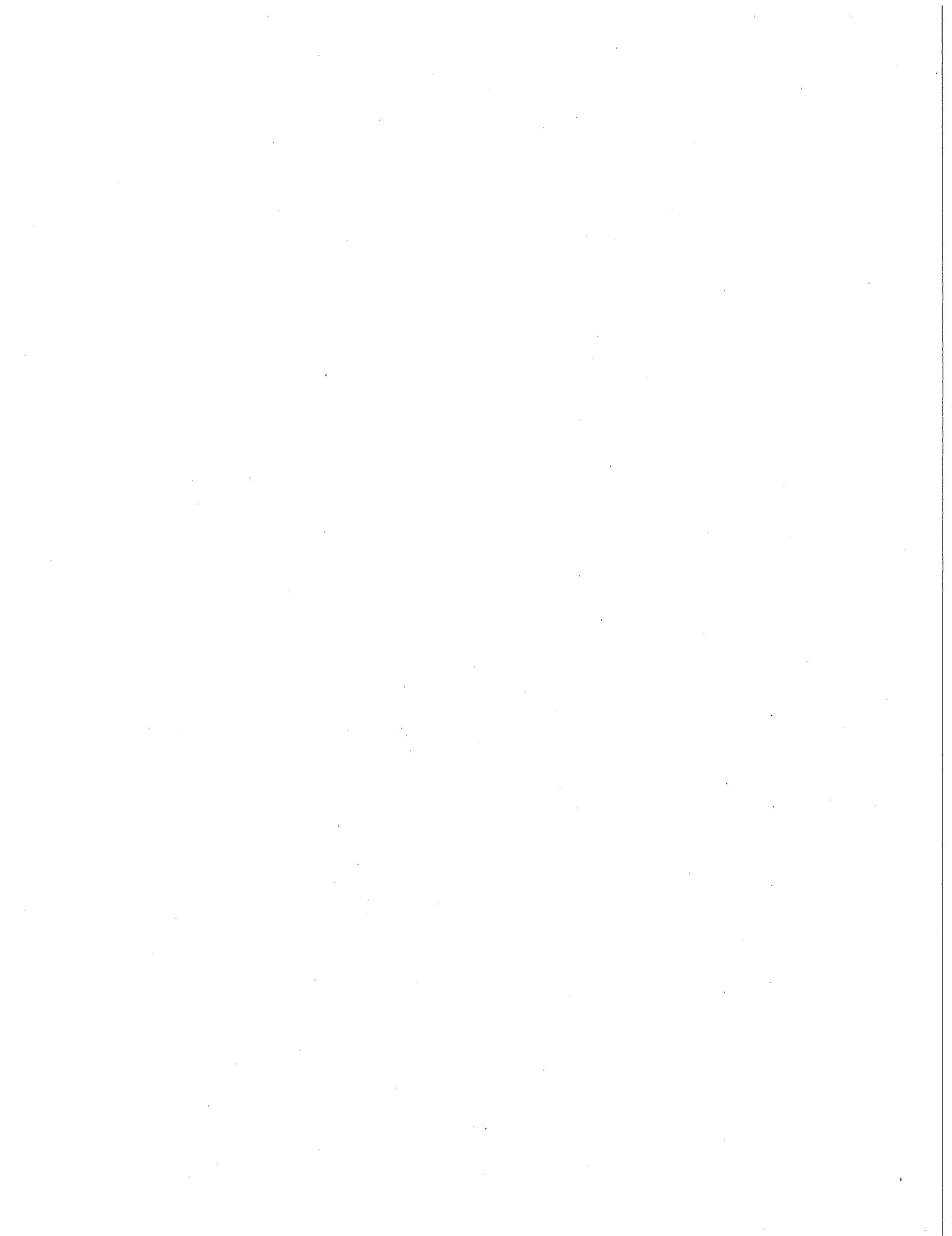
is not intended to lead to Reading Specialist designation. In addition, none of the programs offered in the State are currently offered fully online.

Table E. Reading/Literacy Graduate-level Programs in Maryland

Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Programs in Reading/Literacy			
University of Maryland College Park	PBC	Literacy Coach for Middle/Secondary Teachers	<u>Differences:</u> Geared specifically for Baltimore City Schools, Montgomery County Schools, Prince George's County Schools, prepares candidates to be literacy coaches, intended for middle/secondary only.
Master's Programs in Reading/Literacy			
Bowie (HBI)	Masters	Reading Education	
Coppin (HBI)	Masters	Reading	<u>Differences:</u> These are master's degrees preparing graduates to be Reading Specialists. Two exceptions are Literacy master's degrees at Goucher and Loyola.
Hood	Masters	Reading Specialist	
McDaniel	Masters	Reading Specialist	
Goucher	Masters	Reading Instruction Literacy Strategies	Goucher's and Loyola's MEds in Literacy have similar objectives as Stevenson's Certificate; however, neither of these programs offers a Post-Bac Certificate nor are the programs offered fully online.
Loyola	Masters	Reading Specialist Literacy Teacher	
Mount St. Mary's	Masters	Reading Specialist	
Salisbury	Masters	Reading Specialist	
Towson	Masters	Reading Specialist	
Post-Master's Reading/Literacy programs:			
Salisbury	PMC	Literacy Educator	<u>Differences:</u> Serves the specific needs of teachers on the Eastern Shore of MD, requires master's degree.
Towson	CAS	Reading	<u>Differences:</u> Requires master's degree, not currently admitting students.

2. Provide justification for the proposed program.

As demonstrated by the evidence provided in part C above, not only is there a specific request from a Maryland school system for this professional training, but also a robust market demand and growing need for teachers to strengthen their literacy skills. There are currently no other offerings of Post Baccalaureate Certificates within the State for the same purpose and audience and that are available in a fully online delivery mode.



E. Relevance to high-demand programs Historically Black Institutions (HBIs)

1. Discuss the program's potential impact on the implementation or maintenance of high-demand programs at HBI's.

There is no impact expected on HBIs. The programs offered at Maryland HBI's Bowie and Coppin State Universities are master's degrees that lead to Reading Specialized designations. Hence, these HBI programs are focused on a different audience and for a different purpose than the Post-Baccalaureate Certificate proposed here.

F. Relevance to identity of Historically Black Institutions (HBIs)

1. Discuss the program's potential impact on the uniqueness and institutional identities and missions of HBIs.

There is no impact expected on HBIs. The programs offered at Maryland HBI's Bowie and Coppin State Universities are master's degrees that lead to Reading Specialized designations. Hence, these HBI programs are focused on a different audience and for a different purpose than the Post-Baccalaureate Certificate proposed here.

G. Adequacy of curriculum design and delivery to related learning outcomes consistent with Regulation .10 of this chapter:

1. Provide a list of courses with title, semester credit hours and course descriptions, along with a description of program requirements.

ED 603 Foundations of Literacy (3 credits)

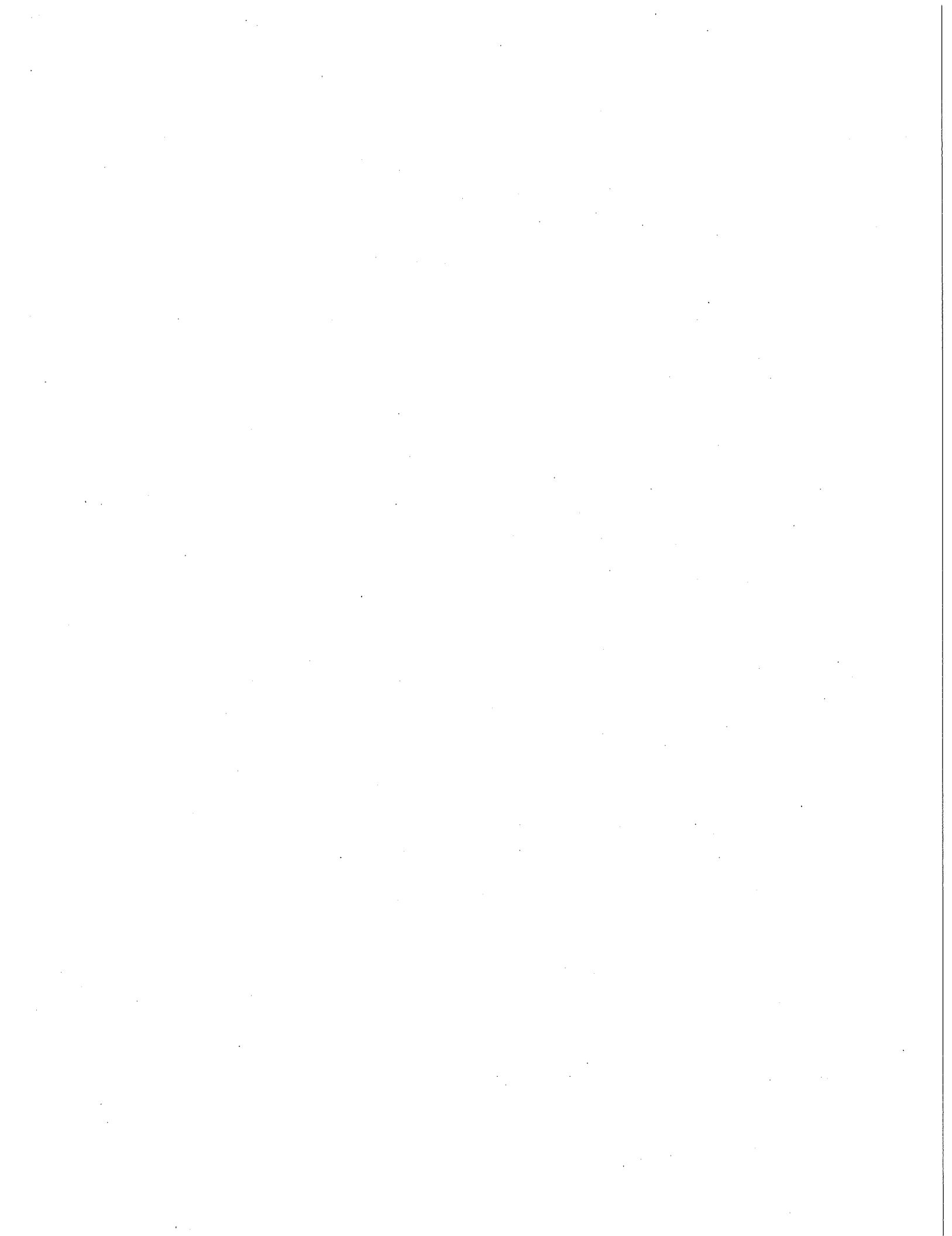
Examines the foundational theories and evidence-based practices of reading, writing and communication processes with emphasis on the development of holistic and integrated 21st century classroom literacy programs. This course considers the developmental progression of learners as readers, writers, and communicators of knowledge. Students connect and integrate reading, writing, and communication instructional strategies to meet the needs and interests of K-12 literacy learners across disciplines.

ED 610 Literacy Assessment (3 credits)

Focuses on principles and practices of formal and informal literacy assessment to evaluate learners' literacy performance and match instruction to developmental strengths and needs. Students examine the processes, models, and instruments for assessing literacy development of diverse learners and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions. Students develop methods for effectively and professionally communicating assessment results and corresponding instructional plans to relevant stakeholders.

ED 622 Culturally Responsive Literacy (3 credits)

Explores research and relevant concepts of diversity and equity and the impact of cultural factors on literacy teaching and learning. This course addresses best practices for teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students, with emphasis on second language acquisition and usage. Students identify environmental and personal factors that can result in learner resistance, avoidance, and maladaptive reading strategies and behaviors. Course includes strategies for creating inclusive and



affirming classrooms through use of culturally responsive pedagogy using a variety of literacy tools and technologies.

ED626 Digital Literacy and Media (3 credit)

Examines the literacy skills required of learners as a result of emerging technologies. Students design and apply instructional practices that integrate digital tools to support literacy instruction across the curriculum. Students examine and critically evaluate media in society and develop instructional strategies that bolster learners' ability to access, analyze, evaluate and create information in a variety of media formats.

ED 701 Literacy Practicum (3 credits)

Provides opportunities for students to integrate theory and practice in a classroom setting within their school. Students develop assessments to measure literacy progress; interpret data and analyze results; implement instructional literacy strategies; create plans for literacy development; produce a case study; and document learning with a portfolio.

Program Requirements:

- Meet the requirements for certification in early childhood education, elementary education, or a secondary education area
- Complete 15 credits
- Maintain 3.0 GPA

2. Describe the educational objectives and intended student learning outcomes.

The overall educational objective and student learning outcomes:

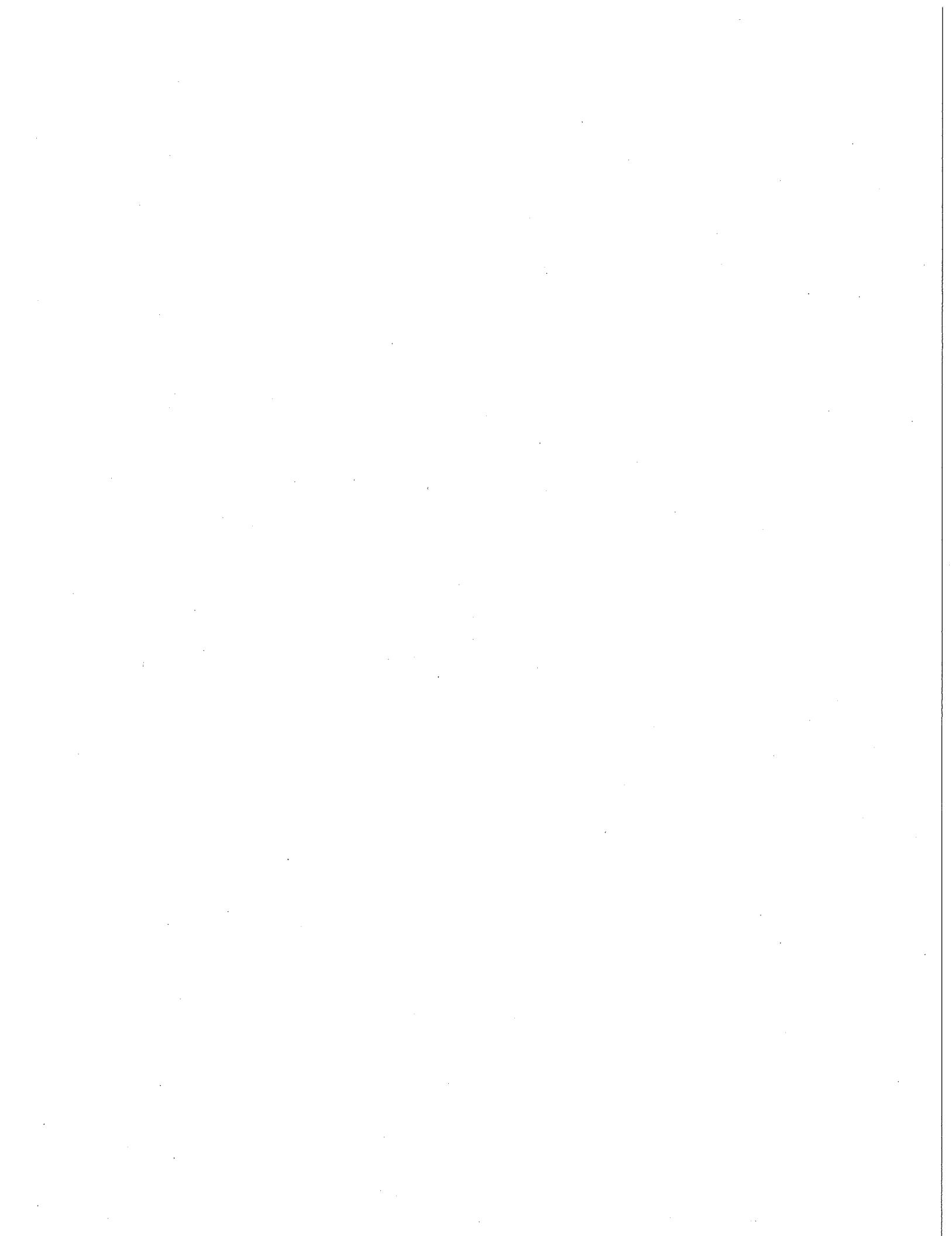
The overall educational objective of this certificate is to bolster elementary and secondary teachers' 21st century literacy skills so they can implement more robust literacy strategies within their classrooms and be more competent in diagnosing and addressing students' literacy gaps to enhance student success.

An additional aim is to align the Literacy Education Certificate with the Maryland State Department of Education requirements for adding a "Reading Teacher" endorsement to a teacher's professional certification. To meet those requirements, candidates must:

- 1) Meet the requirements for certification in early childhood education, elementary education, or a secondary education area;
- 2) Have 12 semester hours of post-baccalaureate graduate credit from an accredited institution of higher education (IHE) in reading including a foundation or survey course and a course in diagnosis and correction of reading difficulties (which is met through the completion of the Post Baccalaureate Certificate in Literacy Education); and
- 3) Have 2 years of successful teaching experience

Program Student Learning Outcomes

- 1) Articulate the theoretical frameworks and research based foundation of reading, writing, and communication processes.
- 2) Design and implement integrated, comprehensive, and balanced curriculum to support learners' literacy needs.



- 3) Evaluate learners' literacy performance using valid, reliable, and fair assessment tools to screen, diagnose, monitor, and measure literacy achievement to inform instruction and evaluate interventions.
- 4) Create and engage learners in literacy practices that develop awareness, respect, and a valuing of differences in our society.
- 5) Integrate digital technologies and print resources to engage learners in a literacy rich learning environment.
- 6) Differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all learners on the developmental continuum of language and literacy learning.

*These outcomes are adapted from the International Literacy Association Standards

3. Discuss how general education requirements will be met, if applicable.

Not applicable

4. Identify any specialized accreditation or graduate certification requirements for this program and its students.

Not applicable

5. If contracting with another institution or non-collegiate organization, provide a copy of the written contract.

Not applicable

H. Adequacy of articulation

1. If applicable, discuss how the program supports articulation with program as partner institutions.

Not applicable

I. Adequacy of faculty resources (as outlined in COMAR 13B.02.03.11).

1. Provide a brief narrative demonstrating the quality of program faculty. Include a summary list of faculty with appointment type, terminal degree title and field, academic title/rank, status (full-time, part-time, adjunct) and the course(s) each faculty member will teach.

During the implementation of the degree program, the expectation is that Stevenson full-time faculty along with part-time faculty with expertise in literacy can provide instruction. As enrollments grow, additional faculty with credentials appropriate to the degree program will be hired according to an implementation plan for the program, which, in turn, aligns with the resource tables presented in section L of this proposal.

Dr. Anne P. Davis, Associate Dean and Professor of Teacher Education in the School of Graduate and Professional Studies at Stevenson University, will oversee the development of the Literacy Education Certificate program. Dr. Davis has over twenty years of teaching and progressive academic leadership experience and has received multiple recognitions for outstanding teaching. Dr. Davis developed, leads,



and teaches in the Master of Arts in Teaching program at Stevenson University. She presents locally and nationally on topics of teaching, learning, and assessment in education.

Dr. Deborah Kraft is the founding dean of the School of Education and leads the undergraduate teacher preparation programs as well as providing guidance to the education graduate programs. Current full-time faculty in the School of Education teaching reading/literacy courses include Associate Professor Clotile Galbraith, EdD and Associate Professor Betty McNally, MED.; and part-time faculty in the School of Graduate and Professional Studies include Cindy Appleby, Adjunct Instructor of Literacy. For a summary, see Table F.

Table F: Summary of Current Stevenson University Faculty with credentials to teach the Literacy Certificate

Name	Academic Degree/Field	Academic Title/Rank	Status	Courses
Deborah Kraft	PhD, Education	Dean and Professor, School of Education	Full-time Admin	
Anne P. Davis	DM, Higher Education	Associate Dean and Professor, Education, School of Graduate and Professional Studies	Full-time, Admin	ED701
Clotile Galbraith	EdD, Curriculum & Instruction	Associate Professor, School of Education	Full-time	ED603, ED610
Betty McNally	MED, Curriculum & Instruction	Associate Professor, School of Education	Full-time	ED603, ED610
Cynthia Appleby	MED, Literacy	Adjunct Instructor, School of Graduate and Professional Studies	Part-time	ED622, ED625

J. Adequacy of library resources (as outlined in COMAR 13B.02.03.12).

Describe the library resources available and/or the measures to be taken to ensure resources are adequate to support the proposed program. If the program is to be implemented within existing institutional resources, include a supportive statement by the President for library resources to meet the program's needs.

The Stevenson University library physical collection is maintained in the Learning Resource Center building on the Greenspring Campus and in the library facilities located in the School of Business and Leadership and in the Kevin J. Manning Academic Center located on the Owings Mills Campus. The physical collections continue to grow, now approaching 100,000 volumes. Many formats are represented, among them DVD's, video recordings, CDs, audiotapes, microfilms, microfiche, CD-ROMs, web-based services, books and periodicals. Library holdings reflect the University's curriculum. The library also participates in the Maryland Digital Library Project and in the AskUsNow Reference Service with other Maryland libraries.

The library provides access to the collections via an integrated, web-based online catalog shared with partners in the Maryland Interlibrary Consortium, whose collections total approximately 800,000 volumes. The interlibrary loan program uses a dedicated courier service which facilitates sharing among the campuses. In addition, students have borrowing privileges through Stevenson's partnership with the Baltimore Area Library Consortium (BALC) and MICUA Consortia.



To support the distance education students, the library offers several electronic services. The library subscribes to 60 databases, approximately 26,000 electronic journals, and over 70,000 electronic books. Electronic media, book, and article searches are available, along with a full-text e-journal locator. Several research tutorials are available, along with research guides and Noodlebib, a program that helps with citations. "Ask us now!" is particularly helpful to students who are not located on campus. This provides access to a librarian's assistance 24 hours/seven days a week.

The Library currently subscribes to the following online databases relevant to this program:

Academic Search Premier – scholarly and popular articles on a wide variety of subjects

Credo Reference – full text of many general and subject specific reference books

Ebrary – full-text collection of approximately 70,000 electronic books. It is fully searchable and can also be browsed by subject discipline and by publisher.

Education Source Complete – covers more than 3,500 academic periodicals and includes full text for more than 2,000 journals, 550 books and monographs, education-related conference papers, citations for over 5.5 million articles including book reviews and over 100,000 controlled and cross-referenced names of educational tests. Coverage in Education Source spans all levels of education from early childhood to higher education and also includes educational specialties such as multilingual education, health education and testing.

ERIC - premier source for comprehensive indexing and abstracts of educational material from Current Index of Journals in Education and Resources in Education Index. Also indexes over 1,000 additional education and related journal and accesses full-text of articles in other EBSCO databases through Smart Linking.

Proquest Education Journals – approximately 830 top educational publications including more than 660 of the titles in full text. Topics include learning disabilities, distance education, and behavior modification.

ScienceDirect College Edition - over 1500 full-text titles in biology, chemistry, biochemistry, physics, medicine, psychology, mathematics, biotechnology and computer science

SocINDEX with Full Text - comprehensive coverage for research in the study of sociology and related fields including teaching

PsycInfo - citations and summaries of articles from approximately 2,000 periodicals, books, book chapters, and dissertations worldwide related to the field of psychology. Fulltext links to articles are contained in the companion database, *PsycArticles*.

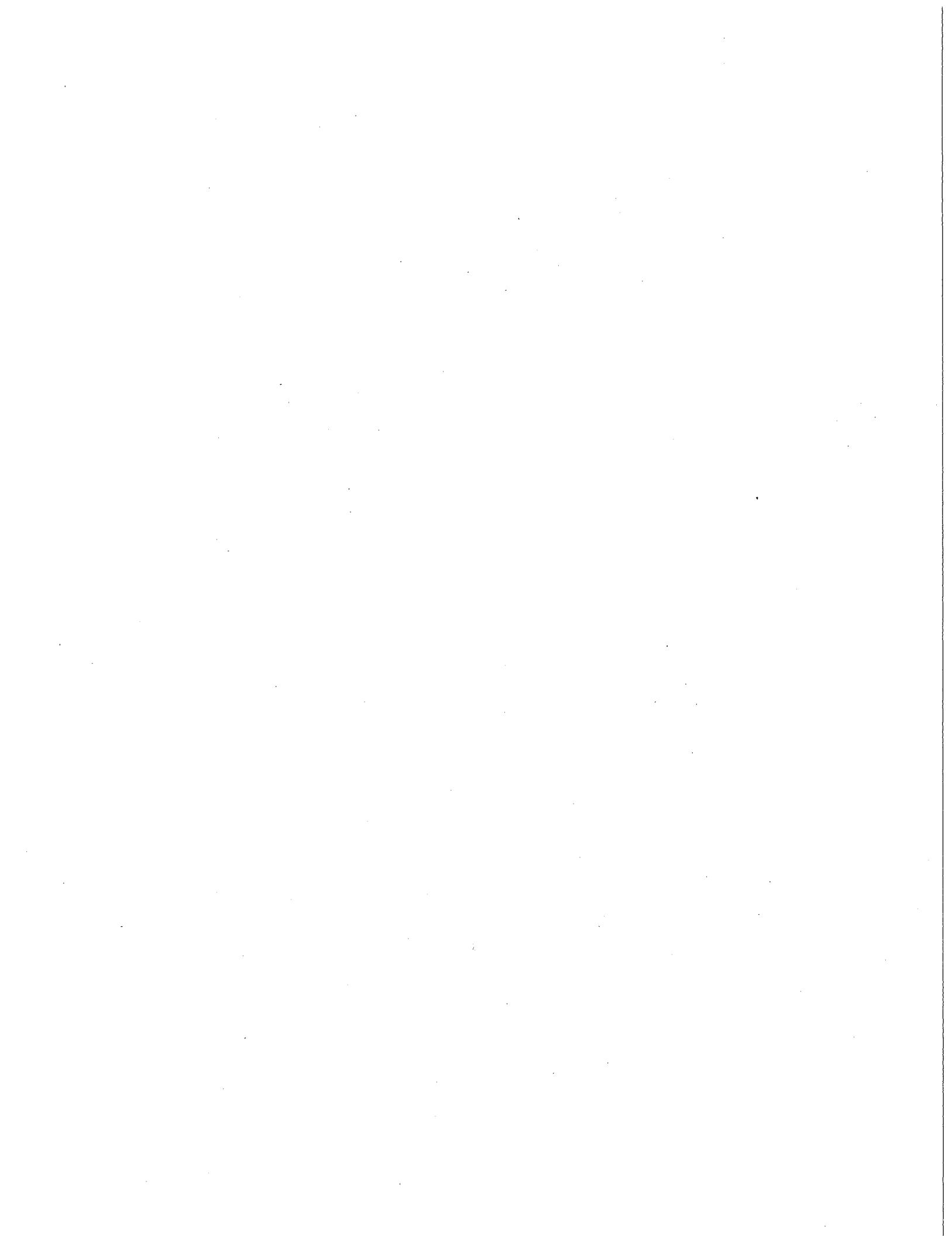
PsycTests - database of unpublished tests and measures

SciFinder - research discovery tool that explores the CAS (Chemical Abstracts) databases that contains literature from many scientific disciplines including biomedical sciences, chemistry, engineering, materials science, agricultural and science.

Additionally, students have access to a wide variety of online resources available through other Maryland libraries (Sailor), the Library of Congress and World Cat. One Search and PubMed are also resources that are used for science proposals. In addition, students have borrowing privileges through Stevenson's partnership with the Baltimore Area Library Consortium (BALC) and MICUA Consortia.

K. Adequacy of physical facilities, infrastructure and instructional equipment (as outlined in COMAR 13B.02.03.13)

Provide an assurance that physical facilities, infrastructure and instruction equipment are adequate to initiate the program, particularly as related to spaces for classrooms, staff



and faculty offices, and laboratories for studies in the technologies and sciences. If the program is to be implemented within existing institutional resources, include a supportive statement by the President for adequate equipment and facilities to meet the program's needs.

The University already possesses the Blackboard learning management system (LMS) hardware and software to design and implement online programs. Continual upgrades are made through service pack installations. All media or other course production equipment necessary for the development of the program is currently in place. Stevenson University has an ample infrastructure for offering courses online. These resources include the latest versions of the Blackboard platform, tech support, and tutoring support through online delivery (SMARTHINKING), and course designers who work with the faculty members who develop courses for online delivery. Currently, this administrative unit consists of four professionals with graduate degrees in the general field of educational technology, and operates under the direction of an Associate Dean with exclusive responsibility for managing the staff and technology associated with distance learning. While the proposed program will be offered online, Stevenson University has adequate facilities to accommodate any face-to-face needs.

**L. Adequacy of financial resources with documentation (as outlined in COMAR
13B.02.03.14)**

1. Complete Table 1: Resources (pdf) and Table 2: Expenditure(pdf). Finance data(pdf) for the first five years of program implementation are to be entered. Figures should be presented for five years and then totaled by category for each year.

TABLE 1: RESOURCES

Resource Categories	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
1. Reallocated Funds	0	0	0	0	0
2. Tuition/Fee Revenue (c + g below)	\$90,000	\$183,600	\$187,200	\$189,000	\$190,800
a. Number of F/T Students	0	0	0	0	0
b. Annual Tuition/Fee Rate					
c. Total F/T Revenue (a x b)	0	0	0	0	0
d. Number of P/T students	20	40	40	40	40
e. Credit Hour Rate	\$500	\$510	\$520	\$525	\$530
f. Annual Credit Hour Rate	9	9	9	9	9
g. Total P/T Revenue (d x e x f)	\$90,000	\$183,600	\$187,200	\$189,000	\$190,800
3. Grants, contracts & Other External Sources	0	0	0	0	0
4. Other Sources	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL (Add 1 - 4)	\$90,000	\$183,600	\$187,200	\$189,000	\$190,800

TABLE 2: EXPENDITURES

Expenditure Categories	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
1. Faculty (b + c below)	\$28,800	\$39,552	\$40,739	\$62,941	\$86,439
a. # FTE	0.375	0.5	0.5	0.75	1
b. Total Salary	\$22,500	\$30,900	\$31,827	\$49,173	\$67,531
c. Total Benefits	\$6,300	\$8,652	\$8,912	\$13,768	\$18,909
2. Admin. Staff (b + c below)	\$8,960	\$9,229	\$9,506	\$9,791	\$10,085
a. # FTE	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
b. Total Salary	\$7,000	\$7,210	\$7,426	\$7,649	\$7,879
c. Total Benefits	\$1,960	\$2,019	\$2,079	\$2,142	\$2,206
3. Support Staff (b + c below)	\$2,801	\$2,885	\$2,971	\$3,060	\$3,152
a. #FTE	0.0625	0.0625	0.0625	0.0625	0.0625
b. Total Salary	\$2,188	\$2,254	\$2,321	\$2,391	\$2,463
c. Total Benefits	\$613	\$631	\$650	\$669	\$690
4. Equipment					
5. Library					
6. New or Renovated Space					
7. Other Expenses	2,000	2000	1,000	0	0
TOTAL (Add 1 - 7)	\$42,561	\$53,665	\$54,215	\$75,792	\$99,676

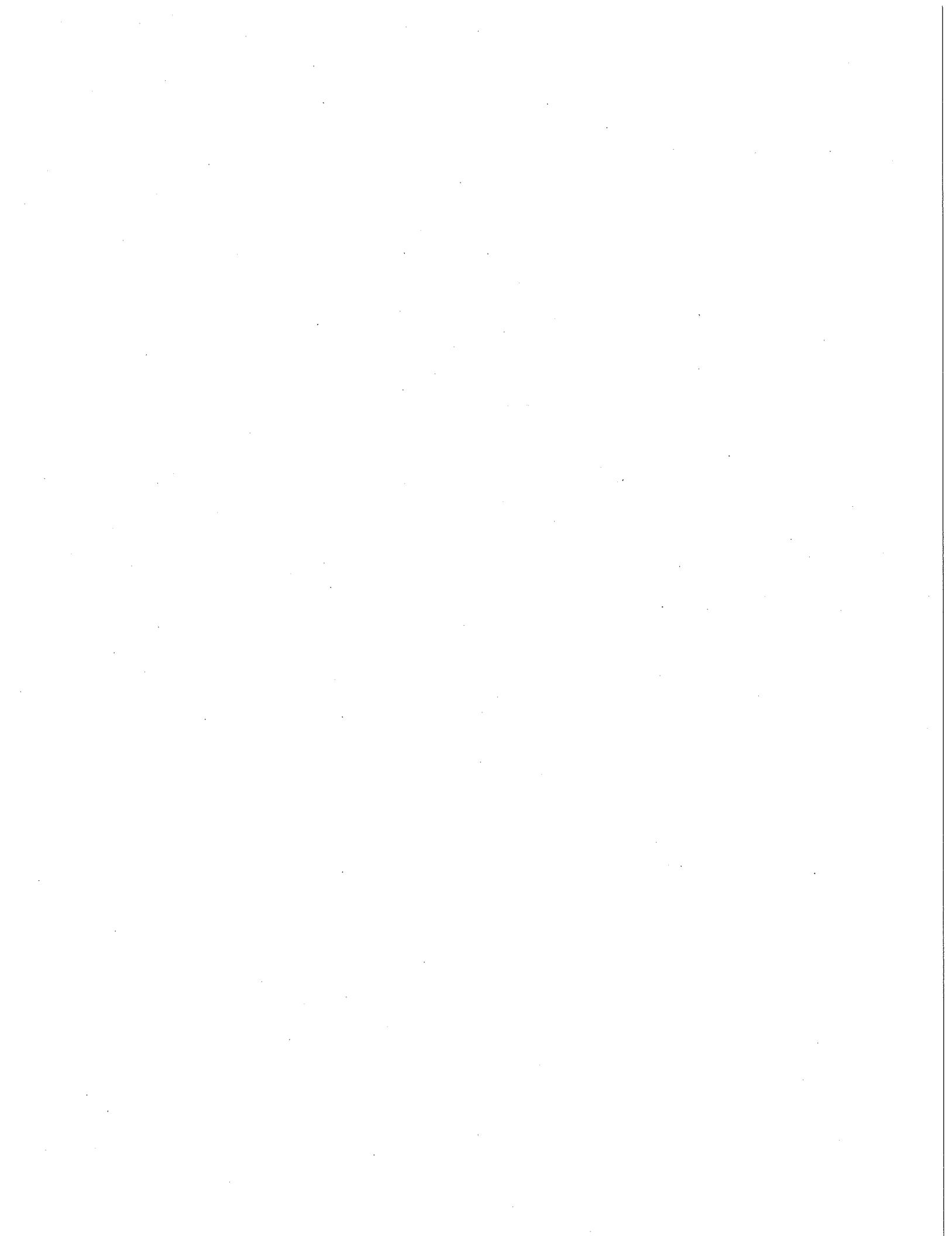
2. Provide a narrative rational for each of the resource category. If resources have been or will be reallocated to support the proposed program, briefly discuss the sources of those funds.

TABLE 1: RESOURCES – NARRATIVE**Reallocated Funds**

No reallocation of funds is planned as part of delivering this new academic program

Tuition and Fee Revenue

Tuition makes up most of the revenue that will be generated for the support of the program. The enrollment projections based on enrolling one cohort of 20 students in Year 1, and two cohorts in successive years. All of these students will be part-time, as is the case with all graduate programs at Stevenson University, which makes the rate of tuition very affordable. The rate of tuition is keeping with rates competitive for the target audience of educators and nonprofit professionals. The



assumption in the tuition revenue projection is that every student will enroll for 9 credits over the course of two year.

Grants and Contracts

There are no resources from grants, contracts, or other external sources that are designated for implementation of this program.

Other Sources

No resources from other sources are necessary for the delivery of this new academic program.

Total Year

No additional explanations or comments are included.

TABLE 2: EXPENDITURES – NARRATIVE

Faculty

The certificate consists of five courses that will be offered one each semester, fall, spring, summer, hence the faculty needs during this time are expected to be managed with a combination of full and part-time faculty resources. As the program's enrollment expands in year four and five, the budget projection reflects expanding additional faculty resources. An initial faculty salary of \$60,000/year is assumed with a three percent increase in gross salary each year and a benefit rate of 28% of salary.

Administrative and Support Staff

A shared position at the administrative and staff level is proposed to assist in managing program implementation of the certificate degree.

Library

No new library resources will be needed for this degree.

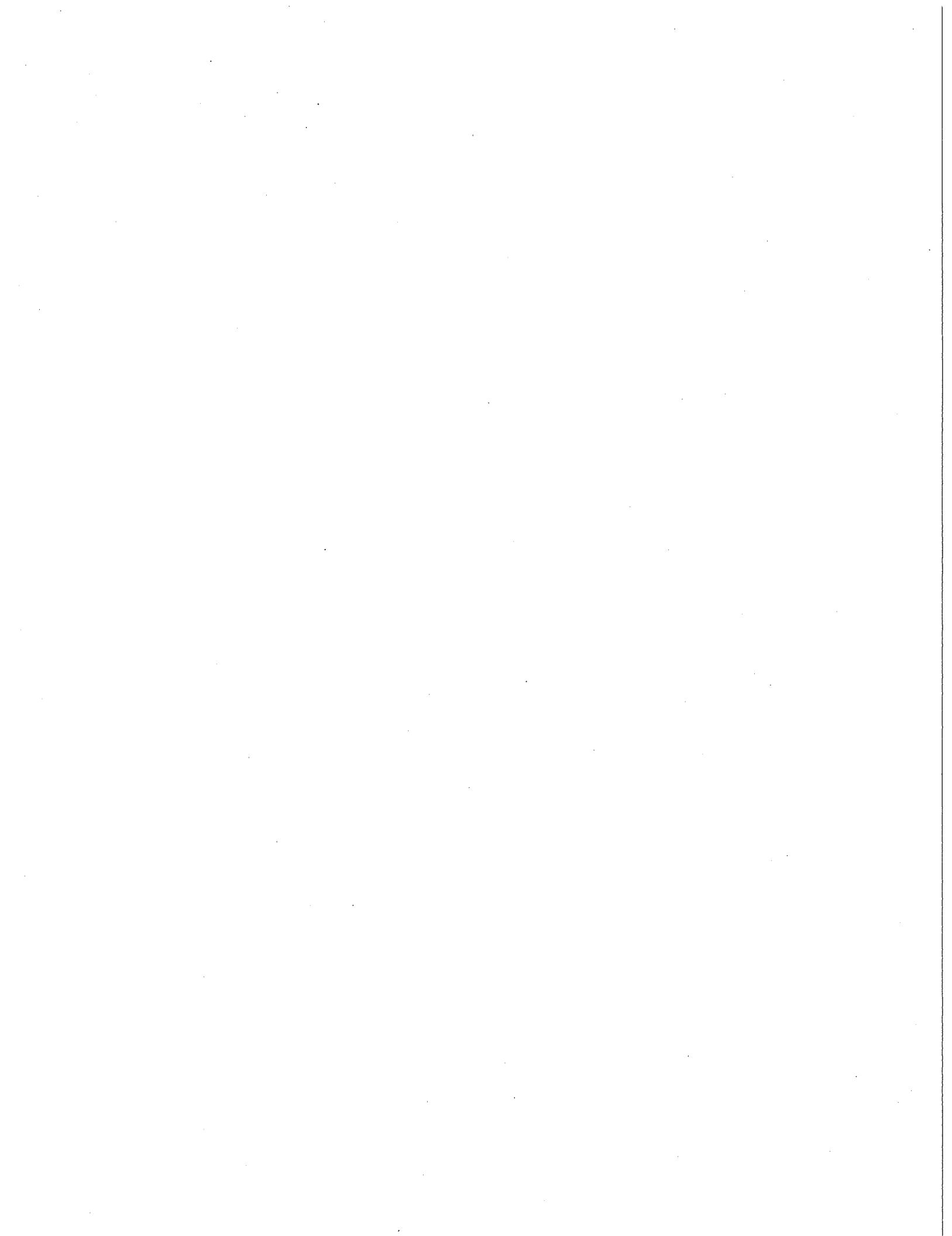
Other

Other expenses include course development costs at \$1,000 per course. Year 1 costs are for two courses, Year 2 costs are for two course, and Year 3 for one course.

M. Adequacy of provisions for evaluation of program (as outlined in COMAR 13B.02.03.15).

Discuss procedures for evaluating courses, faculty and student learning outcomes.

Programs at Stevenson are reviewed according to an established program review cycle and revised, as appropriate, to reflect the mission and vision of the University and the needs of the marketplace. The approval process for new courses requires a matrix which demonstrates alignment of course objectives with program objectives. The matrix becomes a course map, the purpose of which is to demonstrate alignment of each assignment in the course to both course objectives and program objectives. The alignment matrix and course maps are essential tools in assessing the effectiveness of the program. All programs contain a capstone experience that enables the program to observe and evaluate students'



capabilities across multiple skill areas. Each program is also required to engage in a program review process every five years.

Courses are routinely monitored by program coordinators/department chairs/associate deans to ensure that best online teaching practices are being maintained by faculty including: (1) frequent faculty-to-student and student-to-student interaction; (2) prompt feedback; (3) clear expectations for completing assignments and other activities; and (4) opportunities for active learning among students. Stevenson utilizes the Quality Matters Standards rubric as a guideline for all online courses. Faculty presence in each course is monitored. Courses are managed by a course manager and instructional designer with expertise in online course development to ensure that the courses include a sequence of learning activities that students can easily navigate and a communication strategy is in place for the unexpected. Academic program coordinators/department chairs/associate deans and instructional designers ensure there is continued alignment between assignments and course objectives and faculty communicate high expectations for student performance. Finally, faculty are able to avail themselves of ongoing assistance in the performance of their responsibilities through access to the technical and academic assistance provided by the instructional design staff and academic program coordinators/department chairs/associate deans.

Assessment and documentation of student achievement of learning outcomes occurs throughout the distance education programs. Each course syllabus clearly identifies the desired learning outcomes for students. Assignments are designed so that all course outcomes are assessed, and each graded assignment is scored often using a rubric to determine if the student has demonstrated proficiency with the related outcome. Student portfolios demonstrate student mastery of outcomes across all courses in the program and are assessed using a standards-aligned rubric during the capstone course of the program.

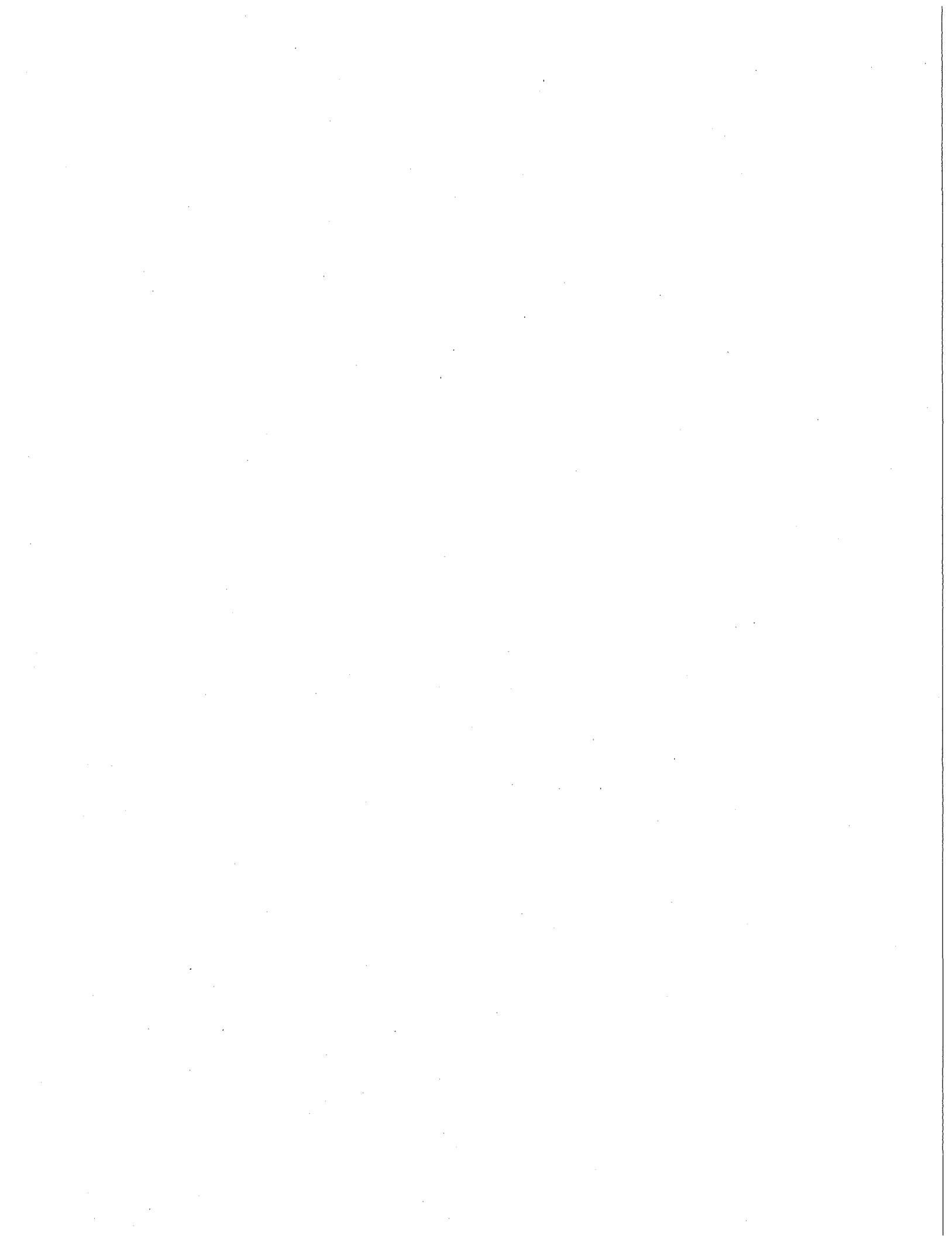
Student course evaluations are routinely administered at the end of each session and are analyzed. Alumni are surveyed periodically to ascertain their opinions about whether they had attained the skills and knowledge required for their jobs and to provide their judgment about the strengths and areas for improvement in their program.

Faculty adhere to Quality Matters standards and to principles of best practice which include the following: (1) providing clear guidelines for student-to-student and student-to-faculty interaction; (2) creating well designed discussion assignments that facilitate meaningful dialogue among students; (3) developing student assessments which include project-based assignments to facilitate critical thinking in addition to tests and quizzes; (4) providing timely feedback; (5) providing regularly distributed deadlines to encourage course/program completion; (6) communicating high expectations; and (7) facilitating student participation in the selection of project and paper topics. Courses regularly are reviewed to ensure that they are meeting these standards.

N. Consistency with the State's minority student achievement goals (as outlined in COMAR 13B.02.03.05 and in the State Plan for Postsecondary Education).

Discuss how the proposed program addresses minority student access & success, and the institution's cultural diversity goals and initiatives.

The Stevenson University student population includes the largest number of diverse students among the private colleges and universities in Maryland. Each year approximately one-third of the entering class of first-year students qualify for federal Pell grants and are from 'educationally disadvantaged backgrounds'. In the 2015-2016 academic year, 45% of the total undergraduate population and 43% of



the graduate and undergraduate part-time student population represented minority groups. The diverse student population is the result of an Institutional plan to recruit students from diverse backgrounds by reserving a significant percentage of institutional grants for students with need as opposed to other determinates, such as educational attainment as measured by high school grades and admissions tests.

Stevenson University has made a commitment to attracting transfer students which has increased the diversity of the student population. Specifically, one-third of the new students during each of the last two years were transfer students predominantly from the state's community colleges where the lower tuition generally attracts the most disadvantaged students. The recruitment plan of the Office of Admissions has pushed outward geographically from the historic dominance of central Maryland counties, adding another factor that accounts for the increasing diversity of the student body.

Stevenson University has among its guiding documents a diversity statement that along with its mission, vision, and values comprise the guiding principles behind all policies of the institution. In order to ensure compliance with the commitment to diversity, Stevenson University has an office of multicultural affairs which serves as a key component of its student services unit. This office is responsible for the annual diversity update submitted for publication to the Maryland Independent College & University Association (MICUA).

O. Relationship to low productivity programs identified by the Commission:

If the proposed program is directly related to an identified low productivity program, discuss how the fiscal resources (including faculty, administration, library resources and general operating expenses) may be redistributed to this program.

This section is not applicable to private institutions.

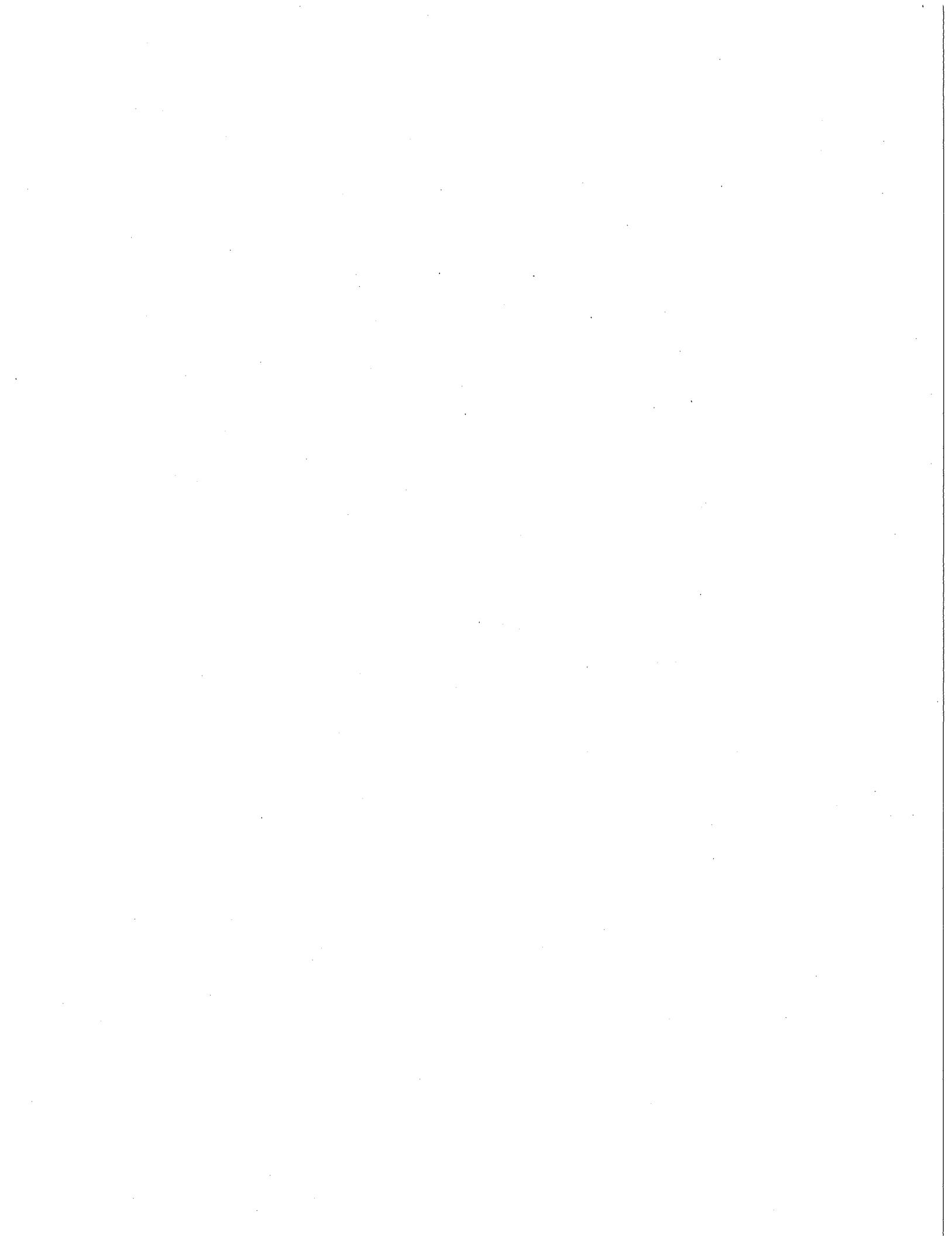
P. If proposing a distance education program, please provide evidence of the Principles of Good Practice (as outlined in COMAR 13B.02.03.22C).

Curriculum and Instruction:

1. *A distance education program shall be established and overseen by qualified faculty.*

Stevenson University distance education programs are developed and overseen by faculty members specifically selected for their subject matter expertise as well as their ability to teach in the online environment. All faculty members hired to teach in the online environment must participate in a faculty in-take session. During the in-take session, faculty are assessed for appropriate teaching skills and ability to interact effectively with students in the online environment through a series of Blackboard learning management system activities that include the following: (1) grading student papers; (2) responding to student discussion forums; and (3) creating an online presentation using media. Faculty are also required to participate in a subsequent online development course that includes facilitating adult learning, developing course management techniques, using grading rubrics, avoiding and recognizing plagiarism and cheating, among other topics. Only faculty who successfully complete these activities are selected to teach and develop distance education courses.

2. *The program's curriculum shall be coherent, cohesive, and comparable in academic rigor to programs offered in traditional instructional formats.*



All courses in the distance education program are subject to the same design and approval process as those offered in traditional instructional formats. All courses, whether in a distance education or traditional format, are initially proposed by the academic departments. The courses are reviewed first by the academic program coordinator/department chair/associate dean and then by the dean of the school which oversees the academic department. The courses are then reviewed by the school's representative to the Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) subcommittee of the University's Faculty Council, as well as by an AAC non-school representative; a representative from the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment; and a University librarian to ensure that the appropriate materials are available to the students. Courses are then submitted for review and approval by the Deans' Council, which is comprised of the deans from all seven schools in the University. Finally, the courses are submitted for review and approval by the AAC. The course content and student learning outcomes are identical regardless of whether a course is offered in a traditional format or a distance learning format. This thorough review process ensures the curriculum for distance education programs is coherent, cohesive and comparable in academic rigor to programs offered in traditional instructional formats.

3. The program shall result in learning outcomes appropriate to the rigor and breadth of the program.

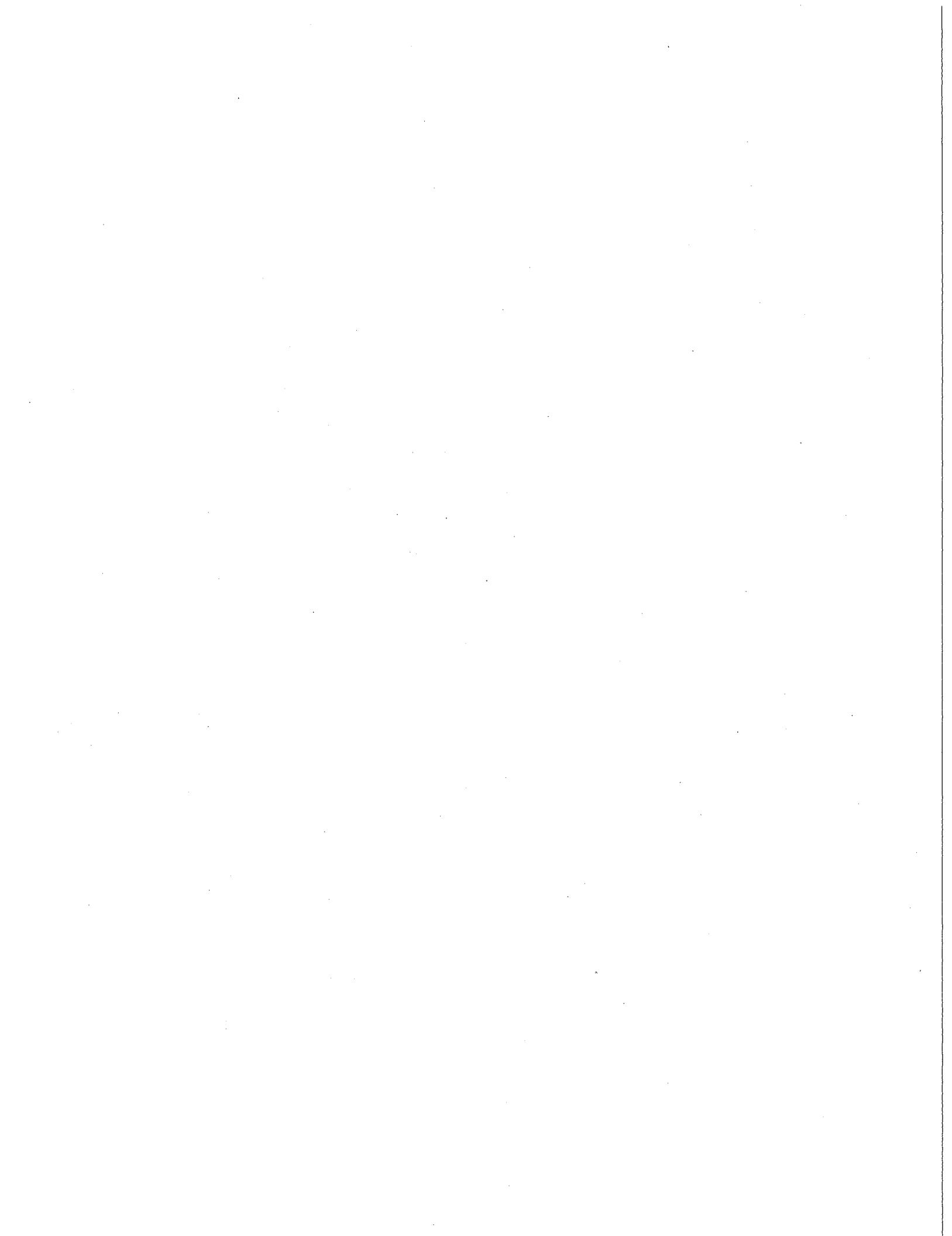
All program proposals are reviewed to ensure that the appropriate levels of the Bloom/Krathwohl taxonomies are addressed in each course in the program and for the program as a whole. All course level and program level requirements meet the standards set by the University for graduate courses and programs. All courses include learning outcomes appropriate for the course level. Programs and courses are reviewed and assessed routinely to ensure that the outcomes are being met by the students.

4. A program shall provide for appropriate real-time or delayed interaction between faculty and students.

All courses in the distance education program provide appropriate student-to-faculty and student-to-student interaction. This interaction is generally asynchronous using discussion board forums, wikis, blogs, journals or interactive software. Faculty are required to provide feedback to students using these modalities. Synchronous, real-time interaction is available through the use of a variety of web appropriate methods, such as VoiceThread, BlueJeans, Google Hangouts, or Skype.

5. Faculty members in appropriate disciplines in collaboration with other institutional personnel shall participate in the design of courses offered through a distance education program.

The School of Graduate and Professional Studies has three full-time instructional designers, an Associate Dean for Distance Learning, and graduate assistants as part of its educational design and technology team. The team has considerable experience and expertise on the BlackBoard course management system used to deliver distance education courses, and works with all those who have technology needs—the administrators, faculty, and students. The team also provides instructional design support to all faculty members developing and teaching distance education courses. Members of the instructional design team have received appropriate training and certifications. One of the instructional designers has received her Quality Matters Peer Review certification and her Quality Matters Institutional Review certification. The other instructional designers have Quality Matters Peer Review certification.



All faculty work with an identified instructional designer during the entire design of courses offered through a distance education program. This collaboration continues during the instruction phase of course delivery. All courses are reviewed by the program coordinator/department chair/associate dean in collaboration with the faculty and instructional designer. All distance education courses must be approved by the program coordinator chair/department chair/associate dean prior to being offered to students.

Role and Mission:

1. *The program shall be consistent with the institution's mission.*

Stevenson University's mission is to provide a distinctive career-focused education and personalized environment for its students. The cornerstone of the mission is an educational experience that supports career planning while encompassing liberal arts, science, and technology. The University meets students where they are and supports and challenges them to become reflective and accomplished individuals committed to a lifetime of learning and contribution. Students graduate with the competence and confidence needed to address creatively the opportunities and problems facing their communities, the nation, and the world. The proposed program fulfills the University's mission.

2. *Review and approval processes shall ensure the appropriateness of the technology being used to meet a program's objectives.*

All course and program objectives are reviewed and approved by the Academic Affairs Committee. Once the program and course objectives have been approved, the technology that will best facilitate student attainment of the objectives is selected by the faculty and instructional designer collaboratively. The instructional design staff are well trained to ensure that appropriate technology or tools are selected.

Faculty Support:

1. *An institution shall provide for training for faculty with the use of technology, including training in the learning management system and the pedagogy of distance education.*

All faculty have access to the training opportunities routinely provided by the instructional design staff of GPS. The schedule for faculty professional development includes training in the use of available technologies for enhancing online and face-to-face instruction and use of Blackboard at both a beginner and advanced level. Individual appointments with instructions design staff are also encouraged. Twice yearly GPS offers professional development seminars for faculty related to andragogy and the best practices for teaching adult students. The School of Graduate and Professional students maintains a faculty professional development website for faculty to access webinars and virtual trainings related to andragogy and the best practices for teaching adult students. Once a semester faculty meetings are held using a virtual meeting software BlueJeans and recordings of the meetings are posted and made available for faculty. Additionally, the instructional design team maintains a faculty resources website with links to webinars and other resources related to instructional methods and technology and best practices for using the LMS.

2. *Principles of best practice for teaching shall be developed and maintained by the faculty.*

Faculty adhere to Quality Matters standards and to principles of best practice which include the following: (1) providing clear guidelines for student-to-student and student-to-faculty interaction; (2) creating well designed discussion assignments that facilitate meaningful dialogue among students; (3) developing student assessments which include project-based assignments to facilitate critical thinking in

addition to tests and quizzes; (4) providing timely feedback; (5) providing regularly distributed deadlines to encourage course/program completion; (6) communicating high expectations; and (7) facilitating student participation in selection of project and paper topics. Courses are regularly reviewed to ensure that they are meeting these standards.

3. An institution shall provide faculty support services specifically related to teaching in a distance education format.

Faculty are provided support specifically related to teaching in a distance education format throughout their entire time of teaching for Stevenson University. As noted above, prior to teaching a distance education course, faculty are required to participate in an online faculty development course. In addition, faculty attend twice annual meetings which are held virtually to accommodate faculty who live out-of-state or are otherwise unable to come to campus.

Continuing professional development workshops from a variety of local and national organizations are made available to the faculty to improve their teaching effectiveness in an online environment. Sessions are a mix of synchronous and asynchronous and are made available on the GPS Faculty Development site and on the Faculty Resources site in Blackboard. Workshop topics have included the following: (1) Introduction to Blackboard; (2) Advanced Blackboard Training; (3) Use of the Grade Center; (4) Facilitating Discussion Boards; (5) How Interaction Aids Learning; (6) Developing Accelerated Online Courses; (7) Best Practices in Accelerating Courses; (8) Available Technologies to Facilitate Online Learning; (9) Teaching a Course You Did Not Develop; and (10) Working with Master Courses. Each workshop is evaluated.

Appropriate learning resources shall be available to students, including appropriate and adequate library services and resources.

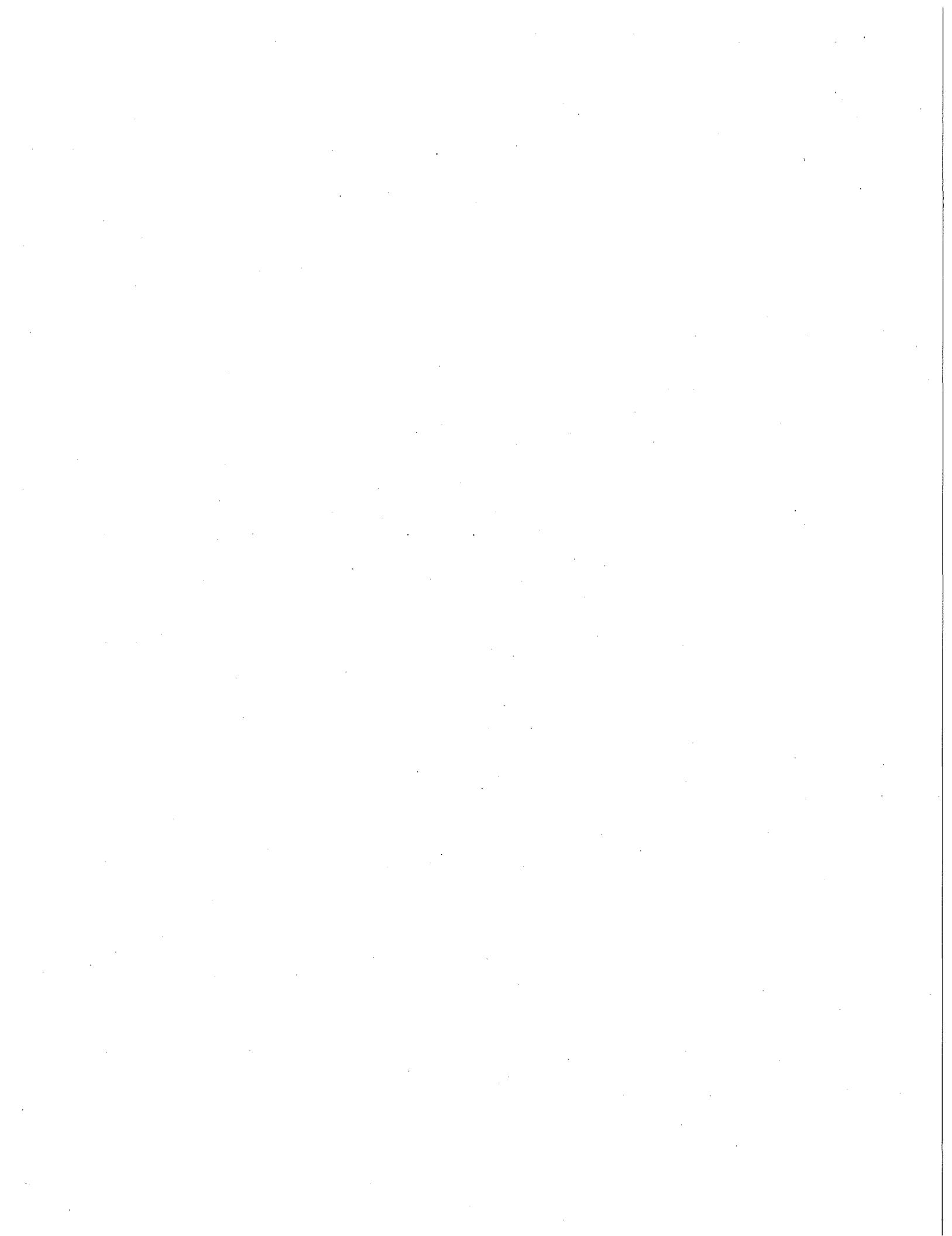
Students and Student Services:

1. A distance education program shall provide students with clear, complete, and timely information on the curriculum, course and degree requirements, nature of faculty/student interaction, assumptions about technology competence and skills, technical equipment requirements, learning management system, availability of academic support services, financial aid resources, and costs and payment policies.

Students receive information about curriculum, course and degree requirements from both admissions personnel and the student support coordinator assigned to the degree program. WebXpress is the online system that allows Stevenson University applicants, students, and faculty to access multiple online resources. With WebXpress, prospective students can check on the status of their application. Current students have access to class schedules, status of accounts, grades, degree audit forms and registration. Faculty can monitor rosters and post grades.

Technical equipment requirements are made known to students through information provided to them during the admissions process and again at orientation. A special browser checker is available to help students assess that their computer is up-to-date and appropriately equipped. Each course syllabus also outlines technical requirements for taking the online course and also indicates any additional software or hardware that may be necessary for successful student performance.

Student support is provided for BlackBoard, the University's learning management system. Tech Connection, the University's technology support group, provides technical support to students



experiencing difficulties with computer related issues. Faculty and instructional design staff assist students with academic issues related to online courses.

The Stevenson University website offers a convenient way to find information related to the University, including financial aid, costs and payment policies, and federally required complaint policies. The website includes links to various units and to academic support services. Website revisions are ongoing in an attempt to remain current, and the Stevenson portal (intranet) provides enrolled students and faculty ways to improve communications and information sharing. There is a student support page associated with the University's School of Graduate and Professional Studies webpage that houses links to academic and student support services specific to the needs of online adult learners.

2. Enrolled students shall have reasonable and adequate access to the range of student services to support their distance education activities.

Library Facilities

The Stevenson University Library, established in 1971, is maintained in the Learning Resource Center building on the Greenspring Campus, in the library facility located in the School of Business and Leadership and in the Kevin J. Manning Academic Center located on the Owings Mills Campus. The physical collections continue to grow, now approaching 100,000 volumes. Many formats are represented, among them DVD's, video recordings, CDs, audiotapes, microfilms, microfiche, CD-ROMs, web-based services, books and periodicals. Library holdings reflect the University's curriculum. The library also participates in the [Maryland Digital Library Project](#) and in the [AskUsNow Reference Service](#) with other Maryland libraries. AskUsNow is particularly helpful to students not located on campus and provides 24/7 access to librarian assistance.

The library provides access to the collections via an integrated, web-based online catalog shared with partners in the Maryland Interlibrary Consortium, whose collections total approximately 800,000 volumes. The interlibrary loan program uses a dedicated courier service that facilitates sharing among the campuses.

To support the distance education students, the library offers several electronic services: Electronic media, book, and article searches are available, along with a full-text e-journal locator. Several research tutorials are available, along with research guides and *Noodlebib*, a program that helps with citations. "Ask us now!" is particularly helpful to students who are not located on campus. This provides access to a librarian's assistance 24 hours/ seven days a week.

Admissions

Students are provided recruitment and admission information through various means. Admissions information is available on the Stevenson University GPS website. Information sessions are held through the year both face-to-face and online. Finally, an enrollment counselor specifically assigned to the program facilitates face-to-face meetings and is available to communicate with students via telephone or email. Students are able to complete either an online or paper application. The Transcript Evaluator for GPS provides services such as transcript and credit evaluations using ARTSYS.

Financial Aid/Student Accounts

Scholarships, grants, and loans are available to students. Financial aid information is provided to prospective students throughout the admissions process. To apply, students must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Student-specific information relating to financial aid awards is available through WebXpress. General information relating to financial aid is available on the website.

Students have the ability to view and print their bills online through WebXpress. Information regarding payment and refund policies are on the University's website and are provided to students in their orientation packets. Students are able to make payments online through WebXpress, by telephone or through the mail by means of check, money order or credit card. Students have access through the website or by telephone to the University's Student Solution Center, a financial aid/student accounts advisory office, to answer questions and solve problems.

Registration

Students register for classes online through WebXpress. A student success coach is available by telephone and email to help students with registration.

Orientation

Accepted students are sent an orientation packet through the mail. In addition, an orientation session both face-to-face and online is held at the beginning of each session for new students.

Advising

Each student is assigned to a student success coach who monitors degree or certificate completion progress and retention. Academic advising is in person, by telephone or online. Online advising occurs through the University's email system. The University has obtained the necessary modules to implement E-Advising through its Colleague System, a component of Datatel. Once fully implemented, this system will be used for online advising.

Access to Academic Services

Stevenson is organized to connect students to the resources they need to succeed. Admissions practices seek to recruit, admit, and enroll students whose interests and abilities are congruent with the University's mission and diversity statements. Student support services aim to develop students' strengths and meet their current and developing needs. These areas share the goals of retaining students in the Stevenson community while preparing them for future careers.

Online tutoring is accessible through SMARTHINKING Online tutoring services are available to students through a variety of means including one-on-one live online tutoring sessions, drop-in tutoring sessions, scheduled tutoring sessions, or through submission of writing assignments for feedback. Students can access these online tutoring activities from any computer facilities available to them.

The College's unique Career Architecture ProgramSM guides students in devising a personalized career plan based on their values, interests, strengths and weaknesses. Students are also provided career services such as resume critiques, job search assistance, mock interviews, career assessment tools, career counseling, and graduate or professional school preparation. Career workshops are regularly held for students, both on-site and online. A dedicated industry specialist is available to assist students in distance education programs. Career counseling is available to students both in-person and via the web using interactive collaborative software. This mission has consistently achieved noteworthy success, with at least 92 percent of Stevenson's graduates every year in the past five years securing employment or continuing their education within six months of graduation. All these services are available to students in the distance education program.

3. *Accepted students shall have the background, knowledge, and technical skills needed to undertake a distance education program.*



All programs adhere to specific admissions requirements in order to ensure that accepted students have the background and knowledge needed to undertake and be successful in a distance education program. In addition, all accepted students are required to take part in online orientation using the Blackboard learning management system designed to introduce them to Stevenson University.

4. Advertising, recruiting, and admissions materials clearly and accurately represent the program and services available.

All electronic and print advertising, recruiting, and admissions materials clearly and accurately represent the program and services available. The admissions and recruitment staff are all extremely knowledgeable about the programs. All materials are reviewed by program coordinator/department chair/associate dean and the school dean before dissemination and list clearly the program, admissions requirements and contact information.

Commitment to Support

1. Policies for faculty shall include appropriate consideration of teaching and scholarly activities related to distance education programs.

Faculty evaluation policies do not distinguish between teaching in a distance education program and in a traditional program. All faculty are evaluated based on the following criteria: (1) teaching effectiveness; (2) scholarship; and (3) service.

All courses are evaluated regardless of modality. Faculty are expected to reflect on the feedback received, using the *Faculty Response to Evaluation* form, which is submitted to the appropriate program coordinator. However, the evaluation instruments are modified to take into account the differences in delivery methods.

2. An institution shall demonstrate commitment to ongoing support, both financial and technical, and to a continuation of a program for a period sufficient to enable students to complete the degree or certificate.

Stevenson University is committed to its online programs. Both financial and technical support has been continually provided since 2006 when the University offered its first distance education program. The level of support has steadily increased over the years. The University fully funds the Blackboard™ servers and routinely upgrades its programs and services in support of the online programs. The University will be moving to a SASS hosted model during 2017-2018. A dedicated Blackboard™ IT technician is identified and the instructional design team expanded its staff and scope of operation over the last three years. Student success coaches, advisers, and other staff members assist in re-enrollment and retention services to enable students to complete their program.

Evaluation and Assessment:

1. An institution shall evaluate a program's educational effectiveness, including assessments of student learning outcomes, student retention, student and faculty satisfaction, and cost-effectiveness.

Programs at Stevenson are reviewed according to an established program review cycle and revised, as appropriate, to reflect the mission and vision of the University and the needs of the marketplace. The approval process for new courses requires a matrix which demonstrates alignment of course objectives



with program objectives. The matrix becomes a course map, the purpose of which is to demonstrate alignment of each assignment in the course to both course objectives and program objectives. The alignment matrix and course maps are essential tools in assessing the effectiveness of the program. All programs contain a capstone experience that enables the program to observe and evaluate students' capabilities across multiple skill areas. Each program is also required to engage in a program review process every five years.

The student success coaches and other members of the student success team focus on student retention. Each new student in a distance education program receives a telephone call from a member of the team during each of their first three courses at Stevenson. The purpose of this call is to ensure students are satisfied with their experience at Stevenson and are not experiencing any difficulties in successfully completing their coursework. Data have shown that students who successfully complete their first three courses are likely to complete their degree program. Thereafter, the student success coaches are available to assist students with any questions or concerns. In addition, as part of the retention efforts, the student success coaches follow up with students who have not registered for subsequent sessions.

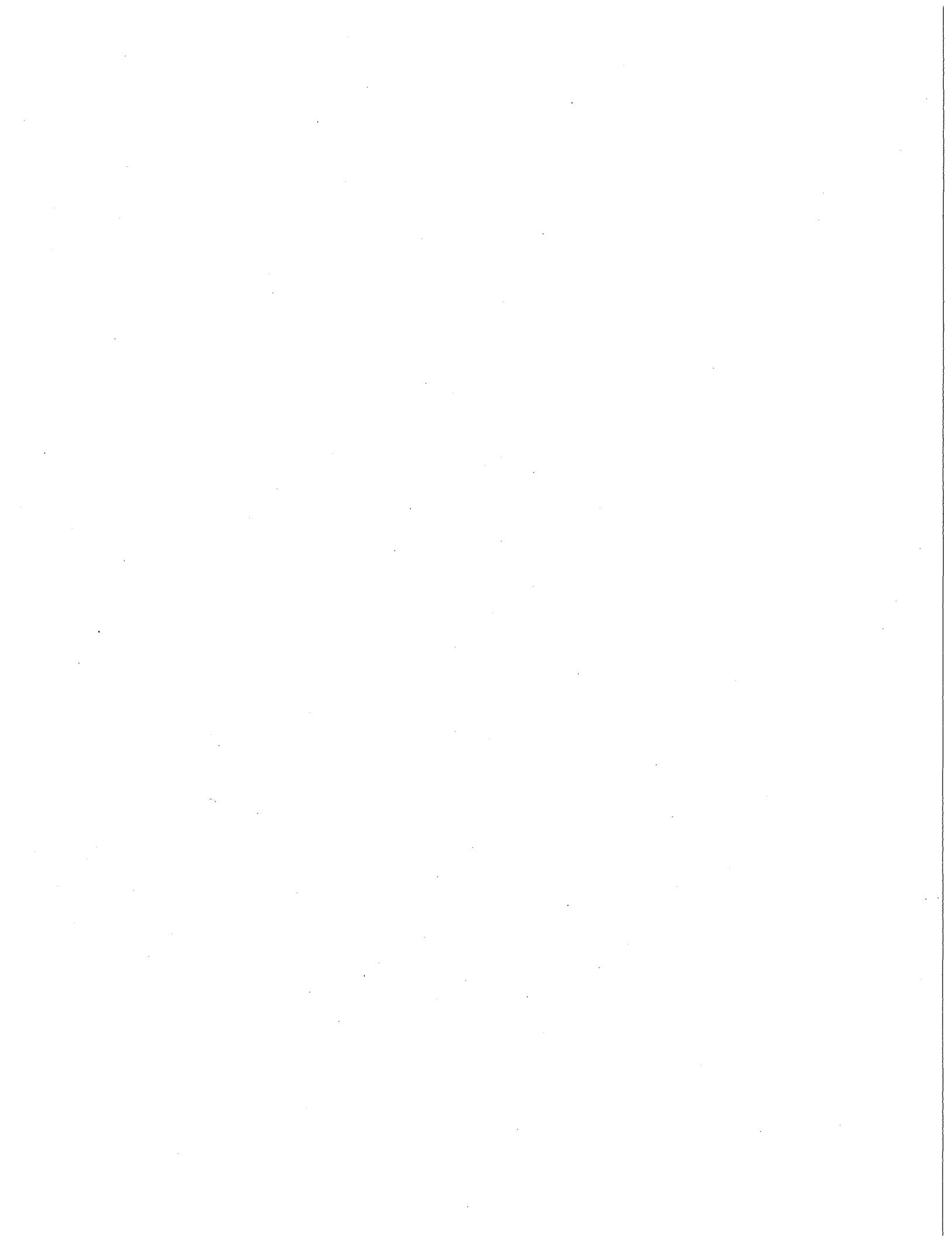
2. *An institution shall demonstrate an evidence-based approach to best online teaching practices.*

Courses are routinely monitored by program coordinators/department chairs/associate deans to ensure that best online teaching practices are being maintained by faculty including: (1) frequent faculty-to-student and student-to-student interaction; (2) prompt feedback; (3) clear expectations for completing assignments and other activities; and (4) opportunities for active learning among students. Stevenson utilizes the Quality Matters Standards rubric as a guideline for all online courses. Faculty presence in each course is monitored. Courses are managed by a course manager and instructional designer with expertise in online course development to ensure that the courses include a sequence of learning activities that students can easily navigate and a communication strategy is in place for the unexpected. Academic program coordinators/ department chairs/associate deans and instructional designers ensure there is continued alignment between assignments and course objectives and faculty communicate high expectations for student performance. Finally, faculty are able to avail themselves of ongoing assistance in the performance of their responsibilities through access to the technical and academic assistance provided by the instructional design staff and academic program coordinators/department chairs/associate deans.

3. *An institution shall provide for assessment and documentation of student achievement of learning outcomes in a distance education program.*

Assessment and documentation of student achievement of learning outcomes occurs throughout the distance education programs. Each course syllabus clearly identifies the desired learning outcomes for candidates. Assignments are designed so that all course outcomes are assessed, and each graded assignment is scored using a rubric to determine if student has demonstrated proficiency with the related outcome. Student portfolios demonstrate student mastery of outcomes across all courses in the program and is assessed using a standards-aligned rubric during the capstone course of the program.

Student course evaluations are routinely administered at the end of each session and are analyzed. Alumni are surveyed periodically to ascertain their opinions about whether they had attained the skills and knowledge required for their jobs and to provide their judgment about the strengths and areas for improvement in their programs.



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