

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

(For each proposed program, attach a separate cover page. For example, two cover pages would accompany a proposal for a degree program and a certificate program.)

Stevenson University
Institution Submitting Proposal

Fall, 2017
Projected Implementation Date

Master of Science
Award to be Offered

Forensic Investigation
Title of Proposed Program

210505
Suggested HEGIS Code

43.0106
Suggested CIP Code

School of Graduate & Professional Studies
Department of Proposed Program

Joyce K. Becker, JD
Name of Department Head

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Clare Moore 5/5/17
Signature and Date

President/Chief Executive Approval

February 8, 2017
Date

Date Endorsed/Approved by Governing Board

Stevenson University
School of Graduate and Professional Studies
Proposal for New Academic Program
Master of Science in Forensic Investigation

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.*

Description of MS in Forensic Investigation

The School of Graduate and Professional Studies (GPS) at Stevenson University (Stevenson or the University) currently offers an MS in Forensic Studies with six tracks (accounting, computer forensics, criminalistics, interdisciplinary, investigations, and legal) and an MS in Forensic Science with three tracks (biology, chemistry and crime scene investigation). Stevenson is proposing to redesign these approved degrees as follows:

MS in Forensic Studies

- Modify the existing MS in Forensic Studies to be solely an interdisciplinary degree. Interdisciplinary track students will remain in this degree.
- Add a new MS degree in Forensic Accounting. Students interested in the accounting track in the MS in Forensic Studies will take this new degree.
- Add a new MS degree in Digital Forensics. Students interested in the computer forensics track in the MS in Forensic Studies will take this new degree.
- Add a new MS degree in Forensic Investigation. Students interested in the investigations track and legal track in the MS in Forensic Studies will take this degree.
- Add a new MS degree in Crime Scene Investigation. Students interested in the criminalistics track in the MS in Forensic Studies, as well as students interested in the crime scene investigation track in the MS in Forensic Science, will take this new degree (see #2 below).

MS in Forensic Science

- Add a new Masters in Forensic Science degree (MFS) to include two areas of concentration: forensic biology and forensic chemistry. Students interested in the biology track and chemistry track in the MS in Forensic Science will take this degree.
- Add a new MS degree in Crime Scene Investigation. Students interested in the crime scene investigation track in the MS in Forensic Science, as well as students interested in the criminalistics track in the MS in Forensic Studies, will take this new degree (see #1 above).
- Discontinue the existing MS in Forensic Science after teaching out current students in the degree.

It should be emphasized that this proposal simply seeks to convert the existing investigations track in the approved MS in Forensic Studies into a separate degree. The curriculum changes needed to implement this redesign are minimal. The program can be completed entirely online. Some hybrid courses may still be offered as enrollment warrants. In 2016, Stevenson was approved to participate in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) that

established national standards for interstate offering of postsecondary distance education programs. Stevenson's participation in SARA facilitates enrollment of out-of-state students.

The MS in Forensic Investigation is a direct outgrowth of GPS's longstanding, now over ten years old, master's degree in Forensic Studies. Currently, GPS students graduate with the MS in Forensic Studies with a track in either accounting, investigations, computer forensics, criminalistics, interdisciplinary or legal. The program's Forensic Advisory Committee suggested creating separate degrees in place of the current offering of a single degree with tracks. It was their opinion that this approach would create a degree whose meaning would be clear in the profession rather than the current generic title.

The program will continue to be offered in an online accelerated format, permitting students to complete this master's program in as few as eighteen months and without having to come to campus to attend classes. The proposed program is focused more clearly on training in forensic investigation, the justice system, legal evidence, and professional communications. The program will culminate in a mock trial capstone.

The MS in Forensic Investigation reflects the logical development of the current investigations track in the Master of Science in Forensic Studies. For students who are looking for careers in conducting investigations for businesses and government agencies, the forensic investigation degree provides the knowledge to plan and conduct such investigations. Courses emphasize the gathering and reporting of testimonial and physical evidence and prepare students to conduct investigations by interviewing witnesses, analyzing documents, and synthesizing the results into factually accurate and objective investigative reports and court testimony. Many forensic investigators work closely with law enforcement personnel and lawyers during investigations and often appear as expert witnesses during trials.

The proposed degree will continue to require successful completion of 36 credit hours of graduate level coursework, consisting of 15 credit hours of core forensic courses and 21 credit hours of forensic investigation and related courses. The following grid compares the current MS in Forensic Studies investigations track with the proposed MS in Forensic Investigation:

CURRENT MS IN FORENSIC STUDIES WITH A TRACK IN INVESTIGATIONS			PROPOSED MS IN FORENSIC INVESTIGATION		
CORE COURSES			REQUIRED COURSES		
FSCOR 601	Foundations of Justice	3	FSCOR 601	Foundations of Justice	3
FSCOR 604	Evidence	3	FSCOR 604	Evidence	3
FSCOR 606	Forensic Journal Research & Review	3	FSCOR 606	Forensic Journal Research & Review	3
FSCOR 702	Mock Trial Capstone	6	FSCOR 702	Mock Trial Capstone	6
TRACK COURSES					
FSINV 600	Investigative Techniques/Interviewing	3	FSINV 600	Investigative Techniques/Interviewing	3
FSINV 605	Investigative Techniques/ Physical Evidence	3	FSINV 605	Investigative Techniques/ Physical Evidence	3
FSAAC 620	Forensic Information Technology	3	FSAAC 620	Forensic Information Technology	3

FSLAW 602	Criminology	3	FSLAW 602	Criminology	3
FSLAW 662	Fraud Investigation and Analysis	3	FSLAW 662	Fraud Investigation and Analysis	3
FSLAW 668	White Collar Crimes	3	FSLAW 668	White Collar Crimes	3
	Forensic Studies Elective	3	FSCI 500	Survey of Forensic Science	3
TOTAL CREDITS		36	TOTAL CREDITS		36

How the Master’s Degree in Forensic Investigation Relates to Stevenson University’s Approved Mission

Stevenson University’s approved mission is as follows:

The University is an innovative, coeducational, independent institution offering undergraduate and graduate students a career-focused education marked by individualized attention, civility, and respect for difference. The University blends the liberal arts with career exploration and planning, complementing a traditional education with applied learning beyond the classroom. 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 University is an innovative, coeducational, independent institution offering undergraduate and graduate students a career-focused education marked by individualized attention, civility, and respect for difference. The University blends the liberal arts with career exploration and planning, complementing a traditional education with applied learning beyond the classroom. 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 MS in Forensic Investigation will equip students with the ability to visualize and achieve excellence in a dynamic global community. Students will graduate with the competence and confidence needed to address creatively the opportunities and problems facing their communities, the nation, and the world. Creation of this program is consistent with Stevenson’s mission and goals as a career-focused university and will enable Stevenson to better respond to the demand in the field.

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

How the Master’s Degree in Forensic Investigation Supports Stevenson University’s Goals

The proposed program supports Stevenson University’s strategic goals and are an institutional priority. Stevenson University has a long history of rising to the challenge to provide its students with the education demanded of them by employers. This proposed program is in direct response to market demands, as is shown in the research section of this proposal.

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 program will meet Goal 5, Objective A by implementing a new MS in Forensic Investigation that addresses a critical market need and helps to advance the career of investigators in the region.

As a key component of the new degree, graduate students will put theory into practice. The program integrates advances in technology into the content and focus, thus enabling candidates to use technology in research and problem solving. The online design of the programs makes it accessible to a larger number of candidates, and the focus on advancing 21st century skills and closing achievement gaps in underserved populations aligns with current educational trends.

Evidence Affirming That the Master's Degree in Forensic Investigation Is a Stevenson University Priority

The University's Board of Trustees and President's Cabinet have affirmatively concluded that the MS in Forensic Investigation is 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 need for data integrity, both financial and computer generated information, requires trained personnel with investigative techniques and skills not only to generate the necessary information but also to be able to convey this information through testimony when necessary. The growing demand for experts able to understand and use forensic evidence necessitates academic programs to help prepare accountants, analysts, lawyers, investigators and others with the knowledge and skills necessary. The proposed program will help fulfill the need for these skills and Stevenson's proximity to the large federal, state and local governmental agencies with an increased need for personnel with forensic investigation skills will help meet this need.

The "CSI effect" has led to an increased reliance on expert witnesses such as digital forensics professionals in the past judges and juries were more willing to accept less forensic proof. In the past, most forensic investigators developed investigative techniques and skills such as testifying at trial through on-the-job experience. Because of the growing demand for expert evidence, there is now a need for academic programs that help prepare individuals with the knowledge and skills needed to enter forensic investigator positions.

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

The proposed program in Forensic Investigation aligns with Goals 1, 4 & 5 of *Maryland Ready*, the 2013-2017 Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education.

Goal 1: Quality and Effectiveness

This program aligns with Maryland's goal to enhance "its array of postsecondary education programs" towards fulfilling the "evolving needs of its students, the State and the nation" (p. 17). The master's program proposed here fulfills the need to prepare students to "advance in their careers...emphasizing ethical principles and practices in ...professional interactions:" (p.18) The adjunct faculty who teach in this program will be working professionals who will "provide invaluable benefits to students and...offer certain kinds of specialized instruction." (p.18) Finally, the program is supported by a strong staff of student enrollment counselors and success coaches that help bolster students and foster success and retention.

Goal 4: Innovation

This program is consistent with Maryland's aspiration as a leader in "the exploration, development, and implementation of creative and diverse education and training opportunities." Stevenson University has been a state leader among the independent college and university community in facilitating non-traditional student access to education through online programming – programming that is meeting the state's goal for providing new, transformative approaches to delivering instruction and implementing new systems of facilitating student success. (p.44) Stevenson's online program is designed specifically to incorporate appropriate technology to facilitate the delivery of quality education that enhances learning and increases information literacy.

Goal 5: Economic Growth and Vitality

The proposed program aligns well with Maryland's goals for economic growth and vitality. The State of Maryland is home to a large number of financial, government, and private institutions that require the skills of trained forensic investigators. This program will provide trained forensic investigators to help fill the needs for the state-based institutions, training that aligns "with business workforce prerequisites and emerging needs." (p. 52) Further, this program was suggested by the Advisory Board for the existing forensic studies programs, industry specific experts who voiced a need for this program.

Thus, in many ways, this proposed program meets several of the *Maryland Ready* Goals.

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.*

Many public agencies employ forensic investigators at the federal, state and local levels. Positions range from local police detective to special agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Investigators at the state and local levels investigate criminal cases, and usually specialize in one type of crime, such as white-collar crime or financial crime. Special Agents at the federal level conduct investigations for criminal violations of federal laws and regulations.

Many forensic investigators also work in the loss prevention department for retail and warehouse security, as independent or agency private investigators, or as internal or external fraud analysts for an organization. Most businesses that possess an inventory of goods in a warehouse or retail environment have a loss prevention department committed to reducing inventory shrinkage and preventing retail larceny. Forensic investigators gather facts and collect evidence to conduct investigations on a variety of different crimes. The employment opportunities for forensic investigators are vast, particularly in the Baltimore-Washington, DC corridor and with the increased attention being paid to homeland security and enforcement.

The national employment outlook provides the following information:
(accessed 4/6/2017 at <http://www.projectionscentral.com/Projections/LongTerm>):

Occupational Title	SOC Code	Employment 2014	Projected 2024	Percent change
Private Detective & Investigators	33-9021	34,900	36,700	5%

A similar review of the State occupational projections found that the projected percent change exceeds the national average:

Maryland

Occupational Title	SOC Code	Employment 2014	Projected 2024	Percent change
Private Detective & Investigators	33-9021	730	890	22.9%

<http://www.projectionscentral.com/Projections/LongTerm>

- 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.*

Based on the data provided above, it is clear that the need for trained personnel in the occupations for which students in this program will be trained, far exceeds the current supply and underscores the need for this program as proposed.

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

The Advisory Board for the program suggested this change to a separate degree in order to make the program more understandable and marketable to employers. Additionally, the GPS

Marketing and Enrollment Management team similarly recommended this change in order to create more targeted marketing and, since the program will be entirely online, expand marketing to regional and potentially national market.

The number of students in the existing MS in Forensic Studies investigations track in 2016 is 28. Anticipating a minimum 10% growth per year for this program, the following projections are for enrollments:

Program	Year 1 2017-2018	Year 2 2018-2019	Year 3 2019-2020	Year 4 2020-2021	Year 5 2021-2022
MS in Forensic Investigation	31	35	38	41	46

Based on these projections, the estimated number of potential graduates from the program are as follows:

Program	Year 1 2019-2020	Year 2 2020-2021	Year 3 2021-2022	Year 4 2022-2023	Year 5 2023-2024
MS in Forensic Investigation	15	18	20	24	28

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.*

Demographic shifts in the college age population in Maryland requires innovative ways to provide education and retraining. Those students 25 year of age or older make up 32% of the total and these older students require more flexibility in academic programs, support services and delivery methods. They require flexible class schedules. Changes in employment patterns and skill requirements for those currently employed necessitate increased educational attainment and advanced skills through the attainment of a master's level degree. None of the programs described below are offered in a part-time, flexible modality that is suitable to the adult populations.

Within the State, there are no similar master's degree programs or graduate certificates. In Pennsylvania, Carlow University offers a master's in Fraud and Forensics and LaSalle University offers a master's in Economic Crime Forensics. In Washington, DC, George Washington University offers a master's in Crime Scene Investigation. These programs focus predominantly on forensic science, fraud and economic crime. Students in these programs work exclusively with other students in their area of focus, i.e, forensic science, fraud or economic crimes. The Stevenson proposed program is unique in that it is interdisciplinary, placing a strong emphasis on legal (forensic) education such as multiple courses in criminal justice, evidence, white collar crime, and mock trial. At Stevenson, the forensic investigation students take some of their courses with students in other subjects such as forensic accounting and digital forensics and all students work together in a unique mock trial capstone course to prepare them for careers working on complex forensic challenges that require more than one discipline in order to succeed

2. *Provide justification for the proposed program.*

As indicated in Section C above, there is a market demand and need for forensic investigators. There are no duplicative programs in the State nor similar programs in the region. Additionally, the strong emphasis on legal issues related to forensic investigations is unique and provides an additional level of expertise for graduates of this program.

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

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

The proposed program is expected to have no impact on Maryland HBIs as there is no program duplication.

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

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

The proposed program is not expected to have any impact on the uniqueness, institutional identity, or mission of HBIs as there is no program duplication.

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.*

Courses:

FSCOR 601 – Foundations of Justice (3 credits)

Provides students with the opportunity to examine the history, philosophy, and social development of investigations, courts, and correctional institutions in a democratic society. Local, state and federal agencies involved in administration of criminal justice, as well as the court and trial process are examined.

FSCOR 604 – Evidence (3 credits)

Provides students with an understanding of the federal rules of evidence and how they are used in the criminal courts, as well as their effect on the administration of justice. Recovery, preparation, and presentation of evidence are covered.

FSCOR 606 – Forensic Journal Research and Review (3 credits)

Provides the opportunity for students to contribute an original piece of scholarly writing to the field of forensic studies. Students will research, write, edit and journal through the writing process. Students will work with peer editors throughout the research and writing process.

FSCI 500 Survey of Forensic Science (3 credits)

Provides the student with an understanding of the two primary arenas of forensic science-the lab and the courtroom. Topics covered will include forensic chemistry, pattern analysis, forensic

biology, forensic microscopy, the expert witness, physical evidence and the crime scene. Topics related to employability as a forensic scientist and workplace demands will also be introduced. In this course, students will begin to explore in detail their specific areas of interest within the broad discipline of Forensic Science.

FSINV 600 – Investigative Techniques/Interviewing (3 credits)

Examines how to gather testimonial evidence by interviewing persons of interest, as well as how to prepare reports of investigation and oral presentations. Students will learn the importance of planning thoroughly before conducting interviews by carrying out preliminary research into the interviewee's personal history and background. Students engage in background research that includes employment, education, financial, and criminal records. Legal issues regarding gathering, maintaining and disclosing information obtained during the investigation is presented, as well as the law governing self-incrimination and providing warnings during interviews. Students learn to differentiate among various types of interviewing, including interviewing neutral witnesses, hostile witnesses, and subjects of investigations. Students prepare reports using analytical techniques that allow them to reach coherent, defensible conclusions. This course must be completed prior to taking Mock Trial.

FSLAW 602 Criminology (3 credits)

Provides students with the opportunity to examine crime, criminals, the law, criminal behavior, and other social processes involved in crime causation. Emphasis is placed on the role of crime as a social phenomenon, the nature of criminal law, and related matters of crime in modern society. Students will examine criminological theories and their impact on policy formation in the criminal justice arena as well as examine scholarly criminological research for use in supportive analysis of theory and policy in the criminal justice arena.

FSINV 605 Investigative Techniques/Physical Evidence (3 credits)

Examines how to gather physical and documentary evidence, such as accounting documents and digital records, from persons of interest and to prepare reports of investigation and oral presentations. Students learn the importance of planning thoroughly before gathering evidence, by conducting preliminary research into the record system to be examined. Legal issues regarding gathering, maintaining and disclosing information, as well as the law controlling privacy and search and seizure are presented. Students learn how to properly record evidence and maintain a chain of custody. Students prepare reports using analytical techniques that allow them to reach coherent, defensible conclusions. This course must be completed prior to taking Mock Trial.

FSAAC 620 – Forensic Information Technology (3 credits)

Introduces forensic computer science, including techniques used to investigate computer crime scenes as well as computer hardware and software used to solve computer crimes. Students study the history of computer crimes and the important legal and social issues related to them.

FSLAW 662 Fraud Investigation and Analysis (3 credits)

Deals with all phases of fraud investigations, including fact-gathering and interviewing witnesses and targets. Issues considered include constitutional criminal procedure relating to the Fourth Amendment (search and seizure), Fifth Amendment (custodial interrogations), and Sixth Amendment (interrogation and identification). The course also covers the rules governing subpoenas for testimony, exemplars and documents, grand jury operation and secrecy, the rights and obligations of grand jury witnesses, and the responsibilities of a defense attorney when they discover evidence that tends to incriminate the defendant.

FSLAW 668 – White Collar Crimes (3 credits)

Includes a review and analysis of the general principles of white collar criminal prosecution and defense, including jurisdiction of various federal criminal law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies; corporate and other business crimes; fraud and political corruption crimes (mail fraud, bank fraud, and crimes involving bribery of public officials); conspiracy; financial and securities fraud; tax fraud; RICO; currency reporting crime and money laundering; regulatory crimes in the health and environmental areas; crimes involving the protection of federal rights and functions (perjury statutes, obstruction of justice, and witness tampering); and sanctions, including the Federal Sentencing Guidelines and the use of minimum mandatory sentences.

FSCOR 702 – Mock Trial Capstone (6 credits)

Examines how evidence is presented in the courtroom during a simulated proceeding, which is the culminating event of the class. Oral communication skills as they relate to eliciting and giving testimony are stressed. Preparation for the proceeding focuses on locating and analyzing all relevant evidence, constructing a theory, drafting questions and/or testimony, applying evidence law, and preparing and using exhibits. Students will develop the skills necessary to elicit testimony and/or to be testifying examiners in the fields of forensic accounting, computer forensics, criminalistics, and investigations.

Program Requirements:

- Maintain a 3.0 GPA
 - Complete 36 credit hours in the Master of Science program
2. *Describe the educational objectives and intended student learning outcomes.*

The overall educational objective of the program is to prepare students as forensic investigators. The Master of Science in Forensic Investigation degree will provide graduates with the skills necessary for occupations as forensic investigators for businesses and government agencies

Upon completion of the Master of Science in Forensic Investigation, graduates will be able to:

1. Evaluate the merits of an allegation and prepare an investigative plan, if warranted.
 2. Conduct effective interviews and interrogations.
 3. Evaluate documentary and testimonial evidence.
 4. Synthesize analyses of facts and law into coherent, defensible conclusions.
 5. Communicate findings, analysis, conclusions and recommendations effectively, both orally and in writing.
3. *Discuss how general education requirements will be met, if applicable.*

Not applicable

4. *Identify any specialized accreditation or graduate certification requirements for the 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

If applicable, discuss how the program supports articulation with programs at partner institutions.

Not applicable

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

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 full-time faculty along with practicing professionals in the forensic investigation field will provide expertise as faculty. As enrollments grow, new faculty with credentials appropriate to the degree program will be hired. See the table below for a summary list of faculty currently employed by Stevenson University with appropriate credentials to teach in the proposed program.

Thomas D. Coogan, J.D., Associate Dean and Professor of Forensic Studies in the School of Graduate and Professional Studies at Stevenson University, will oversee the development of the Forensic Accounting program. Mr. Coogan has over twenty-five years of teaching and progressive academic leadership experience. He received his J.D. from Antioch School of Law and earned his M.A. in Forensic Science at Antioch College. Mr. Coogan was named a Fulbright Scholar by the U.S. Department of State to teach at the Institute of Criminology at the University of Malta. Mr. Coogan has experience working in law enforcement with the U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Justice. He has held executive positions with the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, U.S. Postal Service, and Legal Services Corporation.

Summary of Current Faculty

Name	Academic Degree	Academic Title/Rank	Status	Courses
Thomas D. Coogan	J.D., Antioch School of Law	Associate Dean Professor, Forensics	Full-time	FSCOR 601, FSCOR 604, FSCOR 606, FSCOR 702, FSLAW 662, FSLAW 668, FSINV 600
Joyce K. Becker	J.D., University of Maryland, Baltimore	Dean Professor, Law	Full-time	FSCOR 601, FSCOR 604, FSLAW 668
Steven R. Engorn	MBA, Loyola University Maryland	Assistant Professor, Information Systems	Full-time	FSAAC 620

Maria Howell	J.D., University of Maryland, Baltimore	Professor, Forensic Studies	Full-time	FSCOR 601, FSCOR 604, FSCOR 606, FSCOR 702
Carolyn H. Johnson	J.D., University of Maryland, Baltimore	Professor, Forensic Studies	Full-time	FSCOR 601, FSCOR 604, FSCOR 606, FSCOR 702
Sue A. Schenning	J.D., University of Baltimore	Associate Professor, Forensic Studies	Full-time	FSCOR 601, FSCOR 604, FSCOR 606, FSCOR 702, FSLAW 668
Joh "Jay" Tobin	Ph.D., University of Maryland, Baltimore	Associate Professor, Forensic Science	Full-time	FSCI 500
Thomas Byrd	J.D., Loyola University of Chicago School of Law; M.S., Illinois Institute of Technology	Adjunct Professor, Cyber Forensics	Adjunct	FSAAC 620
Emmet Davitt	J.D., University of Maryland, Baltimore	Adjunct Professor, Forensic Studies	Adjunct	FSCOR 601, FSCOR 604, FSLAW 668
John Grimes	M.S., Stevenson University	Adjunct Instructor, Forensic Studies	Adjunct	FSINV 600
Barry Grzechiwiak	M.S., Stevenson University	Adjunct Instructor, Forensic Studies	Adjunct	FSINV 600
Barbara Jung	J.D., University of Baltimore	Adjunct Professor, Forensic Studies	Adjunct	FSCOR 604
Pamela Kessler	J.D., University of Baltimore	Adjunct Professor, Forensic Studies	Adjunct	FSCOR 606
Colin May	M.S., Stevenson University	Adjunct Instructor, Forensic Studies	Adjunct	FSINV 605
Gerald Maye	MPPM, Birmingham Southern College	Adjunct Instructor, Forensic Studies	Adjunct	FSAAC 620
Michael Robinson	M.S. University of Maryland University College M.S., Stevenson University	Adjunct Professor, Cyber Forensics and Forensic Studies	Adjunct	FSAAC 620
Richard West	J.D., Northwestern University	Adjunct Professor, Forensic Studies	Adjunct	FSCOR 601, FSCOR 604, FSLAW 662
Joyce Zerhusen	M.A., University of Baltimore	Adjunct Professor, Forensic Studies	Adjunct	FSCOR 606, FSLAW 602

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.

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 Brown 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 the proposed program:

Academic Search Complete – Scholarly and popular articles on a variety of subjects

ACM Digital Library – Largest collection of full-text writings on computing and information technology available

Business Source Complete – Scholarly journals, business magazines, trade publications, and full-text access to Harvard Business Journal

Criminal Justice Abstracts with Full Text – Covers over 625 journals and magazines in the field of criminal justice and related fields

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.

FORENSICnetBASE – Full text e-books in areas of forensics

LexisNexis Academic – Full text international coverage of news, business, and legal publications

ScienceDirect College Edition – Scholarly full-text journals in forensic sciences and computer science and ebooks in forensics and criminal justice

The library has been strongly supporting the graduate forensics degrees for many years both on-site and online. Books, periodicals, electronic materials, and online databases in these disciplines have been regularly acquired and are rapidly replaced or updated as these fields develop. The library also has received a generous donation of forensic books from the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners. Given the excellent base of materials in the library's existing collection in this area, supporting the proposed master's program does not require additional resources.

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.

The University anticipates little or no impact on the use of existing facilities and equipment to provide this online program. Courses will not require additional classroom space or office space for faculty/staff.

The University already possesses the Blackboard course management system hardware and software to design and implement these 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 the online dimension. These resources include the latest versions of the Blackboard platform, tech 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 three 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 associate with distance learning.

While the proposed program will be offered primarily 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 and Table 2: Expenditures. Finance data 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					
2. Tuition/Fee Revenue (c + g below)	\$325,500	\$380,625	\$427,250	\$476,625	\$552,000
a. Number of F/T Students*					
b. Annual Tuition/Fee Rate					
c. Total F/T Revenue (a x b)					

d. Number of P/T Students	31	35	38	41	46
e. Credit Hour Rate	\$700	\$725	\$750	\$775	\$800
f. Annual Credit Hour Rate**	15	15	15	15	15
g. Total P/T Revenue (d x e x f)	\$325,500	\$380,625	\$427,250	\$476,625	\$552,000
3. Grants, contracts & Other External Sources					
4. Other Sources					
TOTAL (Add 1 - 4)	\$325,500	\$380,625	\$427,250	\$476,625	\$552,000

Expenditure Categories	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
1. Faculty (b + c below)	\$128,000	\$158,208	\$162,957	\$195,820	\$230,509
a. # FTE	1.25	1.5	1.5	1.75	2.0
b. Total Salary	\$100,000	\$123,600	\$127,310	\$152,985	\$180,085
c. Total Benefits	\$28,000	\$34,608	\$35,647	\$42,835	\$50,424
2.. Admin. Staff (b + c below)	\$8,000	\$8,240	\$8,486	\$8,742	\$9,005
a. # FTE	.125	.125	.125	.125	.125
b. Total Salary	\$6,250	\$6,438	\$6,630	\$6,830	\$7,035
c. Total Benefits	\$1,750	\$1,802	\$1,856	\$1,912	\$1,970
3. Support Staff (b + c below)	\$6,400	\$6,592	\$6,790	\$6,995	\$7,203
a. #FTE	.125	.125	.125	.125	.125
b. Total Salary	\$5,000	\$5,150	\$5,305	\$5,465	\$5,628
c. Total Benefits	\$1,400	\$1,442	\$1,485	\$1,530	\$1,575
4. Equipment (Computer hardware and software)	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
5. Library					
6. New or Renovated Space					
7. Other Expenses	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURES (Add 1 - 7)	\$145,900	\$176,540	\$181,733	\$215,057	\$250,217

2. *Provide a narrative rationale 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

Reallocated Funds

Analyze the overall impact that the reallocation will have on the institution, particularly on existing programs and organizational units.

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

Tuition and Fee Revenue

Describe the rationale for the enrollment projections used to calculate tuition and fee revenue.

Tuition makes up most of the revenue that will be generated for the support of the program. The enrollment projection in Year 1 is based upon the actual number of students currently enrolled in the Master of Science in Forensic Studies Investigations Track, a number that is expected to grow each year thereafter. 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. The assumption in the tuition revenue projection is that every student will enroll for 15 credits over the course of one year.

Grants and Contracts

Provide detailed information on the sources of the funding. Attach copies of documentation supporting the funding. Also, describe alternative methods of continuing to finance the program after the outside funds cease to be available.

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

Other Sources

Provide detailed information on the sources of the funding, including supporting documentation.

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

Total Year

Additional explanation or comments as needed.

No additional explanations or comments are included.

TABLE 2: EXPENDITURES – NARRATIVE

Faculty

Expenditures were carefully constructed to reflect the needs of the proposed degree. Courses will be taught by full-time faculty and adjuncts who are professionals in their respective fields. An average annual salary of \$80,000 per FTE was used in Year 1 and increased by 3% in subsequent years. The FTE was increased by .25 each in Years 2, 4, and 5 to support the anticipated growth in enrollment. Benefits were calculated at 28%.

Administrative and Support Staff

A shared position at the administrative level, devoting 12.5% of his to the program, has been allocated. Similarly, support staff will be shared with other faculty members and administrators; this budget assumes a one-eighth time equivalency devoted to the graduate degree. Salaries have been increased by 3% per year and benefits were calculated at 28%.

Equipment

Computer equipment and software have been estimated at \$2,500 per year.

Library

No new library resources will be needed for this degree.

Other

Other expenses include course development and redevelopment costs at \$1,000 per year.

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 that 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 percentage of under-represented minority students in the school's graduate programs has remained consistently above 40% since 2011 (IPEDS data for Stevenson graduate programs). 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 that 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 that 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).

In December 2016, GPS held its annual Forensic Symposium that focused on diversity and inclusion attended by both current graduate students and alumni of the programs. According to Nelson Santos of the Drug Enforcement Agency, one of several speakers, forensics used to be a male-dominated profession; however, in recent years, organizations have begun to embrace and support diversity in the workplace. All speakers agreed the proper avenue to address these challenges is through education. Through education and training, employees have the greatest potential to understand that diversity and inclusion practices enhance the performance of an organization. Speakers concluded that diversity in the forensics workplace cannot be forced - it requires education.

Goal 3 of the Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education in to "Ensure equal opportunity for Maryland's diverse citizenry." The proposed program is consistent with and promotes this plan and the School's commitment to inclusion and diversity among its student, faculty and staff.

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 instructional 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 are assessed using a standards-aligned rubric during the capstone course of the program.

Student course evaluations routinely are 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. The feedback from these assessments is used by faculty and program coordinators/department chairs/associate deans to review and redesign programs to better meet the needs of the students.