

Collaborative Project to Deliver Risk Management and Insurance Course

**David D. Wood
Appalachian State University**

This project involves the investigation, development and implementation of collaboratively delivering the Principles of Risk Management and Insurance course from Appalachian State University to the community college system. The department of Finance, Banking and Insurance at Appalachian has scheduled three sections of this course to be taught fall semester of 2000. Appalachian is the only university in the UNC system to offer a major in Risk & Insurance and is home to the Brantley Risk and Insurance Center, which is designed to facilitate interaction between higher education and the risk management profession and insurance industry. Many community colleges have the principles course in their catalog but have difficulty offering the course due to the lack of qualified faculty. Where the course is offered the content and rigor may not be consistent with that expected by major universities.

The expected outcome of this project will be a university course delivered to the community college system. This project will also provide a framework for other collaborative courses within ASU's Walker College of Business and the community college system. Successful completion of this project will also serve as a model for making university resources available to the community college system. The grant request for this project is \$22,600.

Investigation

The first step in the investigation process will be to determine the current status of the Principles of Risk Management and Insurance course throughout the community college system. Many community colleges offer this course as one of their primary business offerings. Other colleges offer this course or a similar one as an extension type of course for individuals seeking to become licensed to sell insurance.

This project will assess the current status of course offerings and assess the interest of the course being offered where it is currently not offered. The project will also assess the feasibility of the collaborative effort satisfying the licensing course needs of the community colleges.

The investigation phase will also assess the availability of technology and the feasibility of different delivery methods using that technology. Three methods of delivery initially present themselves. First is a distance learning format through video projection and interaction at remote sites. Appalachian State and the community colleges are set up for this type of class delivery through the North Carolina Information Highway. The availability of these facilities and scheduling will have to be investigated. The second possible delivery method will be the use of the Internet to facilitate the traditional course offering. Students would participate in the course during the traditional semester. Students would complete course assignments and interact with the instructor online. Exams could be given either online or monitored by someone at satellite locations. The third possible option would involve a stand alone Internet based course that students could complete at their own pace and time schedule. This option would allow the flexibility to deviate from the university calendar.

The appropriate delivery method will be largely dependent upon the information revealed in the investigation phase of the project. Obviously, a distance learning format will not work if facilities are not available. The course also must be delivered in a way that it meets the needs of the community college.

As mentioned above, some of the courses currently provided by the community colleges are for licensing purposes. The licensing course may or may not be a feasible venue for the collaborative project. The course at Appalachian is a semester long (3 hour) course and is approved by the North Carolina Department of Insurance to satisfy a regulatory requirement of forty classroom hours of instruction prior to sitting for the licensing exam. However, many of the community college courses are weekend based and can be completed in as little as one month. But, the content of the ASU course might be reformatted to fit into such community college courses, if desired by the community college.

Development

Once the appropriate delivery method is determined the course content must be formatted for delivery by the selected method. The existing course content will serve as the framework for the new course; however, the delivery method will require specific modification to the course.

Community colleges will participate in determining the best way in which the course can be coordinated into their schedules. Our goal will be that the delivery method will allow the participation of all of those colleges who wish to do so. The development of the course delivery will be a collaborative effort with the participating community colleges to assure that their needs are met.

The development phase will also consider how to best promote the course on the community college campuses. The success of this project will depend largely upon students at the community colleges registering to take the course. Promotional materials will be developed for the community colleges to disseminate among their student populations.

Implementation

The implementation of the project will be conducted by bringing the community college representatives responsible for coordinating the effort at their respect schools to the Appalachian campus. This face-to-face meeting will allow a detailed explanation and demonstration of the delivery method. Participants will be able to gain a full understanding of the delivery method and gain the ability to resolve any conflicts, which may present themselves once course delivery begins.

The on-campus seminar will also give community college educators the opportunity to provide focus group and individual assessments of the course. The participation of the community college educators will be key in implementing and facilitating the delivery of the course.

Project Personnel

Dr. David Wood will direct the project. Dr. Wood is the Joseph F. Freeman Distinguished Professor of Insurance in Appalachian State University's Walker College of Business. Dr. Wood is familiar with web based instruction and is currently implementing the WebCT course shell in his Risk Management (senior level) course.

Kelly Greene will provide administrative support for the project. Ms. Greene holds a Master of Education degree and currently holds a position in the Brantley Risk and Insurance Center at Appalachian. Her position is currently under consideration for EPA status. Her new position will hold the title of Assistant Director of the Brantley Risk and Insurance Center. Ms. Greene has experience teaching and advising in North Carolina community colleges and will coordinate communications with specific individuals within the community college system who are vital to this effort. She will also be involved in the development of materials and coordinating the seminar arrangements on the Appalachian campus.

Dr. Karen Hamilton will also participate in this project as an instructional development expert. Dr. Hamilton will work with Dr. Wood and Ms. Greene in the development and implementation phases of the project. Dr. Hamilton will serve as a consultant, but she has verbally accepted the position of Director of the Brantley Risk and Insurance Center at Appalachian beginning in August 2000. Dr. Hamilton is uniquely qualified to participate in this project because of her knowledge of insurance and traditional and distance education. She holds a Ph.D. in Risk Management and Insurance from Florida State University and a master's degree in course design and development. She has experience in course development for non-traditional students employed by the insurance industry.

Budget

Project Director stipend	\$7,500
Administrative Support	1,500
Employee Benefits (at 18%)	1,350
Consultant	5,000
Travel	2,000
Postage and Printing	750
On-campus seminar (room & board)	<u>4,500</u>
	Total
	\$22,600

Timetable

Initial contacts with community colleges	early April
Investigation phase	May 1 - May 19
Development phase	May 22 - June 9
Implementation phase & seminar	June 12 - late June