Executive Summary for Students

In the fall of 2015, Northwest University Salem Campus will alter our model of delivering education.

To accelerate degree completion, increase flexibility to add degrees, and make it easier for students to supplement live classes with online classes when needed, we will offer courses in a 7-week format beginning in the 2015-16 academic year. We will continue to operate on a semester schedule; each semester will have two 7-week sessions.

Further, each class will meet only once each week, on Tuesdays or Thursdays. We will not offer classes on Mondays.

One result of this change is that students will be more personally responsible for achieving course learning objectives through prescribed learning activities outside of class. For example, when a student arrives in class the first day, he or she will have prepared in several ways:

- Completed reading certain chapters in a textbook
- Written in response to questions or reflective prompts provided in the syllabus
- Watched an online video, and/or
- Become ready to discuss his or her learning to that point, on the first day of class

Student success in this transition will be supported in several ways, including thorough orientation for both new and returning students, opportunities for students to prepare on campus for each session, and ongoing evaluation and adjustment of academic services.

More Details Below:

- Advantages to the 7-week Model
- Ways We Are Supporting Students’ Adjustment
- Example Calendar
- Example Fall Class Schedule for Session A and Session B

Advantages to Our New 7-week Model

- **Students can enroll full time but only commute to campus twice each week.**
- **Accelerated degree progress:** Students who can only attend class at night can potentially enroll in more courses. Students with other time restrictions will have similar options, allowing them to earn more credits in a semester.
- **Increased student responsibility for learning:** Research shows that developing confidence in one’s academic ability impacts one’s likelihood of achieving academic goals. Responsibility coupled with success will build academic confidence.
• **Flexibility for students:** If a student needs to take a course that we cannot offer live, the student will be able to take it online. All online courses are in the 7-week format; with live classes on the same schedule, the student will not have to juggle two different formats.

• **Streamlined curriculum assures quality:** The University can provide consistent course content and outcomes regardless of where or how the course is delivered (in Salem, in Sacramento, in Idaho, online) because we will all follow the same syllabus.

• **Faculty retain ability to structure class meetings:** Although the syllabus (learning objectives, assignments, due dates, texts, etc.) is pre-prepared, faculty have freedom to emphasize in the class meetings the topics they believe are most important. Faculty teaching methods also remain the faculty member’s decision.

**Ways We Are Supporting Students’ Adjustment**

Change on the horizon tends to raise questions, concerns, and sometimes even fears. We have a plan in place to support students as we make this transition, so that students will continue – and even improve! – their academic success. Below are some potential concerns about student adjustment and the specific ways we are addressing them.

**Concern #1:** Students will need to adapt to carrying greater responsibility for their learning.

**Resources & Support:**

A. **Orientation for continuing students:** Returning students will have orientation sessions this spring and another in August. Expectations and time commitments will be clearly explained.

B. **Orientation for families:** We will offer parent/family orientation again this summer so families and support networks will understand what we expect of students.

C. **Summer pre-session study times:** We will have designated learning times in the week before Fall class meetings begin so students can prepare for class on campus, with academic support.

D. **Weekly on-campus study time throughout the session:** We will offer at least one designated time each week when students are encouraged to engage in their learning activities on campus. Debbie will usually be present to answer questions and facilitate learning.

E. **Orientation for new students:** Orientation for new students will be adapted appropriately, and will occur earlier in the summer. Expectations and time commitments will be clearly explained.

F. **Ongoing evaluation and adjustment of academic support:** Debbie will monitor student performance and solicit feedback throughout the year of transition to identify specific challenges and strategies for overcoming them.

**Concern #2:** Students need to turn in assignments at the first class session.

**Resources & Support:**

A. **Spring and summer preparation for returning students:**
   a. We will conduct orientation meetings in April to help students prepare for fall classes.
   b. We will conduct a returning student orientation during an evening in early August to make sure continuing students remember the changes and prepare properly.
   c. We will communicate with students throughout the summer regarding their responsibility for their learning.
Students will be reminded that they must have their textbooks in hand and download their syllabi at least one week before class meetings begin.

B. Student preparation week:
   a. In the week prior to Session A, there will be several designated times for students to come to campus to prepare for class meetings. Assistance and support will be available.
   b. Between Session A and Session B, there will be a week for students to work on their classes for the next session. No classes will meet so students have the entire week to prepare for the first meeting of Session B.

Concern #3: Absences and late work will quickly be detrimental to the student.

Resources & Support:

A. Policy development: We will develop attendance policies in consultation with Kirkland professionals who are well-versed in this model. We will discuss this in our March Q & A meetings and other orientation meetings.

B. Clear communication: We will clearly communicate all policies with students beginning this spring and provide reminders through the summer.

Concern #4: Our courses include a lot of writing. Students need time and assistance to develop their writing skills.

Resources & Support:

A. Writing Center access: All students have free access to the Writing Center in Kirkland via the internet. We will continue to remind students how to take advantage of this opportunity.

Concern #5: In spring semester, there are two Monday holidays. We will either miss two of the 7 class meetings (not an option) or have to come in on the holiday or make it up on a Saturday.

Resources & Support:

A. Class meetings on Tuesdays and Thursdays: We will offer classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays only. This eliminates the Monday holiday conflict.

B. Thanksgiving: We will make arrangements to accommodate Thanksgiving.

Concern #6: What about spiritual formation and students’ sense of belonging in our campus community? We need to protect that emphasis; it’s part of what people love about the Salem Campus.

Resources & Support:

A. Spiritual formation is central to who we are as Northwest University and as the Salem Campus. Our commitment to spiritual growth remains strong throughout all locations and levels of the institution. Therefore,
   a. Chapel: We will continue to have chapel at least once each week.
b. **Additional spiritual formation**: We will continue to offer experiences, interactions, and times of focus that to provide opportunities for students to further grow in their relationships with Christ.

c. **The classroom experience**: The classroom will continue to be a crucial place for students to develop a biblical worldview and fruit of the Spirit. Faculty receive ongoing coaching on this element of teaching.

B. **Sense of belonging is critical for student success. Therefore,**

a. **New student orientation**: Orientation for new students will continue to be designed as a key in developing a sense of belonging immediately.

b. **Student life events**: We will continue to provide events that foster student relationships with peers and faculty.

c. **The classroom experience**: The classroom will continue to be a crucial place where students need to feel a sense of belonging. Faculty receive ongoing coaching on this element of teaching.

**Sample Class Schedule**

*All classes and times are still tentative.*

**FALL 2015 – Session A**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:30 am-1:15 pm</td>
<td>American Religious History</td>
<td>Prophetic Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 am-11:30 am</td>
<td>Academic Success</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30 pm-2:45 pm</td>
<td>Chapel</td>
<td>Study Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00 pm-5:45 pm</td>
<td>Ministry Leadership</td>
<td>Found of Coll Writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>6:45 pm-9:30 pm</td>
<td>Christian Thought</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Pastoral Care &amp; Counseling</td>
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**FALL 2015 – Session B**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:30 am-1:15 pm</td>
<td>Biblical Interpretation</td>
<td>Identity &amp; Vocation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theology elective</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 pm-2:45 pm</td>
<td>Chapel</td>
<td>Study Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00 pm-5:45 pm</td>
<td>Old Testament History &amp; Lit</td>
<td>Comp I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:45 pm-9:30 pm</td>
<td>Speech</td>
<td>Preaching I</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Theology of Ministry Essentials</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
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Sample Calendar: Fall 2015

All dates are still tentative. Illustration below.

Early August        Returning Student Orientation
Week of August 17   New Student Orientation
August 24-28        Student Preparation Week
Sept 1              Fall 2015 Session A BEGINS; classes meet once each week, on Tues or Thurs
October 15          Fall 2015 Session A ENDS
October 19-23       Student Preparation Week
October 27          Fall 2015 Session B BEGINS; classes meet once each week, on Tues or Thurs
December 10         Fall 2015 Session B ENDS

Students are off until the Student Preparation Week, the first week in January