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# Memorandum of Understanding

For Collaboration in the Development, Launch, and Support of an  
Accelerated Online Program (AOP)

between  
UNM Online

and

[Name of Department / Program]

Name of AOP: [ Name ]

AOP Launch: [Semester Year]

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## PURPOSE

This Memorandum of Understanding is an agreement between UNM Online, [Department or Program], and [College] in support of an [degree and field].

## BACKGROUND & RATIONALE

Online delivery can extend the reach of UNM programs making it possible for students without access to traditional instructional formats to benefit from a high-quality education. UNM Online is pleased to advance the institution's online strategies through Accelerated Online Programs.

UNM's Accelerated Online Programs (AOPs) began in Fall 2016 as an experiment to better attract and serve students who were not already being served by the institution: working adults with time and place constraints that prevented them from pursuing their degrees in traditional formats. Students admitted into an AOP receive a specialized tuition rate on AOP classes. Originally marketed as "Managed Online Programs" the name was changed to "Accelerated Online Programs" in January 2020 to better support digital marketing efforts.

Accelerated Online Programs are designed around an 8-week course carousel with five (5) starts per year. These attract the adult learner who is drawn to the institution's strong brand recognition and academic reputation but is unable to attend UNM without this alternative pathway. Because students in these programs often have time zone differences and other scheduling constraints, AOP courses are primarily designed for asynchronous delivery, with no required meeting times. Through asynchronous online education, the adult learner benefits from the flexibility of choosing when and where learning occurs. All AOP courses are reviewed for quality using a rubric developed by UNM faculty that is based on Quality Matters.

Because Accelerated Online Programs are intended to create new access to UNM, departments should plan on developing their AOPs into self-supporting and stand-alone course offerings and programs by the end of three years. Launch of an Accelerated Online Program must not diminish the face-to-face options available to traditional students and should avoid shifting existing online students to an 8-week format. Departments are expected to maintain rich campus-based programs for their traditional students.

## SEED FUNDING

In order to develop and launch a new AOP, departments may choose to receive a seed funding loan from UNM Online. The seed funding formula is based on calculating \$1,000 per faculty member either developing a new course or converting an existing online course to an 8-week format. Funding is awarded for each course after it passes an AOP quality review. Additional funding may be considered at the department's request. Seed funding is dependent on meeting deliverable timelines. Should the academic unit choose to accept seed funding, the agreed-to sum and deliverables will be itemized in a Course Addendum.

Seed funding is a loan. Terms of the loan repayment (typically two years) will be agreed to under a separate agreement between UNM Online, Fiscal Shared Services, and the academic department. If the milestones are not met by their deliverable dates, the loan will become due, with funds to be recouped by the Provost's Office from the academic unit's I & G funds.

## TUITION SHARING

Once deliverable timelines are met, and UNM Online has recouped seed funding, the AOP tuition sharing agreement will route total net tuition as follows,

- 65% to the academic unit,
- 5% to UNM Online,
- 5% to Digital Learning at the Center for Teaching and Learning,
- 17.5% to the central tuition pool, and
- 7.5% to the Provost's Office.

Tuition revenue distribution will occur at the end of each Fall, Spring, and Summer semester in which the revenue is earned.

## ACADEMIC UNIT RESPONSIBILITIES

By accepting the terms of the MOU, the academic unit agrees to:

- **PROTECT TRADITIONAL OFFERINGS AND ENROLLMENTS:** Online courses, and particularly those that are offered at a rapid pace, have been disproportionately difficult for freshmen and sophomores. In addition, eight-week courses may not be appropriate for graduate or advanced undergraduate courses that involve research or conceptually challenging literatures that require extra time for students to take in. Launch and continuation of an AOP must not decrease a department's ability to offer its usual line-up of face-to-face and/or 16-week format classes. Departments should consider their available instructional resources before initiating an AOP and must ensure there are no negative consequences for existing curricula. The initiating program, department, or school should document the baseline metrics for the existing degree program at time of MOU proposal, including: the numbers of online sections, hybrid sections, and face-to-face sections; the number of regular and TPT faculty employed; the enrollments per section (with modality), the rates of D/F and Withdraw for at least three sections at different levels of the degree program, and the population of students being served by existing programs and the proposed AOP. This documentation should be signed by the relevant dean and attached to the MOU.
- **LAUNCH** the AOP [Semester Year].

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- **DEVELOP AND APPROVE AN AOP MOU COURSE ADDENDUM:** The academic unit will collaborate with UNM Online to develop and agree to an AOP MOU Course Addendum that is signed by the academic unit, the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), and UNM Online. The Course Addendum outlines deliverables and timelines with consideration given to CTL’s instructional designer capacity and faculty availability. Coordination for the AOP’s launch begins once the Course Addendum is signed.
  - **OFFER MAJOR COURSES:** All major courses required for the AOP, (typically 36 credit hours for undergraduate and 30 credit hours for graduate), will be offered per the Course Addendum’s timeline. The Academic Unit agrees to notify UNM Online of changes to the suite of course offerings. UNM Online is notified at least one full semester prior to implementing AOP curriculum changes by emailing [aop@unm.edu](mailto:aop@unm.edu).
  - **PROVIDE CONSISTENCY:** Guarantee an uninterrupted student experience by offering AOP courses on a repeating 8-week course carousel optimized for up to 5 annual starts.
  - **HIRE AND ASSIGN FACULTY:** The academic unit agrees to commit regular faculty resources to fulfill the terms of the Course Addendum. Ideally, there should be no increase to the existing part-time instructor (PTI) budget. In the short term, if PTI funds are to be requested from the unit’s College/School, the unit should submit a budget reflecting these additional instructional costs caused by operating the AOP, and a timeline for drawing it down, ideally by the time of the third-year review. In the long term, the costs of instruction for an AOP, including both PTI and regular faculty-taught offerings, should be charged by labor allocation to the department’s AOP index. The proportion of AOP courses taught by regular faculty should equal the proportion of the unit’s face-to-face courses taught by regular faculty prior to creation of the AOP. Units will need to document these ratios for the third-year report. Beyond the initial 3-year period, operation of the AOP should be cost neutral with respect to College- or School-sourced PTI funding.
  - **MANAGE EXPECTATIONS OF PARTICIPATING FACULTY MEMBERS:** The academic unit agrees to communicate the expectations to the faculty members teaching AOP courses and the faculty members developing AOP courses. A UNM Online [AOP Deliverables document](#) is available online as part of the [UNM Online Handbook](#).
  - **ENSURE BEST PRACTICES:** The academic unit agrees to appoint faculty to develop and teach AOP courses. Typically, the faculty member developing an AOP course also teaches it although this is not required. It is possible for one person to do the course development while another is the instructor of record.
    - For each AOP faculty member assigned to develop an AOP course, it is a best practice to start preparations no fewer than 3 months before instruction begins. The process includes completion of a 6-week workshop, a course review, and AOP certification. If a stipend is requested for course development, it is awarded as each course is AOP-certified.
    - **WORKSHOP:** Each faculty member assigned to build an AOP course is required to complete the [Evidence Based Practices for Teaching Online](#) (EBPTO) workshop developed and administered by the Center for Digital Learning. Instructors will receive a copy of AOP Deliverables from the UNM Online AOP Quality Reviewer. EBPTO is not required if, 1) the faculty member assigned to develop an AOP course has completed a [Golden Paw](#) Review for the same course, or 2) a faculty member successfully completed EBPTO in or after Fall 2019.
    - **COURSE DEVELOPMENT:** The academic unit assures that each AOP course is successfully developed according to the deliverables and timeline outlined in the Course Addendum.

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The academic unit assures that each faculty member selected to develop an AOP course works with an [instructional designer](#) assigned by the Center for Teaching and Learning, and develop each AOP course to the “accomplished” standards of the [Online Course Standards Rubric](#).

- AOP CERTIFICATION: The academic unit assures each AOP course successfully passes an AOP Quality Review according to the deliverables and timelines outlined in the Course Addendum.
- SCHEDULE COURSES AND MONITOR ENROLLMENT: AOPs are designed for a regular cadence of course offerings that allow students to progress toward graduation on a predictable timeline. For the first three years of program development only, Academic Affairs will not enforce enrollment minima, and the expectation is that courses will be delivered with a regularity that supports timely academic progress for enrolled students.
- REPORT AOP FINANCES TO COLLEGE/SCHOOL AND ACADEMIC AFFAIRS ANNUALLY
  - Academic Affairs will provide quarterly financial reports to your department and the college dean showing AOP revenues and expenditures. These reports should reflect instructional costs being charged to AOP indexes, and show whether AOP revenues are sufficient to cover cost of instruction. Colleges may request additional information on course scheduling and instructors assigned to teach AOP courses to cross-reference with financial reports. Report annually on how AOP revenue-share monies are spent;
  - College/School Deans will review these reports annually and forward to Academic Affairs.
- PARTICIPATE IN A THIRD-YEAR REVIEW after completion of 15 "start" cycles (August of the 4<sup>th</sup> year for AOPs beginning in the first half of a fall semester) and each three years thereafter. The third-year review will refer to and provide comparisons relative to the baseline documentation established with signature of the relevant dean at time of AOP MOU initiation. The third-year review will demonstrate:
  - course carousel delivery;
  - absence of adverse impact on F2F and other 16-week course offerings, compared to baseline data from the years prior to AOP implementation;
  - unit's ability to sustainably deliver stand-alone AOP sections not-co-scheduled with non-AOP sections. AOP courses are restricted to AOP students, and only AOP students are permitted to register for sections scheduled as an AOP;
  - three-year comparative enrollment information on AOP and regular course offerings;
  - three-year comparative D/F/Withdraw and retention data for AOP v. conventional course offerings, and numbers of students majoring in conventional and AOP programs;
  - analysis of cost of delivery of the AOP including instruction, advisement, and other program costs v. revenue generated. Any programs showing a deficit at year three should provide a plan of action and timeline to address the deficit;

College Deans will review third-year reports, followed by Academic Affairs, either of which may require revisions to AOP programs and planned department actions, or withdraw AOP approval.

## UNM ONLINE RESPONSIBILITIES

UNM Online will:

- ACQUIRE AOP PROGRAM CODE: UNM Online will initiate the request for a new AOP program code or request an amendment to an existing AOP program code. This step is required,

- for a student to declare an AOP major,
- for the Bursar's Office to assess AOP tuition and fees,
- to schedule AOP courses,
- to track AOP data, and
- to measure AOP productivity.
- SHARE AOP OUTCOMES and program analytics with the academic unit.
- FACILITATE AOP ADMISSION and enrollment coaching.
- ACT AS LIAISON between Admissions, academic advisement at large, and the academic unit.
- COORDINATE efforts for student recruiting and leads management.
- PROVIDE AOP students with concierge retention and student support services.
- FACILITATE HOLISTIC COURSE CAROUSEL PLANNING.
- FACILITATE FINALIZING THE COURSE ADDENDUM.
- LEAD AOP QUALITY REVEIWS: This step includes generating an AOP Timeline and Milestones document customized for each faculty course designer.
- FACILITATE COURSE SCHEDULE COORDINATION.
- MONITOR adherence to the terms of the Course Addendum, AOP Timeline and Milestones document, and AOP Quality Review, and will communicate matters of non-compliance to the academic unit's leadership.
- MANAGE AOP's WEB PRESENCE on the UNM Online website at [online.unm.edu](https://online.unm.edu).
- COORDINATE DIGITAL MARKETING efforts with the academic unit, University Communication and Marketing, external vendors, and other stakeholders, including some annual investment in marketing and promotion activities.
- COLLABORATE with the department to develop a community outreach and recruitment plan for the planned new student population.
- FACILITATE COMPLIANCE with state and federal distance education requirements.

## PRIMARY CONTACT

The academic unit and UNM Online each agree to provide a primary point of contact for AOP communication, coordination, and approvals.

- Primary Contact at UNM Online is Eva Padilla, Program Planning Officer, [aop@unm.edu](mailto:aop@unm.edu).
  - Primary Contact at the academic unit is:
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## INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

A faculty member who participates in the development of online courses subject to this MOU shall continue to hold rights to the intellectual content of such online courses and will share ownership of the online course with the academic unit. All participating faculty members shall be required to separately grant a royalty-free, perpetual, worldwide license to UNM to use the online content, and all associated intellectual property rights therein, to create and offer online courses to enrolled UNM students, through any platform of UNM's choosing. UNM shall retain all tuition revenue and fees generated from its licensing activities, and will share it with the academic unit, in accordance with the terms of this MOU.

## DURATION AND REVIEW

UNM Online and academic units shall together work in good faith to meet the milestones laid out above. If the academic unit is awarded seed funding and the team's best efforts do not result in good progress against milestones, funding may be withdrawn for investment in programs that are better positioned to move forward. Progress toward enrollment goals of the AOP and its ability to operate as a self-sufficient and separate program from campus offerings will be formally reviewed every three years by the department, UNM Online, and Academic Affairs. UNM Online reserves the right to renegotiate the terms of the MOU.

## ADDENDUM

UNM Online will supplement this agreement with a Course Addendum.

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between  
UNM Online  
and  
[Department]

Name of AOP: [Degree and field]

AOP Launch: [Semester Year]

The AOP Memorandum of Understanding is entered into by:

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Signature of UNM Academic Unit Chair

Date

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Print Name and Title

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Signature of UNM College or School Dean

Date

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Print Name and Title

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UNM Online

Elisha Allen, Director of Online Strategies and Academic Technology

Date

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UNM Office of the Provost

Nicole Dopson, Chief Financial Officer

Date

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UNM Office of the Provost

Pamela Cheek, Associate Provost for Student Success

Date