

LUOMA Action Project Executive Summary – July 2008

Online Student Services Evaluation and Implementation Strategies

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Problem Statement: With the expansion of on-line/distance education learning, the provision of on-line services and co-curricular experiences designed to meet the needs of this student population is essential. While many campuses have undertaken initial steps within this area, a comprehensive look at the type and depth of on-line services, technology enhancements required to support advancement and an outline of cohesive implementation strategies are needed to dramatically raise the level of on-line service.

Review: Existing online services available through the MSU, Mankato website were reviewed and a SWOT analysis was conducted.

Research: Best practices online were explored with focus on Western Cooperative for Education Telecommunications' Guide to Developing Online Student Services as well as review of several online university websites.

Recommendations: Ways for MSU, Mankato, to improve their online student services were suggested in the following areas:

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| ● Marketing | ● Health Services |
| ● Recruiting | ● Tutoring |
| ● Admissions | ● Academic Support |
| ● Registration | ● Counseling/Advising |
| ● Student Activities | |

Overarching emphasis: Consider how MSU-Mankato wants to position itself in the market for online learners.

Summary: As Minnesota State University, Mankato, develops its Strategic Priority 3 to establish a Distance Learning plan, the impact on e-services must be considered. The direction of distance learning policies and procedures will greatly impact how e-services are accessed by online learners. Throughout this project the college received practical feedback and ideas to improve their website for e-services. As MSU, Mankato, works to grow their online student population, they will need to continue to improve access to their online services. Specific suggestions were provided for growth and improvements in a number of services for online students. Some suggestions have already been implemented while others will take additional college planning and coordination.