

## Career and Personal Education (CPE): Overview of Strategy

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### Introduction

Career and Personal Education (CPE) is one of the six pillars of Flexible Learning, the UBC strategy developed in response to the multiple external forces shaping higher education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. CPE represents an important opportunity for the University to strengthen its contributions to learners, society and industry, helping UBC fulfil its academic mission and its public mandate. Success will be measured through effective program development, expanded Faculty capacity for investment, and enhanced UBC market perception. This is an exciting period of growth and transition for UBC.

UBC has a long tradition of supporting lifelong learning both in the Faculties and in Continuing Studies, and is recognized among peer institutions in North America for innovation and excellence. UBC is committed to expanding its capacity to serve non-traditional students through its Vancouver and Okanagan campuses. CPE at UBC will be led by Associate-Provost Academic Innovation, Dr. Hugh Brock. He will work closely with units engaged in CPE activities to shape the overarching strategy, consolidate cross-campus organizational support and build institutional capabilities for sustained success.

### Rationale for a new approach in CPE at UBC

Amidst many far-reaching changes impacting universities, there is growing demand in society, industry and government for continuing education that is relevant, modular, flexible, and high quality. UBC alumni identify professional development and personal growth as two primary motivators of greater engagement with the University.

There is a prominent focus on CPE at most leading institutions in the US. Regionally, local providers, including SFU, BCIT, the University of Victoria and Royal Roads University, offer well established CPE programs. At UBC, CPE has not to date been recognized as integral to institutional excellence. In the credit program sphere, UBC has limited penetration in CPE markets. In the non-credit sphere, activity is dispersed across the Faculties and Continuing Studies.

Within the institution, it needs to be recognized that CPE learners have different requirements in view of their focus on applied skills acquisition, as well as their need for accessibility and learning 'efficiency'. Market agility and sustainable economics are imperative as these programs are largely not government funded. Greater market coherence and integration of activities are also requisites.

### CPE as part of UBC's core mission

As a public institution, UBC has a mandate to serve a broad spectrum of learners, to enhance accessibility and to foster community engagement. CPE should be a significant contributor to these commitments. CPE supports the University's symbiotic relationship with industry and government and offers scope for strategic reinvestment in UBC areas of excellence. Most importantly, CPE will also serve as an incubator for innovation in pedagogy, learning delivery, support systems and student services, and this experience could in time yield broader benefit across the University.

### Overarching principles

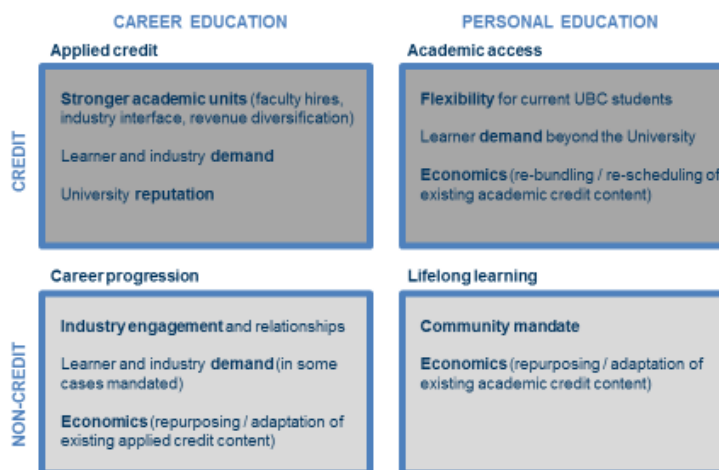
Extensive consultation and collaboration with UBC Deans, faculty members and continuing educators, together with research on US peer institutions has identified principles for CPE at UBC:

- Highest levels of academic integrity, quality and professionalism;
- Faculty autonomy in program development, curriculum design and faculty management;
- Faculty content 'ownership' in areas of domain expertise;
- Programming in areas of sustained (often inter-disciplinary) advantage;
- Market coherence, both in programming and messaging;
- Consolidated support to complement Faculty capability and capacity in both Vancouver and Okanagan, generating economies of scope and scale where possible;
- Clarity in accountabilities across Faculties, CPE support team and UBC;
- Clear scope for (at least) recovery of investment.

## Growth and development priorities

Four learner segments (*see below*) have been identified through primary research. The segments are defined by two axes: career or personal learning objectives, and credit or non-credit offerings. Each of the resulting segments (applied master's programs); career progression (professional development and executive education); lifelong learning; and access (primarily online or off-peak access to academic content for either current or non-UBC students) has strong academic and strategic rationale for growth.

### CPE SEGMENTS AND RATIONALE FOR GROWTH



The initial focus of the CPE support team has been on applied credit and summer programs, given Faculty interest, learner demand and sustainable business models. Three applied masters programs have been launched with VPAO support (Master of Public Policy and Global Affairs, Master of Engineering Leadership and Master of Health Leadership), with another at the approval stage (Master of Data Science). The Vancouver Summer Program, a residential program for international university students, has become a valuable working model in terms of structure, support and pricing for the development of future academic summer programs.

More recently UBC has launched a number of fee-based online courses on the edX professional education platform. UBC seeks to take advantage of the wide learner reach of edX and to experiment with different models of CPE certification and modularity. Online delivery is increasingly a structural imperative in CPE.

## New model of organizational support

CPE growth and development will be enabled through a Faculty-facing unit that provides operational support across both campuses where Faculties require capacity: business development, marketing and pricing, non-credit / off-peak program development and program approval. The VPAO has successfully supported Faculties in these functions through the development of new applied masters programs, and will continue to help the University define and launch an expanding range of fiscally-sustainable CPE programs that align learner goals, Faculty focus, and UBC excellence.

Extensive operational planning is also underway to develop CPE-specific, but University-connected, student service infrastructure and systems for registration, customer relationship management and learning technology, as well as to establish a coordinated approach to CPE space, facility usage and scheduling both on- and off-campus.

The name for the evolving CPE unit and an articulation of the market 'value proposition' of CPE at UBC is yet to be finalized.

## Challenges

There are a number of systemic challenges anticipated going forward. Resolving these challenges will have positive implications for the University if CPE is successful at becoming an incubator for academic and operational experimentation at UBC:

- Embedding learner relationship management and service excellence across all CPE offerings;
- Balancing competing demands on faculty member time and resources;
- Accommodation of CPE requirements for market agility in program approval, financial aid and systems implementation, while maintaining and enhancing program excellence
- Recognizing excellence of CPE programs based on parameters that are distinct from those defining undergraduate and graduate programs;
- Facilitating cross-unit, interdisciplinary CPE collaborations that are effective, fair and equitable;
- Achieving a coherent portfolio of CPE offerings across campuses and Faculties to ensure alignment with areas of UBC excellence and market opportunity;
- Ensuring a financial model for CPE that generates dividends for Faculties and the University.

## Risk mitigation

Strategically, the approach to program development is highly targeted, with clear academic, market and financial criteria, and shared Faculty and CPE commitment. In support of the overarching principles, governance guidelines have been developed that seek to promote both Faculty autonomy and UBC quality and market reputation in areas such as program development, faculty participation, student support and space.

The Board approves program pricing and fees for applied masters programs. Senate retains ultimate accountability for policy and program approval and Enrolment Services for credit-based learner records. Content repurposing, a critical feature of CPE, helps assure academic quality with Senate-approved credit content providing the basis for program development in associated credit, non-credit and online applications.

Financially, there is limited capital investment beyond IT, CRM and space. All of these are extensions of UBC-wide infrastructure, and all require upgrading even to sustain the University's current CPE position. Organizational expansion in CPE will occur in stages, with financial transparency and accountability to Faculties.