

**Northwest Missouri State University**  
**Board of Regents**  
**Date of Meeting: March 16, 2010**

Leadership Team Member: Douglas Dunham

Agenda Item: GIS&T MOU

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**Background:**

Through a Memorandum of Understanding, the Geology/Geography Department would like to join with five other universities that offer Master's degrees in geographic information science and technology (GIS&T) to form a "Community of Professional Master's Degree Programs in GIS&T". Member universities would agree to transfer a minimum of ten (10) graduate credit hours from each others' programs towards a Master's degree in GIS&T. Many students earn a graduate certificate in GIS&T at one university and would like to continue for the Master's degree at a different university. Several excellent students with a graduate certificate from one of the member universities have entered Northwest's Master's program. The benefit to Northwest of participating in the MOU is to remain competitive in attracting this stream of applicants and certificate students from the other member institutions. Not participating in the MOU may make us less competitive in attracting such students.

This MOA has been reviewed by Board Counsel. The Graduate Council approved this agreement (proposal 210-32-01) on Feb 1, 2010.

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**Issue:**

I recommend approval

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**President's Recommendation:**

I move for approval.

**Memorandum of Understanding**  
Community of Professional Masters Degree Programs in GIS&T

18 February 2010

Many students complete graduate and post-baccalaureate credit certificate programs in geographic information science and technology (GIS&T or "geospatial") and aspire to earn a professional masters degree in the same field. A substantial portion of these students will gain admission to a professional masters program in a different institution than the one at which they earned a certificate. This agreement establishes a "Community of Professional Masters Degree Programs in GIS&T" which assures such "transfer" students that a minimum number of graduate credits earned at one institution will count toward the professional masters degree requirements of any program within the Community.

**Eligibility for membership:** Charter members of the Community are the regionally accredited institutions of higher education with professional masters degree programs in GIS&T named below, whose missions, curricula, policies, and quality assurance mechanisms are comparable and compatible. Subsequent member institutions and their respective programs will be admitted by unanimous consent of the charter members, after review of the prospective new member's missions, curricula, policies, and quality assurance mechanisms.

**Termination:** Membership of any institution may be discontinued for just cause by unanimous consent of the other members. Any member may cancel or withdraw membership upon 10 days written notice, but such cancellation or withdrawal of membership shall not affect students whose credit hours were previously accepted.

**Admission into a graduate degree program:** Membership in the Community does not imply that graduate programs must admit applicants who have earned credits from other member institutions in the Community. Each program in the Community will admit students according to its own criteria and procedures.

**Transfers of credit:** Of the minimum number of credits required to earn professional masters degrees in GIS &T at each member institution, the respective **member agrees to accept at least 10 credits transferred from other member institutions in the Community**. The common conversion between semester credits (S) and quarter credits (Q) (i.e.,  $S = 1.5 * Q$ ) will be used unless otherwise stipulated in an addendum to the memorandum of understanding. To be eligible for transfer, credits must be associated with a grade of "B" or higher, appear on an official graduate transcript, and meet any other credit standards of the respective member institution at which the masters degree is being sought. Transferred credits may be counted in lieu of required courses or as electives at the respective program's discretion, but at least 10 transferred credits must count toward degree requirements.

Community of Professional Masters Degree Programs in GIS&T

**Charter Members**

**Accepted and Agreed:  
The Pennsylvania State University**

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[signatory]  
[title]

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Date

**Accepted and Agreed:  
University of Minnesota**

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[signatory]  
[title]

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Date

**Accepted and Agreed:  
University of Southern California**

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[signatory]  
[title]

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Date

**Accepted and Agreed:  
Northwest Missouri State University**

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[signatory]  
[title]

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Date

**Accepted and Agreed:  
University of Denver**

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[signatory]  
[title]

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Date

**Accepted and Agreed:  
University of Colorado Denver**

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[signatory]  
[title]

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Date