ACADEMIC ALERT #2001-01

DATE: September 19, 2000

DECISION: Expanded Opportunities Through NLU FOCUS

The following changes/refinements to FOCUS expand opportunities in intensive general education courses that are designed to take advantage of adult experiential learning through active teaching/learning pedagogies. Please refer to Academic Alert #98-1, March 31,1998, for additional information.

1. Renumbering of terms - the first three of the nine terms will be renumbered. The Academic Opportunity term becomes #3; the Cornerstone Term becomes #1, the Critical Thinking & Behavioral Reasoning Term becomes #2.

2. Admissions Requirements - Participants must be 24 years of age. No previous college experience is. required; however, a high school transcript must be submitted for those without college transfer credit. Students without previous college coursework normally begin FOCUS with Term 1 followed by Term 2 to develop appropriate writing skills. In the event that Term 1 or 2 is not offered at their location, participants may begin with Term 3, followed by Terms 1 and 2. Transfer students must have at least a 2.0 gpa. Participants with a gpa below 2.0 may be admitted provisionally if their coursework was taken three or more years previously.

   Students admitted to FOCUS will be admitted to the University. Admission to degree completion programs (ABS, HCL, BSM) will be granted after successful completion of 90 quarter hours (75 quarter hours for BSMIS), including three writing courses. This writing requirement may be met through writing courses in FOCUS terms, NLU's traditional English courses, or by combining transfer with FOCUS and/or traditional courses. Decisions about appropriate courses must be made with the FOCUS coordinator. Exceptions may be made only with the approval of department chairs.

3. Scheduling - Most FOCUS courses are offered in sets of three (each Term consists of 3 courses) enabling students to enroll in three five quarter hour courses per term which qualifies most students as full-time for financial aid purposes. However, students are not required to take the courses as a set (Term). Students may take the courses individually (with the exception of the fully integrated Terms #3, 8).

   FOCUS terms are scheduled in trimester format and begin in January, May, and August or September each year. Recommended class size is 15; maximum. is 20. FOCUS terms offered onsite for employees of corporations or other organizations may be scheduled at other start times, but are offered in the same accelerated format.

4. Academic Advisement - Students completing liberal arts requirements for a specific NLU program (e.g. teacher education) must have the consent of the academic department or program advisor prior to registration in-FOCUS.

IMPLEMENTATION DATE: Immediately

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