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SHSU joins consortium to expand online course offerings

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HUNTSVILLE — Sam Houston State University has joined a consortium with 10 other universities in a collaborative effort to improve and implement high quality, large-scale online and blended learning programs.

Sam Houston State offers more than a dozen complete graduate programs online, including the MBA, an Executive MBA, teacher certification and master's in criminal justice leadership and management designed exclusively for military police officers.

Sam Houston State associate vice president for SHSU Online Bill Angrove said he and others at SHSU are delighted to join the group, the New Century Learning Consortium.

"The university recognizes the need for inter-institutional cooperation. We are very interested in efforts to promote degree completion and faculty exchange," he said.

The Consortium was founded at The University of Illinois Springfield.

"We are pleased to have Sam Houston State University join the New Century Learning Consortium. This award-winning university has been recognized by Princeton Review and PC Magazine as one of the "Most Wired" colleges in the nation. Founded in 1879, SHSU brings a long tradition of excellence in education to the consortium," said Shari McCurdy Smith, NCLC director and associate director of the Center for Online Learning, Research, and Service at UIS.

The consortium plans to expand to 14 institutions by May, she said.

Consortium activities include developing a clearinghouse of online classes where there is excess capacity; shared research projects; shared IT expertise to support building infrastructure capacity; and peer support at the upper administration, dean, and faculty member levels. NCLC was founded using a grant from the Sloan Consortium, who is also funding for the expansion.

"Sam Houston State University has an outstanding online learning program, said Ray Schroeder, founder of NCLC. "We are excited that SHSU will bring their leadership and experience."

Current members are University of Illinois Springfield; California State University East Bay, Hayward; Southern Oregon University, Ashland; Chicago State University, Illinois; Oakland University, Rochester Hills, Michigan; University of Southern Maine, Portland; Louisiana Tech University, Ruston; SUNY Empire State College, Saratoga Springs; Hampton University, Hampton, Virginia; and the University of Minnesota, Crookston.

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