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## Discussions underway to bring University of Iowa classes to Grinnell

*If enrollment goals are met, classes could start as soon as January 2017*

GRINNELL, Iowa - A group of local institutions is working closely with the University of Iowa, community leaders and employers to bring University of Iowa classes to Grinnell. The classes will be held at the Iowa Valley Community College Grinnell campus at 123 Sixth Avenue. The University of Iowa presence in Grinnell will be the culmination of 1.5 years of work.

In June 2015, a group of stakeholders representing the University of Iowa, major employers from a several county radius, economic development agencies, local community colleges and municipal leaders convened to discuss the possibility of the University of Iowa teaching classes in Grinnell.

“The town of Grinnell has historically been a crossroads where people, ideas and resources converge,” remarked President Kington, who hosted the meeting. “By building on our strength as an educational crossroads, this would be an opportunity for Grinnell to grow and flourish in exciting new ways.”

Feedback was nearly universally positive, as the University of Iowa presence would assist existing employers, grow the pool of well-trained professionals in the area, and create a more competitive job market. The program will also give members of the community easier access to 4-year degree options and specialized certificates.

Following the June 2015 meeting, employers in a five county area, as well as high school counselors, Iowa Valley Grinnell/Marshalltown Community College students and alumni, and Des Moines Area Community College students and alumni, were surveyed to help identify potential students and purposes of the proposed program.

Through this survey, 41 employers responded, and 85% of those said at least one employee would be interested in the program, and more than half of those employers offer some kind of reimbursement for tuition, an additional incentive for participation. The survey also found that programs specializing in business are the most sought after, with over half of all respondents saying they would prefer business-related classes.

The program plans to offer “hybrid” classes combining online coursework (which would provide students flexibility to study from home) and in-person interaction, with the initial face-to-face

component on the Iowa Valley Grinnell campus. Books will be available for sale at the Grinnell College Pioneer Bookstore, and students will be able to take advantage of academic support at the community college campus.

If the program reaches the minimum enrollment threshold, classes could start as early as January 2017. Classes offered, while yet to be finalized, will likely serve a range of business-oriented programs which may include courses in the following tracts: Bachelor of Liberal Studies, Bachelor of Applied Studies, Bachelor of Business Administration or Certificate of Leadership Studies. The Iowa Valley Grinnell campus will be used for all face-to-face classes until a more permanent site in Grinnell is established. University of Iowa representatives will be meeting with area employers in October to define the best fit approach to customize the University's program for the Grinnell community needs.

Interested employers should plan to attend an informational meeting on Monday, October 24 beginning at 3:30pm at Iowa Valley Grinnell Campus (123 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue). If employers are unable to attend this meeting, they may contact the Grinnell Chamber of Commerce by calling 641-236-6555 or emailing [rachael@getintogrinnell.com](mailto:rachael@getintogrinnell.com), or Poweshiek Iowa Development at 641-236-1626 or [laura@powi80.com](mailto:laura@powi80.com) for more information. Interested students should contact Jennifer Timmons with the University of Iowa at [Jennifer-timmons@uiowa.edu](mailto:Jennifer-timmons@uiowa.edu) or 319-335-1565.