

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
STANDARD CONTRACT**

Contract Number: LU214-20-017

This contract entered into this 25th day of August 2020, by Instructional Connections, LLC, hereinafter called the "Contractor" and Commonwealth of Virginia, Longwood University hereinafter called the "Purchasing Agency."

WITNESSETH that the Contractor and the Purchasing Agency, in consideration of the mutual covenants, promises and agreements herein contained, agree as follows:

SCOPE OF CONTRACT: The Contractor shall provide the goods/services to the Purchasing Agency as set forth in the Contract Documents.

PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE: From September 1, 2020 through August 31, 2025. Five (5) successive one (1) year optional renewal periods.

The contract documents shall consist of:


- (1) This signed form;
- (2) The following portions of the Request for Proposal dated June 23, 2020:
 - (a) The Statement of Needs;
 - (b) The General Terms and Conditions together with any negotiated modifications of those General Terms and Conditions;
 - (c) The Special Terms and Conditions together with any negotiated modifications of those Special Terms and Conditions;
- (3) The Contractor's Proposal dated July 20, 2020; and all of which documents are incorporated herein.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have caused this Contract to be duly executed intending to be bound thereby.

CONTRACTOR:

By: 
Alexandra N. Forrester
Title: CAO/EVP Strategic Partnerships
Date: 08/25/2020

PURCHASING AGENCY:

By: 
M. Louise Waller
Title: Vice President for Administration and Finance
Date: 8/26/2020

Note: This public body does not discriminate against faith-based organizations in accordance with the *Code of Virginia*, § 2.2-4343.1 or against a bidder or offeror because of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by state law relating to discrimination in employment.

eVA BUSINESS-TO-GOVERNMENT VENDOR REGISTRATION, CONTRACTS, AND ORDERS: The eVA Internet electronic procurement solution, web site portal www.eVA.virginia.gov, streamlines and automates government purchasing activities in the Commonwealth. The eVA portal is the gateway for vendors to conduct business with state agencies and public bodies. All vendors desiring to provide goods and/or services to the Commonwealth shall participate in the eVA Internet e-procurement solution by completing the free eVA Vendor Registration. All bidders or offerors must register in eVA and pay the Vendor Transaction Fees specified below; failure to register will result in the bid/proposal being rejected.

Vendor transaction fees are determined by the date the original purchase order is issued and the current fees are as follows:

- a. For orders issued July 1, 2014, and after, the Vendor Transaction Fee is:
 - (i) DSBSD-certified Small Businesses: 1%, capped at \$500 per order.
 - (ii) Businesses that are not DSBSD-certified Small Businesses: 1%, capped at \$1,500 per order.
- b. Refer to Special Term and Condition "eVA Orders and Contracts" to identify the number of purchase orders that will be issued as a result of this solicitation/contract with the eVA transaction fee specified above assessed for each order.

For orders issued prior to July 1, 2014, the vendor transaction fees can be found at www.eVA.virginia.gov.

The specified vendor transaction fee will be invoiced, by the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of General Services, typically within 60 days of the order issue date. Any adjustments (increases/decreases) will be handled through purchase order changes.



INSTRUCTIONAL CONNECTIONS

RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

**Longwood University
for
ACADEMIC COACHING SUPPORT SERVICES
FOR MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (MBA) PROGRAM
RFP #LU214-20-017**

**Submittal Deadline: July 27, 2020
Issued: June 24, 2020**

FINAL

**PROPOSAL DUE DATE/TIME: July 27, 2020 at 2:00pm EST
Submitted: July 20, 2020**

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A. REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) COVER SHEET

Issue Date: June 24, 2020

RFP#LU214-20-017

Title: Academic Coaching Support Services
for Master of Business Administration (MBA) Program

Commodity Codes: 92416, 92478

Issuing Agency: COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
Longwood University
Materiel Management & Purchasing
201 High Street, Lancaster Hall, Room 215B
Farmville, Virginia 23909

Location Where Work Will Be Performed: Longwood University, Farmville, Virginia 23909

Initial Period of Contract: October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2025

Electronically Submitted Proposals Will Be Received Until: **July 27, 2020 at 2:00 p.m. Local Time** for Furnishing The Services Described Herein. ONE (1) HARD COPY OF PROPOSAL MUST BE MAILED (U.S. POSTAL SERVICE) DIRECTLY TO ISSUING AGENCY SHOWN ABOVE.

All Inquiries For Information Should Be Directed To: Cathryn B. Mobley, Associate Vice President for Administration and Finance, using ATTACHMENT A – WRITTEN PRE-PROPOSAL QUESTION FORM emailed to materielmanagement@longwood.edu or faxed to (434) 395-2246. **Questions may be submitted until 12:00 noon on July 10, 2020. The University will not accept any questions after the deadline.**

In Compliance with This Request For Proposals And To All The Conditions Imposed Therein And Hereby Incorporated By Reference, The Undersigned Offers And Agrees To Furnish The Services In Accordance With The Attached Signed Proposal Or As Mutually Agreed Upon By Subsequent Negotiation.

State Corporation Commission (SCC) ID#: 11077661 or statement describing why offeror is not required to have a SCC ID# must be furnished with your proposal.

eVA Member: [X] Yes [] No

eVA Vendor ID#: VS0000305978

Check all that apply:

Small Business []

Woman-Owned Business []

Minority-Owned Business []

Note: Offeror shall be a registered eVA vendor on the date and time designated for receipt of proposals to be awarded this contract. See General Terms and Conditions X for information on registration.

DSBSD Certificate Number N/A

Certification Date / /

Expiration Date / /

Name and Address Of Firm:

Instructional Connections, LLC

Date: 07/20/2020

7400 Arabian Circle

By: 

Flower Mound, TX Zip Code 75022

(Signature in Ink)

Name: Alexandra. N. Forrester

E-mail: alex.forrester@iconnect-na.com

(Please Print or Type)

Title: Chief Administrative Officer

Phone: (888) 221-2418 -or- (214) 663-0092

Fax: (877) 663-3439

(Toll Free, if available)

(Toll Free, if available)

1. GENERAL COMPANY INFORMATION (Per Section V. B. 3., on page 9 of the RFP)

This proposal is valid for a time period of 90 calendar days from the date of submission.

1. COMPANY PROFILE:

Legal name of Proposer Company:	Instructional Connections, LLC
Address of principal place of business:	7400 Arabian Circle, Flower Mound, TX 75022
Company Phone Number:	888-221-2418
Federal EIN Number:	46-3903083
State of Incorporation:	Texas, incorporated in July 2010
D-U-N-S Number:	07-966-5093
VA SCC ID#:	11077661
eVA Vendor ID#:	VS0000305978

Instructional Connections is not for sale, in any sales transaction, or has been in discussions with any other entity about a sale – now or in the future. IC doesn't expect to sell to another entity for the foreseeable future; however, if this would happen to occur, IC would certainly discuss organizational and directional impact to the university.

There has never been, nor is any, litigation or legal claim filed against Instructional Connections, LLC.

Instructional Connections owes no debt, nor is in default on any loan or financial agreement(s) or financing agreement with a banking or financial institution.

To date, Instructional Connections is the sole service provider in the United States of online (distance learning) Academic Coaches that are embedded in asynchronous online courses with a faculty of record and students; performing similar roles within a course to that of a traditional Graduate Teaching Assistant, yet the Academic Coaches are degree qualified, experienced practitioners.

Instructional Connections maintains all copyrights to its intellectual property and all materials used in the conjunction with supporting university faculty and students with embedded Academic Coaches in university online, asynchronous programs and courses. These materials became copyrighted upon first publication of the IC' Academic Coach Model in 2010. The Model and other intellectual property under copyright protection are intended for the sole use of students and faculty in university online courses and programs, where Instructional Connections' services are used. As of this date, Instructional Connections maintains a copyright of its name, website and proprietary information; and continues working with Bell, Nunnally & Martin, LLP, a Dallas Texas-based law firm, on other protections it can obtain relative to the services it provides its clients.

2. BRIEF SUMMARY & APPROACH TO PROJECT SERVICES:

Instructional Connections, LLC ("IC") is an integrated provider of high-quality instructional support services to colleges and universities, which offer online courses and degree programs. We specialize in providing Academic Coaches (AKA "Teaching Assistants") to institutions that offer asynchronous online courses with a highly effective and scalable instructional model.

Instructional Connections' vision is to support universities and their faculty providing low cost and high-quality online coursework to under-served student populations at all higher education levels across the United States. Academic Coaches build strong, lasting relationships with university faculty, helping faculty and program instructional leaders to achieve programmatic goals, and help produce positive student outcomes.

IC is a North Texas-based company that independently contracts with online Academic Coaches that assist faculty of record in online, asynchronous courses with the grading of assignments, interactions with students in classroom discussions, management of in-course communications, assistance with helping at risk students, and other support services individual faculty members may require in the context of instructional support.

Instructional Connections currently partners with 50+ universities supporting 45,000+ students per year in various disciplines including Education, Business, Nursing, Criminal Justice and others.

- We recruit, screen, pre-qualify and present candidates desiring work as Academic Coach for approval to university partners.
- We train applicants on the learning management system used by our university partners and orient them with a program.
- We independently contract with and pay Academic Coaches on behalf of a university partner, which removes them from adding human resource and payroll overhead.
- We coordinate and assign Academic Coaches to programs, based on university needs and approval.
- We supervise and manage Academic Coaches in support of university faculty.
- We help our university partners manage and scale online, asynchronous classrooms so that distance education is affordable and of the highest quality.

IC employs over 4000 Academic Coaches with backgrounds and expertise in a large variety of subject areas and disciplines; including, but not limited to: Business, Education, Nursing, Criminal Justice, Math/Statistics, Physical Sciences, Social Sciences, Health Sciences, Public Administration, Political Science, English, Foreign Languages, etc. These Academic Coaches have been screened, vetted, contracted and placed in a pool of Academic Coaches ready to receive an assignment to a course.

Instructional Connections measures the success of our service support philosophy by timely assignment of Academic Coaches to courses and positive feedback from faculty regarding Academic Coaches' performance.

The instructional support model employed by Instructional Connections on behalf of its clients has undergone scrutiny by SACSB, AACSB, both major nursing program accreditation agencies (CCNE and NLNAC) and other various accrediting bodies. This model has assisted multiple universities in the areas of educational programs, business programs, healthcare programs, and undergraduate courses across a wide range of subjects.

3. COMPANY PERSONNEL & EXPERIENCE:

- President:** Dr. Robert F. (Bob) Williams has over 35 years' experience in leadership positions, beginning as an armor officer in the U.S. Army, where he rose to the rank of Major. Bob's other work experiences have been in transportation, logistics, operations, and online higher education. In the fall of 2009, Bob was recruited from Education Management's Online Division located in Pittsburgh, where he was the Director of Academic Operations, into a key role with Academic Partnerships, LLC (then known as Higher Ed Holdings). Bob holds a bachelor's degree in journalism from West Virginia University, a graduate degree in Leadership and Liberal Studies from Duquesne University, and a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership from Argosy University. Bob has over nine (12) years direct experience with three high-growth organizations building and sustaining instructional support for over 80,000 students. Bob incorporated Instructional Connections in July 2010.
- Chief Academic Officer:** Dr. Harriet Watkins is the Chief Academic Officer for Instructional Connections. Ms. Watkins is tasked with building rapport with faculty and conducting research on student coaching and support with various universities within the United States. Previously she worked at the University of Arkansas System eVersity as the Director of Online Education, where she oversaw the building of the entire course catalog for a brand-new online university, the first of its kind within the state of Arkansas. Previous to this, she was the Manager of Academic Partnership Programs at the University of Texas at Arlington,

where she oversaw the logistics and implementation of distance education programs with contracted vendors at the Center for Distance Education. Previous to this she held the Manager of Instructional Design position at the Center for Distance Education. She holds a doctorate degree in Distance Education from Regent University, Virginia Beach, VA.

- c) **Chief Administrative Officer:** Alexandra (Alex) Forrester attended the University of Maryland at College Park. Alex has a strong healthcare background having been a member of the Network Nursing Education Team at the Seton Family of Hospitals in Austin, TX, where she opened and managed the Clinical Education Center at Brackenridge Hospital. At Instructional Connections, she has oversight for a robust recruiting effort. Alex's strengths include Human Resource, Recruiting, Sales & Marketing and knowledge of the healthcare industry. Alex has been with the company since November 2010.
- d) **Chief Information Officer:** Diane (DeDe) Meek has served in various higher education administrative roles, including Dean of Academic Affairs, at several for-profit, proprietary universities over 12 years prior to joining Instructional Connections in December of 2010. She also has held management positions in a variety of companies, including Microsoft. DeDe holds a bachelor's degree from Williams Woods College, a graduate degree in Organizational Management from University of Phoenix.
- e) **VP of Operations:** Jacquelyn Cato serves as the Director of Operations and supporting education, business, and general course programs. She is also responsible for managing the Vertical Lead Coaches. Jacquelyn has served in various roles within online education for the past 9 years. Jacquelyn holds a bachelor's degree from Florida State University and a graduate degree in Biological Sciences from Saint Joseph College. Jacquelyn's strengths include effective training techniques, online course development and administration of varying Learning Management Systems. Jacquelyn has been with the company since 2010, starting as an Academic Coach and then Coordinating Academic Coach. She was promoted to Director of Operations in 2012 and now VP of Operations.

B. STATEMENT OF NEEDS (Per Section IV. On page 5 of the RFP)

1. Academic Coaches.

Each Academic Coach is a highly qualified, experienced practitioner in their field of study and has earned a minimum of a graduate or higher from an accredited university in the individual discipline. These individuals possess a strong educational, instructional, and leadership background, bringing value to the overall student learning experience. Under the direction of the faculty of record, they help students make connections with their online learning, increase depth and complexity in the discussion forum, and encourage students as they progress through the program. Academic Coaches may grade assignments, manage discussion threads, answer and respond to emails with 24 hours, and manage the day-to-day issues as directed by the faculty. This enables the faculty of record to focus on delivery of course curriculum and outcomes while allowing the institution to scale the course to meet student enrollment demands. The exact qualifications and requirements of an Academic Coach are tailored according to individual course and/or program needs.

IC employs over 4000 Academic Coaches that reside across the US, as these positions are virtual and do not require residence in a particular city or state and do not require an on-campus presence. Currently, IC is unable to consider or hire applicants that are not US Citizens or who are not authorized to work in the US. Applicants for employment in the US must have work authorization that does not now or in the future require sponsorship of a visa for employment authorization in the United States and with Instructional Connections (i.e., H1-B visa, F-1 visa (OPT), TN visa or any other non-immigrant status).

2. Recruitment and Qualification.

Based on the identified minimum qualifications provided by the university, IC recruits nationally for qualified candidates across the country and year-round; however, Instructional Connections can focus regionally or within tight niche populations of applicants, depending on the needs of each program and/or course.

Should a faculty member have a candidate they wish to refer to Instructional Connections for assignment to their course, the candidate will be able to apply using the '*Faculty Referral Application*'. These Faculty Referrals may be recent graduates, retired /former faculty or other persons that the faculty would prefer. All Faculty Referral candidates will still be required to meet the minimum qualifications and complete any and all pre-employment screening tasks in order to become a contracted Academic Coach with Instructional Connections. The on-boarding process for a new Academic Coach (screening/training, background check, transcripts, etc.) can take 3-6 weeks.

Based on reviewing a candidate's online application submission, which includes submission of a resume/CV, each applicant is reviewed based on the minimum qualification determined by the university and/or program.

In lieu of a phone interview process, Instructional Connections has found that a required online pre-employment screening session is a much better indicator of an individual's ability to follow instructions as directed and perform necessary functions that will be expected should they be advanced and contracted as an Academic Coach.

To successfully complete the pre-screening course, candidates must participate in threaded discussions, complete all the graded assignments and review all information and data presented in the screening course. They must also contribute to the learning environment in the same manner that students are asked to: using accepted norms for online communication, exhibiting professionalism, and adhering to the highest standards of conduct for academic integrity, and challenging oneself to master all course materials.

The Pre-Employment Screening session includes: details regarding the roles and expectations of an Academic Coach, best practices for facilitating an online course, APA standards, FERPA regulations, and common functions and uses of the Learning Management System(s). The candidate must complete all modules and achieve a passing grade of 85% or higher.

Concurrently with the pre-screening session, candidates are asked to submit a Background Check Release. Instructional Connections uses Sterling Talent Solutions to conduct criminal background checks of each candidate. The background check includes a Social Security number trace and 7-year criminal background check by county and state.

Once a candidate successfully passes the screening activities and is recommended for advancement to the contracting phase to be added to our pool of vetted Academic Coaches. Additional training and/or orientation prior to the Academic Coach's first course assignment is conducted by a Lead Coach or a Coordinating Coach who also serves as mentor in the first coaching assignment.

Actual course assignments are made near to the course start date and are dependent on many factors including: area and level of graduate study, experience, university approval and student enrollments.

3. Credentialing System.

The university's program coordinators and faculty establish the minimum qualifications for the Academic Coaches in each course and/or program. This will be communicated through submission of an Academic Coach Request Form.

Based on the information included in the "Request for an Academic Coach", and communications between the university's program coordinator and the Lead Coach, the Lead Coach reviews the qualifications of candidates from our pool of vetted Academic Coaches and presents them to the Program Administrator and/or Faculty for assignment to a course-based requirement submitted by the faculty and/or program chair. The Program Administrator and/or Faculty will approve or decline the candidate(s). If a candidate is declined, feedback may be provided to the Lead Coach as to the reasons for denial to fine-tune the recruitment efforts. Only Academic Coaches that are approved are able to be assigned to courses.

4. Independent Contractor Agreements.

IC independently contracts with, manage, and pay the Academic Coaches and other staff that are provided to fulfill the service needs on behalf of university partners, which eliminate universities from adding additional human resources and payroll overhead.

Once an Academic Coach is contracted, they added to our pool of Academic Coaches that are ready and available for an assignment at one of our partner universities. The effective date on the independent contractor agreements with the Academic Coach is not a start date for an assignment nor guarantee of an Academic Coaching assignment.

5. On-Boarding and Training.

In addition to the Pre-Employment Screening session that every applicant is required to complete and pass, each Academic Coach receives an orientation to the program and university that they are assigned to by their Lead Coach and/or Coordinating Coach. This may include additional APA modules or university specific FERPA modules, as requested by the program.

Annually, Instructional Connections requires each Academic Coach to complete professional development training. This always includes an annual review and test of FERPA. Academic Coaches are required to pass the annual training in order to continue receiving an assignment as an Academic Coach. Other subjects may be included; such as Professional Communications, Best Practices in Online Learning, etc.

IC employs a Training Manager that has developed training modules for a variety of needs; including but not limited to: Coordinating Coach and Lead Coach Training, FERPA Remediation, and Professional Development Modules.

6. Scheduling and Assignment.

Once an Academic Coach is approved by the university and offered an upcoming course assignment, the Faculty of Record for each course provides clear expectations for the Academic Coach to respond to students, involvement in discussion threads, grade assignments, and preferred method to communicate with faculty. This is primarily handled through a Pre-Course Conference Call in which the Academic Coaches and Faculty review the course, syllabus, assignments, and outcomes. This is maintained throughout the course during the Weekly Conference Calls with Faculty and Academic Coach. During the weekly calls, the Faculty and Academic Coaches discuss any student issues, upcoming assignments, changes in the course, and the Faculty expectations.

7. Academic Coach Responsibilities.

a. Prior to Course Delivery, each Academic Coach must:

1. Successfully complete and pass the Pre-Screening Course and FERPA Course, submit all required documentation and official transcripts to Instructional Connections.
2. Each Academic Coach must acknowledge and agree to the Expectations of an Academic Coach for accepting an Assignment:
 - i. Provide Academic Coaching service during this session, if assigned;
 - ii. Consistently respond to faculty and student emails within 24 hours;
 - iii. Grade open-ended assignments within 72 hours of due date, as directed by faculty;
 - iv. Participate in pre-course and weekly meetings with the Faculty, as specified by the Faculty for the course;
 - v. Complete all requirements, tasks, and timelines expected for the course cycle.
 - vi. If an unexpected emergency arises during the course cycle, the Academic Coach will notify my Lead and/or Coordinating Academic Coach immediately so that alternate arrangements can be made to serve the students.
 - vii. If at any time during a course the Academic Coach is scheduled to be unavailable for longer than 24 hours, that he/she will not accept an assignment for this session.
 - viii. In addition, if professional or personal agendas, limited Internet access or the Academic Coach's ability to respond to students, faculty, or Instructional Connections in a timely way – he/she will not accept the assignment.

b. One Week Prior to Course

1. After receiving access to the LMS and course, the Academic Coach will review course, syllabus, faculty expectations, assignments and assessments with Faculty Record, the Lead Coach and/or Coordinating Academic Coach via a Pre-Course Conference Call.
2. Work with Faculty to establish best means for Faculty communications throughout the duration of the course.

c. During Course

1. The Academic Coach participate in Weekly Conference Call with Faculty.
2. The Academic Coach respond to any/all student, faculty and administration emails/inquiries within 24 hours; the universities LMS is the primary method of communication or the email address provided by IC, whether the communication be through announcements, email and/or discussion threads will be at the direction of the faculty and in collaboration of the Lead Coach.
3. The Academic Coach grade designated assignments per the detailed rubric provided in the course and as directed by the faculty of record within 72 hours of the due date as assigned by faculty.

4. The Academic Coach may monitor and/or participate in asynchronous discussion threads per direction of faculty.
 5. The Academic Coach maintain and/or document student and faculty communication; either through the LMS or email account provided by IC.
 6. Report and/or escalate any technical issues or student concerns, as necessary.
- d. At the End of the Course
1. Finalize grading of student assignments and recommend Grade Book to the faculty to review and submit final grades into the student information system.
 2. Respond to any/all student and administration emails within 24 hours.
 3. Participate in End-Of- Course Review Conference Call with faculty, as necessary.

8. Communication and Coordination.

The Faculty of Record for each course provides clear expectations for the Academic Coach to respond to students, involvement in discussion threads, grade assignments, and preferred method to communicate with faculty. This is primarily handled through a Pre-Course Conference Call in which the Academic Coaches and Faculty review the course, syllabus, assignments, and outcomes. This is maintained throughout the course during the Weekly Conference Calls with Faculty and Academic Coach. During the weekly calls, the Faculty and Academic Coaches discuss any student issues, upcoming assignments, changes in the course, and the Faculty expectations.

The Lead Coach and/or Coordinating Coach will perform evaluations on each Academic Coach a minimum of twice a year, with the first assignment always being evaluated. The Faculty of Record are asked to perform an evaluation of each Academic Coach at least twice a year using the online '*Faculty Evaluation Form*'. This faculty evaluation form takes no more than 5 minutes.

Instructional Connections utilizes a secure, online file sharing server (Box.com) for sharing documents and information that is easily accessible to designated Program Administrators for reference and is frequently used for Accreditation site visits. Documents included in the Box.com files include: Resumes and Official Transcripts of each Academic Coach assigned to a program/course at the university, Academic Coach Evaluations performed by Instructional Connections and the Faculty of Record, Assignment Sheets, Meeting Minutes, reports as requested by the programs, etc.

9. Management and Pay of Coaches.

Instructional Connection will be responsible for payment of taxes due on the compensation paid under this contract. Instructional Connections will be responsible for payment of, or will assure that each Academic Coach will be responsible for payment of, any employment taxes, unemployment taxes, worker's compensation, or other taxes, assessments, or insurance payable in connection with its engagement of Academic Coaches.

Inclusive of the 'per student per course' pricing, IC has additional levels of management and support to aide and facilitate the management of the Academic Coaches. These roles are listed below, but not limited to:

1. The Coordinating Academic Coach serves as point of primary interaction with the Professor.

Some of the points of interaction:

- Clarification of Professor's course policies
- Coordination of multiple coaches' work
- Check on inter-rater reliability in rubric grading
- Review of student performance in both discussions and assessments

The Coordinating Academic Coach is responsible for insuring that interactions between Academic Coaches and the Professor occurs and for recording decisions or action items that may emerge. Assignment of a Coordinating Academic Coach is based on the number of students and Academic Coaches in a course. The Coordinating Academic Coach reports to the Lead Academic Coach.

2. The Lead Academic Coach position is pivotal to the delivery of courses and serves as a "working manager." The Lead Coach most frequently interacts with the academic leadership of a program but also is available to faculty members. If there is not a designated Coordinating Academic Coach for a course, the Lead Academic Coach assumes the role and responsibilities of a Coordinating Academic Coach for that course.

Instructional Connections maintains responsibility for the management and supervision the Academic Coaches, Coordinating Coaches and Lead Coaches.

10. Academic Coach Qualifications

Example Requirements for Academic Coaches in Business Programs:

- A minimum of a Master's Degree in Business related field with at least 18+ graduate hours in the specific course content area is required. Terminal Degree or actively pursuing a Terminal Degree with publications is preferred. Business degrees from AACSB or ACBSP accredited institutions strongly desired. Experience in online education is preferred.

Example Requirements for Undergrad/General/Core Courses and Other Areas/Disciplines:

- A minimum of a Master's Degree with at least 18+ graduate hours in the specific course content area is required. Experience in online education is preferred. A doctorate/terminal degree may be preferred.

Example Requirements for Nursing Related Programs:

- A current and valid RN license and Master's of Science in Nursing (MSN) or greater is required. PhD Nursing Science or DNP (doctorate/terminal degree) is preferred for MSN, Post-Grad NP and DNP programs. Nursing degrees must be from ACEN or NLNAC accredited institutions. Minimum of 3 years of nursing practice experience required; prior teaching experienced (preceptor, clinical, face-to-face or online) is preferred.

Original graduate transcript and a professional vita/resume shall be provided to the CBE for each Academic Coach proposed for a course. If a candidate is currently pursuing a terminal graduate degree, the contractor shall collect an original transcript to reflect completed courses and hours earned. Updated vita shall be submitted as appropriate. These documents shall be available to the Dean of the CBE and/or their designee.

11. Quality Assurance & Contingency Plans

a. Quality Assurance

1. Instructional Connection's quality assurance program is consistent with University's commitment to provide a high quality educational experience. Academic Coaches are an extension of the faculty in courses and follow all guidance and direction from assigned faculty members. At the end of each course, Instructional Connections obtains faculty feedback on the Academic Coaches assigned to the faculty's course via a post-course conference call and/or faculty evaluation of the Academic Coach. In addition, the Lead Coach evaluates Academic Coach activities in the course including the Academic Coach's responsiveness to feedback. If Instructional Connections is notified of a concern from either faculty or administrators about an Academic Coach's performance, Instructional Connections's personnel will investigate and take action as appropriate, up to and including removal of the Academic Coach from the course and/or program.
2. Instructional Connections provides ongoing support to university partners, Lead Coaches, Coordinating Academic Coaches, and Academic Coaches. This support includes, but is not limited to the following:

- a. Supporting faculty in asynchronous, online courses.
 - b. Providing original Academic Coach transcripts and resumes to universities for purposes of accreditation.
 - c. Accreditation reaffirmation and visit support.
 - d. Maintenance of records and documentation.
 - e. Evaluating Academic Coach performance.
 - f. Working in close concert with university's key online leaders on student-related issues.
- c. Contingency Plans

While Instructional Connections' leaders have experience dealing with regional disasters and contingency plans to deploy in case of disasters and/or emergencies, Instructional Connections works with university administrative and instructional leaders to assist in implementation and support of the university's contingency/disaster plans and university policies.

In most cases, and in the event an Academic Coach is unable to continue in a course; the Lead Coach, Coordinating Academic Coach or another Academic Coach(s) assigned to the course will be assigned to the students previously handled by the departing Academic Coach.

In the event of a temporary inability to access the online course by an Academic Coach, the Lead Coach or Coordinating Coach will handle the Academic Coach's duties until access is restored to minimize to impact to the student and/or faculty.

C. SMALL BUSINESS SUBCONTRACTING PLAN

Definitions

- **DSBSD:** Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity.
- **Small Business:** "Small Business" means an independently owned and operated business which, together with affiliates, has 250 or fewer employees, or average annual gross receipts of \$10 million or less averaged over the previous three years. Note: This shall not exclude DSBSD-certified women- and minority-owned businesses when they have received DSBSD small business certification.
- **Women-Owned Business:** Women-owned business means a business concern that is at least 51% owned by one or more women who are citizens of the United States or non-citizens who are in full compliance with United States immigration law, or in the case of a corporation, partnership or limited liability company or other entity, at least 51% of the equity ownership interest is owned by one or more women who are citizens of the United States or non-citizens who are in full compliance with United States immigration law, and both the management and daily business operations are controlled by one or more women who are citizens of the United States or non-citizens who are in full compliance with the United States immigration law.
- **Minority-Owned Business:** Minority-owned business means a business concern that is at least 51% owned by one or more minority individuals or in the case of a corporation, partnership or limited liability company or other entity, at least 51% of the equity ownership interest in the corporation, partnership, or limited liability company or other entity is owned by one or more minority individuals and both the management and daily business operations are controlled by one or more minority individuals.

All small businesses must be certified by DSBSD by the due date of the solicitation to participate in the SWaM program. Certification applications are available through DSBSD online at www.sbsd.virginia.gov/ (Customer Service).

Offeror's Name: Instructional Connections, LLC

Preparer Name: Alexandra N. Forrester, Chief Administrative Officer **Date:** 07/15/2020

Instructions

- A. If you are certified by DSBSD as a small business, complete only Section A of this form. This shall not exclude DSBSD-certified women-owned and minority-owned businesses when they have received DSBSD small business certification.
- B. If you are not a DSBSD-certified small business, complete Section B of this form. For the offeror to receive credit for the small business subcontracting plan evaluation criteria, the offeror shall identify the portions of the contract that will be subcontracted to DSBSD-certified small business in this section. Points will be assigned based on each offeror's proposed subcontracting expenditures with DSBSD-certified small businesses for the initial contract period as indicated in Section B in relation to the offeror's total price.

Section A

If your firm is certified by DSBSD, are you certified as a (**check only one below**):

<input type="checkbox"/> Small Business	Certification Number: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Small and Women-owned Business	
<input type="checkbox"/> Small and Minority-owned Business	Certification Date: _____

Section B

Populate the table below to show your firm's plans for utilization of DSBSD-certified small businesses in the performance of this contract. This shall not exclude DSBSD-certified women-owned and minority-owned businesses when they have received the DSBSD small business certification. Include plans to utilize small businesses as part of joint ventures, partnerships, subcontractors, suppliers, etc.

Plans for Utilization of DSBSD-Certified Small Businesses for this Procurement

Small Business Name & Address DSBSD Certificate #	Status if Small Business is also: Women (W) Minority (M)	Contact Person, Telephone & Email	Type of Goods and/or Services	Planned Involvement During Initial Period of the Contract	Planned Contract Dollars During Initial Period of the Contract
None/Not Applicable					
None/Not Applicable					
None/Not Applicable					
None/Not Applicable					
None/Not Applicable					
None/Not Applicable					
Totals \$					\$ 0.00

C. OFFEROR DATA SHEET

- A. **Qualification of Offeror:** The Offeror must have the capability and capacity in all respects to fully satisfy all of the contractual requirements. Indicate below the length of time you have been in business providing the services required herein.

10 Year(s) 0 Month(s)

- B. **References:** List three (3) contacts (preferably a college or university, if available) for whom you have provided this type of service that the University has your permission to contact.

1. **Company Name:** Florida International University
Address: 11200 S.W. 8th Street, Miami, FL 33199
Contact: Angel J. Burgos, Executive Director, MBA Programs
Phone: 305-779-7951
Email: angburgo@fiu.edu
Project Description: Provide instructional support with Academic Coaches for various online courses and programs; including programs for Business.
Length of Business Relationship: Since 2011
2. **Company Name:** Southeastern Oklahoma State University
Address: 425 W. University Blvd., Durant, OK 74701-3347
Contact: Tim Boatmun, Dean of Graduate Studies, E-Programming, & Academic Support
Phone: 580-745-2372
Email: tboatmun@se.edu
Project Description: Provide instructional support with Academic Coaches for various online courses and programs; including programs for Business.
Length of Business Relationship: Since 2016
3. **Company Name:** Boise State University
Address: 1910 University Dr, Boise, ID 83725
Contact: Brian O'Morrow - Director, Professional, JD, & Online MBA Programs
Phone: 208-426-3168
Email: brianomorrow@boisestate.edu
Project Description: Provide instructional support with Academic Coaches for various online courses and programs; including programs for Business.
Length of Business Relationship: Since 2013

D. FINANCIAL PROPOSAL

Academic Coach Pricing Schedule

This pricing structure contained herein will remain firm for a period of 90 days from the date and time of the quote deadline date.

Pricing is “per student per course” and based on some variables: Level of the Course and the Length of the Course.

Undergraduate Level Courses	
Course Length	Fee (per student per course)
5 Weeks	\$36.00
6-7 Weeks	\$38.00
8-9 Weeks	\$40.00
10-14 Weks	\$42.00
15-16 Weeks	\$44.00
Graduate Level Courses	
Course Length	Fee (per student per course)
5 Weeks	\$46.00
6-7 Weeks	\$48.00
8-9 Weeks	\$50.00
10-14 Weks	\$52.00
15-16 Weeks	\$54.00
Doctoral/Post-Graduate Level Courses	
Course Length	Fee (per student per course)
6-7 Weeks	\$70.00
8-9 Weeks	\$75.00
10-14 Weeks	\$80.00
15-16 Weks	\$85.00

Billing/Invoicing to the University:

- The number of Student(s) for each Start shall be counted at the Census Date. Longwood University and Instructional Connections shall communicate on or shortly after each Census Date and agree in writing on the official count of Student(s). The communication from LU shall be in writing and shall be provided by LU’s POC.
- The number of Student(s) for each Start shall be counted at the Census Date (the day after add/drop). Instructional Connections shall invoice for the reconciled and official count of Student(s) on the Census Date within 14 business days of the census date.
- If the university changes course lengths, combines courses, or otherwise makes substantial changes to course curriculum and/or expectations within its full control included in a program in connection with which an Academic Coach has commenced work, both parties agree to negotiate an appropriate adjustment to pricing.