

**College of Professional Studies
Master of Professional Studies and Graduate Certificate
in Learning Experience Design and Technology (LXDT)**

Executive Summary – October 28, 2020

The College of Professional Studies (CPS), through its Graduate School of Education (GSE), proposes to develop a new standalone *Master of Professional Studies (MPS) in Learning Experience Design and Technology (LXDT)*, and a *Graduate Certificate in Learning Experience Design and Technology (LXDT)*. Both new programs allow for an updated, expanded, and more practice-based curriculum to address the challenges facing 21st Century learning designers, educators, trainers, and instructional technologists across all industry sectors. These professionals are expected to remain current in the knowledge and skills required during a time of unprecedented growth in the field, including the expansion of online education, new pedagogical and design approaches, constantly-changing technologies, and unexpected challenges (e.g., COVID-19).

The LXDT master's degree (45 quarter hours) will take between one and two years to complete. The LXDT certificate (16 quarter hours) will take between six months and one year to complete. These two new programs are intended to replace the current MEd eLearning and Instructional Design (eLID) concentration and the eLID graduate certificate (conditional on separate approval). The change of degree from an MEd to an MPS is due to the new program's intentional focus on the immediate application of knowledge and skills in real-world environments, from authentic assignments in every course, to an expanded variety of experiential opportunities, both within and outside of coursework.

The learning experience will add value to the learner and align with Northeastern 2025 and CPS mission/values in the following ways:

- Advising, Program Planning and Professional Growth (e.g., provide integrated points of planning and reflection across the program)
- Program Learning Outcomes aligned with Industry-based Competencies (e.g., design, technology, collaboration, communication, cultural responsiveness, creative problem solving/critical thinking)
- Innovative Course Design and Formats (e.g., badge earning opportunities in most courses and all Skill Building Labs, open elective options)
- Use of Current Technologies (e.g., integration of Articulate 360 authoring tool in design classes)
- Expansion of Experiential Learning Opportunities (e.g., Design Studio elective, professional internships, and LXDT focused credit and non-credit XN projects)
- Relationships, Networks, Lifelong Learning (e.g., student resource center and focused outreach to alumni to participate in Skill Building Labs and LXDT webinars)

Both new LXDT program course sequences include four new courses:

- EDU6334: Foundations of Learning Experience Design (required);
- EDU6335: Advanced Practices in Learning Experience Design (required);
- EDU6336: Data Literacy (required for MPS; elective for Certificate); and
- EDU6338: Design Studio (elective).

Skill Building Labs and Seminars/Badging

The ever evolving field of learning design requires that the program remain agile and open to changes in professional practice, design methodologies, technology, and other emerging innovations. To that end, a series of 1-2 quarter hour modular LXDT Skill Building Labs (SBL), taught by expert practitioners, will be introduced to allow learners the opportunity to focus more deeply on a key skill or knowledge base that supports professional goals and/or enhances employability in the field. The design of SBLs is

experiential; they stand alone without pre-requisites; they are stackable as elective choices; and all will link to at least one badge. Beyond serving the existing student population, SBLs may provide low-stress entry points for potential students who want to try out a higher education experience without a major commitment. They may also be repurposed as non-credit professional development options for internal faculty/staff or external partnerships.

Market Demand/Competition

Both proposed LXDT Programs offer a solid market opportunity with career changers, current learning design or education/training professionals, and recent graduates from a variety of disciplines and across all industry sectors, including those currently tasked with (or interested in) creating learning experiences within Pre-K-12, higher education, government, corporate, and non-profit organizations. This online program will be geared to domestic students but open to applicants across the globe. Key market differentiators include extensive experiential learning through authentic assignments, internships, and credit/non-credit XN projects; the development of professional ePortfolios; multiple options for skill building labs, badges, and open electives; intentional technology integration in all courses; a student resource center; and lifelong learning and alumni networking opportunities.

According to the OOH and O*NET online, the training and development specialist field (no BLS OOH CIP code exists for instructional or learning designer) is projected to grow 7-10% between 2018 (306,000 employed) and 2028 (37,300 projected job openings). This growth rate is considered to be “faster than average for all occupations,” primarily due to innovations in training methods and learning technology, changes that will require major adjustments to current education and training programs across all industries. Employment in the states where Northeastern campus regions are located is projected to remain robust (based on growth rates between 2016 to 2026) at well above the average rate for the U.S. in general (7-10%). All four regions are among the top 15 states for growth in this field (e.g., from MA at 10% growth to WA at 23% growth).

Program Accreditation and Resources

The Learning Experience Design and Technology Master’s and Certificate programs fall under the accreditation umbrella of the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE).

Additional resources include hiring one half-time faculty member (Fall 2022). Academic Technologies already holds a licensing agreement that would enable the LXDT program to purchase 25 Articulate 360 licenses (a course authoring tool that is required by a majority of employers) for \$225/seat. Licenses would be used across multiple courses.