

Lifelong Learning director asked to share ideas with other state reps

Lisle, Illinois ~ Although less than a year old, Benedictine University's Center for Lifelong Learning has been so successful that state officials want to use it as a model for other such centers throughout Illinois.

Stephen Nunes, Ph.D., director of the Center for Lifelong Learning at Benedictine University's Moser College of Adult and Professional Studies, has been invited to speak to members of the Lifelong Learning Coalition at a meeting on Monday, September 26 in Bloomington.

He has been asked to share the steps Benedictine took to launch its program.

"They want to know how we got this program going and how we have been able to be so successful," Nunes said. "They want to know what we did and how we did it."

The Center for Lifelong Learning at Moser College began offering courses last April and currently has more than 250 adults who participate on a regular basis. Some of them take two or three courses at a time, meaning enrollment in the various offerings can range from 600-700 students.

The Center provides an opportunity for mature adults who want to be part of a dynamic, intellectual and social community, and who enjoy learning and sharing new ideas in an interactive, congenial atmosphere.

There are no tests, grades or admission requirements in the non-credit program. The three-to-six-week courses are highly interactive discussions of intriguing topics led by Benedictine University and Moser College faculty, visiting experts and Center members. Topics include history, current events, natural and social sciences, technology, politics, and art and music.

The Center for Lifelong Learning is also an active social community. Members help organize classes and social activities, and can contribute their own expertise by leading study groups.

“There are three big reasons why we have been so successful,” Nunes said. “One is that there is a need in the community. We hit a nerve. The second is (Benedictine President William) Dr. Carroll. He has given us so much support, through his articles, by teaching the very first class we offered. And third, (Dean of Moser College) Mick Carroll. Whatever I need, he provides.”

Founded in 1989 by the Illinois Community College Board, the Lifelong Learning Coalition is an organization of more than 50 community colleges and universities in Illinois that provide learning opportunities for people age 50 and over. More than two-thirds of coalition members are community colleges.

“To be honest, there aren’t too many four-year colleges that offer this type of program,” Nunes said.

For more information about Benedictine University’s Center for Lifelong Learning, go to www.ben.edu/lifelonglearning. The Center for Lifelong Learning is located at the Moser Center for Adult and Professional Studies, 1832 Centre Point Circle, Naperville, IL 60563.

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