Meeting of the Provost’s Open SUNY Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, January 30, 2014
Multiple Locations by Video
Albany, Buffalo, Syracuse, NYC

Attendees:


I. The meeting began with approval of the 12/3 and 01/08 meeting minutes. Both sets of minutes were approved with no revisions.

II. The Quality Assurance group led the group through their report of criteria for programs to be included in Open SUNY+ along with a matrix that could be used to review programs. The Sloan scorecard was provided as a basis for this, but was ultimately scaled back a bit for the matrix to make it easier for campuses to use. A member of the QA team explained the thinking behind each of the documents up for review. One member noted that the scaling back of the Sloan scorecard was incredibly helpful.

Nomination Form - One member asked if there should be a scaled measure included so that campuses don’t rate things as “great,” etc.,
without outlining the resources they have available to meet the criteria. A change to the wording of some of the elements was suggested to encourage campuses to provide complete responses. There is also reference to the full Sloan scorecard in the document for those interested. Another member mentioned that there are some SED forms that could be beneficial to this process. It was suggested that intellectual property policies/facts could be included in this piece as well. Use of a descriptive title rather than official titles for the contacts piece of this form was suggested since some campuses might not have people on campus by those exact titles, but they may have someone on campus in that role. Also, the inclusion of a request for a campus-wide representative and a department representative (if applicable) was suggested. If a large number of the students that may come into these programs are adult students, we may want to consider those differences (between traditional vs. adult learners). We should also consider adding an Institutional Research designee to the list of contacts requested from the campuses. A member asked if we should ask about full-time vs. part-time faculty associated with the program. The group agreed that this should be specified.

**Metrics Form** – On #8 it was suggested to list out a description of the service with examples to make it easy for campuses to identify those resources (e.g., mentor, concierge, etc.). Accessibility was raised as a concern, and a member mentioned that there is a taskforce working on a report on that will be released at this year’s CIT conference. Accessibility standards will be brought into the course refresh process. SUNY’s Counsel’s office has also provided some guidelines on the accessibility piece that can be incorporated. Members of the group were concerned about courses with content from a provider like
YouTube and how do we ensure that all the videos associated with the course are ADA compliant with captioning, etc. It was noted that this is the law, so it should not be a question of whether campuses, courses, etc., comply. A member asked what the specific criteria are that we are looking at for selection purposes; is it most improved, or most prepared already for inclusion? Another member stated that this is a way to determine if a program meets the minimum gate to be part of Open SUNY+, and if we see a program that falls a little short, we would connect them with a resource to help build them up for future inclusion. A couple members wanted to make sure that we’re not excluding programs with high potential if they don’t exactly meet the standards set forth in these forms. One member noted that this is the criteria for Open SUNY+ and not just Open SUNY in general, therefore the rigor with which we are looking at these programs makes sense. The group will make adjustments to this form and redistribute to the committee before making a recommendation to the Provost. For the next wave, it was suggested that we add some certificates to Open SUNY+ to allow more campuses to participate and strengthen ladder opportunities. Multiple members were concerned about considering certificates with any favoritism, but believed they should be factored in the same as they were before with the awareness that ladder opportunities are available; we can highlight that certificates are an important element of the ladder. When this report is finalized and distributed to the Provost, it will be recommended that CAOs have opportunity to comment on this document.

III. The MOOC sub group discussed their report with the group. A series of FAQs and not just one on this topic may be needed as there are a variety of options for providing a MOOC and different ways to utilize a MOOC. One member mentioned that the Coursera MOOC FAQ
should be first on the list since it is so present in the mind of many faculty across the system. One member mentioned that we should consider MOOCs vs. our general approach to scalability (i.e., do these FAQs include closed courses for SUNY students that are large in scale? Also, exploratory courses will be open, but not necessarily massive). Many questions about MOOCs are coming in, so the group still felt it’s important to get a MOOC specific FAQ finalized soon. “What is a MOOC by our definition at SUNY?” could be a great first Q. Concern was raised over limiting potential based on what a MOOC is or isn’t and any associated fears. Lack of information about the boundaries of what MOOCs are, and are not, tends to lead to fear according to one member.

Cost model for MOOCs and revenue is something that CFOs are concerned about and should be explored. An area in the Learning Commons should be created for individuals interested in developing MOOCs to share ideas and find collaborators. A deeper examination of competition between campuses and programs should also be explored. What kind of branding should be used in MOOCs? The Coursera contract lists all courses as Open SUNY and then by institution. A member stated that MOOCs shouldn’t be any different than another course format in that the campus should support it to make it successful and of high quality. Another member mentioned that Coursera will not accept subpar video quality, etc., so it’s not as if campuses can just throw up something that doesn’t meet standards. A point was made that when/if PLA is worked into Open SUNY, students would be able to get credit based on their knowledge learned from MOOCs—this should be factored into future planning for Open SUNY. The next meeting of the Provost’s Open SUNY Advisory Committee
will likely focus on the work of the MOOC subgroup.

IV. The meeting concluded. The next meeting of the full group will be on 02/20/14 from 1 -3pm.