Meeting of the Provost’s Open SUNY Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 22, 2014
Multiple Locations by Video
Albany, Buffalo, Syracuse, NYC

Attendees:
Deb Amory, Susan Deer, Martie Dixon, Christy Fogal, Kathleen Gradel, Carey Hatch, Fred Hildebrand, Karin Hilgersom, Lenore Horowitz, John McDonald, Ken O’Brien, Cyril Oberlander, Phillip Ortiz, Alexandra Pickett, James Pitarresi, Kim, Scalzo, Anita Bleffert-Schmidt, Peter Shea, Lisa Stephens, Candace Vancko, Ed Warzala

I. The meeting began with approval of the 03/12 and 04/02 minutes. Minutes were approved with no revisions.

II. The group discussed the need to have the Open SUNY website easier to find from www.suny.edu before changing gears to discuss MOOCs. The MOOC group had a discussion recently about what kind of process can be put in place to ensure quality/appropriate courses are put on the Coursera platform. The group discussed the possibility of having some paths to getting a course up on Coursera with an executive sponsor from their campus and then coordination of a project manager type role from System Administration that will help guide selected courses through the process of getting into the platform. Additional roles at the System Administration level might
include a lead instructional designer to help ensure best practices are used, an application support individual can help faculty troubleshoot any issues, and a communications point person to keep everyone informed. Campus level roles would include a project manager, faculty member(s) leading the course, video production support, and a communications point person. This process will help decide what the best use of the technology is for the course—the hope is to ensure that MOOCs are used where effective and less-effective options are not pushed into the platform just because the technology is there. The MOOC group is going to pull recommendations together for the May 12th meeting with hopes that the result will serve as recommendations to the Provost. One member said that what excites them about these discussions is the focus on how we can reach different audiences in a meaningful way.

A representative from System Administration attended a Coursera conference recently and it was noted that more than 50% of Coursera partners are from outside the United States. These partners seemed more willing to take risk to attain societal impact vs. being as concerned about intellectual property—that was interesting. Coursera also seems to be staffing up in an interesting way by hiring people from companies like Netflix and Facebook to create an easy to use environment that is open and tie-together logical items/courses to lead users through a path to non-degree credentialing. Analytics are showing that some students in the signature series are doing very well. Companies are coming to Coursera and saying that if Coursera sets up a signature series that meets the needs of their workforce, they will send their employees through the program for professional development. It was noted that the analytics look very promising, and
there are some amazing research possibilities that will be opened up once those analytics are up and running—this was highlighted as a great opportunity for SUNY.

III. The multi-campus programs group needs to re-group and have some additional discussions to advance their work. Their original report was distributed in January and they have been examining other program models (e.g., Georgia), and they are hoping to have a discussion with folks from Georgia soon. The largest barrier for this sub-committee is that the loss of a member has made advancing the work difficult. Karin Hilgersom and Kim Scalzo volunteered to join the multi-campus programs group to help advance their work. The work of the financial aid consortium may be beneficial to this group and their work to date will be shared with the committee. At the last meeting of NYCAP, many members were concerned about the lack of a business model for Open SUNY and there was some confusion about the existing business model of SLN. It was mentioned that there is very little publicly available information about the existing SLN business model. It was mentioned that the flow of funds between campuses is not at all related to the SLN model, but is an agreement between campuses that ties to existing cross-registration policies that are SUNY-wide. These policies are not “Open SUNY” or “SLN” policies. The Open SUNY team and the Provost’s office are working with the SUNY CFO on a business model that will fund the administrative pieces that drive Open SUNY. The Provost’s Open SUNY Advisory Committee will have an opportunity to view a draft of the model once complete. The multi-campus group will take a look at the existing cross-registration policy to highlight any issues they might see and provide feedback. The committee discussed a model out of Washington State that
provides much of the cross-registration, administrative, and financial pieces behind the scenes so that students have a streamlined experience. Seamless Transfer paths were also discussed and it was mentioned that powered by Open SUNY+ courses may be able to help meet students’ needs in getting the courses they need to complete their transfer pathways into their next level program. The group hopes to look more closely at what Washington State has done to see if there are lessons we can apply to helping get SUNY campuses to join together in making this process easier for students. Common course numbering was discussed and in Washington it was achieved through a legislative mandate. The SUNY team is trying to achieve this without needing to involve the legislature, but it was acknowledged that this would be a long process were SUNY to embark down this path.

**IV.** An update was provided on the Wave II nomination process and the Provost’s Open SUNY Advisory Committee’s role. Additional information on this will be provided at the 05/12 meeting of this group. The call for course information was discussed and it was made clear that this initial look at course ideas is informational at this point. A review of this information will likely inform next steps on the possibility of Open SUNY+ courses.

**V.** The Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) group is looking at what kinds of procedures and options are available. There is still quite a bit of work to be done and the group will continue their work over the summer to provide the best possible recommendations. The group will provide an update at the next meeting with any preliminary conclusions or thoughts. Updates to an existing policy may be the way
forward on PLA. The SUNY Provost’s office is looking into this. Any revised policy will be discussed with this group, the University Faculty Senate, and the Faculty Council of Community Colleges.

VI. The summer schedule for the group was the next item on the agenda. A member was concerned that we will lose valuable momentum if we put a hold on work for the summer. Members were polled to see if the group met less frequently over the summer, if people would be interested in continuing on over the summer. Multiple members expressed interest in meeting over the summer to continue this work. A member asked if there were one or two critical items they could focus on for the summer. Multi-campus items and the business model for Open SUNY were proposed as possible topics to advance over the summer. A member of the SUNY team suggested maybe having Wave II nominations be broken up into wave II, III, IV, etc., so that campus need not continually apply.

VII. The meeting concluded. The next meeting of the full group will be on 05/12/14 from 1pm-3pm.