Meeting of the Provost’s Open SUNY Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Monday, August 18, 2014
Multiple Locations by Video
Albany, Buffalo, Syracuse, NYC, Brockport

Attendees:
Deb Amory, Susan Deer, Martie Dixon, Christy Fogal, Carey Hatch, Fred Hildebrand, Karin Hilgersom, Lenore Horowitz, Mark McBride, John McDonald, Ken O’Brien, Phil Ortiz, James Pitarresi, Kim Scalzo, Anita Bleffert-Schmidt, Candace Vancko, Ed Warzala

I. The first item on the agenda was approval of the July meeting minutes. Minutes were approved without revisions and will be posted to the website.

II. The second item on the agenda was the report outlining possible framework for multi-campus programs. A copy of the report distributed for this meeting included suggested revisions from the last meeting and was revised with an eye toward audiences that may have little familiarity with SUNY. A member of the SUNY team is working with the budget group to determine how this model might scale. A member of the committee will add a paragraph to the report on how the HVEC will serve as a pilot to demonstrate how a consortium may work in the
SUNY system and possibly scale. This addition was suggested to help frame the recommendations and to answer the question of “why are we doing this?” A member explained that the more students a member college has in a consortium, the more FTE reimbursement each campus could receive. The HVEC documents will be added to the final report as an appendix.

A member of the SUNY team talked about some of this already being in place through existing jointly registered programs.

There’s a deficit for one campus in the consortium, but it was explained that this is because that campus does not offer any programs into the consortium (they send their students to other campuses), so their incoming revenue is not what it could be if they offered a program. This highlighted the need for active participation in such a consortium model to see all benefits. Another member highlighted that they were glad to see some of the funding go into the administration of the consortium to continue to drive these efforts.

A member of the SUNY team asked what the process looks like for creating new joint-programs. One difficulty in the process is that the program needs to be approved through all four campuses, but the process is routine from the System Administration and SED perspective. Hiring an employee to help shepherd through approval at multiple campuses was something the HVEC has found helpful. A member of the committee asked that it be highlighted in the report that this is a recommendation for a “consortium.”

The chair thanked the committee for all their work and entertained a
motion to accept the report, make slight amendments, and send to the Provost’s Office. The motion was approved.

III. The third item on the agenda was a discussion around the PLA group’s report. The group discovered through their research that there is existing policy on PLA and a TAACCCT grant dealing with this as well. The first recommendation of the committee is a revision to the existing PLA policy, and the second is that a SUNY center for PLA be created and housed at Empire State College. The POSAC PLA subcommittee supports the endorsement of the TAACCT group suggested changes. A member of the committee did not think the POSAC should endorse the specific recommendations of the TAACCT group, but suggests that the group support revisions to the existing policy noting that POSAC has read the TAACCT recommendations. Another possible route could be for the subcommittee to examine each TAACCCT recommendation in detail and then support more specific TAACCCT recommendations.

SUNY currently allows for up to 30 credits by PLA in existing policy, but many campuses limit below this number (generally around 15 credits). There are no existing transfer guarantees for these credits. One member of the committee suggested looking at middle states to see what they may have guidelines on related to PLA.

The group suggested that the TAACCCT group recommendations be run through SUNY governance structures (UFS and FCCC).

Regulations for competency-based learning are being developed by middle states now and should be finished soon. The PLA group will
stay up to date on these regulations and will inform the rest of the POSAC as more is known.

A member of the group mentioned at a recent FCCC meeting that the existing policy on PLA is out there, so that group is aware that the policy is already in place, but may not know much detail about it.

The POSAC recommends that the TAACCCT policy be forwarded to faculty governance organizations and the POSAC supports non-specific revisions to the existing policy. Once the POSAC as a whole has a chance to review the TAACCCT group report in detail, they may make more specific endorsements. Either way, it was agreed upon that UFS and FCCC should provide feedback on the TAACCCT document. A member of the Provost’s office agreed to work with the presidents of the faculty governance groups to get feedback from their respective organizations.

The group turned to a discussion about the proposed center for PLA at Empire State College. It was explained that this was a conceptual proposal and that specifics have not been examined yet. A member of the committee thought that such a center could help ensure uniform quality and academic integrity across all campuses. Another member of the committee was concerned about centralizing evaluation of PLA. It was explained that the proposed center will not be a clearinghouse for every campus, but will provide training and best practices that campuses could then use in a process driven at their home campus. Centralization was recommended by another member because they believed that was the only way to ensure that everyone is abiding by the agreed upon quality and integrity standards. It was also suggested
that it may be described as a “community of practice” around PLA housed at Empire State College, rather than a center. Another member recommended that a clear definition of PLA be included in the report.

The chair will meet with the PLA sub-committee in the next week or so to discuss next steps and proposed revisions.

IV. The fourth item on the agenda was a discussion around MOOCS. A member of the SUNY team explained that there was some displeasure from the team at Coursera that SUNY was not working to “move the dial” and a follow up meeting will be held in the fall to determine possible areas of collaboration. Other systems seem to be more targeted than SUNY (they will provide campuses with a list of what they would like to see MOOCS developed around and then provide funding to help move those along). Creative commons licensing to share content (as is done with the IITG grants) was described as something of interest around MOOCs. The eCore program in Georgia is also looking to take things to scale with Coursera.

A report was circulated to the group explaining the existing MOOC landscape at SUNY and members of the committee were surprised to see how much was going on throughout the system related to MOOCs. It was asked that this discussion continue during a long meeting at the beginning of September.
V. The final item on the agenda was a discussion of the upcoming meeting dates of the Provost’s Open SUNY Advisory Committee.

VI. The meeting concluded. The next meeting of the group will take place in September. A poll will be sent to members following the 08/18 meeting.