Meeting of the Provost’s Open SUNY Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 24, 2014
Multiple Locations by Video
Albany, Buffalo, Syracuse, Stony Brook

Attendees:

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

II. The second item on the agenda was an update from the Open SUNY team on future directions of the effort.
   a. The team will be launching Open SUNY Affordable Learning Solutions in the next week or so. This effort focuses around free or lost cost alternatives to traditional textbooks and other learning materials.
   b. An Open SUNY business tool for campuses is also being made available. This tool allows campuses to enter some parameters and get back some data on cost associated with getting involved in
online ed. The tool also demonstrates that online can be profitable for campuses of any size.

c. The Open SUNY team has been in discussions with some potential business partners where online options could benefit their workforce. Disaster relief organizations were suggested as a potential type of organization with which to partner (e.g., National Corps and AmeriCorps).

d. The Open SUNY team has a better idea now of what the budget will look like for Open SUNY for the next year and are working on determining what can be delivered within those parameters.

e. There have been some organizational changes on the Open SUNY team to align with needs going forward. One member asked to see an org chart of the Open SUNY organization. A member of the SUNY team said they would share an org chart with the group once a revised version is ready.

f. There is an effort underway to examine possible benefits of consolidating the SUNY Recruitment Response Center and the Open SUNY HelpDesk to provide students with a single point of contact.

g. More than 3,000 students have been identified via SUNY Complete as eligible to complete stopped-out degrees at SUNY Rockland Community College.

A member of the committee asked if readiness assessments for students were required. It was explained that they are not required, but are available to students and campuses throughout the system.
III. The third item on the agenda was final approval of the PLA and Multi-Campus Programs group reports.
   
a. PLA group report: References to a “center being housed at Empire State College” have been removed and it was replaced with a “community of practice.” The PLA report was approved. The final report will also be sent to governance organizations.

b. Multi-Campus Programs group report was up next to be finalized. It was noted that this report suggests the tracking of two consortia, but will not be a single effort to address cross-registration policies; cross-registration will have to continue to be examined and addressed by the SUNY Provost’s Office in their ongoing efforts. Another member highlighted that the consortia being examined are between community colleges, so additional efforts will need to examine such agreements between community colleges and other sectors. The business tool that the Open SUNY team pulled together does not currently have a variable around consortia expenses, but it will be added in. The report was approved.

IV. The fourth item on the agenda was a discussion around the suggested POSAC sub-committees for AY 2014-2015.
   
a. MOOCs – To further examine the effective use of MOOCs across multiple platforms within Open SUNY.

b. Quality Assurance – This group would likely focus more on working closely with the Open SUNY Center for Online Teaching Excellence (COTE) going forward. There will likely still be need for this group to advise on ongoing efforts around campus partnerships. A member of the Open SUNY team mentioned that there is a report from the FACT2 group around accessibility and feedback from groups like this might be beneficial.
c. **Curriculum** – This would examine issues around students taking individual courses through Open SUNY (especially for matriculated students). This process has been viewed as relatively painful/cumbersome for these students, and recommendations around ways to make that process more seamless may be one output of this group. Cross-registration is just one element of the issues students face on this front. Ladder program models are another item this group will likely examine. A member of the SUNY team said that it would be interesting to have a concierge take the lead on ensuring credits students choose to take at other campuses will transfer in for full credit. A high-level of campus engagement was recommended by the group in these efforts.

d. **Communications** – The group can serve as a better communications vehicle going forward. Briefing campuses at a high-level was suggested.

e. **Open SUNY Organization** – Will advise on Open SUNY organization efforts and discussing/identifying differentiation between Open SUNY and other organizations at SUNY.

A note will be sent to the group following this meeting for members to identify their first, second, and third sub-committee choice and also identify any individuals not on this committee that may be able to contribute to the group going forward.

V. The fifth item on the agenda was a discussion around a recent survey of current and potential student attitudes toward “SUNY,” SUNY campuses, and online learning. Some insights include: there is a large pool of students out there that are interested in online education (insight into this population’s readiness was suggested as something to look into); the stigma around online is not as strong as it is often
suggested; students interested in online, for the most part, want to get their degree from a college that also offers traditional classroom options; awareness of SUNY as a provider of online education is low; prominent faculty and being known for degrees are two areas where SUNY is quite strong; there is a cost advantage where SUNY fares better than University of Phoenix, but the perception among the public is that they cost about the same; people believe that online is a way to improve their lives, but are concerned about affordability; and there is high interest in online bachelor's and master's degrees, but SUNY offers a majority of degrees at the associate's level.

VI. The meeting concluded. The next meeting of the group will take place October 7th 2:00-3:00pm and a discussion around the announcement of Wave II partner programs will be on that agenda.