Meeting of the Provost’s Open SUNY Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, December 17, 2014
Multiple Locations by Video
Albany, Brockport, Buffalo, Syracuse, Stony Brook

Attendees: Cole Campese, Sue Deer, Martie Dixon, Carey Hatch, Fred Hildebrand, Karin Hilgersom, Jason Lane, Paul Marthers, Vikki Mazzone, Mark McBride, John McDonald, Lori Mould, Alfred Ntoko, Ken O’Brien, Phil Ortiz, James Pitarresi, Anita Bleffert-Schmidt, Kim Scalzo, Lisa Stephens, Nina Tamrowski, Candace Vancko,

I. The first item on the agenda was approval of the meeting minutes from the last meeting. Minutes were approved with minor revisions and will be posted to the website. A member of the group requested that an Open SUNY update be built into each meeting of the POSAC.

II. The second item on the agenda was an Open SUNY update with members of the Open SUNY team. Since the group last met, the Open SUNY team has posted an internal search for an Open SUNY Executive Director. The team has also placed an ad in the contract reporter for some consulting services for Open SUNY. Onboarding for wave II continues and many campuses are lined up for Open SUNY Institutional Readiness sessions. Open SUNY+ wave I and wave II campuses will meet face-to-face for the first time after the State of the University Address on January 23rd, 2015.
This is the final week of the marketing pilot focused on business programs. Multiple campuses have requested enrollment roundtables with the Open SUNY team and the enrollment team.

The Open SUNY team received some feedback from an external partner on some suggested website optimizations.

A member of the committee asked about the model for revenue and fees for Open SUNY services. A member of the Open SUNY team said that since budgets are flat this year, we will work to offer options for shared procurement contracts. Campuses will continue to determine how they want to share revenue with other campuses via collaborative models. Campuses will be listed in the navigator at no charge and many offerings through Open SUNY education services will be available to faculty at no charge. Another member of the committee raised some concerns about recharges. The Washington model was proposed as a model that may work best for community colleges as it is a non-opt-out model that assesses a flat fee per student and that fee funds many support services including the coordination of a revenue sharing model between campuses. It was mentioned that the State University Business Officers Association (SUBOA) and other business officer groups should continue to be involved in any model discussions. A member of the group was concerned about students being charged any additional fees as their cost obligations are already high.

A member of the committee asked if the Open SUNY team was working to have more flexibility in offering out of state online students the same tuition as in state students. A member of the SUNY team
said that SUNY is in discussions to have more flexibility in tuition charges around online.

Members of the SUNY team have started looking into the existing cross-registration policy to see what can be done to fix the model to better serve students and campuses. Many other systems do cross registration better than SUNY, so it is time to take a look at the model and update it.

III. The third item on the agenda was a discussion of enrollment management at SUNY. Enrollment management is currently in a state that could be best described as a start-up because the populations we are focusing on with Open SUNY are not the same groups we have traditionally tried to reach. The enrollment team is working with multiple campuses to learn what practices have worked for them in reaching non-traditional students. The team has also looked into models used by for-profit and other external universities to see what they are doing and what has been successful for them. Many for-profit institutions spend more than $30m on enrollment marketing efforts. The team recognizes that these enrollment efforts will require buy in and collaboration with all SUNY campuses to be most effective. Business partnerships are another avenue being explored by the SUNY team to enhance enrollment efforts.

A member asked if we fully understood the cost of SUNY courses online vs. national competitors. The SUNY team has quite a bit of information on these costs and SUNY is very competitive nationally, especially when students are eligible for in-state tuition. Television commercials were suggested as a method to build awareness of
SUNY’s competitive cost. The SUNY team would be glad to pursue such marketing methods, but these kinds of advertising can be resource heavy. A member of the committee was concerned about some Open SUNY programs having some kind of residency or location specific requirements—this is a barrier for working adults and out of state students. Programs that require a physical lab are an opportunity for campuses to partner with one another or businesses in the student’s hometown to allow students to remain close to home and still complete these requirements. A member of the committee suggested that CIT have some panels on what works at the campus level.

IV. The fourth item on the agenda was a discussion of scheduling for the spring semester. January 20th is likely the next meeting of the committee.

V. The meeting concluded. The next meeting of the group will take place in January 2015.