

Michael J. Grant Campus

# Academic Assembly

## **December 11, 2018 Meeting Minutes**

1. Alexander Kasiukov called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m.
2. The minutes of November 13, 2018 meeting were approved unanimously.
3. Chair's Report (Alexander Kasiukov) – see [http://kasiukov.com/assembly/updates/2018-12-11/index.html#Grant-Campus-Academic-Assembly](http://kasiukov.com/assembly/updates/2018-12-11/index.html%22%20%5Cl%20%22Grant-Campus-Academic-Assembly)
	1. Update on Tri-Campus Governance: The 3 governance chairs met and agreed to allow the Blackboard discussion group about the future of the tri-campus governance for 1 week after the February meeting of the campus governance bodies. The forum will be closed on March 5, 2019. The feedback will be compiled before the forum is closed and a summary will be provided at the 1st Assembly meeting of the spring semester. After that, face-to-face meetings will be held using simulcast technology at all campuses. So discussions can take place from there.
	2. How are the governance chairs communicating with the administration since we are still in limbo? : Is it the feeling that the ad hoc structure is weaker than the Central Governance Council (CGC)?
		1. Weekly meetings are held with VP Beaudin and many times VP Adams will attend. It’s an ad hoc structure for communication. Yes the ad hoc structure is mush weaker. If we have time Janet Simpson will speak regarding her experience with the lack of the CGC. It is vital that everyone contribute to the forum.
4. Resolution from the [College-wide Curriculum Committee](https://www.sunysuffolk.edu/governance/college-curriculum/index.jsp):
	1. [Resolution 2018-09-[09]](http://kasiukov.com/assembly/updates/2018-12-11/assembly-resolution-2018-09-%5B09%5D-soc-122-course-revision-proposal.docx) Approving the [SOC122 - Modern Social Problems Course Revision Proposal](https://www.sunysuffolk.edu/governance/college-curriculum/documents/2018-2019/soc122-course-revision-proposal.docx) (Lynn Liebert Marx, Janet Simpson) Approved [30-2-3]
5. Discussion: programs with 50% or more of their coursework potentially available in DE modality are classified as DE programs by the New York State Department of Education. What academic implications does this designation have?

	1. This decision by the NYS Dept. of Education effects 27 certificates and programs that fall within the scope of the regulation and need to be registered with SUNY. There was no anticipation on the part of the faculty that these programs would be listed as online programs when some of the courses were offered online. For example, COM studies is on the list because of the core requirements that are offered as online courses.
	2. Issues that arose during the discussion were lack of a cohesive plan for the implementation of online courses, lack of oversight and assessment of online courses, student readiness, student experience, role of the Distance Education Committee (DEC), the importance of faculty engagement with students, ADA compliance, the possibility of an ad hoc College-wide committee, FA contract and the new College Strategic Plan.
	3. **Lack of a cohesive plan for DE** – These programs have never come before the Grant Campus or College-wide Curriculum Committees. As long as these courses appeared in the college catalog, a shift in teaching modality to online could be made without going through the Curriculum Committees. So, the Curriculum and Academic Standards Committees were never given the opportunity to comment on the impact on our students and should have that opportunity.
	4. **Lack of oversight and assessment –** It seems that we need a way to evaluate the classes and the teaching. We need better assessment. This type of modality is not being evaluated. We have a well-defined process for curriculum development and governance is a big piece of that which is fractured now and not functioning effectively. SUNY is mandating this registration based on the statistics. All of our programs rely on the Gen Ed courses that are offered online. Based on our Open SUNY self-assessment, we are not positioned as an online institution, we do not offer support 24/7 for the students, online tutoring or online advisement. There will be the implementation of quality matters standard to set forth guidelines bench marks and parameters to increase assessment of the online classes.
	5. **Student readiness issues –** There has not been any back work to insure that what we are doing works for our students. Do we need to put more materials into this? Do we need to do a type of self-study questionnaire for the students to inform the students of what online courses entail? Students have commented that they were unprepared for what an online course requires and that they failed the course and have then lost the money they paid for it. How do we insure that our students are ready for this and ready to succeed? For example, Penn State only allow students to take 1 online course at a time. The success in an online course can have an effect on student success and student retention in connection to this. Handouts were distributed with facts and figures about who succeeds in online courses. Underprepared, under-resourced minority students have a lack of understanding of what is entailed in an online course. Our population is approaching 50% disadvantaged students. Many of our students have full-time jobs, increased family responsibilities, lots of demands on their time, and often do not understand what is involved in an online course. As an institution, we stepped into this online business with good intentions, but now NYS is requiring that we register and that has further unknown implications. DEC has done a lot of reading on the issue and made strong recommendations to the Administration on how we should proceed with online education, however, even the recommendations that were adopted have not resulted in a positive change or safeguard for our students. We are a community college, we draw our enrollment from the local communities. We know our students may be the least prepared to succeed at an online course. And we are in a situation where some of our programs are being designated as online programs which were never consciously designed as online programs. The second handout is an assessment for students to determine if the students are prepared for an online course. Despite many years of recommendations from DEC to the administration to create appropriate “gateways” such as a readiness test, a certain GPA, a limit to the number of online classes a student can take, there has not been any change. Right now Camille Karlson is investigating the tool called “Smarter Measure” but those who agreed to “test it” it in courses felt it was not really what we need because it does not address key elements of taking an online class as well as the handout does. The sample readiness quiz would help students to determine whether they were ready to take an online class and what steps they would need to take to become ready, nstead of allowing students to register then fail. These failure experiences are related to retention issues. The failure experience is discouraging. If we are focused on retention and student success, we should be mindful of how this modality is being presented. Although DE is appropriate for some students it is not for all students. We need to be more careful about making the determination.
	6. **Student experience with online courses –** From an advising standpoint, DE can be helpful and it works in certain situations. We don’t want to get rid of it, not end it but mend it. Many students are not prepared for this type of learning: they can’t navigate the technology, they can’t navigate this modality of learning. They don’t know what they are getting into. DE also complicates registration – they need classes on campus, Mon.-Thurs. 8-3. There are too many online classes, too many sections and often they are the only available class left when students come at the last minute. These last minute students are often the least prepared for college level work, let alone online success. Also students sometimes register in an online class by mistake. There is no a good labelling for hybrid classes in banner. Students think they can learn the course in half the time – not that half is online. Some of the students’ opinions of DE that have been collected were not positive. We need to reach out to the students to determine their needs. If we can quantitatively evaluate these classes and the student experiences and how these classes can be improved. Dr. Haff has hybrid classes where only part of the class is online. They meet part-time for lecture and full time for labs. Hybrid may be the best way to introduce DE learning to students. Our students need a face to face with faculty. This way our students experience an online class with face-to-face support and it get them prepared for what an online class requires. The science faculty reaches out to the students to ensure they understand that they have registered for an online class. However, some faculty experience with hybrid classes has not been positive. Sometimes students believe that since they are meeting with the professor, they don’t have to do the online part. They wait for the face-to-face meeting get an explanation for the part they didn’t understand in the online assignment. A student remarked that he wouldn’t take an online class because his in person professor posts everything on Blackboard.
	7. **ADA compliance -** The DE Course have the most stringent ADA compliance requirements, since the only method of delivery if online. However, some feel that although they have completed the eAcademy training, they didn’t have the requisite knowledge to ensure their course was ADA compliant.
	8. **Role of the DEC** – Is it appropriate to say that our level analysis by DEC did not allow us to have the proper review of this issue in the place? That DEC was analyzing course by course and what we can do on the program level is not a sufficient of generality because there is a lot interaction between the programs. DEC was not looking course by course. Curriculum looks at the courses. Courses get transferred to the online format based on faculty willingness to teach it online. Where we are now was not foreseen, it was not strategically planned or based on the academic demands of the program or the needs of our students. DE also effects scheduling: if we put a course online here at Grant, it impacts the scheduling of the other 2 campuses even though they had no say. Unlike a whole program that would go before the other campuses for a vote, the modality shift does not. The effect of DE on the other campuses was also not foreseen when the implementation was begun. DEC does not oversee anything on the programmatic side. DEC only looks whether the learning objectives are being met by the online modality. We need a College-wide committee that will to examine the effectiveness and appropriateness of the online program as it exists now. After evaluation, we can remove courses that we need to. And then, SUNY might not declare us an online institution. In fairness to DEC, they have tried: they have made recommendations, asked for a readiness test, and a minimum GPA requirement. The program needs to be transformed. We need to decide what are the effective next steps to fix the program? DEC or something else. Alexander Kasiukov will address this with VP Beaudin. Maybe the role of DEC should be expanded.
	9. **Importance of faculty engagement with students -** Do we have any data in terms of engagement about students that fail an online course and not return versus failure of an in person class and whether they return? Or on students that fail an online class and use that experience to transition to an in-person class? Is there a difference in how many students we are losing in that area? Alexander Kasiukov got some statistics from VP Beaudin for completion of the class and our success rate for online classes is only 8% lower than face-to-face classes. Previously there was a Title III Grant entitled Student Engagement through Informed Support which was to allow our College to develop in the way we wanted it to develop – online or otherwise, aligning online applications with paper applications, VLC, advising centers. A Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) was done at the beginning of the grant and its end. Overall there wasn’t much change from the beginning to the end of the grant in student engagement. However, the areas that went up was when there was faculty and student engagement.
	10. **Preparedness of faculty to teach online (eAcademy) -** How prepared are the online faculty coming out of the eAcademy? Are the faculty getting the support they need? The eAcademy under Dr. Beaudin is much stronger than it had been in the past. In term of observing online teaching, there is no interaction with students or questioning students and this is where a lot of insight to the teaching of a faculty member can be gained. Chairs are allowed into the online course for only 24 hours, which may not be enough time.
	11. **Ad hoc committee -** We can only set-up an Assembly Ad Hoc. We can talk with the other governance chairs to see if we can set-up a College-wide Ad Hoc Committee. It seems that we need a difference level of analysis. Curriculum has course scope analysis and DEC is a narrower scope. We need to look at the big picture. We need a college-wide committee that involves Curriculum, Academic Standards, DEC and the FA Union as this may have contractual implications.
	12. **FA contract issues** - Hybrid classes defined by the contract – you don’t have to meet 50% of the time to lecture. Under the FA contract FT faculty can teach 40% of their load online. Some professors that teach online are also on campus twice as much as they are contractually obligated to be. There are others that are here once week for 30 minutes for office hours. Contractually they are fine, but the question is in a teaching institution is that sufficient. FA negotiations are beginning, you may want to look at the contract requirements for the modality and student learning.
	13. **New College strategic plan/College-wide concerns –** We have the strategic plan coming up, focus groups will meeting and this issues should be brought up there. The new strategic plan with be guiding the College and the decision making. There are reports from Dr. Beaudin that should be reviewed, Camille Karlson is new at the College and has been working on the online piece for support and other things, so she would be a good person to contact. From a business perspective, we need to determine where our online students are coming from. If we are just poaching our day students then what are we are doing? Are just running more sections? We need to determine who these course are right for and then make sure only those students can register for the online classes.
6. Discussion on [SUNY Sexual Harassment and Consensual Relationship Policy](https://www.suny.edu/about/leadership/board-of-trustees/meetings/webcastdocs/Tab02_Sexual%20Harassment%20and%20Consensual%20Relationship%20Policy.pdf) - Policies must be in place by March, 2019. Feedback is needed by January 2, 2019 on the parameter of whether **all** relationships between faculty/staff and students should be banned regardless of whether a supervisory or instructional connection exists. General discussion centered on whether this restriction goes too far. An informal vote was taken whether this ban is too restrictive. Results in support of the ban – 2, not supported – 20, abstentions – 2.
7. Tri-Campus Governance – Please enroll in the Blackboard forum to contribute to the discussion about Tri-Campus Governance. At the next meeting, Janet Simpson will tell us of how the lack of Tri-Campus Governance has effected the Curriculum Committee.
8. Campus Update (James Keane) – Will send a campus brief. Retirements to note: Prof. Williams (music), Ken Williams (Criminal Justice) and Dave Moriarity (English)
9. For the Good of the Assembly
10. Motion to Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 5:02 pm.