STRATEGIC PLANNING COUNCIL

Thursday, October 10, 2024
Virtual Meeting (Teams)

MINUTES

Members in attendance:

Mary Lou Araneo	Dr. Kathryn O'Donoghue
Dr. Edward Bonahue	Ashley Pope, Esq.
Joanne Braxton	Dr. Mary Reese
Trudy Christ	Dr. Irene Rios
Nina Fielding	Angelica Rivera
Sara Gorton	David Schneider
Kaliah Greene	Dr. Tat Sang So
Lisa Hamilton	Dr. Lauren Tacke-Cushing
Dr. Carol Hernandez	Christina Vargas
Theodore Koukounas	Dr. Scott Votke
Dr. Elizabeth McCormick	Carol Wickliffe-Campbell
Fabio Montella	Dr. Helen Wittmann
Dr. Patty Munsch-Eilbeck	Dr. Joshua Wolfson
Isaac Oddoye	Dr. Yu Zhang

Prof. Koukounas began the meeting at 3:49p.m., by welcoming new members Fabio Montella (Eastern governance alternate), Dr. Kathryn O'Donoghue (Grant campus), Trudy Christ (Eastern campus), Dominic Hardy (Student Trustee), Angelica Rivera (VP, Human Resources), and Ashley Pope (General Counsel)

- Although already presented via e-mail, the minutes from the April 11, 2024 meeting were brought forth for approval. Motion by Dr. Patty Munsch, second by Dr. Mary Reese. Minutes approved by the membership as submitted.

Dr. Lauren Tacke-Cushing, AVP of Academic Affairs and the college's Assessment Liaison Officer (ALO) provided a Middle States update:

- The college is one of 81 institutions going through the Self-Study reaccreditation process.
- The college's tentative timeline for Middle States milestones:
  - Fall 2024: Self-Study begins
  - Spring 2025: Self-Study design submitted
  - Fall 2025: Working groups collect and review data
  - Spring 2026: Working groups complete report drafts
  - Fall 2026: Self-Study report is completed
  - Spring 2027: Evaluation Team visit

Central Administration	**Ammerman Campus**	**Grant Campus**	**Eastern Campus**
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- o Summer 2027: Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) determines accreditation action
- Noted that a college brief regarding the Self-Study process is scheduled to be disseminated to the college community over the next few weeks. As Self-Study co-chairs, she and Prof. Ray DiSanza have been attending the Self-Study Institute. In addition, Steering Committee members have been selected and names will be provided within the college brief.
- Next steps include:
  - o Outlining institutional priorities in which the college will focus on throughout the Self-Study
    - Question: What are those things we can focus on to move the institution forward?
    - Need to underscore how data informs decision-making (how do we tell our story with data and evidence).
  - o Determining the approach to and intended outcomes of the Self-Study.
  - o Creating an evidence inventory working group (new to Self-Study process)
  - o Developing a Middle States microsite to keep college community abreast of actions, updates, decisions, etc.
- It was noted that the SPC co-chairs will work with AVP/ALO Tacke-Cushing and Prof. DiSanza to determine ways in which the SPC can support reaccreditation efforts.

VP Greene provided updates on the following:

Spring 2024 Report of Institutional Effectiveness (*document in the SPC Teams folder*)- the document outlines progress towards the institution's seven Key Performance Indicators including: enrollment, retention, persistence, graduation, transfer, success in a math and English course, and graduation data. VP Greene highlighted areas within the document, including fall and spring enrollment (five year look back with percentage changes), continuing education, ESL and workforce enrollment, workforce partnerships. There was a question regarding who was included in the non-credit data and whether there was duplication. VP Greene noted that she would confirm these data, as the report is complied by continuing education for SUNY's New-Credit Instructional Activity Survey. VP Greene requested that SPC members review the document and send along any questions.

Fall 2024 Enrollment (*presentation in SPC Teams folder*)- presentation focused on the alignment of the college's budget and enrollment, as well as fall 2024 enrollment update and institutional trends. As of October 10, 2024, fall 2024 enrollment included an unduplicated headcount of 20,039 students. Current fall 2024 institutional trends include: an increase in new (first-time) students, decreases in continuing and transfer students, trending flat with students age 25-35, and registration for Beacon Program students are still being migrated. Average credits data for new, continuing, transfer and dual enrolled students was also shared. There was a question regarding how Beacon students are counted in the fall as opposed to the spring. VP Greene noted that to her knowledge, if a student registers for a full year Beacon course, the student is counted in fall data. If a student registers for a course offered in the fall and decides to register for another course in the spring, that student appears in the spring enrollment. A Beacon student who only registers for a course in the spring appears in spring enrollment data.

2024-2025 Operational Plan (*document in SPC Teams folder*)- provided an overview of this year's operational plan. Noted the President's Cabinet pivoted in its approach to the outlined initiatives/activities. Instead of their being 30 plus activities, there was a concerned effort for Cabinet members to focus on student-centered initiatives that seek to further improve college-wide enrollment, retention, access, and diversity, equity, and inclusion. The 2024-2025 Operational Plan is comprised of 15 initiatives and similar to previous years, Cabinet members will provide updates in December, June, and August. VP Greene requested SPC members review the document and e-mail her or Ted any questions or concerns.

VP Greene and Prof. Koukounas engaged membership in a discussion centered on the college's 2022-2027 Strategic Plan, specifically the seven Key Performance Indicators.

- The entire strategic plan was implemented in fall 2023.
- Although KPIs were identified, targets for each KPI were not established.
- Institutional, SUNY-system and national data on retention rates for community colleges were provided.
- Dr. Scott Votke asked if the college had qualitative data on why students don't come back. Is there any way for us to reach out to students who have dropped out to get that information?
  - VP Greene noted that there currently wasn't an institutional exit survey that captures these data. However, the three campuses collect these data on the students who withdraw through the college. Depending on the campus some of the reasons include financial, personal, and job-related.
  - VP Munsch added that while the first thing people might want to do is survey the students, she noted that she believed there was institutional data that could satisfy. She continued that the college could look to see the number of credits completed, GPA, financial holds, along with how many students had early alerts going in, how many students the college lost to N/As (they never showed up to begin with), and how many students withdrew. VP Munsch noted that the Executive Deans take time to look at these data points, and there is a tremendous amount of data already about who are the students leaving and what proactively can we do to help mitigate the circumstances by which students leave. VP Munsch suggested the college assess itself and our own data points because that's really going to lead us to making some strategic decisions about what we need to be considering in terms of how we operate and how we work with students in order to retain more students with us. VP Munsch concluded that there are different pieces to this discussion; however, the last time the college conducted a survey nearly 10 years ago, most of the students were not forthcoming about why they weren't returning. But when there was a closer look at the data points the students weren't earning any credits, their GPA was below a 2.0, the development education piece, etc.
- There was a question pertaining to how we gauge a realistic goal?
  - VP Greene and Prof. Koukounas recommended the Council review existing qualitative and quantitative data (retention and persistence over the past six years), and possibly come to a target. That would be used to also benchmark against national, system-wide data, and local colleges.
- Prof. Koukounas noted that part of what he believes helps improve retention is helping students be successful. He continued the college set a target of 70% in the past, and he is of the mindset the college can get there again recognizing trends. He continued the college can trend lines including the 70% as part of the average calculation we would want to consider. Prof. Koukounas noted he believed the college could do better. Seventy percent would be a big push; however, he believes it isn't unreasonable to strive for something that won't be easy to achieve.
- Dr. Josh Wolfson asked if we have any idea how much of the issues are related to curriculum? For example, students who are struggling to get out of developmental sequences and into a credit bearing course.
  - VP Greene noted a report was generated and provided to the SPC last year regarding the number of first-time students who received zero credits at the end of the fall 2023 semester, and it was approximately 530 students. She continued that OPIE would circle back to these data at the end of the fall 2024 semester.
- Dr. Wolfson mentioned the ASAP program, and the potential for the college to utilize what's working with the program and bring it to scale. The program provides a more intimate connection with students who might not have one already, and suggested Dr. Bell, Director of the ASAP program provide an update when additional data is collected and available.
- Dr. Votke noted that the college deems student's college ready and questioned how many students actually are? He continued, it may be a culture shock coming from high school to our institution, and

maybe they leave because they feel they're just not ready for college at this time. Dr. Votke noted his experience with returning students in his math course that fit into this category. He asked if the college could look at the college seminar course and see how many students take it as compared to the number of students enrolled? This could be used as vehicle to get them college ready.

- VP Greene will work with VPSA Munsch, Interim VPAA/Executive Dean Rios, Executive Dean Ciampa, and Executive Dean Reese on compiling data for the November meeting