

Faculty Caucus Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: November 19th, 2024

Time: 2:30 PM

Location: TEAMS

Attendance: A. Fried, A. Lewis, A. Miller, A. Radlowski, B. Seaton, C. Miller, C. Van Namee, C. Ehrlich, D. Sonne, D. Swiss, E. Bush, E. Brindisi, G. Melendez, H. Forbes, J. Ireland, K. Montague, K. Raab, L. Williams, L. Charbonneau, M. Barlett, M. Faitell, M. Kuczynski, N. Chrisman, R. Huyck, S. McManus, S. Dar, S. Crocker, T. Lock

Meeting Guests: B. Faehmel, A. Palmer

Meeting called to order at 2:32 PM

1. Review of Agenda

2. DEI Conversations: SUNY Gen Ed Civic Discourse: B. Faehmel (Guest)

- I. Identity acquired meaning out of a process of being historically constructed. Students do not understand the process of policy change. They tend to think inequities are a result of mal intentions, so it is important to incorporate Civic Discourse Competency as a General Education Core Competency.
- II. [SUNY Civic Discourse Competency PowerPoint](#)
- III. There will be office hours to help Faculty figure out how to incorporate this content
- IV. Questions/Responses
 - i. Questions: Is this for a specific course or should it be peppered into courses? Response: Students must demonstrate these competencies, so it should be incorporated into a class, but it does not have to be a civics course- should be a Gen Ed course that most students have to take.
 - ii. Questions: Best tips for engaging students in class? Response: Having a structure with ground rules about what is appropriate and what is a deal breaker, so students feel more comfortable with being able to express ideas. Also graded on not “shouting” and how they communicate.
 - iii. Questions: Public speaking class may be a good place to fit this in, but any tips for how to help ESL students? Response: Google Translate/AI may be helpful but a writing component where they have time to construct their arguments more thoughtfully may help.
 - iv. Questions: Faculty’s opinion, do you share and how? Response: Saying something like “I am taking my teacher hat off” / “I am talking as a private person.” But it is best not to tell students how you think, especially because there is a power differential. Share only if students want to know. She does share her opinions with her students but gives context for how she came to these viewpoints/ideas to tries to set the stage of how you got there.

3. New Business

I. Prior Learning Assessment (A. Palmer)

- i. SUNY is mandating that all Colleges develop a (Prior Learning Assessment) PLA action plan. The purpose is to expand opportunities for students to earn PLA

credit and expand opportunities for students to earn this type of credit. MVCC is in a great position to develop these plans as we can use foundational recommendations that were previously done.

1. Work with regional employers to expand opportunities
 2. Explore non-credit to credit opportunities
 3. Make more students aware of this opportunity (i.e. Veterans)
- ii. Suggest read through [Plan](#) (also [Action Summary is available here](#))– Currently high-level plan, want Faculty input. Deadline is the end of December.
- iii. Question: The policy developed at the SUNY level involved more Faculty input than what is in our PLA document. What role should Faculty be playing? For example, the SUNY Empire State model works well – review is done all by Faculty. Response: There must be an opportunity for Faculty to be involved.
- iv. Question: Need clarification about the portion that says we can give Credit for a course that we don't offer Response: SUNY's guidance is to accept as much transfer credit as possible, but not sure the rationale behind that policy
- v. Question: For SUNY Empire – it is a flat fee for all PLA credits, how will MVCC handle that? Also, how is Faculty compensated for the review process? Response: There is an opportunity to discuss what the fee structure looks like. Right now, he believes it is about 2/3rds of the cost of the credits, but it needs to be discussed.
- vi. Question: What is the difference between credit for CEL and portfolio review? Response: When SUNY created template, they used the terms interchangeably – will clarify before it is submitted.
- vii. Question: What are the next steps for Faculty Caucus? Response: Will welcome endorsement if there are no major changes. Was brought up by L. Kahler at the last Faculty Caucus meeting so this is the second time it has been brought up
- viii. Question/Comment: Would like to see more clarity about Faculties role before it is brought to a vote
- ix. Question/Comment: What is the deadline? Response: End of year
- x. Question/Comment: Can we look at it at the last Faculty Caucus meeting of the year? Response: yes.

4. **Approval of Minutes from Tuesday, October 22, 2024**, C. Miller moved to approve, S. Crocker, seconded.

- Passed TEAMS Poll (20 Approved, 0 No, 2 Abstain = 22 total responses)

5. **Chair's report: S. Dar**

- I. Going forward will add slide to report on Senate
- II. **Pre and Post Caucus meeting with VP Kahler**
 - i. AI training opportunities
 - ii. BERT Process (Review)
 - iii. Changes to the Annual Plan are coming. One more pillar is being added. The timeline will not allow for this to be brought to Caucus but come to Senate to hear the rationale.
 1. Increase Student Completion
 2. Strengthen the Educational Pipeline
 3. ADVANCE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVENESS

4. DEVELOP THE WORKFORCE AND COMMUNITY
5. *Operational Excellence (New Pillar)*

III. Meeting with Tom Squires

- i. Suggested Recycling Audit on Campus
 1. We should reach out to the Sustainability Committee and seek their help
- ii. Who to call? 911 in case of all emergencies, Public Safety for disciplinary problems
 1. Buildings are marked. System set up to dispatch / contact our Public Safety. No penalty for calling 911
- iii. Seating in CCED hallway – will look into recommendation – need to comply with fire safety code
- iv. Classroom furniture? Not sure when budget will be approved
 1. Can provide feedback when we know budget will be approved
- v. Emergency Preparedness
 1. Can invite Chief to Caucus. Could ask for guidance on how to respond given you specific location

IV. Senate Meeting (November)

- i. Proposed Calendar 2026-2027 and Intersession
 1. No more intersession beginning this year
- ii. Use of Wheeled Conveyances on Campus Policy
 1. In a Senate folder if you want to read
- iii. Review of BERT process discussion underway

V. Reminders

- i. Please volunteer for Middle States Self Study
- ii. Please response to email about Fall 2026 Calendar

VI. Next Meeting Tuesday, December 10th at 2:30 PM

VII. Questions/Comments?

- i. Questions/Comments: Please do not take out the changes in policies (regarding the plastic policy) from SUNY on the Facilities staff.
- ii. Question/Comment: Should we call 911 from cell phone or campus phone (if close by) – is one better than the other for sharing the location with 911?
Response: will ask!

6. Old Business:

I. Review of the BERT Process: A. Fried

- i. Student Affairs had their all-division meeting last week. They will be working on the process, but it will take time. A. Fried would like to provide documentation including constructive criticism so he will listen/take notes if you want to reach out to him. Can reach out to him and he will record the comments anonymously as well. However, if you are willing to talk, it could be helpful for the Cabinet to talk to you, though will keep confidential if you prefer. Will file information into categories:
 1. Experience
 2. Recommendations about process
 3. Recommendations about review process

- ii. Question/Comment needs to be clarification as to what role BERT plays vs the role 911 plays vs the role Public Safety plays. There may be a situation in which it needs to be 911, especially when you are trying to figure things out under stress in the moment. Redundancy in messaging will clarify how the three entities play a role. Admin has mentioned four pieces as well. We need clarification and should be told yearly. Response: one misconception is that the E in BERT is for emergency, but it is for EVALUATION. When we bring students on board, there is not a lot of contact with the student outside the SSA contact. One thing in the BERT process may fail to see is the line between “sketchy” behavior in the classroom and when 911 needs to be called. One issue to be considered is that some of these situations are “above the faculty’s paygrade.” However, the response has historically been that it is a “classroom management” problem. But if BERT has been employed repeatedly, it isn’t a classroom management problem.
- iii. Question/Comment: You should still use BERT while the policy is being revised, however make sure to be CLEAR about your intention with calling public safety.
- iv. Question/Comment: Has holding an Open Forum for this been considered? Can it be if not? Response: Have not heard anything but can mention it.

7. New Business

I. Gen Ed. Committee Update: A. Lewis

- i. Gen Ed approved two new courses in the arts.
- ii. If you have a course that you teach that may fill the new Core Competency role, please reach out. Next semester the committee will review these.

II. Screening Committee: S. Crocker

- i. Need to discuss policy/procedures for those who are on search committees. The structure of these committees and the process have changed over the years. Years ago, there used to be about five individuals on the search committees, including multiple people who work in that area. More recently it feels like we have lost some transparency. Faculty used to have more input when writing the job description. We want to have a discussion and develop procedures for best practices for search committees.
 - 1. Question/Comment: When people have asked, we have been told that it is hard to get five people to meet however it seems that it is more important to prioritize more people on committees as these future colleagues will be working with us for the rest of our careers
 - 2. Questions/comment: Open teaching demonstrations should be part of the official process
 - 3. Question/Comment: Hearing word that HR is making changes to the process, but we have not been made aware of what the current processes are. We need to hear from HR or from the Dean of a given school, so everyone knows that that process is. How can we devise best practices if we do not clearly know what the current process is? 360 recently has felt more like a report out.
 - 4. Question/Comment: the 360 is an important piece to have and should be happening consistently. If it is not happening, it should be addressed

5. Question/Comment: Timing has been an issue. Some searches are on different timelines. There should be clear guidelines about minimum time for posting, timeline for committee to do work
 6. Question/Comment: Recently a job posting was not really written for the job that was needed. More clarification about how the posting is written would be extremely helpful
 7. Question/Comment: Job posting and job description are not necessarily the same thing. Job Description is what faculty need to do (how much to teach) Job posting more specifics (i.e., about what things will be taught)
 8. Question/Comment: Thought Faculty Council (before COVID) there was a procedure that was approved through Senate about this.
 9. Question/Comment: One previous argument given to reduce screening committee members down to three was to help with “timeliness” of search
 10. Question/Comment: Push feels like “any warm body” but we are a tight knit group so it would be good
 11. Question/Comment: Issue at SUNY level about Administration Searches requiring Faculty on search committee. We should share the resolutions with our Administration
- ii. Senate Advisory will discuss next steps. The chair will discuss with VP Kahler as well.

8. Open Forum

- i. Comment/Question: Post election results, students are concerned about what is going to happen to FASFA and they are concerned with their future in higher ed. SUNY Poly’s President sent out a non-partisan communication to students that was reassuring, as did the SUNY Chancellors. Can we ask our Leadership to follow suit?
- ii. Comment/Question: Is there any other feedback on the Calendar before it is sent out? Comment: Meeting with Student Reps – Students are very in favor of Fall Break. Comment by a student – “since there isn’t a break, I make a break from myself” which is concerning.
- iii. Comment/Question: Concern about Law Enforcement training classes in AB 241. Officers are armed. The presence is threatening/alarming as sometimes they are in casual clothing, and it is hard to see their badges. We are hosting classes through CCED – however they used to be in JC, so we did not see them. Has requested HR find a mechanism for announcing it if possible. Comment: Should investigate our current policies

9. **Adjournment Motion** S. Crocker, Seconded E. Brindisi. Unanimously approved.
- o Meeting adjourned at 4:34 PM.

Next meeting December 10th, 2024, 2:30 PM on TEAMS

Secretary: Devin Sonne