

SUNY Pilot: Framework for Enhancing Academic Programs

February 7, 2025
Bulger 423





Timeline

- Jan 8: Email from Dr. Ram Ramasubramanian (Ram) detailing the Pilot Program
- Jan 9: Call with Dr. Ram
- Jan 21: Email from Dr. Ram - appoint a small program review team
- Jan 22: Email to Esteemed Colleges
- Jan 22: Email to Dr. Ram - smallish team identified with note - as programs are identified, the chairs of the departments that house the programs will be invited...
- Jan 23: Email from David Cantaffa to find time for meeting with Jay Urwitz for pre-meeting
- Jan 27: Meeting with David and Jay-learned that the pilot started Jan 8
- Jan 28: Spring Meeting – Charge and Roster shared
- January 30: Taskforce met with David and Jay

SUNY Pilot - Framework for Enhancing Academic Programs Taskforce



Charge

SUNY will partner with Buffalo State – a dedicated SUNY staff will be assigned to the campus to assist with identifying, collecting, and assessing key performance indicators (KPIs) that will guide our assessment of the effectiveness of programs.

Roster

Academic Deans, Yves Gachette, Nigel Marriner, Randy Bowen, Amitra Wall, Kelly D’Aloisio, Jim Thor, Geoff Nason, Sue McCartney, Kristin Fields, Denise Harris, Bill Benfanti, Meghan Pereira, Howard Reid, Ken Fujiuchi, Laurie Buonanno, Jennifer Toohey, Naila Catilo, Jay Urwitz, David Cantaffa



Key Performance Indicators

Enrollment Trends and Course Demand

- **Five-Year Enrollment Trends:** What is the five-year enrollment trend for the program? If enrollment has decreased by more than 15% over the 5-year period, what are the contributing factors (e.g., shifting student interests, external competition), and how is the institution addressing these issues? By the same token, identify programs with positive momentum that a campus might want to further support and expand.
- **Impact on Credit Hours:** How has the change in enrollment affected the number of credit hours generated by the program and related programs (e.g., biology students taking chemistry courses)? If credit hours or enrollment in supporting courses have decreased by more than 15% over the most recent 5-year period, what actions are being taken to address this decline?
- **Student Demographics:** How have key demographics, such as the ratio of full-time to part-time; in-state to out-of-state; or traditional-age to working-adult students, shifted over the past five years, and what impact has this had on program revenue, resource allocation, and program design?

Comparison with Peer Institutions

- How do the five-year enrollment trends of similar programs at peer institutions compare? Examining these trends, both within and outside the SUNY system, helps determine whether shifts are localized or part of broader changes in higher education.

Key Performance Indicators



Student Outcomes and Learning Experience

- **Program Learning Outcomes:** How well is the program meeting its learning outcomes based on student feedback and performance metrics? Regular assessment of course content, faculty engagement, and the overall learning experience ensures the program remains aligned with student success goals.
- **Career Outcomes:** What are the career outcomes for graduates in terms of job placement, salary, and advancement, and how do they compare to peer institutions? Tracking these metrics (including through SUNY's [gradwages portal](#)) provides valuable data on the program's effectiveness in supporting students' professional and career growth.

Labor Market Demand

- What is the projected labor market need in the regions where graduates typically reside? Understanding this ten-year forecast helps align program offerings with future workforce needs and enhances the career readiness of students.

Institutional Identity and Community Benefit

- How does the program contribute to the institution and broader community (e.g., local partnerships, regional workforce needs, the institution's identity/brand, or the institution's academic reputation)?
- If program expenditures exceed revenue, what models (e.g., partnerships with other institutions, revenue generation) are being explored to maintain these community benefits more cost-effectively?



Key Performance Indicators

Financial Performance and Resource Allocation

- **Revenue Trends:** What has been the annual tuition revenue for the program over the past five years, factoring in real revenue per credit hour after scholarships and discounts?
- **Cost Management:** What are the costs associated with personnel (e.g., faculty and staff) and operational needs (e.g., equipment, technology, subscriptions)?
- **Sustainability:** If the program's expenditures exceed program revenue, what is the institution's plan to address this financial gap (e.g., offsetting a high-cost program with expansion of lower-cost programs, partnership with one or more other campuses, changes to the program model, external funding, or discontinuation of a program that is no longer in demand)?

Another Institution's Framework

- Enrollment
- Graduation
- Enrollment trend
- Job placement

Considered programs meeting at least two of the following criteria:

- A three-year average enrollment under 15
- A three-year average number of graduates under 4
- A 5-year enrollment trend that was more negative than the overall college
- Job or graduate school placement more negative than the overall college.

Another Institution's Framework

Program	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Full Time Undergrad					
Part-time Undergrad					
Full Time Graduate					
Part-time Graduate					
Faculty FTE required to deliver the courses/credit hours taught					
Number of courses taught by visiting Faculty...					
Extra Service Instructors utilized...					
Staff FTE (including accreditation)required to deliver the courses/credit hours taught					
Credit Hours delivered (Students*Credit hours)					

Another Institution's Guiding Questions

The following questions should be directed towards all faculty and staff within a program by anonymous survey.

Regarding Cross-program participation:

- How many faculty in this program also participate in other programs, and what is the proportion of program faculty time?
- How many staff in this program also participate in other programs?
- Identify the programs:

Regarding program capacities:

- What is the maximum enrollment capacity at current resource levels and assignment practices?
- What is the capacity to expand enrollment in this program with existing resources?

Another Institution's Guiding Questions cont.

What are the constraints on expanding enrollment in this program? This could be a “bottleneck” course, staffing, lab space, etc. What per-course enrollment is majors vs non-majors – may indicate needed course focus to add programs. Are there other barriers to recruiting more students into the program?

Regarding our commitment to Academic Excellence:

- How does the program align with labor market demands?
- How does the program contribute to fulfilling the institutional mission?
- How does the program deliver positive community impact and/or contribution to civic responsibility?

Another Institution's Guiding Questions cont.

Are there possible cross-college collaborations or consolidations that would benefit this program?

Faculty and others in each Department for the Number of Courses Taught: The individual professor per course and credit hours may undercount depending on whether a lot of faculty and staff are excused from teaching. This would make the professor to student ratio look better than the overall picture. Consider Faculty and Others in the Department for the number of courses taught. Break this out by overall, tenure/tenure track faculty, other faculty (e.g., adjuncts), assistants, and administrative staff.

Another Institution's Guiding Questions cont.

Bases for teaching dispensation. Are there a minimum number of students before an instruction is considered a course for purposes of filling academic load requirements? How is independent study treated; at what point can a research grant substitute for a course responsibility; what administrative functions exempt a faculty member from a course and how many in each department are excused from one or more courses; what other practices affect time for teaching, such as preparation of academic papers or time to prepare new course materials.

Stated Purposes

This exercise will help us with identifying where we can put resources to grow some of our programs.

This pilot will to extend the SUNY assessment [policy](#) and [procedures](#) related to programmatic review. The hope is to create a flexible, systematic review process that all campuses across SUNY can use so that we can better serve our students by aligning our academic offerings with evolving market trends, optimize resources, and ensure long-term sustainability.

The objective is to align academic offerings with evolving market trends, optimize resources, and ensure long-term sustainability.

Stimulate our review so that Buffalo State can address our needs and institutional priorities.





Next Steps

- Feb 14 Taskforce Meeting
- Feb 20 Meeting with David and Jay
- Institutional Research and Finance and Management Data Collection
- Identification of Programs
- Expand Taskforce

SUNY will establish mechanisms for collecting feedback through regular meetings. This information will be analyzed and used to analyze effectiveness across the SUNY system.