SUNY Campus Considerations for Online Learning as an alternative method of instructional delivery in response to COVID-19

Many SUNY Campuses are considering the use of alternative methods, such as Learning Management Systems (LMS) and conferencing systems (Zoom, Collaborate, WebEx, MS Teams, etc.), to deliver instruction in the event of a significant COVID-19 event. Campuses should consider making these preparations under the broader auspices of Academic Continuity Planning. Academic continuity is the process of maintaining continuity of learning in a crisis caused by a natural disaster, human-induced ("man-made") disaster, or other precipitating factors. It is the extent to which operations that enable affected students to continue their academic studies during the response, aftermath, and recovery phases despite the disruption caused by the crisis can be sustained. Many SUNY campuses may find they already have plans in place based on preparations established during the Swine Flu Pandemic in 2009.

The SUNY Office of the Provost has prepared the following checklist, aligned to the Online Learning Consortium's (OLC) Quality Scorecard for the Administration of Online Programs, for campuses to consider in their Academic Continuity planning.

Institutional Level Checklist

❏ Locate and review business and academic continuity plans, and update them in response to this pandemic.
❏ Identify your faculty, course support, and technology teams, and determine what their current capacity is for supporting delivery of your current online courses.
  ❏ Determine what help you need and what resources are available to you.
❏ Identify your student support services teams, and determine their current capacity and needs to move services online for remote access.
❏ Ensure that your faculty, course, student, and technology support teams connecting with each other and involved with your broader campus business and academic continuity planning.
❏ Create a comprehensive public webpage with contact information for emergency remote/online learning support for faculty, students, and staff.
❏ Review campus-wide course completion policy, adjust for partial course completion, and consider partial credit as appropriate.
❏ Review campus-wide attendance policies and adjust as appropriate.
❏ Involve faculty in decisions about preparations for emergency remote teaching at the course and program level.
❏ Develop policies and procedures for reporting and backfilling faculty during prolonged absences due to illness.

Course Delivery and Faculty Support Checklist

❏ Review your courses that fall into one of the following categories of online delivery:
  ❏ **Currently Online** – Delivered 100% online, generally using the LMS and/or some form of conferencing technology. These courses can continue as is.

- ❏ **Hybrid** – combination of face to face and online instruction, generally using the LMS. These courses can move to 100% online.
- ❏ **Not online this semester** – online content available. These courses can likely be moved online by copying a previous course.
- ❏ **Not online** – never been taught online. Create a course shell for these courses, preferably using a template that includes important information for remote emergency teaching and learning. Provide a campus-wide synchronous conferencing tool, such as Collaborate, Zoom, WebEx, etc., to maintain the current schedule of campus class meeting dates/times.
- ❏ Consider extending synchronous conferencing tools, such as Collaborate, Zoom, WebEx, etc., for other purposes.
- ❏ Consider tools that are mobile ready for students who will only have access via cell phone.
- ❏ Review online course content for accessibility. Minimally, implement a process to address rapid response to requests for accommodations through existing campus disability services.
- ❏ Encourage faculty that are already trained to use online teaching tools for both blended and fully online instruction to assist in faculty preparation efforts for emergency remote teaching.
- ❏ Develop emergency remote teaching orientation for faculty
- ❏ Provide information faculty might need for remote access to campus resources, services, etc. on the broader website.

Student Support Checklist
- ❏ Develop emergency remote learning orientation for students.
- ❏ Provide information students might need for remote access to campus resources, services, etc. on the broader website.
- ❏ Provide a concierge service for students available via phone, email, chat, web-conferencing – to provide a single point of contact for any question.
- ❏ Ensure that all student supports and services can be accessed remotely.
  - ❏ Conduct an inventory of existing student supports and services.
- ❏ Consider how to ensure students have access to technology necessary for remote learning such as computers, headsets, and webcams. Provide recommendations for purchase/access.
- ❏ Provide training and tutorials for students to use online tools.
- ❏ Consider that students are increasingly using mobile devices and that students may have varied types of access to technologies for connecting remotely.

Technology Support Checklist of Considerations
- ❏ Consider whether your current infrastructure (hardware and software licensing capacity, Internet connectivity) can be maintained in a pandemic outbreak and can adequately expand to accommodate an anticipated expansion.
  - ❏ Consider reaching out to university-wide programs, such as Open SUNY/SUNY Online, ITEC, SICAS, OIT, and CPD with your anticipated needs/challenges.

- ❏ Review and expand account provisioning processes for online teaching technologies as necessary.
- ❏ Review and expand secondary contact information, such as home and or cell phone number, in your SIS as necessary.
- ❏ Train and support staff and faculty to remotely access their voicemail. Review, post, and distribute instructions.
- ❏ Train and support staff and faculty to remotely access email via web browser. Review, post, and distribute instructions.
- ❏ Ensure that your "Campus Alerts" system is up to date, operational, tested, advertised, and that campus members are subscribed.
    - ❏ Identify / confirm designated individual(s) responsible for producing alerts.
- ❏ Consider how to ensure faculty, staff, and students have access to technology necessary for remote learning such as computers, headsets, and webcams. Provide recommendations for purchase/access.
- ❏ Conduct an inventory of supported online and remote technologies.

Additional Considerations for Faculty and Instructional Designers

The following questions may help faculty and instructional designers work through the process of addressing "alternative" course delivery methods, and to assess the potential of "alternative" course delivery in current courses.

- ❏ What method of remote delivery (web conferencing, email, LMS, other) appears to be most appropriate/feasible?
- ❏ What training do I need to switch successfully to teaching remotely (synchronous or asynchronous) in an emergency? If TAs are used, are they trained?
- ❏ What hardware and technology support do I need?
- ❏ Can my course materials/content be made available to the students via the LMS? If not, what can I do now to prepare?
- ❏ What support will my students need to engage and participate remotely?
- ❏ Can the student easily find and navigate my course content during an extended campus closure?
- ❏ How can course assessments be administered electronically? Are online assessments already part of the normal course operation? What are remote assessment alternatives?
- ❏ Will my grading process need to change, and if so, how will it be modified? How will students know?
- ❏ What level of interaction with the students, during and outside of class hours, will be required (by instructors, and TAs if available), and what are the possible ways to accomplish that?
- ❏ What will I do if a significant proportion (20-40%) of the class is out sick for an extended period of time (i.e., 5-7 days)?
- ❏ Do I have backup plans for extensions, make-up activities and assessments, course assignments?
- ❏ What options are available if I become ill? How do I report my illness, and request assistance? Are there other faculty/adjuncts/TA's in the program that can assist with the course while I recover?

Resources and links to information that may be helpful

- https://onlinelearningconsortium.org/about/continuity-planning-emergency-preparedness-resources/ (includes additional links that may be useful to you at the campus level)
- https://rems.ed.gov/docs/REMS_IHE_Guide_508.pdf
- https://www.insidehighered.com/.../how-college-leaders...

Services available to support campuses:

- Open SUNY has services available to help campuses looking to online learning as an option and a full range of resources available for:
  - Campus leaders responsible for online learning
  - Faculty planning to teach online and instructional support staff
  - Students enrolled in online courses and student support staff
- SUNY Online can provide coaching support for students who are new to online learning and instructional design support for faculty who are new to online
- The SUNY Center for Professional Development can provide training for faculty preparing to teach online
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SUNY University-Wide Programs Contact Info

- **Open SUNY/SUNY Online** – Kim Scalzo (kim.scalzo@suny.edu)
- **SUNY Office of Information Technology (OIT)** – Brian Digman (brian.digman@suny.edu) or Karen Geduldig (karen.geduldig@suny.edu)
- **Information Technology Exchange Center (ITEC)** – Mike Notarius (mike@itec.suny.edu)
- **Student Information and Campus Administrative Systems (SICAS) Center** – Bill Grau (bill.grau@oneonta.edu)
- **SUNY Center for Professional Development (CPD)** – Lisa Raposo (lisa.raposo@suny.edu)