



SUNY FACT² Open Education Initiatives Task Group Final Report – May 2020

Executive Summary

Open Education increases student access to high quality, affordable post-secondary education to a diverse body of students through innovative teaching practices designed around personalized learning, providing more equitable learning experiences for greater student success. Open Education includes content, practice, access, and policy.

The pedagogy of open education, *Open Pedagogy*, encourages faculty and students to engage in the co-development of knowledge, allowing authentic contributions that will continue to be shared and built upon. Open Pedagogy includes learning processes and products that are open, collaborative, and accessible while promoting practices that support innovations in learner choice, agency, and curriculum.

Through open pedagogy, students engage in their learning by creating information, rather than being consumers of it. Using inquiry and problem solving, as well as other critical learning competencies, students research and present information to share within and/or external to the classroom. Most commonly, the knowledge generated by the student is shared through open licenses as open educational resources (OER) and live on web-based platforms in order to have an impact within professional circles or the greater community.

An important aspect of open pedagogy practices is that students are building essential competencies needed for further education and employment. The opportunity to investigate a problem and develop solutions or to explore a topic in-depth empowers students to be engaged learners, which encourages lifelong learning. Participating in open pedagogy activities requires students to use their prior knowledge, research new knowledge, and integrate them together. It also provides students opportunities to present this knowledge in formats so that other people can learn from their work. In other words, students use and integrate all of their academic competencies to become creators of knowledge and contribute to the growth of a field. Through open pedagogy activities, students become professionals in their own right.

Open Education Initiatives Task Group

The Open Education Task Group expanded upon the work being done to scale the adoption and creation of Open Educational Resources across SUNY. Specifically, this group sought to highlight a wider range of open pedagogical practices as part of an open education initiative that fosters transparency, innovation, and collaboration and leverages SUNY's scale. The group felt that by focusing on the pedagogy of open education, its work could have the most impact within a short period of time to spread practices across SUNY.

The Open Education Initiatives Task Group, working during the 2018-19 and 2019-2020 academic years, focused on developing SUNY-wise resources for Open Pedagogy, including practices and tools, and developing recommendations for policy considerations. The full Task Group membership is listed as an appendix to this report.

Task Group Outcomes:

1. Define the scope and focus of the Task Group, ensuring buy-in for our charge.
2. Develop a working definition of Open Education for SUNY.
3. Curate examples of open pedagogical practices within and outside SUNY.
4. Facilitate and support a community of practice for Open Pedagogy that extends throughout SUNY.
5. Recommend policy considerations that facilitate adoption of open pedagogical practices.

The work of the Task Group was divided among subcommittees. Summaries of each subcommittee's work follows.

Scope and Focus (Nan Travers, MaryLou Forward, and full Task Group)

The first work of the Task Group was to develop the scope and focus for the upcoming work. The completed scope is in the appendix. The Task Group also developed a working definition for Open Education:

Open Education increases student access to high quality, affordable postsecondary education to a diverse body of students through innovative teaching practices designed around personalized learning, providing more equitable learning experiences for greater student success. Open Education includes content, practice, access and policy.

Community of Practice group (Alexandra Pickett, Judith Littlejohn, Deborah Spiro, Helen Lane, Edward Beck, Chris Price, and Marylou Forward)

First steps toward the scaling of open pedagogical practices across SUNY was to bring together faculty and administrators in a community of practice. The work of this subcommittee focused on mapping existing open educational practices from around the SUNY system, showcasing Open Pedagogy from SUNY and outside of SUNY through webinars, creating a website on Open

Pedagogy to promote adoption, conference presentations and creating online community spaces. Outputs include:

- Webinar series in Spring 2019 showcasing Open Pedagogical practices at SUNY and worldwide. Series co-hosted by SUNY FACT2 and the Open Education Consortium. Nine webinars were offered; recordings available here: <https://sunycpd.eventsair.com/QuickEventWebsitePortal/webasp19/spring19/Agenda>
- Online Community of Practice Developed on Workplace: <https://sunyedu.workplace.com/groups/OpenPedagogy/>
- Four SUNY Open Pedagogy Webinars offered during Open Education Week 2020. Recordings available here: <https://online.suny.edu/onlineteaching/2020/02/27/oew2020/>
- Two presentations given at the CIT workshop in 2019; one workshop and two presentations were scheduled for CIT 2020.
- Development of the Open Pedagogy at SUNY website: <https://innovate.suny.edu/f2/taskgroups/> (in progress)

Recommendation:

Continue to nurture a Community of Practice around open pedagogy through Workplace, presentations at CIT and SUNY Teaching and Learning conferences, and by highlighting the good work of faculty across SUNY campuses. This will require someone being asked/appointed to manage this, the most natural home being OER services with support from libraries and CPD.

Policy Group (Ed Beck, Diane Hamilton, Lee Graham, Nan Travers)

The policy group examined key SUNY policies that have potential impact on Open Pedagogy practices. The three policy areas that seemed to be the most related were Open Educational Resources, Privacy and FERPA, and Intellectual Property.

- There is no centralized OER policy, but rather some of the campuses have developed their own; therefore, each institution would need to explore the relationship of open educational resources with open pedagogy practices.
- Privacy and FERPA policies address information that can (e.g., directory information) and cannot be disclosed regarding students' data. The potential exposure of student information through open pedagogy practices could occur in two situations: 1) if the student provided personal data through a web-based published assignment, or 2) if the instructor gave graded academic feedback within an open learning space. The risk of either of these situations would be minimized with training and documentation on good practices to help students understand how to protect their privacy in open areas and open pedagogy grading practices. Neither seem to be a policy issue.
- Intellectual Property policy and subsequent memorandums delineate when intellectual property belongs to an institution and when it belongs to a faculty or staff. They also address the thesis produced by graduate students. The policy does not address intellectual property of students outside of the thesis, per se, but some statements do

refer to the academic community (e.g., publications), which would include students. The policy seems dated and could use an update to include intellectual property pertaining to OER and open pedagogy materials, regardless if created by faculty, staff or students.

Recommendation:

Revise the current Intellectual Property to include materials developed within open environments created by faculty, staff and students.

In addition to policy, the group identified that a practice document on open pedagogy would be fruitful. This document could include good practices regarding how to create open learning environments, technologies involved, and ways to sustain and maintain existing materials and sites.

Symposium Group – (Nan Travers, Chris Price, MaryLou Forward - Joint with Adaptive Learning Task Group)

The 6th annual FACT2 Symposium, Reframing Individualized Education: Open Pedagogy and Adaptive Learning occurred on November 1, 2019. The symposium was co-developed by the two FACT2 Task Groups: Open Pedagogy and Adaptive Learning. The symposium focused on adaptive learning platforms that can provide students with customized learning paths based on their individual needs and open pedagogy projects that can be used to provide students with engaging and meaningful learning opportunities in which they actively participate in the creation of educational content. The symposium began with Chuck Dziuban, from the University of Central Florida, as the keynote speaker and followed by an additional six sessions on both adaptive learning and open pedagogy. A total of 26 individuals participated in person, with additional participants on-line.

Evolving Open Pedagogy Projects

Open pedagogical practices are emerging across SUNY campuses. We have learned of many examples, which are posted in the website. Two recent projects are worthy of note:

1. SUNY Create is an IITG funded proof of concept that SUNY can support a Domain of One's Own project. The focus is on teaching students about web literacy, digital identity, and demystifying how the internet works. Using the open source tools that run the majority of the internet, students can create websites, share projects, and make important decisions about how to license them. By linking Open Pedagogy and the creation of public facing websites, instructors are taking an active role in teaching digital literacy skills and facilitating conversations about the changing nature by which knowledge is shared in digital environments.

Examples:

- a. Student portfolio, with work integrated from class assignments. By building the portfolio in WordPress as opposed to some of the proprietary portfolio solutions marketed towards higher education, students are building both a portfolio and the skills to manage a website that they can take into the future.
<https://tmcgill.sunycreate.cloud/>
 - b. Cross campus project lead by history department, archiving diaries of COVID-19 among the SUNY Oneonta staff, faculty, and students. Over 100 diary entries were added to this public portfolio
<https://pandemicdiariesoneonta.sunycreate.cloud/>.
 - c. SUNY Purchase sharing creative projects that didn't get to be presented on campus face-to-face
<https://purchaseproduces.sunycreate.cloud/uncategorized/avery-casasanta/>
2. SUNY COIL Global Commons Virtual Study Abroad
(<https://system.suny.edu/global/coil-global-commons/>)

Program goal

Students will contribute to global sustainability by completing a project in small groups, in partnership with community based and nonprofit organizations around the world. Students will complete coursework on intercultural storytelling and international perspectives on one of six UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which will provide concepts and knowledge that students will apply to the development and execution of their projects. Students will gain skills in storytelling, intercultural communications, and collaborative project development by telling the story of one of these partner organizations through the framework of one of the SDGs. Partner organizations around the world will work with groups of students to develop these stories, and receive use of the final products.

Program model

To make this model as flexible and scalable as possible, the roles of content creation and learning facilitation are unbundled. Selected SUNY faculty are developing content for the modules and the disciplinary lenses within these modules according to their area of expertise. This content will form the curricular base of the courses, designed with activities and assignments that can be done completely online, remotely. All learning materials developed for and used for this program will be openly licensed. Teaching faculty will use the content to facilitate student learning. Teaching faculty for the SDGs will work with a group of students aligned with an international community based or nonprofit organization to develop and execute a storytelling-based project. Students will use course content and interactions with their partner organization to develop the story of that organization along with the project output (for example, a poster, article, social media materials) that align with the needs the organization expresses.

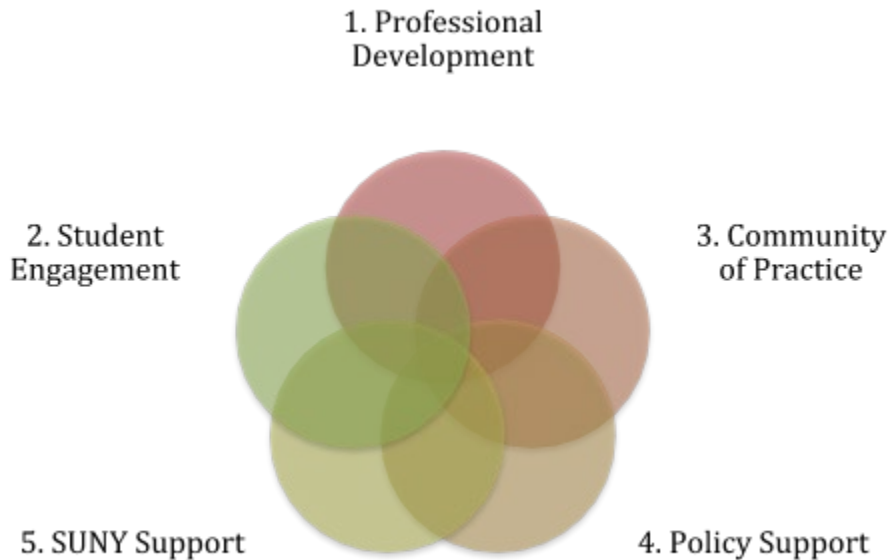
Final Recommendations

Open Pedagogy, as a practice to engage students in knowledge creation and sharing, plays a critical role within the broader context of Open Education. Focused on the strategies to help faculty work with students to be self-agencies of knowledge development and engage in a community of learners connected to that knowledge. The Task Group spent the first year to collect examples of open pedagogy practices across SUNY campuses and begin professional activities to spread the word. The second year focused on building a community of practice, examine policy implications, and continue to gather examples to share across the system.

From this work, the task force feels strongly that the work itself is just beginning across SUNY, although its time as a FACT² Task Group is coming to an end. As we enter a post COVID-19 pandemic era, we must provide more opportunities for students to engage their learning in various ways that strengthen their abilities to be lifelong learners and strong employees. Open pedagogy strategies enable students to take advantage of on-line research, learning, and presentation. Students become an agent of their own learning, utilize the vast knowledge open to them, and curate existing and create new knowledge to share with a community of practice. Many examples show students joining professionals in a field and co-developing products, knowledge, research and other outcomes as an equal.

This is work that should not end. To sustain open pedagogy practices across SUNY system, there are five areas of recommendations to create an Open Pedagogy Sustainability Model:

Open Pedagogy Sustainability Model



1. Professional Development – Research shows that professional development is essential to implement and sustain new practices. Often, professional development is one area to be cut first in financially hard times, but also is one activity that helps grow new practices essential for institutions. The Task Group recognizes that in this pandemic/post-pandemic times that professional development is harder to support, but we feel that it is necessary to sustain open pedagogy practices, which help students remain engaged in higher education and be prepared for their future. The Task Group recommends keeping professional development opportunities in Open Pedagogy available through the Center for Professional Development and system-wide activities.
2. Student Engagement – Research in recruitment, persistence, and completion indicates that when student feel connected to an institution in some way, they are more likely to enroll, persist and complete. In addition, research in open pedagogy shows that

students are more engaged in open activities than in many of their traditional classroom activities. Open pedagogy also utilizes the internet and learning at a distance, making it a viable learning strategy when students must be socially distanced. The Task Group recommends that open pedagogy opportunities be considered a SUNY recognized educational strategy and be encouraged during the pandemic and post-pandemic periods as a way to engage students more fully.

3. Community of Practice – Considerable efforts have begun to create a community of practice for Open Pedagogy across SUNY. Three key initiatives, each with relatively low cost, need to be continued and sustained: webinars, Workplace, and the website. The webinars have been essential to share the work so far and encourage additional work in this space. These have been supported through the Center for Professional Development and co-hosted (in some cases) with the Open Education Consortium. The subgroup for the Community of Practice created space on Workplace for Open Pedagogy; it needs to be moderated and kept active. The subcommittee also created initial pages on the FACT² website; these need further work and maintained. The Task Group recommends that Open Pedagogy needs a recognized affiliation with an existing office (e.g., OER Services) or a SUNY endorsed committee (see last recommendation).
4. Policy Support – Policy is essential to sustain practices across SUNY and within institutions. After careful consideration of existing SUNY policies, the Task Group recommends that the Intellectual Property policy be revised to include all forms of open education, including open pedagogy, and address intellectual property of students for knowledge created through their coursework. In addition, the Task Group recommends the development of best practices that protect students’ personal information and doesn’t violate FERPA requirements. A best practices document would also help ensure methods used across the system are consistent and are of quality and integrity.
5. SUNY Support - Building further a community of open pedagogy practice across SUNY is needed, but to do so requires an endorsement from SUNY and a designated group to spearhead the work. Offices, just as OER Services, are already overwhelmed with work and, if assigned Open Pedagogy, may not be able to give full attention the work. Yet, if a committee is formed, it doesn’t always have a way to move the work up through SUNY. Therefore, the Task Group recommends a combination of both: assign Open Pedagogy to an office, such as OER Services, and form a SUNY-wide Open Pedagogy committee to work closely with the assigned office, CPD, and library services. In this way, there is an official home for Open Pedagogy and a group to work on the tasks involved. Many members of the FACT² Task Group have indicated they want to serve on a system-wide committee and Ed Beck (SUNY Oneonta) is willing to chair the committee. We feel that this is solution to keep the momentum going forward.

Open pedagogy is an important educational strategy, especially in today's situation. It provides ways to enhance students' academic competencies, build confidence, and connect learning to the wider community. It provides students with a voice and promotes leadership as students gain confidence with their knowledge and share with professional communities. Yet, the strategies are still relatively unknown across the SUNY faculty. Overall, the FACT² Open Education Initiatives Task Group recommends that Open Pedagogy be considered a valuable approach to 21st century education to prepare our students better for their future as lifelong learners and workers.

Appendix A:

FACT² Open Education Initiatives Task Group Charge

Open Education Initiatives. Co-Chairs: Nan Travers and Mary Lou Forward
Mark McBride, SUNY Admin Liaison

Open Education increases student access to high quality, affordable postsecondary education to a diverse body of students through innovative teaching practices designed around personalized learning, providing more equitable learning experiences for greater student success. Open Education includes content, practice, access and policy.

Open Pedagogy encourages faculty and students to engage in the co-development of knowledge, allowing authentic contributions that will continue to be shared and built upon. Open Pedagogy includes learning processes and products that are open, collaborative and accessible while promoting practices that support innovations in learner choice, agency, and curriculum.

This year, the Open Education Initiatives Task Group will focus on Open Pedagogy resources, practices and tools, and recommending policy considerations.

Outcomes:

1. Define the scope and focus of the task force, ensuring buy-in for our charge.
2. Develop a working definition of Open Pedagogy for SUNY.
3. Curate examples of open pedagogical practices within and outside SUNY. Disseminate results.
4. Facilitate and support a community of practice for Open Pedagogy that extends throughout SUNY.
5. Recommend policy considerations that facilitate adoption of open pedagogical practices

Appendix B: **FACT² Open Education Initiatives Task Group Membership**

Co-Chairs

Nan Travers SUNY Empire State College *
MaryLou Forward SUNY COIL *

Team Members

Ed Beck SUNY Oneonta *
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*Served on subcommittees