SUNY POTSDAM & SUNY CANTON
SHARED SERVICES PROJECT

July 15, 2012

THE EDUCATION ALLIANCE
Education Excellence, Innovation and Experience

CONFIDENTIAL
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Executive Summary

Pursuant to the charge from the Chancellor of SUNY, this report responds to the September 20, 2011 and November 22, 2011 SUNY Board of Trustees Resolutions and SUNY Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost’s December 9, 2011 letter establishing benchmarks for evaluating the progress of the shared services collaboration between SUNY Canton and SUNY Potsdam.

Further and importantly, this report addresses the specific expectation that a higher percentage of the budget be allocated to supporting academic and student services, and that the institutions align and vertically integrate administrative services to effectuate economies of scale, efficiencies in operations, and non-duplication of future programs and services.

This report also addresses the SUNY Board of Trustees charge regarding the continuation of separate presidencies.

Financial Benchmarks Significantly Exceeded (BOT Resolution 4a.)

Based on data provided by the SUNY Vice Chancellor for Financial Services and Chief Financial Officer on June 26, 2012 (see Appendix A), during 2010-11, SUNY Canton spent 64% of its operating budget on areas that have a direct impact on students (instruction, academic support, clinical instruction, libraries, scholarship and fellowships, and student services). This exceeds the Board of Trustees requirement of a minimum of 52%. Canton is currently hiring an additional eleven full-time faculty for the 2012-13 academic year. This will add at least an additional $500,000 to academic affairs for Fall 2012, which will exceed the 5% increase expected by SUNY System Administration by June 30, 2014. The continued investment in academic affairs comes from identified administrative savings and new revenue from enrollment growth. In fact, SUNY Canton’s own strategic planning efforts have identified an
additional $595,000 in projected administrative savings and an additional $1,000,000 in potential generated revenue.

In 2006, SUNY Potsdam embarked on a ten-year strategic plan, the Bicentennial Plan. Designed to culminate in the celebration of the Bicentennial of the College, this strategic plan looks to enhance many areas of campus life, with a particular emphasis on instruction and services to students. In early July 2012, SUNY System Administration released calculations regarding the allocation of funds toward the various functions of the campus, as captured from reports of the 2010-2011 financial plan. Unfortunately, for the Potsdam campus these figures seem to be in error. Nevertheless, according to those figures in 2010-2011 Potsdam was expending 65% of its budget on areas that have a direct impact on students (a figure Potsdam believes to be low), the largest single portion of that was for instruction. Consistently, SUNY Potsdam has spent a significant percentage of its budget on instruction and direct student services. Within the four-year units of the SUNY System, SUNY Potsdam has one of the highest percentages of tenured and tenure track faculty. It also maintains one of the lowest student-faculty ratios. Yet seeking to continue to improve instructional offerings, in the wake of the budget reductions of 2009-2010, for the budget year 2011-2012, the campus reallocated nearly $700,000 from Administrative Services to Instruction. Other minor allocations bring the total directed to instruction and direct student services to the target reallocation of $880,000 requested by the 2013-2014 year. Within the Bicentennial Plan, Potsdam anticipates increasing its allocation of funds to instruction and direct student services, particularly in the areas of student-faculty research, and support for capstone experiences such as study abroad, research, internships, and service learning experiences.

Both SUNY Canton and SUNY Potsdam concur that based on current projections overall administrative savings have been achieved and will be possible in the future through natural attrition and realignment of current staff. Canton and Potsdam officials have been advised that the effective intent of this initiative is to achieve expense reduction, cost avoidance and non-redundancy, and not to effectuate retrenchment of faculty and staff.
Progress Toward Alignment of Administrative Staff (BOT Resolution 4b.)

The two institutions have established a unified Executive Team called for in the SUNY Board of Trustees resolution. The team is comprised of the two presidents and the executive leadership from each institution. This team provides:

i. oversight for the shared business services
ii. oversight for shared IT services
iii. administrative oversight and operational leadership for the SUNY Institute of Arts, Sciences, and Technology
iv. the identification of opportunities to develop additional areas of cooperation and sharing.

The Executive Team will resolve problems and eliminate unnecessary duplication as well as achieve scale and efficiency of operations through shared business services and IT services. The Executive Team will meet monthly.

Notable progress to date includes SUNY Canton and SUNY Potsdam recruiting a shared Chief Financial Officer (CFO). The hiring of the joint CFO is a major step forward in the shared service efforts between the two institutions. The shared CFO will be the focal point for intercampus collaborations and the alignment of administrative services, including: Human Resources, Finance, Accounting, Purchasing, Billing, Budget, Facilities - and the information systems related to those functions.

Both institutions continue to demonstrate a commitment toward aligning staff and administrative resources whenever feasible. Prior to filling staffing needs, they consult with one another to determine opportunities for sharing. This process of cooperation has resulted in the
shared-staffing positions of a Military and Veteran Services Coordinator and an Inter-Library Loan Specialist.

Significant discussions and progress on sharing resources and economies of scale have also occurred among Library Services, University Police, Campus Life, Human Resources, Payroll, Purchasing, Auxiliary Corporations, and Institutional Research and Effectiveness.

**Progress Toward Integration of Information Systems (BOT Resolution 4c.)**

One of the most visible examples of shared services momentum at SUNY Potsdam and SUNY Canton has been with the movement toward the integration of information systems. SUNY System Administration’s Chief Technology Officer conducted an initial review and IT analysis in November 2011. As a result of this visit, SUNY’s team identified areas of sharing between the two institutions, possible opportunities to leverage University-wide Alliance for Strategic Technologies (AST) Shared Services, and offered recommendations for moving both campuses forward collectively utilizing a SUNY Team approach.

To date, significant steps have been made toward aligning both IT Departments to deliver joint services across the campuses, establishing cross-campus project teams for common areas of future interest, and addressing SUNY’s IT Transformation Plan.

**Transformational Initiative – SUNY Institute of Arts, Sciences, and Technology**

In consultation with the Chancellor and Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost, SUNY Canton and SUNY Potsdam have proposed a dynamic concept that would enable the two institutions to deliver new academic programming, and potentially make available (subject to cost recovery) services to the surrounding community.
As currently conceived, the special mission of the SUNY Institute of Arts, Sciences, and Technology is to deploy the assets of SUNY Canton and SUNY Potsdam to create new opportunities that neither college could achieve on its own, such as, collaborative academic programs, and student-related activities.

The core mission of the Institute is to provide a mechanism to facilitate the development of new academic opportunities for Canton and Potsdam. The Institute is essentially the scaffolding linking the two institutions and on which many different collaborations can be built. It allows Canton and Potsdam to maintain their own identity, leadership, and brand while creating what will become a distinctive initiative shared by the institutions.

There are many goals related directly to the creation of the Institute, but the central goals are increased enrollments (and revenue), selectivity for both institutions, and contributing to the local economy.

The Institute will be a new model for SUNY. This is a full-scale effort to build a new organization that expands academic opportunities for our students, offers new avenues for collaboration between faculty, and contributes significantly to the economy of our region. While there are risks with such a major effort, the interdependence that this will create will almost certainly reduce costs and increase revenue. A successful institute will improve the quality of both institutions while also providing increased financial stability. For Potsdam and Canton, this is a major new initiative.

Retaining a President (BOT Resolution 6 and 7)

At the end of the day on Sunday, July 15th, Canton and Potsdam have different perspectives on the presidency. What follows is their respective positions on the issue:
SUNY Canton:

SUNY Canton has shown the ability to transform itself – as demonstrated by changing from a sleepy, two-year college with fewer than 2000 students to a dynamic, four-year college that will serve more than 4000 students during the Fall 2012 Semester and more than 6000 different students over the next year. Presidential leadership was certainly an important part of this transformation. The impact of presidential leadership is everywhere on the campus. The college enjoys record numbers of applicants and enrollments, a transformed faculty that reflects the level of preparation expected of a four-year college, new facilities, and the dramatic growth of the college foundation from $1 million to about $40 million dollars. None of these things happened by accident. Each required focused and sustained leadership. Likewise, the role of the college in the local community, local economy, and the North Country region has grown dramatically. The response of the political leadership and the community in general is an adequate testimony to where leadership has made a difference. Faculty, students, the College Council, elected officials, as well as student and faculty governance, have all collectively and vigorously defended the need for an individual president. Resolution after resolution has been passed in support of an individual president. Resolution after resolution has reaffirmed the need for focused, anchored leadership. And, resolution after resolution has committed to shared services, believing that leadership need not be sacrificed to achieve efficiencies.

Now, the college is taking another series of transformational steps with the development of the SUNY Institute of Arts, Sciences, and Technology and the creation of a major shared services center. These are the types of innovative activities that will strongly
support the Six Big Ideas of the SUNY Strategic Plan. For these creative initiatives to be successful, both colleges will again need focused and inspired leadership. This is the best reason for both colleges to have their own president.

Significant progress on shared services was made this year. Individual presidents did not impede or preclude the discussion or implementation of any shared services initiative. Rather, both presidents, working together, motivated many of these endeavors. And, both achieved this success without jeopardizing, at any point, the mission or integrity of either institution. Because of these significant results and in an effort to retain and enhance the distinct missions and integrity of each campus, we strongly recommend that each campus retain its own respective presidents.

**SUNY Potsdam:**

As the institution with the longest history in the State University of New York, SUNY Potsdam has experienced tremendous growth over its nearly 200 years of existence. From its beginnings as St. Lawrence Academy, to its establishment as Potsdam Normal School and then as a teacher’s college, the campus has grown into an internationally known center for the liberal arts and sciences with rigorous undergraduate and graduate programs. It is also transforming itself into the premier arts campus within SUNY, on the heels of the 125th anniversary of The Crane School of Music and with the construction of the $45 million Performing Arts Building, as well as its growing competitive programs in the visual arts and
creative writing. In addition, the College continues to break its own records for fundraising to support scholarships and the student experience. Even though SUNY Potsdam is one of the smallest comprehensive colleges, it is No. 1 for alumni giving among its comparable institutions within SUNY, and No. 15 in the nation for alumni giving among public master’s universities. As the College approaches its 200th year, the campus community is grateful to President Schwaller and his vision for the future.

Now, SUNY Potsdam is ready to embark on a unique collaborative opportunity, through the Center for Administrative Services and the SUNY Institute for Arts, Sciences, and Technology. Looking forward, the road ahead offers many opportunities. We have discovered through the course of our conversations that many areas for collaboration appeared unexpectedly because of a unique confluence of circumstances. It is impossible to predict where these conversations will lead. As such, given that both campuses have stable executive leadership, it seems reasonable to allow the shared services conversations to continue under the current leadership model. A final determination regarding the definitive nature of the campus presidencies, either campus-specific or shared, can be made at such time when that decision can be based on experience. Moreover, the Canton and Potsdam conversations do not exist in a vacuum. There are other shared services experiments underway in the System, and it would be wisest to allow them to also play out before a definitive and irrevocable decision is reached.

There is no clear consensus of opinion on the Potsdam campus regarding the question
of shared presidencies. As a result, we believe that it is too early to make such a recommendation.

6. Conclusion

SUNY Canton and SUNY Potsdam have already demonstrated shared savings at the administrative and academic levels exceeding the threshold requested by the SUNY Board of Trustees September 20, 2011 and November 22, 2011 resolutions and Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost’s December 9, 2011 letter; have made significant progress in full alignment of administrative services; have made significant progress toward consolidation of business and information systems; and have successfully demonstrated a collaborative spirit when working with SUNY System Administration.
Chapter 1

Historical Context and Project Background

The proposed shared services model between SUNY Potsdam and SUNY Canton has a long and storied, indeed fabled history. Discussions regarding how the two institutions could share services have taken place for almost 20 years. In about 1995, the president at Potsdam, and the President of SUNY Canton were encouraged by a local senator to think about how they could combine efforts to make both institutions stronger. The Presidents wrote a white paper that outlined the ways that the institutions could share. That model envisioned the new organization as a catamaran with each college floating on its own hull but linked together. Interesting enough, this is the conclusion that the current study has revealed.

A second try was made when John Fallon was the President at Potsdam. The Education Alliance assisted with this effort as well. Upon further investigation, the leadership felt that the savings were insignificant and that there was no read advantage in pursuing the issue further.

Consideration was given to these earlier efforts which draw upon the strengths of each campus. Underlying this proposal is the notion that each campus will retain its particular mission, function, degree programs, character, and presidential leadership while seeking to create new opportunities using the strengths of both institutions. See Appendices A & B.
An important lesson which arises from a study of the history of past experiences, and of the immediate past nine months, is that plans developed by Presidents, consultants, or even the central system are unlikely to succeed unless there is significant support from a wide range of constituents. Change which comes about as a result of the brainstorming, visioning and planning from campus staff, faculty and front line personnel is far more likely to be transformational, if it occurs within a framework of guiding principles and an ultimate vision. In essence, this process has been a successful exercise in: “Tell us where you want to go and what the rules are to get there, and we’ll make it happen.” The greater the specificity of the plan, the less likely it will be realized.

SUNY Potsdam and SUNY Canton have actively engaged senior leadership peers and faculty, staff, students and alumni in mutual growth, winning strategic partnerships and co-ventures aimed at effectuating economies of scale, efficiencies in operation, and importantly, non-duplication of program and service efforts. SUNY Potsdam and Canton are also engaged in promoting the several SUNY system-wide themes of Systemness, allocating precious resources for student academic success, strategic partnering, and quality shared service delivery resulting in creative partnering strategies for establishing shared services, joint programs and other mutually profitable collaborative arrangements.
Chapter 2

Preservation of Distinctive Missions

SUNY Potsdam and SUNY Canton have come together as a partnership of venerable, mission complementary, yet distinctive institutions (equals) – creating a new collaborative co-venture. As currently conceived, the SUNY Institute of Arts, Sciences, and Technology will preserve the institutions’ distinctive missions and draw on the best and brightest examples of Arts, Sciences and Humanities at Potsdam, and the Applied Sciences and Technologies programs at Canton.

Under the aegis of a consolidated Advisory Council and the unified Executive Team, the SUNY Institute of Arts, Sciences, and Technology combines the attributes of a comprehensive, world class university with the traditions of the best Research Institutes across the nation and around the world.

Reiterating the theme of Systemness, the SUNY Institute of Arts, Sciences, and Technology envisions preserving and distinguishing the unique missions of Potsdam and Canton, yet blending and integrating the precious assets and resources of both institutions. Over time, the integrative partnering process presented in this report will achieve economies of scale, efficiencies in operations, and non-duplication of future programs and services.

Significantly, the new Institute will be in a position to cross subsidize high-demand enrollment and workforce needs to support exceptional quality academic programs for students and new professional development opportunities for faculty. See Appendices C & D.
Chapter 3

Model of Collaboration

During Spring and Summer 2012, senior officers of both SUNY Canton and SUNY Potsdam recognized that the new SUNY Institute of Arts, Sciences, and Technology has the potential to advance SUNY Potsdam and SUNY Canton’s academic and student development for years to come, while creating the prototype SUNY model for shared services going forward. The model includes a broad and varied array of shared services.

Beyond shared services, the creation of the SUNY Institute of the Arts, Sciences and Technology envisions a comprehensive co-branding and co-marketing campaign – complete with collaborative academic programs, revolving semesters, coordinated academic and student calendar, and importantly, shared services to effectuate economies of scale, efficiencies in operation, and non-duplication of future programs.

The promotion of the proposed SUNY Institute of Arts, Sciences, and Technology will be compatible with and not mutually exclusive of partnerships with community colleges, other state colleges and universities, and other private, non-profit, and perhaps, for-profit colleges and universities throughout New York and beyond.

Over the next several months, SUNY Potsdam and SUNY Canton will have an opportunity to consider several models to house and operate the proposed Center for Administrative Services – and importantly, to develop business plans to support investment in shared service infrastructure and delivery capacity.
The SUNY Institute of Arts, Sciences, and Technology will become a model of shared services co-located with various offerings at the respective campuses. Some guiding principles for the new business model, include:

- Leverages Systemness thinking and orientation and perspective
- Incentivizes self-reliance, reduces tuition and tax dependence, and empowers higher education innovation and collaboration
- Preserves respective arts, sciences and technology missions of SUNY Potsdam and SUNY Canton
- Creates an advisory council for the Institute
- Integrates an executive team to manage the Institute
- Integrates unified and coherent policies, protocols, and procedures
- Effectuates economies of scale and efficiencies in campus operations
- Achieves non-duplication in future program development and avoids undue competition
- Builds mutual trust through peer colleagueship
- Stimulates joint research and shared scholarship and publications
- Promotes collaborations in community service and civic engagement
- Provides the basis to seek start-up funding for the Institute from the SUNY Foundation or other sources
- Establishes a sustainable business model for SUNY Canton and SUNY Potsdam through shared services, programs and related resources
- Builds a logical and practical political caucus in support of the new Institute.
- Reinforces the mutual growth and profitable win/win partnerships between SUNY Potsdam and SUNY Canton
Chapter 4

CFO

Vice President Michael Lewis of SUNY Potsdam, having served the campus for some 37 years opted to retire from his position in order to take advantage of retirement incentives provided by the State University System and the campus. His initial date of retirement was December 31, 2011. Subsequently, SUNY Canton’s Vice President for Administration, Christine Gray, announced her retirement effective August 1, 2012. The Potsdam campus initially organized a search for a CFO replacement, which was initiated during the Spring, 2011 semester.

At the behest of the Chancellor, the Presidents of Canton and Potsdam agreed to search for a shared Chief Financial Officer who would supervise the business and administrative services offices of the two institutions. A new search committee was appointed, with representatives from both campuses, and a new search initiated.

At the end of the search process, the finalists were invited for separate visits to both Canton and Potsdam. Although the process was complicated, the final result was successful. The joint search committee reached consensus regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the finalists. The two Presidents then met and concurred with the analysis offered by the search committee and an employment offer was made to Ms. Natalie Higley to serve as the shared CFO.

The two institutions developed a Memorandum of Understanding (See Appendices E & F) to govern the CFO’s performance program, evaluation, and compensation. The costs
associated with the CFO position will be absorbed equally by the two campuses, and it is expected that the CFO will spend half of her time on each campus.

During the first year of her assignment, the new CFO will be called upon to address the following issues:

- Develop a timetable for the implementation of collaboration and shared services in offices within her divisions, pursuant to the November 22, 2011 Resolution of the Board of Trustees;
- Provide leadership to conversations already occurring in Purchasing and Human Resources;
- Consolidate collaboration in the area of Payroll;
- Work with staff to align the offices of Finance, Accounting, Budget, and Facilities;
- Make proposals on how best to organize the two divisions of Administration and Business on the two campuses so that they more closely mirror each other;
- Recommend how best to create a single set of policies and procedures, looking at national best practices and comparing these with policies and procedures on each campus;
- Work closely with the IT working group to ensure that when individual functional units engage in consolidation discussions that the IT aspect is addressed early on in the process.

It is anticipated that the shared CFO will then begin to provide leadership for the development of a Center for Administrative Services, a virtual division of the two campuses for
the supervision of the collaborative services. At least initially, the offices included in this Center will be coming from Business/Administrative services divisions on their respective campuses, such as Payroll and Purchasing.

While the road to the appointment of a single CFO for the two institutions was complicated, it has ended in success. As a result of the extensive conversations which have accompanied this process, each institution is better informed about the areas for potential collaboration. Many of the misconceptions about this position and other areas of collaboration have been clarified. A degree of trust between the two institutions has also resulted from this difficult process. While many challenges still lie ahead for the new CFO, at least for now, it is possible to quote Shakespeare and hope that “All’s Well that Ends Well.”

Looking at the transition from two Vice Presidents to a single CFO, several issues remain to be addressed. At present, each institution has lost at least half of an executive position. Eventually, some of the responsibilities might well be absorbed by support staff, or abandoned altogether. In the short term, the campuses will probably need to use some of the vacancy savings to assure that necessary functions continue to be carried out during the period of transition. Savings will eventually accrue to each campus, but it might take years.
Chapter 5

**Shared Administrative Services**

The logical point for the study of collaboration between the campuses of SUNY Canton and SUNY Potsdam is the realm of administrative services. Consequently, consideration has to be given to how the two campuses can be more efficiently administered. One harsh reality is that both campuses have experienced drastic cuts in their state support at precisely the same time that they have seen record and near record undergraduate enrollments. In nearly every area of operation they have been forced to do more with less. At both institutions, positions have been aligned, where the opportunity has presented itself. Both campuses are already so lean that there is very little to be gained from higher productivity.

Nonetheless, there are economies of scale which can be achieved in aligning functions between the two campuses. Of interest in the initial phases of the conversation have been back-office operations – those transactions which occur behind the scenes and which support the overall campus environment. Early on, several offices have been identified as possible opportunities for collaboration and economies of scale. Included in these are Library Services, University Police, Campus Life, Payroll, Purchasing, Human Resources, and Institutional Research and Effectiveness. It is entirely conceivable that between the two campuses there is more than adequate staffing to provide the same level of service to both campuses at the same time that some personnel could be reassigned to areas of more pressing need. Eventually after a series of reassignments and voluntary transfers, this might free up a position or two which simply would not need to be filled.
The other area of possible alignment, as seen in the previous chapter, is among senior administrators. In theory, a single vice president could supervise parallel operations on both campuses. On the surface this would save half of the salary for that vice president on each campus. Unfortunately, the reality of the situation is that both campuses are so lean that the vice presidents do not merely supervise others and set policy for their division, but they perform many essential functions which on larger and wealthier campuses would be performed by additional staff.

By and large, the size of the staff on the two campuses is proportional to their enrollment. In some instances there are twice as many employees in a given office on the Potsdam campus, in others, there are nearly the same on both. For example, in Human Resources, which includes Payroll on both campuses, Canton has four employees, Potsdam has eight. But in just Central Receiving or Storehouse, Canton has four employees and Potsdam only has two, for that function. In Potsdam, the Storehouse/Receiving function is included in the operations of the Print Shop which was consolidated from the two campuses, with participation from Clarkson University and St. Lawrence University, as part of an earlier round of cost saving reductions some eleven years ago. The two Admissions Offices are similar: Potsdam has 17 employees and Canton has 12. In Financial Aid and Student Accounts, Potsdam has 15, and Canton has 8. The two Registrars’ Offices are nearly identical, on paper, with six to seven employees each.

What this staffing picture demonstrates is that both campuses are thinly staffed. Each has the minimum number of employees necessary to carry out the essential functions of each office. Both campuses have already had to reduce their staffing levels in these areas, largely
through attrition when employees retired or moved. While additional economies of scale are possible, given the very thin staffing levels, there will be minimal savings.

Because of union contracts, with administrative reorganization employees on continuing appointments will need to be reassigned. As vacancies occur, and existing staff members are reassigned where possible to fulfill those functions, eventually some vacancy savings can be accrued. It is entirely possible that there will be no one on staff who can perform a specific function, which will, in turn, require that the campus search for a new employee. As a result, this process might well take several years as employees work their way through various job changes, vacancies are filled, or not, and savings eventually accrued.

It is conceivable that within a few years as many as three to five positions might be freed up on each campus. In salary savings, this would generate from $100,000 to $250,000. These are modest savings when seen in the light of the significant cuts which were imposed as a result of the recent financial downturn, when the Canton campus lost in the neighborhood of $7 million in State support and Potsdam approximately $13 million.

**Report on Benchmarks:**

In the November 22, 2011, Resolution of the Board of Trustees, certain areas are specifically targeted for full alignment (Section 4, b): “including but not limited to Institutional Research, Human Resources, Finance, Accounting, Purchasing, Billing, Budget and Facilities.”

The structures of the Canton and Potsdam administrations place these offices under the supervision of different Vice Presidents, and call these functions by different names. For instance in Potsdam, Billing is the purview of the office called Student Accounts. In Canton, as noted, this function is included along with Financial Aid. On the Potsdam campus, Institutional
Research is under the supervision of the Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Enrollment Management, as is the Student Accounts Office. At Canton, Institutional Research is administratively under the direction of the Provost. On both campuses, however, Human Resources, Finance, Accounting, Purchasing, Budget, and Facilities all fall under the new Chief Financial Officer. In spite of the lack of alignment administratively, some discussions have occurred among all of these offices, and some major progress is being made in integrating their function.

The institutions have established a unified Executive Team as called for in the SUNY Board of Trustees resolution. The team is comprised of the two presidents leadership teams from each institution. This team will:

- Provide oversight for the shared business services
- Provide oversight for shared IT services
- Provide administrative oversight and operational leadership for the SUNY Institute of Arts, Sciences, and Technology
- Explore opportunities to develop additional areas of cooperation and sharing.

The creation of the Executive Team also creates a mechanism to resolve problems and eliminate unnecessary duplication. The Executive Team has committed to a monthly meeting schedule. Both institutions continue to demonstrate a commitment toward aligning staff and administrative resources whenever feasible. Prior to filling staffing needs, they consult with one another to determine opportunities for sharing. This process of cooperation has resulted in the shared-staffing positions of a Military and Veteran Services Coordinator and an Inter-Library Loan Specialist. (See MOUs in Appendices E & F)
Military and Veteran Services Coordinator: This position was filled this Spring by Mr. Patrick Massaro. He was hired through a joint search team and is the first shared union position on record (UUP) in the State. As a graduate of both Canton and Potsdam, coupled with his military background, Mr. Massaro presented as an ideal fit for this new position. For SUNY Canton, the money previously budgeted to fund a full-time position (External Studies Coordinator) was re-directed to Academic Affairs for the hiring of this shared position.

Inter-Library Loan (ILL) Specialist: A shared search committee has been assembled for this position, and plans are to have this position filled by September 2012. The Potsdam campus has a robust ILL staff and needed a partial position to be fully staffed. Thus, when combined, the need from both campuses provides ample justification for one shared position.

Institutional Research / Effectiveness: Communications between the Offices of Institutional Effectiveness at SUNY Potsdam and SUNY Canton have been taking place on an almost daily basis for the past two years. Requests for data at both institutions have resulted in such actions as the sharing of programming code for the generation of common reporting functions, clarification of processes and best practices in gathering, analyzing and communicating institutional assessment data. This past year, IR/E staff have joined with IT staff from both campuses to explore and experience demonstrations of data management and transparency (Dashboarding) and consider the strengths and weakness of various software options for gathering, managing, analyzing and communicating institutional assessment data.

In addition to capturing the necessary data to demonstrate evidence of institutional effectiveness, both offices have been charged with the daunting task of creating a culture of
assessment of student learning outcomes (MSCHE Standard 14) and training and motivating their respective faculties toward a model of assessment of learning which is required for accrediting by Middle States Commission on Higher Education. Both institutions have made significant headway the past few years in the area of academic assessment. SUNY Potsdam appointed a Director of Academic Assessment as one of the key functions of the IE Office. The Director of Academic Assessment delivers a rigorous assessment of General Education student learning outcomes on a three-year cycle and assists with the implementation of Assessment of Program Majors as required by SUNY System Administration on a seven-year cycle. In contrast, SUNY Canton’s Provost oversees the Academic Assessment responsibilities for the College. In tandem with the Provost, the Director of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness manages the cycle of assessment for General Education and program retention. In addition, SUNY Canton’s Council for University Planning (CUSP) reviews all non-academic and academic assessment on an annual basis.

With the added dynamic and increased demands of accreditation placed upon SUNY Potsdam’s School of Education by NCATE and the multiple specialized professional associations at both institutions, additional workload has fallen to both Offices of Institutional Effectiveness. This is in addition to both offices receiving a large number of requests for data both for grant writing and assistance with institutional assessment data capturing for purposes of improving programs and functions for the institutions.

Both institutions will often have seventeen to twenty surveys active at a given time, which require data analysis and trending for purposes of planning and improvement, in order to fulfill this part of their mission.
Lastly, SUNY Potsdam received a glowing reaffirmation of accreditation in the wake of the Middle States team visit in the spring of 2012. Many commendations were received and best practices in assessment of student learning recognized. The college was asked to report on institutional level assessment in an interim report to be filed in two years. Responsibility for this report will fall on the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. SUNY Canton’s Middle States team visit will be held during the Spring 2013 semester.

**Human Resources:** The Human Resources Departments of the two institutions have a long history of close cooperation. This has been facilitated through participation in the Associated Colleges of the St. Lawrence Valley. The Associated Colleges has for many years sponsored seminars and other opportunities for these departments to collaborate and work on various projects. Since these offices report to the CFO on both campuses, significant progress toward aligning functions is expected to occur.

The Human Resources Department at SUNY Canton has worked to support the shared services discussion as combined positions are navigated and negotiated. The Department itself has been also considering how it can move forward toward a more integrated model with its SUNY Potsdam counterpart.

One of the first steps toward this has been with the responsibility of payroll services. SUNY Canton has recently been challenged to provide payroll due to an employee’s long-term illness. Discussions with SUNY Potsdam’s Human Resources staff, together with SUNY System Administration Human Resources staff, have resulted in SUNY Potsdam processing SUNY Canton’s student payroll as of June 2012. This has helped to reduce the burden on SUNY Canton’s Human Resources Department.
The shared CFO will oversee both Human Resources Departments and will continue to press for additional efficiencies and streamlining of the two organizations. She will also be responsible for regular joint business meetings; continued shared services conversations with SUNY Plattsburgh and area community colleges; regular Research Foundation HUB meetings; and addressing Affirmative Action, Title IX, Ethics, Training, and Conflict Resolution as overseen by the Human Resources Departments.

**Finance, Accounting, Budgeting:** These functions are all carried out in a single office on both the Canton and Potsdam campuses. One of the prime responsibilities of the shared CFO will be to study the policies and procedures of these offices at the two institutions and seek to align them. This will, of course, also require consideration of best practices and other successful examples from other areas within SUNY and the nation.

**Purchasing:** The two offices have had very fruitful discussions, which have included representatives from SUNY Plattsburgh from time to time.

Alongside SUNY Potsdam, SUNY Canton has completed a lease agreement for 12 passenger and mini-vans. This combined RFP, and ultimately the lease agreement, resulted in savings of time and has avoided the redundancy of each individual campus procuring similar items. Future purchases for various commodity items are being reviewed, and it is anticipated they will be procured in a similar manner, thereby reducing the workload to the currently overburdened staff.

SUNY Canton volunteered to be part of the pilot for the Virtual Transaction Center; a SUNY-wide service that will allow purchase orders to be processed virtually, thereby better utilizing individual campus resources. Looking to the future, SUNY Canton has embraced this
idea of system-wide purchasing and strategic sourcing has expressed interest in joining the multi-campus contract for athletic apparel and footwear through the University of Buffalo. Commencing in 2013, SUNY Canton hopes to participate in this contract which will ultimately allow for leveraging SUNY’s combined buying power to achieve similar discounts for smaller athletic programs.

Down the road, there is serious consideration being given to a single purchasing office for Northern New York, possibly located in SUNY Potsdam or SUNY Canton, to serve state-operated campuses. This might eventually also include campuses in Oswego and even Syracuse.

**Facilities:** Discussions regarding facilities are only beginning. Because this function is so very campus specific, there does not seem to be much advantage to the full alignment of it. Nevertheless, in project planning and project management there might well be opportunities for a greater degree of collaboration. The shared CFO will also be asked to consider this.

**Shared Service Contracts:** Given the remote location in northern New York, there are numerous examples of SUNY Canton and SUNY Potsdam working together to address problems and challenges between the two campuses. A lot of this type of collaboration has been addressed through a broader organization in the county known as the Associated Colleges of the St. Lawrence Valley. This organization consists of the presidents of both Canton and Potsdam, as well as the leaders of the two nearby private institutions of St. Lawrence University and Clarkson University. Collectively, the four institutions of higher education have addressed such issues as student athletic transportation, local transportation, cross-registration, print
shop needs, recycling, and trash removal. The two SUNY campuses will continue to participate in these joint contracts.

**Center for Administrative Services:** Initially under the direction of the CFO, the Center for Administrative Services will serve as the administrative home for shared services between SUNY Canton and SUNY Potsdam. The Center will reflect the mandates of the November 22, 2011, Resolution of the Board of Trustees. In this way, the functions which are critical to the budget and finances of both campuses will be as closely integrated as possible. Moving forward, additional functions will be included on a case by case basis as they serve to support the common functions already in the Center. Information Technology issues will be addressed as the various departments and functional units explore the best way to align their functions to establish full collaboration.
Information Technology Services

In the November 22, 2011 Resolution, the Board of Trustees called for: “Significant progress toward full consolidation of business and student information systems, processes and software, in all major areas...” (Section 4, c). Following this resolution, an analysis team of technology experts visited SUNY Canton and SUNY Potsdam in November, 2011 in order to study the IT services and processes at both colleges. The analysis team included Dave Powalyk (SUNY CIO and Transformation Officer), Carey Hatch (SUNY Connect and LMS), Mike Notarius (CIO of ITEC), Bill Grau (Interim Director SICAS), Joe Moreau (SUNY Oswego CIO) and Ron Brown (a retired CIO-serving as a resource to the team). The Team identified areas of sharing between the two institutions, possible opportunities to leverage University-wide Alliance for Strategic Technology (AST) Shared Services, and offered recommendations for moving both campuses forward collectively utilizing a SUNY Team approach (See Appendices C and J).

Report on Benchmarks:

In recent months, a very positive relationship has developed among the members of the SUNY Canton and SUNY Potsdam IT departments. Moreover, under the leadership of Dave Powalyk, all parties engage in a weekly conference call to push forward the shared services agenda in Information Technology. In particular, Potsdam is now moving to have SUNY
Information Technology Exchange Center (ITEC) host Banner processes; while Canton recently completed its Banner move to ITEC July, 2012. These moves will provide each institution with disaster recovery and redundancy and at the same time prepare them for participation in future common Student Information System (SIS) standards and related initiatives.

Most recently, on June 29, 2012, Vice Chancellor Brian Hutzley announced a new set of priorities within the Information technology area, with the overall goals of improving business functionality through technology and leveraging technical resources effectively and efficiently. Both colleges applaud the goals of SUNY’s IT Transformation Plan, but note that SUNY needs to identify how it can provide assistance to the colleges to maintain current operations while local IT staffs are working on system-wide conversions and cover additional infrastructure expenses like extra bandwidth. However, utilizing the same major systems does make sense even if it does not save money. For small and rural colleges like Canton and Potsdam, this will help sustain critical campus operations where there is little or no redundancy in expertise among staff. Many of these will supersede the conversations being held in a bi-lateral environment between Canton and Potsdam.

SUNY Canton and SUNY Potsdam either have adopted or are preparing to engage in initiatives in most of the areas mentioned in the memo, including:

- Finance & HR – Optimize current tools and processes
- Transaction Processing Center – Move to a system-wide procurement processing.
- Student information System – create a standard repeatable common approach template for a campus student information system (banner).
• Identity Tracking and Management – Aligning campus’ identity and security management strategy.

**Degree Planning:** Potsdam implemented DegreeWorks two years ago and is waiting to see how the locally modified version will interface with adaptations to accommodate the SUNY-wide transfer initiative. They will then be able to ascertain the strategy and timeline for implementation. Canton likewise is involved in implementing DegreeWorks and will be part of SUNY’s December 2012 cohort.

**SUNY Cloud – Migrate Local Services Into Available University-Wide or Regional**

**Campus Collaborations Opportunities:** SUNY Canton already participates significantly in university-wide services and/or public cloud services. These include: ITEC (Information Technology Exchange Center), ANGEL LMS (Learning Management System) hosting at ITEC, extended helpdesk support from SLN for online students, SLN Education support for campus-based instructional designers, an educational web conferencing system from ITEC, and remote database administrator services from SICAS (Student Information and Campus Administration System) and ITEC. Potsdam has not actively participated in shared IT services for a variety of reasons. As noted above, this will consume the greatest amount of campus IT resources for the conversion and re-integration of other systems to Banner. Potsdam users will have to adapt to less flexible and customized campus services as they learn to live with the standard SUNY implementation and the methods under which processes are run. This will result in some loss
of functionality that accompanies increased efficiency and security; Potsdam needs to be clear
to the campus community about those tradeoffs.

**Virtual Desktop Infrastructure:** Each college provides a suite of applications for most
desktop computers. If SUNY were to negotiate an even better licensing terms and conditions
for Microsoft or Adobe applications (as examples), VDI on a system provided basis becomes
quite attractive. The standard repertoire of office applications (word processing, spreadsheets,
presentations software, calendar and e-mail) represent only a small part of the needed desktop
environment. Potsdam, for instance, is more interested in Virtual Applications (e.g. being able
to run SPSS, Adobe products including Flash) from anywhere on anything versus the entire
desktop while Canton is currently awaiting pricing information for ITEC’s VDI offering and
anticipates participating in a pilot Fall 2012. Canton is willing to explore being a regional center
for the ITEC VDI initiative. By hosting one of ITEC’s black boxes, SUNY Canton would provide VDI
service to institutions in its region.

**Examples of Successful Collaboration:** The IT Directors at SUNY Canton and SUNY Potsdam are
currently reviewing and investigating, in detail, the functions of IT across both institutions; with
the goal of aligning both IT Departments to deliver joint services. *Both* Banner Teams meet
regularly to collaborate on Banner initiatives. Canton met with Potsdam and shared their
documentation, best practices, and implementation strategies for the Banner Document
Management System (BDMS). Canton is visiting Potsdam on July 19 for a Workflow
demonstration. Cross-campus teams are being formed for many initiatives such as BDMS and
Workflow, video surveillance and storage, e-commerce solution, an IDS (security) solution,
Banner 9 training, Banner core applications, Argos, and BB Analytics reporting tools. Potsdam
and Canton had a joint meeting with a vendor this past June to review a security solution.

Moreover, staff from both institutions have already begun traveling to SICAS Op Council video conferences together and are exploring several areas of common interest. Specifically, they are looking at adopting Cashnet at both institutions as a common response to e-commerce needs. More recently, the Canton Admissions group met with the Potsdam Admissions Office regarding the implementation of a paperless application flow process, which is already in place in Canton.

One important goal in any future decisions regarding IT, is to avoid being boxed in by our current organizational structures. In reality, the two institutions are working closely to integrate services where feasible. As has been noted numerous times, information technology runs the gamut of functions across the institutions. In particular, an important suite of functions has to do with the teaching and learning enterprise. At Potsdam, in particular, this has been under the supervision of Academics Affairs. There are concerns that aspects of instructional technology might be alienated from Academic Affairs. This includes, but is not limited to, support for classroom technology, courseware, support for information technology related to library services and information literacy throughout the curriculum, instructional design of online courses, and oversight of online curricula and faculty. Given how inextricably linked these are to the academic enterprise, there should be no radical change on either campus having to do with the delivery of instruction and the functions listed above, without significant input from the faculty and staff involved.
In Summary:

Beyond the goals articulated by the Chancellor, and specified by the Board of Trustees in their November 22, 2011, Resolution (4, c), a long-term goal must be the reconfiguration of IT services at both institutions in order to enhance and facilitate shared services, particularly those services supporting business operations.

While the two institutions work toward this goal it is important to note that significant steps have been made toward aligning both IT Departments to deliver joint services, establishing cross-campus project teams for common areas of future interest, and addressing SUNY’s IT Transformation Plan (specifically, migrating local services into available university-wide services and/or public cloud services).
Chapter 7

Advancement

In general, the area of Advancement, as traditionally conceived, responds directly and intimately to the mission, history, and distinctiveness of the institution. As a result, in general, functional units within Advancement must be carefully scrutinized in order to assure that by initiating collaboration or shared services, nothing interferes with the public “brand” of each institution.

As with so many areas, the Division of Advancement includes different functional units on the two different campuses. At SUNY Canton, the Advancement Division houses many of the offices which have to do with external audiences and with the development of financial resources other than from the instructional mission of the College. As a result, it houses Admissions, Athletics, Grants, Career and Transfer Services, along with Alumni & Development, and Public Relations under the leadership of one vice president. On the Potsdam campus, the Vice President for Institutional Advancement supervises a narrower range of offices. It is divided into three areas, Marketing, Alumni, and Development. Government and Public Relations fall under Marketing.

Looking, then, at only the areas where the two campuses coincide organizationally under Advancement, one only has Development, Alumni Relations, and Public Relations. Since so much of what these offices do has to do with reinforcing the brand of the institution, it does not seem that there might be many opportunities for shared services. Nevertheless, some possibilities do exist.
The two Advancement Divisions might seek to gain a better price for their publications, software, and consultants by bidding all of the work together. Working with their Admissions Offices, the two institutions might purchase radio and television time in a consolidated bid. Canton has proposed looking into the use of a common software package, Razors Edge, for enhanced tracking of donors and alumni. Banner, the common platform for both institutions, does not interface well with Razors Edge. Potsdam has had success with the relative components of Banner installed for this purpose, as well as publications in a consolidated bid through Public Relations.

Consequently, taken as a whole, while there are some exciting areas where the two campuses might collaborate in the area of Advancement, they are limited due to the essential function of the division which is the preservation and advancement of the unique mission and characteristics of the institutions.
Chapter 8

**Student-Related Services**

As has been seen in other administrative areas, offices related to direct student services report to a wide variety of vice presidents on both campuses. In fact, it is possible to say that every vice president on each campus is responsible for a portion of student related services. Student-related services run the gamut from Admissions to Residence Life, to Career Services, and beyond. Some of these functions have an immediate and powerful tie to the mission and distinctiveness of each college, such as Student Activities and Advising. Other functions are more opaque, occurring in the background but providing a real service and benefit to the student, such as Student Accounts, Financial Aid and the Registrar. As a result, it is best to look at the discrete functions and then discuss the potential sharing of services related to that function, the estimated timeline for the implementation of shared services, and the anticipated outcomes of that action. This chapter will consider each functional area and its potential for shared services.

1. **Admissions**

The area of Admissions offers many challenges and opportunities as we look to shared services. On the one hand, in the eyes of many people SUNY Canton and SUNY Potsdam compete in recruiting the brightest and best students in the North Country. Because of the funding system used within SUNY, enrollments translate directly into money. We are, for better or worse, tuition-driven institutions. Consequently, there needs to be an
acknowledgement that we need to collaborate with one another to in turn compete with other colleges who also recruit heavily within our region.

The Admissions process, especially the recruitment of new and transfer students, is intimately linked to the mission and distinction of each campus. Admissions counselors are, after all, salespersons, and their product is the whole experience offered by their respective institution. Consequently, as we seek to maintain the distinction of each campus, it will pose a challenge to Admission to collaborate.

a. Potential Shared Services:

i. The Canton Admissions Office is currently implementing document imaging-workflow software, Ellucian (formerly SUNGard), Banner Document Imaging Systems (BDMS) in hopes of implementing the phase two workflow in the near future. Potsdam has currently scheduled a demonstration of Ellucian for Potsdam stakeholders. The campus has made it a top priority in a difficult funding environment. Potsdam is looking to benefit from the experience and expertise gained during implementation at Canton.

ii. Because Admissions as a function is the public face of the mission and distinction of each campus, on the surface it would not seem that there would be many opportunities for shared services, except for back-office functions such as document processing and record keeping. An objective observer might envision a date in the future in which there were Admissions counselors in the field recruiting for both institutions. For instance, imagine a cross-trained Admissions counselor at a high school in Pennsylvania extolling the benefits of a joint application to institutions who offer the wide range of technical and liberal arts majors
represented by the two institutions: from Vet Tech to Studio Art, from Music Performance to Environmental Technology, the range is truly impressive.

iii. Within the area of marketing, Admissions plays an important role in publicizing the unique qualities of each campus. At the same time, both campuses rely heavily on printed materials: viewbooks, pamphlets, and other recruiting tools. They are also increasing use the Web as a major venue for recruiting potential students. One can envision a future where the two institutions join their purchases of printing services in order to achieve greater economies of scale. Likewise, the acquisition of the same content management software for their web presence might also accrue savings.

b. **Estimated Timeline:**

i. Discussions of shared document imaging are underway already to be followed closely by the implementation of application workflow. Both components could be fully implemented for the Admissions Offices on both campuses by the end of 2013-2014.

ii. The creation of a corps of admissions counselors who represent both institutions is possibly in the future.

iii. Discussions can begin right away about joint Requests for Proposals for the purchase of printing services. As each campus looks to upgrade its web presence, similar conversations can begin regarding the content management software.

c. **Anticipated Outcomes**

Based on the progress made to date, one can safely assume that the two institutions will be using the same document imaging and workflow software and work toward establishing a common workflow. If basic policies and procedures can be established, within the targeted
three to five years having cross-trained Admissions counselors on the road would be a next logical step.

2. Financial Aid

The SUNY Potsdam and SUNY Canton Financial Aid Departments have a long history of collegiality. Specifically, the two offices team annually to alternately host and co-present a SUNY Financial Aid Day. Staffs from both Financial Aid Offices have met on occasion to discuss issues of compliance, Quality Assurance Program participation and with Canton’s move toward becoming a Division III athletic campus, NCAA reporting expectations and requirements. Areas target for future discussions include: satisfactory academic progress policies and procedure, program integrity regulation implementation, customer servicing, consortium agreements, consumer information, and the development of an assessment instrument to measure students’ satisfaction. Acting in conjunction with Admissions, Financial Aid is one of the first campus offices with which prospective, and current, students have contact. The work of the office is critically dependent on both Title IV, HEA standards of administrative capability, and the mission and distinction of the campus. It is conceivable that in the areas of data collection, processing, and records, Financial Aid Offices might well look to adopting some shared services. Just as it is also conceivable to have Admissions counselors represent the two institutions, so it is also conceivable with extensive professional development that Financial Aid counselors would be able to package offers for students from both schools, in keeping with the intent and restrictions applicable to each type of award.
a. **Potential Shared Services:**

i. As noted, there are office procedures and processes which are performed in a nearly identical manner on each campus. Having to do with information technology and record keeping in Banner, it is possible to have a single set of clerical employees service the two Financial Aid offices.

b. **Estimated Timeline:**

i. Conversations regarding the integration of back of office processes and procedures could begin at anytime. It is paramount that IT issues be addressed pursuant to planning and implementation.

ii. The full alignment of the Financial Aid offices will probably require three to five years of discussions, especially since packaging is intimately associated with the Admissions process. Packaging has much to do with the leveraging of financial aid to targeted populations of prospective students. Until the two Admissions Offices are more closely integrated, it makes little sense to move to link the Financial Aid Offices.

c. **Anticipated Outcomes**

Given adequate attention to the above dynamics, the potential exists for the full alignment of the two Financial Aid Offices so that any given employee, with adequate training and professional development, might process packages from Canton or Potsdam, according to a single set of policies and procedures, but based on the unique recruiting and retention efforts of the appropriate campus. In compliance with the Code of Federal Regulations Standards of Administrative Capability, there will need to be a capable individual responsible for administering all Title IV, HEA programs in which the campuses participate and for coordinating
those programs with the institutions other federal and non-federal programs of student financial assistance. The location of the Financial Aid employees need not be campus-determined; however, in order to satisfactorily address unique student issues and needs, adequate financial aid staffing on each campus would be required.

3. Student Accounts

The Financial Aid and Student Accounts Office in Canton are combined in the Student Services Center. This area is supervised by the Director of Financial Aid with professional and clerical staff in each area and reports to the Vice President for Administration. SUNY Potsdam’s Office of Student Accounts disburses funds allocated by the Financial Aid Office to students as well as the collection of tuition and student fees. This student-related service could potentially be combined and offers a good opportunity for shared services.

a. Potential Shared Services:

i. SUNY Potsdam has partnered with Higher One for the refunds of refunds to students. The ONEDisburse Program has allowed the office to streamline the refund process and allows staff more time to work individually with students and their parents. Currently, SUNY Canton is manually processing refund checks. Initially, the two campuses might well have a profitable conversation about adopting a single provider for the two institutions.

ii. The Potsdam Campus has been exploring eCommerce solutions for their student billing and web-based payments for other campus departments. After meeting with vendors on the SUNY-wide eCommerce contract, SUNY Potsdam has determined that Higher One CashNET suite of programs will provide eBilling and eMarket solutions to better
serve our students, families, alumni, and community. Again, it would be profitable to initiate a conversation about adopting this single solution.

iii. Billing and processing functions could be located in one area with customer service representatives on each campus to work with individual students and their families to address their issues and needs.

b. Estimated Timeline:

i. The discussions regarding adopting a single provider and associated software can begin immediately and must include discussion regarding web-based payments for all departments collecting payments on each campus. Full implementation might be delayed depending on current contract restrictions.

ii. A survey of common policies and procedures can begin right away, with an ensuing analysis of the staffing functions and internal control requirements of a combined office. Depending on obstacles encountered which include technology, separate banking functions and State and Federal financial aid regulations, integration could potentially be achieved within three to five years.

b. Anticipated Outcomes:

If both these options are pursued, billing and processing functions could be located in one area with customer service representatives on each campus to work with individual students and their families to address their issues and needs. This could potentially save money by consolidating responsibilities and achieving larger economies of scale.
4. **Student Affairs**

Within the Division of Student Affairs on each campus there are variations. The Canton Institution Library and academic support services reports through Student Affairs, while in Potsdam they are part of Academic Affairs. Career Planning reports through Student Affairs in Potsdam but through Advancement in Canton.

a. **Potential Shared Services:**

From the beginning of shared services discussions, there have been reduced expectations related to the degree to which Student Affairs Offices might integrate their activities. With that said, there are significant possibilities.

At this time, campus life offices at both institutions have repeatedly met with each other and have agreed on and/or discussed the possibility for sharing bookings, purchasing, transportation, trips, leadership training, and best practices. Student leaders at both institutions plan on continuing their conversations on student issues as well. Additionally, the Student Health Services directors have engaged in significant discussions related to student health insurance and the opportunity to “share” the next contract. Clearly, these two offices can be the example to follow for the remainder of the Student Affairs Offices: colleagues from the two campuses meet brainstorm areas for collaboration, and then enact those opportunities.

There have been routine meetings between both the Diversity Offices and the Career Services Offices. These meetings have occurred in a bilateral setting but also as part of larger conversations within the Associated Colleges of the St. Lawrence Valley. The Career Services
staffs have explored the possibility of coordinating campus visits by recruiters. In the area of Diversity, meetings have included both staff and student leaders.

b. Estimated Timeline:

With regard to Campus Life the development of shared programs has already begun and will continue. There is an expectation that the remainder of the Student Affairs directors will meet during the Fall 2012 semester with the understanding that they will work toward increased collaboration and achieve cost savings where feasible.

c. Anticipated Outcomes:

At least initially, conversation will proceed as they have with Campus Life and Student Health Services: looking to combining forces to reduce the cost of a contract or working together to attract additional programming. The opportunity to identify and share best practices and training for their staffs will be a suitable outcome for other offices.

Discussion has taken place between SUNY Potsdam’s Dean of Students and SUNY Canton’s Vice President for Student Affairs on possibilities for integration and venues for collaborative planning and training. Full integration would likely require state-level negotiations with two different unions and would likely not generate any savings. Developing a mutual aid agreement between the departments, will improve the quality of policing at both colleges without any increase in cost. SUNY Potsdam shared equipment and resources to SUNY Canton during the February 2012 Cook Hall Fire.
5. Academically-Based Student Services

At both SUNY Canton and SUNY Potsdam, there are several academically-based, student-related services. Many of these, such as advising and academic services, are campus specific, insofar as they serve as an interface between the student and the specific academic environment of each institution. While it is good to envision a time when academic advisors on each campus are familiar with the programs, policies and procedures of the other, in order to better advise all students, that remains a long-term goal. That said, there are some components with academic support services where some collaboration might prove very welcome.

Included in the area of academic support services are the Potsdam Student Success Center, College Writing Center, and Math Tutoring Center which report to Academic Affairs. At SUNY Canton, the Academic Services and Retention Office is under Student Affairs along with various components within Academic Affairs, geared toward advising and tutoring. While consultation and assistance of one institution toward the other is a high goal, there is an opportunity for shared professional development training on an immediate level. Most of these areas are hands-on service areas where time to meet with students determines staffing levels, so potential savings in personnel is not likely. Because the services are so intimately linked to curriculum, there is little immediate potential for collaboration.

Both institutions have robust and successful retention programs – Potsdam’s program beginning with a comprehensive first-year experience, and a newly-developed program targeting sophomore students, which has been featured nationally by the American Association of Colleges and Universities. Canton has its own program for student retention, beginning with
first-year student orientation and following through curricular choice and mentoring in the programs. The two groups will doubtless have many examples of best practices to share to improve learning opportunities.

a. Potential Shared Services

The shared Military and Veterans’ Services Coordinator, which is shared between the two institutions is assigned to this area. This might well serve as a model in other areas where students with specific needs or who enjoy specific benefits might approach the campuses.

There is interest in discussing ways in which Potsdam graduate students in Math and Writing might assist in tutoring centers at SUNY Canton. Similarly, some of the more advanced graduate students might be considered for employment at Canton as instructors of elementary Math or English courses.

b. Estimated Timeline:

In Fall 2012, the Provosts will convene math and writing tutoring personnel, along with related graduate program directors from Potsdam to discuss the possibilities of using the Potsdam graduate students in various functions at Canton. They will be asked to develop a proposal. There have been preliminary conversations, but no commitment to action.

c. Anticipated Outcomes:

There are several very positive possible outcomes from this conversation. Collaboration can provide employment and experience for Potsdam graduate students and a real service to Canton students.
Beyond these proposals, there may be some programs for specific populations where both institutions have needs. This will require getting the relevant staff together to begin to explore the possibilities.

6. International Students and Study Abroad

On both campuses international students are supported by the same offices as local students who seek to study abroad. At Potsdam, the International Study Office is part of the Student Success Center so that services to international students are closely aligned with other academic support services. The Potsdam campus already has a shared services agreement with SUNY Plattsburgh to process visas for international employees. Canton uses external legal counsel to assist in the processing of employee visas. Currently, each campus processes its own student visa applications. SUNY Potsdam is poised to begin a summer English as a Second Language program from in-coming international students, which can possibly be of interest to students arriving from abroad to study at Canton. Consequently, there might exist opportunities for collaboration in the general assistance provided to international students.

International recruiting is another area that could yield positive results for both campuses, given the cost of international education.

There might also be opportunities for providing support to local students who wish to study abroad. Both SUNY Canton and SUNY Potsdam participate in numerous international programming initiatives, but little is done in collaboration with one another. For example, there might be an opportunity for SUNY Potsdam to be a partner with SUNY Canton’s summer programs. Both institutions have their own faculty-led study abroad programs that might
attract students from other campuses. SUNY Potsdam has more exchange agreements than SUNY Canton, and perhaps some of those students could be attracted to Canton programs.

7. Registrar

The Registrar’s office provides an academic function with the range of student-related services since it is responsible for maintaining the integrity academic records and related processes. As with so many other offices, it has two important components. One is the customer service side which addresses concerns and issues which students have regarding their records and the various academic policies and procedures of the campus. In this regard, there needs to be a unique presence on each campus. At the same time, some of the work of the office is opaque to the end user, the maintenance of the integrity of academic records. That function is subject to unique rules and policies both from the SUNY system, but also developed locally. Consequently it is conceivable that there might be an integration of some back-office functions.

a. Potential Shared Services

The Military and Veterans’ Services Coordinator relieved considerable workload in both Registrars’ Offices, namely the certification of students for veteran’s benefits and related processes. As a result, in reality the two offices have shared a great deal, even though the position does not report to them. If the institutions go to shared document imaging systems, that will facilitate the exchange of transcripts electronically, which would save a small amount of work and postage and improve speed of service to students.
Potsdam has already implemented the DegreeWorks graduation tracking software. Canton is beginning to implement it. Possibilities exist for cooperation and collaboration wherein Potsdam can assist in the implementation process, just as Canton will be assisting the Potsdam Admissions Office in implementing the Ellucian document imaging process.

Sharing of staff seems unlikely. While both have Banner databases, each institution uses Banner in completely different ways with different processes, procedures, and academic rules. As a result, any move to greater integration would be heavily dependent on developing a single set of rules, policies, and procedures. These are also directly related to the mission and distinction of the institutions and so will need to be very carefully considered. Only in the utilization of shared software might collaboration be feasible at present.

b. Estimated Timeline:

The Military and Veterans’ Services Coordinator position has been accomplished.

Progress on DegreeWorks and the Ellucian shared imaging projects depends on implementation timelines being developed by the IT working group.

The review of rules, policies, and procedures will be very complicated and probably take several years to successfully complete, since it will require direct participation by leaders of the two faculty shared governance entities.

c. Anticipated Outcomes:

The two institutions can expect some workload efficiency and enhancement of services through collaboration. In the near to middle term, it is unlikely that there will be any savings from staff reductions.
8. Library

Similar to the discussions happening about Information Technology, discussions have been ongoing about the possible shared services opportunities between the two respective college libraries. Weekly joint teleconference team meetings with SUNY representatives and college leaders convene over numerous collaborations, including sharing an Inter-Library Loan Specialist position and piloting a shared comprehensive library management system. In addition, the members of this combined team drafted a library initiatives comparative document that included:

- Creation of a targeted marketing plan – SUNY Canton has crafted and employed a number of marketing/publicity/outreach strategies over the past year. Potsdam and Canton will work together to establish best practices and concretize a targeted, strategic plan for these activities for each institution.

- Launch of LibAnswers/LibChat - a web-based, library help platform that allows users to text, chat and electronically submit help questions via qwidget– SUNY Canton launched LibAnswers (asynchronous service) this past year and is looking at LibChat (synchronous service). SUNY Potsdam is launching LibAnswers this year and is looking at LibChat. Co-investigation of LibChat is planned, and Canton will share knowledge and best practices relating to launch of LibAnswers.

The Library constitutes an important area of student-related service. As noted earlier, it reports to different vice presidents at the two institutions (Student Affairs at Canton, Academic Affairs at Potsdam). Although a student-related service, its primary and irreducible function is instructional. It would be a tragic error to divorce the Library from the academic enterprise.
which it supports. Librarians within SUNY are considered instructional faculty by virtue of that role. Because a discussion of shared services within the Libraries does not fit as easily in the forthcoming discussion of Academic Partnerships and Collaboration, it is included here, but with the caveat that the Library is a quintessentially academic/instructional unit.

a. Potential Shared Services:

The two institutions have agreed to hire a shared Inter-Library Loan (ILL) Specialist. There will be small savings, as the position is half-time for each institution. SUNY Potsdam had a full-time vacancy that was converted to this position. Potsdam’s expertise and experience in delivering ILL will be invaluable as Canton sets up its system.

Potsdam’s librarians are modifying the introductory information literacy online modules developed for first-year courses so they can be adapted for use at Canton by segregating Potsdam specific advice from more generic advice.

The Libraries have volunteered to participate in pilot testing for some other university-wide shared functions. A timeline of that participation will depend on how SUNY proceeds.

Each library is planning separate initiatives that would benefit from consultation and sharing of work product with the partner library. Much of this knowledge transfer will likely come out of established work groups devoted to information literacy, public service and marketing/outreach. SUNY Canton is planning to craft a standard information-literacy lesson plan to be shared among librarians whose primary and backup responsibilities include teaching information literacy. SUNY Canton would benefit from best practices and work product relating to information literacy instruction from SUNY Potsdam. SUNY Potsdam is planning to investigate circulating textbook and/or popular reading collections digitally. SUNY Canton will
provide work product, best practices, workflow information, etc., on what they have accomplished with their current programs thus far.

OLIS is still moving forward in their investigation of a SUNY-wide shared system whereby libraries would benefit from single bibliographic files (instead of locally-created or copied files) and a shared interface for searching and accessing collections. Canton and Potsdam continue to communicate with OLIS regarding this process and have expressed an ongoing willingness to pilot a merger of catalogs or a launch of a new product when those possibilities emerge.

b. Estimated Timeline:

The ILL Specialist will be hired before end of summer. The course adaptation by the Potsdam library for sharing with Canton will proceed during the 2012-2013 year.

Librarians from both campuses are continuing to meet and will present a plan for additional shared opportunities by the end of the summer.

c. Anticipated Outcomes:

Discussions with the Libraries to date have considered public service, information literacy instruction, and archives. Most of these have involved sharing of best practices and professional development, rather than actually sharing of delivery or personnel.

The Librarians of the Associated Colleges of the St. Lawrence Valley are also discussing some informal gatherings of various staff groups to facilitate mutual support in functional areas.
9. Health Services

Both Directors met in mid-December to discuss the possibility of combining plans in order to get better pricing with a larger pool of insured students. Working together, both colleges drafted a plan negotiating benefits that were satisfactory to both institutions. Once again, a SUNY-wide health insurance contract is encouraged.

10. Lifelong Learning/Extended Studies/Personal Enrichment: As of Spring 2012, SUNY Canton did not continue its Lifelong Learning/Extended Studies Department. A few non-credit generating programs remain that should be housed in SUNY Potsdam’s Center for Lifelong Education and Recreation. Their robust programming is well maintained and has an excellent reputation, so to avoid “reinventing the wheel,” SUNY Canton will be reaching out in the near future to see if SUNY Potsdam could assist.

11. Internships and Experiential Education: Both curricula at SUNY Canton and SUNY Potsdam include internships as well as experiential education requirements. SUNY Canton faculty and deans help assist students with placement and credentialing. SUNY Potsdam has an office dedicated to these endeavors. If we could collaborate, SUNY Canton students could greatly benefit from this service.

12. Cross-Institutional Knowledge Transfer: While collaboration often brings with it opportunities for cost savings and economies of scale, it also provides a means or forum for the free exchange of ideas. Many initiatives occurring on individual campuses are not unique to them, but are being broadly implemented across the SUNY System, at one stage or another.
Campuses would therefore benefit from the sharing of best practices and the leveraging of one another’s knowledge and expertise.

Recently, SUNY Canton was able to provide SUNY Potsdam with documentation and implementation strategies on a large-scale document and imaging system; a system that Canton has been transitioning to for over a year and one which Potsdam is considering purchasing. Sharing information on the system greatly accelerated the process and decision-making for Potsdam. While Potsdam has greatly assisted Canton in the implementation of the Degree Works degree progress management software as part of a system wide initiative.

**Summary**

Taken as a whole, the area of student-related services can provide some additional opportunities for shared services, collaboration, and integration of policies and procedures. Each function must be carefully considered to assure that the mission and distinction of each campus is in no way compromised as a result of shared services. Nonetheless, this is an exciting area of investigation and groups on both campuses are already deeply engaged in constructive discussion, and significant accomplishments have already occurred. Many other conversations regarding shared software and other programs are also underway, such as those in Admissions and Student Accounts. Moreover, nearly every office in this area already has a track record of cooperation and collegial sharing developed over many decades.
Chapter 9

Academic Partnerships and Collaboration

Initially, it seemed that academic programs would be the last area to be considered for shared services. Indeed, it is the academic program which is most intimately linked to the mission and distinction of each institution. Both institutions have done a superb job of creating a marketable brand. Students are attracted to the range of academic programs offered by each. No one wishes to muddy that distinction.

Some faculty members of the institutions demonstrated that one of the most exciting possible areas of collaboration between the institutions was precisely in their academic programs. After two years of discussions, the Potsdam Department of Geology and the Canton Department of Environmental Technology proposed minors to be offered to students of the other campus. Their proposal consisted of a minor in Geology for SUNY Canton students and a minor in Environmental Technology for SUNY Potsdam students. The pairing was extremely fortuitous and has the effect of providing a truly-enriching opportunity to students.

The SUNY Potsdam Geology Program has an outstanding track record in placing its graduates in industry and graduate schools. It is a well-developed liberal arts-based curriculum which prepares its graduates for jobs in mining, public service, research, and to pursue additional graduate study. Similarly, SUNY Canton’s Environmental Technology Program has a strong track-record of placing its students in a wide variety of industries, and prepares them to be certified as environmental engineers within the State of New York. Unfortunately, the Potsdam program does not prepare its students for such certification. Similarly, the Canton
program does not prepare its students for graduate study. The minors developed by each institution serve to alleviate these shortcomings. The Canton minor in Environmental Technology provides SUNY Potsdam students with a pathway to certification, while the Potsdam minor in Geology provides all the necessary prerequisites to SUNY Canton students interested in eventually attending graduate school. In this way, the programs truly enhance the quality and opportunities of the other.

It became apparent that there were potentially numerous areas in which the two institutions could cooperate and collaborate academically. Early on critics pointed out that sharing services between the two institutions was unlikely because they were so different in character and curricula. In fact, it is now apparent that collaboration will be possible precisely because they are so different. The two institutions have very few curricula, or even courses, in common. They share a very small pool of students who apply for admission to both. Consequently, it is now apparent that there are many possible areas where curricula on one campus can enrich the academic experience of students on the other, as in the case of Geology and Environmental Technology.

But the range of possible cooperation does not end merely with parallel minors or other curricula. These seek to enhance the opportunities of existing students. The campuses are now beginning to see where they can develop curricula which will attract new students, to increase the enrollment base of both campuses. Moreover, expertise on one campus can be drafted to assist the other. Using these concepts as a point of departure, there are many possibilities to explore.
The academic collaboration should start with some initiatives that will bring together the academic departments to see if we can secure some early agreements. Once faculty know one another and have some experience working together, full-blown programmatic collaborations will be much more feasible. So one might begin by looking at:

- Articulation agreements between programs, whereby a student could complete programs at both institutions via transfer of credit.
- Reciprocal minors like the one pending between Environmental Technology and Geology.
- Development of short curricula (two to five courses) from one institution to enhance the programs of the other.
- Using cross-registration to deliver specific courses or small groups of courses at the other institution. Online courses, in particular, could be useful in this way.
- Offering to students of both campuses opportunities previously available on one campus, such as publicizing study abroad/travel courses at both institutions.
- Offering students the opportunity to work on research with faculty members at both institutions.
- Promoting collaborative research by faculty at both institutions, which could lead to sponsored research proposals.
- Examining current offerings to see if existing courses can assist with meeting demands of programs on other campuses.

All of these options can be implemented without significant bureaucratic obstacles.

Each curricular issue will need to be approved through the shared governance systems of each campus, but curricular offerings of the minor or less do not need off-campus approval. The Associated Colleges of the St. Lawrence Valley already has policies whereby students at any one of the four institutions can register for a course each semester at another. Building on this experience, SUNY Potsdam and SUNY Canton can explore how to allow students to register for
more than one course a semester. There are some significant issues to resolve, due to federal and state requirements for full-time students and the application of financial aid, but the two can seek to find the best solutions for these difficulties.

Each institution has expertise which can be enlisted to assist the other. Canton has significant experience with on-line learning technology and currently offers more than 200 online courses. SUNY Potsdam hosts a modest number of on-line courses. Potsdam might well seek assistance from Canton in developing additional on-line courses. Potsdam has an extensive system for the support of student research, thanks to a Title III grant from the U. S. Department of Education, and additional funding from a private endowment. Both institutions can benefit from knowledge transfer.

Requiring more planning, cooperation of faculty from both campuses, and approval from both SUNY and the New York State Department of Education, would be degree programs beyond the level of the minor. These options include the following:

- **Dual Degrees**: In New York, dual degrees are when two degrees are registered with the Department of Education and the student enrolls in them simultaneously, such as the dual degree in Childhood Education with Potsdam and Jefferson Community College. Under this arrangement, the student completes the first two years at JCC and receives the A.S. degree and then continues for the B.A. degree at Potsdam. Potsdam also has 3-2 programs in the sciences at Potsdam and engineering at Clarkson which are dual degrees. One can imagine the development of similar curricula which draw upon the unique strengths of the SUNY Potsdam and SUNY Canton campuses.
Joint Collaborative Degrees. This type of program is one where significant parts of the single curriculum are offered on each campus, such that a student would take a certain set of courses at Potsdam and another set at Canton to receive a single ultimate degree. Because this would be a new and unique possibility, it is not clear if the New York State Department of Education has a category for it. Such possibilities will need to be fully researched. One possible approach would be through an articulation agreement, where some courses at one institution contribute to the degree at another or a dual degree as above.

Dual Enrollment: Under current agreements of the Associated Colleges of the St. Lawrence Valley, students may enroll in a course at the other institution if they are otherwise fully enrolled at their home institution. Both institutions have decades of experience in this. Memoranda of Understanding can be developed to allow students to take more than one course in any given semester at the other institution. One area of concern would be federal financial aid rules where a student must enroll for a minimum of 12 credits at one institution to be considered full time. Again, there are technical issues which would need to be resolved to implement such a policy.

Joint Faculty Hires: This is an exciting area for future discussion. Each institution might need some specialization to deliver a discrete number of courses, but not a full-time faculty member. It might be possible to hire one person to deliver specific courses on each campus. This has already been a topic of conversation within the Associated Colleges, but the public/private-union/nonunion and salary differential complications have seemed hard to overcome. Between SUNY schools, this does seem like a possibility.
• **Team Teaching and Rotating Semesters:** Within the Associated Colleges, SUNY Potsdam and SUNY Canton already have this capability. It has proven popular among faculty members and has stimulated curricular reforms on several campuses. Under current state rules, there are no impediments to faculty members at one SUNY school teaching at another. Consequently, it would be possible for a SUNY Canton professor to teach alongside a SUNY Potsdam professor in a course offered at either institution, or form teaching at one one semester, and the other, the next. The only consideration would be how it will be figured as part of the total workload and be considered with the faculty member’s performance program and how that service would be credited toward permanent appointment for probationary employees.

• **Faculty-to-Faculty Research/Student Faculty Research:** Within current rules, there are no obstacles to cooperative or collaborative research occurring between two faculty members on different campuses. For example, one Potsdam Biology professor is presently engaged in a research project based out of SUNY ESF in Syracuse while a Chemistry professor is working with colleagues at the University at Buffalo. Again, there are issues of workload assignment and how the activity is credited toward permanent appointment which would need to be clarified. Similarly, it would be both possible and exciting for students from one institution to engage in research alongside of a faculty member from the other campus. Depending on the desired goals of the research experience, if it is credit bearing or part of a course requirement, there are some administrative issues to resolve.

In all of these examples, there are a few axioms which must guide any deliberations. All conversations must respect the shared governance institutions of the two campuses, especially
where curricular issues are concerned. Both institutions must also respect the regulatory environment for degree programs, including not simply campus shared governance institutions, but also approval from SUNY System Administration and the State Department of Education. In some areas, there are also important issues involved in the assignment of workload and thus fealty to the collective bargaining agreement with the United University Professionals union.
SUNY Institute for Arts, Sciences, and Technology

In consultation with the Chancellor and the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost, SUNY Canton and SUNY Potsdam have proposed a new concept that would allow the two institutions to deliver new academic programming, find ways for shared service administration, and potentially offer services to the surrounding community. In order to supervise and coordinate the collaborative academic activities outlined earlier, this new virtual institute will be created and named the SUNY Institute for Arts, Sciences, and Technology. The name is particularly apt. It is the SUNY Institute because while it grows out of both Potsdam and Canton, it can also have a unique identity of its own, serving as the clearinghouse and public image of many of the shared collaborative programs. It is an institute for arts, sciences, and technology because it will draw from the strengths of both institutions. While SUNY Potsdam is the leading arts campus of SUNY, it takes tremendous pride in the rigor and success of programs in the sciences, social sciences, and education. By characterizing the institute as representing both the arts and sciences we convey that deep and broad participation in the collaborate efforts. Clearly, it is also an institute of technology in recognition of the important and unique contributions brought to the partnership by SUNY Canton, a leader in applied sciences and technology education within SUNY. Consequently, this Institute is where the best programs of both institutions can explore collaboration, to enhance the programs of one another but also to create new learning opportunities not currently available on either campus.
Mission

The mission of the SUNY Institute of Arts, Sciences, and Technology is to use the assets of SUNY Canton and SUNY Potsdam to create new opportunities that neither college could achieve on its own. These opportunities could be administrative collaborations, academic programs, or student-related activities.

The core mission of the Institute is to provide a mechanism to allow and facilitate the development of a new type of academic mission for Canton and Potsdam. The Institute is essentially the scaffolding linking the two institutions and on which many different opportunities can be built. It allows Canton and Potsdam to maintain their own identity, leadership, and brand while creating what will become a third brand shared by the institutions.

There are many goals related directly to the creation of the Institute, but the central goals are increased enrollments (and thus revenue), increased selectivity for both institutions, and making a significant contribution to the local economy.

The Institute will be a major departure from tradition for SUNY. This is a full-scale effort to build a new organization that expands academic opportunities for our students, offers new avenues for collaboration between faculty, and contributes significantly to the economy of our region. While there are risks with such a major effort, the interdependence that this will create will almost certainly reduce costs and increase revenue. A successful Institute will improve the quality of both institutions while also providing increased financial stability. For Potsdam and Canton, this is the next “big thing.”

The Institute will provide structure and assistance for the collaborative academic activities between the two institutions. At first, the leadership will be provided by the two
Provosts. They will see that appropriate faculty members, departments, and programs are invited to participate in collaborative conversations. As proposals emerge, it will also be the responsibility of the Provosts to see that they receive the necessary approvals from the appropriate shared governance institutions. Consequently, the leadership will work closely with the Faculty Senate/Assembly on each campus to see that shared governance principles are upheld. Eventually, as the Institute gains programs, there will be a sole director (rank and title to be determined), reporting to the campus Provosts, to continue the supervision of the Institute.

The Institute will function as a virtual center. Initially, no faculty will be assigned to it, but will have their assignment in a traditional department at one or the other institution. Similarly, the Institute will not own academic programs. These will still be developed and controlled by the participating departments. Rather, the Institute will serve as a place where programs can be developed and where the offerings can be coordinated. In this regard, it will resemble the Graduate School at SUNY Potsdam. The School is a virtual school which serves to coordinate the graduate offerings of the three Schools of the College.

The Institute will allow the two institutions to accomplish more working together than they could by working separately. As mentioned, it will provide an academic scaffold to generate creativity between the institutions. It will mean that the whole to be greater than the sum of its parts because it will serve to unleash the boundless creativity of the faculty members of both campuses. It can also serve to tap into the entrepreneurial spirit of the two institutions.
Shared Vision

The Institute will not simply look at STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) but convert it into STEAM (Add in the Arts)! As of this report, academic units have not begun conversations. Yet, an early success and possible model for future conversations is the Minor in Environmental Technology offered at SUNY Canton to SUNY Potsdam students. This is paired with a Minor in Geology offered by SUNY Potsdam for SUNY Canton students. One can imagine a wide range of areas where the strengths of one campus could provide added value to the curriculum of the other. However, as previously noted, progress has been made toward integration of shared minors. By and large most collaborations will probably consist of shorter educational opportunities, such as certificate programs and minors and articulation between upper and lower division curricula. Given the regulatory environment in which the institutions exist, it is unreasonable to believe that full degree programs (graduate or undergraduate) can be developed and approved in less than three years. Minors and some certificates can be approved locally, and thus provide the groundwork for further collaboration and possible integration.

In addition to developing some of the programs suggested, the Institute could sponsor:

- Faculty development opportunities
- Joint research programs, some of which might serve regional economic development needs (e.g., sustainability).
- Conferences, leadership institutes, and the like, that attract faculty from other colleges to engage with Canton and Potsdam faculty members.
• Faculty/staff collaborations on co-curricular projects linking student and academic affairs.

• Non-credit programs reflective of the strengths of the campuses offerings.

• A research center serving as a clearinghouse for the campuses expertise and the needs of local businesses and governments.

Financial issues must be addressed from the beginning. The faculty members of both campuses have been asked to do much more with much less. Both campuses have seen surging undergraduate enrollments. Canton’s has doubled in less than a decade and has set record-breaking enrollments. Yet both institutions have also seen their state supported budgets slashed, by approximately a combined $20 million! As a result, faculty members are already hard pressed to address the necessary activities of their workload assignment. In order to facilitate the collaborative conservations, incentives will need to be established.

Incentives might take several forms. For example, SUNY has engaged in several course redesign initiative with certain incentives built in. This might be resurrected and applied to the SUNY Institute. Academic departments and programs might be offered an opportunity to have front loaded funding. Under this model, the department or program estimates how much additional enrollment a new initiative will generate within a specific period, such as three years. Upon approval of the new program, they receive the full funding up front. It then diminishes as enrollments increase until the program can be run based on the tuition generated by the new enrollment.

The motto of engagement with faculty members should be “All may, some should, none must.” The collaboration offered by the Institute is available to all faculty members at both
institutions. Some programs and departments probably should participate, because of existing ties to the other campus or because of obvious linkages and synergies. Yet, there should also be nothing coercive about the Institute. To build on a popular slogan from a recent conflict, it should be an alliance of the willing, not a shotgun wedding.

**Marketing and Branding**

Both Potsdam and Canton enjoy strong reputations in areas that are distinct and overlap very little with each other. It is critical that nothing is done within the Institute that dilutes or diminishes these established college brands. The academic programs developed within the Institute will have the general theme of being “polytechnic.” In this case, that means involving academic disciplines from each institution. Certainly, some programs will be more Potsdam related and some more Canton focused, but all should involve expertise from each college.

The Institute will not usually be marketed as a separate entity. It will be marketed through both institutions’ normal marketing functions. Indeed, some of the programs may be marketed by the institutions in slightly different ways. For example, a new program developed by the Engineering faculty from Canton and the Art faculty from Potsdam may be marketed with an art emphasis by Potsdam and an engineering program by Canton. Done correctly, the marketing will result in more and better prepared students; as well as students who stay more than four years. That is, students will come as freshmen and leave with both a baccalaureate and a master’s degree – and possibly an associate degree as well. It is essential that the two institutions collaborate on the marketing plans for the new degrees offered through the Institute.
As noted in a previous chapter, while initial offerings might well be directed mainly at enriching the curricular offerings for existing students, an important component for the future will be the creation of unique opportunities which will assist both institutions in recruiting new students who previously would not have considered either Potsdam or Canton for their collegiate studies. These new collaborative programs, including joint and dual degrees, can help in creating distinctiveness for the new Institute and enhance the reputation of the two institutions even more.

The branding of the new Institute will need to be sensitive to the existing brand identity of the two institutions. As has been repeated endlessly in this report, no one wishes to see the existing brand identities of the institutions diminished in any way. Furthermore, there needs to be great sensitivity to brand confusion. As a result, the launch of the Institute will need to be accompanied by clear and simple explanations of what it is, and what it is not, how it relates to the two “parent” institutions, and how it differs. For many years, this will be a subtle distinction, since most brand emphasis will continue to fall on SUNY Canton and SUNY Potsdam. But eventually, it is hoped the Institute will become the visible token of the collaboration between the campuses.

The marketing of the new Institute will provide some of the most excitement, since it will offer both campuses a unique opportunity to begin to strike out in new and exciting ways. It is especially important because all of the participants hope that because of the new and distinctive programs will attract a new cohort of students, and thus increase the overall enrollment of the two institutions by as much as a combined 1,000 students. In addition, the new programs will also assist in retaining existing students, which also increases enrollment.
Lastly, there is the hope that eventually new graduate programs offered through the Institute will then both attract new students and also provide continuing graduate enrollment for existing undergraduate students, thus also increasing overall enrollments for the two campuses.

Management

The Institute will have a faculty committee that will be responsible for reviewing the academic proposals developed for the Institute. The committee will be comprised by an equal number of faculty (defined broadly) from each institution and will be drawn from those faculty who are participating in Institute activities. Once reviewed, academic proposals will go directly to the faculty senate/assembly of each institution for review.

The Institute’s faculty committee will also have the responsibility that faculty normally have in the day-to-day management of academic programs. This will include creating and reviewing courses, advising students, and making recommendations for faculty appointments to the two provosts.

Once the Institute has a significant number of programs and students, a director (rank and title to be determined) will be appointed. This director will report to both provosts. Until then, the provosts will jointly manage the Institute.

Signature Programs

At present, it is far too early to predict where the long-term success of the Institute will lie. An objective observer can see linkages among programs that suggest a wide range of possible conversations regarding collaborative programs drawing on the outstanding repertoire.
of existing programs at SUNY Canton and SUNY Potsdam that many new and exciting programs at all levels might emerge. These can include programs which serve to enhance existing curricula; degrees offered by one or the other institution which draw heavily on the expertise of the other; completely new jointly-offered undergraduate degree programs and completely new graduate programs. As noted, in general, programs will look to incorporate the strengths of the applied sciences and technology offered by SUNY Canton with the more traditional arts and sciences curricula of Potsdam.

**Future Conversations**

Examples are offered to illustrate possibilities. It is important to underscore that discussion between departments and programs would be the starting point for the development of actual academic collaborations:

- **Applied Health Focus** – there are many applied health initiatives that might combine lower level sciences with upper division applied health coursework, and possibly extend some programs to the master’s level.

- **Design** – This effort could bring all of the necessary engineering content and the graphic design program from Canton together with Potsdam’s studio art program to offer dual degrees in areas of design and potentially even architectural technology.

- **Business or Management** – Business related programs could collaborate to reduce duplication and enhance existing programs with broader offerings at the undergraduate level and explore related graduate programs.

- **Information Technology** – this area could bring together computer science, information technology and math for dual degree opportunities or possibly to enhance graduate offers.
Chapter 11

Administrative Structure, Governance and Control

Throughout the process leading up to the creation of this report, each institution has enlisted the assistance of their senior leadership. At SUNY Canton, this includes the members of the Executive Cabinet: the President, Vice Presidents, and direct reports to the President. On the Potsdam campus the President’s Council has been intimately involved, which includes the Vice Presidents, the Dean of Students, and the three academic deans. At the retreat where the joint leadership worked to draft this report, it was decided that moving forward the Executive Team, consisting of both executive groups from the respective campuses, would meet on a monthly basis to both build rapport on the leadership team and to guide the collaborative process. The institutions are seeking to schedule a joint retreat in August, prior to the start of classes to map the way forward and to assist in team building. In all likelihood, the Team will seek to contract a facilitator to assist in team building.

Over the course of the next few years, each President will seek to involve his/her counterpart in many of the ceremonial and festive occasions on campus. This is an essential element in team building, in helping the colleague to better understand the institution’s distinctiveness and mission and to simply allow them to get to be better known at the other institution. It is hoped that members of the leadership teams will extend similar invitations to their counterparts and colleagues.

Both institutions recognize that team building and the leadership of this process stretches far beyond the executive level. As a result, other working groups will also be meeting on a regular basis in order to keep the process on track. The working groups include the
Academic Cabinets, that is, the respective Provosts, academic deans, and other directors of academic units from each campus. Similar working groups are also being created in Student Affairs and Business Services. These groups will meet at least once a month so that most executive level officers will meet with counterparts on the other campus on a regular basis, alternating between the executive leadership team and the functional area leadership teams.

**Shared Governance Systems**

Both institutions recognize the importance of shared governance. In fact, participation by the units of shared governance is absolutely essential if there is to be any long term progress and success with the project. At both institutions, there are three entities which must be involved in the discussions and in the eventual approval of projects, based upon their statutory and traditional roles.

**Faculty Assembly / Faculty Senate**

Both Canton and Potsdam have long traditions of faculty involvement in curricular issues. As a result, it is both desired and necessary that the faculty representatives participate in the processes outlined in this report. In developing this report, and in the manifold conversations leading up to it, there has already been faculty involvement. Faculty members sat as members of the joint search committee which assisted in the selection of the shared Chief Financial Officer. Faculty members participated in focus groups which were held on each campus and conducted by The Education Alliance, providing important observations in the development of this report. Faculty members and staff professionals have been involved in all of the functional conversations which have occurred thus far. Clearly as new curricular proposals emerge from the academic collaborations, they will need to proceed through the
established approval process set up on each campus by the Faculty Assembly or Faculty Senate. The campus presidents have made and will continue to make regular reports to the faculty governance entities about the details of the conversations and the progress being made.

**Student Government Associations**

On both campuses students play an important role in shared governance. As with the faculty, they need to be involved in the decision-making process, and consulted about proposals for shared services and academic collaboration. Thus far in the process, students have already been engaged and involved. Some of the most eloquent support for each campus has come from the student leaders. Student participation in the process is also essential for ultimate success. They are our first concern and ultimately the purpose for which we do everything.

**College Councils**

The College Councils have played an extraordinarily active role in the conversations surrounding shared services. The road has not been an easy one. The campus leadership teams have attempted to keep the Councils informed about the process, but admittedly at several points in the last year the path was very uncertain and the direction unclear. More recently both College Councils have been engaged in discussions regarding the report. President Schwaller held an informal briefing for members of the College Council to poll their fears and hopes regarding shared services, in order to address them in this report. He also shared with them the broad outline of the sharing of administrative services and the collaborative academic programs. President Kennedy has also kept the Canton College Council informed about progress on the process, seeking their guidance and input. Mr. Ron O’Neill,
Chair of the Canton Council attended the leadership retreat when the outline for this report was finalized by the two executive teams, and made an impassioned plea that each campus retain its own President.

Moving forward, in compliance with state requirements and good practice, the College Councils will continue to be engaged in discussions of the process and goals. The two chairs of the Councils are considering inviting both presidents to attend council meetings on a routine basis, to better inform the Councils about the broad range of activities, and to better address any questions or concerns the Councils might have about matters at either institution. The Council members have also expressed their interest in hold joint meetings where issues of common interest regarding shared services and academic collaboration might be considered.

Unions

Unions and their members, who are governed by collective bargaining agreements, need to also be part of the process whereby we look at shared services and academic collaborations. At SUNY Canton, the unions have already been engaged in these discussions. For clerical positions, the process needs to be mindful of work assignments. For faculty and professional staff, workload considerations also must be taken into account. In both instances, an open dialog between the administration and the union leadership prior to any triggering event is necessary.
Financial Impact

Part of the impetus for the exploration of shared services has clearly been financial. In a time of severely reduced state support for public higher education, both institutions need to look for new ways to accomplish the goals we have established. A logical area is to seek economies of scale and share services, especially because these two campuses are relatively close to one another. The SUNY Provost has indicated that he does not anticipate any layoffs or other job loss directly as a result of shared services. Both Presidents have repeated that pledge to their respective institutions. Far and above all other areas, personnel costs are the most significant portion of both institutions’ budgets. Upwards of 80% of expenditures at each institution go to personnel costs. Consequently, the only way in which to accrue real and substantive savings is through employing fewer people. Yet, it is clear that these savings will be accrued through retirements and other voluntary departures, not through layoffs.

Report on Benchmarks

In the November 22, 2011 Resolution, Section 4, a), the Board of Trustees asked that the campuses “Demonstrate progress toward a 10% increase from current percentage of operating budget devoted directly to instructional budget, or achievement of at least 52% spending on instructional budget in total.”

In 2006, SUNY Potsdam embarked on a 10 year strategic plan, the Bicentennial Plan. Designed to culminate in the celebration of the Bicentennial of the college, this strategic plan looks to enhance many areas of campus life, with particular emphasis on instruction and
services to students. In early July, 2012, the SUNY System office released calculations regarding allocation of funds towards the various functions of the campus, as captured from reports of the 2010-2011 financial plan. Unfortunately, for the Potsdam campus these figures seem to be in error. Nevertheless, according to those figures Potsdam was expending 65% of its budget on areas that have a direct impact on students (a figure Potsdam believes to be low), the largest single portion of that was for instruction. Consistently, SUNY Potsdam has spent a significant percentage of its budget on instruction and direct student services. Within the four year units of the system, SUNY Potsdam has one of the highest percentages of tenured and tenure track faculty. It also maintains one of the lowest student-faculty ratios. Yet seeking to continue to improve instructional offerings, in the wake of the budget reductions of 2009-2010, for the budget year 2011-2012 the campus reallocated nearly $700,000 from Administrative Services to Instruction. Other minor allocations bring the total directed to instruction and direct student services to the target reallocation of $880,000 requested by the 2013-2014 year. Within the bicentennial Plan, Potsdam anticipates increasing its allocation of funds to instruction and direct student services, particularly in the areas of student-faculty research, and support for capstone experiences such as study abroad, research, internships, and service learning experiences.

Based on data provided by Vice Chancellor for Financial Services and Chief Financial Officer Brian Hutzley on June 26, 2012, during 2010-11, SUNY Canton spent 64% of its operating budget on areas that have a direct impact on students (instruction, academic support, clinical instruction, libraries, scholarship and fellowships, and student services). This exceeds the Board of Trustees requirement of a minimum of 52%. (See Appendices A & H).
SUNY Canton is currently hiring an additional eleven full-time faculty for the 2012-13 academic year. This will add at least an additional $500,000 to academic affairs for Fall 2012, which will exceed the 5% increase expected by SUNY System Administration by June 30, 2014. The continued investment in academic affairs comes from identified administrative savings and new revenue from enrollment growth. In fact, SUNY Canton’s own strategic planning efforts have identified an additional $595,000 in projected administrative savings and an additional $1,000,000 in potential generated revenue.

For 2011-12, the majority of hiring has taken place in the Academic Affairs Division of the college, predominately with faculty positions. The reasons behind the 23 faculty searches conducted this year vary, but 19 of those positions were vacant due to retirements or resignations. Four of the searches were new faculty positions—Electrical Engineering Technology, Mechanical Engineering Technology, and two mathematics positions. The new tenure-track faculty positions in engineering support the recent approval of engineering degrees in the fields of electrical and mechanical. The two mathematics positions hired this year are both lecturer positions—which has allowed SUNY Canton to decrease its reliance on monies from the temporary services account and apply it directly to the personal services regular (PSR) account that faculty are paid from, thus allowing for an increase in the percentage of the budget being devoted directly to academics.

As the 2012-13 academic year gets underway, SUNY Canton is planning for the hiring of 2013-14 academic year positions. A tremendous amount of effort has been made in the
Academic Affairs Division at SUNY Canton to lessen the reliance on temporary services budget monies — the money used to fund adjunct faculty members. Over the past five years, there has been an increased reliance on adjunct, or part-time, faculty to “pick up the slack” when there is a curricular need. This practice has come into play to help keep the cost of hiring full-time, tenure-track faculty to a minimum, which is more costly to the institution. The result however, has presented its own set of challenges: (1) an increased pressure to seek qualified and willing adjunct faculty, especially challenging given our remote location; and (2) a significant spike in our temporary services budget. In order to address the growing concern of our temporary services budget, the Academic Affairs Division has proposed a slate of new faculty hires categorized as “lecturers.” This will allow for nearly $500,000 worth of savings in the temporary services budget and an increase to the overall operating budget for direct academic purposes. The “lecturer” salary range is less expensive when compared to tenure-track faculty salaries. In addition, it will be beneficial for numerous reasons:

- provide stability for our seasoned adjuncts (instead of a tenuous semester by semester contract);
- lessen the volatility in which temporary services monies are spent;
- provide students with additional faculty members to serve as mentors, advisors, etc.;
- allow for academic departments to have a more robust staffing plan
SUNY Canton anticipates an additional ten lecturer positions to be added for the commencement of the 2013-14 academic year. In addition, two faculty librarian positions will be hired with this upcoming cohort.

Yet as savings accumulate, there are costs which will be incurred along the way. In looking at the parameters of identifying savings, there are other useful considerations, a taxonomy if you will.

**A Taxonomy of Savings**

Savings seem to be easy to identify. At one point, an institution was spending X dollars on a function and now it spends X – Y. The Y then represents the savings. But not all changes will result in such a simple saving. In fact, savings prove elusive in most instances. For example, if a given office takes over a function for both institutions, and not as many employees are needed, current work rules require that the person whose effort is no longer needed be reassigned, unless they are probationary. Consequently, for some time the amount of money expended at the institution will remain the same, until such time as an existing employee is assigned to the duties of a departing employee (leaving through retirement or voluntary departure), or until some other position simply is not refilled. That salary differential, at the very end of a chain of reassignments, is the savings.

**Cost Avoidance**

A second area wherein savings might be generated is through cost avoidance. If offices can collaborate on the purchase of software, and get a better price because of economies of scale, there is a cost avoidance and a savings which can be quantified. Similarly, if the two
institutions set up monitoring systems to avoid fines or other unexpected costs, there is a cost avoidance, but which is much harder to quantify. Also, efficiencies, such as in the use of utilities, are a form of cost avoidance. The Canton campus is looking at installing a wind turbine to generate electricity more cheaply than buying it on the market, and it has the added benefit of being a sustainable practice.

**Efficiency**

In general some efficiencies can save money. The more efficient use of energy, as noted above, can accrue real savings. But in many offices, efficiencies merely lighten the workload and improve the overall quality of worklife. But, efficiencies spread across an entire campus can eventually result in savings. This is precisely what each campus has had to do to respond to the current financial crisis. With the loss of a collective $20 million to the two campuses, they have had to rely on greater efficiency from their employees in order to do more with less.

**New Enrollment**

Both institutions base their budget on projected enrollment figures. When actual enrollment exceeds the projected enrollment, in general terms, income increases because the campuses collect more tuition than they had projected. Consequently, as enrollments grow additional tuition revenue provides additional funds across the board. The Canton campus, for example, has benefitted from record-setting enrollment just as state support has dwindled, thus moderating the effect of the reduction. If through new curricula and programs the campuses can increase their enrollment, by attracting more students, especially students they might not have attracted before, the campuses will benefit from increased tuition collections and thus see a benefit in their bottom line.
Retained Enrollment

Just as campuses predict how many new students they will attract each year, so they also estimate how many students will drop out without completing their degree program. If an institution can lessen the number of drop outs, thereby increasing the retention of students, they can also increase revenue, because the larger number of retained students amounts to additional tuition income. Thus, if through new collaborative academic programs the institutions are able to retain more students, they can also have increased revenue as a result.

Policies and Procedures

One of the goals of the shared administrative services is the development of either a single set of policies and procedures for both institutions, or at least policies and procedures which mirror one another. While this exercise in and of itself will not bring about any savings, it will set up the groundwork upon which collaboration and shared services can come about. If the policies and procedures are standardized in a given functional area, when a retirement or other departure occurs, the unit will be poised and ready to take advantage of sharing services.

Costs and Benefits

An important method of evaluating progress in shared services and academic collaboration will be a cost/benefit analysis. In a perfect world, one can envision a process whereby each proposal is subjected to a rigorous cost benefit analysis and then action is taken according to the findings. This is not a perfect world. In fact, while one of the goals of the shared service alliance is to accrue savings, it is not the only goal. In addition, many of the areas where services can and will be shared will not necessarily save money, at least initially. As indicated in the taxonomy of savings outlined above, many decisions can be made which will
eventually accrue savings, decisions which might not be envisioned in a simple cost/benefit analysis.

The process of discussion which has been undertaken up until now has had the reduction of costs as one of several goals. Cost/benefit analysis did not emerge as prime driver of the conversations. Rather simple opportunity provided the most powerful impetus to moving forward. In the cases of the first two shared positions, SUNY Potsdam and SUNY Canton saw an opportunity to jointly hire a position which neither could fund independently, but which became feasible if the costs were shared. The shared Chief Financial Officer emerged as a viable option when it became apparent that the two Vice Presidents for Business/Administration would be retiring within a year of one another. The joint position in Interlibrary loan has emerged when a vacancy occurred on the Potsdam campus, and it seemed reasonable to look to sharing the position for the future. Consequently, the trigger for the shared positions has not been a cost/benefit analysis. At the same time, however, such an analysis has been part of the considerations. Quite simply, given the taxonomy of saving, by sharing services, we can provide additional value to our employees and students which might eventually create a situation in which either revenue will be enhanced (through enrollment) or through true cost saving (generally by not filling a position at some point in the administrative structure).

**Cost Recovery and Chargebacks**

In order to accomplish the work of shared services, there are a few accounting mechanism which must be utilized to assure that employees are paid according to the work they do from the entity for which they do it. As independent institutions, SUNY Canton and
SUNY Potsdam routinely pay their own employees for work done on that campus, or as part of the workload assigned by that campus. With shared employees and shared services, other mechanisms must be used, including cost recovery and chargeback.

These two accounting mechanisms attempt to reflect in the budget the complex relationship between the two campuses. In the case of a chargeback and cost recovery, one campus estimates the cost of a service which it is providing to the other, and then charges the other campus for that service to recover the appropriate portion of the cost.

There are also other mechanisms which will need to be considered, including fee for services and contractual services. In these instances, the two institutions draw up a contract which will determine the manner in which the campus which provides the service is reimbursed by the receiving campus. This can be done on an incident basis (every transaction is billed at a certain rate) or as a flat contract for whatever volume of work is agreed upon.

**Expense Reduction and Reinvestment**

SUNY System Administration has indicated that the goals of sharing services is to reduce the portion of individual campus budgets which go to administrative costs and to increase the portion spent on instruction and direct student services. Most recently, SUNY System Administration has provided the institutions with an estimate of the percentage spent on administration versus instruction and direct student services, as of the 2010-2011 fiscal year. While both institutions have questions about the data, the bottom line is that the amount requested by SUNY System Administration to be moved is very small, in the context of the overall budgets. In the case of Potsdam, the figure was some $800,000 while that for Canton
was roughly half as much. In fact, both institutions believe that they have already taken the action necessary to comply with this request.

But both institutions should not rest on their laurels. An important on-going consideration is to continue to capture savings accrued through shared services and to reinvest them in instruction and direct student services.

**Resources Allocation Process**

One of the specific tasks presented to the shared Chief Financial Officer is the development of a consistent resources allocation process for the two institutions. A single Chief Financial Officer will allow both institutions to capture best practices and sharing opportunities. This will require, however, much work and study. Study to determine the best practice; work to then bring the budgeting and expenditure processes of each campus into align with the other. Clearly, one of the most important considerations is the tracking of savings accrued through shared services so that they might then be reallocated to instruction and direct student services. This will require, however, benchmarks for current activities.
Chapter 13

Economic and Workforce Development

The role of both campuses in the economy of Northern New York is tremendous. For decades, and centuries, both institutions have contributed significantly to the health of the economic region. The shared services process will allow the campuses to enhance their impact on the local North Country economy. This occurs in many different ways, but the reality is that currently higher education is the largest industry in St. Lawrence County, and that SUNY Canton and SUNY Potsdam are important contributors to that.

Economic Impact

The current economic impact of the two SUNY campuses on the local economy is significant. Using very conservative figures SUNY Potsdam accounts for nearly half a billion dollars of economic activity in the immediate region. Using the same metric SUNY Canton would provide approximately a quarter of a billion dollars. That means that simply combining the two, SUNY generates about $750 million dollars of economic activity.

Yet one of the goals for shared services and academic collaboration also needs to be increased attention to the economic development of the region. Both institutions are exploring projects for the Governor’s Regional Economic Development Council. Both institutions offer significant outreach to local businesses and local governmental agencies. Canton operates a Small Business Development Center to provide support and outreach to North Country business and industry. Potsdam runs the Potsdam Institute for Applied Research which conducts a wide variety of research projects for local government entities and businesses. Clearly, both
campuses individually, and together through the SUNY Institute for Arts, Sciences, and Technology, wish to do more for the region.

One possible model for the Institute would be to also serve as a clearinghouse for local businesses and governmental units seeking the expertise of the campuses. Local businesses and agencies have no idea how they might avail themselves of the expertise of the institutions. The Institute could perform an important outreach into the community, both to secure sponsored research opportunities for faculty members, but also to provide service learning project for classes. In this way, a business which might need market research could approach faculty members on one or both of the campuses. They could then conduct the research as a sponsored project. A local government might seek assistance on the most efficient way to plow streets of snow, which could become a project in a statistics class: an example of service learning with an important give-back to the community.

The Institute could also be a research center focusing on issues of concern to the region. These might include questions of sustainability, especially since both campuses now have major initiatives in this area. It might continue to investigate and foster the consumption of local foods, already championed by the food services on both campuses. The list of possible areas for study is quite limitless and will depend greatly on the interests, and entrepreneurial spirit of the faculty members.

**Workforce Development**

With the founding of St. Lawrence Academy (the original name of SUNY Potsdam) in 1816, the campuses have been dedicated to local workforce development. The Academy was founded specifically for the purpose of training local students to provide direct service to the
local economy, in education, in business, and in the professions. For the ensuing two centuries that important function has not changed. SUNY Potsdam prides itself on developing the professionals, strongly grounded in the liberal arts and sciences, who will contribute to the development of the local economy, the state, and the nation.

Since its founding as an agricultural and technical college, SUNY Canton has had workforce development as its most constant and abiding goal. Generations of North Country residents have received a quality education in a wide variety of technical fields. For the last decade, the college has been producing highly-trained individuals with four-year degrees in economically important areas. The institution prides itself on being sensitive to issues of local workforce development.

Given these rich histories, it is only reasonable to assume that under the aegis of the Institute even more exciting areas of workforce development will emerge. As has been noted numerous times before, the combination of the deep training in the liberal arts and sciences, complemented by cutting-edge applied sciences and technology education, students who take advantage of the offerings of Canton and Potsdam will be well equipped to confront the demands of the modern world. Working with local businesses and industries, the Institute can offer insights into workforce development and also work with the faculty members of the two institutions to develop curricula to respond to local demands.
Chapter 14

Opportunities and Barriers

All innovative proposals need to confront not just the opportunities which the initiatives present, but also reckon with the barriers which must be confronted. The program of shared services and academic collaboration is no different. Since the Board of Trustees launched the shared services initiative over a year ago, the two institutions have had to deal concretely with both the barrier we confronted as well as seize the opportunities when they were presented. Perhaps, it might be best to consider the barriers before the opportunities

**Barriers**

**Fear**

There is no doubt that the greatest barrier which needs to be overcome is fear. Campus constituencies, our students, faculty members, staff members, fear change, especially coming on the heels of massive budget cuts on both campuses. Employees fear losing their jobs. Students fear losing the quality of education they have chosen by attending our institutions. Fear is unquestionably the greatest barrier to progress in this endeavor.

**Confusion**

After fear, the next barrier is confusion. Over the course of the last twelve months, the messages to the campuses from a variety of sources have been evolving. Because students and staff members are focused mostly on their work and studies, they do not dedicate much time or attention in following the shared services discussion. As a result they simply are confused. Unfortunately, in the absence of definitive information on a topic, rumor will rule the day, just
as bad currency pushes out good. Confusion only helps to generate more fear, thus exacerbating the problem.

**Ignorance**

For many, the problem is simply ignorance about what it going on and about the other institution. Many people do not understand the shared services mandate, nor do they understand how it might affect their life. As a result they just go along outside of the process. Many folks in Potsdam remember SUNY Canton when it was an agricultural and technical college which only offered two-year degrees. The campus has changed dramatically in the last ten years, grown rapidly, and broadened the number of degree programs to include many four-year degree offerings, including several that are highly selective. On the other hand, some people in Canton think of SUNY Potsdam only in terms of the Crane School of Music, or perhaps programs in Education and teacher training. Potsdam has also seen a significant increase it its undergraduate enrollment, as well as an across-the-board increase in selectivity, thanks to its position as the only SUNY campus with a test-option admissions policy. The solution is to engage folks at both institutions to learn more about the other.

For all of these barriers the solution is communication. SUNY Potsdam and SUNY Canton must begin to consistently and continually inform constituencies about the details of the project, and keep them informed at every step along the way, encouraging participation wherever possible.

**Money**

While the shared services alliances have as a goal the generation of savings in administrative costs to be allocated to instruction and direct student services, one major barrier
to change is money. Many of the changes outlined in this report will generate savings but in most instances those savings will be small, and it will take several years for them to accrue. The reality is that in the first few years many of the changes will actually cost more. Consequently, there is a real problem that in order to make the necessary changes the institutions will need more money in the first years of the process.

Regulatory Environment

Most of the changes envisioned for the future can be accomplished by virtue of power and authority already granted to the campus administration. Yet to move beyond the essential elements the leadership will need to take the regulatory environment into account. This is particularly true when considering new academic programs. Those programs which are equivalent to a minor, or which have fewer credits, by and large, do not require external approval. Degree programs and many certificate programs require on-campus approval, approval by SUNY, and approval by the State Department of Education. Experience has taught that these approvals are not always easy to secure. Depending on the direction taken in creating a shared administrative structure, the leadership also needs to be aware of guidelines and recommendations of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

Time

Because of budget cuts the staff on both campuses has been forced to do more with less. The number of employees at both institutions has been reduced. As a result there simply is less time to devote to things other than core services. As laudable as the collaborative conversations are, they will always be seen as outside of the core commitments of the institutions. Consequently, time is a serious barrier to further progress. As noted earlier,
unless a system of incentives can be developed to reward positive behavior, it will be extremely difficult to motivate many employees to take on this additional duty. Even with incentives, there simply are not enough hours in a day for many employees to do their jobs and take on new initiatives. The institutions may look to SUNY to either provide expertise on a part-time or short-term basis to help us address some of these issues, or develop a program to provide the institutions with supplemental funding to accomplish these ends. In reality, time and money are highly interrelated.

**Opportunities**

As has been noted through the report, the opportunities abound for SUNY Canton and SUNY Potsdam, linked through shared services and collaborative academic programs. The excitement is palpable. The following is merely a recapitulation of some of the opportunities outlined elsewhere in this report.

- Regional economic development
- Regional workforce development
- Increased retention of existing students
- Increased enrollment of new students
- Development of new academic programs
- Creation of a clearinghouse for faculty expertise
- Increased sponsored research through cooperation from both institutions
- Savings through economies of scale in shared services
- Increased efficiency through streamlined and regularized policies and procedures
• Cost avoidance through collaborative initiatives
• Opportunities for student and faculty research
• Opportunities for increased service learning
• Enhanced faculty and staff development through cooperative programs
• Increased revenue as other campuses purchase services offered
• Increased variety of student activities through cooperation between institutions

One of the key messages to all constituencies must be that this is a process of shared services and academic collaboration. The goal is to create a better environment through cooperation. It is a descriptive plan, not a prescriptive one. The two institutions prefer to describe the general goals and aspiration of this process, and then unleash the students, faculty, and staff to discover the extent to which this process will take us. Both institutions have been careful to not predict exactly where the next academic initiative will come, but are excited at the possibilities inherent in the creativity of our faculty, staffs, and students.
Chapter 15

Strategic Action Plans

The Strategic Action Plan for the two institutions looks to three different horizons – Fall 2012, next year, and long-range.

Fall 2012

As noted earlier, during the late summer and fall, the Executive Team will continue to work on issues of shared services and academic collaboration. The group has pledged to meet at least monthly and also hope to have another full retreat together before the beginning of the Fall term. The Executive Team will work hard to learn as much as possible about the other institution in order to better contribute to the collective conversation.

They will also convene functional area groups to meet regularly to evaluate proposals and discover additional areas of possible cooperation. These functional groups would include the two academic cabinets, and the Student Affairs leadership groups, for example.

Beyond the Executive Team, faculty, staff, and students will be engaged in the process to discover how they would like to see these areas of collaboration develop. SUNY Canton and SUNY Potsdam will use the shared governance structures of each campus. Within the context of the Institute, both institutions will convene discussion groups of faculty to explore new curricular innovations, possibilities for collaboration, and how students can gain as much as possible out of our academic cooperation.

Both institutions will also work with the College Councils to consult with them where appropriate as we move forward. The Councils represent the interests of our local
communities and both campuses pride themselves on the close ties which they have with their communities. This will also mean that both institutions will work with local Chambers of Commerce, and service clubs, such as Rotary and Lions, to better inform them about the exciting possibilities for the future. Both institutions will also collaboratively engage in discussion with our state legislators to help them understand the innovative model we are developing.

Next Year

During the course of the 2012-2013 academic year, both institutions hope to make great progress in implementing collaborations. Within this year, they should attain full coordination of the Institutional Effectiveness/Institutional Research offices. Both institutions anticipate that discussions regarding the best way to collaboratively manage the payroll function will come to fruition. The Human Resource Departments will also proceed apace. Work on the alignment of IT services between the two institutions will continue. Conversations and progress will occur in a wide variety of offices, as outlined in other sections of this report. As vacancies become available, both institutions will seek to share positions and services. The shared Chief Financial Officer will recommend to the Executive Team the optimal organization structure for Business and Administration at each institution and seek to integrate operations under her direction. The two Provosts will begin to formulate a plan for the development of the SUNY Institute for Arts, Sciences, and Technology.

Long-Range

Within three years, both institutions hope to create a high level of interdependence between SUNY Potsdam and SUNY Canton, in both academic and administrative areas. This
does not preclude cooperation or interdependence in other areas, but the focus will be on administrative services and curricular offerings. Both institutions will see the creation of the two virtual administrative centers: the Center for Administrative Services and the SUNY Institute for Arts, Sciences, and Technology. The Center will explore providing administrative services to other institutions. The Institute will become a model for academic cooperation.

Taken as a whole, this is an exciting time for both SUNY Potsdam and SUNY Canton. The two institutions have a real chance of making a positive and long-term impact not only on the delivery of higher education in the North Country, but throughout the United States.