

Provost's Corner

Bette S. Bergeron, Provost & Senior VP for Academic Affairs

May 7, 2020

Special Edition4: COVID-19 Updates

During a recent Leadership Forum meeting, members had the opportunity to share how COVID-19 has been impacting them and their students. While many frustrations and challenges were recognized, members also cited the unforeseen positive outcomes of our (temporary) “new normal.” For example, faculty and staff have noted the resiliency of our students, the creativity and innovation that have gone into the transition to distance learning, that students are very eager to engage with faculty on a one-to-one basis through virtual platforms, attendance at many events and meetings has seen a marked increase, offices are finding new ways to digitally transform outdated workflows and paperwork, and our campus’ culture of caring and compassion. Though we all anticipate that the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic will be long-lasting, so too will be the resiliency, creativity, and compassion of our SUNY Potsdam family. I am grateful for each of you, and for what you continue to do in support of our amazing students and for each other.

And while COVID-19 has prevented us from holding an in-person *Commencement* this May, plans are underway for a unique virtual experience to honor and celebrate SUNY Potsdam’s Class of 2020. You are invited to join this virtual celebration of our graduating students on **Saturday, May 23, at 10:00am**. This ceremony will include speakers, musical guests, and a public announcement of each graduate’s achievements. A link to the livestreamed event will be available on our social media channels, and at potsdam.edu/commencement. While an online gathering is no substitution for a live event, I hope you will help make this day a success by joining the event and honoring our students as they complete their degrees.

Looking ahead, it is still unclear if or when we will be able to host a traditional commencement ceremony on campus this year, given our current restrictions. Please know that while we are still planning an in-person ceremony at a later date, we will not do so until it is safe.

Please take care, stay healthy, and keep in touch. *I look forward to hearing from you!*



Campus Updates

Academic Continuity Working Group. President Esterberg has recently charged a new *Academic Continuity Working Group* to consider various possible scenarios for opening the campus for the Fall, 2020 semester from the perspective of academic programming. While the governor makes the final decision regarding the opening of state universities, preliminary planning includes the following possible scenarios: opening in the fall with full face-to-face instruction, with the need to return to remote instruction later in the semester due to an emergence of a second wave of the pandemic; a delayed opening, either beginning with distance learning and transitioning to face-to-face, or a delayed opening that moves the semester further into academic calendar; or, opening in the fall with hybrid instruction, which could include some face-to-face and distance learning, with some social distancing still needed. Other variations of these scenarios are also being considered.

The specific charge of the Academic Continuity Working Group includes the consideration of possible changes in the academic calendar, as well as changes in academic programming, as a result of various scenarios for the fall's reopening. The group will also be assessing what we have learned from the current move to distance learning and what we would need to implement in order to ensure academic success moving forward in the fall. Given the differences in broad types of instruction (creative and performing arts, studios, physical and natural sciences, and so forth), the group will also be considering the unique needs of different disciplinary areas. And finally, the group is asked to consider alternative plans for internships, applied learning (such as student teaching), and service-learning experiences if the campus does not meet face to face for some (or all) of the fall semester.

Members of the Working Group include: *Bette Bergeron* (Group Facilitator; Provost & Senior Vice President), *Jessica Burnett* (Accommodations), *Laura Carbone* (Graduate & Continuing Education), *Stephanie Claxton* (Registrar), *Julianne Kirk Doyle* (Crane), *Gretchen Galbraith* (A&S), *Allen Grant* (SOEPS), *Amy Guiney* (Center for School Partnerships & Teacher Certification), *Alan Hersker* (Graduate & Continuing Education), *Lauren Jackson-Beck* (College Libraries & Archives), *Blair Madore* (Mathematics/Faculty Senate), *Krista Medo* (A&S), *Jill Pearon* (Associate Provost/Crane), *Jenica Rogers* (Lougheed Center for Applied Learning), *Michael Sitton* (Crane), *Jerod Sommerfeldt* (Crane), and *Joshua Vink* (Theatre & Dance).

President Esterberg has also tasked five additional Working Groups to address various other campus and community impacts of the pandemic: *Student Success, Student Life, and Student Wellbeing Working Group; Faculty and Staff Wellbeing Working Group; Financial Wellbeing*

Working Group; Community Relations and Communication Working Group; and the Technology Working Group. More information will be forthcoming on our [COVID-19 website](#). The willingness of faculty and staff to serve on these Working Groups is invaluable as our campus plans for the inevitable impacts of this COVID-19 pandemic on our campus, students, and colleagues for the coming Fall, 2020 semester.

Student Retention Initiative. Starting last week, a tremendous group of volunteers began the massive and crucially important process of reaching out by phone to personally contact each of our 3,044 enrolled students. The goal of this effort is to check in, let students know we are thinking of them at this difficult time, and to offer our help in navigating the challenges of this unique and challenging semester. The effort has been led by *Gretchen Galbraith* (Dean, A&S), *Sean Partridge* (SSC), and *Krista Medo* (A&S), with support from many individuals including *Laura Carbone* (Graduate & Continuing Education), *Amy Charleston* (A&S), *Billijean Elliott* (SOEPS), *Allen Grant* (Dean, SOEPS), *Lauren Jackson-Beck* (College Libraries & Archives), *Romeyn Prescott* (CTS), and *Jenica Rogers* (Lougheed Center for Applied Learning).

On behalf of the School of Arts and Sciences, the Lougheed Center for Applied Learning, and the Student Success Center, the following amazing volunteers are thanked for making this effort work! I hope you'll join me in giving them all an appropriately socially-distanced virtual "high five:"

Jim Bechtel	Rick Berkman	Diane Billings
Sabel Bong	Ricky Bonner-Murray	Linnette Bracero-Torres
Lauren Bruce	Sarah Burgess	Helen Bush
Laura Carbone	Holly Chambers	Diane Chappell
Amy Charleston	Brittany Cohen	Tanner Cooper
Kelly Deshaies	Izabella DeSilva	Billijean Elliott
Lynnette Emrich	Beth Fayette	Donnita Firnstein
Jesse Fobare	MarySue Foster	Carol Franck
Gretchen Galbraith	Greg Gardner	Jeff Gerrish
Jay Green	Lauren Jackson-Beck	Patti Jay
Clifton Harcum	Alan Hersker	David Heuser
Jim Hubbard	Annette Kelly	Sandy Larock
Bonnie Lawrence	Ken McLaughlin	Krista Medo
Mark Millward	Mark Misiak	Bill Mitchell
Maggie Mitchell	Jordan Ott	Adam Parker
Bethany Parker	Laurie Peary	Shawn Ramos
Eleni Riechers	Dawn Robinson	Jenica Rogers

Kathy Sherwood	Naira Sidi	Tammy Snell
Tristan Spearing	Lisa Stewart	Josh Stokes
Bethany Vanderwoude	Nicole Wendel	Heather West
Marta Whalen	Toby White	Brett Willmott
Hillary Wolfe	Nicole Zeledon	

Postcard Campaign. In an additional outreach and retention effort, volunteers are writing postcards to currently enrolled students to let them know how much we miss them and hope to see them back on campus in the near future. This campaign was co-facilitated by *Lauren Jackson-Beck* (Director of College Libraries & Archives) and *Nicole Conant* (Chief of Staff). It is hoped that all students will receive a handwritten note. If anyone would like to volunteer to send out postcards, please contact Lauren at jacksola@potsdam.edu. Thank you for all that you're doing to support and retain our students!

Stories of Success. What creative strategies or activities are you and your students planning during this time of "virtual instruction" as we begin to wrap up our semester? One effective strategy that has been implemented across disciplinary areas is to engage virtual guest speakers. For example, *Libbie Freed* (History) invited the "other" Dr. Freed (i.e. her father) to join her and her students as a guest for two Global Food History courses on the day they were covering the origins of scientific agriculture in the 20th century and the Green Revolution. Now retired, Dr. Freed is an agricultural scientist and was personally involved in the Green Revolution. Students reported that this special guest "really helped for a better understanding," and that it was "really cool to hear his side of the Green Revolution and what he went through and experienced firsthand."

What innovative practices are you and your students trying in your classes? Be sure to pass them along!

Course Surveys: EvaluationKIT. *EvaluationKIT* (EK), our new digital platform for Student Opinion of Faculty Instruction, is ready to be piloted for the Spring, 2020 semester! EK will be available for faculty to use with all their courses. The survey is being configured with the same content that was on the previous campus-wide course evaluation Scantrons. Detailed instructions were sent to all teaching faculty via email this week.

If faculty would like to add optional additional questions, a four-day window will be provided for this purpose. Optional questions are not required; the standard campus questions will appear automatically in every survey.

The proposed timeline for EK's implementation is as follows:

- **Thursday, May 7** Faculty can begin adding questions, if desired
- **Sunday, May 10** Last day for faculty to add individual questions
- **Monday, May 11 (12:00am)** The surveys will go live for students
- **Monday, May 25 (12:00am)** The surveys close for students
- **Monday, June 1** Faculty will have access to reports

Interested in participating in this pilot? If you have a Moodle shell for each course(s) you teach, there is nothing else you need to do right now! You and your students will be able to access the Student Opinion of Faculty Instruction through EK.

If you do NOT already have a Moodle shell for any course(s) you teach, please request a Moodle shell for each course by following these instructions:

1. Login to [BearPAWS \(http://bearpaws.potsdam.edu\)](http://bearpaws.potsdam.edu).
2. Click **Faculty & Advisors**.
3. Click **Moodle Site Request Form** near the bottom of the screen.
4. Follow the prompts and instructions presented.
Important: You MUST do step 5 below.
5. Click the **Review Request(s)** button to review your selection(s).
6. Then click the **Submit** button to submit your request

You will receive an automated email receipt almost immediately following successful submission of your request. If you don't receive the email receipt, you may not have submitted the request. See [Pending requests](#) for more information. After submitting the request, the site(s) should appear within 30 minutes (they're auto-processed on a 30-minute cycle).

The CCI has made links available to easy training videos on the [Tech Tools](#) page. In addition, the CCI is offering the following training sessions.

Basic Trainings (to cover sign-in and question creation):

- [Thursday, 5/7 @ 12:30-1pm](#)
- [Thursday, 5/7 @ 3:30pm-4pm](#)
- [Friday, 5/8 @ 12:00-12:30pm](#)
- [Friday, 5/8 @ 3-3:30pm](#)

Reporting Trainings (to cover reporting formats and access):

- [Monday, 6/1 @ 11-11:30am](#)
- [Monday, 6/1 @ 3-3:30pm](#)
- [Tuesday, 6/2 @ 12-12:30pm](#)
- [Wednesday, 6/3 @ 1-1:30pm](#)

CCI staff are available to answer support questions about EK at cci@potdam.edu.

Please note: Because of the launch of EvaluationKit, requests for Moodle Course Evaluations may be delayed as these are very time-consuming to create. If you have requested a Moodle Course Evaluation, and would prefer to participate in the pilot of EK, please let the CCI staff know by emailing cci@potdam.edu (subject: Cancel Moodle Eval).

This continues to be a truly unique semester, with unprecedented challenges as well as creative opportunities. As such, please remember that it is your *narrative reflection* on lessons learned this semester, and not the course survey tool itself, that is the most important component for any future dossier. If you have concerns or questions, don't hesitate to contact your chair, dean, or me directly (bergerbs@potdam.edu).

Financial Updates. In a recent memo to campus, Interim VP for Business Affairs *Keith Kaplan* updated the campus on COVID-19's impact on our budget and the closeout of the fiscal year. While we all have felt the impact of COVID-19 on our campus on many levels, from a financial standpoint these disruptions have resulted in unanticipated costs and decreased revenues. One such decreased source of revenues for the campus is the state tax support that we receive each year; this spring, we have seen that state support curtailed for April and perhaps longer, due to COVID-19's impact on New York State's finances. The NYS Division of Budget has issued [budget bulletins](#) that include information on state-wide budget and hiring freezes. More information on the employment related items will be sent when they become available.

We are applying and lobbying for funding wherever possible to help secure the resources we need to carry on our work and serve our students. However, we are also going to have to dramatically reduce our spending for the remainder of the fiscal year. All purchase card (p-card) and purchase order activity will be stopped effective immediately. Purchase requisitions that have already been received by Purchasing and Payables will be reviewed by Business Affairs. The campus will assume any critical commitments have also been encumbered, such as utilities, contract payments, and services delivered.

If you have any outstanding payments to PACES or any invoices in your possession, please submit them to Purchasing and Payables by **May 15th** in order to expedite payment and accurately account for outstanding expenditures within the current fiscal year. Invoices submitted after this date without justification will need to be paid by the department with non-state funds. Any travel that occurred *before* COVID 19 restrictions were imposed should have been submitted by now; however, if there is any still requiring reimbursement, please submit all travel reimbursement paperwork **no later than May 15th**.

Work will begin soon on budget planning for the upcoming year. This process will be reflective of the unique new ways of managing our resources that we will have to adopt in order to carry out our mission (while in accordance with updated SUNY and NYS policies given the current fiscal situation in NYS). The campus will be notified when encumbering can begin for the new fiscal year.

If you have any questions, please reach out to *Keith Kaplan* at kaplankb@potdam.edu. Your understanding and shared sense of purpose is most deeply appreciated.

On-Campus Events/Activities. SUNY Potsdam continues to closely monitor guidance on all events and activities, in consultation with the St. Lawrence Public Health Department. As a result of this consultation and review of current data, the College has cancelled all in-person campus-sponsored and third-party events and activities through August 1, 2020 in order to protect the health of our campus and community. We know that this is disappointing news. However, each program organizer is working closely with their constituents to develop alternative plans, including some innovative virtual outreach. All existing restrictions limiting access to campus facilities will likewise remain in place until further notice.

International Travel Experiences. SUNY Potsdam has canceled all upcoming College-sponsored international travel experiences, including semester-long and short-term programs for the Fall, 2020 semester. Students who are planning to complete an international travel experience through another SUNY institution should contact *Krista LaVack* (International Education & Programs), to discuss the potential impact of the pandemic on their ability to participate, at lavackkm@potdam.edu.

Domestic Travel Experiences. Effective immediately, for risk management purposes, all domestic travel courses involving students that include an overnight stay will need to be coordinated following the [policies and procedures](#) established by the Office of International Education and Programs. Instructors should contact their respective Dean/Director and [Krista LaVack](#) to discuss the potential impacts for their courses.

Alumni Business Roundtable. Through a collaboration between the Loughheed Center for Applied Learning and Office of Alumni Relations, a virtual *Alumni Business Roundtable* was held on **May 7th**. Three successful alumni (Eileen Whelley, Brian DeWitt, and Ronald Fishbeck) discussed ways to succeed in the face of the current pandemic and its impacts. They also shared their advice for our new graduates as they prepare to enter an uncertain workforce, and took questions from the audience.

Campus Life: Fall Activities Planning. As the campus begins planning for various Fall, 2020 scenarios, Campus Life is now collecting event information for the 2020-2021 academic year. All events submitted will be included on the Get Involved website, weekly table tents and filers, and other print marketing pieces. In addition, Campus Life is collecting information about any virtual events happening this semester to advertise on *Get Involved*. Please submit any virtual events for the rest of the semester via email to *Ariel Adams* at adamsad@potsgdam.edu.

Libraries: Planning for the Fall. The College Libraries are ready to help you locate content for your course readings and assignments as you prepare for the Fall, 2020 semester. Because none of us at this time know what the fall will bring, we recommend that you consider the possibility that some, if not all, courses will be taught remotely for at least a portion of the fall semester. It is therefore strongly recommended that faculty consider expanding your use of open access resources and existing electronic materials in our Libraries' existing databases for your course readings and assignments.

The resources listed below can guide you in finding appropriate content in your discipline:

- Use Open Educational Resources. These are textbooks in electronic format that are freely available for use: <https://library.potsgdam.edu/oer>.
- Use electronic resources that are already in our collections. The College Libraries have many databases that may have content for your reading lists and assignments. Please consult the A to Z list of databases that are currently available: <https://library.potsgdam.edu/az.php>.
- Use E-books and streaming films from our available collections. The College Libraries have E-books from a variety of publishers, and there may be titles that address the content you wish to deliver to your students: <https://library.potsgdam.edu/az.php?t=17445>. Of particular interest may be *Ebook Central's Academic Complete collection* and *Films on Demand*.
- Use Open Access materials. There are many scholarly articles that are available as Open Access: <http://library.potsgdam.edu/c.php?g=757573&p=5431967%20%20and%20doaj.org>.
- Use authoritative websites. There may be appropriate videos, information from research institutes, free museum content, and other sources that could be used in your syllabus and for your assignments.

In the upcoming weeks, the Library faculty will be sending out invitations for web meetings that will focus on locating the content listed above. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to

reach out to any of the Library faculty, or to *Lauren Jackson-Beck*, Director of College Libraries and Archives (jacksola@potsgdam.edu).

CCI Support – Helping you teach remotely. The CCI staff are available to answer your questions! Whether you have Moodle, Teams, O365, Relay, or Zoom questions, email cci@potsgdam.edu for immediate support from an available CCI staff member. The staff will answer your questions, direct you to resources, and even meet with you online in Teams (or Zoom). CCI staff will also be available throughout the summer as you prepare for the fall and will also offer summer workshops and training sessions (check the [CCI Events Calendar](#) later in May for event dates).

Also, the CCI would like to remind you that **Relay** and **Moodle** go hand-in-hand. Relay is a video capturing platform that allows you and your students to quickly and easily create, upload, and share videos securely. It is the primary way users should post and share videos in Moodle. For more info, visit Relay in [Tech Tools](#).

CCI–Crafting Campus Resources. In addition to providing faculty and staff with technology support and training, CCI staff are hard at work exploring how to best leverage the powerful features of our Microsoft O365 environment. Using *Power Automate*, processes that currently rely on paper (forms and approvals) can now be converted to a completely digital, automated format. Watch the *Remote “Walk-In” Support* video for a demonstration of the potential benefit of this tool.



CCI Advisory Board. The CCI Advisory Board is seeking nominations for a representative from the School of Arts and Sciences, the Crane School of Music, and the School of Education and Professional Studies. Please send nominations for yourself or others who may be interested in serving to cci@potsgdam.edu (Subject: Advisory Board) by **Wednesday, May 13th**.

COVID-19 Resources. EAB (the parent company of our Navigate platform) continues to collect resources related to responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. These resources, which are free for all SUNY Potsdam employees, include:

- [COVID-19 Resource Center](#)- This site is updated regularly, and includes insights and research around instructional practices, academic planning, official responses from professional associations, and policies developed by other institutions.
- [Professional Development Resource Center](#)- This site includes a library of PD resources on a range of topics including student mental health and wellbeing, student success, IT, DEI, and academic programming.

EAB has also created a [Zoom Guide](#), which is particularly useful for newer users to this platform, that include links to several Zoom tutorials and guides. Never accessed the EAB website before? Simply go to www.eab.com, click “Login” on the upper right-hand corner, and select “Create an account.” Be sure to use your potsdam.edu email.

In addition, *University Business* has gathered a site with materials and resources for higher education to use at no charge during the COVID-19 crisis. This list is available [here](#).

Converse with a Nurse. Student Health Services invites your participation in their ongoing *Converse with a Nurse COVID19 Edition* held on **Thursdays at 9:00am**. Up-to-date health information will be discussed, and there will be opportunities to pose questions. Zoom connection details are below. If you would like to submit questions in advance, please send them to bradisba@potsdam.edu.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/3957022466?pwd=R1FpN1lySWZpZUUweElZO0w2Ok1MUT09>

Meeting ID: 395 702 2466

Password: 122503

Counseling Center: Open Faculty Debriefs. Please join the Counseling Center’s staff for their weekly *Open Faculty Debriefs* to discuss updates and share concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic:

Tuesdays at 10am with Tanya or Christina

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/93141636568?pwd=eXJ2Qkd2eUkyZ3NhQi9PSzkraklnUT09>

Meeting ID: 931 4163 6568; Password: 3KYSXP

Wednesdays at 2:30pm with Gena

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/92964143428?pwd=eHg0ZmE2SjFKZ3F2SG96MURZVE12QT09>

Meeting ID: 929 6414 3428; Password: 022441

Bearcare Boxes. The fundraising drive to support students by giving care packages has been a resounding success. These *Bearcare Boxes*, created by the College Store, are customized for each recipient and can contain items such as non-perishable food as well as cleaning, school and art supplies. The store is also shipping store gift cards to students to enable them to order what they need. So far, the campus has raised over \$2000 and identified more than ten students who will receive help. Please contact *Blair Madore* (madorebf@potsdam.edu) if you wish to pledge support or if you know of any students we should help. Orders can also be placed, Monday-Friday by emailing collegestore@potsdam.edu or by phone: 315-267-2573 or 3052.

Card Drive: SUNY Potsdam Childcare Center. While so many of us enjoy employee protections, the teachers and staff at the SUNY Potsdam Childcare Center (SPCCC) have not been so lucky. Almost 95% are currently not working because of the COVID19 crisis. As we know, there have been already admirable initiatives to support our wonderful PACES employees, but we also need to remember the incredible staff and childcare providers at SPCCC. The following plan has therefore been provided to support these invaluable community members.

The goal is to collect \$1,600-\$2,000 to provide gift cards to the SPCCC employees that have been affected by the crisis. (While the goal is to send a \$50.00 gift card to each employee, any contribution will help). Once the initial goal has been met, cards will be mailed to the employees' homes.

If you are interested in participating, you can donate to the PayPal SUNY Potsdam CCC Pool: <https://www.paypal.com/pools/c/8ojEsOcU2M>, or mail a check to:

SUNY POTSDAM CHILDCARE CENTER (EMPLOYEE CAMPAIGN)
185 Outer Main Street
Potsdam, NY 13676

Blair Madore (Mathematics; Faculty Senate President), *Lori Moulton* (SPCCC Executive Director), and *Sergio Lopez* (Modern Languages; Faculty Senate Representative) will track all donations. Gift cards will be purchased when the first goal is reached. The deadline to donate or mail is **May 10, 2020**. Any questions can be directed to *Sergio Lopez* (lopezsd@potsdam.edu).



Middle States Updates



Middle States Steering Committee. Our campus' work towards being re-accredited has continued throughout this semester, despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, and we remain committed to having a transparent and inclusive process. The main goals of this first year were to convene a Steering Committee, identify and finalize campus priorities, and start developing the self-study design and Working Groups.

The members of the Steering Committee include:

- *Carrie Bates*, Academic Assessment
- *Heather Beauchamp*, Psychology
- *Julie Dold* (co-chair), Residence Life
- *Chad Graham*, Elementary Education
- *Tanya Hewitt*, Public Health & Human Performance
- *Ada Law*, Provost's Office
- *Sherry Paradis*, Advancement
- *Sean Partridge*, Student Success Center
- *Gordon Plague* (co-chair), Biology
- *Tammy Snell*, CSTEP
- *Heather teRiele*, Student Accounts
- *Lonel Woods*, Music Performance

We are grateful for the leadership these individuals will provide throughout the self-study process, and particularly to *Julie Dold* and *Gordon Plague* for serving as the co-chairs. If you have questions or feedback regarding the self-study, please feel free to reach out to any Steering Committee member.

Campus Priorities. The Middle States Steering Committee (MSSC), working with the requirements that the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, has been working with the campus community to identify three to five campus priorities to frame our reaccreditation self-study process. To ensure an inclusive and transparent process, the MSSC met with the campus Leadership Forum and the Council of Chairs in Fall, 2019 to discuss their members' priorities, and then surveyed all campus employees in Spring, 2020.

After analyzing the outreach and survey data, the MSSC identified four widely supported campus priorities that committee members agree are forward-looking, worthy of a deep investigation, and promising enough to benefit SUNY Potsdam over the long-term:

1. Strategic Enrollment Management, led by *K. Chad Graham* and *Heather teRiele*
2. Creativity, led by *Heather Beauchamp* and *Sherry Paradis*

3. Inclusive Excellence, led by *Tammy Snell* and *Lonel Woods*
4. Strategic Decision Making, led by *Tanya Hewitt* and *Sean Partridge*

Please visit the [SUNY Potsdam Middle States website](#) to learn more about the campus priorities, including a description of those aspects that may be reviewed as we continue our process.

Next Steps. As we close the Spring, 2020 semester and head into the summer, the Steering Committee's focus will turn to completing the *Self-Study Design*, which will provide a blueprint for the self-study. This will be finalized over the summer and will be shared with the campus early in the Fall, 2020 semester.

The Steering Committee is also starting to identify the Working Groups who will spend the Fall, 2020 semester thoroughly examining the campus priorities. Working groups will be comprised of wide representation from faculty, staff, and students. If you would like more information about the Middle States re-accreditation process and/or the next steps for the Steering Committee, you are welcome to contact co-chairs *Julie Dold* (doldjm@potsdam.edu) and *Gordon Plague* (plaguegr@potsdam.edu).

Around SUNY and the State

COVID-19 Contact Tracers: Call for Interviewers. New York State is seeking immediate assistance from SUNY faculty and staff to help meet a pressing need related to COVID-19. As part of a NYS effort to address COVID-19, SUNY is assembling a pool of contact tracers, community support specialists, and supervisors. At this point, NYS is starting to recruit people for the contact tracer role. As part of this effort, all potential contact tracers will go through a screening process including an interview. SUNY faculty and staff expertise and experience are needed, namely, to conduct the second-round interviews.

Each interviewer will be provided both the job description and some sample questions to ensure the candidates understand the role. The System is aiming for 100 SUNY faculty and staff volunteers to serve as interviewers. The time commitment for each interviewer is four to five hours for three to four days. Because the interviews are expected to take place between **May 11-17**, immediate action is needed to sign up to become an interviewer.

If you are interested, please fill in your contact information at:

<https://forms.gle/qBgGjz79w2yAWuMfA>. SUNY will provide all supporting materials. If you have any questions, please contact Peter.Velz@suny.edu.

Communities of Practice. During the current pandemic, faculty and staff from across the Associated Colleges of St. Lawrence Valley have been extraordinarily innovative in transitioning instruction and services to a virtual/online format. In order to continue to support this tremendous work and to build a forum for sharing best practices (and brainstorming solutions to common challenges), informal “*Communities of Practice*” have been formed. It is our hope that such communities of practice will assist faculty and staff from across the four Colleges to come together around disciplinary and service areas, through which individuals with common issues can collaboratively share resources and support the ongoing academic efforts across our four campuses.

The following eight informal Communities have been formed. If you are interested in joining, please reach out to the convener (please also cc *Ada Law* at lawam@potsteam.edu). If you have any questions, don’t hesitate to contact me directly (bergerbs@potsteam.edu).

- **Fine & Performing Arts**
 - *Caroline Downing* (downincj@potsteam.edu)
- **Computing/Mathematics/Engineering/Tech**
 - *Maegan Bos* (maegan@stlawu.edu)
- **Health/Health Sciences**
 - *Marela Fiacco* (fiacom@canton.edu)
- **Instructional Support/Libraries**
 - *Mary Cabral* (mcabral@clarkson.edu)
- **Lab Sciences**
 - *Martin Walker* (walkerma@potsteam.edu)
- **Professional Programs**
 - *Sarah Solley* (solleysa@potsteam.edu)
- **Humanities/Social Sciences**
 - *Christine Leshko* (leshkoc@canton.edu)
- **Student Support Services**
 - *Kate Mikel* (kmikel@clarkson.edu)

SUNY FACT2 Virtual Symposium. As educators, we realize this time is an incredible opportunity for reflection and learning about how this pandemic has affected our work. To that end, SUNY FACT2 will host a virtual symposium entitled *Managing the COVID-19 Crisis in the Spring and Planning for Fall* on **May 28, 2020** from **9:30am-4:00pm** that closely examines

how our community is responding to the COVID-19 crisis.

This special event will critically examine the many challenges and decisions that comprised our collective response to the pandemic and then looks ahead to how we move forward, learning from the process and how this experience has changed higher education. Students, faculty, and administration are invited to participate in this free one-day event which will culminate with breakout sessions that include all of the attendees. Topics to be explored will include:

- How did the transition to remote learning work?
- The impact of policy and process in managing the crisis.
- What faculty and instructional support teams have learned about remote learning from those who adapted their courses.
- Social impact: How remote learning had an impact on the student and faculty campus experience.

This symposium will be delivered online, in real-time. For more information, [View the Agenda](#). [Register here for this free event](#).

SUNY Support Webpages. SUNY is providing campuses with a variety of resource webpages and links related to responding to the COVID-19 crisis, including the following:

Resources for Remote Learning Website: one place to aggregate resources and services
<http://innovate.suny.edu/covid19>

Faculty Drop-in Hours: faculty can get answers to questions about teaching remotely
<https://innovate.suny.edu/covid19/faculty-staff/course-support-session/>

Open Digital Content: openly licensed digital content
<http://oer.suny.edu>

Student Drop-in Hours: students can get answers to questions about learning remotely
<https://innovate.suny.edu/covid19/faculty-staff/course-support-session/>

Remote Teaching Clinic: webinars/training for faculty and staff
<https://innovate.suny.edu/covid19/faculty-staff/course-support-session/#clinic>

Communities of Practice: discipline-specific faculty Communities
<https://innovate.suny.edu/covid19/faculty-staff/course-support-session/#workplace>

Help Desk: tech support for students and faculty

<https://online.suny.edu/help/>

Technology Support: scaling infrastructure & expanded offerings for Collaborate & Ally

<https://innovate.suny.edu/covid19/campus-leaders/campus-technology-status/>

Data/Tracking/Reporting: dashboard to monitor usage and assess ongoing need

<https://tinyurl.com/SUNY-COVID19-Response>

Remote teaching: summarizes the differences between remote and online teaching, including a Remote Teaching Checklist

<https://onlineteaching.open.suny.edu/page/remote-teaching>

Academic Continuity Q&A. SUNY's Office of the Provost has provided an *Academic Continuity Q&A*, which includes updates in the following areas: Remote Learning; Course Credits; Course Grading; Degree Conferral; Academic Calendar; Partnering with Other Institutions; Clinical, Laboratory, Studio, Field-Based, and Applied Learning; Concurrent Enrollment; Assessment; Incoming Students; and Program Development and Review. This comprehensive Q&A is available at [SUNY's COVID resource website](#).

COVID-19 External Funding. At this time of great uncertainty, one of the few things we know for sure is that we are facing a fiscal challenge. To assist, Chancellor Johnson has shared the following link to the *Research Foundation website* that provides a comprehensive list of funding available from many public and private sources. This website is regularly updated: <https://www.rfsuny.org/About-Us/COVID-19/COVID-19-Funding/>. For more information about SUNY Potsdam's response regarding federal funding, contact *Nicole Conant* (conantna@potsteam.edu) or *Keith Kaplan* (Keith.Kaplan@rfsuny.org).

In addition, there are dollars that are available through the *Federal CARES Act* specifically for the humanities. This information is available through the following link - <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=326458>. Funds are available to support a range of activities. While not comprehensive, the following examples are provided to illustrate the types of activities that could be proposed in this program:

- Assist faculty members and staff who are converting to online teaching
- Training museum staff to engage with visitors virtually, including developing online virtual tours or transcribing digital collections to make the collections more broadly available to the general public
- Offering online professional development or organizing online lectures

- Supporting a tribal community's program creating, preserving, and making available oral history interviews
- Supporting faculty and staff in developing documentation and outreach plans to broaden the use of open-access digital resources in research and teaching
- Developing a podcast to contextualize the global impact of the coronavirus in relation to historical events such as plagues, natural disasters, and world wars that significantly altered human society

For more information regarding possible external funding sources, be sure to contact *Jack McGuire*, Director of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, at mcguirjp@potSDam.edu.

In Case You Missed It...

Recruitment and Retention Innovation Award. During these extraordinary times, I have been continuously impressed with the many creative ways in which faculty and staff have been actively engaging with, retaining, and recruiting students. Your work is so important to our campus and, most specifically, for the success of our current and future students. Thank you!

I would like to take this opportunity to invite your application for the annual *Student Recruitment and Retention Innovation Award* (SRRI). The SRRI was established to acknowledge individuals and units that are implementing highly successful and creative initiatives in support of student success. The goal is also to create a “community of practice,” through which faculty and staff from across campus can share and scale up successful practices that have been proven to have a positive impact on the recruitment and retention of a diverse population of SUNY Potsdam students. I have seen so many examples of these best practices this semester—I do hope that you will apply, and nominate your colleagues who have also been implementing creative and effective strategies.

Who is eligible for this award?

Any individual, department, and/or unit on campus is eligible to apply for this award.

What is the process for applying for the award?

Individuals/groups can apply by submitting a narrative (up to three pages) with the following information:

- Name of the individual/department/unit

- Name of the initiative
- Narrative describing the initiative
- Impact of the initiative on student recruitment and/or retention, with relevant data if available
- Plan for disseminating “lessons learned” to the campus

When is the deadline for applying?

Applications are to be sent electronically to *Ada Law* in the Office of the Provost (lawam@potSDam.edu) no later than **Friday, May 15th**.

What is the process for selecting nominees?

Members of the Provost’s Cabinet will independently review each application, and then meet as a group to make a recommendation to the Provost regarding potential awardees. The Provost will make the final decision on the awardees.

What criteria will be used in recommending finalists for the award?

Each member of the Provost’s Cabinet will independently review the applications based on the following criteria:

- Evidence of positive impact of the initiative on student retention and/or recruitment
- Potential for scalability of the initiative to other departments/units
- Clarity of the description of the initiative
- Plan for sharing “best practices” related to the initiative to the broader campus community

How many awards will be made?

While two awards are typically made each year, given the extraordinary circumstances this year additional awards will be considered.

How will awardees be recognized?

Awardees are typically recognized at the campus’ Opening Meeting in the fall. In addition, the awarded unit/department will be provided with \$500 to be used towards professional development for the academic year in which the award is made (awards will not be able to be “banked” for future years). If an individual faculty/staff member is selected, the amount of the award will be \$250 for that individual or \$500 for the individual’s department/unit, depending on the preference of the finalist. Summaries of all proposals will be provided in the Provost’s Newsletter.

Again—thank you for ALL that you are doing to support our students’ progress and success. This semester’s unique challenges have produced incredibly transformative and innovative strategies across all units on campus. Your individual efforts are invaluable.

PACES Student Award. The PACES Student Award Committee is accepting nominations for the annual *PACES Student Awards*. These awards recognize graduating seniors who have excelled academically while providing exceptional service in college and student life activities. Nominees must have a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher and demonstrated noteworthy, productive participation in college and student life activities. Nomination packets must include a letter of nomination, two additional letters of support, and the resume of the nominee. The PACES Award winner will receive a certificate and a \$500 award. Two runners-up will receive certificates and awards of \$200 each.

Please send complete nomination packets to: PACES Student Award Committee, PACES Executive Office, 129 Merritt Hall or arnogc@potdam.edu. As adequate time is needed to evaluate and interview final candidates, no nominations will be accepted after **May 8, 2020**.

Do you have ideas or news to include in the next Provost’s Corner? Be sure to let me know! Just email me at bergerbs@potdam.edu.