

# Provost's Corner

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

January 27, 2021

## *Welcome, 2021!*

Welcome to the start of the Spring, 2021 semester! Though the semester ahead promises to be an unusual one, we are also starting to see signs that there will be a return to “normal” soon.

One of the exciting changes this spring has been SUNY Potsdam's designation as an appointment-based state vaccination site location for the North Country region. We are proud to provide our facilities for such an important public health function. As a host institution, we will not handle details related to appointment scheduling or administration of immunizations. We are solely serving as the host site and will provide support as needed to ensure that the clinic is successful.

The Potsdam clinic, which is located in the Maxcy Hall Fieldhouse, is now listed among the new state vaccination sites that are available for appointments on the [state website](#). Through this site, you are able to fill out the eligibility questionnaire and book an appointment to receive an immunization in Potsdam (if you are eligible). To check on your eligibility, visit <https://am-i-eligible.covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/>. Please note, it is the responsibility of the individual employee, and not HR or SUNY, to determine eligibility. To learn more about the safety and efficacy of the approved COVID-19 vaccines, visit the [CDC website](#). To assist with the initial launch of the vaccination site in Maxcy Hall, SUNY Potsdam is hosting approximately 30 members of the New York National Guard on campus. The National Guard members will assist with set-up, sanitizing, logistics, and other support functions.

I also want to thank the faculty and staff who participated in this week's Spring Planning Town Halls. An archived recording of the employee session can be accessed [here](#). Recordings of the student/family sessions on [January 22nd](#) and [January 25th](#) are also available. As a reminder, our [Potsdam Prepared](#) website includes information and resources related to [Learning Remotely](#) and [Teaching Remotely](#). I also want to direct your attention to the [Readiness Self-Assessment](#) developed to assist students in self-identifying the most appropriate learning modality that best aligns with their learning style.

I look forward to seeing you, and our students, around campus this spring!

## *New Faces/New Positions*

- **Anita Weisburger**- has joined our faculty as a Clinical Instructor in Elementary Education, assigned to our Watertown/JCC site.
- **Christine Doran**- (Interdisciplinary Studies) has been appointed as the Director of the Potsdam Pathways General Education program for a three-year term.

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## *Campus Updates*

**Preparation for the Spring, 2021 Semester.** *The following joint statement from the Office of the Provost and Faculty Executive Committee was recently shared with the faculty regarding the upcoming semester:*

As the campus prepares for the start of the Spring, 2021 semester, we want to take this time to thank everyone for the extraordinary work, patience, and creativity that have gone into the planning and implementation of high-quality academic programs since the onset of the pandemic. Academic excellence is a cornerstone to student experiences at SUNY Potsdam. While the academic enterprise has looked very different over the past 10 months, your commitment to excellence and your students' success have remained central to our mission.

As part of our commitment to excellence and student success, and to maintaining a healthy and safe academic environment on our campus, we would like to share some critically important reminders as we start to ramp up our planning for the spring. First, it is critically important that all faculty—and especially those who will be offering any face-to-face student experiences on campus—have **updated their SUNY Potsdam contact information** to include a current phone number where you can be reached. This is especially important for the purpose of contact tracing. It is vital to the overall health and safety of our campus that our Director of Student Health Services, Tracy Harcourt, can easily contact by phone and speak to faculty and staff who have been in close contact with students who have tested positive for COVID. In order to check on or update your contact information, go to the SUNY Portal at SUNY HR Self Service at <https://www.potsdam.edu/about/offices/hr/payroll>. Under Self Service, click on SUNY HR and update your contact information. If you do not use the portal, you can contact Human Resources directly.

Also critical to successful contact tracing is regularly taking *classroom attendance* for any course sessions that are face-to-face (F2F). Faculty need to keep track of who is attending F2F, and also *where they are sitting* for contact tracing purposes.

Please Note: According to new guidelines issued by the County, if a student (or faculty member) tests positive, and is attending a F2F class, *the entire class will need to be quarantined if the class session is more than 60 minutes*. For classes less than 60 minutes, the individuals to be quarantined will depend on the distance between the infected individual and others in the class. Therefore, it is critical to keep track of where each student is sitting for every class meeting (I would recommend that every faculty member do this, regardless of the length of the class session).

In order to facilitate accurate contact tracing, it is highly recommended that students sit in the same places for each session. To the extent possible, instructors should also implement seating plans and remind students to adhere to social distancing in labs, studios and other enclosed spaces, and minimize interactions and close contacts. However, please keep in mind that some students may have accommodative needs (e.g., related to vision or hearing impairments or other physical challenges) that necessitate that they sit in certain spots in the classroom. Therefore, it is recommended that students choose where they are to sit on the first day of class, then remain in that seating pattern for the duration of the semester.

Related to the health and safety of our students and campus community, please remember that *masks/face coverings and proper social distancing are required on our campus*, including within the classroom. This is part of our campus' spring plan submitted to SUNY, and is also required by SUNY for all of its campuses. As noted in SUNY's Spring 2021 Reopening Guidelines, "face coverings (masks) must be worn by all members of the campus community on campus at all times, including in classrooms, conference rooms and other spaces, even when six-foot social distancing exists." SUNY's complete Spring 2021 Guidelines can be accessed at:

<https://www.suny.edu/media/suny/content-assets/documents/healthaffairs/Spring-2021-Reopening-Guidance-Final.pdf>.

As a reminder, even within our hybrid/remote learning environment, it is strongly suggested to *align final exams with the originally scheduled exam period*. Of course, changing an in-person exam time without approval would be prohibited, even during a typical semester, as this may cause conflict with exams in other courses. However, this is also relevant for online and take-home exams – while students may appreciate the flexibility of extended due dates during finals week, many students may wait to complete the exam until right before the new deadline, causing unnecessary stress (especially if they have multiple exams due on the same day). It is recommended that all instructors stick with the posted schedule for all exams, and be flexible

with individual students as necessary. More information can be found at:  
<https://www.potsdam.edu/about/offices/registrar/final-exam-schedule>.

On behalf of the Office of the Provost and the Faculty Executive Committee, we want to thank you once again for your extraordinary work during these very extraordinary times. We are proud of you, and of your commitment to your students and each other.

**Students' Return to Campus: Spring Reopening Plans.** As the Spring 2021 semester is now upon us, the following details outline our campus' plans for the safe return of students to campus and to the North Country. An overview of the move-in process, which all returning students are being asked to follow, includes the following:

- **Schedule:** Per SUNY requirements, classes are scheduled to begin on February 1, with instruction remaining virtual for the first two weeks of the semester. On-campus students may choose a date to return between January 28 and 31. We recognize that off-campus students may opt to return to Potsdam sooner, or may not have left the area during the winter break. They will also be required to complete the symptoms tracking, self-quarantine and mandatory COVID-19 testing (see below) prior to the start of classes, and may choose from earlier testing dates depending on their availability.
- **Two weeks before students return:** Per SUNY guidelines, all returning students were required to begin monitoring their health symptoms daily beginning two weeks before their scheduled move-in date. Information on how to access the student symptoms tracker (through BearPAWS) can be found [here](#).
- **Seven days before students return:** Also per SUNY requirements, students must have completed a seven-day self-quarantine prior to arrival on campus. The self-quarantine guide and calendar can be found [here](#). Students traveling from noncontiguous states or internationally were required to follow [additional requirements](#).
- **Testing upon arrival:** Students were required to sign up for a move-in date ahead of time and are expected to arrive as close their scheduled testing appointment as possible. Student testing will now be held in the newly reopened Barrington Student Union Multipurpose Room. When students arrive on campus, they will immediately proceed to the Union to complete their pooled saliva test through Upstate Medical University. Additional testing instructions and information on what students should do if they miss their appointment can be found in the [student move-in guide](#).
- **Move-in and self-quarantine:** After completing testing, residential students will be able to access their rooms. More details on the public health expectations for move-in can be found in the [move-in guide](#). All students must continue to self-quarantine until receiving their test results. All campus dining will be take-out only until February 15, at which point we will review opening dining spaces along with other campus areas,

following the results of our initial campus testing.

As always, while these are the current plans, the ongoing health pandemic and updated guidance from New York State/SUNY could result in changes. More information is available at [potsdam.edu/prepared](http://potsdam.edu/prepared).

**Spring Calendar.** With the guidance finalized from SUNY regarding the reopening of campuses for the Spring, 2021 semester, our campus has recommended the following calendar:

- February 1<sup>st</sup>- classes begin; the first two weeks of classes will be virtual.
- Per SUNY guidance, spring break will be cancelled. However, five “reading days” are planned throughout the semester. All classes, whether F2F, hybrid, or remote, **will be cancelled** on these five days. It is also requested that faculty avoid assigning work or group projects on these scheduled days off:
  - **Tuesday, March 9**—Break Day #1
  - **Thursday, March 18**—Break Day #2
  - **Wednesday, March 24**—Break Day #3
  - **Tuesday, March 30**—Break Day #4
    - Note: *Tuesday Classes will be held on Monday, March 29.* NO MONDAY CLASSES are taught this week.
  - **Thursday, April 8**—Break Day #5
    - Note: *Thursday Classes will be held on Friday, April 9.* NO FRIDAY CLASSES are taught this week.
- Week of May 17<sup>th</sup>- finals begin.
- May 22<sup>nd</sup>- commencement. The format for commencement has not yet been determined, and will be dependent on guidance from SUNY and the state relative to health and safety.

*Student teachers* will follow the calendar and break schedule of their assigned K-12 school. Please note the *Tuesday/Monday and Thursday/Friday shifts* for the two final break days, described above. This ensures that the break schedule does not unfairly impact those classes or labs held on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Chairs are asked to work closely with their adjunct faculty who teach at multiple institutions, and whose schedules may be complicated by the Tuesday/Monday or Thursday/Friday shifts. Depending on the unique situation of the individual adjunct’s schedule, accommodations may need to be made in consultation with the chair and the dean.

It is strongly suggested that faculty avoid any tests or assignments due the day after the scheduled Break Days, so that students can truly have the opportunity to rejuvenate. In

addition, it is highly recommended that all faculty and staff avoid scheduling meetings, advising appointments, required rehearsals, lessons, etc. during the break days. It is important that faculty/staff also have the opportunity to “break away” from campus, if at all possible. This approved calendar has been recommended based on our current knowledge of the pandemic and recent guidance from SUNY. It is recognized that this calendar could change, based on the projection of the pandemic over the coming months. It is also important to note that all faculty will need to be prepared to move their instruction to remote modalities at any time, based on directives from SUNY and/or the governor.

**Employee Testing.** Effective February 1, 2021, all faculty and staff reporting to campus for work must be tested for COVID-19 *every week* going forward. This change comes following SUNY Chancellor Jim Malatras’ new requirement for students to be tested each week. Per the memoranda of understanding between New York State and UUP, PEF, CSEA and PBA, testing will be no less frequent than that which occurs for the student population. The same guidelines will apply to M/C employees. As a reminder, at this time, the weekly testing will continue through June 30, 2021.

The process for self-administration will remain the same:

- You will receive an email reminder from Human Resources when you need to submit a test.
- The test dropbox is located in Maxcy Hall, at the top of the main entrance ramp.
- Please come prepared, with your swab test completed and registered. **DO NOT** administer your swab test at the drop box.
- There will be COVID-19 tests available at the drop box for use for the following week. You should only take one test, as there is only enough for one per employee.
- Drop off will now be on **Mondays, between 6 a.m. and 4 p.m.**, in order to accommodate the need to get the tests to SUNY Upstate Medical in a timely manner.
- Don’t forget to register each test with [SUNY Upstate Medical](#).
- Don’t forget to label your test tube with your sticker label listing your name and date of birth. (The labels were previously provided to employees.)
- You must still be tested even if you have received your vaccine.
- You will only be contacted if you are in a positive pool. As a reminder, you can track the case details [here](#).
- Don’t forget that the COVID-19 tests should not be frozen!

Should you have any questions, please contact [Melissa Proulx](#), Director of Human Resources.

**Cross-Registration and Course Audits.** As was communicated during winter break, temporary changes are being made to two of our academic policies for the Spring, 2021 semester related to cross-registration and course audits. The following revised recommendations are for the spring semester only, and have been vetted through the Academic Affairs Continuity Working Group, Cabinet, and President's Council with input also from the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. Please let me know if you have any questions.

**Associated Colleges/Cross-Registration.** For the Spring, 2021 semester, it is recommended that students who attend one of the Associated Colleges, and who follow similar testing and health protocols as established at SUNY Potsdam, be allowed to register for classes at SUNY Potsdam including face-to-face courses.

**Spring Course Audits.** Because of the complications arising from health and safety guidance around social distancing and contact tracing, we will not be offering the option for community members to audit courses with face-to-face components *in the Spring, 2021 semester only*. However, community members can audit a course that is entirely remote, with the instructor's approval. SUNY Potsdam employees can audit any course, regardless of modality, as long as they officially complete and submit a Course Audit Application Form and receive permission from the course instructor. In these instances, the faculty member *must keep records of the student's/participant's attendance* in any face-to-face activity in compliance with our campus' health and safety plans.

**PPE Requests.** As a quick reminder, please be sure to submit *to your dean (or director)* your PPE requests as early as possible for any anticipated needs for the Spring, 2021 semester. It is important for Campus Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) to have accurate information so that they can adequately stock our storeroom.

If you have concerns about PPE, or regarding health issues as they relate to space, safety issues, etc., our Director of EH&S, *Patrick O'Brien*, can be available to assist. However, as a reminder, please submit requests for PPE directly to your dean/supervisor.

**Electronic Check-In.** SUNY Potsdam's Electronic Check-In process for all registered students is now activated. Students are asked to confirm their contact information and whether or not they plan to attend for the Spring, 2021 semester when they sign in to BearPAWS. The purpose of the Check-In is to confirm student attendance as well as to remind students of their financial responsibility and the proper procedures to take if they decide to leave the College. It also frees up more class seats for students who may need those specific classes. Please note that all students registered for a class at the College need to check in, including those who are student

teaching, participating in off-campus internships, taking an online course, participating in a Consortium agreement, or attending at a remote site such as Watertown. This process also includes staff members taking a SUNY Potsdam course.

The deadline for registered students to complete the Check-In process will be **February 15th**. Registered students who have not checked in by the deadline will have an All-Services Hold placed on their records, which can only be removed by the office responsible for their student type. Failure to check in also prevents disbursement of a student's financial aid. If you have questions about the Electronic Check-In process, please contact one of the following offices: Registrar's Office (315) 267-2154 [registrar@potsdam.edu](mailto:registrar@potsdam.edu), Graduate & Continuing Education Office (315) 267-2165 [gradcon@potsdam.edu](mailto:gradcon@potsdam.edu), or Student Success Center (315) 267-2580 [SSC@potsdam.edu](mailto:SSC@potsdam.edu).

**Add/Drop.** Requests for adding classes or dropping sections that are linked will come to faculty via an electronic form in your email again this semester. Please be sure to check your email regularly in order to approve or deny the requests from students to add your class. Please do not leave any requests unanswered in your inbox.

**Class Schedules.** Just a friendly reminder that the first iteration of the Summer and Fall 2021 schedules is due on **February 8<sup>th</sup>**. The CPI will be turned off at 8:00 a.m. and you will not be able to make edits until February 18<sup>th</sup>, when the second iteration of the schedule will be turned on. If you have any questions regarding the summer schedule please contact *Kathy Sherwood* at ([sherwoka@potsdam.edu](mailto:sherwoka@potsdam.edu)), or for questions regarding the Fall schedule please contact *Bethany Parker* ([parkerba@potsdam.edu](mailto:parkerba@potsdam.edu)). At this point in time, we are assuming that we will be able to resume face-to-face classes under a "normal" schedule this fall. However, we will continue to monitor guidance from the county, SUNY, and state related to the pandemic, and will adjust as needed.

**Important Note about Instructor Drops.** At the start of each semester and in accordance with College policy, faculty are asked to notify the Registrar of any student who does not attend the first meeting of a class, and does not notify you of the reason for this absence within 48 hours of the first class meeting. These are called *Instructor Drops*. (You cannot drop any student who has attended your class even one time.) **It is essential that faculty initiate Instructor Drops for all applicable students in accordance with this policy.** While students are required to complete an electronic check-in, we have learned from the NY State Attorney General and recent court rulings, that the electronic check-in does not necessarily make students obligated to pay tuition and fees. Therefore, timely Instructor Drops of all impacted students will allow Student Accounts to remove charges from the bill rather than forward a student to collections with the

Attorney General. (**Please note:** If you are teaching a F2F class, you may have students who are unable to physically attend class at the beginning of the Spring, 2021 semester if they are in mandatory quarantine. It is recommended that you reach out to your students to ascertain their status.)

**Library Updates.** Both the Crane and Crumb libraries will resume virtual reference and chat services beginning on February 1, 2021. The hours of chat will be 10:00am to 6:00pm, Monday through Friday. Research consultations can be made on the [College Libraries website](#). While the libraries won't be physically open until the 15th of February, physical materials will still continue to be made available.

Please let your students know that there will be study spaces available in both Crumb (LLC building) and Crane libraries for students beginning on February 15, 2021.

**Classroom Technology Upgrades.** We are excited to announce that CTS-NIM has completed the installation and programming for 17 *Dual Channel Live Streaming Enhanced Classrooms*. These streaming classrooms will make it easier for faculty to livestream their classes to students who are remote. The campus has also begun advanced testing and trials on the classrooms, and CTS is currently working with the CCI to schedule upcoming training for instructors.

The enhanced Dual Stream classrooms include:

- Kellas 103, 104, 105, 106
- Timerman 131
- Stowell 211, 217, 218/221, 315
- Satterlee 120, 120i
- Flagg 103, 206, 210, 211
- Schuette A323
- Maxcy G104

**Graduate Assistant/Graduate Advantage Program Positions.** The Office of Graduate and Continuing Education is now accepting position requests for AY 2021-2022 for *Graduate Assistant* and *Graduate Advantage Program* positions. For those interested in applying, use the [GA/GAP Position Request](#) form. Requests are due **February 15, 2021**.

As in the past, funding for these positions is competitive and limited. Also, positions that have been funded this past year are not guaranteed for AY21/22, and therefore units will need to reapply. If you have any questions, please contact *Alan Hersker*, Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs, at [herskeal@potdam.edu](mailto:herskeal@potdam.edu).

**Microcredentialing Task Force.** A new Task Force has been developed to recommend policies and processes related to the creation of Microcredentials on our campus. As outlined in SUNY [policy](#), microcredentials offer ways to document students' achievement of specific skills and competencies. Microcredentials can be completed relatively quickly either online, in the classroom, or in a hybrid format. SUNY has encouraged campuses to offer microcredentials as one way to demonstrate our commitment to individualized student learning. Microcredentials can enhance recruitment and build enrollment and, as the SUNY policy notes:

*The potential uses for micro-credentials are far-reaching: offered within an existing degree program, micro-credentials can motivate current students to persist; as an add-on to an existing degree program, micro-credentials allow students to distinguish themselves in a competitive marketplace through mastery of skills complementary to their chosen field of study; for adult learners looking to start or return to college, micro-credentials can be used to break a degree program down into smaller sections of curriculum that stack toward a degree; and, micro-credentials can be terrific tools to support life-long learning and professional development (SUNY Microcredential Policy).*

SUNY Potsdam's **Microcredentialing Task Force** is charged with developing a proposal for our campus' policy for review by the Provost's Cabinet, and for approval through the campus' governance process. Specifically, the Task Force is charged with reviewing current literature regarding the definition and use of microcredentials, considering the SUNY Microcredential policy and identifying content that can inform our own policy, proposing a microcredential policy for our campus, and suggesting a microcredential approval process for the Faculty Senate.

Task Force Members include:

- *Marta Albert* (Advanced Studies in Education)
- *Russell Biczó* (Music Education)
- *Ray Bowdish* (Biology)
- *Laura Brown* (Secondary Education)
- *Karen Caldwell* (Business Administration)
- *Blair Madore* (Mathematics)
- *Ruth Policella* (Student Life)
- *Sarah Solley* (Elementary Education)-- convener
- *Eudora Watson* (Center for School Partnerships & Teacher Certification)

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Task Force members for their willingness to serve!

**CCI – Events and Workshops.** Links to many SUNY, SUNY CPD, and CCI events and workshops can be found on the CCI [Events Calendar](#) page. Please visit the site for event information and for registration links. Also, if you missed the EIT session, feel free to watch the [First Steps toward meeting EIT Accessibility](#) presentation. For more accessibility training opportunities and resources, visit the [How do I adhere to ADA guidelines and laws?](#) webpage.

**Update: Course Surveys (a.k.a. Course Evaluations).** In collaboration with CTS, the CCI has made improvements on how we use *EvaluationKit (EK)*. Course surveys must now be requested through BearPaws. This new process helps us avoid issues associated with using Moodle courses (that may have been altered or combined) to create EK surveys. For complete guidelines, please visit the [Course Surveys](#) webpage. In summary:

- *EK Course Surveys* have replaced Scantron and Moodle Course Evaluations.
- Requests for surveys are made through [BearPAWS](#).
- Requests are due **two weeks** before the last day of classes (this includes courses that have a mid-semester end date).
- Surveys will be activated and available to students a week before the last day of classes.
- Faculty will be able to add “custom” questions to the survey the week before it is activated (adding custom questions is optional).
- Students will be prompted to complete surveys when they log in to Moodle.
- Course Survey emails will be sent to students containing EK links.

For training tutorials, please visit the *EvaluationKit* section of [Tech Tools](#) and contact [cci@potdam.edu](mailto:cci@potdam.edu) if additional support is needed.

**Online Faculty Fellows.** In conjunction with the Center for Creative Instruction (CCI), I am pleased to announce the call for applications for the second iteration of the *Potsdam Online Faculty Fellows*. The Online Fellows have been instrumental in assisting our campus community in moving to online and remote learning during the COVID crisis. Fellows play an important role in:

- developing and delivering professional development on the effective use of teaching and learning technologies,
- mentoring colleagues regarding established practices in online education,
- maintaining and encouraging high standards for the quality of online education, and
- staying abreast of developments in online educational technology.

A select group of Fellows are chosen to serve a one-year term for which a course release is provided by the Provost’s Office. The term of appointment is February 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021.

I want to thank the following Fellows, who will be returning for 2021: *Andre Mount* (Crane) and *Karen Caldwell* (SOEPS). We are still seeking one additional Fellow to join Andre and Karen. This individual can be from SOEPS, Crane, or Arts and Sciences. Please [click here](#) to learn more and submit your application. The deadline to apply is **February 1, 2021**. Email *Allen Grant* (Dean, SOEPS) at [grantac@potdam.edu](mailto:grantac@potdam.edu) with any questions.

**Starfish/Navigate Transition.** This spring, the campus will begin its transition from *Navigate* to *Starfish* as our retention/advising platform. This change was initially prompted by concerns raised from SUNY, which noted *Navigate*'s higher cost as compared to *Starfish*. *Starfish* has also been identified by SUNY as one of the System's preferred providers. In response, a campus Task Force was created to complete a cost/benefit analysis comparing these two tools. The group's final report was reviewed by the Provost's Cabinet and President's Council Budget Group. A final recommendation has been made to transition the campus to *Starfish* based on the following:

- It is highly unlikely that SUNY would reverse its decision regarding its preference for the use of *Starfish*, given *Navigate*'s higher contractual costs.
- There are substantial savings to the institution over time.
- Transitioning to *Starfish* allows us to join an informal network of SUNY peers—*Starfish* is SUNY's preferred provider, and therefore many of our peer institutions are already using this tool.
- *Starfish* is not substantially different from *Navigate*; the basic functionality will be the same.
- Notes inputted into *Navigate* will not be lost with the new *Starfish* system.

Our campus has recently been invited to join SUNY's Community of Practice for *Starfish*, which consists of 32 other campuses across the SUNY System that connect regularly to share information and resources on best practices to support each other in the implementation and use of this tool. We are looking forward to becoming an active member of this robust and collaborative community.

While we will continue to use *Navigate* this spring, our campus' current plan is to complete the integration of *Starfish* over the Spring, 2021 semester, provide training in late spring/summer, and implement *Starfish* as our retention and advising tool for the Fall, 2021 semester. Be sure to watch your email (and this Newsletter) for updates!

**Instructional Resources.** The following (free) resources may be helpful as you continue to navigate the unprecedented challenges—and opportunities—of this most unique time in higher education.

- [On-Demand Webinars](#) are available from *The Chronicle* including sessions on the following:
  - College and COVID in 2021
  - The Future of the Academic Enterprise
  - Race, Class, and Campus Climate
  - Student Success in a Time of Remote Learning
  - Preparing for Post-Pandemic Teaching and Learning
  - The Human Element in Online Learning
- *The Chronicle* also offers a webinar series specific to [Faculty Resilience](#).
- [The Human Element in Online Learning](#) - For faculty who usually teach face-to-face, building human connections in an online class is one of the keys to a successful semester. This virtual forum examines how faculty members can create better engagement and a more personal environment for students and instructors alike. [Watch on demand](#)
- [What Students Wish Their Professors Knew](#) - The Covid-19 crisis has put students and instructors who never signed up for distance education in virtual classrooms together. A panel of experts discusses what motivates students, and what approaches best support them academically and personally. [Watch on demand](#)
- Poet-laureate *Amanda Gorman* stole the show at the presidential inauguration last week. Watch her read her inspiring poem at: ["The Hill We Climb."](#)

Remember, if you need support in these challenging times, don't hesitate to contact the [College Counseling Center](#) (for students) or take advantage of the Mental Health Resources team in Microsoft Teams (for employees). Additional coping resources are available [here](#).

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## *Middle States Updates*

**Campus Self-Study.** Our Working Groups (WG) will complete the evidence-based Self-Study of our college this semester. As a reminder, this requires active participation from all members of campus, and we thank everyone who has already participated to help identify areas for improvement and innovation.



The Middle States Steering Committee will start reviewing the WG reports, and compiling and prioritizing the findings and suggestions, in preparation for writing the final report this summer.

Don't hesitate to contact Middle States Steering Committee co-chairs *Julie Dold* ([doldjm@potdam.edu](mailto:doldjm@potdam.edu)) or *Gordon Plague* ([plaguegr@potdam.edu](mailto:plaguegr@potdam.edu)) with any questions about this process.

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## *Around SUNY and the State*

**2021 Student Success Summit: Embracing Equity and Building Inclusive Excellence.** As SUNY is building capacity and best practices for supporting all students during these challenging times with evidence- and results-based campus and student leadership models and methods, our communities of practice have again joined together in order to facilitate collaboration, networking, and sharing of ideas to improve offerings for all students across the state. This Summit brings together three SUNY communities of practice: Student Success, Applied Learning, and Advising. The conference is free to SUNY faculty and staff and will be held virtually **April 22-23, 2021**.

The call for Session Proposals has been extended to **February 1, 2021**. Please visit the [event website](#) for more information regarding proposal submission, registration, speakers and event details.

**SUNY Undergraduate Research Conference (SURC).** SUNY Old Westbury will serve as host for the **2021 SUNY Undergraduate Research Conference (SURC)** to be held on **Friday, April 16, 2021**. Due to COVID, this year's SURC will be a virtual conference.

The annual SURC event brings together undergraduate student researchers and faculty mentors from across the SUNY system for a full day of multidisciplinary activities, including sessions devoted to student presentations (oral, performance, artistic displays, and poster); luncheon with keynote speaker(s); a SUNY Transfer, Graduate School and Career Fair; and professional development workshops for students and faculty.

SURC is supported by the Offices of the Chancellor and SUNY Provost, and the Research Foundation, as well as SUNY student and faculty governance organizations. All undergraduate students engaged in research/creative activity and their mentors across SUNY are invited to

attend. For more SURC resources, including abstract submission, registration, etc., please visit [www.SUNY.edu/SURC](http://www.SUNY.edu/SURC).

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## *Coming Due*

**Lougheed Applied Learning Grants.** You are invited to submit proposals for the Spring, 2021 *Lougheed Applied Learning Grants*. The submission window will be open through **March 5, 2021**. Detailed information about the submission process can be found on our website: <https://www.potsdam.edu/faculty/center-creative-instruction/funding-and-awards/lougheed>. Please note that applications are submitted through Moodle.

The Lougheed's generous endowment was established to enhance opportunities for students to engage in high impact activities that allow them to apply theoretical learning. In order to impact the greatest number of students and contribute to the transformation of the College's curriculum, *this fund is intended to support faculty and staff activities that improve our ability to facilitate student participation in high impact and Applied Learning activities*, including, but not limited to, curricular transformation, laboratory materials and equipment, professional development, course releases, new program development, etc., as well as to directly fund student engagement with Applied Learning.

Given the extraordinary challenges and opportunities resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, and impacts on pedagogy and modes of delivery, during AY20/21 priority will be placed on those proposals that focus on innovative and scalable ideas for enhancing high-impact and highly engaging teaching and learning within online/virtual environments for which there is no other funding source available. However, please note that all proposals related to high impact and applied learning activities, regardless of modality, will be accepted and considered.

If you have any questions regarding the grants or the proposal process, please don't hesitate to contact me ([bergerbs@potsdam.edu](mailto:bergerbs@potsdam.edu)).

**Walker Fellowships.** I am pleased to announce the continuation of the *T. Urling and Mabel Walker Research Fellowship Program* for 2021. The purpose of this program is to encourage faculty from the region's 11 institutions of higher education to undertake research on critical issues confronting North Country communities, and to make recommendations for possible solutions. The program is designed to promote greater community-academic cooperation. Proposals that include a strong statement of support from a local individual or organization

that clearly explains how the community will benefit from the project results will be given preference.

Funding for this program comes from the Campaign for the T. Urling and Mabel Walker Research Fellowship Program, which is administered by the SUNY Potsdam Provost's Office. A maximum of two research projects of up to \$5,000 can be awarded each year. The Walker Fellowship Steering Committee will determine the amount of the award for each approved project. In the past, funds have been used to pay a student assistant, support travel costs, and purchase software and supplies. Only in limited cases have funds been used as a stipend for the researcher.

Proposals are due by **January 29, 2021**, close of business. For further information and an application, please visit the [Walker Fellowship website](#).

**Diversity Attribute.** The Diversity Attribute Review Committee will soon be accepting course submissions for Fall, 2021. The Diversity Attribute is designed to help students more easily identify diversity-rich courses. The Diversity Attribute (DEI) does not have any curricular requirements and is not associated in any way with Potsdam Pathways or General Education.

- [How do I know if my course is diversity-rich?](#) Use the diversity-attribute checklist and examples of diversity-rich syllabi found in the link above to guide your course/syllabus preparation. To have your diversity-rich course(s) appear in the Fall, 2021 schedule of classes with a DEI attribute, submissions will be due **February 8, 2021**. The application process includes submitting a syllabus and demonstrating how your course meets the goals outlined on the diversity-attribute checklist.

Please direct questions to *Lauren Diamond-Brown* (Sociology & Criminal Justice) at [diamondla@potsdam.edu](mailto:diamondla@potsdam.edu).

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## *Mark Your Calendars*

**Black History Month Presentation.** Please join the campus community in a special event to kick off our celebration of Black History Month. On **Monday, February 1<sup>st</sup>**, Dr. Joanne Martin will be presenting on the topic of "National Great Blacks," beginning at 6:00pm. Dr. Martin is the CEO and Founder of the National Great Blacks in Wax Museums. The event can be accessed on Zoom at: <https://potsdam->

[edu.zoom.us/j/81507785030?pwd=S010MVllbS8xUGVRelBIO1YvY3EzOT09](https://edu.zoom.us/j/81507785030?pwd=S010MVllbS8xUGVRelBIO1YvY3EzOT09) (passcode 489456).  
For more information, contact *Clifton Harcum* at [harcumch@potSDam.edu](mailto:harcumch@potSDam.edu).

**Media Dance Concert.** Please join in celebrating Black History Month and the SUNY Potsdam dance students in their works of *Media Dance*. To keep us all safe during COVID-19, this event will be held virtually at [cyndance.org](https://cyndance.org) on the **First Friday in February 2021 at 7:30pm**. The theme of the event will be “Knowing the past can shape the future.” From this Black History Month celebration event, you will see a variety of student-made media dance works that have been in development since Fall, 2020.

Every February, people across the nation come together for events and activities to celebrate Black History Month. This year, more than ever, it is a time for us to maintain peace and safety while continuing our collective journey of honoring and deepening our knowledge of black history and those who have been marginalized from mainstream curricula and discussions because of our country’s legacy of slavery and institutional and structural racism. For dancers, Black History Month is also a reminder of the tradition of diversity in this art form, and our students take delight in celebrating the many achievements and contributions of Black American dance artists who, throughout history, have done so much to make us the culturally diverse, compassionate, and creatively rich community of American artists today.

**Implicit Bias Webinar.** All SUNY staff and faculty are invited to attend a conversation in Zoom about *Implicit Bias* on **February 2<sup>nd</sup> from 12:30-1:30**. The discussion will be led by *Eileen MacAvery Kane*, Assistant Professor, Art Department, Rockland Community College.

Prof. MacAvery Kane will share highlights and resources from a five-week training course she recently completed, “NEA/NYSUT Virtual Trainer of Trainers: Implicit Bias, Microaggressions, and Stereotypes.” There will be a brief presentation followed by breakout sessions for discussion of these topics and how they impact us and our students, and strategies to recognize, address, and confront them in ourselves and others. RSVP for the webinar at: <https://sunycpd.eventsair.com/ib0221/reg0221/Site/Register>.

**SUNY Potsdam Learning and Research Fair 2021.** The annual *Learning and Research Fair* will be held (virtually) during the week of **Monday, May 3 through Friday, May 7, 2021**. On behalf of the Office for Student Research and Creativity, you and your students are encouraged to participate.

Since its inception over two decades ago, the Learning and Research Fair has been a wonderful opportunity for faculty, staff, and students to share their research, teaching/learning

innovations, creative efforts, and scholarly achievements. Visit the Fair to get to know your colleagues and students better, learn about and celebrate their scholarly contributions and accomplishments, share your knowledge and expertise, and suggest possible new projects and future collaborations. Student presenters at the Fair are eligible to compete for awards administered by the Loughheed Center for Applied Learning.

*A note on the virtual format:* The Learning and Research Fair will be entirely online in 2021, to support public health goals stemming from the coronavirus pandemic.

- Students will submit abstracts and poster files, as usual.
- Students will also submit a short video about their research.
- Staff in the Loughheed Center for Applied Learning will post each entry on the L&RF website.
- Students who wish to enter the judging for one of our [research awards](#) will log into a Zoom room during an assigned appointment, and field questions from our faculty judges.
- Winners will be announced on campus social media and by email, and posted [on the Fair website](#) and [our campus website](#).

The Learning and Research Fair 2021 Digital Registration Form and important deadline dates will be posted under “Learning and Research Fair” on the home page of the Office for Student Research and Creativity. The link is as follows:

<https://www.potsdam.edu/academics/appliedlearning/studentresearch/learning-research-fair>.

The registration form is for students or teams of students who will present projects at the Fair. Students are to submit the form no later than **Thursday, March 4, 2021**. *A separate form is to be submitted for each topic or team's topic to be presented.* Please direct any questions to *Patti Jay* at ext. 2507 or [lrf@potsdam.edu](mailto:lrf@potsdam.edu). We look forward to your continued support and participation in this year's Learning and Research Fair.

**Accessibility Workshop.** A free two-day webinar will be held on **March 10th and 11th** hosted by Deque University and will include workshops in four different aspects of accessibility: Development, Design, Organizational Success with Accessibility, and Wildcard. Over 80 different webinars are offered through this two-day event. Information regarding registration will be available at: [Deque Axe-Con 2021 Registration and Schedule](#).

**Assessment Institute.** Hosted by IUPUI, the [Assessment Institute in Indianapolis](#) is the oldest and largest higher education event in the U.S. focused on assessment and improvement. The

2021 conference will be offered as a free virtual engagement held on **Sunday, October 24, 2021**, through **Wednesday, October 27, 2021**.

- The 2021 [Call for Proposals](#) is open. Please submit your proposal(s) by the priority deadline of **Monday, March 1, 2021**.
- [Complimentary registration](#) is being provided to the 2021 Assessment Institute in order to support members of the higher education community faced with resource constraints and travel restrictions during these challenging times. [Please register](#) by **Monday, October 11, 2021**.

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### *In Case You Missed It*

**Advisor Support Now Available in Teams.** All faculty and staff advisors have been added to the new [Advising Hub](#) in MS Teams. With two General Education programs to manage and constant COVID-related impacts, the hope is to keep everyone up-to-date as you advise your students. The Teams page includes regular updates; links to essential resources; instructions on how to get the most out of BearPAWS, BearDeN, and Navigate; and a forum for posting your burning advising questions.

You are encouraged to visit this site often and consider enabling notifications from the team when new information is added. If you have questions about the Advising Hub, please reach out to *Kristin Jordan* ([jordankm@potSDam.edu](mailto:jordankm@potSDam.edu)).

**Expectations for Renewal Documentation: COVID's Impact.** As it still remains uncertain how long before we are on the other side of the current global pandemic, it is evident that COVID-19 continues to significantly impact our lives both personally and professionally. While SUNY Potsdam has so far been very successful in keeping cases to a minimum, due in large part to the incredible efforts of our students, faculty, and staff, the long-term stresses caused by the pandemic on our teaching and on our students' academic experiences cannot be overstated.

Several faculty members have expressed specific concerns related to expectations for course evaluations and documentation for renewal given the continued extraordinary circumstances we are currently under. While the campus does not require any specific type of student opinion survey, one option that is now available to all faculty members is the use of EvaluationKit,

which is an electronic form of course survey. If you are unfamiliar with the use of this tool, you can find additional information on the [Tech Tools](#) site or contact the CCI staff at [cci@potdam.edu](mailto:cci@potdam.edu). As was the case in the Fall, 2020 semester, however, please be reassured that it is *your reflection on your teaching practices*—and not the tool itself—that is most important. For example, it would be appropriate to include a narrative describing what types of modalities you have tried since the onset of the pandemic and what you have learned from this process, what improvements you plan to make in subsequent semesters, what you have applied to your instruction from professional development opportunities/training, and your future goals for continued reflection and improvement.

It is also recognized that research and creative activities continue to be impacted by challenges posed by both the pandemic and fiscal barriers. In some disciplines, there are expanded opportunities to present and attend conferences free (or at a greatly reduced cost) in a virtual environment, and to participate in virtual performances or exhibits. These activities are valued, and should be included in any documentation. However, it is also understood that these virtual opportunities are not available in all disciplinary areas, and some faculty members' scholarly work is dependent on sitework which at the current time may not be possible. Therefore, it is important for faculty members to consult with their chairs and deans on appropriate alternatives, if warranted. Please know that the administration will support these alternatives as appropriate to your disciplinary area and your unique challenges. Again, a descriptive narrative outlining individuals' challenges, possible alternatives, and future goals related to scholarly and creative endeavors is important to include in any documentation.

Finally, while access to Zoom and Teams has increased our ability to virtually attend meetings and participate in campus-wide service, it is also recognized that the amount of time in these meetings has substantially increased. We would ask senior faculty and chairs to be especially mindful of their junior faculty colleagues, and work with them to identify only those service activities that are most critical to the individual faculty member's professional progress and goals.

While it has been said often—these are indeed unprecedented times. We recognize the stress and challenges that are a result of many current factors, including the pandemic, racial injustices, and economic fragility. Therefore, it is also recognized that expectations for documentation in the renewal process must be reconsidered. Faculty are encouraged to continue to work with their chairs and deans to clearly identify alternatives for documentation that are appropriate to the discipline, and to focus on reflection and lessons learned during this “new normal.”

## *Kudos*

**Student Awardee.** *Ramatu Muhammed*, an International Studies and Politics student, was among the 45 SUNY students recently honored as a recipient of the *Norman R. McConney, Jr. EOP Student Excellence Award*.

**Recognizing Faculty Advisors.** The staff in the Lougheed Center for Applied Learning and Office of Experiential Education extend their most sincere gratitude to the faculty and staff who make it possible for students to have high-impact applied learning experiences - we quite literally couldn't do it without you. Today we extend a public THANK YOU to the top ten internship and TA advisors of the last five years - you, along with all the other faculty advisors - have impacted hundreds of students through your willingness to take on these extra responsibilities. There are no words profound enough to recognize your commitment, but you have our gratitude.

1. *Drew Coles/David Vial/Marc Ernesti/Kickie Britt*, Music Business, 185 interns
2. *Sarah Lister/Tanya Hewitt*, Public Health and Human Performance, 102 interns
3. *Kathleen Mahoney/Mark Huff*, Graphic Design and New Media, 82 interns
4. *Karen Wilson*, English and Communication, 78 interns
5. *Dave Bugg*, Sociology and Criminal Justice, 76 interns
6. *Iggy Beerbower*, Art, 59 interns
7. *Toby White*, Lougheed Center for Applied Learning, 56 interns
8. *Josh Vink*, Theatre and Dance, 55 interns
9. *Morgan Perkins*, Anthropology/Art, 48 interns
10. *Shalu Wunnava*, Business Administration, 46 interns

These individuals (and their predecessors, for those recently started) were the faculty advisors to 39% of our interns over the last five years! Please join us in recognizing their contribution to your departments, to our College, and most importantly to our students' success.

*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](mailto:bergerbs@potdam.edu).*