



SUNY Applied Learning Campus Plan  
Campus Applied Learning Plan Part V

Feasibility Study

Due May 1, 2017

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| <b>Campus Name:</b>           | Buffalo State College   |
| <b>Date:</b>                  | 2/1/2017  |
| <b>Narrative Compiled by:</b> | Stephanie Zuckerman-Aviles, Director Career Development Center<br>Amy McMillan, Chair, College Senate, Associate Professor Biology<br>Ann Emo, Chair and Associate Professor, Theater   |
| <b>Summary</b>                | <p>Language in the 2015-16 Enacted State Budget (in an “Article VII” bill) directed the SUNY Board of Trustees and SUNY to develop a plan to make approved applied learning activities available to SUNY students enrolled in the 2016/17 academic year. This plan will include individual campus plans. Based on this language the Applied Learning Steering Committee has broken campus plans into VII parts.</p> <p>The relevant part of the language is as follows:</p> <p>“Such plan shall define approved experiential or applied learning activities, methods of faculty oversight and assessment, responsibilities of the business, corporate, non-profit or other entities hosting students, and include a requirement for collecting and reporting data associated with such experiential or applied learning activities.</p> <p>Such plan shall have each college examine the feasibility of including such experiential or applied learning activities as a degree requirement.</p> <p>Such college shall examine its ability to administer and provide such opportunities to students; the local community’s capacity to support such experiential or applied learning activities; the impact such a requirement would have on the local workforce, if any; potential for such a requirement to enhance learning outcomes for students; and whether adding such a requirement would cause potential delays in graduation for students.”</p> <p>This assignment represents Part V of VII of campus applied learning plans and asks questions to describe campus capacity to support applied learning. Similar to Parts I-IV, Part V should be submitted as a <b>descriptive narrative</b> regarding your current campus-level processes and policies relating to approved applied learning activities, your future plans, and campus ability to include approved applied learning activities as a local graduation requirement.</p> |

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|                     | <p>All parts of the Campus Applied Learning Plans must follow local campus governance processes and be approved by campus governance leaders.</p> <p>Please refer all questions to <a href="mailto:AppliedLearning@suny.edu">AppliedLearning@suny.edu</a>.</p>  |
| <b>Question 1</b>   | <p>Do you currently measure any impacts of campus-approved applied learning on the local community and workforce? If so, what impacts do you measure and what methods do you employ?</p> <p>At this time, Buffalo State College does not have a standardized method of measuring the impact of Campus-Approved Applied Learning on the local community or workforce. In response to a survey of all department chairs, most indicated no measures of impact are taken, other than to measure the impact on the students after completing their applied learning experiences. And not all departments work with the community and local workforce.</p> <p>The Volunteer and Service-Learning Center (VSLC) measures the impacts of service-learning partnerships on community organizations and their clients. This happens in two primary ways. In December and May the VSLC sends electronic and/or paper surveys to community partners who worked with service-learning classes the previous semester. The survey measures satisfaction with the partnership, how the collaboration influenced the organization, successes and challenges of the particular collaborating projects, suggestions for improvements to the particular project or program as a whole, and the likelihood that the partner will work with Buffalo State service-learning courses in the future. The data is collected and analyzed to understand impacts and areas for improvement. Data specific to the partnership is also shared for review and consideration with faculty members who partnered with the responding community partner.</p> <p>The second way the VSLC measure impacts is by holding community partner meetings four times per year. In these meetings, the partners are given the opportunity to provide feedback on course collaborations and program experiences. These conversations are helpful for VSLC staff and Buffalo State faculty members to consider for program improvements, and for community partners to receive feedback about their programs. The meetings are also critical for new community partners; they hear from individuals experienced in working with service-learning courses, which helps them create successful partnerships.</p> |

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|                     | <p>In addition to the VSLC model, the School of Education has also created some models to measure the impact of applied learning experiences on both the school districts and the K-12 students. For example, in most of the Exceptional Education courses that include Applied Learning, candidates work directly with children in schools and local community agencies serving individuals with disabilities to provide assessment and/or intervention services. Typically, as a part of that work, teacher candidates need to measure the impact of their intervention services on K-12 student outcomes and monitor progress. In addition, Exceptional Education master's candidates complete applied research in the schools working directly with children who need intervention services. As a part of the project they collect data, implement intervention services, and monitor the students' performance. They use the data to help make instructional decisions while adding to the current body of educational research.</p>   |
| <b>Question 2</b>   | <p>Based on your work on the Applied Learning Initiative to date, please describe the opportunities and challenges the campus would face in including approved applied learning activities as a local graduation requirement. Please describe implications for general student learning outcomes, advising, staff and fiscal implications, and other relevant information.</p> <p>Buffalo State College students, faculty, staff and administration have a truly remarkable commitment to Approved Applied Learning. This commitment was expressed during a comprehensive study on the feasibility of requiring AAL as a graduation requirement. There was overwhelming interest in applied learning from students and faculty who are either interested in beginning, currently engaged in, or have a desire to grow and advance existing programs. The majority of responses from surveys and group discussions indicate a belief in the concept of applied learning and the many benefits for students and the community. There was a very definite desire to provide these experiences to students. For the most part, opportunities far outweighed the challenges, and the campus community was extremely positive about applied learning experiences in general. However, the lack of faculty resources, especially given the current budget picture, was the greatest challenge for most of the campus. Despite the resource challenge, we believe that AAL can be a primary factor in achieving several of the goals laid out in our newly codified campus Strategic Plan, which focuses on our status as SUNY's Urban Engaged Campus.</p> <p>The SUNY Approved Applied Learning initiative is coming at a time when various factors on the campus are influencing how we move forward. There</p> |

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|                     | <p>are clear statements in the new Strategic Plan supporting the AAL initiative, and we are currently re-envisioning our General Education program as well as investigating the further integration of High Impact Practices (HIPs) to ensure that every student engages in multiple experiences during his or her academic career. Additionally, the college is in the process of approving Institutional Learning Outcomes, which may impact how AAL and High Impact Practices are integrated into the Buffalo State experience.</p> <p>We found that, overall, the opportunities that might result if Buffalo State included AAL activities as a graduation requirement would impact three areas; the college, students, and the community. As a college, Buffalo State would benefit by strengthening our already diverse community engagement, solidifying our brand and mission as the SUNY Urban Engaged campus with a diversity of majors, increasing recruitment and retention possibilities, and strengthening our curriculum.</p> <p>Our student body, much of which can be considered “non-traditional,” would benefit in a wide variety of ways. Students would experience a stronger sense of community on- and off-campus, see first-hand the connection between classroom learning and “the real world”, develop 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, explore career opportunities, and gain exposure to areas of interest outside of their major. When we discussed this with our students, they identified that AAL would help them discover their own likes and dislikes and strengths and weaknesses, preparing them to be better learners and citizens, and perhaps clarifying their career choice. Furthermore, applied learning has been shown to deepen the understanding and applications of course content. Other obvious benefits are connections with potential employers, increased mentorship relationships both peer to peer and with faculty, and important resume and portfolio building.</p> <p>Buffalo State is set in an urban environment so our relationship with the surrounding communities as well as the region is very important to our mission. AAL activities can offer opportunities in these areas as well through better understanding of community needs, enhancement of the local economy, events that nurture cross cultural relationships, and understanding and improved communication regarding issues that concern both higher education and the surrounding areas.</p> <p>Likewise the challenges can be summarized in terms of resources, existing requirement restraints, consistency and quality. Buffalo State sees and embraces the value of AAL but lacks the personnel to support broadening programs. This includes sufficient advisement time and contact with students, faculty trained in applied learning methods, financial support for programs, as well as developed and sustainable community partnerships. One of the areas</p> |

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|                     | <p>most mentioned as a resource challenge is with internships. With close to 1000 internships currently per year, faculty coordinators are being stretched to identify, supervise and monitor these placements. Many academic departments, especially the ones with large numbers of majors, cannot require internships because there are not enough faculty to implement and coordinate these experiences. Faculty also raised the concern about community capacity to be able to handle more of our students, in addition to the internships being offered by the other colleges in this region.</p> <p>Faculty see opportunities within some majors for applied learning, but not without additional faculty and time for extensive professional development. If Applied Learning becomes a requirement in the major, students who change majors will need consideration so that it doesn't become an impediment to graduation. This is also true for transfer students who may or may not come with these experiences but who are on a shorter timeline. A further consideration is that our students often have part- or full-time jobs, making the time required for a meaningful applied learning experience a potential hindrance. We also must consider our large number of commuter students, students with family obligations, or students who may not have the transportation to reach off campus locations.</p> <p>While we have not formally measured the impact of AAL on the community, it is clear through conversation with those engaged in activities that our connections would need to grow significantly to support the increased needs of the campus if applied learning were a requirement. We need intentional and directed training for meaningful and mutually beneficial partnerships and resources for sustaining them. The departments and programs who excel in applied learning may help guide the measurement of impacts for both on- and off-campus experiences. This area will need development on our campus.</p> <p>Our decentralized departmental structure makes any sweeping change a challenge. For example, in departments where an AAL experience is already required in their curriculum, academic advisement is not considered a challenge. However, for departments where it is not a requirement, there was a concern that it would become another check box on the already long list of requirements, and one more thing for faculty advisors to discuss with students. Academic advisement is one of the major venues for informing students about AAL experiences.</p> <p>There is a deep concern that there is lack of consistency and the potential for the quality of applied learning programs to drop if this became a graduation requirement. One of the concerns with our current General Education program is that students and some faculty see it as a series of requirements to be fulfilled rather than an integration of learning and life skills. As Buffalo State</p> |

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|                     | <p>revises this program it is yet unclear how applied learning can or will fit into the new vision.</p> <p>The list of opportunities and challenges was extensive for the college, community, students and faculty. However, the campus is ready to move this initiative forward even though it might be a slow trajectory. The impact on student learning remains a positive outcome that generates collaboration around the initiative. The resource issue will possibly remain the greatest hurdle, but we believe we can advance AAL on the campus.</p> |

**NOTE:** Forward all materials to [AppliedLearning@suny.edu](mailto:AppliedLearning@suny.edu) no later than **May 1, 2017**



SUNY Applied Learning Campus Plan  
Campus Applied Learning Plan Part VI

Collaboration Plan

Due May 1, 2017

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| <b>Summary</b>                | <p>Language in the 2015-16 Enacted State Budget (in an “Article VII” bill) directed the SUNY Board of Trustees and SUNY to develop a plan to make approved applied learning activities available to SUNY students enrolled in the 2016/17 academic year. This plan will include individual campus plans. Based on this language the Applied Learning Steering Committee has broken campus plans into VII parts.</p> <p>This assignment represents Part VI of VII of campus applied learning plans and focuses on collaborations in applied learning. This plan should be submitted as narrative with questions answered in the spaces provided.</p> <p>Please refer to language about facilitators included in the Criteria for Approved Applied Learning Activities.</p> <p>All parts of the Campus Applied Learning Plans must follow local campus governance processes and be approved by campus governance leaders.</p> <p>Please refer all questions to <a href="mailto:AppliedLearning@suny.edu">AppliedLearning@suny.edu</a>.</p> |
| <b>Question 1</b>             | <p>Please provide an overview of the various types of on- and off- campus collaborators/facilitators who engage in Applied Learning. These may include any business/corporate, non-profit, state/municipal and other hosts/facilitators. Be sure to note the general roles and responsibilities for each type of partner identified.</p> <p>The urban location of Buffalo State College in New York State’s second largest city allows for a diverse array of off campus partnerships collaborating with businesses and corporations, non-profit community agencies, health care facilities, cultural organizations, government agencies, and school districts. In</p>   |

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|                     | <p>general we identify Approved Applied Learning partners based on their needs and the desired learning outcomes for the students. We partner most frequently with non-profit organizations, followed closely by businesses and government agencies. These non-profit organizations serve a variety of community needs including education, health, hunger and homelessness, environmental stewardship, senior citizens, refugee supports, and others. It is important to mention that Buffalo is a federally-designated "Preferred Community" for refugees and for decades has been a destination for immigrants and refugees seeking to build new lives. The intense need for the support and resettling of thousands of refugees has provided a large number of opportunities for the college to develop reciprocal partnerships for AAL.</p> <p>In addition to off campus organizations, many AAL sites and experiences occur in on campus locations. As the largest 4 year SUNY College, opportunities are provided by the many offices, departments, and special programs housed on campus. Additionally, with a strong undergraduate research program, individual faculty supervise students in their experiences. These research experiences are facilitated at both on- and off-campus sites.</p> <p>One of the areas of growth in collaborative partnerships is with international agencies, schools and communities. Short-term study away and semester long study abroad experiences are growing exponentially at the college based on student learning and global needs. More and more faculty are engaging students in international AAL experiences at various sites around the world ranging from schools and communities in Haiti and Rwanda to water research projects in Thailand.</p> <p>With our de-centralized applied learning structure the roles and responsibilities of each AAL site range from clearly defined and monitored to unstructured and loosely defined. Ideally, it is our hope that all organizations/partners will provide real-world experiences, ensure the quality of learning experiences, and provide timely feedback to students and faculty mentors. Successful collaborative AAL partnerships are the responsibility of both the faculty supervisor/departmental contact and the community/organization partner. In order to set up a successful experience for the students no matter what type of organization, the organization/partner and faculty must collaborate on the following areas of responsibilities.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Site Identification and Placement – Once the partner provides the college with a need that we agree to help meet through AAL, all parties collaborate to develop the project that will address the need and the learning for our students. For each organization type, partners and</li> </ol> |

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|                     | <p>faculty must determine and ensure that a site is structured for the student with sufficient learning opportunities, on-site mentoring, and supervision. The faculty/department member must ensure that the student is the primary beneficiary of the learning experience and that the students have the required background to match the needs of the organization. Once the site location and learning experience is determined appropriate, the faculty/department member will either select the students, or the organization/partner will have the opportunity to select students through an interviewing process. There are departments, however, where sites are identified by the student, not by the faculty. In this case, the faculty should take the responsibility to ensure it is a good site for the student to complete their experience and has the capacity to provide meaningful opportunities for student learning and engagement.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Supervision and Assessment – Mentorship and coaching are the responsibility of both the faculty member and the site supervisor regardless of the type of organization providing the experience. Assessment of the experience is primarily the responsibility of the faculty member, however, in many instances the organization/partner must complete an evaluation of the students work. This may include, tracking the number of hours completed by the students, and providing timely performance feedback throughout the experience. There are college support offices (e.g. Volunteer and Service-Learning Center, Undergraduate Research Office) who provide the structure for assessment and evaluation of their particular Applied Learning activities.</li> <li>3. Environmental – The workplace must be safe and appropriate. It is a joint responsibility for the college and the partner to ensure that the environment is safe and, for some departments, meets the criteria set by their accreditation standard as an approved site. In addition, where appropriate, it is the responsibility of the faculty/department to complete Affiliation Agreements for insurance purposes, or purchase insurance for students, as is the case for international AAL.</li> <li>4. Orientation and Training - This aspect of AAL is dependent on the type of applied learning experience. Orientation and training can be either on- or off-site but is valued as an important step leading up to the AAL experience. For example, for research, orientation and training happens as part of the experience and is the responsibility of the faculty member. For Service-Learning, the VSLC does the majority of this function for the students, very often in partnership with the</li> </ol> |

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|                     | community partner. For internships the responsibility might be shared by the internship coordinator, faculty member, department, career center, and/or the facility off-campus.  |
| <b>Question 2</b>   | <p>Describe any existing methods used to support intentional and reciprocal relationships on and off campus. Please identify the offices, departments or other structures on campus currently supporting these relationships.</p> <p>Buffalo State provides varying degrees of support to our partners ranging from reciprocal collaborations to almost no interaction, which relies on the goodwill of partners to provide opportunities for students to engage in real-world experiences. Most relationships are supported and managed by individual faculty members, internship coordinators, field coordinators, student teaching supervisors, and department chairs. Some Approved Applied Learning experiences are supported by excellent offices and departments that provide formal structures to nurture these partnerships.</p> <p>A good example of an on-campus office that provides numerous supports with the aim of building reciprocal and sustainable partnerships is the Volunteer and Service-Learning Center (VSLC). These include: 1) community partner meetings four times per year to provide opportunities for faculty and staff to hear directly from community partners about community need and organizational priorities; 2) VSLC staff conduct site visits to community organizations to discuss potential partnerships, appropriate projects, and provide a service-learning orientation to community organization staff; 3) VSLC staff organize and facilitate individual meetings with faculty and potential community partners to discuss particular service-learning course learning objectives and specific community projects; 4) the VSLC communicates with service-learning partners throughout the semester to ensure project success; 5) the VSLC surveys community partners at the end of each semester to determine service-learning impacts and areas for improvement with the goal of improving collaborations; and 5) the VSLC recognizes outstanding partnerships, and organizations through an annual Celebration of Service.</p> <p>For our education programs, the Teacher Education Council (TEC) supports relationships with partner schools. Additionally, the Professional Development Schools Consortium (PDS) coordinates, nurtures and sustains partnerships with K-12 schools. The PDS model provides schools with a small stipend and encourages schools to engage in action research by offering mini-grants. The</p> |

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|                     | <p>PDS Consortium holds an Annual Retreat that brings together PDS partners including school teachers and administrators, campus faculty and staff, and teacher candidates for discussions and professional development.</p> <p>The Office of Undergraduate Research provides a formalized structure for promoting and providing a variety of research, scholarly, and creative opportunities in all academic disciplines. It supports research engagement for both faculty and students through a summer research fellowship program, small grants program to support academic year research, travel support for students presenting/performing at professional meetings and conferences, and faculty development opportunities related to undergraduate research.</p> <p>The Career Development Center (CDC) also provides support by assisting on and off campus partners to identify students primarily for internships. In addition, the CDC provides a centralized resource for on and off campus partners to engage with the college. A structure is provided to identify new partners, clarify partner needs, identify appropriate departments to meet those needs, and establish processes to find and select candidates. An online job and internship posting system is available to help partners advertise their opportunities to the campus community.</p> <p>Finally, the Office of International Education provides assistance and support to students and faculty wanting to engage in short-term or semester-long study abroad experiences. This includes travel arrangements, financing, orientation for students, recruiting, and emergency protocols.</p> |
| <b>Question 3</b>   | <p>Describe how your campus engages new community partners in applied learning.</p> <p>There are a variety of ways that departments and the college identify sites and involve partners for Approved Applied Learning. Program Coordinators for internships, field placements, student teaching placements, and clinical practicums are the primary way in which new partner contacts and relationships are established. Campus offices, such as the CDC, may provide contacts to Program Coordinators after initiating partnerships with on- and off-campus organizations. Individual faculty also engage new community partners and provide the first point of contact for many off campus sites. In many academic departments, however, it is the department chair who engages with any new community partners who want to establish an ongoing working relationship. Department chairs serve as the primary or often times first point of contact for establishing AAL projects. Because there is no campus</p>   |

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|                     | <p>clearinghouse for information about AAL partnerships, duplicative efforts or lack of communication can become impediments.</p> <p>Campus offices such as the VSLC, CDC, Office of Undergraduate Research, International Education, and the PDS also make the contact to establish new on- and off-campus partnerships and/or engage new faculty mentors and supervisors. For example, the VSLC regularly engages new community partners in a number of ways: 1) a portion of the community partner meetings are reserved specifically for new partners to discuss the “nuts and bolts” of service-learning collaboration; 2) the VSLC has created a community partner handbook to assist partners with strategies for being successful when working with service-learning classes ; and 3) new partners are added to the “VSLC Connection”, a regular email communication with strategies for success and opportunities for partnership. Additionally the CDC engages new corporate partners who are initially seeking to hire Buffalo State students and graduates, but are soon engaged in establishing themselves as an AAL site.</p> <p>Students also engage community partners with the campus. They, and often times their parents, make contact with sites they are interested in, are employed by, or are actively engaged with in their community. These connections are effective in helping to engage new community partners since the relationship has already been established.</p> |
| <b>Question 4</b>   | <p>Based on your answer to questions 1-3, please describe your campus plan for supporting current and future intentional and reciprocal partnerships.</p> <p>In September 2016, our President convened a work group and charged them with developing a Civic Action Plan for Buffalo State in order to align with our campus mission and strategic plan. The purpose of the Civic Action Plan is to forward Buffalo State’s role as an urban engaged campus and expand our existing diverse civic and community engagement efforts in ways that advance citizenship and positive social change. Our institution has been recognized regionally as SUNY’s urban engaged campus and nationally as a leader in civic and community engagement through multiple awards, and through classification as a Carnegie Community Engaged Institution.</p> <p>In the Civic Action Plan, the institution's contribution to the health and strength of the Buffalo community was identified as our opportunity for greatest improvement. “Individual projects and initiatives across the campus have strong reciprocity including the Professional Development Schools and service-learning partnerships. Recent efforts, through the Anchor Institution</p>   |

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|                     | <p>Dashboard Initiative, are helping the college to define the impacts of the institution on the broader community, and to measure potential impacts on economic, social, environmental, educational, and political elements of a community. In order to expand our understanding of the public purposes of higher education, it is essential to see our community collaborators as experts of knowledge and practice. We must continue to deepen and broaden collaborations in order to harness the power of campus-community connections to improve both campus outcomes and community priorities”. The plan includes specific recommendations to achieve this objective.</p> <p>Once the Civic Action Plan is fully adopted by the campus, it will serve as the roadmap for deepening and expanding our institution’s civic and community engagement work.</p> <p>As Buffalo State completes our investigation of Approved Applied Learning on our campus, several opportunities and challenges have become clear. It is evident that our de-centralized system has created coordination and structural issues. Our strengths lie in established programs in the School of Education, Service-Learning, Undergraduate Research, and Internships that have created strong reciprocal partnerships with on and off campus organizations. The Applied Learning Leadership team has discussed the implementation of a centralized and sustainable applied learning structure. This would be done by first establishing an Approved Applied Learning Oversight Committee that would be responsible for establishing standards for designation, development and revision of curriculum, professional development, community partnership engagement and growth, and assessment. Planning for engagement, development, assessment, and growth of community partnerships and collaborations would be a primary objective moving forward.</p> |

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SUNY Applied Learning Campus Plan  
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Graduation Requirement

Due May 1, 2017

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| <b>Summary</b>                | <p>Language in the 2015-16 Enacted State Budget (in an “Article VII” bill) directed the SUNY Board of Trustees and SUNY to develop a plan to make approved applied learning activities available to SUNY students enrolled in the 2016/17 academic year. This plan will include individual campus plans. Based on this language the Applied Learning Steering Committee has broken campus plans into VII parts.</p> <p>This assignment represents Part VII of VII of campus applied learning plans and asks each campus to determine whether they can include approved applied learning activities as a local graduation requirement. The feasibility of requiring approved applied learning activities for all students includes a decision as to whether this academic methodology is sound and appropriate to include in curriculum, as well as determination of the local community’s ability to support the number of students enrolled. Having knowledge of the number of students currently engaged in approved and required applied learning activities may help campuses make an informed decision.</p> <p>All parts of the Campus Applied Learning Plans must follow local campus governance processes and be approved by campus governance leaders.</p> <p>Please refer all questions to <a href="mailto:AppliedLearning@suny.edu">AppliedLearning@suny.edu</a>.</p> |
| <b>Question 1</b>             | <p>Based on the data reported to SUNY System Administration in Parts I-VI of campus plans, will your campus include approved applied learning activities as a local graduation requirement?</p> <p>After extensive discussion with faculty, staff, students and administration, detailed analysis of survey data, and a thorough look at our decentralized</p>  |

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|                     | <p>model described in part I-VI, we have made the decision not to include Approved Applied Learning activities as a graduation requirement at this time.</p>   |
| <b>Question 2</b>   | <p>Describe the specific reasons for this decision. Please note which governance bodies and other campus stakeholders were consulted in the process and have approved the decision, including student governance.</p> <p>The Applied Learning Leadership team sought a broad array of input from all constituents on campus: administration, students, faculty, and staff. The following describes the activities we implemented to get as much feedback and input from the campus as possible.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Two consultations with the Provost and the Dean’s Council</li> <li>2. Conducted discussion groups with the College Senate Executive Committee, Associate Deans, Student Affairs and Academic Affairs Program Directors, United Students Government, and the United Students Government Executive Council</li> <li>3. Administered a survey to academic department chairs, with 100% return rate</li> <li>4. Administered a survey to the campus for all faculty and staff with 205 responses</li> <li>5. Provided monthly updates to the College Senate with the chair of the senate, who also is a member of the Applied Learning Leadership team</li> <li>6. Consulted with the two programs on campus that have the strongest collaborations with community partners and assessment of impacts of Approved Applied Learning: School of Education (Professional Development Schools) and the Volunteer and Service-Learning Center</li> </ol> <p>The information we gathered from this process lead us to believe that there are simply not enough full time tenure track faculty to support the initiative to keep the highest standards for these activities and to assess their effectiveness. Currently, and for the foreseeable future, there is no funding available to hire additional faculty to support a decision to require our students to participate in Applied Learning. Moreover, there is insufficient infrastructure in place needed to support and coordinate the efforts given the existing decentralized model. Further analysis also revealed that some departments could not support a requirement given their existing</p> |

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|                     | <p>curriculum, staffing, and numbers of students needing to fulfill the requirements.</p> <p>We did not make this decision lightly and believe this is a “for now” decision, and that the future may lead the campus in a different direction. With the college undergoing a revision of the General Education program and on the verge of approving a set of Institutional Learning Outcomes, AAL may become an integrated element of the new curriculum.</p> <p>There are very strong views for and against making AAL a graduation requirement. Students expressed a strong interest in and connection with applied learning activities, however, they were divided on whether or not to require it for graduation. Student concerns that an applied learning requirement could lengthen time-to-graduation played an important part in our final decision. While 68% of the departments believed they could integrate AAL as a graduation requirement within their departments, a majority of those also believed they could not do this without further resources to support the initiative. The greatest challenges noted by departments were insufficient number of faculty to implement the experiences, too many other academic requirements for students to complete for graduation, unsure of how they would track AAL completion, and a lack of faculty buy in. On the other hand, some departments already have AAL as a requirement for completion of the major and saw no immediate challenges (although everyone could use more staff to oversee and identify placements). Still other faculty reported they were very excited about examining curriculum, revamping capstone courses, and growing the AAL in their departments.</p> <p>Buffalo State faculty, students, staff and administration already have a very strong commitment to AAL. There is a deep concern that it not become a check box on the graduation requirement list. Instead, the overwhelming sentiment was that AAL become more formalized by investing in a more organized (and centralized) structure and that the standards are raised on how these experiences are identified, assessed, and how they support learning outcomes. The Buffalo State campus wants the AAL experiences to be something special; that are effective at integrating course content, something students strive for in their educational path, highly valued, and, most importantly, speak to and address community and student needs. Buffalo State is not equipped to implement this as a requirement right now, but this Feasibility Study has raised the awareness of the importance of these experiences for students, so we are hopeful that one day it will be</p> |

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|                     | made a requirement. It was clear, however, from the feedback we collected, that there must be improvement in the way these experiences are coordinated and integrated into a student's education.  |
| <b>Question 3</b>   | <p>If your campus plans to move forward with a graduation requirement, which approved applied learning activities will be required? How will the requirement be verified, and who will oversee the requirement? When will the requirement become effective?</p> <p>N/A</p>   |
| <b>Question 4</b>   | <p>If your campus does not plan to make approved applied learning activities a graduation requirement, what is your plan for sustaining current and future applied learning work?</p> <p>While gathering data on Approved Applied Learning and Applied Learning activities over the past year and a half and writing the Applied Learning Plan, it has become clear to the Applied Learning Leadership team, the Provost, and the Deans that the campus is committed and excited about maintaining, growing, and strengthening our current experiences. We have outstanding programs in Undergraduate Research, Service-Learning, The School of Education's Professional Development Schools program, and Internships.</p> <p>At this time, we recognize that to sustain quality, meaningful, and impactful AAL at Buffalo State we must have greater understanding and buy-in of the definition and set of criteria currently in place. These have been refined and vetted via a committee of representatives from across campus, however, getting consensus among faculty, staff, students, administration, and community partners is our next hurdle. Early in the process, department chairs were surveyed to gather information on current applied learning. They returned an overwhelming number of courses that reportedly met the five criteria for AAL. In a subsequent survey meant to track these applied learning courses, chairs are now revising that information. Some of the courses that were believed to be AAL have been removed from the list and others added. This indicates an increased awareness of our definition and the criteria that need to be met for these activities to be considered AAL.</p> <p>The Applied Learning Leadership Team is in the greatest position to move this initiative forward. Our de-centralized model is both a strength, in that it allowed several programs to develop independently, and our greatest challenge, due to a lack of consistent standards and oversight. Current campus awareness of what truly qualifies as AAL is at a peak and we</p> |

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|                     | <p>believe the campus is ready to move forward with some centralization of procedures, assessment, and professional development. One of the models currently being discussed to continue this positive forward momentum is the establishment of an Applied Learning Committee lead by the current Applied Learning Leadership Team under the direction of the Provost. In addition, faculty representation from all four Dean’s areas, as well as representatives from the four foundational Buffalo State programs (Undergraduate Research, Service-Learning, etc.) would be involved to provide oversight. This newly formed campus-wide committee would be charged with sustaining and growing our AAL courses and programs. Most importantly, it would put some foundational initiatives in place including clarifying definitions, assessing what needs to be standardized, determining the best way to designate courses as AAL, and setting up a review process. We know from our data collection that advisement is the primary way students learn about opportunities, so a consistent and effective advisement process must be put in place.</p> <p>We will be looking at a method for reviewing and assigning designations to identified courses that include AAL. The Volunteer and Service-Learning Center (VSLC), for example, oversees the approval process of designating service-learning courses; this may be a good model for some other applied learning experiences. Faculty who initiate service-learning in their courses and want their courses designated as such must meet College Senate criteria. The process includes an application and review by a faculty committee. For AAL this may be done as a sub-committee in the College Senate Curriculum Committee or a separate body under the umbrella of the AAL committee. This entire designation process would need to be explored and procedures determined that make sense for the faculty and the campus. Most importantly, assistance must be readily available to help departments modify courses to meet the criteria. One additional function of a centralized committee and model would be to consult with departments who genuinely want to move forward and offer AAL to their majors.</p> <p>A formalized assessment plan will need to be established, which may align with Buffalo State College’s new Institutional Learning Outcomes as well as the individual course Student Learning Outcomes. While analyzing the impact AAL has on the community may be more difficult to implement on a large scale, the committee will make recommendations for strengthening community partnerships and assessing their needs. Again, the VSLC has</p> |

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|                     | <p>been routinely measuring impacts on the community, and may serve as a model for formalizing this area.</p> <p>The campus has embraced Applied Learning as evidenced by the newly developed Strategic Plan, which focuses on our status as SUNY's Urban Engaged Campus by 'sustaining and increasing approved applied learning ensures that every student engages in multiple high-impact practices during his or her academic career' (Goal 1.3) and 'offers an applied learning experience for every Buffalo State student' (Goal 1.3.2). Furthermore, Buffalo State is in the midst of a General Education revision and applied learning is an integral part of this research and development (Goal 1.1.1). With such a strong commitment in the Strategic Plan, the campus is primed to put into place a sustainable, centralized structure to support, implement, and assess applied learning, with the goal of increasing and improving our applied learning initiatives.</p> |

**NOTE:** Forward all materials to [AppliedLearning@suny.edu](mailto:AppliedLearning@suny.edu) no later than **May 1, 2017**