Instruction and Research Committee

Final Report
2017-2018

Members:

A. Shephard, Chair (Fashion & Textile Technology)

L. Anselmi (Anthropology), K. Boos (Prof. Staff.), C. Burnett (Int’l. Center for Studies in Creat.), C. Cardina (Health, Nutrition/Dietetics), David Ettestad (Physics), E. Harvey (Library), A. Liao (Communication), N. Minaya (Student), W. Paterson (Dean, SOE- Liaison) A. Patti (Exceptional Education), M. Pereira (Prof. Staff), H. Shandomo (Elementary Ed. & Reading), M. Warford (Modern & Classical Languages)

Charge: The committee on Instruction and Research shall concern itself with those aspects of policy that relate to:

- The improvement of Instruction and the development of services and resources necessary to carry out or enhance this function;
- The use of time and resources (e.g., scheduling, registration, and the college calendar);
- Evaluating of student progress and teaching effectiveness;
- Grading, withdrawal from courses, experimental and special instructional methods, innovative practices, and maintenance of quality education; and,
- The stimulation and support of research, scholarship, and creativity

Name of Chair Submitting Report: Arlesa Shephard

Anticipated Vacancies in 2018-2019:

Five faculty, one student, and two professional staff have terms that are expiring at the end of 2018. Some members are returning; however, it is expected that several seats will become vacant.

Approximate Number of Meetings:

The I&R Committee had four face-to-face meetings and communicated frequently electronically.

Annual Report:

The following business was conducted through meetings and electronic communication:
I. Micro-credentialing
   a. The Instruction and Research committee reviewed the draft of the SUNY Micro-Credentialing Task Force: Report and Recommendations which was generated at the SUNY level. The committee developed a review document that was presented to the senate to summarize the report and explore what micro-credentialing could mean at Buffalo State. The review included potential application of micro-credentialing, concerns about micro-credentialing, and recommendation for micro-credentialing at Buffalo State. A copy of this review is attached at the end of this report.

II. Course Evaluations
   a. Buffalo State is using a new tool to facilitate course evaluations online. The Instruction and Research Committee was asked to examine the questions used for these evaluations.
   b. Currently the School of Arts and Humanities has adopted a standard set of 12 questions while other schools and programs used different questions (i.e. many programs in the School of Professions used 16 standard questions).
   c. It has been suggested within the Instruction and Research committee that the college adopt a hierarchical structure where the evaluations contain a core set of questions with additional questions being developed and added at the school, department, and individual instructor level. More data is needed to further explore this topic; therefore, the discussion of course evaluations has been tabled for now.

III. Course Audit Policy
   a. Currently, Buffalo State College does not have a policy about auditing courses. The Instruction and Research Committee worked on developing an audit policy in conjunction with Standards for Students.
   b. The committee gathered information by reviewing audit policies at college within and outside of the SUNY system. Input was also sought from the Registrar’s office as well as RITE (related to use of educational technology such as Banner and Blackboard).
   c. An Audit Policy has been drafted and approved by members of both the Instruction and Research committee as well as Standards for Students. It is anticipated that this policy will be presented to the senate in fall 2018. The current draft of the policy is attached at the end of this report.

IV. Agenda item for 2018-19
   a. In conjunction with Standards for Students, the Instruction and Research committee will present the audit policy to the senate for discussion and a vote.
SUNY Micro-Credentialing Task Force: Report and Recommendations

Review: Buffalo State College

Overview:
Micro-credentials can be non-credit or credit bearing. They can also be stackable which means that they may contribute toward a minor, certificate, or degree program. Micro-credentials should assist students with earning employment. It is recommended that BSC explore working with industry partnerships. They should also be approved by the local campus governance and should indicate market need in their proposal. Examples of micro-credentials include but are not limited to badges, MOOCs and licensure.

Potential role of micro-credentials at Buffalo State College:
There is great potential for micro-credentialing at Buffalo State. The development and implementation of micro-credentials can help enhance the education and retention of existing student as well as attract additional student groups. Although Buffalo State has made some efforts toward the development of micro-credentials, there is room for expansion. One example of a successful micro-credential at Buffalo State is the MOOC, Igniting your Everyday Creativity. The potential is there to expand the use of micro-credentials on campus. Currently, Buffalo State offers many certificate programs. Stackable micro-credentials could be developed that can count toward the completion of these certificate programs. When considering developing micro-credentials, it may be worth focusing on programs that already experience a higher percentage of micro-credentials in SUNY such as disciplines in technology, business, and education. This may help fulfill a need and aid with the transferability of micro-credentials among SUNY institutions. Micro-credentials may go beyond helping traditional students by supporting workforce development initiatives in conjunction with various programs and entities on campus (i.e. Small Business Center and/or the Library).

Another way that micro-credentials may be useful is by helping students achieve specific skill sets. One of the benefits of micro-credentials is to verify, validate, and attest that students have achieved specific skills or competencies. Some micro-credentials can be developed to not only help students when they enter the workforce, but to also assist in gaining basic tools and skills that make them better students and citizens. Micro-credentialing could lead to specialized work opportunities for students. For example, there could be peer tutors at the library Reference Desk once a student earns certain micro-credentials which would attest to their capability. Micro-credentials can also assist with retention by providing students with an avenue by which to gain additional confidence and knowledge in specific areas. For example, creating micro-credentials for competencies such as writing, communication, or computer skills could benefit students. Furthermore, offering badges for high-impact practices such as service learning related to urban engagement could provide students with unique skills while achieving experiences that could be valuable to external stakeholders.

Concerns about Micro-credentials at Buffalo State College:
Micro-credentials have many benefits and there are opportunities to expand the offering of micro-credentials at Buffalo State. Among the concerns remaining about micro-credentials include the need for financial aid assistance for non-credit bearing micro-credentials. Currently, financial aid is focused on students working toward traditional degree programs; however, financial assistance may be needed for students completing micro-credential requirements. Additionally, it is important for the campus to evaluate resources required to support the development and implementation micro-credentials. For example, technology and instructional support is often necessary to develop and implement some micro-credentials. The time and cost required to support both credit and non-credit bearing micro-credentials must be considered. Also, governance and quality control for non-credit bearing micro-credentials is important. For example, clarity should be provided to distinguish badges that are offered as an approved micro-credential versus badges that students can earn as part of coursework using the Blackboard learning platform.

**Recommendations:**

To ensure quality and oversight of micro-credentials, policies should be reviewed and/or developed regarding the development, approval, implementation, and review of micro-credentials at Buffalo State. In addition, there should be a central directory of micro-credentials available on the website for Buffalo State College to improve the transparency, accessibility, and promotion of these opportunities. The possibility of including micro-credentials on student transcripts should also be explored. Furthermore, resources that can assist with the development and implementation of micro-credentials at Buffalo State should be examined, such as the Small Business Center, the library and library staff, instructional resources, and other support entities on campus.

VI. Appendix 2

**Audit Policy (Draft)**

**Types of auditors**

- **Currently enrolled students**
  - With instructor permission, students who are currently enrolled in the college may audit classes. Students will be required to complete the Audit form. Audit courses do not count toward full-time status.

- **Faculty and Staff**
  - Faculty and staff may audit courses. Auditors must complete the audit form.

- **Non-degree-seeking students**
  - Students who have completed the non-degree-seeking application through the Admissions Office may audit classes. Auditors must complete the Audit form and may have limited access to campus services and technology.

**Auditing Criteria**

- General Criteria for all auditors
Auditing provides a person permission to regularly attend and participate in a class without receiving a grade or earn credit.

Auditors must obtain approval from the instructor of the course.

- Auditing is a privilege and requires instructor approval. No one can claim the right to audit any course at any given time.
- An Audit Form that includes approval from the instructor and the department chair must be completed and submitted to the Registrar’s Office by the add/drop deadline for the semester in which the audit will take place.
- Students who have been previously dismissed or are on academic probation must obtain additional permission from the associate dean and meet conditions for readmission to the college in order to audit a course.
- The auditor’s role beyond attending the course, such as completing assignments, receiving instructor feedback, and taking exams, should be agreed upon with the instructor.

Auditors may be admitted only if the classroom capacity has not been met with regular enrollment. The audit agreement will be voided if maximum classroom capacity has been met by the add/drop deadline.

Course auditors may be expected to purchase text books and/or supplies necessary to participate in the course (i.e. art supplies).

Auditing is not permitted for:

- Study abroad programs, student teaching, fieldwork, independent study, thesis, senior projects, or classes that include patient/client contact.

Special considerations for laboratory and studio classes:

- See DOPS Policy I:09:00.
- Course auditors may be required to pay laboratory or similar fees associated with the course.

The auditing student will **NOT** receive a grade or earn credit toward a class.

- Audited courses do not count toward full-time status for enrolled students.
- Audited courses will appear on course rosters and transcripts with an audit designation. This audit designation is not a grade and will not contribute toward a student’s GPA, credit count, degree, or financial aid eligibility.
- Auditors may not retroactively register or request to receive credit in a course they are auditing. If a student registers for the same course in a different semester, the student is responsible for completing all course requirements during the semester in which the student is registered.
- Work completed in an audited course may not be used toward improving a previous grade or for extended registration because of an incomplete “I” grade.
- A student may not audit a course for which he/she is currently enrolled. The student must drop the course and seek audit approval prior to the add/drop deadline.

**Additional criteria for non-degree-seeking auditors**

- Auditors who are not seeking a degree and/or are not currently enrolled in the college must complete a non-degree application and related documentation through the Admissions Office as well as complete and submit the Audit Form.
o Non-degree-seeking auditors will not be charged tuition; however, other fees may apply.
  • Non-degree-seeking auditors may be required to pay fees which could include but are not limited to a registration fee, a class or lab fee as well as a fee to cover technology and library use on campus.

o Non-degree-seeking auditors are expected to adhere to all college policies and the Student Code of Conduct.

o Auditors must adhere to parking rules and regulations and may need to purchase a parking pass if parking on campus.