



The State University
of New York

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

1. What is Open SUNY?

Open SUNY is a system-wide effort designed to maximize online-enabled learning opportunities for all SUNY students current and future. Open SUNY, as a concept, seeks to support campuses and faculty in increasing access, completion, and success for their students. Open SUNY draws on a rich history of innovative instruction within the SUNY system including the SUNY Learning Network (SLN), Empire State College Center for Distance Learning and much more. Open SUNY will launch in January of 2014, but the details are still in development. We welcome your input and encourage you to tell us what you think by sending your thoughts to ContactOpenSUNY@suny.edu or by visiting our information website at <http://commons.suny.edu/opensuny>.

2. When will Open SUNY launch?

January of 2014

3. Is participation in Open SUNY required for all campuses?

Open SUNY will have multiple elements that will have a broad impact and improve online-enabled learning including fully online, hybrid, and even face-to-face. All campuses will be required to list their online degrees and courses on the Open SUNY website and report their data to institutional research in an accurate and timely manner. Details regarding services and systems are being developed and will eventually be overseen by appropriate advisory structures for Open SUNY. We anticipate that Open SUNY will involve a combination of no-cost/mandatory elements as well as optional fee-based services.

4. Will SUNY offer MOOCs or become members of MOOC groups such as edX or Coursera?

SUNY campuses are already offering MOOCs. For example, Empire State College has offered several Constructivists MOOCs, and Buffalo State College received an Innovative Instruction Technology Grant to develop an Open Course to teach faculty how to create open content.

SUNY and Coursera currently have a non-binding non-exclusive contract that was put in place at the request of Stony Brook University. Stony Brook launched its first MOOC on

the Coursera platform on August 29, 2013. The contract also provides mechanisms for SUNY campuses to utilize Coursera course content as part of a SUNY course.

The Contract requires that the SUNY System provide procedures to ensure the quality of courses being offered on the Coursera platform. We are in the process of establishing procedures for that activity.

5. Will Open SUNY be a “new campus?”

Open SUNY will not be a new campus.

6. Will Open SUNY impact residency requirements/policies?

No. Open SUNY will not impact residency requirements.

7. Will degrees be granted by “SUNY” rather than specific campuses?

No. Campuses will offer degrees and will continue to make decisions about what new degrees to offer and which degrees to take online. However, we do plan to work with campuses and provide incentives to offer new online degrees, that will not require the campus offering the courses in the major and the degree, to develop all of the online general education and elective courses necessary to confer a degree. We are currently investigating the most appropriate mechanisms to ensure student financial aid is not impacted. This level of collaboration will require adoption of best practices for faculty development and support, student support, and course quality assurance.

8. How is this initiative different than our current status?

SUNY’s current online environment has been created by the strategic and tactical decisions of individual campuses. SUNY System Administration has supported and subsidized those activities through the SUNY Learning Network (SLN) and other University-wide programs. The result is an environment that is rich in online course offerings and some online degree programs, but poor in cross registration, collaborative programs, and degree ladder opportunities. While campuses will continue to develop and maintain their programs going forward, SUNY System Administration will become more proactive in identifying new online degree, and degree ladder opportunities, through our Strategic Enrollment Management initiative. We will also establish new systems and services so that campuses can more easily partner to deliver online learning opportunities for students. Furthermore, we will look to better leverage, develop and share campus course offerings to generate synergies and provide more seamless instructional pathways for students.

Additionally, the System Administration office will establish rational policies for out-of-state and international tuition for online courses and programs so that our instructional opportunities can be systemically extended beyond New York. Open SUNY also envisions a refreshed suite of student and faculty supports as well as rich “real-world” student experiences like co-operative education and internship opportunities.

Our University-wide programs will be realigned to support these new directions, and we will partner with a SUNY campus or campuses to provide services such as certifications for prior learning assessment (PLA) and degree completion.

9. Will Open SUNY assist my campus with cross-registration and associated financial aid?

The SUNY Office of the Provost is working with System Administration IT Services on an initiative to better integrate the SUNY Student Information Systems (SIS) environment. Plans are being developed to create applications to streamline the student and faculty components of cross registration, and allow staff from the student's home campus to monitor student activities at the host campus.

10. Who are we trying to serve with Open SUNY?

As the public University for New York State, we seek first to serve the citizens and workforce development needs of New York. However, student experiences are always enhanced by the diversity that international and out-of-state students bring to the classroom. Where appropriate, we will utilize our online learning environments to extend SUNY's highly valued learning opportunities to the nation and the world. Open SUNY is particularly interested in serving the more than six million New Yorkers without a post-secondary degree.

11. Are we trying to reduce costs for students through Open SUNY?

Yes, we are looking to reduce costs for students. These savings can come in various forms such as reduction in text book costs to students through the adoption and creation of open education resources. If we can save each of our 469,000 plus students \$30 in textbook costs, we will generate over \$14,000,000 in savings. Online courses also allow students to save on costs associated with commuting and child care. During the Open SUNY development process costs and cost sharing will be reviewed with the goal of creating a rich, rewarding, and affordable experience for all students.

Additionally, we will provide technical platforms and services so that campuses and faculty can openly share the materials and courses they create with learners throughout the world. These open environments will provide free learning opportunities for anyone in the world.

12. Who is going to help train faculty on my campus in online-enabled instruction?

Faculty support services will be a key element of the Open SUNY initiative. Many campuses have organizations that provide such services. University-wide programs such as the SUNY Learning Network and the SUNY Center for Professional Development also provide professional development for online-enabled instruction to many campuses within the SUNY system. Open SUNY will network these University-wide and campus

programs in new ways to improve, extend and enhance faculty supports to create and deliver online-enabled courses.

13. Are we offering courses or content for free?

Yes. Open SUNY will work with faculty and campuses to develop and utilize a variety of Open Education offerings including: Open Education Resources, Open Courseware, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), Open Textbooks and Open Journals.

14. Will our campus Learning Management System be compatible with Open SUNY?

Yes, however, over the course of the next several years we hope to reduce the variety of Learning Management Systems in use by SUNY campuses. This will allow greater efficiencies in development and provision of support services, ease campus collaborations, and provide a more seamless experience for students who are taking courses from multiple SUNY institutions.

15. Will the growth in online courses and programs be part of approved funded enrollment?

When identified through strategic enrollment management, online growth may be considered approvable funded enrollment. Campuses may also want to consider offering online programs on tuition alone recognizing that appropriately managed online programs can be delivered at lower costs than traditional programs. Movement into online environments also allows a campus to diversify their instructional delivery methods, which opens new opportunities to reach non-traditional learners across the education pipeline.

16. How do I make sure that my voice is heard in the development process?

Visit the following page (<http://commons.suny.edu/opensuny>) and tell us what you think!