

E-mail to the Campus Community from OIC Neisser, accepting the recommendations of the realignment plan, dated 3/31/2022:

Dear Colleagues,

I write to provide an update on the status of the academic realignment plan as well as information about other budgetary-related work underway.

I have accepted the recommendations contained in the academic realignment plan, and work proposed in the plan is underway.

The plan remains an internal document for SUNY Potsdam employees. It is not designed for external audiences. I ask you to refrain from publishing the document or otherwise sharing it beyond the confines of the campus, as this could negatively impact our recruitment and retention efforts, one of the key goals of the plan itself.

The conclusions of – and the work put in motion by-- the academic realignment plan are as follows:

- Some academic departments will be merged.
- The faculty of each academic program is tasked with developing innovations (and/or continuing to work on innovations they have underway) that show promise when it comes to contributing to the achievement of a higher retention rate and a higher level of overall enrollment. Those contributions could be in the form of curricular change, course modality change, additional participation in recruitment activities, creation of new recruitment strategies, and/or engagement in new collaborative efforts. The bottom line: our campus needs to both increase the number of students enrolled in our majors and to retain more of those students all the way to degree completion.
- The faculty of each academic program on provisional status is to work with its dean in order to formulate an individualized plan of action for their program. Each dean has the authority to design and approve the enrollment action plans relevant to their School. Each of those plans will outline an individualized path to removal from provisional status.
- Each academic program on provisional status is different from each of the other programs on provisional status. Thus it is to be expected that each program's individualized enrollment action plan will be unique. The formation of each such plan will, moreover, be informed by the detailed information that each academic department submitted as part of the process of creating the academic realignment plan, e.g. the information pertaining to how, course by course, each academic program supports other academic programs, as well as course-by-course enrollment information and alignment to campus mission and goals. I want to emphasize this last point: It is imperative that any evaluation of academic program performance – including any cost-benefit analysis – be based on all of the relevant information.

While the study phase of the academic realignment process is now finalized, the work that needs to be done is far from over. That work, moreover, needs to be done by all academic departments and all non-academic divisions. Finally, that work is urgent.

The good news is that the College is making progress when it comes to addressing its difficult budgetary situation. Many initiatives have been launched and numerous promising recruitment-related events have been held. For example:

- On the academic side, online versions of several existing programs are under development, the College has reinvigorated – and is looking to possibly expand – its partnership with JCC, the SUNY Language Consortium has been launched, the Second Chance Pell program is up and running, and the President’s Council has recently affirmed the creation of a new Student Retention Steering Committee, with that group inclusive both of individuals in Academic Affairs and individuals from other college divisions.
- On the non-academic side, Knowles Hall will not be occupied in 2022-2023 (except for the period in January when the College serves as the home of the Athlete Village for the World University Games), and that will reduce expenditures on our Physical Facilities. In response to changing campus needs, PACES Dining Services will consolidate locations and operations for the 2022-23 academic year. The intentional prioritization of classroom technologies and the new print management policy will provide further savings in the coming years. The Admissions Team has taken a number of steps to improve how the College engages in recruitment, including the implementation of a new design for Accepted Students Day and the return of Multicultural Weekend. Finally, the College Communications team has launched several new targeted marketing efforts.

Thank you for your time reading this, for your support of this effort, and for what you do each and every day for our students.

Yours,
Phil