

Academic Process and Structure Community Forum

FEEDBACK SUMMARY

Academic Process and Structure Working Group
MARCH 2024

Introduction

The Academic Process and Structure Working Group held its first meeting on November 13th. It began its work by reviewing the charge and discussing potential processes for the project. Over the next several weeks, the working group reviewed available school data provided by Decision Support, previous strategic planning community feedback, and results of an earlier survey regarding academic naming conventions and structure. Following this review, the working group identified several processes and structural barriers. It created two possible alternative models as a starting point for the community conversation held.

On January 29, 2024 the Academic Process and Structure Working Group hosted a [community forum](#) for the purposes of sharing an overview of the group's work and to provide opportunities for community input. A recording of the presentation and related documents were posted to the [project page](#). Aligning to its charge, the working group introduced multiple venues for feedback. These included breakout sessions immediately following the presentation, an anonymous survey based on the presentation, and ten facilitated listening sessions. This document presents a summary analysis of the feedback obtained through each of these channels.

Post Forum Breakout Rooms

Immediately following the Academic Process and Structure Working Group presentation, forum participants were randomly assigned to breakout rooms for discussion moderated by members of the working group. There were five breakout rooms hosting between forty and fifty participants each. At least two working group members were assigned to each room to serve as a primary facilitator and a session notetaker. Sessions were *not* recorded, and speaker identities were not captured discussions notes. The following overarching themes emerged from review of notes taken.

- Problems within the current model are unclear.
- More data and analysis are needed to support consideration of structural changes.
- The community is experiencing change fatigue.
- A cost-benefit analysis should be pursued.
- Naming conventions should be examined.
- There were concerns about the composition of colleges as presented, including potential cultural and employee impacts.
- There is a distinction between examining alternative structures and implementing new structures.
- Opportunities to strengthen existing structures that should be considered.
- The timeline associated with this work is insufficient.

Community Forum Follow Up Survey

An anonymous, 12-question survey was distributed through a community wide announcement, including links to the presentation recording and related materials.

The survey was comprised of scaled items intended to assess levels of agreement as to whether the models presented could support the reduction or elimination of barriers described in the presentation, as well as whether models could help advance strategic objectives associated with Office of Academic Affairs' Strategic Plan. Responses were captured using a five-point scale where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither disagree nor agree, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree. A not applicable option was also available.

Four open-ended questions asked:

- *What types of opportunities could emerge from our implementation of Model 1 or Model 2?*
- *What are the potential unintended consequences of Model 1 or Model 2?*
- *In your opinion, what are the best aspects of the current model?*

- Do you have other recommendations for the working group to consider?

There were 247 responses collected of which 42% (n=104) qualified complete responses. Survey Monkey deems that a response is ‘complete’ if at least one item is answered, and the respondent clicks ‘done’ at the end of the survey. The analysis that follows is based exclusively on qualified responses.

More than two-thirds of the respondents affiliated with the Office of Academic Affairs (69.3%, n=72). Of the remainder, 7.7% (n=8) were affiliated with the Office of Enrollment Management and Marketing, 4.8% (n=5) identified with either the Office of Administration and Finance, the Office of Advancement, the Office of Communications, or the Office of Integrated Technologies. In addition, 18.3% of responses did not identify a division and selected the option “Prefer not to state” (n=19).

Quantitative Findings

Quantitative analysis on scaled items focused on model comparison, excluding all “non-applicable” responses. As a result, the number of responses referenced below ranged from 81 to 90. Tables that display item response counts and response percentages by agreement category for Model 1 and Model 2 appear below. Response categories were collapsed from five to three categories to support ease of interpretation. Points one (strongly disagree) and two (disagree) were combined into the ‘disagree’ category, while points four (agree) and five (strongly agree) were combined into the ‘agree’ category. Point three (neither disagree nor agree) represented a neutral category.

Wilcoxon signed-rank tests were used to compare model ratings within paired responses. Paired responses are those that included an agreement rating for *both* Model 1 and Model 2 (excluding “not applicable” responses). Results indicate the extent that the total responses for any scaled item yielded higher ratings for Model 1, higher ratings for Model 2, or equivalent ratings for each model (expressed as ties).

In general, more respondents rated Model 1 and Model 2 equivalently, meaning that *neither* Model 1 *nor* Model 2 garnered higher levels of agreement. Of those who *did* rate one model higher than the other, Model 2 was preferred on 14 out of 19 questions using an agreement scale. There were three statistically significant differences at the 0.05 level. Two of the three involved the barriers Accreditation and Student Pathways, and the third concerned Objective 1 subsumed within the Academic and Inclusive Excellence strategic priority area: *Strengthen the quality, breadth, and currency of degrees, certificates, and other learning opportunities to meet the needs of students, employers, and communities.*

Barriers

Survey respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that Model 1 (five colleges) and/or Model 2 (four colleges) could help reduce the barriers identified. Item response counts and percentages based on by agreement rating for each model appear in Table 1.

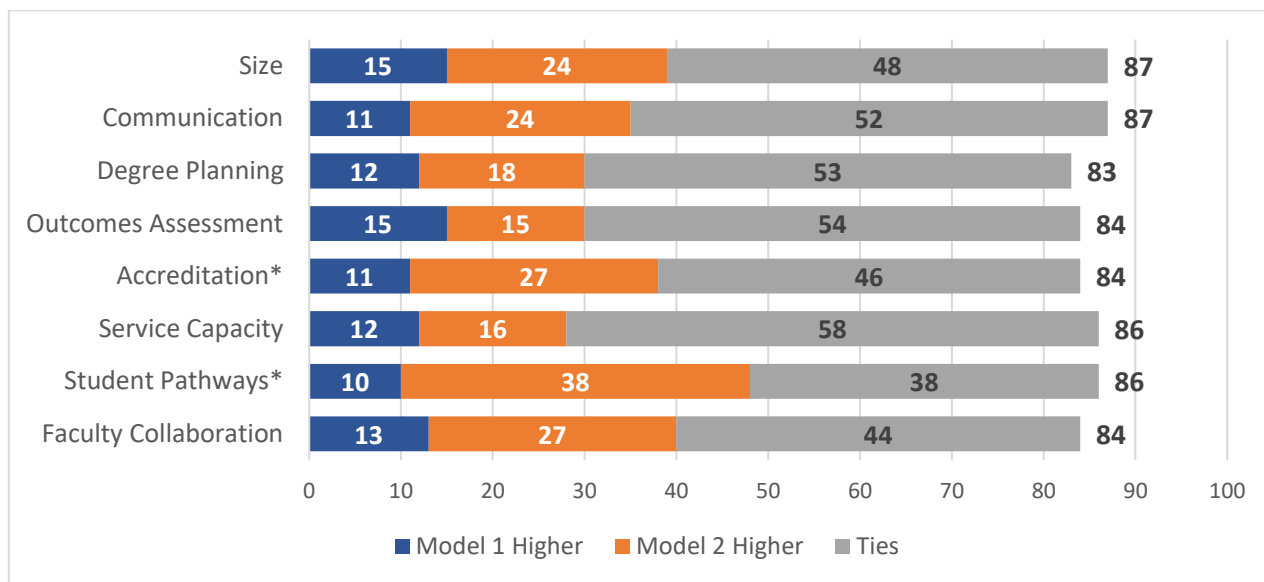
Table 1. “Barrier” Item Response Percentages by Collapsed Agreement Categories

Barriers	Model 1				Model 2			
	n	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	n	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
Size	87	41.2%	29.4%	29.4%	87	40.5%	21.4%	38.1%
Communication	88	49.4%	19.5%	31.0%	87	33.3%	13.8%	52.9%
Degree Planning	84	26.1%	22.7%	51.1%	83	29.1%	22.1%	48.8%
Outcomes Assessment	85	49.4%	24.7%	25.9%	85	40.7%	19.8%	39.5%
Accreditation	85	40.0%	20.0%	40.0%	86	45.9%	18.8%	35.3%
Service Capacity	88	42.9%	21.4%	35.7%	86	43.4%	20.5%	36.1%
Student Pathways	87	45.5%	22.7%	31.8%	87	43.7%	17.2%	39.1%
Faculty Collaboration	85	33.3%	31.0%	35.6%	84	36.8%	21.8%	41.4%

Figure 1 visualizes the extent that respondents rated Model 1 higher, Model 2 higher, or rated both models equivalently (expressed as a tie). The analysis was based on item responses that included an agreement rating for *both* Model 1 and Model 2. If an individual response included an agreement rating for one model but a blank or N/A response for Model 2 – that response was excluded analysis. There were between 83 and 87 paired responses addressing each barrier.

More than half of the responses were ties for all but one of the “barrier” items (Student Pathways). Among those responses that classified one of the models higher, more than twice the number of respondents favored Model 2’s ability to support reduction of Accreditation barriers (27 vs. 11) over Model 1; and respondents favored Model 2 three times more than the number of respondents favoring Model 1’s ability to support reduction of Student Pathways barriers over Model 1 (38 vs. 10). These differences were statistically significant at the .05 level.

Figure 1. Respondent Counts Based on Higher Agreement with Model 1, Model 2, or Model Ties, “Barrier” Items



* Denotes statistically significant differences at the 0.05 level.

Student Success

Survey respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that Model 1 (five colleges) and/or Model 2 (four colleges) could support the Office of Academic Affairs’ ability to advance the strategic objectives related to the Elevate ‘28’s priority area: Student Success.

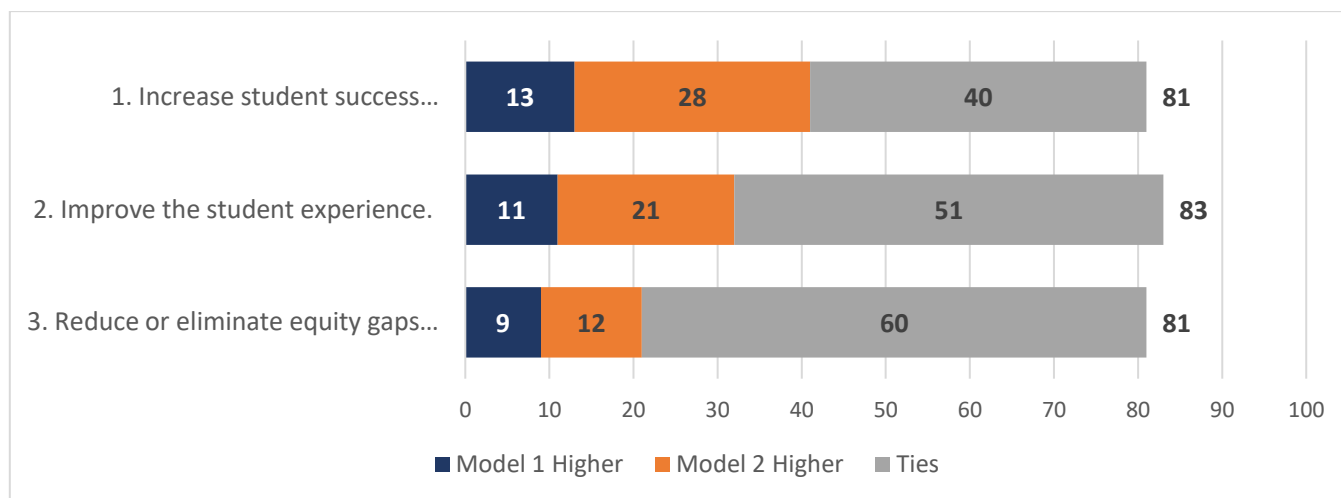
Item response counts and percentages based on by agreement rating for each model appear in Table 2. The highest ratings for each item/model combination feature bold type.

Table 2. “Student Success Objective” Item Response Percentages by Collapsed Agreement Categories

Student Success Objectives	Model 1				Model 2			
	n	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	n	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
1. Increase student success...	82	35.4%	42.7%	22.0%	81	38.3%	39.5%	22.2%
2. Improve the student experience.	84	36.9%	33.3%	29.8%	83	37.3%	28.9%	33.7%
3 Reduce or eliminate equity gaps...	82	41.5%	26.8%	31.7%	81	38.3%	21.0%	40.7%

Between 80 and 83 paired model responses were identified for the three strategic objectives presented. Figure 2 visualizes the extent that respondents rated either Model 1 or Model 2 higher, versus how many times ratings were tied. Irrespective of the objective, 50% or more of the item level responses did not favor either model, however, of those that did – Model 2 was consistently higher than Model 1. There were no statistically significant differences detected.

Figure 2. Respondent Counts Based on Higher Agreement with Model 1, Model 2, or Model Ties, “Student Success Objective” Items



Academic and Inclusive Excellence

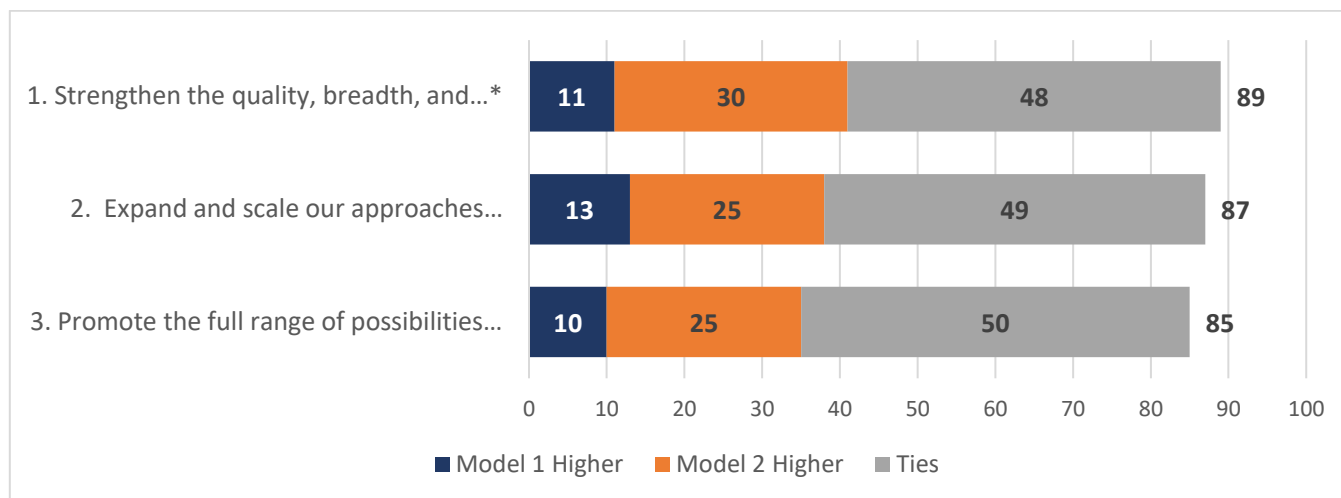
Item response counts and percentages based on by agreement rating for each model appear in Table 3. The highest ratings for each item/model combination feature bold type.

Table 3. “Academic and Inclusive Excellence” Item Response Percentages by Collapsed Agreement Categories

Academic and Inclusive Excellence Objectives	Model 1			Model 2				
	n	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	n	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
1. Strengthen the quality, breadth, and currency...	90	36.0%	34.9%	29.1%	89	35.3%	25.9%	38.8%
2. Expand and scale our approaches...	88	38.6%	29.5%	31.8%	87	41.4%	19.5%	39.1%
3. Promote the full range of possibilities...	86	42.2%	30.0%	27.8%	85	40.4%	18.0%	41.6%

There were between 85 and 89 paired responses to items concerning strategic objectives within the Academic and Inclusive Excellence priority area. Figure 3 visualizes the extent that respondents rated Model 1 or Model 2 higher, or how many times ratings were tied. Irrespective of the objective, 50% or more of the item level responses did not favor either model, however, of those that did – Model 2 was consistently higher than Model 1. A statistically significant difference was detected in the ratings between models for objective 1: *Strengthen the quality, breadth, and currency of degrees, certificates, and other learning opportunities to meet the needs of students, employers, and communities.*

Figure 3. Respondent Counts Based on Higher Agreement with Model 1, Model 2, or Model Ties, “Academic and Inclusive Excellence Objective” Items



* Denotes statistically significant differences at the 0.05 level.

Organizational Effectiveness

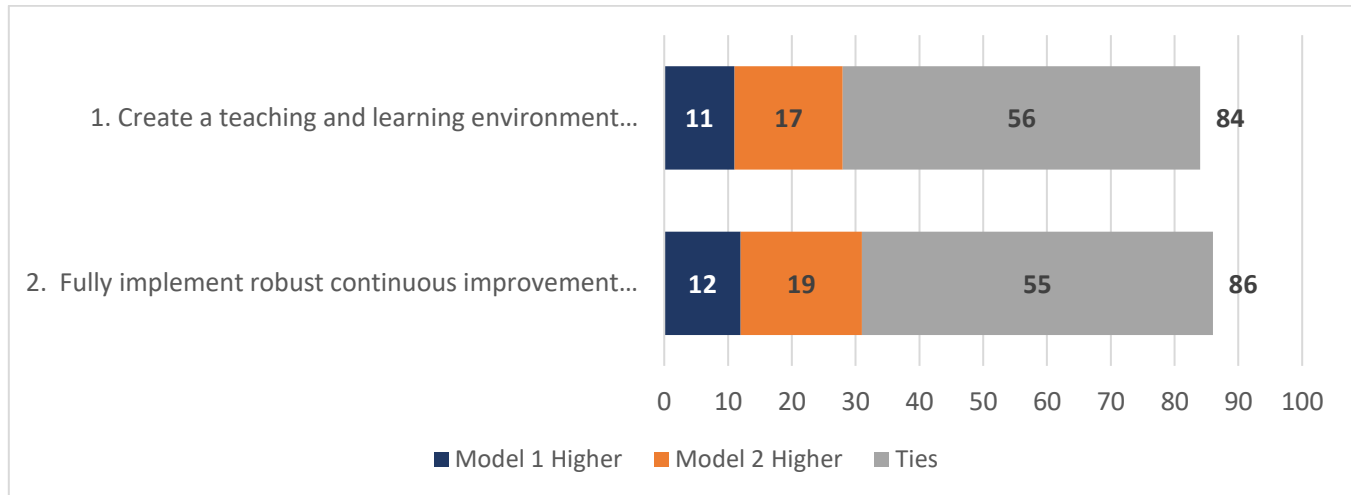
The Organizational Effectiveness priority area includes two objectives. Item response counts and percentages based on by agreement rating for each model appear in Table 4. The highest ratings for each item/model combination feature bold type.

Table 4. “Organizational Effectiveness” Item Response Percentages by Collapsed Agreement Categories

Organizational Effectiveness Objectives	Model 1			Model 2				
	n	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	n	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
1. Create a teaching and learning environment...	84	35.6%	33.3%	31.0%	85	37.9%	28.7%	33.3%
2. Fully implement robust continuous improvement processes...	87	37.6%	36.5%	25.9%	87	41.2%	28.2%	30.6%

There were 84 paired responses to Objective 1: *Create a teaching and learning environment that fosters mutual respect, advances clear communication, and engenders a culture of belonging, trust, and inclusivity*; and 86 paired responses for the item concerning objective 2: *Fully implement robust continuous improvement processes and effectiveness tracking across the division*. Figure 4 visualizes the extent that respondents rated Model 1 or Model 2 higher, or how many times ratings were tied. Irrespective of the objective, 50% or more of the item level responses did not favor either model, however, of those that did – Model 2 was higher relative to Model 1 in each instance. No statistically significant differences detected.

Figure 4. Respondent Counts Based on Higher Agreement with Model 1, Model 2, or Model Ties, “Organizational Effectiveness Objective” Items



Raising Our Public Profile

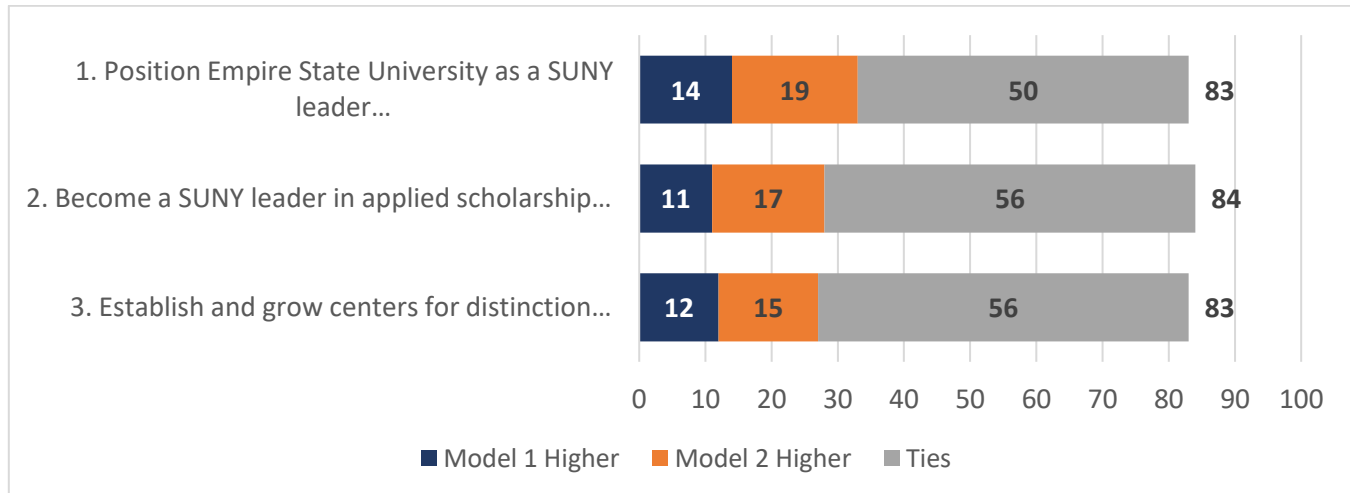
Three strategic objectives are subsumed under the Raising Our Public Profile priority area. Item response counts and percentages based on by agreement rating for each model appear in Table 5. The highest ratings for each item/model combination feature bold type.

Table 5. “Raising Our Public Profile” Item Response Percentages by Collapsed Agreement Categories

Raising Our Public Profile Objectives	Model 1			Model 2				
	n	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	n	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
1. Position Empire State University as a SUNY leader...	85	28.2%	47.1%	24.7%	83	38.6%	33.7%	27.7%
2. Become a SUNY leader in applied scholarship and creative activities.	85	30.6%	45.9%	23.5%	84	34.5%	39.3%	26.2%
3. Establish and grow centers for distinction...	85	32.9%	37.6%	29.4%	83	37.3%	31.3%	31.3%

Between 83 and 84 complete responses were collected each objective. Figure 5 visualizes the extent that respondents rated Model 1 or Model 2 higher, or how many times ratings were tied. Irrespective of the objective, 50% or more of the item level responses did not favor either model, however, of those that did – Model 2 was consistently higher than Model 1. No statistically significant differences detected.

Figure 5. Respondent Counts Based on Higher Agreement with Model 1, Model 2, or Model Ties, “Raising Our Public Profile” Items



Qualitative Findings

There were between 73 and 80 responses to the open-ended questions. Irrespective of the question, sentiments expressing interest in further clarification were pervasive, particularly as it pertains to the following:

- The process and substance of the rationale for structural change
- The coherence of models
- The pace/magnitude of change
- The timing of this endeavor relative to the provost search
- The anticipated impact of structural change on employees and workplace climate

A brief synopsis of other themes emerging from each question appear below, followed by verbatim examples retrieved from the survey data.

What types of opportunities could emerge from our implementation of Model 1 (five colleges) or Model 2 (four colleges)? (72 responses)

Responses suggest there are perceptions about opportunities that could emerge through structural change in terms of **communication**, **processes**, **synergies**, **collaboration**, and **alignment** to external standards.

Streamline communication processes, programming, and enrollment between under and grad.

Making a more standard institution makes it easier for outside audiences to understand us and support us. Having colleges opens the opportunity to find donors who would like to name the colleges after themselves. Utilization of our full range of academic expertise across UG and Grad

Increased faculty collaboration within specialty areas for research, grants, program development, etc. (both models). Smoother transitions for students in combined programs or moving from undergraduate to graduate programs (model 2). Greater opportunities for undergraduate faculty to teach graduate courses and vice versa (model 2). Tenure and promotion review by colleagues in field for (model 2).

What are the potential unintended consequences of Model 1 (five colleges) or Model 2 (four colleges)? (74 responses)

Responses to this question indicate concern about the **negative impacts** of implementing alternative models, primarily with respect to **staffing, workplace climate, culture, and change fatigue**.

1) Even greater distrust between faculty and administration. 2) A rushed or chaotic implementation could make lack of consistency across units even worse.

The challenges and disruption of going through another restructuring so soon after the last one. People yet again experiencing the loss of community - it took a long time for faculty and staff to feel a sense of belonging in departments and schools rather than in their locations. The potential for the college leaders to have less expertise in some of the areas under their purview.

You are introducing more change into a system that has already more change. We are fatigued and you fail to consider what the long-term consequences are of this 'restructuring'.

There were also some model-specific concerns.

Model 1 would perpetuate the undergrad/grad divide to the detriment of both students and faculty who would like access to cohesive communication and collaborations in their areas of teaching and research.

Model 2 unintended consequences: creates new siloes for students who complete an undergraduate degree in one college and are interested in a graduate degree in another college; the pairing of departments and programs does not support academic disciplines and relevance/expectations in the workforce; does not solve the program of adequate resources to balance size of departments - uneven with enrollments and faculty/staff resources; does not include international programs.

Model #2 means that the graduate program is less integrated and graduate students potentially have smaller groups of colleagues.

In your opinion, what are the best aspects of our current model? (71 responses)

Sentiments about the current model were favorable. There was evident appeal in the **academic coherence** and **familiarity** of the current model, and interest in **improvement of the current model** as opposed to wholesale structural change.

The best aspect is that we are familiar with it, we can improve the way we work together now instead of starting from scratch and learning a new model. A new model at this time would really disrupt too much of the good things that are already working.

It is working. We are seeing growth. We can address communication, educational planning, and UG-Grad pathways in the present. I think it would be more productive and effective to enhance those aspects in our current model than to restructure.

We can improve the current model with modest changes in systems, communication, and resource allocation.

Do you have other recommendations for the working group to consider?

Responses to this question reiterated overarching themes referenced previously, including the desire for more clarification about the **impetus and rationale** for exploring alternative structures, in addition to concern about the **timing** and **urgency** of the group's deadline. Specific recommendations included references to further examination

of the **disciplinary composition** of colleges, **evaluation and analysis of barriers, processes, and models**, as well as examination of the **external environment**.

1. SMT is a registered program with the state, and as such cannot be broken apart as in the models presented. 2. A hold on making any decision on change of structure for at least 1.5 years 3. No attempts have been made to adjust the current model. 4. Math, Computer Science & Technology, and Natural Sciences departments should all be in the same college/unit 5. College 1 in both models are too varied in membership to result in the desired synergies and program support systems 6. Premise/motivation for proposed changes unsubstantiated

Better opportunities with Model 2 with a few changes that committee might consider to align the programs with academic discipline where they fits the best A. Move Mathematics and Natural Sciences from College 1 to college 3. B. Move MA in Community and Economic Development from College 1 to college 4. C. Move Child and Family Studies from College 3 to college 4 D. Move Social Science and Public Affairs from College 4 to college 1.

Recommendations: 1. rethink if the barriers are due to structure. Many of the barriers and problems cited are due to challenges with process. 2. the challenge with outcomes assessment is more a function of not having a position that supports schools in their process. The new hire in this position could be charged with this role and a structure change is not required. There are positive examples that could be scaled. 3. challenges with degree planning is less a function of the structure and more about skills of individuals in those roles. Policies, practices, and professional development that are clearly articulated would go a long way with improvements. There are examples that are working in difference schools that could be scaled. 4. communication - the number of schools does not impact information delivery. Schools communicate very effectively with their constituents. Improved communication could result from review of policies and procedures that are long outdated and in need of revision; as well as more frequent town halls where the entire university community is involved. 5. barriers for faculty collaboration - there are numerous examples of cross role/discipline/functional collaboration. There are several examples of faculty that serve on hiring committees outside of their own department/school; and faculty that work on research projects, grants, etc. This may be more of a perceived barrier from individuals and not one based in actuality. 6. there are certain barriers for student pathways, and I don't always think these are due to the structure of academic programs. Many of these barriers could be improved from the process side of things - closer relationship with recruiters and OEM so they understand the different programs; having specific recruiters specialize in certain programs so they are more expert on those rather than the expectation they know everything we offer in great detail; having more resources imbedded in schools rather than having OEM completely separate from OAA and in competition with one another for resources. 7. identification of accurate data and tracking systems and tools are a must. The number of students in a school/program is one way of looking at a model but that is not representative of reality - data reports are not representative of programs, certificate, micro credentials, and course enrollments that support other schools and departments' programs. The proposed models still have major discrepancies with number of students served and resources required to run efficiently. 8. consider how international programs factors into these models. Faculty are asked to teach in these programs and schools are not adequately resourced because it's treated separately.

Listening Sessions

During the week after survey data collection ended, the working group hosted ten moderated listening sessions. Sessions were managed using a standard approach. One of the committee co-chairs was present as for each

session and managed the facilitator role, while two working group members observed and took notes. During each session, the facilitator began with a standard introduction and preamble that reiterated 1) the working group’s charge and 2) points made by the President during the [February 9, 2024 Senate meeting](#) emphasizing the process (vs. pre-determined outcome).

Participants were asked to consider what the working group needs to know about:

- *positive aspects of our current model*
- *barriers (identified or not identified in the presentation)*
- *models (as stated, suggested variations, etc.)*

Session attendee counts are featured in Table 6. A total of 494 university employees (faculty, professional employees, and support staff) attended the sessions.

Table 6. Listening Sessions by Date/Time, Facilitator and Number of Session Attendees

Session	Date/Time	Facilitator	Attendees
Arts & Humanities	February 14; 1-2pm	Rob Sanders	24
Business	February 12; 11-12pm	Seana Logsdon	44
Human Services	February 12; 3-4pm	Seana Logsdon	36
Science, Math, and Technology	February 13; 3-4pm	Rob Sanders	18
Social and Behavioral Sciences	February 14; 3-4pm	Rob Sanders	27
Graduate Studies	February 14; 1-2pm	Seana Logsdon	59
Nursing and Allied Health	February 12; 10-11am	Seana Logsdon	21
HVALS	February 16; 11-12pm	Rob Sanders	15
Professional Conference	February 15; 2-3pm	Rob Sanders	146
Support Staff Conference	February 15; 2-3pm	Seana Logsdon	104
Total			494

Overarching Themes

Notes taken during each session were made available to all members of the working group for review and were the basis of further discussion and analysis. Overarching themes followed by school and conference session summaries appear below.

The session notes demonstrate consistent critical **questioning and uncertainty** about the process including the **rationale, timing, and pace** of this work, intertwined with pervasive concern about **negative impacts and capacity** to undergo significant structural change. Concerns stemmed from uncertainty about **staffing models and structures**, damage to **workplace climate and culture**, and **change fatigue**.

Questions posed during listening sessions were primarily centered on understanding 1) the rationale for organizational change, 2) evidence that substantiates the structural change, 3) the merit of structural change as a means of addressing process related barriers, 4) the differentiation between process and structure as it relates to models, 5) why structural changes are being considered prior to the selection, hire and onboarding of a new provost, 6) analysis of impact, and 7) expectations of working group’s charge and corresponding timeline for completion.

Session participants voiced concerns with uncertainty about how implementation of structural changes would impact staffing models and roles. In addition, there were concerns about the likelihood for adverse impacts to

departments or schools through either of the alternative models presented to the community (e.g., HVALS, SONAH, and SGS). Points made in each listening session are summarized below.

Session Themes

Arts and Humanities (24 attendees)

Listening session participants from the School of Arts and Humanities expressed concerns about the models presented and their impact on departments as well as the Harry Van Arsdale School of Labor Studies and the School of Nursing and Allied Health and their respective students. There was also concern about the dissolution of the School for Graduate Studies.

There were also sentiments expressed suggesting uncertainty about how new models would address any of the identified barriers. Participants explained that the absence of unifying systems and technology presents a more significant barrier than how schools are organized. Further, lack of confidence in the administration, and problems with trust were also cited as barriers.

Participants wanted to understand why any changes were being discussed prior to the installation of a new provost, and what the staffing implications will be for professional employees within each school. They felt a new structure was immaterial to successfully addressing the barriers identified and that the current structure does not present an impediment to the implementation of Elevate '28.

There was discussion about unsustainable workload levels, risk for losing what makes the institution unique, the benefits of individualized degree programs, and uncertain impacts on program development.

Business (44 attendees)

Comments made during the listening session with the School of Business reiterated support for the faculty conference resolution passed at the February Senate meeting. There were also remarks about items in the resolution that were not directly addressed by the President such as workplace climate and capacity for such momentous change (relevance of change fatigue), and the rationale for change (e.g., clarity about what “problems” we are trying to fix).

Session participants further discussed concerns about trust and climate, reiterating that the perceived absence of clear, substantiated problems raises issues with trust and respect, with trust being essential for “buy-in;” and the perception that structural change would result in serious, negative impacts on climate. Session attendees advised consideration for the opportunities that are present with the current model, that issues with the current structure should be addressed prior to advancing any major changes, and that the strength of the current model is connection.

Human Services (36 attendees)

Listening session participants from the school of Human Services referenced the highly effective and collaborative working dynamic within the school, the caliber of work being done with respect to program assessment and speculated whether similar approaches could be adopted in other schools. If the current format supports the strategic plan, then what motive is there to change? Why not address issues with the current model?

Participants noted the distinction between “process” and “structure” in that it is possible to modify processes but changing structures does not automatically guarantee the desired outcome. There were concerns about the timing of this work relative to the provost search, the pace of change and uncertainty about how a structural change would impact those in faculty, professional employee, or support staff roles. Participants voiced concern for unintended or unanticipated consequences and the impacts of change fatigue.

Participants articulated concerns about enrollment related data the working group referenced, and uncertainty about how courses utilized in other programs would be affected by proposed models. It was suggested that combining Human Services with Human Development, Public Affairs and Criminal Justice was more logical than combining with Nursing.

Science, Math, and Technology (18 attendees)

Participants in the Science, Math, and Technology (SMT) listening session expressed that there was no compelling reason for restructuring, and existing barriers or problems could be resolved in other ways. There were comments about the legitimacy of the barriers presented and the evidence used to identify them. Further, what exploration about what is working well and how any of the problems identified could be resolved prior to proposing any type of restructure?

There were references to the negative impacts of previous organizational change (ESC 2.0) and the management of changes made recently and/or currently underway has negatively affected workplace climate, work/life balance and trust. As with the other sessions, there were concerns about the timing of this work relative to the provost search, and the perceived rush.

Participants had specific concerns about how the models presented disbanded the area of study and felt it was imperative that SMT remain intact. It is a registered program with the New York State Education Department. Further, splitting up their departments would not be helpful, as STEM is a field. It would cause problems and confusion for students and external audiences. For example, if a student desires to pursue graduate study in computer science but their degree is in under a business school, what type of problems would that cause?

Participants remarked on the need to evaluate whether and how the array of recent changes (for example, department chairs, area coordinators, reduced part-time lines, and the first term advising pilot) has impacted current structures. Further, how would a restructure introduce opportunities? There was contention that working group should consider budgetary impacts, and how to address 'real' barriers; concern that alternative models would result in degree plans being reviewed by people without the background to support it.

Social and Behavioral Sciences (27 attendees)

Participants in the Social and Behavioral Sciences listening session questioned the necessity for change, and whether existing obstacles could be addressed through the current structure. They also questioned the timing, pace, and methodology of the process relative to the significance of the outcome and relative to other significant recent and ongoing institutional changes.

Participants questioned how alternative models would affect the university's commitment to mentoring. Are there other ways the generalist mentoring model could be addressed? It has been discussed over the years, but no significant changes have been made around it. Combined programs are another issue – does the model need to shift to combine grad/undergrad, or could it simply be solved with a designated person to help answer questions and shepherd students across programs? Additionally, there were questions about whether and how the things that work well currently are being highlighted and integrated into new models.

Graduate Studies (59 attendees)

Participants in the School for Graduate Studies (SGS) listening session described timing (relative to provost search), pace (seems rushed), and rationale (few merits and little justification) for an organizational restructure. There were references to the lack of employee will for prior changes, lack of support for what's been proposed thus far, absence of dialogue and discussion, and the fact that implementation of the department chair role remains in flux.

There was sentiment that any attempt to merge graduate and undergraduate schools would be problematic. It would not solve problems with integrated programs and would be detrimental for workload. Graduate faculty are very busy and there would be limited to no capacity for them to teach at the undergraduate level. There were perceptions that merging would undermine enrollment growth and new program development. There are policy, process, and systems distinctions between the undergraduate and graduate schools that should be considered; and a community of practice within SGS that encourages research. If the levels were merged, it would have a defocusing effect that would be disruptive.

Other remarks spoke about lack of consideration for culture and the need to keep students in the forefront of any changes.

Professionals and staff expressed concern for feeling overshadowed by faculty in this process. There are concerns of the unknown, not knowing where they will go and who they will work for. Concerns are based on past practices and lived experience.

School of Nursing and Allied Health (21 attendees)

School of Nursing and Allied Health (SONAH) participants expressed their understanding about organizational restructure within organized health care settings and articulated that clarity about the rationale for any change is critical for communal understanding. Is it because of the budget? Efficiency? Much of the discussion specifically focused on the success of SONAH and the merits of maintaining SONAH's current structure.

SONAH exists in support of nursing as a profession and is not just an academic model. The integration of undergraduate and graduate level programs in SONAH enables holistic student advising and supports with maximum efficiency. They provide great service; working with students from the beginning of their program and understanding who and where they are and provide them with solid support. The curriculum is scaffolded with appropriate redundancy of content and is intricately mapped to standards of the profession and accrediting bodies. One curriculum body oversees both undergraduate and graduate curriculum and faculty are healthcare professionals with content expertise in their respective areas.

With respect to accreditation, SONAH would not automatically or necessarily lose accreditation, but there are risks. Some risks include being recognized within the community of nursing. Not being identified as a school may be perceived as a red flag suggesting there is something "lesser" in the program. It could affect our relationship with our clinical partners, that we work with for our student experiences. It could also affect partnerships with the community colleges, and potential students, and future funding, etc. Accreditation concerns are different between the schools. For example, there may be programs that have accreditation at one level but not the other, or another accrediting body that requires both UG and Grad levels.

From a marketing standpoint a school has advantages over departments in terms of attracting future students, alumni endowments, and grants. Additionally, the BS in Allied Health is growing. We are developing a BS in Respiratory Care that will grow and develop a BS in Nutrition and Dietetics that will grow. These have secondary accreditors that appreciate the current structure to serve our students.

There appears to be some confusion about the leadership and organizational structure within SONAH. There is no department chair or area coordinator role within SONAH, rather, there is a dean and program director. This distinction creates confusion with respect to how people communicate about or within SONAH.

If there were a scenario where SONAH was split by level, there is concern about how that would be reflected operationally and in supervisory structures.

Harry Van Arsdale School of Labor Studies (15 attendees)

Participants in the Harry Van Arsdale School of Labor Studies (HVALS) had serious concerns that an organizational restructure which entails that HVALS become absorbed or subsumed within another college would be detrimental. Participants expressed concern that such a change undermines the school's history, reputation, culture, and cache with external audiences. HVALS has a long history of partnerships with unions (e.g., IBEW Local No. 3) and there was concern that structural changes would threaten those relationships, threaten new partnership opportunities and enrollment growth opportunities. Partnerships with unions are a visible statement and endorsement of the school (versus other institutions) and it carries significant social, political, and cultural capital.

HVALS depends on the academic coherence and control they have over the curriculum, as well as autonomy regarding instructor and staff hiring with specific expertise in labor that is required to support their curriculum and unique student population. Session attendees suggested school composition be based on context of their disciplines and market.

Participants contended that this is a "process in search of a problem," and that it is unclear what barriers truly exist, what problems new models would solve, and questioned the timing relative to the provost search.

Participants also referenced change fatigue and speculated whether a reorganization is a way to get rid of people. There were also comments about the absence of dialogue in the process.

Professional Conference (146 attendees)

Professional employees (PEs) had concerns regarding how this structural change could impact their role(s) and work processes at SUNY Empire. PEs articulated concerns about the lack of consideration taken regarding their roles in a realigned university. Questions were posed regarding what the Director of Academic Review role would be in this change. Information Technology (IT) expressed concerns from a resourcing perspective and asked that there be consideration for changes needed on the back end (programming, jobs, etc.) to reflect a new structure. Similarly, would these structural changes have unforeseen consequences that may impact Brightspace, accessibility and instructional design?

Many questions surround the idea of an undergraduate and graduate combined structure. What is the process for such change? How will communications processes be handled? Are there positions that must be reevaluated and how will one know if their position is at stake? PEs expressed concern over the merge of HVALS into other schools and fear a potential loss of corporation and public partnerships at the cost of such change.

PEs had questions for the committee regarding the timeline, or lack thereof. Repeated calls arose for a more specific timeline as well as concerns around the timing of such change when there is an ongoing Provost search. They warned of change fatigue. They wished to see more data that supports the need for this change and the barriers stated in the earlier presentation.

Support Staff Conference (104 attendees)

Some support staff members expressed support for the current structure, but also expressed that change is necessary to remain current with the external environment and effectively meet the needs of our students. Having undergraduate and programs collocated in the same unit seemed logical and in alignment with how other institutions are structured. Nevertheless, the logistics of implementation would be complicated.

There was questioning and speculation about the pace of change and how the new provost will be involved. There was also uncertainty about implementation and potential impacts of any restructure – for example, on recruitment, admissions, student services, and support staff roles.

Statements were made about communication being a significant source of concern and that there are differences between communication and communicating. Support staff are often able to help students navigate processes and

guide them to appropriate resources, thus understanding changes is critical to their ability to effectively support students. There needs to be mindfulness about the communication of changes and *how* changes are communicated.

Participants made points about anticipated negative impacts on staffing and workplace climate and expressed strong desire to be engaged in decisions that impact their roles, versus being moved without consultation or evaluation of strengths and fit for alternative roles.