

March 26, 2018

To: Faculty Senate Academic Standards and Policies Committee  
CC Faculty Senate Executive Committee  
From: Andy Workman, Provost and Senior Vice President  
RE: Request for information on the School of Continuing Studies

Over the past several years, the Faculty Senate has requested and received information about the School of Continuing Studies (SCS) numerous times. During this period, the school has undergone rapid improvement and expansion. Past practices in SCS left something to be desired and so a great deal had to be done to ensure that it offers a quality program and was able to take opportunities to move beyond the dated procedures and practices that characterized the old model. In the 2012-2013 academic year, the Faculty Senate formed the Continuing Studies *Ad Hoc* Committee and charged it with reporting on a number of issues and concerns about SCS. An initial overview of the changes produced by Jamie Scurry in November 2012 is included here (Attachment A) as is the committee's report delivered in April 2013 (Attachment B). The Committee concluded, "it did not uncover or discover any major issues or concerns in the operational or administrative aspects of the school and supports their future efforts." Since that time, questions have arisen over the curricular approval and faculty appointment practices of the school. A new curricular process was developed in the 2014-2015 academic year (see Attachment C). In the spring of 2016, Dean Jamie Scurry visited the Faculty Senate to discuss SCS and respond to questions. Her remarks were well received and she was applauded for her work with the school. In the fall of 2017, questions were again raised and your committee has been charged with producing a report to answer them. It is entirely appropriate for the Faculty Senate to be concerned about the curriculum and practices at SCS, but it is also important to know that the school has responded to its questions and concerns on many occasions and so is part of an ongoing dialogue.

Despite the many successful efforts to inform the Senate, continued concerns about the SCS are understandable because of the differences between it and the schools on the Bristol campus. The undergraduate program in Bristol is designed for a traditional age population of residential students who attend classes, for the most part, during a nine-month period stretching from late August to mid-May. Its admissions cycle is keyed to this timeframe, as are nearly all administrative processes at the University. Bristol's academic programs tend to change slowly with only a few added each year. The Bristol student population is relatively affluent,

predominantly white, and drawn mainly from the northeast with the largest number of students coming from Massachusetts and Connecticut. The SCS, on the other hand, offers a much wider variety of programs and learning formats. These range from Associates and Bachelor degrees, the paralegal and EMT programs, single course offerings for current high school students, non-degree training programs for schools, governmental agencies and private industry, and much else. Consequently, its student body includes those in high school, active duty military personnel and veterans, other adult degree completers many of whom are working full-time jobs and is quite racially and ethnically diverse. Delivery of its courses and other offerings is in classrooms at the Providence campus, at client facilities, on-line, and in hybrid format. Funding for these students comes from many different sources including school districts, local government, the military, Pell grants, and contracts. SCS also faces rapid changes in the market for its many programs in a way that is broadly different from the Bristol campus and is subject to the capriciousness of governmental funding and its attendant effects on program size and scheduling.

As the foregoing makes clear, SCS needs to develop curriculum, staff courses, disburse financial aid, schedule, and teach in ways that are different from Bristol and it must operate at a much greater rate of speed. Over the last six years, it has met the challenges to become one of the most dynamic continuing studies programs in the region. Its Dean is sought out by other educators and government officials at the local, state, and federal level for her vision on innovation in higher education. In order for the University to remain financially viable for the long term, we must find ways to foster even more rapid growth of SCS to meet the expanding needs for dual enrollment, degree completion, technical education, and skills enhancement. The University's Board of Trustees recognizes this and has directed the President to expand the scope and size of SCS.

Given the questions arising from the Faculty Senate and the needs of the SCS, it is time to consider a governance and administrative structure that will provide the flexibility that the latter needs while providing for appropriate shared governance. On January 15, 2018, I received a series of written questions and this document is in part an answer to them but it is also meant to resolve some of the organizational and administrative ambiguities that prevent SCS from reaching its full potential. It is divided into three sections. The first provides an overview of the wide variety of programs offered by SCS with their enrollments along with a list of its many partnerships. The second is a review of curricular and other procedural practices for the different kinds of programs offered by SCS as they exist now for different kinds of programs and some of the difficulties that have arisen between the campuses in overseeing them.

In addition to the curricular and governance issues addressed here, the administrative structure of SCS is under review, particularly in its connections with systems on the Bristol campuses. Likewise, certain issues, like the need for a separate Academic Calendar for SCS, must be discussed with the RWUFA and will be taken up separately with that body. Finally, some of the extensive list of questions forwarded by the committee, particularly those on the budget for SCS are not addressed here as they are managerial in nature and thus not an appropriate subject for this process.

# **Section I: Overview of SCS Partnerships & Programs:**

## **Educational Programs:**

### **Dual Enrollment Programs:**

- Advanced Course Network – Courses for currently enrolled public school students.
- Gateway to College - Degree completion for students who have dropped out or at risk of doing so.
- Community Development with Juanita Sanchez Education Center (JSEC)
- EMT Basic with Foster Gloucester Regional School District & Rhode Island Nursing Institute

### **Non –Credit Workforce and Career Development Programs:**

- Career Pathway Programs:
  - Intro to Computers & Cyber
  - Legal Assistant
  - Business & Office Skills
  - Production, Planning, & Design
- City of Providence Summer Youth Programs
- Office Skills/Customer Service
- Business Skills for the Construction Trades
- EMT – Basic (also offered for credit)
- Paramedic (also offered for credit)
- ELL Certification
- Turn up RI (seminar/conference for HS students)

### **Bachelor Programs:**

Community Development  
Criminal Justice  
Cybersecurity and Networking  
Emergency Medical Services  
Healthy Communities  
Humanities  
Individualized Concentration  
Management  
Paralegal Studies  
Psychology  
Public Administration

Social Science  
Technology, Leadership & Management

## **Associate Programs:**

Arts  
Criminal Justice  
Paralegal Studies  
Science

## **Certificates:**

### ***Undergraduate***

Corrections Agency Administration  
Digital Forensics  
Case Management  
Community Development  
Community Policing  
Corporate Communication  
Environmental, Occupational Safety, & Health  
Gerontology Certificate  
Health Services Administration  
Homeland Security  
Introduction to Computers and Networking  
Municipal Management  
Nursing Home Administration  
Police Agency Administration  
Public Safety  
Technology, Design & Production

### ***Post Baccalaureate***

Healthcare Paralegal  
Nurse Paralegal  
Paralegal Studies

### ***Graduate***

Sustainable Community & Economic Development

## **Partners:**

Partner Type	Partner Name
Of the University	-Housing Works RI -Latino Policy Institute

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-CYCLE</li> <li>-Ready to Learn</li> <li>-Providence Talks</li> </ul>
At the University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Unified Solutions</li> <li>-ARISE</li> <li>-Latino Civic Fund</li> </ul>
Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Alex and Ani</li> <li>-Blue Cross/Blue Shield of RI</li> <li>-Taco</li> <li>-CVS</li> <li>-Acopia Harvest</li> <li>-Journey, Hope, Health &amp; Healing</li> <li>-General Dynamics</li> <li>-Senedia</li> <li>-Neighborhood Health Plan of RI</li> <li>-NeighborWorks America</li> </ul>
Center for Workforce and Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-CVS Health</li> <li>-Generations Comprehensive Health &amp; Rehabilitative Services</li> <li>- National Elevators Industry Educational Program</li> <li>-Catholic School Office of the Dioceses of Providence</li> <li>-O2X Human Performance</li> <li>-Real Jobs RI, DLT</li> <li>-CCRS</li> <li>-CAPP</li> <li>-Connection for Children &amp; Families</li> </ul>
School Based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-IYRS</li> <li>- Juanita Sanchez Educational Complex</li> <li>-Academy of Career Exploration</li> <li>-Providence Public School District</li> <li>-Portsmouth School District</li> <li>-Foster Gloucester Regional School District</li> <li>-Pawtucket School District</li> <li>- Rhode Island Nursing Institute</li> <li>-Blackstone Valley</li> <li>-Blackstone Prep</li> </ul>
Municipal/State Agency/Associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-City of Pawtucket</li> <li>-City of Central Falls</li> <li>-City of Providence</li> <li>-Rhode Island Department of Education</li> <li>-Department of Human Services</li> <li>-Department of Health</li> <li>-Department of Labor &amp; Training</li> <li>-Department of Corrections</li> <li>-Westerly Education Center</li> </ul>

	-NEACoP
Military/Gov.	-United States Navy -RI National Guard -Department of Defense -Corporation for National & Service Learning,
Community Based	-Children's Friend -West Elmwood Development Corp -Genesis Center -Cranston Adult Education Programs -FUSE -Progresso Latino -YMCA of Greater Providence -Boys and Girls Club -AS220 -NeighborWorks Blackstone River Valley -Tri-County Community Action Agency -East Bay Community Action Program -New Leaders Council

## Section II: Curricular Development and Delivery

### A. Curriculum Development and Approval

- a. The current process of approval is outlined in the Roger Williams University School of Continuing Studies Curriculum Oversight Structure. It provides pathways for three different types of curricular approval:
  - i. **Credit bearing programs that originate with SCS.** This set up a system of curricular oversight for each program within SCS. Each program has a Director who could be either a full-time faculty member or staff with a terminal degree in the field. The current directors are:
    - a. Gina Bianco, Paralegal Studies, JD
    - b. Taino Palermo, Community Development, Healthy Communities, EdD
    - c. Mathew Kite, Criminal Justice, LP.D
    - d. Kelly Donnell, Early Learning, PhD
    - e. Dennis Rebelo, Technology, Leadership and MNGT., PhD
    - f. Katrina Novell, Public Administration, PhD
    - g. John Potvin, EMS (CoAEMSP)
  - ii. Initially, a Faculty Curriculum Coordinator position, which was a full-time faculty member who did not run the day-to-day operation of the program but oversaw curriculum development alongside a non-faculty program director, was attempted, but this did not prove workable. Instead, all Program Directors are now required to have terminal degrees in their field. The Program Directors (faculty and non-faculty) comprise the SCS Curriculum Committee (SCSCC). The SCSCC has the same role in the University curriculum process as other school-based curriculum committees and all proposals that it produces flow through the University curriculum process.
    1. This system has worked well to some extent but it suffers from three main problems:
      - a. Program directors tend to have more intense demands on their time than is the case on the Bristol campus.
      - b. The curriculum process for the University is too slow to respond to changes in the market. Curriculum review has

tended to be even slower than mandated in the 2016 Curriculum process and stops completely for four months of the year. SCS cannot continue to move forward at this pace.

- c. This system also limits program development to those areas where current faculty expertise is available. Other institutions serving markets similar to that of SCS have curriculum developed by external faculty experts that allows for the rapid deployment of these programs.
- iii. **Credit Bearing Programs not Originated on the Bristol Campus:** These currently include the Paralegal and Emergency Medical Technician programs. They are developed and overseen by national or regional bodies outside of campus. These go through the curricular review system but are not subject to changes by the faculty at the University.
- iv. **Non-Credit Bearing Programs:** The third pathway addresses non-credit programs delivered by SCS's Center for Workforce and Career Development. These have never been reviewed through the curricular system and are not required to be so by NEASC.

## **B. Curriculum Delivery**

- a. In addition to the creation of new curriculum for the SCS, it has also delivered courses approved in other schools as part of its Associates' and Bachelors' degrees and as part of the Advanced Course Network classes offered to high school students. For the most part this consists of lower division courses in FCAS (mainly Writing, Math, Sociology, Music, Psychology,) Instructors delivering these classes are recommended by the Chair of the Department that originated them.
  - i. There have been occasional concerns from Bristol based departments on the appropriateness of offering certain, mainly upper division, classes taught by an instructor other than the course creator. There have also been questions raised about the age of students taking college classes in the ACN program, and on the mode by which they are delivered (i.e. on-line, in class, etc.)
  - ii. The assignment of instructors can be problematic given the differences in the educational needs of the two campuses population (e.g. the much larger percentage of English Language Learners at the Providence Campus). There is also some internal competition over instructors needed for courses offered on both campuses.



## Section III: Proposed Changes for Discussion

- A. Development of a more independent structure for those SCS programs and courses that do not replicate those on the Bristol campus.
- The current structure should remain in place for all courses originating in Bristol programs. This includes the recommendation of faculty to teach classes and permission from the Department Chair to use upper division courses in SCS programs.
  - SCS should have a curriculum approval track that matches its educational model. This should parallel that for the Bristol campus programs with SCS program committees, the SCS School Committee, and Decanal review, but the reporting and advising process with the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee need to be modified so that SCS has the flexibility to develop and approve new programs quickly. The curricular process must operate on a twelve-month basis and should include mechanisms for developing programs in fields outside of current faculty expertise.
- B. All new programs, courses, partnerships should be formally reported to the Faculty Senate as part of a comprehensive annual report.
- C. In coming years, SCS should add to its small cohort of full-time faculty. It may also from time to time temporarily appoint Bristol faculty to develop and lead programs as it has in the past.
- D. The SCS should decouple its Academic Calendar from that of the Bristol Campus. This calendar will provide more flexibility and have multiple entry points for its programs.
- E. The SCS should undergo a rebranding process to consider changing its name so that its programs are more distinct from the RWU traditional undergraduate program.

# School of Continuing Studies Credit Bearing Programs and Non Credit Programs Headcount FY 15 to FY 19

