

Joint Report of the
Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC)
and the
General Education Committee (GEC)
on

Modes of Instructional Delivery and Curriculum at the College of Staten Island in the COVID-19 Moment

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In response to a request from the Executive Committee of the College of Staten Island/CUNY's Faculty Senate, we submit this report on the impact of COVID-19 adjustments on the actions and responsibilities of the undergraduate curriculum committees in Spring semester, 2020.

The curricular committees moved to online meetings this semester, with great success. Faculty submitted items, attended the meetings, gave feedback, and much was accomplished this semester. We thankfully are up to date with all items that were submitted.

However, the curricular committees express some concerns on the transition from in-person mode to online mode of learning. In particular, these concerns focus on maintaining the approved student learning outcomes when the mode of delivery is changed, through ensuring that appropriate resources and course conditions (such as course caps) are available in all modes of instructional delivery.

When reviewing courses, committee members often discuss requirements for student access to resources across campus. These include, but are not limited to: access to library holdings; availability of wet laboratories, studios, computer laboratories, and other dedicated instructional spaces; installations of necessary software; access to multimedia equipment; and the availability of field trips, field work, and internships. Course proposals ask faculty to identify course caps because these are also important aspects of course delivery. When the curriculum committees approve courses and programs of study, they take into consideration these aspects -- access to resources, student learning outcomes, course caps, and modes of delivery. Therefore, when significant changes are made to any of these aspects it is not only beneficial but necessary that these be made with careful consideration of the impact on the course and program student learning outcomes. The curriculum committees would argue that in order to maintain the academic integrity of the degree programs, such changes must not be made without the approval of the departments and programs to which the curricular items belong, and that serious efforts must be made to ameliorate any negative pedagogical impact of changes in modes of instruction.

Finally, the curriculum committees expressed concern that assessment of course and program student learning outcomes will need to be adjusted to be effective in the mode of delivery of the courses and degree programs. This is especially a challenge for General Education, as its outcomes fall outside of the purview of any department, where most student learning outcomes assessment takes place. A plan is in place, however, to aid in the successful assessment of General Education outcomes in an online environment.