

# Initial Faculty Input To Hanover Academic Research Projects

Hanover is a research company hired by our campus to investigate research projects formulated by key stakeholders on campus. The faculty will define and drive the academic research projects. Faculty should give feedback to formulate the projects topics, and the project research questions -- initial drafts are provided below.

The current working title for the academic research projects is  
**"Niche Opportunities for Expanding Enrollment".**

After faculty feedback is collected below, the Executive Committee (EC) will compile and summarize the results. The EC will coordinate with Hanover, and they will provide us with survey templates and research questions that fit the projects and questions outlined below. Faculty will again have an opportunity to provide feedback before the research projects begin. (Stay tuned!)

Note: Hanover research projects will be executed *in sequence*. The order presented below is the order proposed by the Executive Committee. The total length of the Hanover contract is 3 years (2021-2024). Each individual project would span a number of weeks depending on the complexity of the project.

**Responses are due by Friday Feb 4th.**

## **Project A: "Targeting Adult Learners within our Mission Distinctiveness"**

Description:

- Within our program offerings are there particular ones that are likely to draw greater interest from adult learners?
- What scheduling factors would contribute to greater interest in our program offerings by adult learners?
- To what program packaging options, such as stackables (micro-credentials, certificates) etc., are adult learners attracted?
- Is there a market for continuing education packaged for completion during summers, winters, evenings, and weekends?
- What are the workplace trends where adult learners may experience job changes or need retraining that may present us with enrollment opportunities?
- What kinds of programs and certifications are adult learners seeking? Is there an advantage to having day-long weekend programs for example? Or other?

- What kinds of competency or skill-based training programs are local businesses interested in investing in? For example, financial literacy, quantitative literacy, leadership development, critical thinking and decision-making under uncertainty.

**Do you have additional ideas or issues that should be investigated related to this specific project?**

To what extent are adult learners interested in STEM? How many STEM adult learners continue to higher education versus entering the workforce? What career paths do STEM adult learners follow after graduation?

No

Adult learners may work on a full-time or part-time jobs, or need to support families. A key factor for them to be successful in school is the flexibility. More specifically, the programs that allow them to learn at their own pace would be attractive. One of such teaching model is flipped classroom. Instructors can use in-person meeting more effectively on problem solving, rather than conceptual learning.

What kinds of programs do we offer to train students for global professional interaction?

Is there potential to expand the SPS to include more traditional Continuing Ed? There seem to be two areas popular at other college: other applied learning programs (media, arts, data science, etc) but also the traditional liberal arts/ CE life long learner classes (art, literature, philosophy, etc.). Also, how can continuing ed /SPS be mission aligned? More opportunities to really push into the mission here? Perhaps speciality intensive social justice oriented programs that draw on the strengths of faculty (many doing social justice oriented research and creative work).

There should be clarity on the adult audience "targets", and productive ways to reach them.

Town Libraries have "resource" options, in place and on-line.

The concept of "lifelong learning" should be included...not mainly "vocational" goals.

no

I have seen Adult Learners express interest in learning software programs and design skills. I have had several high school teachers sign up for graphic design courses to learn the range of adobe software commonly used in design.

These students would benefit from scheduling options that included evenings and weekends.

In Visual Arts, we have a Certificate in 3D Digital Design that is being processed. We are working on stackable micro-credentials that can add up to fulfilling the Certificate. One of these is in Graphic Design and one is in 3D design. Each micro-credential contains use of the fab lab equipment, specifically lasercutters and the CNC machine. These are valuable skills.

Just to be mindful of not depleting course availability for day time students who need early classes in the attempt to attract adult learners.

## Project B: "Modality Demand Distinctions"

Description:

- What data exists to gather student preferences, and their reasons, for taking classes online versus remote versus in-person?
- Do we have programs that are better served by online degree options, or that are better served by in-person options?
- What are the online/technology-related supports that students are looking for to optimize their enrollment and participation? Same for in-person?
- Do our modality offerings complement other campuses in order to encourage cross enrollment?
- Similarly do our summer and winter courses encourage enrollment from other campuses?
- What modalities and support services facilitate the academic performance of underrepresented students?

**Do you have additional ideas or issues that should be investigated related to this specific project?**

Is there any correlations between course modality and student career success? How does course modality affect student acceptance rates into post graduate programs or first year employment?

Many of these things have been investigated and discussed extensively by SUNY Online/Open SUNY/the SLN. Before paying Hanover to research these topics, we should do due diligence to determine what we already know and/or can learn for free.

Similar to my answers to Project B.

How would offering more fully online courses similar to what is offered at SUNY Empire increase enrollment?

Online ed works so well for high performing adult students but I worry that our most at risk students are drawn to it to avoid commuting costs or to increase their work availability resulting in poor outcomes. How do we support the students who really need to be on campus to do well while offering expanded access for those who do well online.

Student feedback on such matters as summer and winter courses are "market-driven". There is a great deal of concern that our 4-credit courses taught during these shortened periods do not cover the expected and standards for these courses. Students need to be able to use all modalities and be able to use and access Library and other resources of the College.

no

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We are now in a phase where students seek both remote and in person learning options. Some students have made other plans during the pandemic and have taken jobs. They now wish to find remote courses. Access to licenses for software as well as loaner laptops greatly help our students. These are especially valuable to students working remotely.

Courses that teach valuable skills for job retraining could benefit from online modalities. Graphic Design and 3D Design fall within this category.

Imperative for us to offer flexibility to students to remain relevant in this changing world.

## **Project C: "Mission-distinctiveness within the Marketplace"**

Description:

- Are we mission-distinctive within the marketplace demand?
- How can we more effectively craft our recruitment materials and outreach efforts to the growing new diverse and immigrant populations in the immediate region around Old Westbury?
- How do we make our mission distinctive strength marketable to attract enrollment?
- Are there new ways to engage local guidance counselors to effectively promote our mission and strengths as an institution?
- Do potential students understand and value our distinctive mission?
- Do potential students understand and value our academic programs?
- Are there new ways to engage with local high schools to create bridge programs into our institution? How can we create a better pipeline?
- How do we connect the marketing of our existing programmatic strengths to our mission in a way that is responsive to the needs of potential students?
- What is the best way to communicate our programmatic strengths to potential students to attract enrollment?
- What areas of study are potential students attracted to, and do they know their areas of study before they enroll? Does this differ based on status such as non-traditional, transfer, first generation, etc.?
- What other areas attract students? Identity and values? Specific areas of study? Practical experiences available? Graduation rates? Average salaries?

**Do you have additional ideas or issues that should be investigated related to this specific project?**

No

This list seems to mix issues related to expanding our enrollments to new types of students and issues

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related to enhancing our traditional forms of recruitment. They are all good topics to explore, but they don't all seem to fit within the working title, and run the risk of diluting our effort to the point of weakening it.

Our students need more internship opportunities from or interactions with industry partners if there are any. One of the reasons for students to pursue an academic degree is to enhance their chances in job market. The goal for many students is to get a job after graduation. However, they may not know what a real job looks like before be hired.

How do we market to the rest of tri-state area?

How can we showcase our strengths as departments? What resources are available? We have amazing successful graduates and impressive faculty. It feels like a secret. Yet, we are all so overworked, we can't devote the time to PR and outreach on top of teaching, advising, service and research. Even getting a dept website in order is a heavy lift for a department.

The mission of social justice can and should be elaborated by various disciplines and fields that faculty are engaged in. For example we have the designated UNAI (United Nations Academic Impact) connection with the mission and charted goals of the UN. Notable such current and important and "far reaching ideas in all the disciplines includes the Environmental, Climate Change, and Justice issues, associated with the state supported SDG's Sustainable Development Goals. More notice of these specifics help others too understand the College Mission(s).

no

Emphasize the role of liberal arts in creating a global citizen with an extensive skill set. The value of a liberal arts education goes beyond specific skills in a given discipline. Perhaps emphasizing how values and learning are entwined would be a good way to promote this. Example: A design course that completes a project with students in Latin America working towards a common goal.

A college wide enrollment strategy with everyone participating in some capacity.

## Thank you for your feedback!

Are there other issues that we should be investigating or looking for data related to increasing the scope of our enrollment and academic program offerings?

none

The working title seems prejudicial. The combination of demographic and economic changes that are already under way suggest that refocusing from "(under)graduate and go" to institutionalized lifelong learning / upskilling is not a niche opportunity, but adaptation to long-term social evolution. The title doesn't have to buy into that, but it shouldn't minimize the scale and significance of the challenge and the response. "Innovative Opportunities for Expanding Enrollment" might be better, for example.

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We will know where the jobs/markets are and what our focus should be by searching job openings and historical data round Long Island and NYC.

Will faculty have input on marketing plans?

Are there ways we could expand on and showcase our success with neurodivergent learners (especially ADHD and autism, both growing populations to college)? What supports are needed on campus to expand and showcase our strengths in this area? How might this help enrollment? Summer bridge? Dorm program? More support for OSSD? Links to feeder regional HS programs?

Yes,

The all-important RESOURCE issue must be addressed. Enrollment increases, new modalities, and other desirable goals require more funding than has been the cause historically for the College.

no

Under-utilized programs that are already in place.

Example – We are the only SUNY in the area offering a BFA degree. This draws many students. Visual Arts is one of the 5 fastest growing departments on campus. The BFA degree can be emphasized when recruiting students.

Many schools have expanded their design offerings. This is a potential area of growth. SUNY Farmingdale has an art department but they have a very different program geared only towards skills. They offer a BTech degree. OW could possibly offer a BFA in Graphic Design. Other possibilities might be in either a minor or major in Digital Illustration and/or Graphic Novel.

We need to look closely at our surrounding area- everyone is our competition. In addition, surrounding states need to be recruited more to increase residential living. We need a better plan.