

# Needs Assessment: M.S. Management Program

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MGMT 658 – Needs Assessment

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# **Needs Assessment: M.S Management Program**

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT POTSDAM

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## Table of Contents

<b>PROGRAM TO BE ASSESSED.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION &amp; OVERVIEW .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>TEAM OVERVIEW .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PROGRAM SETTING, BACKGROUND, HISTORY .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>CLIENTS(S) &amp; STAKEHOLDERS AND AUDIENCE .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>INTRODUCTORY PURPOSE/PROBLEM STATEMENT.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>FRONT END ANALYSIS (PRIMARY AND SECONDARY FOCUS QUESTIONS) .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>CONTEXTUAL FACTORS .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>PROJECT MANAGEMENT PLAN .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>DATA COLLECTION METHODS.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>ANALYSES (FINDINGS).....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>DATA RESULTS FROM STUDENTS INTERVIEW QUESTIONS .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>DATA RESULTS FROM FACULTY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>APPENDIX.....</b>	<b>32</b>

## TABLE OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1. FISHBONE DIAGRAM .....	0
FIGURE 2. FORCE-FIELD ANALYSIS .....	0
FIGURE 3. RELATIONAL MAP OF TEACHING AND LEARNING.....	6
FIGURE 4.FAVORITE PART OF M.S. MANAGEMENT .....	16
FIGURE 5. BEST ABOUT FACE-TO-FACE .....	17
FIGURE 6. BEST ABOUT ONLINE .....	17
FIGURE 7. ADVICE TO THE FACULTY.....	18
FIGURE 8. COURSE MATERIALS QUALITY.....	18
FIGURE 9. INTERACTION WITH STUDENTS.....	19
FIGURE 10. INTERACTION WITH INSTRUCTOR.....	19
FIGURE 11. TERM LENGTH .....	20
FIGURE 12. TOP ASSESSMENT TYPE.....	20
FIGURE 13. ADVISEMENT .....	21
FIGURE 14.ORIENTATION .....	21
FIGURE 15. TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENT.....	22
FIGURE 16. FAVORITE PART OF THE M.S. MANAGEMENT.....	23
FIGURE 17. BEST ABOUT FACE-TO-FACE .....	23
FIGURE 18. BEST ABOUT ONLINE.....	24
FIGURE 19. TOP ADVICE .....	24
FIGURE 20. COURSE MATERIAL .....	25
FIGURE 21. WHAT HAS WORKED WELL AND WHAT HAS NOT.....	25
FIGURE 22. INTERACTING WITH STUDENTS .....	26
FIGURE 23. TERM LENGTH .....	26
FIGURE 24. TOP ASSESSMENT.....	27
FIGURE 25. ADVISEMENT .....	27
FIGURE 26. ORIENTATION .....	28
FIGURE 27. TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS .....	28
FIGURE 28. POTENTIAL BARRIERS .....	29

## Program to be Assessed

The MS Management program is a 33-credit hour master's degree, offered through the Business Administration department at SUNY Potsdam. This degree is comprised of the following components:

- 18 credits of core coursework (six classes)
- 12 credit hours of a chosen track (four classes)
- Culminating Experience class (known as Needs Assessment)

According to the college's website, "The M.S. Management program provides individuals from any area of study or professional discipline with the skills and knowledge to effectively manage and lead operations, people, and technology. The program integrates critical competency areas around organizations, leadership, financial and data management, as well as ethics and project management."

<https://www.potsdam.edu/academics/programs-study/management>

Additionally, the college goes on to describe the program as being flexible and designed for the working professional. This includes evening and weekend courses, which is critical for those working full-time and looking to continue their education. The program is currently being offered on the main Potsdam campus, as well as a branch site that the college operates in Watertown, NY on the campus of Jefferson Community College.

## Project Description & Overview

SUNY Potsdam's goal with the MS Management program is to make it a fully online distance learning program. The stakeholders wanted to seek information from both students and instructors to determine their needs and wants. The project entailed determining the needs of the stakeholders, the needs of the students and the preferred way to deliver a high-quality graduate program fully online for the first time.

A focus group setting was the modality that was used to determine the needs of students. A preset list of questions was asked of students in a small group setting or individually. A preset list of questions was asked of instructors in a one on one setting. The data was analyzed, and recommendations formed based on the results of the survey questions.

With Covid-19 occurring in the middle of the semester and all of our current learning transitioning to 100% online, all students had a unique perspective on distance learning. Some students who had never participated in a course online now had experience with distance learning and were able to provide insight on their needs. All instructors also had a real-life comparison to full online distance learning as most courses are not currently available online.

## Team Overview




Angela Harvey is a graduate student in the M.S. Management program with a concentration in Organizational Leadership at SUNY Potsdam. Angela is a Graduate Assistant in the Center for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Angela will focus on the Front-End Analysis, Problem Statement, Clients & Stakeholders, and Executive Summary sections.



Nsundidi Jorge is graduate student in the Management program with concentration in Information Technology at SUNY Potsdam. Nsundidi is Graduate Assistant at Writing Center, where he works as Assistant Director to the Writing Center.

Nsundidi focuses on Project Management, Data Collection Methods, and findings which he will help his team complete the MS Management Program Needs Assessment.

 A portrait of Kayla Herne, a woman with long, wavy blonde hair, wearing a blue polo shirt. She is smiling and standing in front of a dark, textured wall.	<p>Kayla Herne is a graduate student in the Management Program with a concentration in Organizational Leadership at SUNY Potsdam. Kayla has 10 years of management experience and hopes to further her education and career.</p>

## Program Setting, Background, History

The State University of New York at Potsdam was founded in 1816 and was originally called St. Lawrence Academy. It was one of America's 50 first colleges and has a 200-year-old history. SUNY Potsdam has grown to become a leader in creativity, applied learning and educational excellence ([www.potsdam.edu](http://www.potsdam.edu)). Along with undergraduate education, SUNY Potsdam offers a MS in Management program as part of their School of Educational and Professions Studies. The MS in Management program is designed to further the education of working professionals.

The MS in Management offers three tracks that include: organizational leadership, information technology, and training & human capital development. The program can be completed in as little as one year. The program is unique as it offers:

- Applied learning opportunities woven throughout the curriculum
- Flexible scheduling, with all evening classes, plus full- and part-time options
- Choose your location! This program is offered both on the SUNY Potsdam campus in Potsdam, N.Y., and at Jefferson Community College in Watertown, N.Y.
- Small class sizes
- Expert full-time faculty with years of practical working experience
- Mix of working professionals and recent college graduates

([www.potsam.edu](http://www.potsam.edu)).

The current MS in Management program has 35 students and it is expected with the transition to online distance learning that more working professionals or recently graduated undergraduates will participate in the program.

## Executive Summary

The primary focus of this Needs Assessment is to look into the general needs of the M.S Management program preparing to go 100% online. Methods of analysis include focus group interviews with faculty, staff, and students. The focus group interviews helped the team address specific issues in order to organize recommendations to our client, the Program Coordinator.

This project includes factor issues after conducting, contextual factors, force field analysis, Front-End/Root Cause Analysis, collecting data on students and faculty members. The focus group interview reports were performed to indicate the needs to provide recommendations for the usage satisfaction and improvements to the M.S Management program.

The recommendations that the Needs Assessment team has suggested includes:

- ⇒ Distance Education Policy
- ⇒ Student Interactions
- ⇒ Comprehensive Online Orientation (optional personal mentor)
- ⇒ Advisement and Coaching
- ⇒ Implement Stop, Start, Continue
- ⇒ Course Development and Instructional Design

The recommendations that have been made by the Needs Assessment team are data-supported suggestions on what to include in the M.S Management Program and increase the enrollments number in the program. The benefits of these recommendations are to help the M.S Management grow effectively in the long-term.

## Clients(s) & Stakeholders and Audience

**Client:**

The client is Dr. Anthony Betrus, Program Coordinator for the Master of Science in Management at SUNY Potsdam. Dr. Betrus determines the final approval for all incoming MS Management graduate students and has multiple roles and responsibilities within the program including, professor, academic advisor, curriculum & course development, planning, and many other operating functions. Our client is interested in creating a fully online MS Management program that satisfies the needs of graduate students and faculty while aligning with SUNY Potsdam's Vision: "*SUNY Potsdam aspires to foster innovative programs that deliver truly transformational student experiences, in a collaborative and creative community environment, emphasizing inclusivity, sustainability, and leadership in scholarship and service.*"

<https://www.potsdam.edu/about/mission>

#### **Stakeholders & Audience:**

The Audience, or "super" stakeholders, are individuals that directly participate and have a distinct interest in the success of a 100% online MS Management program at SUNY Potsdam including, potential and current MS Management students, potential and current graduate students, SUNY Potsdam MS Management faculty (Dr. Anthony Betrus, Professor/Graduate Program Coordinator, Dr. Rick Miller, Adjunct Professor/Retired Executive Vice President & Chief Student Affairs Officer, Dr. Karen Caldwell, Assistant Professor, Dr. Greg Gardner, Professor, Dr. Seon Levius, Assistant Professor).

The stakeholders that have a vested interest in the overall success of the 100% online MS Management program are MS Management program at SUNY Potsdam including, potential and current MS Management students, potential and current graduate students, SUNY Potsdam MS Management faculty (Dr. Anthony Betrus, Professor/Graduate Program Coordinator, Dr. Rick Miller, Adjunct Professor/Retired Executive Vice President & Chief Student Affairs Officer, Dr. Karen Caldwell, Assistant Professor, Dr. Greg Gardner, Professor, Dr. Seon Levis, Assistant Professor), Dr. Allen C. Grant, Dean, School of Educ. & Professional Studies, Dr. Allen Hersker, Assistant Vice President, SUNY Potsdam Office of Graduate & Continuing Education, SUNY Potsdam Distance Learning Office, SUNY Potsdam Administration, Provost & Academic Affairs, and the SUNY Potsdam Student Success Center, SUNY system in general, associated colleges, Watertown extension faculty and staff.

## Introductory Purpose/Problem Statement

The purpose of this project is two-fold. First, we want to look at what the overall needs are for the MS Management program in order to develop it into a flagship online program at SUNY Potsdam rich in enrollment with high student retention. The needs for any program (online or on campus) include investment in personnel, financial resources, and overall buy-in from senior administration/leadership of the campus. With plans for this program to be the first, fully online master's program at Potsdam, the campus must be invested in supporting all aspects so that it is sustainable and scalable.

The second piece to the project is inextricable with the first. There are unique aspects to teaching and learning online that arise that are both short and long-term in nature. In addition to the basic uses of technology associated with the delivery of the course, there are very specific, and in some cases, very basic human needs that need to be met in order for there to be success for everyone involved. When developing and executing an online program, there will be very specific, and very deliberate and proactive

actions that need to be taken to support faculty who develop and teach courses online, as well as students who are learning the content and utilizing the course materials.

## Front End Analysis (Primary and Secondary Focus Questions)

### **Current state**

The MS Management program at SUNY Potsdam offers on-campus weekday, evening classes geared toward working professionals. The MS Management program has 3 tracks for students to choose from including Organizational Leadership, Information Technology, and Training & Human Capital Development. Students are required to take classes online and face to face at either the SUNY Potsdam campus or at the Watertown Extension Center at the Jefferson Community College campus. Certain “core” classes are offered only as online so students must acclimate to an online learning environment.

### **Desired state**

SUNY Potsdam will offer a high-quality, 100% fully online MS in Management, with at least 3 “tracks” including Organizational Leadership, Information Technology, and Training &

Human Capital Development. The necessary resources and support systems are in place to ensure successful outcomes for students and faculty.

### **Gap**

SUNY Potsdam lacks the resources and support necessary to guarantee a successful, sustainable 100% online MS Management program.

### **Root Cause Analysis**

The Ishikawa diagram was used in order to identify possible root causes that would explain what potential barriers or changes are necessary in order for the MS, Management program to be successful 100% online. This representation can also support our goal of identifying and hypothesizing the potential gaps associated with the needs and support of the fully online program.

# Fishbone Diagram

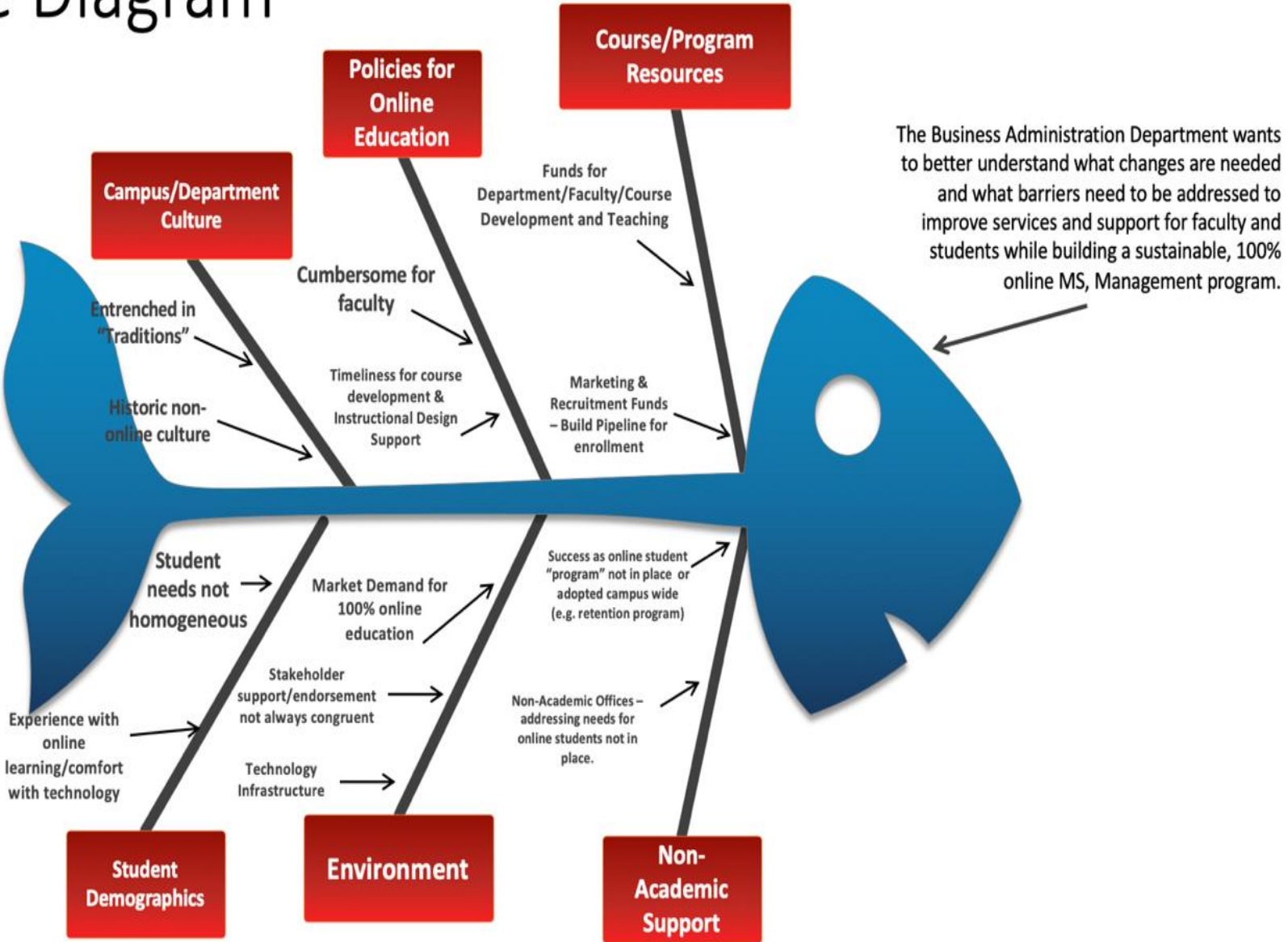


Figure 1. Fishbone Diagram

## Force Field Analysis

The model below represents an analysis of the major factors that need to be considered while researching the needs for faculty and students in the MS, Management program, as well as the needs for the program to become a successful and sustainable online program. Using a Force Field Analysis provides us with a method by which to consider forces that are either "Driving" (pushing towards a new state), or "Restraining" (pushing against change to the desired state but supporting the existing state).

# Force-Field Analysis

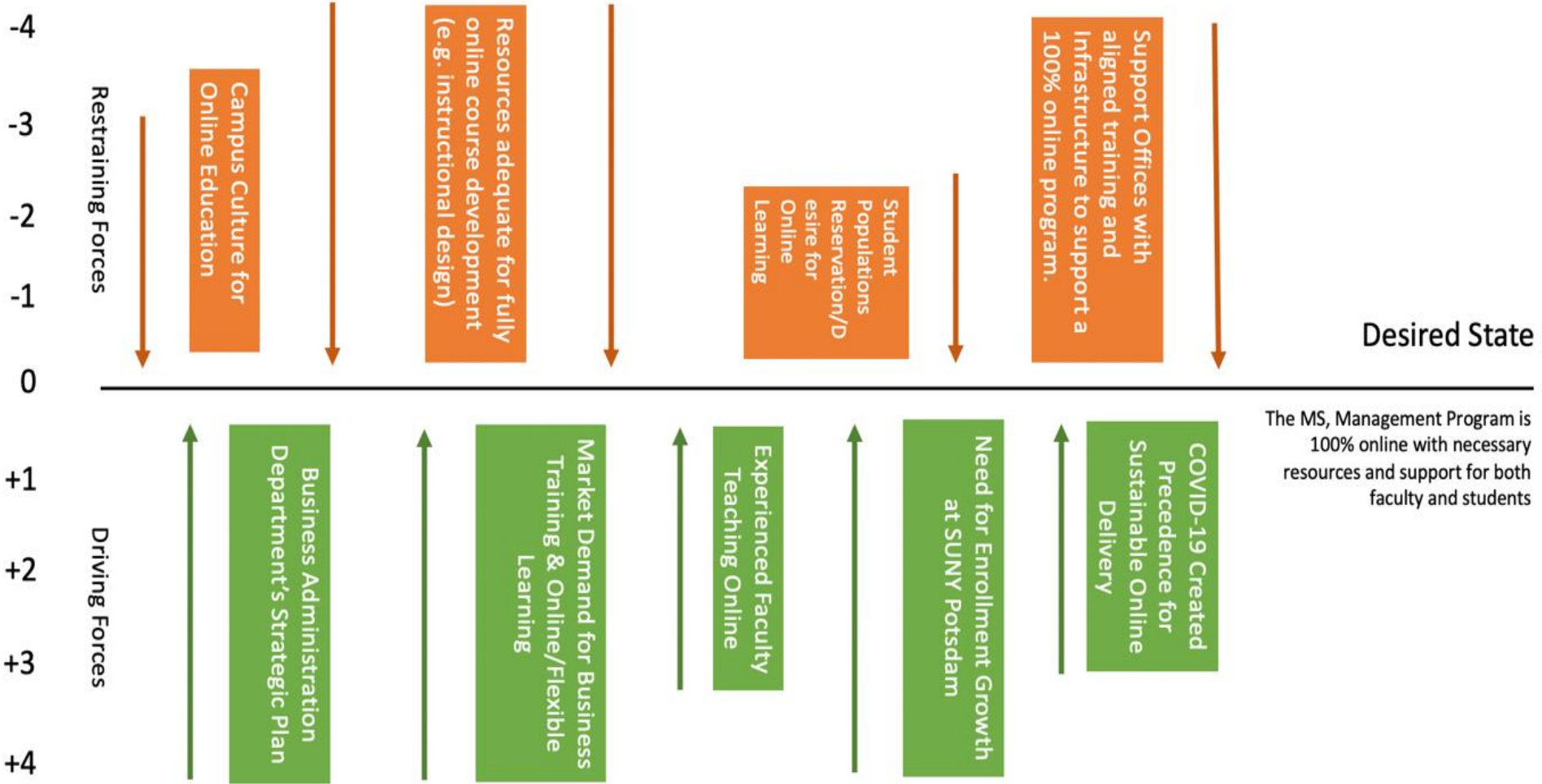


Figure 2. Force-Field Analysis

## **Restraining Forces**

### ***Campus Culture for Online Education (-3)***

Online education is something that, while not necessarily new any longer to higher education, can still be considered new for smaller segments of higher education, especially at the institutional level. As of today, there is a certificate of advanced study at Potsdam that is fully online, but not a fully online master's program. The college remains very traditional in its perspective as a residential liberal arts campus. While there are a variety of other factors that can drive online, this is a fairly strong opposing force. If the faculty and administration do not find ways to create meaning and weave the value of online education into the fabric of the college's culture, there will constantly be resistance to that, or any other change related to it, which will have a trickle-down effect on the overall ability for the institution to shift to a place that will fully embrace online education.

### ***Resources adequate for fully online course development (-4)***

This can be seen as one of the most compelling forces that the college will need to overcome to be in a position to move a program online. This is also a fairly extensive category, as it includes technical, personnel, time, and several other resources that the college may or may not be in a position to support. One of the most critical aspects to online education is the support for the development of the courses themselves. This work is typically done by an instructional designer. Without adequate instructional design staffing, and time for development itself, that alone could put the program in jeopardy of not being delivered along with its overall goals.

Other resources from a "people" perspective include the time for faculty to develop the courses. If a faculty member is already teaching a full load, is there enough extra time for that person to develop the courses? If not, what other ways can the college increase this capacity? That is another significantly strong force that should be addressed. In

addition, what are some of the resources related to professional development of faculty to improve their own pedagogy of teaching online, as well as their knowledge of how to use the learning management systems, etc.?

Finally, resources surrounding technical aspects and support of the online environment are most certainly a big driving force. Moreover, what financial resources are being set aside strategically by the administration in support of not only preparing and launching a program to be fully online, but so that it is sustainable, and scalable. These are just a few very significant considerations that should be carefully looked at when addressing the resource issues that are restraining to the success of the program.

### ***Student Populations Reservation/Desire for Online Learning (-2)***

While it is widely assumed by many that online education is embraced by everyone in 2020, there is plenty of research that suggests that this may not be true, and at the very least the campus should be careful when considering the position of the program. Adult learners in particular, may not find a 100% online program as attractive as others, especially for those that may have been out of school for a significant period of time.

While this is not necessarily among the largest restraining forces, it will most certainly have some impact. There are some things that may be considered to minimize the restraining force when going online isn't an option. This is especially true as it relates to the issue of what service needs students will have. Alternative residency options, or advanced online training/orientations that will be discussed later in our recommendations would be efforts to minimize the reservation some may have to consider enrolling in a fully 100% online program.

## *Support Offices with Aligned Training and Infrastructure to support a 100% Online*

### *Program (-4)*

Going back to a restraining force associated with campus culture, if a program is 100% online with coursework, but the student support services and administrative offices that are critical for supporting students is not in the same place related to online access for students or outreach/programming, the ability to attract and retain students will be greatly jeopardized.

Students in an online environment need to have access to exactly the same resources, and be oriented to them, as they would be in a residential setting. There is also a paternalistic narrative that an institution must take, as those who are entirely new to online learning don't know, what they don't know.

### **Driving Forces**

#### *Business Administration Department's Strategic Plan (+3)*

The Business Administration department has made it very clear to the school that this is among the highest priorities for them related to their departments plans for growth, and retention in student enrollment. Upon learning of the history of the program itself, the department has taken very deliberate actions to create a program that is marketable, provides the necessary skills and experiences, and more for students who are interested in graduate work in business. A part of their plan includes deliberations with campus administration related to obtaining the proper resources to ensure its success. By this being a part of the department's overall goals, that also means a department wide buy-in, and a strong voice for advocacy, but also for the development of the courses necessary for the program.

### ***Market Demand for Business Training & Online/Flexible Learning (+4)***

There has traditionally been strong market demand for programs in business. While the MBA market is fairly saturated, unique and specialized programs like the MS, Management could be attractive to those not looking for an MBA. In addition, the specialized tracks could also provide for stronger marketability. Overall, compared to other disciplines, graduate degree work in business has been a consistent discipline, in demand largely due to its versatility.

Flexibility is also key in the marketplace today. Working professionals seeking advanced education need the flexibility that is provided in online education.

### ***Experienced Faculty Teaching Online (+3)***

In addition to the department buy-in, the majority of faculty who are teaching in the business administration department are also experienced in teaching online. Also, some of the newest faculty in the department come with experience in teaching online and have done so for many years. This is an important driving force not only for the actual development and teaching of the courses, but also in the advocacy for shifting the narrative for the institution on the need for 100% online education.

### ***Need for Enrollment Growth at SUNY Potsdam (+4)***

The college's enrollment has significantly declined over the last decade. Given this, the college has a vested interest in a program that offers the marketability and flexibility that the MS, Management provides. If constructed well, supported well (for both faculty and students), it can be developed over time into a scalable program, and easily the largest graduate program at Potsdam. The high need for new enrollments to the college

would greatly drive the campus to shifting the limited resources it has towards a program with this potential for success.

### **COVID-19 Created Precedence for Sustainable Online Delivery (+3)**

While the rate by which this force cannot truly be measured yet (and for all intents and purposes could be seen higher than this), while researching and putting together this study, we have been completing a semester in a 100% online environment. This situation has forced colleges to leap into 100% online learning, not by choice, but by necessity. It has demanded that all of the reasons to not be online go away or be mitigated and compelled every stakeholder at the institution to embrace online for the good of the college, and students. It is for that reason that this should be considered a driving force for support and change, because it can and has been done.

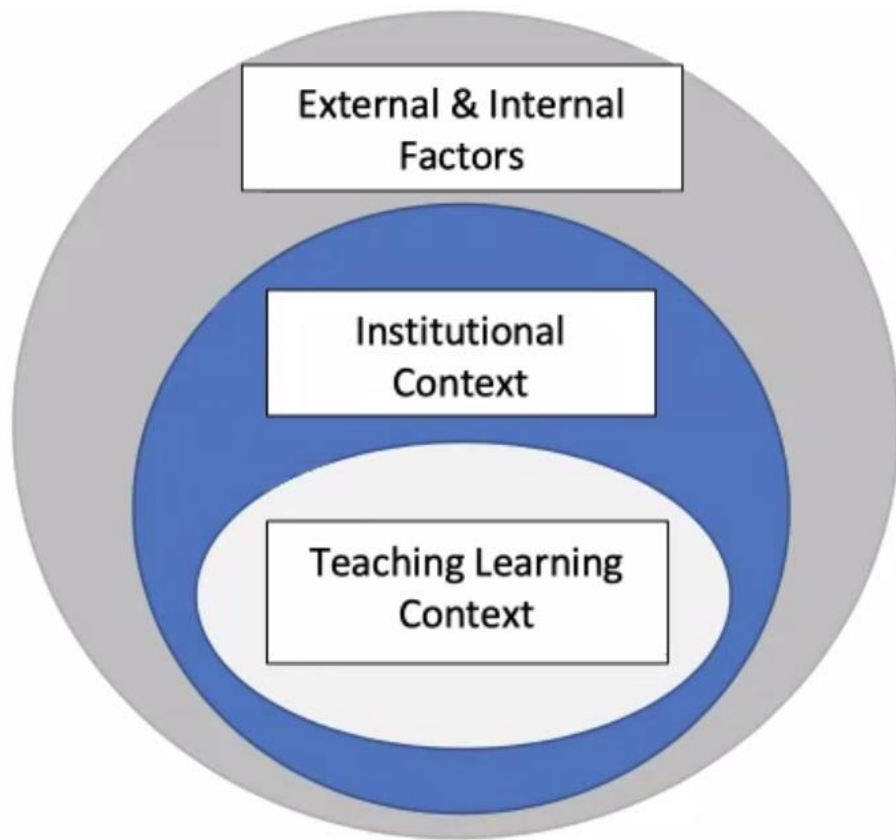
## Contextual Factors

Extensive research has been conducted regarding contextual factors in relation to online and distance learning. Research has shown online learners' performance to have a strong association with their demographic characteristics, such as regional belonging, socio-economic standing, education level, age, gender, and disability status (Rizvi, S., Rienties, B., & Khoja, S.A. 2019). With these internal factors, it can be concluded that demographic characteristics play a major role in online distance learning success.

Studies have also been conducted on external contextual factors in relation to online and distance learning. Findings indicated that online learner participation and patterns of participation are influenced by the following factors: technology and interface characteristics, content-area experience, student roles and tasks, and information overload. Technology, the course interface, the behavior of the group, and the personas that students may take in an online learning course can influence participation and learning outcomes (Voderwell, S., Zachariah, S., 2005).

It is important for instructors to understand the contextual factors and how they will affect online learning, especially in a first-time online distance program. Below is a diagram titled "Relational Map of Teaching and Learning" or TL. It displays how contextual factors (internal and external) are the largest scope of learning. As the circle move inward the teaching-learning context becomes smaller and focuses on the relationship and

communication between student and teacher. Although the internal and external factors above can be considered challenges to learning, the focus should be relationship and communication.



*Figure 3. Relational Map of Teaching and Learning*

## Project Management Plan

### Scope

After observing various aspects within the MS Management Program and speaking with the Graduate Program Coordinator, Dr. Anthony Betrus, the team found that there are two main objectives that need to be further studied. These objectives are:

1. Identify the general needs of MS Management program online.
2. Identify the students and faculty needs as they attend and deliver this program online.

By further studying these objectives, the team expects to find and identify the general needs of MS Management program to be delivered online and identify the students and faculty needs to have a fully online MS Management program. By conducting this research, the team also hopes to close the gap between the students and faculty needs.

### Schedule

The Needs Assessment of the MS Management Program at SUNY Potsdam will take place during the spring semester of 2020, starting on March 6<sup>th</sup> and finalized on May

14th. The team will present the Needs Assessment to the Graduate Program Coordinator in hopes that any recommendations made can be implemented in the near future.

The collection of data will be completed by April 26th. The focus group email for appointments were sent out April 8<sup>th</sup> and April 10<sup>th</sup>. The focus group interviews concluded on April 16th. The team was then able to come together to finalize the data collected from focus group interviews.

The final report from the Needs Assessment will be delivered to the client after the team completes the final Needs Assessment report. From the presentation and report, hopefully the recommendations made can be implemented in the near future.

2020		March				
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
24	25	26	27	28	29	01
02	03	04	05	06	07	08
09	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21 Project Options Discussion	22
23	24	25 First meeting w/Client to learn the case	26	27	28	29

2020		April				
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
30	31 Developed questions for group focus interview	01	02	03	04	05
06 Meeting w/ Client to approve the questions draft	07	08 Send out Focus group interview request via email	09	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19 Closed Focus Group interview
20	21 Began to analyze the collected data	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	01	02	03

2020		May				
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
27	28	29	30	01	02	03
04	05	06	07	08	09	10
11 Began to assemble the final paper	12	13	14	15	16	17
18 Meeting w/ Client to discuss the data collected	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

## **Communication Management Plan**

Angela, Jorge and Kayla all are responsible for all communications throughout the Needs Assessment plan. The project team's communication goals are:

- Finding out the students and faculty needs for M.S. Management be delivered fully online.
- Making team recommendations based on data collection from the focus group interviews.

Any issue that appears during the project, the Needs Assessment team communicates with team members and Dr. Miller.

The Needs Assessment team will always stay in touch with each other via phone text and email for any questions or any assignment clarifications. The team will meet once a week virtually with Dr. Miller to discuss updated process of the project.

The team will communicate with the client on regular basis when is necessary for any clarifications and when the Needs Assignment plan is presented. Please see the following chart:

Who?	What Information?	When?	How?
Needs Assessment Team	All project details	Once a week and when needed	Group text, Teams, virtual video group chat and in person
Client: Dr. Betrus	Discussion focus group questions	Tuesday, 11:00am, 03.31.2020	Needs Assessment plan
Dr. Miller	Project concerns, questions, final Needs Assessment plan and	Once a week or when needed.	Project concerns, questions, final Needs Assessment plan and presentation.

	presentation.		
Students & Faculty	Focus Group Email interview request	04.6.2020 – 4.16.2020	Email
Students & Faculty	Started Focus Group interview data	4/08/2020 – 4/19/2020	Zoom, email, Final Data collection

### Data Collection Methods

The plan for gathering information is to assemble responses from two different groups of people: students and faculty. In order to gather this information, we conducted both virtual focus groups and email messages with our questions.

**What:** Focus group interview via zoom

**Who:** SUNY Potsdam M.S. Management Students

**When:** Zoom Focus group interview will begin on April 8th. The Zoom Focus Group Interview will be completed in a period of two weeks.

**Purpose:** By targeting the current MS Management students it will help to identify the needs if they had to attend a fully online MS Management program. Getting their feedback on what the key essentials necessary to run the MS Management fully online may also help faculty design course with that meets the students' needs, which can lead to increased number of enrollments in the program. There are approximately 35 students currently enrolled in MS Management program. The group hopes to see results from half the population.

**Limitations:** MS Management students are in its entirety adults with other professional and household duties to have 20 or 30 minutes to seat for a Zoom interview. To mitigate the schedules conflict, emails with questions were sent hoping to return with answers.

**What:** Zoom Interview / email

**Who:** Faculty

**When:** Interview request will be sent to the faculty on April 8th. And for those that can't do zoom interview we will email the questions and the faculty will have just over one week to complete the questionnaire.

**Purpose:** By targeting the faculty, it is possible to determine venues that can be most utilized to meet the students' goal. Getting their opinion on what MS Management are offered may also help to promote the program and student's satisfaction in general, which can lead to increase the enrollment.

**Limitations:** Faculty tend to have occupied schedules that 20 or 30 minutes for video interview can be difficult, so the alternative we planned is to those that we cannot have a zoom call is to email a questionnaire that they could respond and send back.

## Analyses (Findings)

Data analysis for this project utilized a simple qualitative approach. For the focus group type questions, frequency statistics were used to summarize that data. The percent agreement was reported for each question, along with question's average response value. This allowed the group to make observations and draw basic conclusions regarding the M.S Management program for online.

We conducted fourteen focus group interviews were distributed 11 students and 4 faculty members in the M.S Management program at SUNY Potsdam. All fourteen interviews were completed (100% response rate) and the results were compiled per graphs below.

## Data Results from students Interview Questions

In this section, the graduate students were asked a set of questions from their experience and perspective of online learning. The results for questions 1- 6B are detailed in the respective figure 1 – 6.

1) *What is your favorite part about the MS Management program?*

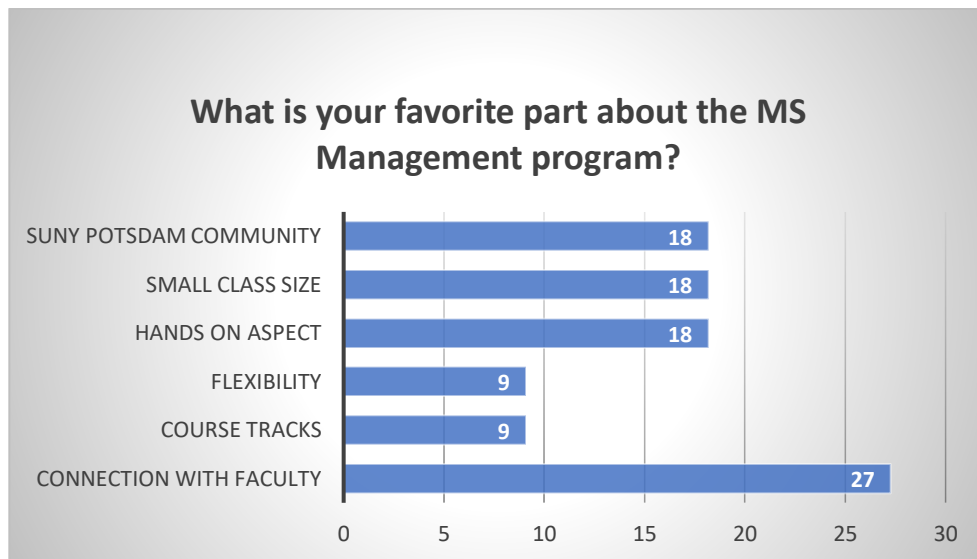


Figure 4. Favorite part of M.S. Management

2) *What do you like best about taking courses face to face?*

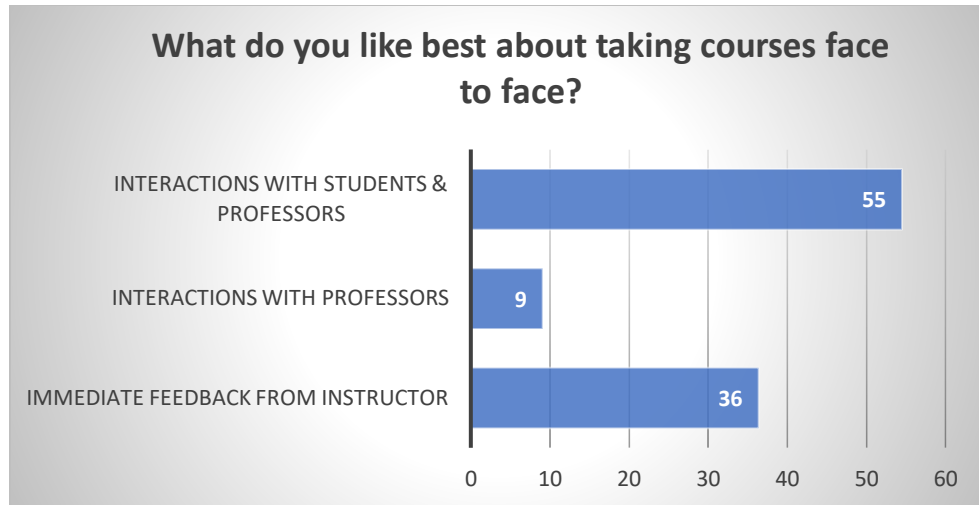


Figure 5. Best about face-to-face

3) *What do you like best about taking online courses?*

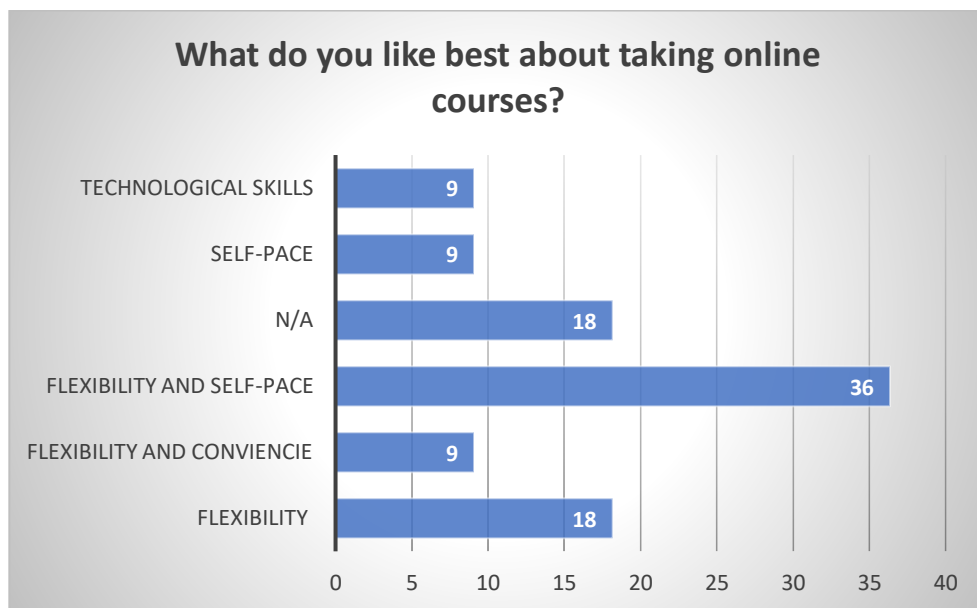


Figure 6. Best about Online

4) *The MS Management faculty wants to be attentive to your needs as students. What advice do you have to the faculty as they develop and deliver their online courses?*

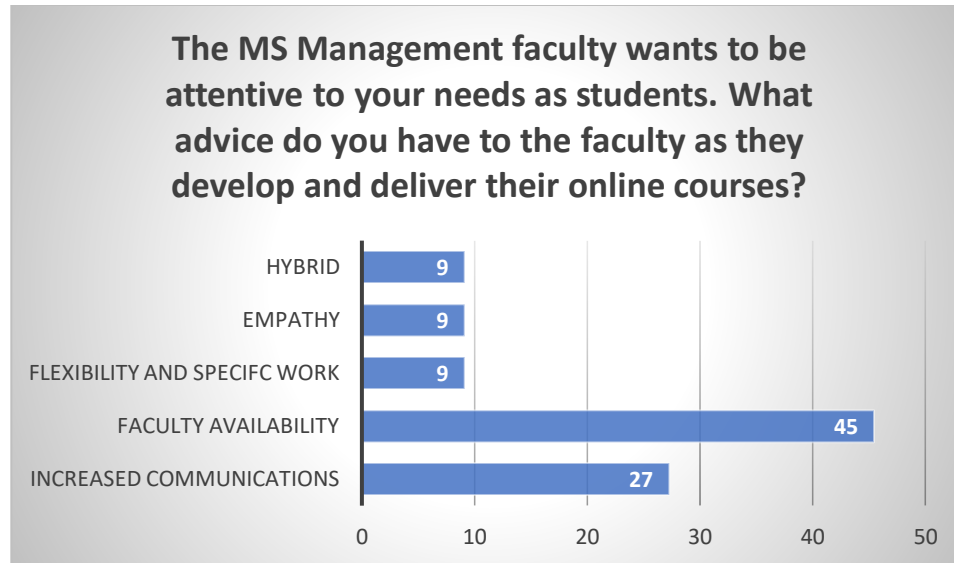


Figure 7. Advice to the faculty

5a) What are your feelings about the quality of the *course materials* in your online courses?

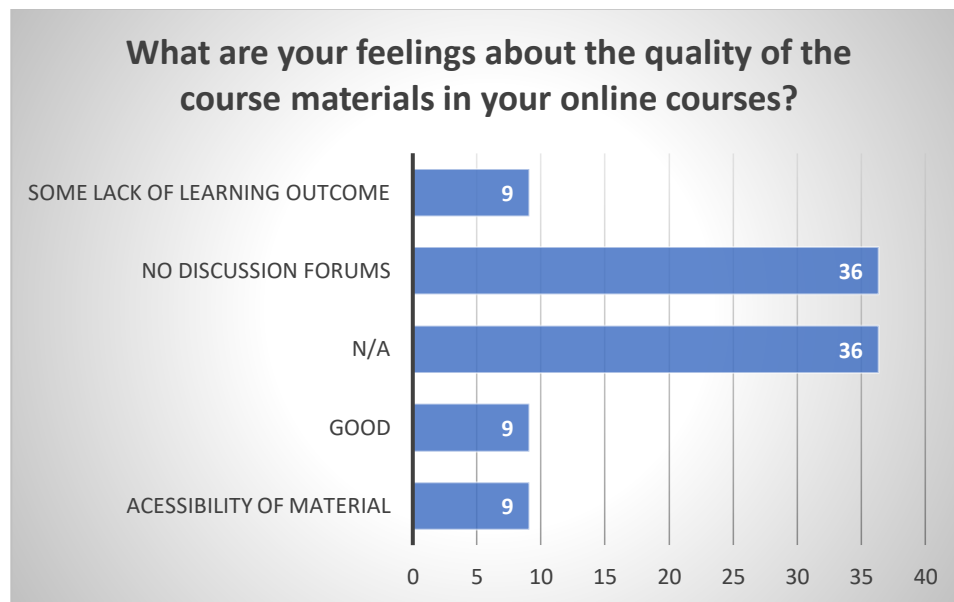


Figure 8. Course Materials quality

5b) How do you feel about *interacting with your fellow students, synchronously or asynchronously* in an online environment? What has worked well for you? What has not?

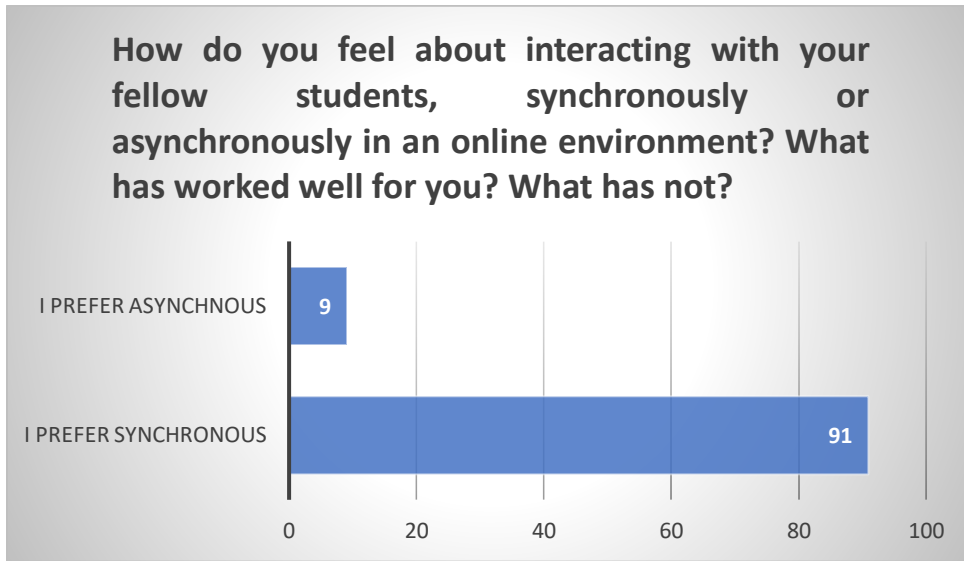


Figure 9. Interaction with students

5c) How do you feel about *interacting with your instructor, synchronously or asynchronously* in an online environment? What has worked well for you? What has not?

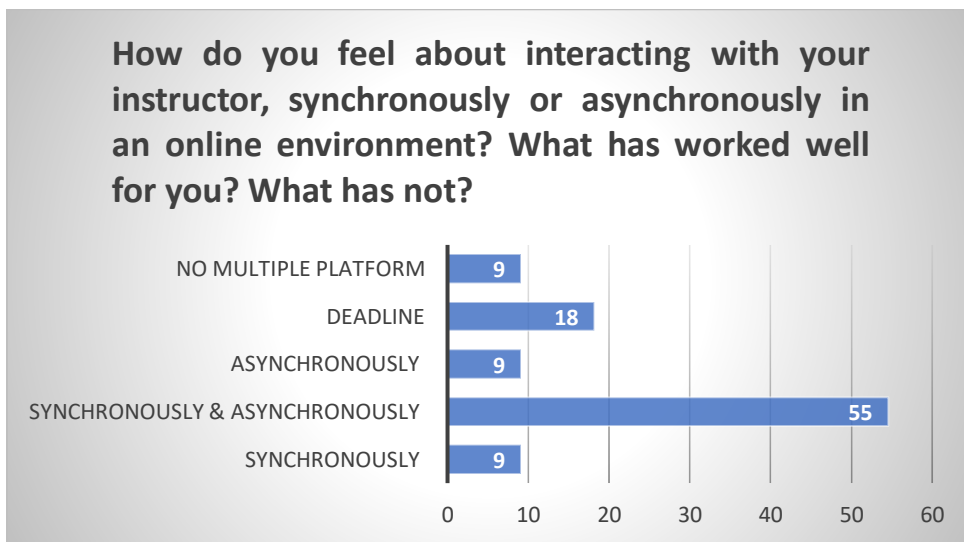


Figure 10. Interaction with instructor

5d) What would be the ideal **term length** of a course? Would you prefer full term (16 weeks), ½ term (7 weeks), or shorter durations like 3, 4, or 5 weeks courses?

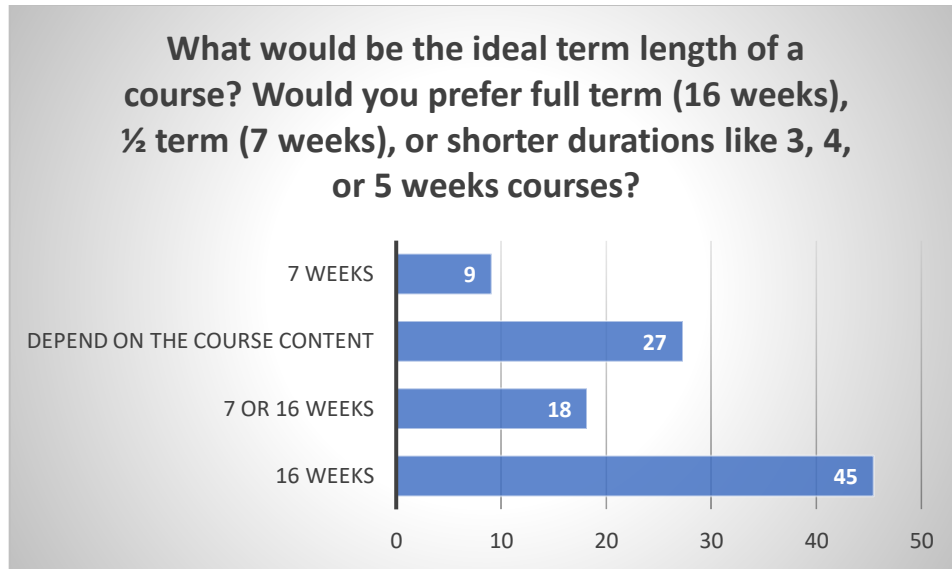


Figure 11. Term length

5e) What could faculty do to ensure that students are *assessed* fairly and appropriately?

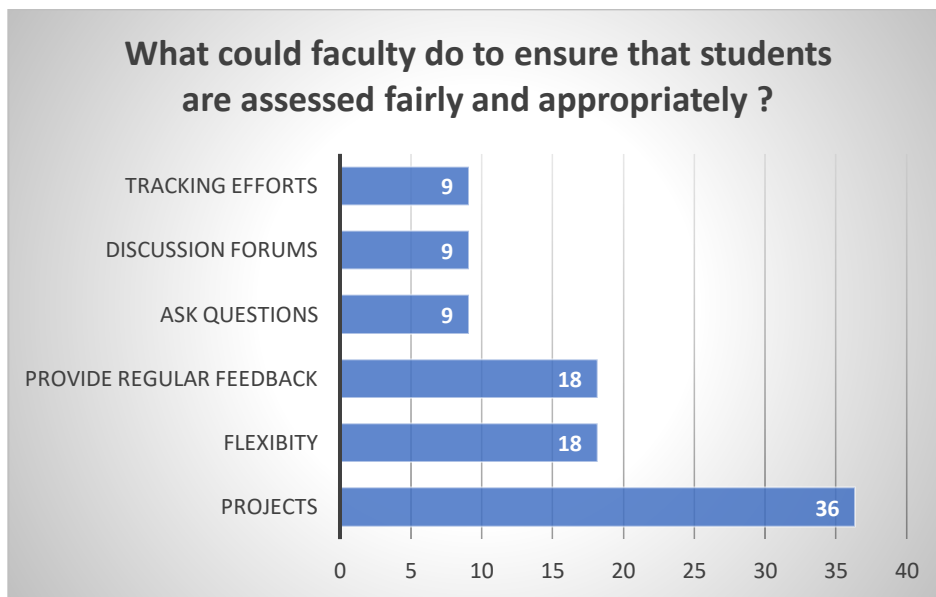


Figure 12. Top assessment type

5f) What are your thoughts on *advisement*? Synchronous, Asynchronous, both?

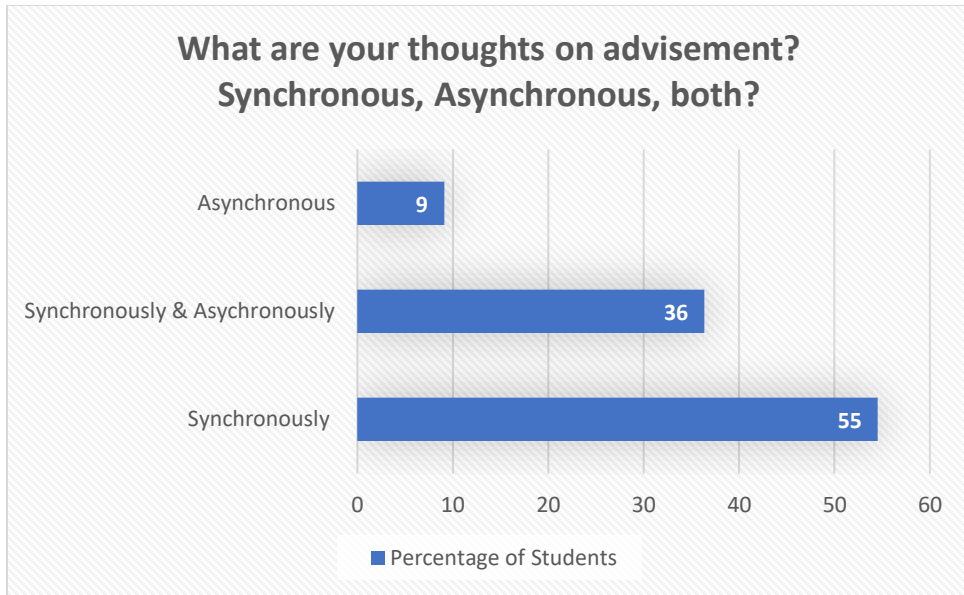


Figure 13. Advisement

6) We are going to have an **orientation** to the online program for all students. Based on your experiences with the online program, what do you feel should be included in this orientation?

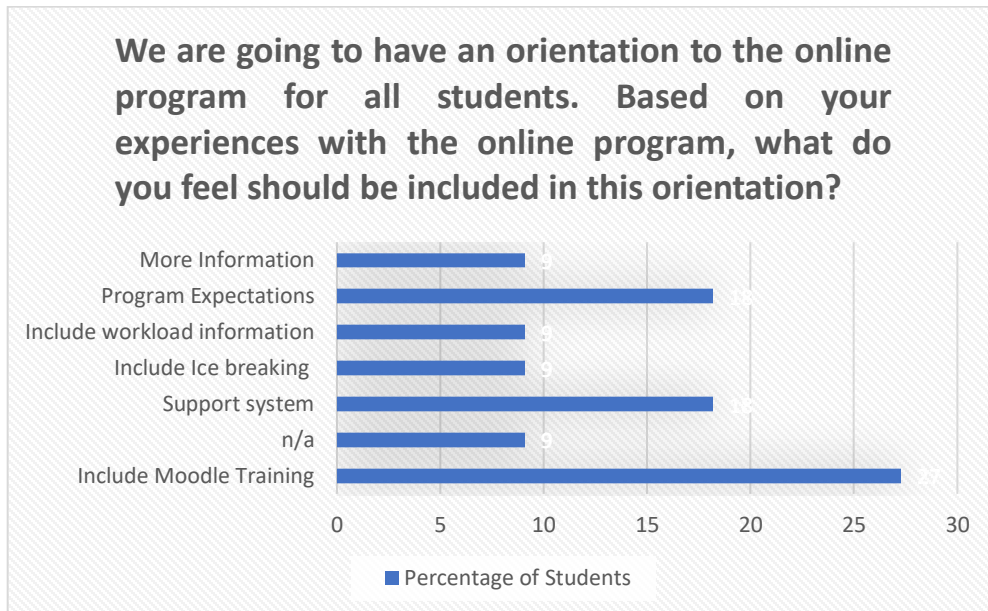


Figure 14. Orientation

6b) What do you feel should be the **minimum technology requirements** for students in the online program? Laptop, Camera, Internet Speed, Microphone.

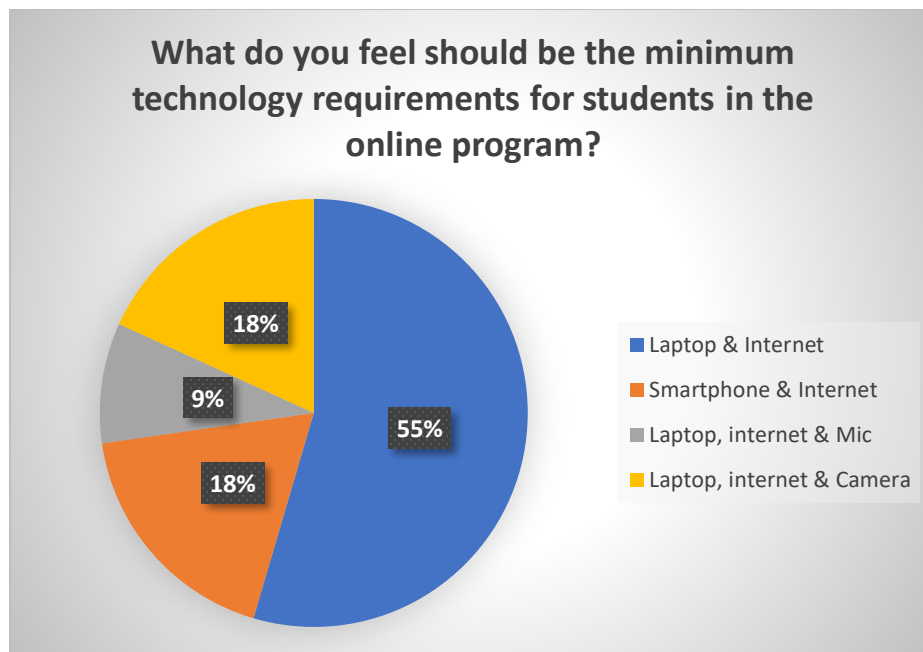


Figure 15. Technology requirement

### Data Results from Faculty Interview Questions

In this section, the faculty were asked a set of questions from their experience and perspective of online learning. The results for questions 1- 7 are detailed in the respective figure 13 – 25.

1) What is your favorite part about teaching in the MS Management program?

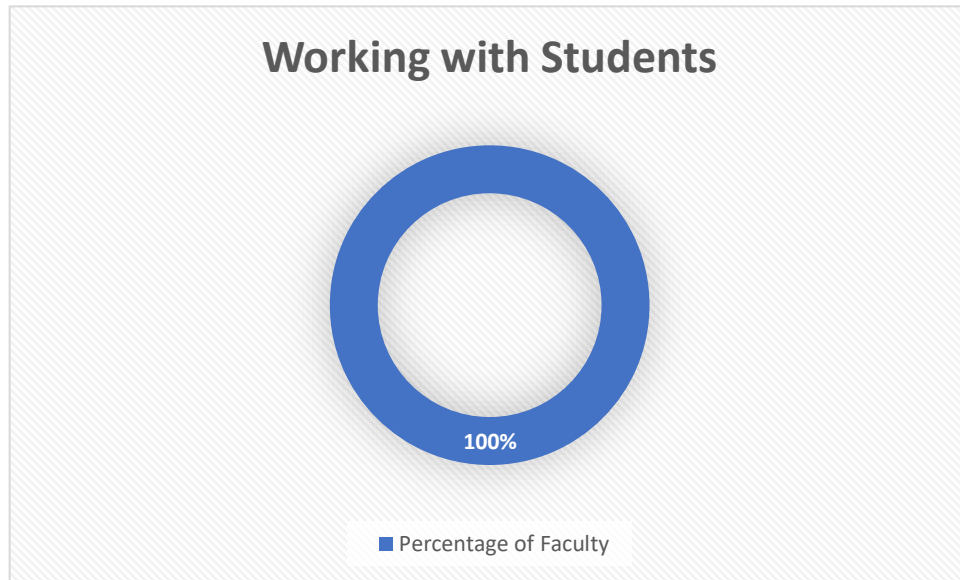


Figure 16. Favorite part of the M.S. Management

2) What do you like best about teaching courses face to face?

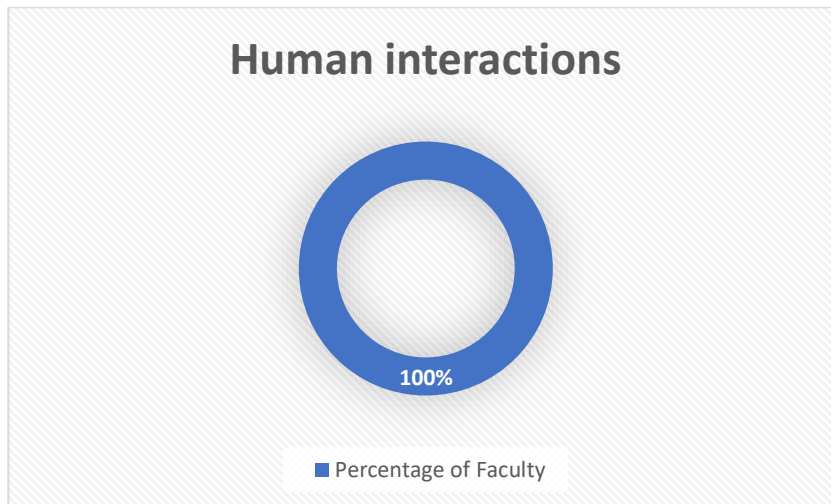


Figure 17. Best about face-to-face

3) What do you like best about teaching online courses?

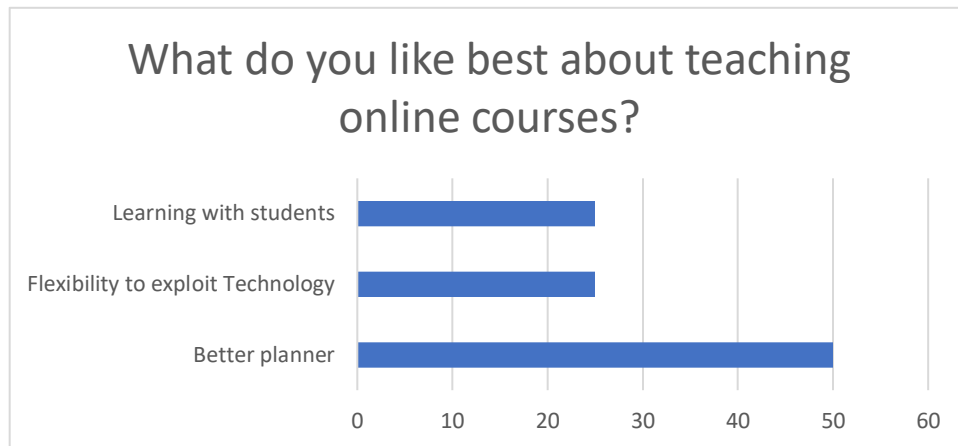


Figure 18. Best about online

4) What advice do you have for other MS Management faculty as they develop and deliver their online courses?

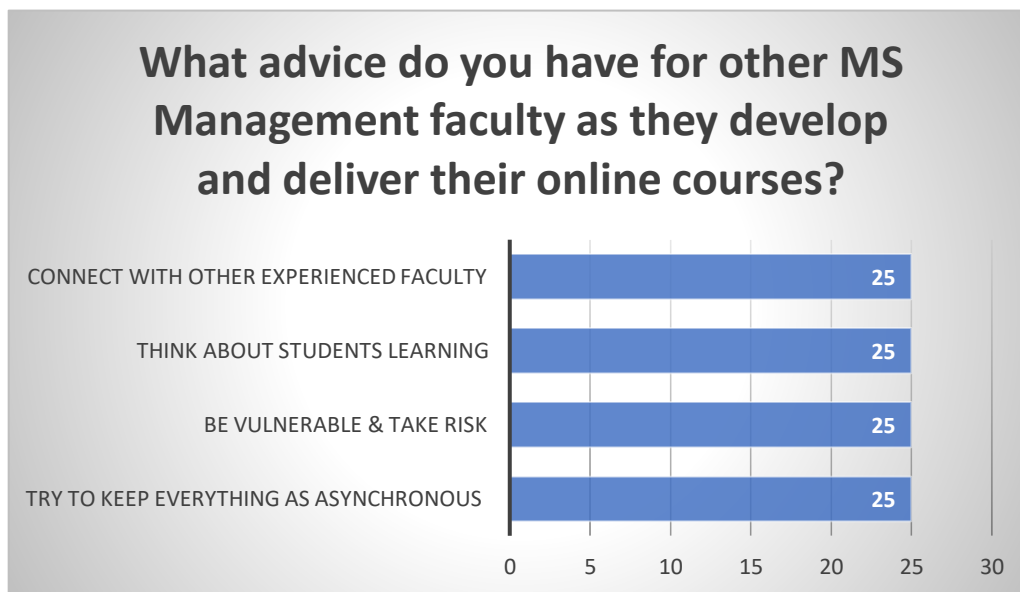


Figure 19. Top advice

5a) What are your feelings about the quality of the **course materials** in your online courses?

## What are your feelings about the quality of the course materials in your online courses?

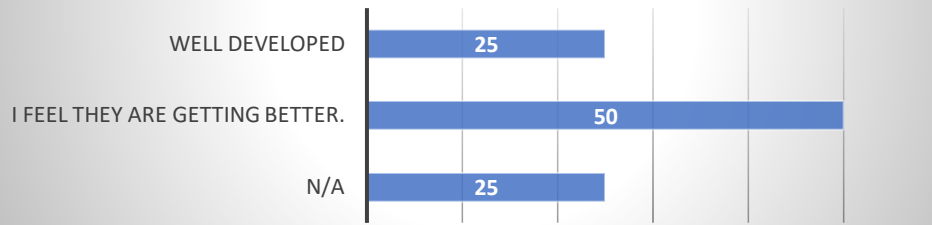


Figure 20. Course material

5b) How do feel about in your online courses? What has worked well for you? What has not?

## Percentage of Faculty

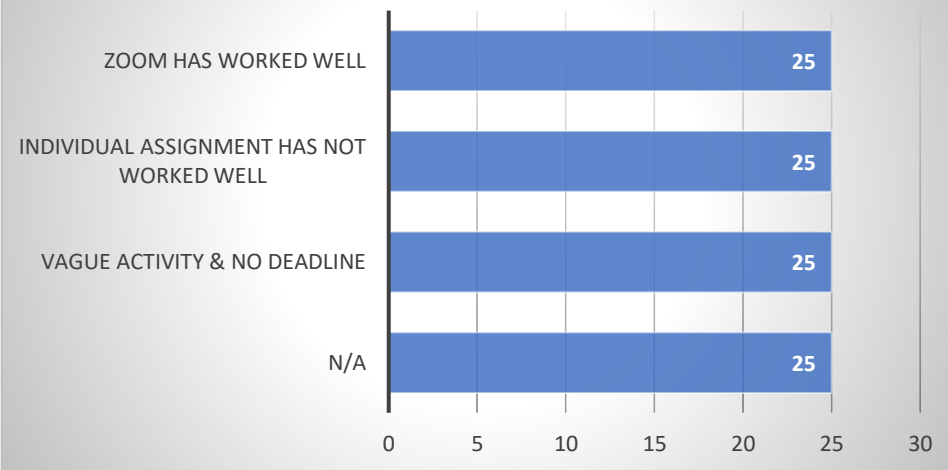


Figure 21. What has worked well and what has not.

5c) How do you feel about **interacting with your *students*, synchronously or asynchronously** in an online environment? What has worked well for you? What has not?

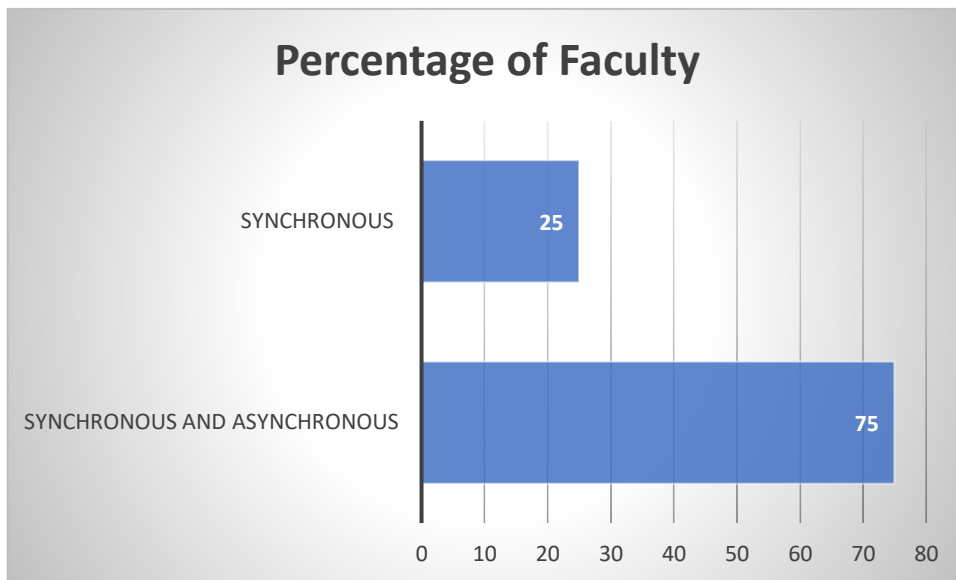


Figure 22. Interacting with students

5d) What would be the ideal **term length** of a course? Would you prefer full term (16 weeks), 1/2 term (7 weeks), or shorter durations like 3, 4, or 5 weeks courses?

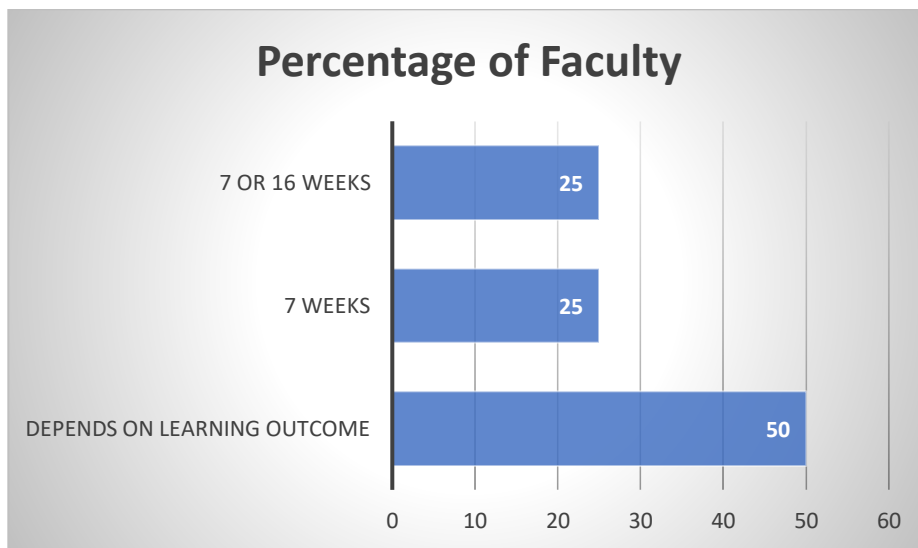


Figure 23. Term length

5e) What do you do to ensure that students are **assessed** fairly and appropriately?

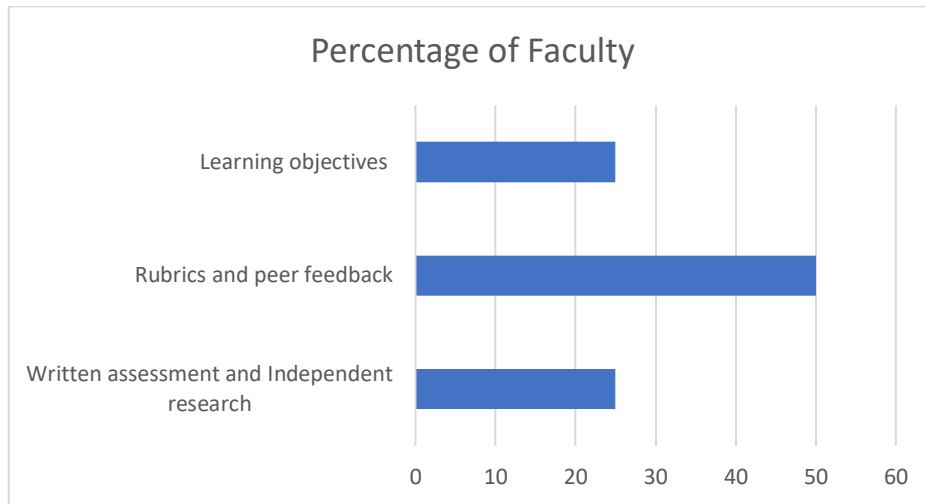


Figure 24. Top assessment

5f) What are your thoughts on **advisement**? Synchronous, Asynchronous, both?

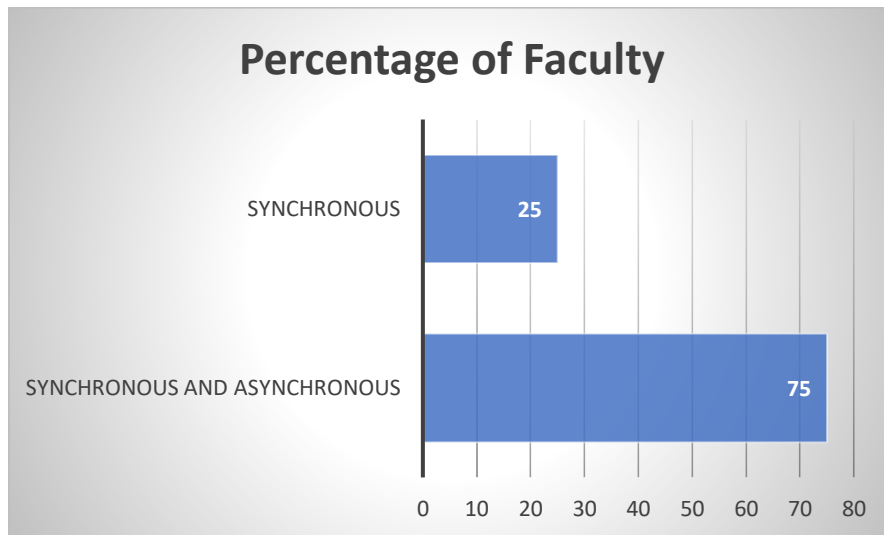


Figure 25. Advisement

6) We are going to have an **orientation** to the online program for all students. Based on your experiences with the online program, what do you feel should be included in this

orientation?

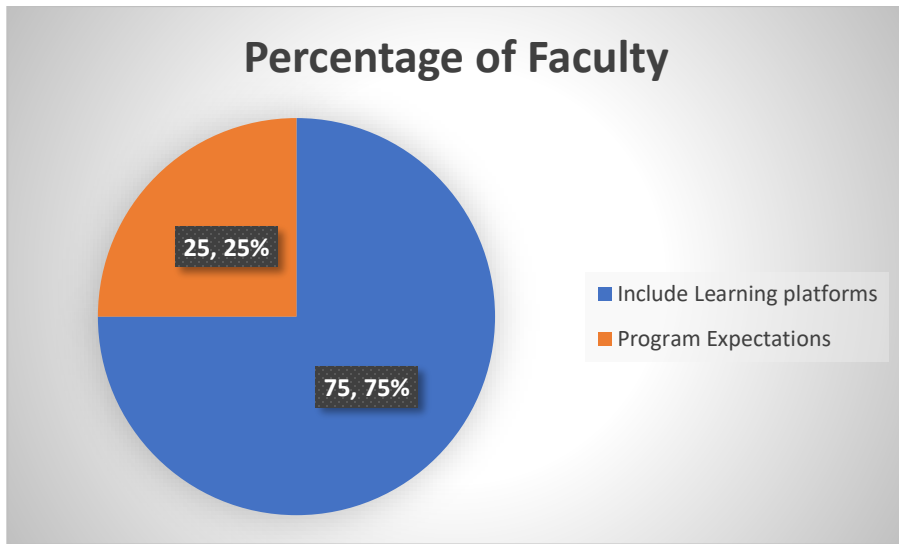


Figure 26. Orientation

6b) What do you feel should be the **minimum technology requirements** for students in the online program? Laptop, Camera, Internet Speed, Microphone.

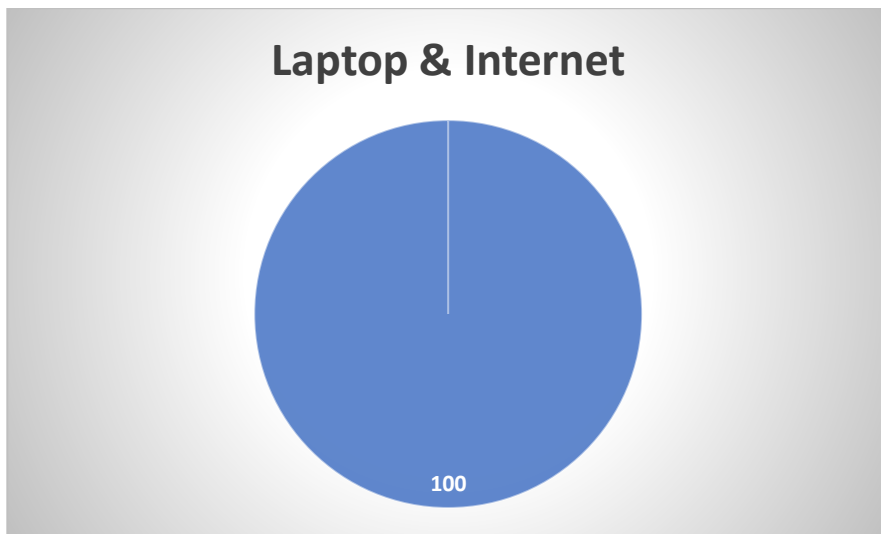


Figure 27. Technology requirements

7) Do you feel there are any institutional barriers that SUNY Potsdam needs to address in order to fully support online learning?

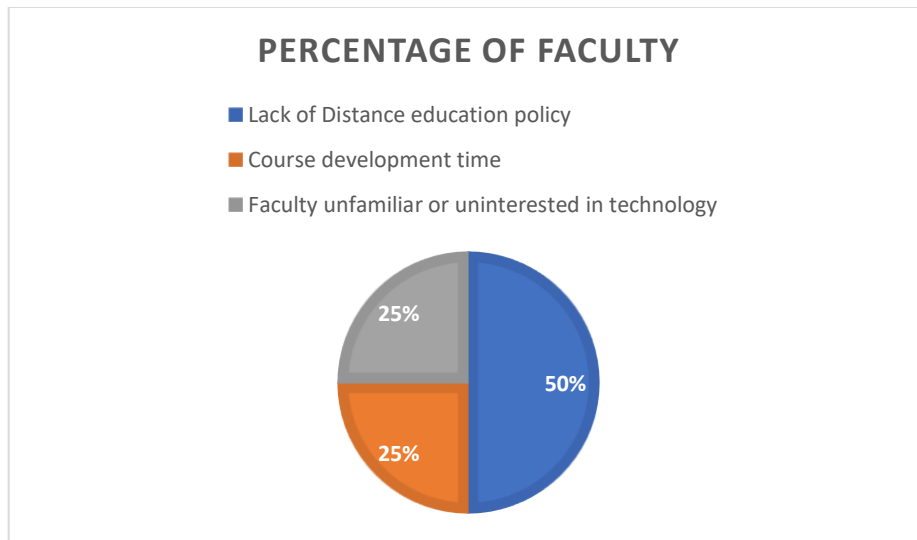


Figure 28. Potential Barriers

## Recommendations

### **1. *Distance Education Policy***

As SUNY Potsdam prepares to launch a fully online program in the coming semesters, it will require the campus to have a distance education policy in place to regulate a new form of teaching for faculty and students who are not physically in the classrooms. The policy is intended to establish standards on how to conduct online learning and the expectations needed to help both faculty and students who are the critical actors in this policy.

### **2. *Student Interactions***

Incorporate Interaction-based activities in every class. In questions 1,2 and 4 shows that the majority of students expressed the interaction component with faculty and peers. So, keeping students actively engaged with each other promotes student success. And the interaction-based activities include but are not limited to:

- ⇒ group projects
- ⇒ group case studies
- ⇒ role playing
- ⇒ synchronous or asynchronous discussions or debates
- ⇒ collaborative brainstorming

### **3. *Comprehensive Online Orientation (optional personal mentor)***

Provide students with an online orientation which includes an introduction to SUNY Potsdam's online learning environment (netiquette and standard codes of behavior online to promote positive communication channels) and information and resources about how they can be successful in the MS Management program.

As the data shows from question 6, Figure 25, provide a high-level overview of what services are available to students (library, health center, athletic facilities (relevant if student is close to campus), support for students with disabilities, international student information, career services, access to tutoring, bookstore, I.D. cards, I.T. help, instructions for the LMS (Moodle) with tutorials.

Finally, provide students with the option to request a personal mentor who can guide them through any of the processes and be a support system during their time in the program.

#### ***4. Advisement and Coaching***

According to Question 5f, Figure 24, provide a comprehensive MS Management course sequence “map” to keep students focused on their path to degree completion instead of a traditional “take this course” then “that course” overview. Students interested in the online MS Management program will want to know what the entire program looks like (all 11 courses) and what they will need to plan for.

Our data suggests that students and professors alike can benefit from individualized synchronous advisement/coaching sessions. These sessions can provide students with more than just a course schedule & can include conversations about career choices and development, life skills, and job possibilities.

#### ***5. Implement Stop, Start, Continue***

According to Question 5E, Figure 25, to meet the feedback requirement, implement the teaching tool “Stop, Start, Continue”.

Stop=what the students wish to stop

Start=something the students would like you to start doing in class or something they would like to do themselves in class

Continue=things that are already happening in class that the students wish to continue

#### ***6. Course Development and Instructional Design***

The majority of faculty expressed their concern with the amount of planning time. An instructional designer is recommended to be a consultant to work with current faculty, especially those transitioning to an online teaching platform.

According to Question 7, Figure 28, to fully support online learning provide training and workshops for faculty who are unfamiliar with technology to enhance the delivery method of course content via online learning. This can include Moodle, Zoom, Teams, Google and other advanced forms of communication and technology.

## Appendix

### **Appendix A**

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Angela, Kayla and I would like to invite you to take part in a focus group (small discussion group) on April 10, 11 and 12<sup>th</sup> via Zoom at 11 am about MS Management Students Need to move online. This is a group project for Needs Assessment class. The focus group should last no longer than 45 minutes. In particular, we would like to know more about your needs for learning as if you were attending solely online in the MS Management program or other master's Program at SUNY Potsdam.

Please reply to this email you can't make Friday, April 10<sup>th</sup>, and would like to reschedule for another time or day.

Thank you in advance for your help.

One Love  from this TRIO.

## Appendix B

### Students Interview Questions

- 1) *What is your favorite part about the MS Management program?*
- 2) *What do you like best about taking courses face to face?*
- 3) *What do you like best about taking online courses?*
- 4) *The MS Management faculty wants to be attentive to your needs as students. What advice do you have to the faculty as they develop and deliver their online courses?*
- 5a) *What are your feelings about the quality of the **course materials** in your online courses?*
- 5b) *How do you feel about **interacting with your fellow students, synchronously or asynchronously** in an online environment? What has worked well for you? What has not?*
- 5c) *How do you feel about **interacting with your instructor, synchronously or asynchronously** in an online environment? What has worked well for you? What has not?*
- 5d) *What would be the ideal **term length** of a course? Would you prefer full term (16 weeks), ½ term (7 weeks), or shorter durations like 3, 4, or 5 weeks courses?*
- 5e) *What could faculty do to ensure that students are **assessed** fairly and appropriately?*
- 5f) *What are your thoughts on **advisement**? Synchronous, Asynchronous, both?*
- 6) *We are going to have an **orientation** to the online program for all students. Based on your experiences with the online program, what do you feel should be included in this orientation?*
- 6b) *What do you feel should be the **minimum technology requirements** for students in the online program? Laptop, Camera, Internet Speed, Microphone.*

### **Appendix C**

#### **Faculty Interview Questions**

- 1) What is your favorite part about teaching in the MS Management program?

- 2) What do you like best about teaching courses face to face?
- 3) What do you like best about teaching online courses?
- 4) What advice do you have for other MS Management faculty as they develop and deliver their online courses?
- 5a) What are your feelings about the quality of the **course materials** in your online courses?
- 5b) How do you feel about  in your online courses? What has worked well for you? What has not?
- 5c) How do you feel about **interacting with your students, synchronously or asynchronously** in an online environment? What has worked well for you? What has not?
- 5d) What would be the ideal **term length** of a course? Would you prefer full term (16 weeks), ½ term (7 weeks), or shorter durations like 3, 4, or 5 weeks courses?
- 5e) What do you do to ensure that students are **assessed** fairly and appropriately?
- 5f) What are your thoughts on **advisement**? Synchronous, Asynchronous, both?
- 6) We are going to have an **orientation** to the online program for all students. Based on your experiences with the online program, what do you feel should be included in this orientation?
- 6b) What do you feel should be the **minimum technology requirements** for students in the online program? Laptop, Camera, Internet Speed, Microphone.
- 7) Do you feel there are any institutional barriers that the SUNY Potsdam needs to address in order to fully support online learning?

## Appendix D

### Needs Assessment Team Project Report Outline Guidance

Table of Contents	Include page numbers to reference each section.	Page(s)#
Program to be Assessed	Describe the Program being Assessed.	Angela
Project Description & Overview	Introductory section summarizing the needs Assessment Project.	Page(s)# Kayla
Team Overview	Section includes a biography paragraph for each team member.	Page(s)# All
Program Setting, Background, History	1-2 pages describing the broader organization and the program /unit/service being assessed including background, history, of the program /unit/service (e.g. Esports Program, Athletic Facility Needs to Improve Student Experience at Clarkson University, Online Needs/Services for the MS in Management Online Program).	Page(s)# Kayla
Clients(s) & Stakeholders and Audience	Describe the clients, stakeholders and audience.	Page(s)# Angela
Introductory Purpose/Problem Statement	Describe the focus/foci guiding the Needs Assessment. This is typically 1-2 paragraphs.	Page(s)# Angela
Front End Analysis (Primary and Secondary Focus Questions)	Primary & Secondary focus questions should be congruent with the Introductory Purpose/problem statement.	Page(s)# Angela
Contextual Factors	Describe Contextual factors (include internal and external factors and conditions, drivers/forces of change and challenges)	Page(s)# Kayla
Project Management Plan	This is a table listing each phase/step in the assessment project. Include dates or date ranges. A Gantt chart or similar calendar illustration is useful.	Page(s)# Jorge
Data Collection Methods	Describe the data collection methods (e.g., interviews, surveys, focus groups, program records/data, etc.) Survey Instruments and Interview Protocols can be listed separately here or listed separately in the appendix.	Page(s)# Jorge
Analyses (Findings)	Respond to Focus Questions, Describe Root Cause(s).	Page(s)# Jorge
Recommendations	Include a prioritized list of recommendations and suggestions for improvement. Based on client preference, you may also prioritize recommendations within each focus questions and root causes.	Page(s)# All
Executive Summary	Includes a 1-2 pages summary of the project. This is synthesis the focus of the assessment, findings, recommendations, caveats, etc.	Page(s)# All

Appendix	List supporting documents (survey/focus group instruments, references, reports, planning documents, IRB application, etc.)	Page(s)#
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Client Meeting #1 March 25, 2020

**Appendix E**  
**Meeting note #1**

Present: Tony Betrus, Rick Miller, Angela Harvey, Nsundidi Jorge, Kayla Herne

Client: Tony Betrus

Stakeholders: Alan Grant, Rick Miller, Karen Caldwell, Seon Levius, Chris Burl, Greg Gardner, Nikki Zeledon

Timeline: 2 months

### **Priority #1**

Online Course Development

- Prerequisite: apply for online status (completed)
- Create focus groups, one on one interviews, surveys
- Include JCC students

### **Priority #2**

Faculty Needs (Staff Interviews) and Student Needs (Current Grad Student Interviews)

### **Priority #3**

Preserve the integrity of SUNY Potsdam learning online

Create a high-quality experience

- May drop the cap to 15 students per class
- Work for hire

### **Priority #4**

Student Advising

- How should it be done?
- Best tool for advising records? (Excel sheet, Google sheet)
- Slate, mapping courses

### **Online Course Deliverables Options**

- Distance Learning (synchronous) vs. Online Learning (asynchronous) or a combination of both
- Optional live lectures
- Teams, Moodle, Google, other platforms

### **Issues**

- Training
- Orientation
- Expectations (outline)
- Group Work

### **Core Courses Online**

*Fall*

MGMT 608 Organizational Development (Dr. Caldwell)

MGMT 635 Research Techniques (Dr. Caldwell)  
MGMT 648 Human Capital Development (Dr. Caldwell)

*Spring*

MGMT 507 Policies, Issues, and Ethics for Professional Practice (Dr. Caldwell)  
MGMT 512 Financial Management in Organizations (Dr. Miller)  
MGMT 607 Principles of Leadership (Dr. Caldwell)  
MGMT 658 Needs Assessment (Dr. Miller)

*Online*

MGMT 511 Data Management (Dr. Levius)

**Appendix F**  
**Meeting note #2**

Client Meeting #2 April 6, 2020

Present: Tony Betrus, Angela Harvey, Nsundidi Jorge, Kayla Herne

Client: Tony Betrus

Stakeholders: Alan Grant, Rick Miller, Karen Caldwell, Seon Levis, Chris Burl, Greg Gardner,  
Nikki Zeledon

Timeline: 7 weeks

-The student/faculty survey was turned into a questionnaire that will be conducted via one-on-one interviews, di-interviews and email.

-Tony combined and revised all of our questions.

-Angela, Jorge and Kayla will begin conducting interviews asap.

-Kayla will create an Excel Sheet to keep track of client interviews.

-Group will check in on Friday for status updates.

*Sources*

Rizvi, S., Rienties, B., & Khoja, S. A. (2019). The role of demographics in online learning; A decision tree based approach. *Computers & Education, 137*, 32-47.

Hall, C., Kidman, J. (2004). Teaching and Learning: Mapping the Contextual Influences. *International Education Journal*, Vol 5, No 3, 331.