

RAMAPO COLLEGE

Course Delivery Modes Task Force

Overview

The current climate in higher education sees many institutions grappling with the challenges of balancing student access and need with the pedagogical and institutional implications of remote learning (i.e., virtual and online course delivery modes). This concern was amplified and accelerated in the past 18-plus months, when virtual and online delivery modes became necessary for colleges and programs to continue course delivery given the pandemic-necessitated implementation of restrictive health and safety guidelines on campus.

The Course Delivery Modes Task Force is convened in the spirit of shared governance and will benefit from the expertise of its members. The Task Force is charged to undertake a data-informed, disciplined, inclusive, and deliberative process to establish which course delivery modes are most pedagogically effective, best fit our curricula, meet the needs and align with the learning styles of our current and prospective undergraduate and graduate students, and are compatible with the course scheduling and financial needs of the College, as well as our practices related to the assignment of instructors. Recommendations put forth by the Task Force must align with the College's mission and values, as well as the Ramapo College experience promised to prospective and current students.

Timeline

The Course Delivery Modes Task Force will be responsible for overseeing two distinct phases of work. The first phase involves finalizing data-informed recommendations on exactly which course delivery modes can be utilized under what specific circumstances. Any recommendations approved by the Provost will be implemented on a pilot basis in a timely manner. The second phase involves assessing the effectiveness of each recommendation implemented during the pilot period, making suggestions related to any necessary changes for future terms/semesters, and adjusting course, as needed, to coincide with the Strategic Plan that is currently under development. Any recommendations that emerge from the second phase will be subject to approval by the Provost.

A communication plan, to be developed by the Office of the Provost in consultation with the Chair of the Course Delivery Modes Task Force, will include the announcement of recommendations scheduled to be implemented on a pilot basis and details related to the actual implementation. The communication plan will include stakeholder cohort-specific messages written for students, faculty, staff, parents, etc. that will be strategically and deliberately disseminated through various avenues/media channels.

The table below outlines the timeline of tasks that must be completed in phase one. Provided all indicated deadlines are met, it is expected that the Task Force recommendations may be implemented to begin *as early as* the Winter 2022-2023 term. It is important to note that course schedule build timelines and future semester/term registration dates may impact the timeline outlined in the table in which case the recommendations will be implemented in a *later term/semester, as practical*.

Date/Deadline	Tasks to be Completed
11/17/2021	finalize membership of the Task Force (TF); select Chair from faculty serving on the TF; set tentative TF meeting schedule, identify internal and external data to consider, begin data collection
11/24/2021	the Provost and TF Chair will establish a frequent standing meeting schedule to ensure open lines of communication during phase one
03/04/2022	submit final draft of TF recommendations to the Provost
03/11/2022	Provost provides response or meets with TF (or TF Chair) to convey approval/non-

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	approval of various TF recommendations // in the case of non-approval, the TF may submit adjusted recommendations to the Provost for approval, which must occur by no later than 03/31/2022
04/06/2022	TF Chair presents a summary of the TF's work in phase one and each recommendation (i.e., as line items) at the FA meeting
04/27/2022	FA votes on each recommendation (i.e., as line items)
<p>The Communication Plan will commence so that the entire College community is informed of course delivery modes available in upcoming semesters/terms.</p> <p>The TF will develop, in collaboration with the Office of the Provost, a timeline for phase two following the completion of the Communication Plan.</p>	

Course Delivery Modes Task Force Membership

The Course Delivery Modes Task Force shall be comprised of College stakeholders inclusive of representatives from the groups listed below. All representatives are expected to fully participate in all Task Force meetings, conduct research and collect data assigned to them, and facilitate bidirectional communication regarding the Task Force's work through their respective stakeholder channels.

The faculty members and Librarian on the Task Force should be approved by their Units rather than selected and appointed by their Deans/Director, and the Task Force Chair should be selected from this group. Administrators and staff members are to be identified and appointed to the Task Force by their Unit Managers/Supervisors.

- Deans (2)
- Faculty Assembly Executive Committee Members or Designee(s) (2)
- One faculty member from each School and the Library (6) (Note: Tenure is *not* required, but temporary faculty should not be on this Task Force.)
- Chair of the Graduate Council (1)
- Registrar or Designee from the Office of the Registrar (1)
- Representative from the Center for Student Success (1)
- Representative from the Office of International Education (1)
- Representative from the Office of Equity, Diversion, Inclusion, and Compliance (1)
- Representative from the Office of Special Services (1)
- Non-voting representative from the SGA (1) (Note: The student representative may not be included in *all* meetings or deliberations due to personnel-related or sensitive topics that may be discussed.)
- The Task Force may identify and request feedback from other offices on campus, as warranted based on the data and other factors to consider.

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Data & Other Factors to Consider

- Pedagogical effectiveness
- Middle States and program-specific accreditation implications
- Graduate versus undergraduate course delivery modes
- Year-specific (e.g., first-year, fourth-year) student needs and academic performance
- Discipline-specific or course type-specific needs (e.g., some programs may not utilize certain course delivery modes, some course types – lecture, seminar, lab, studio, lecture series – may not utilize certain course delivery modes)
- Term/semester appropriateness (e.g., summer/winter sessions versus fall/spring semesters; the USDOE-required minimum class meeting/instruction times must be considered)
- Course delivery site (e.g., courses that are delivered off-site)
- Course section delivery mode versus class session delivery mode (i.e., the difference between a *course section* being delivered for the entire semester via a particular mode and the opportunity to deliver a specific *class session* using a particular mode)
- Student preference [e.g., first-year preferences expressed to CSS in Summer 2021; Fall 2021 course fill rates across delivery modes (despite the potential problems with extrapolating from COVID times to post-COVID times); number of complaints to Deans, advisors, Registrar, OSS, Office of the Provost, etc. about various modes]
- Grade distribution comparison for students who took in-person after remote or in-person then in-person for course sequences
- Potential for academic integrity violations/academic dishonesty
- Impact on faculty teaching assignments and faculty work conditions (Note: This may require/involve conversations with the local AFT.)
- Impact on faculty responsibilities/engagement outside of the classroom
- Budget/revenue implications
- Degree to which *presence on campus*, for both faculty and students, results in serendipitous interactions and experiences that, in sum, contribute to the overall richness and value of the College experience
- Degree to which adopting various course delivery modes under specific circumstances align with the College's mission and values and the Ramapo College experience promised to prospective and current students
- Delivery modes at other NJ public higher education institutions and peer institutions (especially for graduate programs if this might increase the attractiveness of Ramapo's programs)