**SUNY Faculty Development Conference**

**SUNY New Paltz, 04-05 April 2019**

**“Individualization at a time of competition and standardization: Can we pull it off?”**

**Roundtable Discussion: Shantih Clemans and Alan Mandell, SUNY Empire State College**

**Thursday 04 April 10:45 am**

**Summary Notes**

We offered this roundtable as one opportunity to think together about “individualized education,” one of the goals for SUNY as set forth by Chancellor Kristina Johnson. Our hope was to describe some of the tensions regarding the call for individualization that we have faced and that concern us at SUNY Empire State College. Here are some of the topics and themes that emerged in our discussion:

1. Student need for different kinds of “structures” as they try to more fully participate in their learning;
2. The many ways in which the word “individualized” is even used; awareness of our definitions and assumptions;
3. What does student “autonomy” mean? Is it our goal? How might it manifest itself?
4. There is a difference between “individualized study” and “independent study;”
5. Students come to us with different purposes; the need to be aware of what those purposes are;
6. Students (at different times in their college educations) are often quite uncertain; how can we account for and respond to that uncertainty?
7. SUNY online and new course creation; how can we make space for individualization in an online course that is created for many many students?
8. The realities of “scalability;” are there major tensions between individualization and scalability? Are they are real odds with each other?
9. Relationships are important in all of our connections with students; how can we develop and maintain such relationships?
10. The importance of general education requirements as one way to encourage students to explore and think about new options—in effect, to make their educations their own?
11. “Individualization” can office at different levels; for example, it can occur at the course level; and it can also occur at the degree level;
12. The use of “summative reflection” (at the end of a course; at different points along the way in a student’s studies) as a way to encourage students to think about their on-going learning and its connections to their personal, academic and professional goals (they may be changing over time!);
13. Even in more preset paths (e.g., preset curricula/programs), how can we find space for students to take the lead, to make choices and decisions, to see themselves as active learners?

If we missed something from the roundtable discussion, please let us know. Also, we welcome hearing from you on your experiences with the theme of “individualization.”

Thank you,

Alan Mandell and Shantih Clemans

SUNY Empire State College