

Flexible Learning Implementation Committee Quarterly Report

Activities through August 18, 2022

Membership

- Jim Kurose, Associate Chancellor, Partnerships and Innovation and Distinguished University Professor, College of Information and Computer Sciences (co-chair)
- John Wells, Senior Vice Provost for Lifelong Learning and Professor, Operations and Information Management (co-chair)
- Jenny Adams, Associate Professor, English
- Carolyn Bassett, Associate Provost for Student Success
- Jacqueline Castledine, Chair, UWW
- Kristin Famighette, Project Manager
- Michelle Goncalves, Deputy Chief of Staff, Chancellor's Office (Administrative Liaison)
- Deb Gould, Vice Provost for Administration & Finance
- Claire Hamilton, Associate Provost and Director, Center for Teaching and Learning
- Sarah Hutton, Interim Dean, UMass Libraries
- Ken Kleinman, Professor, Biostatistics and Epidemiology
- Adam Lechowicz, Undergraduate Student, Computer Science
- Mzamo Mangaliso, Associate Professor, Isenberg School of Management
- Anne Massey, Dean and Thomas O'Brien Endowed Chair Operations & Information Management, Isenberg School of Management
- Chris Misra, Vice Chancellor for Information Technology
- Key Nuttall, Chief Marketing Officer, University Relations
- Heather Sharpes-Smith, Associate Provost of Instructional Design & Technology, and Director of Instructional Design, Engagement and Support (IDEAS)
- Mary Deane Sorcinelli, Senior Fellow, Center for Teaching and Learning
- Xiaoyun Song, PhD Student, College of Education
- Patrick Sullivan, Registrar
- Susan Weldon, Senior Director for Employee Engagement, Human Resources
- Tilman Wolf, Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Professor, Electrical and Computer Engineering

Overview and Context

This is the third quarterly report of the AY 2021-2022 Flexible Learning (FL) Implementation Committee (FLIC), covering the period May 8, 2022 – August 18, 2022. The FLIC has been [charged](#) to build on the vision and momentum of the [Spring 2021 Task Force on Flexible Learning](#), and to begin moving the campus from strategic planning to implementation, consistent with the vision and recommendations of the Flexible Learning Task Force. Earlier quarterly reports and other background material on Flexible Learning can be found in the “About” section of on the UMassFlex website, <http://www.umass.edu/flex>.

Q3 Major Activities

Q3 corresponded to our campus’ summer session, giving committee members the opportunity to advance key projects while most faculty and staff were off campus.

A concerted effort was undertaken by the FL co-chairs to reach out to units that had been less engaged with FL during the academic year, and to provide briefings to campus leadership. During Q3, meetings/briefings were held with the Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI) (July 7, 2022), Advancement (July 28, 2022), Chancellor’s Council (August 4, 2022), Dean’s council (August 9, 2022) and Student Affairs and Campus Life (August 31, 2022). The purpose of these briefings was to both present an overview at FLIC goals and accomplishments during the past academic year, as well as to look forward to AY 22/23 activities.

Each of the six subgroups also began identifying AY 22/23 priorities, in light of recommendations of the [Spring 2021 Task Force on Flexible Learning](#), and the group’s accomplishments during AY 21/22.

Other important FLIC activities took place during Q3. We list highlights below, organized by the FLIC subgroup coordinating the activity:

- **Pedagogy.** The 20 inaugural [Flex Learning Fellows](#) (FLF) completed their year-long fellowship. A panel on “[Preparing Departments and Instructors for the Flexible Future](#)” was organized at the Annual Educause

conference by leadership from Center for Teaching and Learning (CLT) and the Instructional Design, Engagement, & Support (IDEAS) group. The panel discussed UMassFlex and reflected on the FLF



Figure 1: Twenty Flex Fellows, and their larger impact.

program. A [solicitation](#) for the 2022-2023 FLF cohort was released in April 2022, and a [second cohort](#) of FLF was selected.

- **Technology.** The technology subgroup continued its “listening sessions” to better understand technology needs in support of FL. A particular focus of the tour was on Learning Management System (LMS) needs, as the subcommittee learned about campus LMS needs as it considers the advantages and disadvantages of the campus’s two current LMS model across campus, as well as other existing LMSs. The technology subgroup, working through Information Technology, continued its work on building out three technology showcase classrooms to pilot next-generation technology for classroom capture, streaming, storage, and live interaction.
- **Communications.** The communications group posted video [highlights](#) of the April 2022 UMassFlex Summit, and put policies in place for updating the UMassFlex website.
- **Finance.** Currently, university-session (e.g., residential) students who enroll in University Without Walls (UWW) courses pay additional tuition to UWW when they enroll in UWW courses. The finance subgroup completed their historical analysis of the number of students who choose this option and the financial flows of their tuition revenues to UWW, colleges, and central administration.
- **Co-curricular and Student Services.** This group continued its ongoing survey of existing flex-related offerings in co-curricular and student activities, with an aim of understanding where there are existing offerings/capabilities and where there are gaps.
- **Records and Registration.** The records and registration subcommittee continued its planning for introducing explicit UMassFlex designations into SPIRE for courses, starting with Fall 2023 classes. A first pass recommendation of the specific requirements needed for a course to have a “UMassFlex” designation was drafted.