



College Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, December 14, 2022

Williams Center, G103A

Prepared by Dr. Naomi Baldwin, Interim Chief of Staff and Executive Assistant

President's Cabinet Members Present: President Kolison, David Starrett, Tracy Stenger, Naomi Baldwin, Betty Gossett, Mike Metzger, Vicki T. Sapp

Absent: Maria Carroll

College Council Members Present: Frank Pagano, Joe Johnson, Cynthia Ahlstrom (via Zoom), Stephen Keefe, JoAnn Niebel, Richard Alexander, Ilene Thompson

Absent: AJ Dolce

Guests: Matt Sullivan, IT; Dr. Bruce Simon, Chair of University Senate; Chief Brent Isaacson, Chief of University Police Department

Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

There was a motion from Rich Alexander to approve the October, 5, 2022 minutes. The motion was seconded by JoAnn Niebel, and the minutes were approved.

Executive Session

A motion was made to go into an Executive Session by Joe Johnson and seconded by Rich Alexander.

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We returned to the regular session at 11:05 a.m.

Report from the President of the Student Association

Presented by Ms. Ilene Thompson, President of Student Association

Students voted on the student association fee and it will remain a mandatory fee, which is currently at \$118. Votes on this are held every two years. Ilene will remain SA President for the next semester, and there is a new Vice President for SA, Rosemarie Rapisarda.

Report from the President

Presented by Dr. Stephen H. Kolison, Jr., University President

President Kolison sought input from the council members about the opportunity to officially designate SUNY Fredonia as a university with New York State. While we have been using “university” in our name and branding with permission, New York State still officially lists SUNY Fredonia and the other SUNY comprehensives as colleges.

This opportunity has arisen due to a new definition of university based on the Board of Regents definition.

Many other private institutions have already begun changing their designations. Among the SUNY comprehensives, most meet the requirements, and will be pursuing this change. Oneonta has recently completed the process earlier this month and is now officially designated as a university.

This designation has implications for recruitment. For example, recruiting international students where college and university have different implications on rigor and ranking.

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President Kolison has been consulting with other stakeholders: University senate and the union representatives, for example.

Chairman Pagano proposed that we draw up a resolution in support of moving forward with the official designation of SUNY Fredonia as a university.

The motion to support the resolution was made by Joe Johnson and seconded by Joann Niebel.

President Kolison continued with his report and offered recognition to Vice President Metzger and Vice President Gosset. For the last two years, it has been a distinct privilege to work with these individuals. It has not been an easy journey, but it has been a rewarding journey. President Kolison thanked VP Metzger and VP Gossett for their work and dedication. It has been a pleasure. On behalf of the faculty, staff, and students, President Kolison wished the best in their future retirements.

Funding appropriations from SUNY were successfully secured. Provost Starrett and his team worked tirelessly to put these proposals together. No other SUNY comprehensive has received this level of funding.

The Bicentennial Fund continues to grow, and it is making significant progress even though it is less than a year and a half old.

President Kolison continues his community engagement and was recently appointed to the Chautauqua County Chamber of Commerce board. He looks forward to continuing his engagement and building relationships across our region.

Concluding with some reflections, we looked back on the last calendar year, which started with severe COVID-19 restrictions. We continued to stay operational and fulfilled our commitments to our students. President Kolison reiterated his

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commitment to facing our challenges and to doing all that he can to ensure that SUNY Fredonia has a bright future.

Special Guest, Chief Brent Isaacson

Chief Isaacson offered a report about the safety of campus, and he encouraged the College Council members to see his report as an opportunity to ensure we are marketing our safety to future students and their parents.

Chief Isaacson formerly worked with the FBI and has a background in behavioral analysis. He understands the training and prevention needed to ensure that violent events do not happen in schools. He has trained over 400 faculty and staff on our campus on how to identify behavioral markers that may precede violent acts. This training helps people recognize certain behaviors and how to support people exhibiting those behaviors. He also has a community policing program to help communication among people on campus and the University Police Officers. The officers are visible and present at events and around campus to help make these connections. Emergency access is widely available through the campus blue light phone system as well as through the traditional call-in system. We have 297 cameras on our campus with high resolution, which cover 98% of the public spaces on our campus. These are of great assistance in cases of theft as well as in accidents. The recordings are 24/7 and are monitored in an office in the UPD station.

UPD has recently completed a 911 address update. Before this update, the emergency responders from off campus did not know where to go if they were not familiar with the building names. The update includes proper street addresses to every single building on our campus that can be located through the emergency response systems.

If you visit campus, the emergency number is 716-673-3333. Calling 911 from a landline goes to Mayville's dispatch center and a 911 call from a mobile phone goes to the Village of Fredonia dispatch center. While the UPD office is notified

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when 911 is called from campus, the response can be faster when using the 10-digit number.

The Clery Act requires that we notify campus when there is a danger, and they have only had to do 2 notifications in the last 3 years. In this context, Fredonia is one of the safest areas a student can be in. We have also not had a single crime that has resulted in physical injury.

Chief Isaacson concluded his report with repeating his encouragement that we promote our campus level of safety to help us recruit students for campus.

Cynthia Ahlstrom asked how safety is evaluated. Chief Isaacson confirmed that all reports are centralized in his office for documentation. Student engagement with safety can be a different matter, however. Chief Isaacson reiterated the importance of programs such as Cones with a Cop to help promote the visibility of police officers and safety. They are also doing safety walks with officers, safety staff, and students to identify and correct issues such as replacement light bulbs and lighting on campus.

Cynthia Ahlstrom also asked how weapons are detected. Chief Isaacson confirmed that it is through routine police work - for example, a car that has an expired registration can be towed and the contents cataloged. In other instances, people on campus call and report concerns, and this level of proactiveness from the campus community is also highly beneficial at detecting potential danger. On the very rare occasion when weapons were confiscated by UPD, the weapons were not firearms.

Joann Niebel asked how the UPD is addressing threats to students. Chief Isaacson explained that if there is a crime that is the threat, they do an assessment of whether the danger is credible and imminent. In these cases, it is not protected speech and they can investigate origins of the threat, for example, threats through texts or bullying/threats on social media. We also have opportunities on

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our campus to help students learn how to have civil discussions and to practice kindness. Chief clarified that explicit threats are a crime. They have identified and followed-through with 100% of these crimes.

Joann Niebel asked about any implications for marijuana legalizations. Chief Isaacson clarified that the criminal component for marijuana is no longer an issue. The health aspects of its usage are handled through the student wellness programs and education.

Report from Finance and Administration

Presented by Mr. Mike Metzger, Vice President for Finance and Administration

Vice President Metzger thanked the College Council and reflected on the positive experience of his time with Fredonia.

He updated the group on some of the projects that have been ongoing. The Reed Library windows are now complete. We have physically centralized all ITS staff in Thompson Hall, and this move will be completed by the end of this year.

Jewett Hall designs are nearing completion and it will next go out to bid to an engineer.

To follow up on Chief Isaacson's report, the UPD has a new body cam system. And they recently completed a public relations program called Cones with a Cop.

They have initiated the Reed Library Learning Commons. This is modernizing the library space away from traditional spaces for books and toward collaboration and learning spaces.

Lanford House continues to be delayed, but is still ongoing. Maytum Plaza has also been completed and the Reed Library steps should be completed by next summer.

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The Memorial Garden phase 1 has been completed.

FSA will be moving to an online textbook service and the hardcopy textbook distribution will no longer be stored in the bookstore. This change offers financial and space savings.

There are three Electronic Vehicle charging stations around campus. Each station has two ports for community, student, and employee use. The charge is at-cost, and this is a nominal revenue source. Other benefits include bringing people to our campus from the throughway, aligning with our sustainability plans, and being ready with an infrastructure that would streamline possible use of electronic vehicles at the university.

SUNY has been encouraging shared services, and one of Fredonia's staff is overseeing FOIL requests for Fredonia as well as Brockport, Geneseo, and BuffState, who pay Fredonia for these services.

Vice President Metzger reviewed the latest budget status for 2022-23. We are holding steady at where we were at the last report in October. We are in good standing through the end of this fiscal year through the use of Federal funds and shortfall actions.

Chairman Pagano asked about the UPD bodycams and their protocol. Chief Isaacson clarified that whenever there is a call for service, the camera is on and recording. Officers have this on their vest before they address the call. After the call is addressed, the camera is turned off. The system is forensically sound and approved by the courts. In cases when privacy is an issue, the officer has the discretion to turn the recording off when there is a heightened level of sensitivity.

Chairman Pagano offered words of appreciation to Vice President Metzger.

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Report from Academic Affairs

Presented by Dr. David Starrett, Executive Vice President and Provost

Provost Starrett offered some updates on enrollment. SUNY is paying attention to enrollment system-wide and has a specialist assigned to help campuses consult. They also supported a free application period of two weeks, which doubled Fredonia's application numbers. Even if these include students who would have applied anyway, it is advantageous to have the applications in earlier so that admissions staff can begin working with the admitted students. Provost Starrett also noted that students on average are only applying to less than two institutions, and that bodes well for yield.

In addition, SUNY Fredonia was recognized by SUNY as the first to send out admissions and financial aid packages to admitted students. The data suggests that the first university to send materials to a student tends to have higher yields.

Provost Starrett reviewed some of the metrics related to the different applications - FTFY, transfer, and graduates. The numbers are very encouraging for us. For FTFY, we already have almost 4,000 applications and 3,000 of those applications were accepted.

Chairman Pagano asked for clarification about the 3,000 admitted students and how the staff follow-up with the admitted students. Provost Starrett explained that the staff follow-up both electronically and through the mail and they are focusing on yield this year. We are hiring two accepted student coaches to continue engaging with the admitted students, to talk with the students about the campus and connect them to areas of interest. Even with a modest increase in yield from last year, this will be highly beneficial for our enrollment.

Jeff Woodard also reported on the digital strategies they have been doing with advertisements. We used to put out general advertisements more broadly. Now

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we are fine-tuning our advertising platforms to target the higher yield audiences, which aligns with the Provost's strategies for enrollment and yield.

Provost Starrett also updated the group that there are significant changes underway in the organizational structure of the admissions and enrollment staff including the hiring of two new counselors and the search for the Director of Admissions.

The EAB consultant submitted their report after assessing enrollment management earlier in the fall and Provost Starrett has been working through the consultant's recommendations. In addition, SUNY is sending an enrollment specialist to continue supporting these efforts.

Ilene Thompson asked about the application process and what criteria we use for admissions. Provost Starrett reviewed the process generally and that there are several admissions criteria that are reviewed. We are accepting 75% of our applications. We are also up in applications for graduate students, and next for our campus is to make sure we have graduate programs that are attractive to new students as well as to students who are graduating with undergraduate degrees and want to continue into graduate studies.

Joann Niebel asked about the free application week. Provost Starrett reviewed that this was a week during which the application fee was waived by SUNY and prospective students were able to apply for up to 5 SUNY institutions for free. At this point in time, we are 76% higher in applications compared to the same point in time last year. We will be continuing to monitor this and see if the total applications tend to even out. SUNY has had favorable PR for this initiative, and that is a good sign that it is likely to continue. In addition to the earlier outreach, SUNY Fredonia being the first to send out admissions and financial aid materials is a very promising sign.

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Provost Starrett continued with updates about the Strategic Planning process and that we are engaging in an Academic Program Health review as part of the Academic Master Plan work. We expect drafts of the Strategic Plan to be ready by early spring.

Following up on President Kolison's update, Provost Starrett offered more details about the \$1.5M allocation from SUNY, which includes several critical faculty lines to maintain high-enrolled programs and new programs. These faculty lines are dedicated to high demand degree programs. Allocations were also awarded for new enrollment strategies.

Provost Starrett reviewed the searches underway for faculty and staff in Academic Affairs, including 16 new faculty lines in total. They are also in the process of hiring permanent Deans for the School of Music and School of Business, and they are in the initial phases to open a search for the Dean of the College of Education.

President Kolison offered words of support for these searches: Leadership will matter in the success of our institution.

Report from Student Affairs

Presented by Dr. Tracy Stenger - Interim Vice President for Student Affairs

Vice President Stenger encouraged College Council members to attend some of the athletic events coming up on campus.

There were several items highlighted to the group in demonstration of how our student health and wellness programming has been growing in its success.

Campus food pantries are located in the Williams Center and in the Health Center. The location in the Williams Center accepts more than food and offers students day-to-day essentials. This is a great resource for our students when they unexpectedly find themselves in need.

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JED Campus and BetterMynd are two programs highlighted by VP Stenger, and these have been initiated through the use of one-time HEERF funding. These programs will expand our services for suicide prevention and use teleservices to expand services for mental health to students during nights and weekends. There will be additional updates on these in the spring meetings.

Activity and engagements from students have picked up very quickly, even more than pre-COVID-19. Examples include the Halloween Bash, a special speaker on Anti-Hazing, CultureFest and Let's Talk. Based on assessment activities and feedback surveys, these programs show substantial positive impacts on students.

Report from University Advancement

Presented by Ms. Betty Gossett, Interim Vice President for University Advancement and Executive Director of the Fredonia College Foundation

The Bicentennial Fund is helping to bring resources for student access and persistence. There is currently over \$647,000 in the fund. \$200,000 of those gifts will help with additional scholarships for students this year.

Jeff Woodard offered updates on the Search Engine Optimization, which began in October. They are focusing on degree program pages to ensure that students searching for specific programs are able to find them more easily through general online searches/search engines. In the first three months alone, we are already increasing our online visibility. Mr. Woodard mentioned that students tend to search for programs more frequently than institutions.

Report from the University Senate

Presented by Dr. Bruce Simon, Chair of University Senate

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Dr. Simon reviewed the Fall 2022 activities of the University Senate. Especially with the Search Committees and the Task Forces, they have been very successful with moving forward with important shared governance initiatives.

They are also reviewing and voting on new programs, including changes from SUNY on the new general education curriculum (Fredonia Foundations). Dr. Simon reviewed several of the new programs and actions that the University Senate has approved: Revisions of programs, approving new programs, and formally cleaning up some of the deactivated programs.

Dr. Simon spoke to the College Council members about New York State advocacy in context of the upcoming New York State executive budget. Dr. Simon distributed materials to the College Council members that the SUNY University Faculty Senate and Fredonia University Senate have been working on and highlighted the important talking points with the group.

Dr. Simon concluded his report by encouraging the College Council members to coordinate advocacy through personal letters to Governor Hochul, a resolution, and/or other activities between now and the New Year. Personal letters showing connections and experiences with SUNY Fredonia are more influential than form letters. The core goal is to make sure SUNY is a national leader and to help Governor Hochul establish SUNY as her legacy.

For the spring, Fredonia University Senate will be working more on New York State advocacy, focusing on the Strategic Plan/Academic Master Plan discussions and academic program health assessments.

Remarks from Chair of College Council and College Council Members

Chairman Pagano again congratulated the Vice Presidents Metzger and Gosset on their retirements and offered appreciation to the members of the President's Cabinet for the many positive updates.

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Meeting Adjourned

Chairman Pagano called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made to adjourn by Joann Nieble and seconded by Rich Alexander, and the meeting adjourned at 12:43 p.m.