

**STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT FREDONIA
MEETING OF THE COLLEGE COUNCIL
FREDONIA UNIVERSITY VILLAGE TOWNHOUSES
FEBRUARY 19, 2020**

Present: Richard Alexander, Jillian Beard, Russell Diethrick, AJ Dolce, Stephen Keefe, JoAnn Niebel, Frank Pagano

Guests: Dennis Hefner, Cedric Howard, Kevin Kearns, Ted Lee, Michael Metzger, Mary Beth Sievens, Denise Szalkowski, Jeffrey Woodard

Absent: Cynthia Ahlstrom, Michael Cerrie, Joseph Johnson

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

The College Council meeting was called to order at 10:05 AM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The College Council minutes of December 18, 2019, were approved without modification with a motion by Richard Alexander and seconded by JoAnn Niebel. Motion carried.

WELCOME JILLIAN BEARD

Student Association (SA) President Jillian Beard was introduced to the College Council. In addition to serving as SA President and a member of the College Council, Miss Beard is a member of the Presidential Search Committee. Ms. Beard is a Psychology major and Biology minor from Buffalo, NY.

THANKS TO FREDONIA'S MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

Chairman Frank Pagano thanked Mr. Jeffrey Woodard for his good work on the Small Business Revolution contest. It was inspiring to see the college and community work together in such a positive way to support this endeavor undertaken by the Village of Fredonia.

UPDATE ON PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH

Mr. Pagano announced that the Presidential Search Committee met yesterday. Committee members continue to review applications and have set an agenda for their next meeting. The committee is inspired by the number and quality of candidates. The committee continues to work together to secure a successful President for Fredonia.

STATE BUDGET

Interim President Dennis Hefner discussed Governor Cuomo's budget and how it impacts SUNY. The budget was released in January and includes no change in operating dollars for our campus.

Once again, no money has been added to help offset collective bargaining increases--resulting in another hit to Fredonia's baseline budget. The NYS Governor has proposed an extension of the Predictable Tuition Plan through 2024. The SUNY Board of Trustees would be given prior approval of up to a \$200 annual tuition increase.

This marks the second year one-time retroactive funds were not included in the Governor's budget. SUNY has been advised that this is an error and that a correction will be made during a 30-day amendment period. We anticipate \$1 million in retro payments will be put back into Fredonia's budget. Dr. Hefner expressed concerns about the negative 5% reduction in community college base funding.

Dr. Hefner shared his key legislative requests from Fredonia. 1. Support the Governor's Budget 2. Extension of a predictable tuition plan which will keep our budget flat instead of going backwards 3. Restoration of 5% funding for community colleges, and 4. Increase construction dollars—including a \$200 million matching fund component. It's especially important that legislators support the request for \$25 million to close the TAP Gap since campuses have been covering this shortfall. Fredonia used \$2.1 million this year to underwrite the tuition assistance program. These funds could have been used to cover part of our structural deficit.

CAMPUS BUDGET

Vice President for Finance and Administration Michael Metzger provided a brief summary on the State, FSA, Residence Life, and Construction Fund Budgets. Thanks to the good work of Dr. Hefner, Fredonia was awarded \$5 million of additional construction fund dollars. The FSA Budget is very close to being finalized and the State Budget will be finalized in late March/early April, after our enrollment numbers have been confirmed. Administration is currently reviewing broad based fees which students receive on top of their tuition (e.g. athletics, technology) to be sure they're accurate and properly maintained. Divisions are addressing their budget cut reductions to ensure they'll be able to make their targets.

Finance and Administration staff update the budget projections monthly based on enrollment numbers and expenses. Even though Fredonia fell short on its enrollment headcount, we compensated by utilizing other funds. We're coming out slightly short of where we were previously at this time last year. We're currently positioned to take out a loan, from SUNY, but because of encumbrances, we can postpone the request until summer.

DEGREE PROGRAM UPDATE

Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs Kevin Kearns went on record to thank the Deans, Directors, and Chairs for their good work in revising Fredonia's curriculum. As a result, several programs have been approved by SUNY including an online CAS in Educational Leadership, a B.S. in Environmental Sciences, an online CAS in Child Advocacy Studies, a minor in Data Science, and an ESL program. We don't expect a large student cohort the first year in these programs, but we do expect a significant increase with the B.S. in Environmental Science once that program appears in the *System Viewbook*.

ENROLLMENT

Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services Cedric Howard said he was pleased with Fredonia's enrollment numbers. As noted, the charts in the report show negative numbers, but the narrative provides the context on why these numbers have dropped without impacting our overall enrollment much. Unlike last year, from fall to spring we retained 88% of our students, or 4% more. We continue to make changes across the institution to help with retention. Most recently, the campus received an anonymous donation of \$250,000 for retention purposes. Additionally, Fredonia's J-Term enrollment was up 12% this year. We anticipate a 50% increase in our out-of-state students from PA/OH as the result of the Good Neighbor initiative. We've already admitted over 50 students from PA/OH, including our top two recruits for women's basketball. Overall, we feel good with where we are and where we'll be in the fall. Estimated enrollment for next fall is 4,600; last year's enrollment was 4,430.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

In Ms. Gossett's absence, Dr. Hefner provided an update on University Advancement. Fredonia's \$20 million fund-raising campaign concludes December 2020. The committee has done an incredible job in reaching and exceeding its campus goal one year ahead of schedule. Working collaboratively with Betty Gossett, Dr. Hefner was instrumental in securing a donation of \$250,000 to help support retention efforts. In a week and a half, Dr. Hefner will travel to Texas to firm up a gift and discuss opportunities for another gift. The Foundation team just completed several successful fundraising visits to Florida.

SMALL BUSINESS REVOLUTION

Director of Marketing and Communications Jeff Woodard provided an update on his involvement with the Small Business Revolution. As soon as Fredonia found out they made the top 10 list in December, Jeff was invited to assist the Village of Fredonia and the Chamber of Commerce with marketing the contest. He assisted with the website, social media, and local media. Emails went out encouraging faculty, staff, and students to engage in participation in the contest. A rally was held at the Fredonia Opera House on December 11. Winter weather was an issue that day, but the turnout was still overwhelming. Jim Gibbons shot a video that day and it was later broadcast on four local TV stations. After placing in the top five, Jeff continued to market the publicity of the contest. He promoted voting by inviting all Fredonia Alumni to vote. The amount of sharing through social media was astounding. Forty-nine states and several international countries partook in the voting. Daily reminder messages were sent out encouraging everyone to vote for Fredonia.

The TV producers from Small Business Revolution are in Fredonia today meeting with local businesses to determine which seven will be showcased on the show. On March 6, the Village plans to engage students, staff, and the community in a local rally to kick-off the filming of the show in the Village of Fredonia. Even though Fredonia was up against towns much larger in population, Fredonia led the contest from beginning to end. The efforts of the community and campus were just incredible.

STUDENT ASSOCIATION UPDATE

Student Association (SA) held a successful spring summit. Sixteen student representatives were appointed and the SA Cabinet has been fully populated. SA is working on developing a Code of Ethics for representatives so restrictions and standards can be enforced. An open forum with counselors is in the works to better inform students on scheduling concerns in the Counseling Center. A Rising Leader Ceremony is being planned to recognize the good work of campus clubs. SA will host a faculty led diversity initiative with a focus on academic disciplines. The goal is to integrate diversity and to provide outreach to students—especially underrepresented students. Dr. Kearns suggested Ms. Beard contact his office for information on funding through a SUNY diversity training initiative.

UNIVERSITY SENATE UPDATE

Since the last College Council meeting, Senate has been actively involved in advocating for the SUNY budget. Letters went out to local legislators, the NYS Assembly, and the New York State Senate. Senate is currently involved in a second round of advocacy efforts. Senate passed a resolution, with no opposing votes, to support Interim President Hefner's budget requests. They are encouraged by NYSUT's website promoting state funding for higher education.

RETENTION

At a recent Enrollment Management meeting, the Art Department suggested a pathway program for entering art students. Two days after that meeting, the Art Department executed a plan to bring in additional students. Every accepted student interested in art was contacted and given the option to enroll as a liberal arts major. This guarantees incoming art students admission to Fredonia plus studio class time to complete their art portfolio for submission following their first year. The School of Music and Department of Theatre and Dance are also looking into a pathway program for students to enter their program.

Enrollment in Education has been down for the past seven to eight years, however; we're starting to see a shortage in New York State teachers so we expect enrollment to change as the number of teacher vacancies increases. We also expect graduate enrollment to go up, but we won't have a good projection on those numbers until summer. The deposit period for students is April 15 through May 15; National Deposit Day is May 1. We'll have a much better idea on our enrollment numbers after this period. Enrollment is an institutional responsibility. When students don't make a deposit, academic departments reach out to them.

Mental health issues continue to present a retention issue for the campus. Dr. Hefner has asked SUNY to increase funding for mental health support for the coming year. With the closure of the Lakeshore mental health facility, we've been struggling to secure a backup location that can accommodate patients with behavioral health and chemical dependency needs. We're in the process of finalizing an agreement with WCA Hospital in Jamestown, NY, and we also have an Agreement with the Chautauqua Tapestry program and the Chautauqua County Department of Mental Health.

Why do students leave Fredonia? Approximately fifty percent of students who leave Fredonia do so because of academic issues. Other reasons include financial, another major (not offered

at Fredonia), or personal. We will have a more robust picture of why students leave after we've reviewed the student exit survey results and from reviewing information gathered from faculty retention counselors.

Mr. Russell Diethrick added that Chautauqua County depends on the financial success of SUNY Fredonia.

HONDURAS PROJECT

Dr. Ted Lee, Professor of Biology and Chair of the Health Professions Advising Committee, gave a brief presentation on a student medical trip conducted in the western hemisphere during J-Term. The annual trip, now in its second year, offers students an authentic experience. This year, thirteen Biology/Chemistry majors traveled to Honduras and explored how primary health care is delivered in rural areas. Four of the 13 were returning students from the previous year, and three received SUNY grants to attend. The Fredonia team conducted four separate brigades in four villages and saw more than 200 patients. A Honduras doctor was on site as well as a Spanish interpreter. This year the group met the founder of the mission. Dr. Lee hopes to attract non-science majors next year. The College Council was invited to hear the students present on their trip on Friday, February 21 at 3:00 PM in the Science Center's Kelly Family Auditorium (Room 105).

On average, Dr. Lee said Fredonia has 10 to 15 pre-med students a year apply to professional programs.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

At the All-Campus meeting in January, Dr. Hefner identified a four-year correction path to get Fredonia's budget back on track. The Middle States Accreditation report is now complete and an electronic copy will be sent to College Council members. He thanked co-chairs Mary Beth Sievens and Tracy Collingwood for their good work on this initiative. College Council members are tentatively scheduled to meet with a member of the Middle States Visiting Team on Tuesday, March 31 at 10:00 AM. The Team will be on campus from March 28 through April 1. The final report will be presented to the campus on Wednesday, April 1 at 11:00 AM in the Science Center's Kelly Family Auditorium.

Dr. Hefner, the vice presidents, and members of the College of Education will host a luncheon for local school superintendents next Monday. The purpose of the gathering is to kick-off the new Education Leadership certificate which begins this summer.

This year's Keynote Commencement speaker is Dr. Thomas Quatroche Jr., '92 (Business Administration), President and CEO of Erie County Medical Center. Dr. Quatroche was recognized earlier this year with the Outstanding Alumni Achievement Award.

Dr. Hefner is optimistic about Fredonia's enrollment. Our campus retention efforts have enabled us to retain 40+ more students from fall to spring. With the assistance of a retention grant, he expects retention to continue to improve. He referred to 2020 as the "year of the

yield” and he anticipates we’ll enroll 4,600 students next fall. He expects good results from the Ed Leadership program and anticipates a full cohort that will grow to 100+ students within three years.

As the result of raising the SAT score, we’re not pushing as many students through the automatic admit so we expected a small drop in the number of acceptances from last year, however; we’re admitting academically strong students which helps our retention efforts.

Chairman Pagano thanked President Hefner and his Cabinet for putting these initiatives forward before the new President begins.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION UPDATE

Vice President Michael Metzger announced that work continues on the Rockefeller Arts Center window replacement project and phase 2 of Houghton Hall. The remaining funds necessary from the SUNY Construction Fund to complete Houghton Hall were secured by Dr. Hefner. The Esports Lounge was completed and students have been enjoying the new space. Bids for the Lanford House renovations will go out soon and the work on the solar array project will begin this spring.

ENROLLMENT AND STUDENTS SERVICES UPDATE

Dr. Cedric Howard announced the opening of a Blue Devil eSports Lounge in Schulz Hall. It’s been so successful that we are beginning conversations to open another lounge on campus. The eSports Lounge is a gaming room where students can gather one place for competitive video gaming. Teams of students face off in games with players from all over the world. The first tournament will be held on February 27, and both Drs. Hefner and Howard will be joining in on a competitive game of Mario Kart.

Enrollment and Student Services worked closely with Facilities Services and Finance and Administration to complete a Housing Master Plan. The 15-year plan lays the groundwork for future residence hall renovations.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mrs. JoAnn Niebel and seconded by Mr. Stephen Keefe. The College Council meeting concluded at 11:54 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Szalkowski, Fredonia College Council Secretary