



SUNY OLD WESTBURY

SUNY OLD WESTBURY COLLEGE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: September 29, 2023

Meeting Time: 12:30 PM

Location: Student Union Multipurpose Room C, St. Charles Hospital (Port Jefferson), and Zoom

Present from the College Council: Chair Mili Makhijani, Ms. Melissa Archbold, Dr. Nicolette Fiore-Lopez (via Zoom), Hon. William A. Hohausser, Ms. Theresa A. Regnante, Ms. Amira Crystal T. Richardson

Representatives of the College: President Timothy E. Sams, Dr. Kyle Anderson, Dr. Ed Bever, Dr. Randall M-J Edouard, Dr. Dorothy Escribano, Ms. Teseria Bryant Ezzell, Ms. Denee Jenkins, Mr. Michael G. Kinane, Ms. Lisandra Ramos, Dr. Jo-Ann Robinson, Ms. Martha M. Santana, Dr. Shalei Simms, Dr. Diana Sukhram, Dr. Bryan Terry, Ms. Angela Wambuğu Cobb, Dr. Cheryl A. Wilson, Ms. Maria Moreno

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Mili Makhijani called the College Council meeting to order at 12:55 p.m. on Friday, September 29, 2023.

Acknowledging that everyone received a copy of the May 12, 2023, College Council meeting minutes, the Chair called for a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Melissa Archbold motioned to accept, seconded by Ms. Amira Crystal T. Richardson. The Council approved the by unanimous vote the minutes.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT, DR. TIMOTHY E. SAMS

The President welcomed the College Council members and then started his formal report on the following items:

Accolades and Accreditation

- SUNY Old Westbury has received the following accolades/accreditation this year:
 - AACSB Accreditation
 - AAQEP Accreditation
 - #35 Economic Mobility Index - Third Way
 - #9 in Top Performers on Social Mobility in Regional Universities North - U.S. News & World Report
 - #31 in Top Public Schools in Regional Universities North - U.S. News & World Report

- #96 in Regional Universities North - U.S. News & World Report
- Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award
- Best Colleges for Adults – Abound

SCOTUS Ruling and SUNY OW Secret Sauce

- The President shared that the Affirmative Action ruling has brought an opportunity to highlight SUNY Old Westbury’s secret sauce, which makes us the most diverse institution across SUNY. He highlighted the following findings:
 - Diversity in Faculty and leadership
 - Close interaction-caring
 - Diversity of ideas and experiences
 - Affordability and values
 - Inclusive & progressive pedagogy excellence as a transformational tool
 - Support for 1st generation students
 - Students are the center of our work
 - Encourage “authentic behavior”

Chair Mili Makhijani asked the President if the SCOTUS decision would affect OW students who then apply to medical school or other graduate schools. The President shared that it could depend on the school's approach to admissions, so if a school has not addressed that, it could have an impact. However, it won't impact the way the university prepares its students.

Identifying 2023-24 Strategic Efforts

The President shared that the administration is focusing on the following areas for the academic year:

- Preparing with the Future in Mind
 - Student Recruitment, Retention, and Graduation
 - Academic Programs (*how to strengthen & support them*)
 - Strategic Planning Process
 - Fundraising and Elevating the Profile of the University
- Putting our People First
 - Improving Employee's & Student Experience
 - Student-Centered Focus
 - Customer Service, Excellence, and Celebrating our Community
- Increasing Institutional Efficiency
 - Institutional Data (*collection, integrity, & transparency*)
 - Policy & Procedure
 - Eliminate Duplication
- Full Speed Ahead
 - Completion of Current Projects (*"No New Things"*)

Overall Enrollment and New Student Enrollment

Enrollment is up overall, with 4,441 students enrolled for the 2023-2024 academic year (4,387 in 2022-2023). New student enrollment is also up, with 1,473 students for the current academic year (1,117 in 2022-2023). The President shared the following data:

- Current Headcount: 4,441 (*Target: 4,046*)
 - Continuing and Returning: 2,700
 - New First Time in College (FTIAC): 696
 - New Transfer: 630
- Total Graduate Students: 381
 - Continuing Grad: 261
 - New Grad: 142
- Housing 615 (*Housed Last Year: 475*)
 - Number of Students in Learning Living Communities (LLCs): 101
- General Breakdown of Students Placed in Housing
 - Continuing: 314
 - First-Year/Transfer: 326

Ms. Theresa A. Regnante asked how the university balances the value for commuter and residential students. The President shared that we are not a remote school and that classes designated as in-person will be taught in person. The university (and other universities alike) have run into the phenomenon of faculty members changing an in-person course to online, which SUNY Old Westbury is actively addressing when it happens. Dr. Cheryl Wilson added that students do not hesitate to inform the Deans or Chairs when this occurs. First, the faculty has a meeting with their Chair, and then the second step is a communication from Human Resources because they are not meeting the requirements of their contract.

The President then closed his report.

CHAIR'S REPORT/OLD BUSINESS, MS. MILI MAKHIJANI

Chair Mili Makhijani allocated the time for her report to the New Business segment of the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Student Code of Conduct – Proposed Revisions

Dr. Randall M-J Edouard and Ms. Maria Moreno presented the proposed changes to the Student Code of Conduct. These changes aim to ensure transparency, follow regulations, address procedure gaps, and emphasize zero tolerance for certain behaviors. The key areas addressed included the following:

- Student Conduct System Policies (*Page 17*)
- Student Conduct Procedures (*Page 20*)
- Appeals (*Page 30*)
- Title IX Policies and Procedures (*Page 24*)

- Student's Rights (*Page 32*)

After the presentation, the council members provided the following suggestions and feedback for consideration:

- **Establish a clear timeline for implementing the new code:** Determine a specific implementation date for when the old code will be sunsetted, and the new code will be implemented and communicate it to the campus community.
- **Consider the retroactivity of the new code:** Discuss and determine whether the new code will be retroactive to pending cases or only apply to new charges.
- **Develop a plan for student support and education:** Develop a plan for educating students about their rights, the conduct process, and the available support resources. Address concerns about encouraging students to come forward without fear of retaliation or harassment. Additionally, how to address false complaints and ensure that valid and unsubstantiated complaints are handled appropriately. Improve communication channels, provide clear information to students (visual & programmatic), and ensure transparency in decision-making processes.
- **Evaluate the fine and sanction policies:** Review the fine/sanction policies, consider itemizing fines, and ensure that the policies are fair and equitable.

Chair Mili Makhijani shared that another meeting will be scheduled within 30 days to discuss and vote on the student code of conduct revision based on the feedback provided during this meeting and offline.

Faculty Senate Chair Report

Dr. Kyle Anderson started his report by highlighting the recent developments and initiatives from the faculty perspective:

- **Provost Search:** Dr. Anderson reported on the ongoing provost search, underscoring the significant number of candidates and the ambitious goal of appointing a new provost in 2024.
- **Strategic Planning:** He highlighted the successful kickoff event for strategic planning, which drew enthusiastic participation from faculty, staff, and students. During this event, various subcommittees elaborated on their strategies for the strategic planning process.
- **New Faculty Members:** Dr. Anderson shared the exciting news of welcoming ten new faculty members to the university, specifically mentioning those designated as Social Justice Fellows. These individuals will play pivotal roles in the new Social and Environmental Justice Institute, a comprehensive initiative spanning various centers at the Woodlands residence hall. Their arrival was met with great enthusiasm among faculty members.
- **Natural Science Building Renovation:** The plans for renovating the Natural Science Building took center stage, emphasizing the creation of a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) center. This renovation aligned with acquiring a grant earmarked for a high-functioning 3D printer designed for use across STEAM fields.

- **Campus Renovations:** Dr. Anderson noted the positive impact of the renovations at the Clark Athletic Center and the Campus Center, contributing to a vibrant and uplifting campus atmosphere.
- **Faculty Morale:** Addressing the pressing issue of faculty morale, Dr. Anderson proposed administering a faculty survey to measure morale. He also acknowledged the arrival of ten new faculty members as a significant step toward enhancing the institution's culture and morale.

Dr. Kyle Anderson closed his report.

Alumni Representative Report

Mr. Chitty was not present to report.

Student Government Association Report

Ms. Amira Richardson started her report by highlighting the recent developments and initiatives from the Student Government Association (SGA):

- **New SGA Positions:** Ms. Richardson added five new positions to the Executive Committee of the Student Government Association (SGA). These positions aim to enhance representation and inclusivity. They include:
 - LGBTQ+ Representative
 - Military Veterans Representative
 - Disability Representative
 - Transfer Voices Representative
 - Non-Traditional Learners Representative
- **Accessibility Initiatives:** The SGA is actively working on improving accessibility on campus. Initiatives include ensuring disability access doors and events. They aim to streamline access to various locations on campus, making them more easily accessible for all students, especially those with mobility challenges.
- **International Student Representation:** Acknowledging the need for international student representation, the SGA is working to rectify this by ensuring the presence of international students on their board.
- **Transportation Initiatives:** Ms. Richardson mentioned efforts to improve transportation services, including shuttle services to facilitate student mobility.
- **Late-Night Study Spaces:** To address the needs of students who study late at night, the SGA is working on keeping the New Academic Building open until 2:00 a.m. This facility will offer equitable access to printing, the internet, and quiet study spaces.

- **Survey Operations:** The SGA aims to conduct comprehensive surveys to gauge the sentiments of the student body. These surveys will be tailored to provide quick yes or no answers and more in-depth feedback on various issues.
- **Outreach and Culture Change:** Ms. Richardson highlighted the importance of outreach and cultural change, emphasizing the empowerment of freshmen to get involved on campus. She mentioned efforts to simplify the process of club reactivation and involvement to encourage student engagement.
- **Formal Outreach and Entertainment:** The SGA conducts formal outreach through tabling at various locations. This outreach is also aimed at ensuring these spaces are appropriately staffed. Regarding entertainment, the SGA has organized various events, including Stay Up at the Union, Food Truck Friday, Fall Fest, Pumpkin Decorating, Workshop Wednesday, Halloween Parties, and Winter Formal.

Ms. Amira Richardson closed her report.

OPEN MEETING

Chair Mili Makhijani opened the floor for public comments.

Seeing no comments from the floor, Chair Mili Makhijani asked for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Amira Crystal T. Richardson moved the motion to adjourn, and Hon. William A. Hohausser seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 2:13 PM.

ACTION ITEMS

- The council members will review the updated code and provide feedback or suggestions to Ms. Maria Moreno in time for the special meeting on October 27, 2023.

Submitted by:

Denee Jenkins

Denee Jenkins
Executive Assistant to the President, SUNY Old Westbury