



SUNY OLD WESTBURY
SUNY OLD WESTBURY COLLEGE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: October 27, 2023

Meeting Time: 12:30 p.m.

Location: Campus Center H 311 and Zoom

Present from the College Council: Chair Mili Makhijani, Ms. Melissa Archbold (via Zoom), Dr. Phillip E. Elliott, Dr. Nicolette Fiore-Lopez, Ms. Cania Infante, Ms. Theresa A. Regnante, Mr. Scott D. Reich

Representatives of the College: President Timothy E. Sams, Dr. Ed Bever, Dr. Randall M-J Edouard, Ms. Teseria Bryant Ezzell, Dr. Michael Kavic, Mr. Michael G. Kinane, Ms. Lisandra Ramos, Ms. Martha M. Santana, Dr. Shalei Simms, Dr. Bryan Terry, Ms. Angela Wambugu Cobb, Ms. Maria Moreno

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Mili Makhijani called the College Council meeting to order at 12:42 p.m. on Friday, October 27, 2023.

OLD BUSINESS, MS. MILI MAKHIJANI

Chair Mili Makhijani shared that this special meeting is about reviewing and voting on the revised student code of conduct. She thanked her fellow Council members for their suggested edits and revisions to the Code of Conduct document and then gave the floor to Ms. Maria Moreno.

Student Code of Conduct – Proposed Revisions

Ms. Maria Moreno delivered a presentation that featured the revised code, complete with track changes, and a comprehensive document addressing significant concerns and feedback. The critical areas of focus were as follows:

- Old Westbury refrains from imposing fines on students under the sanctions policy. Restitution will remain unchanged in the new code, emphasizing the need for students to take responsibility for any damage to University property. The current process involves obtaining cost estimates from Facilities on a case-by-case basis for repairs.
- The existing code of conduct is scheduled to sunset on December 31, 2023, with the new code slated for implementation on January 2, 2024. Pending cases will continue to be addressed under the old code.
- Students will receive education regarding the new code through various means, including:
 - A welcome email to inform the community about the new code.

- Presentations during Spring Orientation to educate incoming students.
- Hosting a series of three educational programs per semester, led by residential assistants and professional staff, to discuss student rights, the conduct process, retaliation, or harassment.
- Website updates featuring visuals highlighting the administrative and hearing board conduct process.
- Collaboration with Commuter Student Services to host programming in both morning and evening sessions.

Ms. Regnante suggested that the University could partner with United Way if a student required community service as part of their sanction, mainly when the restitution amount is substantial. Dr. Edouard acknowledged this suggestion as something they would explore in the future. He emphasized the University's commitment to working with students to ensure they are held accountable while being sensitive to their financial situations.

Mr. Reich inquired about the process for evaluating restitution. Dr. Edouard explained that the process relies on collected evidence, including staff or third-party witnesses, camera footage, and student testimony. Mr. Reich recommended establishing a written policy to ensure consistent process application. Chair Makhijani and Dr. Fiore-Lopez expressed concerns about the clarity and specificity in determining conduct violations.

Dr. Elliott proposed adding language regarding community service. Dr. Edouard indicated this could be considered in future revisions, as the document is subject to annual review. Later, the President highlighted a possible sanction on page 28 involving community restitution for internal and community-based organizations.

Dr. Fiore-Lopez questioned when a person is considered fully informed through orientation and education opportunities. Chair Makhijani suggested electronic acknowledgments during registration or orientation. Mr. Reich recommended shifting the responsibility to the student by stating that continued matriculation implies agreement with these policies. Chair Makhijani added that the acknowledgment protects the University and legally establishes that the student knows these policies and procedures. Ms. Santana suggested including in the communication that this document is dynamic, encouraging students to stay updated.

Chair Makhijani requested a motion to approve the revised student code of conduct, subject to the Office of Student Affairs, incorporating the suggestions and comments discussed during today's special meeting. Dr. Elliott made the motion, and Ms. Infante seconded it. The motion was approved unanimously.

Chair Makhijani then closed the old business segment of the meeting.

OPEN MEETING

Chair Mili Makhijani announced important upcoming events, including the next council meeting scheduled for December 15, 2023. She also mentioned an upcoming "Legacy of Inclusion" event featuring Chancellor King on November 13, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. in the Recital Hall.

Following this announcement, Chair Makhijani opened the floor for public comments.

In response to the October 7, 2023 Hamas terrorist attacks, President Sams issued two public statements. Council Members Hohausner and Reich were deeply concerned with the statements made by President Sams. In response to such statements, Council Member Reich read a statement written by Council Member Hohausner (in his absence), and then Council Member Reich read a separate statement on his own behalf. The President's two statements, the statement by Council Member Hohausner, and the statement by Council Member Reich are annexed hereto as Appendices "A", "B", "C" and "D", respectively.

Chair Mili Makhijani thanked Mr. Reich and Hon. Hohausner for sharing their comments and commended President Sam for having student interests at the forefront.

With no further comments from the floor, Chair Mili Makhijani requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Elliott motioned to adjourn, and Ms. Infante seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 1:26 p.m.

ACTION ITEMS

- Adjusting the date for the old code to sunset on December 31, 2023, at 11:59 p.m. and the new code to be implemented on January 1, 2024, at midnight.
- Investigate methods to obtain student acknowledgments of policies and updates to those policies by researching how other institutions typically handle this process.

Submitted by:



Denée Jenkins

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