



SUNY OLD WESTBURY COLLEGE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: October 11, 2024

Meeting Time: 12:30 PM

Location: Student Union Multipurpose Room C and Zoom

Present from the College Council: Chair Mili Makhijani, Ms. Melissa Archbold, Dr. Phillip E. Elliott, Dr. Nicolette Fiore-Lopez, Hon. William A. Hohaus, Mr. Scott D. Reich

Present from the Alumni Association Dr. Lorraine Cadogan-Cochrane

Representatives of the College: President Timothy E. Sams, Mr. Nicholas Capriola, Dr. Randall M-J Edouard, Dr. Michael Kavic, Mr. Michael Kinane, Dr. David Lanoue, Mr. Gary Levanti, Ms. Maria Moreno, Ms. Lisandra Ramos (Via Zoom), Dr. Jo-Ann Robinson, Dr. Shalei Simms, Dr. Diana Sukhram, Dr. Bryan Terry, Ms. Angela Wambugu Cobb, Dr. Cheryl A. Wilson

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Mili Makhijani called the College Council meeting to order at 12:40 p.m. on Friday, October 11, 2024. The chair shared the sad news that she had learned this morning, that Council member Regnante's mother had passed away this past Tuesday. Dr. Sams shared the passing of our Chair of Biology, Dr. Manya Mascareno. Dr. Sams discussed her most recent accomplishment which was her work with Northwell and building our partnership with them.

Acknowledging that everyone received a copy of the April 12, 2024, College Council meeting minutes, the chair called for a motion to approve the minutes. Council member Elliott motioned to accept, seconded by Council member Reich.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT, DR. TIMOTHY E. SAMS

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

Headwinds

The President started his report by discussing headwinds and what we see ourselves facing this year. Headwinds included the following:

FAFSA continues to be an issue. The financial aid office was able to do really good work around it and they are poised to do it again.

Morale: This continues to be an issue, not just for Old Westbury but across the board in employee retention, budget, and funding.

Campus unrest and broader social unrest issues. We went through October 7th without an episode.

Campus construction: This will be a disruption for a number of years. But we know that on the other end of it is an even more beautiful place for our students to learn and for our faculty to teach.

On the Horizon for 2024-2025

The President shared the horizon for 2024-2025. This includes items that are happening this year.

On the horizon includes:

Faculty Funding: Funding was increased for this year. This is an important piece as it recognizes our faculty's research and supports them in their work.

Launch of our teaching and learning center and the re-launch of our honors program.

Strategic Plan: The plan will be completed this year. President Sams is excited about its completion as after the strategic plan from a strategic standpoint you're moving and making strategic guidance that is so thoroughly necessary.

SUNY's Guidance: Responding to campus unrest

Dr. Sams informed all that SUNY Old Westbury is still operating under SUNY's guidance responding to campus unrest.

This slide included the following:

- Announcing parameters and what is prohibited
- Staying overnight outside on campus
- Freedom of Expression and Assembly: Time, Place & Manner
- Carrying & Presentation of ID Cards
- Schools must practice Institutional Neutrality

Council member Reich inquired that when non-Old Westbury people are on-campus, are they typically people that are invited and brought in by people of the Old Westbury community, or do they tend to be purely external or drive-in because our entrances are public?

Dr. Sams shared that we haven't had too much energy from a protest standpoint. Dr. Sams noted that many people come onto campus to get to the other side because it's quicker.

Council member Reich added that we might consider it as an addition, but to the extent that if the Old Westbury community facilities something that is beyond the normal right to assemble the Old Westbury individual(s) facilitating the event can be held responsible for the actions of those people.

Dr. Edouard noted that while it is not in our student code of conduct, it is one of our policies. Any student that holds a program and they are sponsoring that, anything that happens belongs to that student organization.

Ms. Maria Moreno added that our guide to campus living covers that students who bring a guest onto campus are responsible for their guest. This is something that each student acknowledges electronically.

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

Chair Mili Makhijani didn't have anything to report.

NEW BUSINESS

Admissions Activities for Fall 2024

- Dr. Bryan Terry provided an overview of the registration goal report. This report includes headcount and goals for Graduate (Continuing), Graduate (New), Undergraduate (continuing), Undergraduate (First Year), and Undergraduate (Transfer). Dr. Terry stated that we have reached our goal in all but two metrics. With this, SUNY Old Westbury reached our overall goal and has a head count of 4,692 students.
- Dr. Terry shared that applications went up across the board from Fall 2022 to Fall 2024, applications went from 4,400 to 7,700 and the same with transfer students.
- Dr. Terry presented us with a graphic representation of our continuing population.
- Council member Archbold shared that she recently attended a meeting with Chancellor King, who will have some new projects for students who couldn't complete their programs in a traditional way.
- Dr. Terry noted that there has been a long desire for folks who have dropped out to put programs in place to get them to come back.
- Mr. Michael Kinane mentioned that SUNY recognized that Old Westbury was the best at doing that. Mr. Kinane also shared that Old Westbury has the mechanisms in place through academic affairs and through our retention efforts to reach back out to people who have stopped and figure out a way to get them a degree. Dr. Terry explained that we tend to route these folks into our professional studies program. The ultimate goal is to get the student the degree and our School of Professional Studies has multiple courses and degrees to ultimately get folks a degree.
- Mr. Kinane stated that the reason we end up focusing on a degree for them is because they've stopped out with 40, 60, or 80 credits invested in a degree.

- Chair Makhijani called on Council Member Elliott who had asked for clarity on the application numbers. Dr. Terry noted that two years ago in 2022 we had 4,444 applications that were completed. This year the number of completed applications was 7,791.
- Dr. David Lanoue informed the group that professional studies is essentially a completion degree which is online. SUNY Old Westbury also has a liberal arts degree that can be utilized as a completion degree.
- Dr. Cheryl Wilson shared that students could take whatever they have in terms of credit, and they work 1:1 with an advisor to shape the rest of their coursework and often the culminating experience in an internship so they have a portfolio when the students go out into a career.
- Dr. Terry notified the group that enrollment management receives calls from people calling their office to complete their degree.
- Council member Elliott questioned if people reach out to enrollment and enrollment reaches out to students as well. M. Kinane confirmed that we reach out to students more than they reach out to us.
- Dr. Terry stated that enrollment management has the ability to see if former students have matriculated at another university. In some cases, students come back to complete their degree due to their job.
- Council member Fiore-Lopez asked with Nassau's decreasing enrollment, if there has been other school(s) that Old Westbury was looking at to increase their interest in coming here. Dr. Terry mentioned that Old Westbury is starting to expand their footprint and that there is still plenty of work to be done on Long Island.
- Mr. Michael Kinane informed all that the University recently updated our agreement with Suffolk Community College for the first time in twenty years. The University also has had discussions with both Queensborough and Kingsborough.
- Dr. Terry spoke on our diverse population, our diversity landscape has not significantly changed from year to year. He shared that one main thing when looking at the landscape, it's all about the location.

Student Affairs Code of Conduct

- Dr. Randall Edouard & Ms. Maria Moreno began their presentation on the Code of Conduct for 2024-2025.
- Dr. Edouard thanked Ms. Moreno for all the hard work that she has put into this code of conduct. Dr. Edouard shared that when he had first arrived, the code of conduct hadn't been revised in over ten years.
- Dr. Edouard touched on some changes that are reflected in the code of conduct to include threatening or excessive behavior (students fighting). Dr. Edouard shared that after the code of conduct was implemented on January 1st, the number of cases has drastically declined.
- Dr. Edouard shared some other areas of concern including defamation in relation to social media, weapons and dangerous materials being on campus, hazing, harassment as it relates to excessive emails and false claims.
- M. Moreno provided a brief overview of the Office of Community Standards.

- M. Moreno began discussing the key areas addressed in the New Updated Student Code of Conduct including Controlled Substances, Harassment, Hazing, Social Media, Weapons and Dangerous Materials, and False Claims. This will also include language updates to temporary suspension, respondent, and complainant, and change the language on “Cease and Desist” to “No Contact Order”.
- M. Moreno talked through the updated definition of Controlled Substances and the language she is looking to add.
- M. Moreno introduced the Controlled Substance Proposed Fines for 2024-2025. The proposed fines are the following:
 - 1st Offense: Cannabis Education – YES Community Counseling Center, The Bridges Program and Administrative Hearing
 - 2nd Offense: \$500 fine
 - 3rd Offense: \$500 fine
 - 4th Offense: University Board Hearing
 - Will collaborate closely with Business and Finance to find a process for collecting the fines.
- Council member Fiore-Lopez asked what happens if a student can't pay the fine. M. Moreno explained that a hold would be put on the student's account.
- Council member Elliott inquired if drug testing is a part of this process. Dr. Edouard clarified that drug testing is not a part of this process.
- Council member Archbold talked about the mindset of students thinking that cannabis is allowed. Council member Archbold discussed her next concern which was the fee. She explained that the fee will not stop the behavior as it is a psychological behavior and needs another layer of treatment. M. Moreno discussed how the Office of Community Standards spends time educating students and offers counseling.
- Dr. Sams asked for clarity on whether the proposed updates were an attempt to enforce SUNY's Policy. Dr. Edouard informed all that our major issue is the use of cannabis inside our buildings. Student Affairs has received a large number of complaints from our current students about the smell and smoke inside the residential halls.
- Chair Makhijani questioned the 4th offense and the one-semester residential hall suspension. Chair Makhijani recommended the 2nd offense be a \$250 fine with the 3rd offense being a \$500 fine.
- Dr. Sams inquired about how these fines align with what we did last year and the significant drop. Is there a sense of how the penalties line up with the penalties from last year adjusting?
- Dr. Edouard explained that before the code was changed, students who were caught fighting received probation. Now, if students are caught fighting they are immediately suspended.
- Council member Reich asked why there are so many levels of events. If you break the policy, there will be consequences. Dr. Edouard talked about the history of our students and what we have been dealing with. Dr. Edouard said that student affairs is trying to work with the students in hopes of understanding that they make better decisions. Student Affairs' main goal is to educate the students and get them together.
- Council member Elliott asked for research in terms of policies and other institutions & impact. Council member Elliott discussed Hampton University's zero-tolerance policy and how it positively impacted their enrollment.

- Council member Elliott questioned the drastic drop in fighting, is it due to the enforcement or the policies? Council member Elliott went on to explain that many municipalities have policies but they are not enforced. The council confirmed that the drastic change in fighting numbers was due to the enforcement.
- Chair Makhijani proposed combining the first and second offenses. The proposed changes would make the 1st offense: a \$250 fine plus educational training, and the 2nd offense a university Board Hearing.
- Council member Archbold noted that you can't compare the conduct of physical aggression with something more psychological; or neurological. Council member Archbold suggested a contract mandating the students to six months of treatment which their own money will pay for.
- Chair member Hon. Hohauser asked for clarification on what was meant by we need to take into account who our students are. Dr. Edouard said he meant this generation and how this is not a SUNY Old Westbury problem. Council member Hon. Hohauser asked if the fighting cases are expedited as students are suspended pending review. Dr. Edouard explained that all cases are based on a full investigation and go to a board. The full investigation is completed within seven days.
- Council member Hon. Hohauser said the number of steps proposed was very generous and went into the makeup of our campus, its mission and how there are other ways to change behavior such as community service. M. Moreno explained that they have tried community service and probation.
- Council member Hon. Hohauser mentioned that a \$500 fine is beyond the means of most people who attend this campus. Dr. Edouard discussed how with this fine, the hope is that it will be a deterrent. Dr. Edouard said that the Office of Community Standard tries community service, educational conversations, and educational projects and we have found through our research that students continue to keep doing it. Council member Hon. Hohauser went into how cleaning bathrooms would be a deterrent.
- Council member Elliott inquired about the penalty for a student who is caught distributing it, is it the same penalty as a person smoking? Dr. Edouard explained that University Police will take over if a student is caught distributing it.
- Council member Reich raised concern regarding the immediate suspension policy as students have the potential of missing a big part of class. Dr. Edouard explained that we have a way of rectifying that, which means that the faculty will work with that student.
- Council member Elliott asked for clarity on whether these policies apply within a calendar year or a life of four years. It was confirmed that these policies apply to an academic year.
- Chair Makhijani proposed calling a special meeting in November to discuss the rest of the proposed changes.

Faculty Senate Chair Report

Dr. Kyle Anderson was not present to report.

Alumni Representative Report

Dr. Cadogan-Cochrane provided the following updates:

- Alumni Association Homecoming event was well attended
- Dr. Sams will join an upcoming Alumni Association meeting to discuss the strategic plan
- The purpose of this year is to bridge the gap between the Alumni and students & show support to the public.

Student Government Association Report

Ms. Natalie Malatino was not present to report.

OPEN MEETING

Chair Makhijani wished all of our Jewish council members, faculty, staff and cabinet members an easy fast coming up.

Chair Makhijani asked for a motion to adjourn. Council member Ms. Melissa Archbold moved the motion to adjourn, and Council member Mr. Scott Reich seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 2:05 PM.

Submitted by:

Nicholas Capriola

Executive Assistant to the President, SUNY Old Westbury