

# SUNY COLLEGE AT OLD WESTBURY COLLEGE COUNCIL

## MEETING MINUTES

**Meeting Date:** Friday, September 23, 2016  
**Location:** Student Union Multipurpose Room C

**Attendance:** **Appointed Members of the College Council**

Ms. Melissa Archbold  
Mr. William Hohausser  
Ms. Cania Infante  
Mr. Scott Reich

**Representatives of the College**

Dr. Calvin O. Butts, III  
Mr. Lionel Chitty  
Mr. Len Davis  
Dr. Wayne Edwards  
Mr. Omar Estrada Torres  
Dr. Kathleen Greenberg  
Dr. Barbara Hillery  
Mr. Michael Kinane  
Dr. Patrick O'Sullivan  
Ms. Mona Rankin  
Dr. Jishan Zhu

**I. Welcome and Meeting Opening**

In Dr. Wadler's absence the meeting was chaired by Mr. Scott Reich who called the meeting to order at 10:20 am. The attendees recognized Dr. Butts' 17<sup>th</sup> anniversary as President of the College, and Mr. Reich then asked for approval of the minutes of the April 15, 2016 meeting, which were approved without dissent. There being no old business, Mr. Reich asked Dr. Butts to proceed.

**II. President's Report on the College**

- Dr. Butts began by wishing Dr. Wadler well with his health challenges and thanked the Council for its acknowledgement of his anniversary and encouragement and the Cabinet, and faculty and staff leaders for their support. While there are fiscal challenges, we are in a good place with a first time to college enrollment of 510 students, the highest level it has been in over twenty years, and 840 transfer students...the highest transfer enrollment in the College's history. We need to focus somewhat on retention, and our graduate enrollment is a little off, but is being worked on. Overall our enrollment has increased by approximately 3% compared to last fall. Dr. Butts congratulated the Council on the role it's played in helping the College to move forward.
- Dr. Butts thanked Mr. Lionel Chitty, President of the Old Westbury Alumni Association for his invitation to the Hicksville Chamber of Commerce annual meeting where Dr. Butts made contacts beneficial to the College and particularly its students.
- We are still finalizing the profile of our new students, 50% of which are from Nassau County, 25% percent from Suffolk County and 22% percent from New York City. We'd like to increase our enrollment from New York City. We also have students from other states as well as from many countries across the globe.
- The College has received a major grant totaling \$296,189 from the National Science Foundation, for research to be conducted by a number of science faculty members led by Dr. Ruomei Gao of the Department of Chemistry and Physics. The grant will allow us to test new, creative approaches for improving STEM learning and learning environments.

- Dr. Butts introduced Dr. Kathleen Greenberg the new Chair of the Faculty Senate, and then asked Provost and Sr. Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Patrick O'Sullivan for any update on Middle States.
- Dr. O'Sullivan replied that we submitted a Periodic Review Report in June, which is an interim report submitted between Middle States site visits which occur every ten years. It is an accreditation report for which the reviewers in their responding report gave the College nine commendations and two recommendations on the progress we have made. The reviewers' report has been submitted to the Middle States Commission which will issue a final report to us in November. We have consistently done very well with Middle States.
- Dr. Butts mentioned that the areas in which we were challenged by Middle States were Strategic Planning and Institutional Assessment which looks at all divisions of the College. We have a foundation, but need to make more progress in this area.
- Dr. Butts mentioned that in Strategic Planning we have a focus on student success and completion rates, and went on to commend Chancellor Zimpher, who is retiring at the end of the academic year, for her hard work in these areas and said she was one of the best chancellors we've had. He also mentioned that we're looking at how technology can improve student success and completion rates and our life overall at the College. Dr. Butts then asked Mr. Len Davis, Sr. Vice President for Business and Finance and CFO, if we had engaged EAB.
- Mr. Davis responded that we are close to engaging EAB, a nationally known consultant in the education field, recommended by SUNY. We have been talking to them, as well as other consultants, to determine where we should be with the student success project. The project involves early alerts, predictive analytics, etc. which can be used to help our students. This project has resulted from a SUNY grant which we were awarded last year.
- Dr. Butts noted the importance of technology, but said that he doesn't want to lose the human aspect of education.
- In terms of finances, our state support has been flat and we've had to meet the challenges of the new year by relying on reserves which will only last a little more than a year, therefore we are concerned about revenue. We have been unable to raise tuition because we lost the rational tuition policy.
- Mr. Davis said we have additional costs ahead including costs involved in the Fair Labor Standards Act as well as reimbursement of pay deducted through the Deficit Reduction Plan a few years ago. We do, however, have good enrollment numbers.
- Dr. Butts asked Dr. Wayne Edwards, Vice President for Student Affairs and Chief Diversity Officer, to speak about the Diversity and Inclusion Plan which will be submitted to SUNY. Dr. Edwards mentioned in terms of diversity within the SUNY system we are well ahead of the curve. We are in the process of creating a Diversity & Inclusion Council comprised of faculty, students and staff, to discuss issues on campus with which various individuals are confronted. The committee will make recommendations on how to improve campus life and the campus climate for everyone. It's an opportunity to make a good situation even better.
- Mr. Reich asked about our marketing budget, in terms of how our marketing efforts relate to the geographic breakdown mentioned earlier. Mr. Michael Kinane, Assistant to the President for Advancement, replied that recent efforts have focused less on geography and more on cultural background. We targeted some of the south Asian community

regarding our medical/science programs due to that community's interest in STEM. We also want to look at the Caribbean communities to see what vehicles are available to promote the College there. Mr. Kinane went on to express the value of a firm such as EAB, not only in amassing data, but also in analyzing and interpreting it. While we don't have the resources or tools of larger, better funded institutions, those schools are focusing on communications tailored to the prospective student with more emphasis on the individual than on groups. We are using a lot of social media in the marketing area. In the graduate program this past summer focus was less on inquiry acquisition and more on post-inquiry communication. Response time is critical in the graduate programs.

- Dr. Butts mentioned some of the upcoming events, Alumni and Friends Day on Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>, and Panther Pride Homecoming and asked Dean of Students, Omar Estrada Torres to speak further.
- Dean Estrada Torres distributed a flyer and some of the novelty items to be given out at Panther Pride Homecoming, a huge collaborative effort by faculty, staff and students, and described the many Panther Pride planned events. The theme is the Roaring 20's/Great Gatsby.

### III. New Business

- Mr. Kinane mentioned that 320 alumni family and friends had registered to attend Alumni Family Saturday which will be held on Saturday, October 1<sup>st</sup> as part of Panther Pride Homecoming. Dr. Edwards announced that Dr. Sachi Dastidar's annual ISPaD Project's Partition Center Conference would also take place on Saturday, October 1<sup>st</sup> at 8:30 a.m. In addition, Mr. Chitty remarked that the Alumni Association, with the help of the Office of Alumni Affairs, is holding their annual brunch that morning as well.
- Mr. Reich asked for any comments from the Council, to which Council Member Ms. Cania Infante responded that she, along with Vice President for Enrollment Services, Mary Marquez Bell and Dean of Students Omar Estrada Torres had attended the SUNY Conversation re Hispanics in Higher Education one day event the prior Friday in New York City. Focusing on building institutional capacity for Hispanics and Latinos in higher education and the challenges faced by that community, it was a well put together event.
- Mr. Reich asked Dr. Greenberg, Faculty Senate Chair, to report. Dr. Greenberg mentioned the SUNY initiative, *Open SUNY* through which SUNY assists the campuses in developing online learning. SUNY staff, through a series of three workshops, will work with the campus to assess our readiness to fully introduce online learning as an alternative form of delivery of the curriculum.
- Another SUNY initiative on *Applied Learning* encourages campuses to consider whether to include applied learning experiences as a graduation requirement. We have a group of faculty who have been working on this, and the College is well suited to adopt this based upon the nature of our students' experiences as well as the civic engagement component of our mission.
- We will be hosting the University Faculty Senate Plenary in January 2017. The faculty is excited about being part of the Diversity and Inclusion Council, as well as participating in the development of the Strategic Plan.
- Council Member Ms. Melissa Archbold asked about online teaching. Dr. O'Sullivan said that we already offer approximately sixty courses online, and then went on to outline the process by which each college that wants to offer degrees on line needs to be assessed with regard to the resource base that they have, institutional readiness, and the

commitment to do so in a timely way. The choice of degrees to be offered online is made based on demand.

- Mr. Lionel Chitty, Alumni Association President, reported that he had the opportunity to speak in front of CoCo (the SGA's Council of Clubs and Organizations) with approximately 45 student leaders and organizations attending. It was learned that many are going to be actively looking for jobs and are being prepared to start networking after they graduate. Many are interested in something also being considered, that is to have business owners come to discuss the challenges the graduates will face, what kind of employees they're looking for, and what kind of continuing education they'll be looking for. We will likely have an open forum during the latter part of April to bring in some of these businesses, and invite the Council, students and graduates to come in and participate in a series of seminars including how to market themselves, connect with people, etc.

On October 15<sup>th</sup> the Alumni Association is planning a wine tour and lunch in the Hamptons.

- Mr. Reich called upon Dr. Barbara Hillery, Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, to report: Dr. Hillery stated that along with the College's increase in enrollment, the School of Arts & Sciences has eight additional faculty members, four of whom are either tenured or on tenure track. Upon approval, they are looking to have five or six new searches this year.  
Despite a lack in state funding they are making progress.
- Dr. Jishan Zhu, Interim Dean, School of Business reported that the School of Business is continuing to push for more student career services, and on October 6<sup>th</sup> will hold a reception/job fair to which 27 accounting firms have committed.
- The School of Business is also trying to increase its presence in the global arena. One of our finance professors was invited by a university in Mexico to teach during the summer and an Old Westbury accounting professor conducted a month long research project in England, with all expenses paid by the host bank. It is hoped that such exchanges will attract international students.
- We continue to grow our graduate programs and our Forensic Accounting Master's program has been approved by SUNY and awaits State Education Department approval. The first class is expected to be taught in fall 2017. Also in 2017, we will offer an MS in Accounting online course.
- Dean of Students Mr. Omar Estrada Torres remarked on a positive start to the semester in engaging students, including the success of the "Black Lives Matter Week" during which on average 100-300 students attended a variety of programs.

#### **IV. Open Meeting**

- Mr. Reich asked for any comments or questions from the group. Ms. Mona Rankin, Chief of Staff, mentioned that, for the record, due to Mr. Ihne's absence we did not have a quorum at today's meeting, but chose to go forward, as there was no official business listed on the agenda. Further, this would be noted in the meeting minutes which will be part of the annual package that we send to SUNY.
- Dr. Greenberg remarked that the faculty commends Dr. Butts for his outreach to the community, and the campus community, to address the difficult issues surrounding race

and ethnicity, including his recent letter to the editor of *Newsday* about Old Westbury's commitment to opening up a dialogue regarding these important issues. The faculty looks forward to helping address these issues under his leadership.

- Ms. Infante mentioned that she hears many great success stories and asked how, in addition to advocating for the school, do we leverage these things to share the Old Westbury story? Mr. Kinane responded that traditional media outreach, website content development, pushing out things to bloggers, etc. are done within the scale that we can handle. We have increased our communication with alumni because often a decision about a college is made by what students learn from personal contacts rather than what they find out themselves. Students receive a weekly update, as do faculty and staff. We are working on the first version of our alumni magazine, with the goal of having an alumni magazine each fall and a newsletter each spring.
- There being no further discussion Mr. Reich adjourned the meeting at 11:32 a.m.

Submitted by:

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Irene Cotton  
Administrative Assistant to the President