

SUNY COLLEGE AT OLD WESTBURY COLLEGE COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: Friday, September 29, 2017
Location: Student Union, Multipurpose Room C

Attendance: **Appointed Members of the College Council**
Ms. Melissa Archbold
Ms. Cania Infante
Dr. Mario Mignone
Mr. Scott Reich

Representatives of the College
Dr. Calvin O. Butts, III
Dr. Nancy Brown
Mr. Len Davis
Dr. Raj Devasagayam
Dr. Wayne Edwards
Mr. Omar Estrada Torres
Dr. Barbara Hillery
Mr. Michael Kinane
Mr. William Kimmins
Dr. Patrick O'Sullivan
Ms. Mona Rankin

I. Welcome and Meeting Opening

- Dr. Mario Mignone, as Designated Chair of the College Council, called the meeting to order at 10:38 am, and asked Dr. Butts to speak about the late Dr. Gary Wadler, Chair of the College Council. Dr. Butts paid tribute to Dr. Wadler for his service and dedication as a member and Chair of the College Council, and asked for a moment of silence in his memory.
- He then turned the meeting back over to Dr. Mignone who also remarked about Dr. Wadler's commitment to and passion for the College. Dr. Mignone then commented about the need for members to make every effort to attend Council meetings in order to assure a quorum for when Council business must be transacted. He understands that members are very busy and have other commitments, as he himself made a commitment a year ago to attend a conference in Florence, Italy which happens to fall on the date of the next meeting. Dr. Mignone hoped this would be noted by absent members when they read the minutes.
- Dr. Mignone then asked for a vote to accept the the minutes of the April 27th meeting which were accepted without dissent.
- Ms. Melissa Archbold, College Council Member, remarked that she believed that Council Members should attend the annual ACT Conference because information disseminated by the SUNY Chancellor and Chair of the Board of Trustees is expected to be brought to the attention of members at individual Council meetings. The Chancellor and Board of Trustees Chair are expecting members who have not attended in years to attend the conference next year. They are also encouraging campus presidents to attend. At past ACT Conferences it was conveyed that Council members should be seen by the community as the "eyes and ears" of the institution as a whole and that campus and local community members should be aware of who Council members are. Toward that end, Ms. Archbold reiterated a prior request for a campus identification card and business cards. Discussion took place as to this practice and it was agreed that it would be looked into again. She also requested that Council Members be able to advise and recommend and be included in the drafting process of documents.

- Dr. Mignone mentioned that he used to attend the ACT Conference, but that it had become more difficult to do so. He thanked Ms. Archbold for her representation there. Ms. Mona Rankin, Chief of Staff, mentioned that the College does reach out to Council Members re the ACT Conference.

II. President's Report on the College

- Dr. Butts remarked that he shared Dr. Mignone's concerns about Council attendance. Dr. Butts then introduced Dr. Raj Devasagayam, the new Dean of the School of Business and asked him to speak briefly about his background. Dr. Devasagayam remarked that he was attracted to Old Westbury by the idea of serving our students, access, support for success, the founding of education on the philosophy of liberal arts, and creating leaders of tomorrow who make a difference in society. His experience thus far has confirmed that he made the right choice in coming here, and he has received a generous welcome and the support of the faculty of the School of Business as they pursue AACSB accreditation.
- Dr. Butts said that we are doing great...with the highest enrollment in the College's history with 666 first time students. He believes the College is viewed highly by an increasing number of students, crediting in part our reputation for diversity and for giving service to our local communities. He also expressed his appreciation to our Council which reflects our diversity and our service, noting Council Member Scott Reich's book about John F. Kennedy in which he expressed his appreciation for John F. Kennedy and how Kennedy challenged our nation. This semester we also have the largest number of transfer students the College has ever had.
- This growth has resulted in a challenge regarding parking spaces. We opened up a new parking area, Parking Area B, with 377 spaces that will serve us until it snows, at which time we will need to make some changes.
- We have a new Master's Degree program (MS in Literacy Education). We have approximately twelve new faculty members. We also have a new marketing program, "Own Your Future". The Excelsior Program has yielded some benefits for us in the form of 235 new and continuing students. Sr. Vice President for Business and Finance and CFO Len Davis mentioned that the Excelsior Program is a free tuition program for New York State students. The College has issued approximately \$500,000 in Excelsior scholarships and credits. New York State is creating a less cumbersome application and convoluted process for the spring. The College is creating programs and disseminating information to make more students aware of the Excelsior Program.
- Dr. Butts mentioned the many things that the College has to offer, i.e., diversity, the undergraduate and graduate curriculum, a faculty dedicated to preparing students to live in the real world, and a beautiful campus. We also have a continually growing Student Success Center. He requested that Council members promote the campus and not feel limited as to what they say.
- Dr. Butts went on to address the parking issue further. There has been an adjustment period due to the need to have shuttle buses transporting students to and from Parking Field B. This is not unfamiliar on some campuses, but is new to Old Westbury. We have been studying how to address the student population increase in terms of parking. We have a long term capital project parking study already underway, because we have been looking down the road at growth. However, the growth unexpectedly reached 10% in only one year. Part of the parking study was completed last academic year, and we have provided evidence of the recent increased demand to the SUNY Construction Fund. We already have \$2.38 million allocated for the project. The action plan includes beginning ground land surveys immediately and expediting the hiring of a consultant by mid-November. We will use a SUNY Construction Fund term contract which we hope to award by June 2018. This project will be fast tracked to complete as many paved spaces as possible by fall 2018. It is a complicated process, however, entailing surveys, etc., but the project has to be carried out correctly. In addition to the 377 spaces in Parking Field B, we have created parking spaces by converting a couple of tennis courts. We are doing all that we can to address this issue. Dr. Butts encouraged Council members to use whatever political contacts

they may have to relay the message that Old Westbury needs parking. Dr. Butts said that at a reception in Albany he met the new Chancellor, Dr. Kristina Johnson, an engineer and entrepreneur, and conveyed to her our need for more parking.

- Dr. Butts also mentioned our need for a new Science Building because of the emphasis being placed by our School of Arts and Sciences on careers in the health professions. We have been lobbying for this, and he learned that morning that the estimated cost of the building has gone from approximately \$80 million to \$92 million. Several of our Foundation members, the College, the faculty, alumni and Pfizer Corporation have contributed to a fund that will help students train to take the MCATS, necessary to apply to medical school. We received a \$10 thousand contribution for this fund this morning from one of our Foundation members.
- We had a very important meeting with SUNY Downstate Medical School in which we discussed programs, particularly in the area of public health, nursing and physicians' assistants.

III. New Business

- Dr. Butts asked Provost and Sr. Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Patrick O'Sullivan to talk about the Student Success Center initiative. Dr. O'Sullivan remarked that right now we have a writing center, a general math tutoring center, departmental tutoring, a First Year Experience program and Honors College. In addition to those services we want to have a centrally located, highly visible Student Success Center which will offer general tutoring, an expansion of tutoring that will be under the aegis of Dean Hillery. We will also have an expanded advisor/mentorship coaching area which will focus on sophomore retention, and also particularly on transfer students who are very important to our enrollment. We will also have an area for healthcare professions advising. In addition, in order to connect students with the notion of jobs so that they follow a clear pathway to their degree, Career Services will move to the second floor and be part of this unit. We want to expand student support services consistent with our enrollment and provide greater opportunities for students to get the services they need. We will have monitors indicating where the services are, and will continue to expand and staff this area. This is an important opportunity for us to focus on retention and our graduation rates. In order to inform our faculty and advisors, particularly the advisors in this area, we will use a software program, EAB (Education Advisory Board) which will provide data to help make predictions enabling us to be interventionists and function proactively rather than reactively.
- Mr. Davis said that we are working with EAB and their Student Success Collaborative which forms the underpinnings needed to make the Student Success Center work as we envision it. This started last year when we received a \$500 thousand grant from SUNY which started with a digital campus, but which required us to break down a \$21 million proposal to \$500 thousand. We boiled it down to what we considered to be the components essential to getting us on the road to student success. This project is being managed by Dean Barbara Hillery and Chief Information Officer Evan Kobolakis. EAB is very happy with the progress we've made to date. Our aim is to give students the opportunity to graduate on time with the least amount of debt.
- Dean Barbara Hillery stated that the Student Success Collaborative is a combination of software tools, technology, data analytics and predictive analytics as well as consultation on best practices. Much of the focus since last February has been on the software and data analysis. We went live with the system in August. The special advisory staff is starting to use the system for advising students. We are working our way outward training people as we go. We've been working on training faculty in the First Year Experience program and in the Educational Opportunity Program, and working with all faculty across campus to develop student success markers which will be used in data analysis for the computer to help find those students who are going off track. The faculty seems to be excited about this program.

- Dr. Mignone remarked on the need for support of freshmen, and inquired as to whether there has been any improvement in retention. Dr. O'Sullivan said that in 2005 our freshmen retention rate was 72%. For the last few years freshmen retention has been 80-80.5%. (The national average is approximately 75%.) The 6 year graduation rate starting with the Fall 2005 cohort was 35%. The most recent rate, for the Fall 2011 cohort is 47.6%. Within the cohort African-American and Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) students are graduating at a higher rate and the highest graduating rate is for African-American women. We're not where we want to be, but have made significant progress.
- Mr. Davis mentioned that the Student Success Program entails ten year's worth of student data, and with these benchmarks we can make informed decisions.
- Dr. Butts mentioned that issues regarding retaining our faculty, include the cost of living on Long Island and the need to offer competitive salaries. Mr. Reich asked what other factors came into play. Dr. Butts said that we need to be able to offer faculty housing opportunities. He wants to build faculty housing on campus, however we have more than 300 acres that must remain wild. Some plans have not been able to come to fruition. Faculty members like it here, but it is almost always a question of the cost of living in this area. Mr. Reich further asked if we had considered public/private partnerships for development of faculty housing. Dr. Butts said that is being considered.
- Dr. O'Sullivan reported that two new Master's degrees have been registered: the MS in Data Analytics is a mixture of statistics, math and computer science. The other, in the School of Business, is an MS in Healthcare Management. A third Master's program that was registered after the last College Council meeting is an MS in Childhood Special Education.
- Dr. Butts mentioned that the continued growth of the College is going to require a constant infusion of money, and asked the Council to market Old Westbury to their legislative contacts as a diverse educational institution...not elitist...but rather for the people.
- Dr. Butts remarked that the new Chancellor is a delightful person with an excellent background to lead SUNY, and that he expected her to visit the campus soon.
- Dr. Mignone asked Mr. Davis if the flat budget was causing problems. Mr. Davis said that we've been in this position for the last few years, during which the state agreed to not provide less funding than before, however during which time many unfunded mandates were imposed. A flat budget is really a decrease in our spending power. It prohibits us from taking next steps at the pace which we would like to. While we had an increase in the student population, that revenue is being offset by the need for new classrooms, faculty, utilities, etc. Therefore, the flat budget has hurt us.
- Dr. Butts complimented Mr. Davis on his management of our financial resources, and thanked his Cabinet members for their hard work.
- Dr. Butts asked for a report from Dr. Wayne Edwards, Vice President for Student Affairs and Chief Diversity Officer. Dr. Edwards expressed his enthusiasm for the Student Success Center and for EAB and said that the students are excited about it. The Center for Student Leadership and Involvement (CSLI), or as some know it as Student Activities, reported that over this past academic year we have had more than 3,000 students involved in programming in some way.
- With the growth in student population, the Woodlands Residence Halls are now at capacity. If we keep experiencing this kind of growth, we will need to address this issue. However, this is a good problem to have.

- Dr. Edwards went on to say that we are about to go live with our first Diversity and Inclusion website and thanked Mr. Kinane for his assistance.
- Dean of Students, Mr. Omar Estrada Torres spoke about efforts to support DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) students in terms of engagement and documentation. We had a successful Constitution Day program here specifically focused on the theme of DACA, and he thanked the First Year Experience program and Old Westbury Web Radio for helping to support this effort.
- The governor's office conducted an audit this past summer, and we, along with many of the other SUNY campuses, were found to be either compliant or significantly compliant with New York State Education law 129-B. We are "tweaking" two particular areas, and the dean is confident that in working with our general counsel and Mr. William Kimmins, Assistant to the President for Administration and Title IX Coordinator, that we will be fully compliant very shortly.
- Dean Estrada Torres went on to mention the 10th Anniversary Panther Pride Homecoming which will be held October 10 -14. Many people on campus are enthused and energized about the celebration, and students are more engaged in the conversation about Panther Pride Homecoming than in past years. He invited the Council members to join in the celebration.
- Ms. Archbold mentioned that she would pass on information to Dean Estrada Torres regarding a foundation of which she is aware that has funding and resources for students or groups that have been victimized in any way.
- Dr. Edwards mentioned the Annual SUNY 2017 Diversity Conference scheduled for late November in Albany, and said that it was very well attended and had excellent speakers last year. He encouraged Council members to attend and said he would keep them informed.
- Mr. Kimmins reported that his and Mr. Davis' staff had created two parking lots over a weekend, and we are looking at parking for the future. On the subject of unfunded mandates, Mr. Kimmins pointed out two such instances in his own area. First, the requirement by the federal government approximately five years ago wherein Title IX programs had to include a Title IX officer and training. Another example of an unfunded mandate is SUNY's requirement for every campus to have a Diversity Officer, a responsibility that was given to Dr. Edwards. These types of requirements are not funded, but must be fulfilled.
- Mr. Michael Kinane, Assistant to the President for Advancement, echoed Dr. Butts' excitement about the enrollment success this year. He said that our yield rate among freshmen who were accepted to enroll rose 3 percentage points. He is pleased about that, as we have worked very hard with admissions to improve the communications plan with accepted students. Marketing also contributed to some of this success. Most satisfying to him is that we exceeded our goal for continuing/returning students. Retention is very important to our success.
- With regard to the Childcare Project between the College and the College Foundation, as previously reported legislation was passed allowing the College to lease property to the Foundation for the development of a Childcare Center. In discussions with SUNY Counsel's Office a Request for Information (RFI) was developed which basically consists of a series of questions regarding the project. It has been distributed and is being advertised in the *New York State Contract Reporter* and in the *Blue Book*, which is a construction and trades development procurement guide. We hope to receive responses that help to inform our future decision making in terms of what the contract between the College and the Foundation needs to include, and ultimately what the Request for Proposal (RFP) and the contract between the Foundation and its partner should include.

- Mr. Kinane will be attending SUNY Day DC in Washington, DC late next month. He has appointments with Congressman Zeldin's staff and Congressman's Suozzi's higher education staff.
- Returning to Mr. Kinane's earlier remarks, Mr. Reich asked whether incoming students were asked why they chose Old Westbury. Mr. Kinane said that surveys seeking that information were generally handled through the First Year Experience area. His area focused on communications...hard copy and electronic. Mr. Reich also wondered if we had determined how transfer students had made the decision to switch to Old Westbury. Mr. Kinane responded that he's hoping for this to happen next, however at present this is, again, something usually approached via surveys conducted by the First Year Experience program. He has been more involved in a communications plan to determine what media is being used to convey information and how to build redundancy into communications to be sure information has been successfully disseminated. Mr. Reich suggested a "Survey Monkey" type approach. As of this meeting SUNY-wide data was not available. Soon we will see market data other than our own. A transfer student specific activity that was undertaken was geofencing at Nassau and Suffolk Community Colleges' main branches where we advertised on their network. It was not costly and we see traffic through the websites, but we will need to find a way to track the path from geofencing to enrollment.
- Dr. Nancy Brown, Dean, School of Education reported that we will be one of the host sites for the SUNY Teach New York Teachers Summit on October 9th. The summit will bring teachers from all over Long Island to SUNY Old Westbury for a professional development day. The Chancellor and Commissioner of Education will be participating electronically. Our Teacher Opportunity Corps grant students will be assisting the practicing teachers.
- Our Special Education and Elementary Education programs have changed so that all methods courses are now being held in real classrooms, and our faculty are out in the districts with the students. Districts are reaching out to us to form partnerships, and our students are being hired.
- Some new programs in our pipeline include ENL (English as a New Language) certification. This used to be known as TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages). This is the most highly needed teacher anywhere in the state and especially on Long Island and in New York City. This is a second certification following a Master's degree and basic certification. We are also exploring a Speech and Language degree in partnership with Farmingdale.
- Dr. Raj Devasagayam, Dean of the School of Business, reported that the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) is an international admissions based accreditation held by fewer than 5% of schools of business in the United States. We are seeking this accreditation because of our commitment to our students and our mission. This accreditation assures that what our students learn is current and relevant. We are aspiring to this accreditation with the support of Dr. Butts, the Provost and the entire faculty of the School of Business.
- Dr. Devasagayam went on to say that the School of Business is planning to demonstrate innovation in teaching, to show the impact the school has upon the lives of our students, and engagement between faculty across schools, between faculty and students as well as between faculty and practitioners and between students and practitioners. The Dean invited the Council to participate by bringing their expertise into our classrooms or providing contacts in the business arena, not necessarily limited to for-profit organizations.
- Dean Barbara Hillery mentioned that the School of Arts and Sciences is thrilled with the increased enrollment and thanked faculty members for the excellent job they have done in meeting the challenges this growth has brought with it.

- Dr. Hillery went on to mention that Dr. Carolyn Cocca won a 2017 Eisner Award for the Best Academic/Scholarly Work on a comic book hero for her book, *Superwoman: Gender, Power and Representation*.
- Dr. Butts introduced Ms. Lenore Walsh, our Athletics Director who had been seated in the public area.

IV. Open Meeting

There being no further discussion, a motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 pm.

Submitted by:

Irene Cotton
Administrative Assistant to the President