

**SUNY COLLEGE AT OLD WESTBURY COLLEGE COUNCIL**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Meeting Date:** Friday October 2, 2015

**Location:** Student Union Multipurpose Room C

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

Dr. Mario Mignone

Mr. William Hohausser

Ms. Antoinette Metoyer

**Representatives of the College**

Dr. Calvin O. Butts, III

Mr. Lionel Chitty

Mr. Len Davis

Dr. Wayne Edwards

Mr. Omar Estrada Torres

Dr. Barbara Hillery

Mr. Michael Kinane

Ms. Mary Marquez Bell

Dr. Patrick O'Sullivan

Ms. Mona Rankin

Dr. Kate Velsor

Dr. Jason Zhu

**I. Welcome and Meeting Opening**

Dr. Mignone convened the meeting. Minutes of the April meeting were approved without dissent.

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

President Butts opened his report by announcing key new appointees and campus leaders:

- Dr. Nancy Brown, who has come to the College as Dean of the School of Education after serving at Oakland University in Michigan.
- Dr. Jason Zhu, who is serving as the Interim Dean of the School of Business
- Mr. Omar Estrada Torres, who has come to the College as Dean of Students after serving at Catholic University in Washington, D.C., and
- Ms. Antoinette Metoyer, President of the Student Government Association.

He discussed the success of the ongoing Panther Pride Homecoming week, noting the elevated spirit being shown across campus. President Butts also noted that he was impressed by the students who are new to the college that he met during his annual Fall Convocation.

Looking forward, President Butts discussed the vision and plans he sees the College pursuing in the near future, including

- Continued growth in enrollment, seeking an ultimate headcount of 6,000 by 2020 and a growing residential student enrollment.

- An increased focus on STEAM-related areas – science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics -- with hiring within the faculty focused in computer information sciences, biology and public health.
- The acquisition of capital funds for an expansion and renovation of the Natural Science building.
- Efforts related to retention and graduation will continue to increase, including:
  - Reviewing and improving the ways students are advised
  - Improving the “digital” nature of the campus by increasing access to information and resources for students, faculty and staff through improved and new technologies (online courses, DegreeWorks). As part of its efforts to improve and expand the use of technology, the College is in the running for up to \$20 million in state funding for its “Digital Campus” proposal which would provide for things such as:
    - expansion of scanning and optical recognition technologies to improve administrative processes
    - increasing wifi capabilities across campus
    - providing iPads to students and faculty and integrating them into coursework on a wide scale basis
    - this funding request is aligned with the “SUNY Excels” process, which is requiring each campus to create annual Performance Improvement Plans to be reviewed and approved by SUNY. President Butts noted that the plan being developed ties directly to the vision outlined in this meeting.

**Discussion:**

Mr. Hohausser asked for information related to the rate of retention of new faculty. Provost O’Sullivan noted the retention was high, that actual recruitment was the greater challenge. Dr. Mignone asked whether the review of academic programs is administratively driven rather than faculty driven and applauded the emphasis on science and health-based foci. Mr. Chitty questioned whether computer/tech related certifications could be offered. Dr. O’Sullivan noted that a School of Professional Studies was in development and the College was awaiting a “demand analysis” from an external consultant regarding potential offerings, certificate and otherwise.

On issues related to enrollment, President Butts noted that access remains an important part of the mission of both the college and SUNY as a whole. Vice President Marquez Bell explained that fall enrollment was actually down, as it was for all areas and most SUNY colleges as each adjusts to changes in local and regional demographics.

**Discussion:**

Ms. Metoyer asked how the process of financial cancellation impacts student enrollment. Mr. Davis noted that the cancellation process had been revised several times over the past 14 years, and in the past two increased communications has become the focus. Early signs are that this effort is reducing the number of students impacted.

The team in Student Affairs has hit the ground running this academic year, particularly in putting together the new student orientation programs and the ongoing Panther Pride Homecoming program. New appointments in Student Affairs, aside from Dean of Students Estrada Torres, include: Gareth Schumack, Director of Residential Life and Stacey DeFelice, Director of the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities.

**Discussion:**

Ms. Metoyer questioned why homecoming had only occurred during the past eight years rather than being a long-standing part of the College's history. President Butts noted there was no evidence to suggest whether such considerations had been made before.

President Butts reported that the College continues to await full allocation of funds from the State Division of Budget and SUNY. The budget is once again basically flat from year to year, as the state continues to lower its contribution to SUNY and its campuses. Dr. Butts reminded the Council that the only real new tax-based funds made available to SUNY this year were an \$18 million sum to be used to incentivize the SUNY Excels performance improvement plan. Senior Vice President and CFO Davis reported that nearly \$5 million in reserves would be added this year to the \$37 million base budget to fund needed and expected programs and activities. He also noted the campus wide effort, being led by the Division of Business & Finance, to continually improve students' financial literacy. "Financial Literacy Old Westbury" – or FLOW – is the effort underway. Through FLOW, more and more students are using the online video and other resources available that give them a better understanding of how to efficiently manage themselves financially.

On issues related to the Division of Advancement, Mr. Kinane updated the Council on efforts to lease land to the College Foundation for the development of a new child care center. A new survey is being done which will provide the boundaries needed for inclusion in new draft legislation that is expected to be presented next term. The College's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary was also discussed, and all were reminded that the celebration has been extended through the spring semester, culminating at the May Commencement. He also noted that additional effort was being made to re-engage alumni, including turning the Saturday of Panther Pride Week into "Alumni Family Saturday." As of this meeting, more than 120 alumni are expected and some 150-200 guests.

**Discussion:**

Dr. Mignone asked how the fundraising efforts of the campus could be amplified. Mr. Kinane noted that a discussion was underway with the President's Office regarding staffing needs of the fundraising team that need to be addressed.

President Butts closed his report by inviting Council Members to attend as many anniversary events as possible. He also asked that they mark their calendars for two key upcoming events.

- Thursday, November 12, 2015 – A Visit With Congressman John Lewis and Noted Journalist Bill Moyers.
- Tuesday, May 10, 2015 – The SUNY Old Westbury 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala.

### **III. New Business**

Dr. Mignone asked the Council members if they had new business to review.

Hearing none, he asked Dean of Arts and Sciences Hillery to provide an update. Dr. Hillery noted that the College had welcomed the first cohort of students this fall for its new Master of Arts in Liberal Studies program. She also discussed the ongoing effort to earn accreditation of the College's Public Health Department and Health & Society degree from the Council on Education of Public Health.

Dean of Students Estrada Torres discussed his plan to promote the social and service opportunities available to students through Greek life. He also reviewed the SCOPE program and its series of workshops and activities targeting upper division students.

Acting Dean of the School of Business Jason Zhu reported that the work of the high needs grant collaborative with Stony Brook and others had entered its second year. He also noted that both departments within the school were involved in five-year program reviews.

Faculty Senate Chair Velsor reported that faculty members are engaged in a variety of projects and improvements related to student assessment of the faculty.

Student Government Association President Metoyer reported that 85% of leadership positions across SGA had been filled within the first month of classes and that first-year elections were underway. SGA also provided \$40,000 in its budget to promote weekend programming in alignment with efforts to create a more residential campus environment. She also noted that the new common hour period within the new class schedule seems to be negatively affecting attendance at meetings and events. Among chief student concerns reported were deficiencies in the shuttle bus schedule, cleanliness issues in the Campus Dining Center, and poor lighting on campus.

### **IV. Open Meeting**

Dr. Mignone opened the floor to questions and comments from the public. Hearing none, Dr. Mignone closed the meeting.

Submitted by:



Michael Kinane

Assistant to the President for Advancement