

# SUNY COLLEGE AT OLD WESTBURY COLLEGE COUNCIL

## MEETING MINUTES

**Meeting Date:** Friday, October 5, 2018  
**Location:** Student Union, Multipurpose Room C

**Attendance:** **Appointed Members of the College Council**  
Ms. Cania Infante Mr. Evan Rufrano  
Dr. Mario Mignone

### **Representatives of the College**

Dr. Calvin O. Butts, III	Ms. Claudia Marin Andrade
Mr. Len Davis	Ms. Mary Marquez Bell
Dr. Raj Devasagayam	Mr. Andrew Mattson
Dr. Wayne Edwards	Dr. Patrick O'Sullivan
Mr. William Kimmins	Ms. Mona Rankin
Mr. Michael Kinane	Mr. Usama Shaikh

### **I. Welcome and Meeting Opening**

- Dr. Mario Mignone, Designated Chairman, called the meeting to order at 10:40 am. He expressed his disappointment for the lack of attendance and commitment on the part of his Council colleagues.
- He then went on to announce that Dr. Debra Handel who has served since 2007, has resigned from her position on the College Council. He thanked Dr. Handel for her long, dedicated and valued service to the Council and to SUNY Old Westbury.
- Dr. Mignone feels the Council could do more for the College. He went on to mention how impressed he was with the inspiring talk given by Dr. Butts at Fall Convocation two weeks prior.
- Finally, Dr. Mignone requested approval of the minutes of the April 13<sup>th</sup> meeting, which were accepted without dissent. There being no old business, Dr. Mignone requested that Dr. Butts give his report.

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

- Dr. Butts began by echoing Dr. Mignone's concerns about our College Council attendance, and also mentioned that we have been waiting for some time for the Governor to make appointments to our Council.
- Dr. Butts then introduced Ms. Claudia Marin Andrade, our new Dean of Students, who comes to us from Hofstra, and Mr. Evan Rufrano, a senior Politics, Economics and Law major who is this year's SGA President.
- The College has received two new achievement awards. For the first time, SUNY Old Westbury has been recognized by *Money Magazine* as being among the best colleges in the United States in terms of value. In addition, we are one of only ninety-six institutions in the nation to receive the 2018 Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award.
- Dean Barbara Hillery was named as an American Chemical Society Fellow in 2018. The ACS Fellows program, in its tenth year, recognizes ACS members for outstanding achievements in and contributions to science, the profession and ACS, the world's largest scientific society. Only fifty-one scientists from around the world were inducted this year.

- Dr. Llana Barber of the American Studies Department was announced as the co-winner of the Lois P. Rudnick Book Prize by The New England American Studies Association. This prize is given to the best academic book in American Studies written by a New England scholar or about New England. She received the honor for her recent book, "Latino City: Immigration and Urban Crisis in Lawrence, MA, 1945-2000."
- Dr. Butts went on to praise the College's administrators, faculty and staff for one of the smoothest beginnings to the Academic Year in a long time. Also, there has been no parking problem. We built a new parking lot and have not received any complaints about parking. Dr. Butts expressed his gratitude to Assistant Vice President Ray Maggiore of the Office of Capital Planning and to Director of Facilities Tim McGarry and the Facilities and Maintenance team for their efforts in completing this project.
- Panther Pride Homecoming starts next week, and Dr. Butts encouraged everyone to review the Panther Pride material in their packages and attend if they were able.
- Dr. Butts congratulated Ms. Mary Marquez Bell, Vice President for Enrollment Services, along with her team, for a very successful year. They have worked with our academic advisors, First-year Experience staff, EOP Office, transfer services personnel and the Student Affairs orientation team for the collective effort that was made to assist this year's entering class of students.
- Four years ago, we surpassed, for the first time, overall enrollment of 4,500. For the fall of 2018, the College exceeded its enrollment target by enrolling 5,079 students. This enrollment includes 751 first year students, 809 transfer students, 3,217 continuing students and 302 graduate students. They score in the mid-percentile of the SAT's and have a high school average of approximately 84 percent.
- This represents the largest class of first year students ever welcomed to campus, the largest total enrollment in College history, and the first time we have ever exceeded 5,000 in headcount, thus placing us well on our way to achieving the roughly 5,400 headcount by 2023 which we set out for ourselves with SUNY.
- Included among our student body are 496 who will receive the Excelsior Scholarship from the State of New York. This is nearly double the number we had last year and represents approximately \$1.3 million in support for students. Old Westbury has to put forth the funds and be reimbursed by the state. We have not yet been reimbursed for last year.
- Dr. Butts asked Ms. Marquez Bell for any other comments. Ms. Marquez Bell mentioned that in addition to the 84 percent GPA of the entering class their average SAT was 1,040, approximately 20 points higher than last year. The freshman population from New York City and the boroughs and Nassau County are very close, with 40 percent from Nassau and 38 percent from New York City. We have placed more emphasis on New York City over the last two years because part of the population was still growing. There will be a 3 percent decrease in high school graduates both in New York City and in New York State next year. It will be a challenge to maintain what we have.
- Dr. Mignone inquired as to the comparative number of students from out of state and abroad. Ms. Marquez Bell said that in order to garner more enrollment from a targeted area, since we still have the same number of staff when we concentrate on New York City other geographic areas decrease in enrollment. We have seen a significant decrease in recent years in out of state enrollment. Last year we had a drop in international enrollment, as did everyone else in the country because of new visa regulations, but this year we were up approximately 20 percent because of some very targeted efforts. We are down in China, slightly up in India and have been having great success in Vietnam. However, the numbers are small. Mr. Kinane, Vice President of Communications and Chief Communications Officer, mentioned that out of state and international enrollment averages only four to seven percent of our enrollment.
- Dr. Butts mentioned that we have twenty-four new full-time faculty this fall along with two librarians.
- The College welcomed the first class of students in two new graduate degree programs: the MS in Childhood Special Education and the MS in Forensic Accounting. Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Patrick O'Sullivan is leading a review of all of our graduate offerings to ensure they are both excellent educationally and operating effectively.

- We have new degrees that will hit the market this year – an MS in Students with Disabilities (Grades 1-6) and an MS in Data Analytics.
- Renovation of the campus library is nearly complete, and we brought six new classrooms online that will support many more collaborative learning opportunities between our students and faculty. Fifty-four course sections have been scheduled into these new spaces this semester.
- Dr. Butts remarked that with all of the great work we have been doing, we still need a new science building that we estimate will cost approximately \$100 million. He will be talking to Governor Cuomo later today as to what he can do to assist us, and Dr. Butts appealed to everyone present to help raise these funds. We have already engaged the support of Chancellor Johnson, and Trustee Eunice Lewin came to campus in September and has pledged her support as well.
- The State Education Department has provided a \$700,000 grant payable over the next four years to create an Early College High School Scholars Academy in cooperation with Roosevelt Union Free School District. The program is designed as a learning community within the larger school setting. It will also have formative career pathways to assist students with their future career orientations as they gain both requisite skills and earn college credit. During the four-year period, at least one hundred students will participate.
- Dr. Butts asked Dr. O'Sullivan to report on Academic Affairs. Dr. O'Sullivan remarked that we are planning for the Middle States site visit in spring 2021. Preparation of the Self Study report is already underway and committees have been structured. We are on target to do well, as we have during all of our reviews by Middle States over nearly two decades.
- Dr. Butts mentioned that the Division of Student Affairs will be re-launching the campus' participation in the NASPA (Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education) Undergraduate Fellowship Program. This program encourages minority students' entrance into student affairs as a career.
- Dr. Butts then requested that Mr. Usama Shaikh, Vice President for Student Affairs and Chief Diversity Officer report further on the Division. Mr. Shaikh said that with the assistance of Business and Finance, a new initiative has been launched to extend the Student Union business hours on the weekend for an additional thirty-six hours. This is being done based on funding that will enable us to create student manager positions, thus adding another employment opportunity for students. We have just hired eight students who will be trained by the Student Union Building Manager.
- Our Student Health Center has switched to an electronic medical records system.
- The Office of Residential Life has launched a forty days of programming initiative to encourage student engagement.
- Mr. Shaikh said the Division of Student Affairs was excited to have Ms. Claudia Marin Andrade join them as Dean of Students.
- Dr. Mignone asked Dr. O'Sullivan about our graduation rate, and if lack of course availability influences it at Old Westbury. Dr. O'Sullivan says that at times it does...the frequency depends on the semester. We are focused on the time to degree and the curriculum across the campus, with regard to obstacles that have crept in. Also, we are looking at schedules much more rigorously each semester, and for fall 2019 will be using Ad Astra, a software package that will help us to anticipate certain problems. We are focusing on retention and graduation rates. Our retention rate is improving. We have extended the First-year Experience program to sophomores. We have the Student Success Center, which focuses on the transfer of students and the exchange of information among transfer counselors, and in November the College will host a conference for transfer counselors from Nassau and Suffolk Community Colleges, and perhaps from Queensborough Community College. We have also used an Early Alert System to identify students at risk so that we can intervene with "intrusive advising". In the Honors College, over sixty percent are graduating in four years. If the students who graduated from Old Westbury in six years are combined with those who leave Old Westbury and transfer to Stony Brook, approximately fifty-five percent graduate within six years. Mr. Kinane added that when Dr. Butts was appointed as President nineteen years ago, the six-year graduation rate was approximately twenty-two percent. The most recent cohort is over forty-eight percent. While this is not as high

as we would like, it is moving in the right direction. Dr. O'Sullivan added that nationally, empirical evidence shows that students who routinely carry fifteen or more credits graduate within four years. More than eighty-five percent of our students work for some period while here at Old Westbury. While the Excelsior program is helpful, the socioeconomic demographics of our students indicate that our students still have to work.

- Dr. Butts then moved on to the Division of Business and Finance and stated that we are awaiting the award of our budget for this year. We expect \$41.9 million consisting of \$10.1 million in state tax support and \$31.8 million in tuition revenues and fees. The College's Financial Plan for the year will require \$47.7 million. The \$5.8 million difference will be covered by using campus reserve funds. Included in the Financial Plan is \$1.6 million for collective bargaining increases. Our retention efforts have been great. We are retaining more students and analysis indicates that the cost savings from retaining students is approximately \$400 thousand.
- Dr. Butts asked Mr. Davis to comment, and Mr. Davis said we still have a structural deficit. We still have gotten less funding than we plan to spend, therefore we have to get the balance from other sources and from dwindling reserves. Because we had good enrollment last year we were able to get some additional funds, which were largely spent on new faculty and librarians. Overall, however, we should be able to maintain the initiatives we have started.
- Faculty Senate Chair, Mr. Andrew Mattson asked how this year's budget compares to last year's. Mr. Davis said we will receive approximately \$2 million more this year, but there are many costs that are not evident such as the TAP credit and the Excelsior Credit. We still have to make up the shortfall.
- Dr. Butts then discussed activities in the Office of Institutional Advancement. Our 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Polo Match was held in Bethpage for the first time. We had a reception at the President's House for potential Foundation Trustees, and we should pick up five or six new Trustees. One of our honorees at the Polo Match was an Old Westbury graduate who we hope to have join the Foundation Board. We do have three new board members: Mr. Alton Byrd, Vice President of Business Operations, Long Island Nets, Ms. Terri Elkowitz, Senior Vice President at VHB, and Town of Hempstead Councilwoman, Viviana Russell.
- Dr. Butts then introduced the College's newly added Director of Advancement, Mr. Rossano Rovello, who comes to us after most recently having served as Associate Director of Individual Giving at St. Francis College. Dr. Wayne Edwards, Vice President for Institutional Advancement and Executive Director of the College Foundation, added that Mr. Rovello had also worked at St. John's University and Hofstra, and brings a wealth of experience in the area of planned giving which we very much need in Institutional Advancement. At today's Faculty Senate meeting Mr. Rovello will announce the Faculty and Staff Giving Campaign.
- We have instituted a new online program called NextGen that helps with the review of scholarship applications. Last year when we were still reviewing paper applications, we had 328 scholarship applications. This year we had 629 plus 124 that the system categorized as pending.
- Dr. Butts remarked that it had been a good year, and congratulated all of the Vice Presidents on their cooperative efforts.
- Dr. Butts asked Mr. Kinane to report on activities in the Office of Public and Media Relations. Mr. Kinane reported that his team, along with a team in Admissions have been looking at the new graduate student enrollment to understand better graduate student inquiry and enrollment cycles. Research is underway so that we can focus closely on what drives an inquiry, an application, and ultimately, a registration.
- We are also supporting open house and working with radio stations on budgets and placements as well as working on digital placements.
- A draft RFP will soon be finished for Purchasing to review so that we can bring a company onboard to refresh the design of our website and move us to the next generation of our content management system. We hope to have this done by the end of next spring.
- Final approvals have been put in place for a multi-media professional position. This person will

- become the official photographer/videographer, because we are very deficient in our use of video.
- We are nearing the rollout of our new College magazine, hopefully within the next month.
- Dr. Butts reported on the upcoming retirement of Ms. Mona Rankin, Chief of Staff, who has been at the College for 19 years, and has been a tremendous supporter and encourager who is loved and respected by many on campus. Dr. Butts is saddened by her departure, as Ms. Rankin has been both a left and right hand to him and his family and the epoxy that holds everyone together. He is very grateful to her, and she will be greatly missed.
- Dr. Butts also thanked the others gathered at the table for all they have given to the College, and thanked Dr. Mignone for his dedication in stepping up in the absence of former College Council Chairman, Dr. Gary Wadler. Dr. Mignone sometimes raises difficult questions, out of a love for Old Westbury and SUNY. He has been at Stony Brook for many years, but recognizes the difference between Stony Brook and Old Westbury.

### III. **New Business** – Reports from College Representatives

- Dr. Mignone asked Dr. Raj Devasagayam, Dean, to report on the School of Business. Dr. Devasagayam said that he and his fellow deans were afforded the opportunity to present their accreditation progress report to the President and his Cabinet. It was a wonderful opportunity to be reaffirmed. He then went on to reaffirm the mission of the School of Business, which is to provide access and support to empower our students with the knowledge, skills and values to think critically, communicate effectively and act responsibly.
- Our eligibility application to AACSB was successful, and we have affirmation and a letter in hand. We have been assigned an Academic Mentor, Dean David Martin, of the Ansell School of Business at Western Connecticut State University. Dr. Devasagayam visited his school and Dean Martin visited Old Westbury and met with Provost O'Sullivan and expects to be back on campus in November to meet with the entire faculty and as many students as possible, and then provide us input. He has stated that his goal is to be a cheerleader and encourage us to attain AACSB accreditation over the next few years.
- Included in today's meeting package is a compilation of weekly newsletters from last year. This is a testament to the commitment of the School of Business' faculty, staff and students to the mission of the School of Business. Dr. Devasagayam brings thanks from the School of Business' faculty for the support provided by those around the table, and he, in turn, thanks the School's faculty.
- Dr. Mignone then requested a report from Faculty Senate Chair, Mr. Andrew Mattson. Mr. Mattson said that the faculty is very pleased that the full time faculty has increased. Going forward, retention is the issue. The role of the First-Year Experience program, led by Dr. Laura Anker, along with the Registrar, Enrollment Services and the Advising Center ... the new Student Success Center...are crucial in keeping students. The Advising Center and First-Year Experience program especially have been doing incredible work with the 751 first year students coming in and deserve a lot of credit and available resources to support their work.
- The faculty has been very involved in working with the Office of the President on the Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan Task Force is being created to begin operating this fall to create a Strategic Plan Committee, which will take over the monitoring and assessment of the Strategic Plan.
- Faculty are working on Middle States with people from Academic Affairs. Mr. Anthony Barbera and Dr. Duncan Quarless are leading the charge, and several faculty members are on the committee. This is long term, important work that involves a lot of unsung faculty labor in documenting the quality of Old Westbury's academics and curriculum.
- The President has initiated a Committee for Open Access Resources, led by Director of the Library, Ms. Antonia DiGregorio. There is a SUNY mandate to increase access to scholarly and creative works databases across the SUNY system.

- Open Educational Resources entails increasing access to textbooks and educational resources that are free of charge. The faculty and Ms. Joanne Spadaro of the library have been working together on a committee to have classes that use open educational resources so that students do not have to pay for very expensive textbooks.
- There is another SUNY mandate to increase Applied Learning, which can involve many activities outside the traditional classroom. There is a committee working to designate courses as Applied Learning.
- Led by Dr. Ed Bever, Director of the School of Professional Studies, a faculty task force on micro credentials has been created to determine how micro credentials can bring people to this campus to serve our students. When we consider a student body of five thousand fulltime students, micro credentials are a way to bring people here for continuing education in non-traditional ways.
- Ms. Claudia Marin Andrade, Dean of Students, reported as follows:
- Per the Voter Registration Initiative from SUNY Student Assembly, the College hosted the League of Women's Voters who showed students how to vote, how to work the machines, and the importance of voting. Over 150 students registered to vote.
- Ms. Jamie Jones has been promoted to include in her responsibilities centralized diversity including programs. Among these programs are Cultural Café, already underway, and Cultural Month celebrations such as LGBTQ+ programming and Lavender graduation programs.
- Ms. Andrade thanked everyone for the warm welcome she has received.
- Dr. Mignone asked Mr. Evan Rufrano, President of the SGA to speak.
- Mr. Rufrano started with a follow-up question to Mr. Mattson and Mr. Kinane as to whether any progress had been made on a data collection project for the First-Year Experience office discussed in a prior meeting, to determine why students attend Old Westbury. Mr. Kinane said that they had not yet gotten to that.  
Mr. Mattson said that Dr. Jacob Heller is working in Academic Affairs and revitalizing the collection of data of all sorts to be available in the decision making process. Between this, EAB software advising data and Ad Astra software things will change a lot in terms of available data.
- Mr. Rufrano mentioned the campaign proposals he made when seeking office including increased parking; increased transportation availability; extended library hours; partnerships with local restaurants and businesses; and increased funding for campus activities.
- Regarding Dr. Mignone's comments about graduation rates, Mr. Rufrano has been in conversation with Academic Affairs regarding prospective programs on four-year graduation that mirror SUNY Buffalo and Buffalo State.
- The SGA is implementing initiatives this year including "Breaking Bread with the Athletes" to bridge the gap between the SGA and athletes. It is important to recognize athletes as students first, with a commitment to both academics and athletics. The SGA will be hosting a bagel breakfast for each team on Senior Day. Anyone who would like to participate on October 13<sup>th</sup>, the women's soccer game, is encouraged and invited to attend.
- On October 2<sup>nd</sup> the Listening and Learning Tour with Dr. Butts will allow the SGA to listen to the concerns of different campus constituencies and learn how the SGA can become a partner in making progress.
- The SGA has a full membership this year with an average 3.5 cumulative GPA.
- To facilitate the incorporation of the College community in SGA training, a Speaker Series has been implemented in which various members of the College speak to SGA leaders.
- The SGA is currently sitting on twenty-five campus committees.
- Dr. Mignone asked for comments. Mr. Mattson responded by saying that Mr. Rufrano had mentioned major accomplishments. We have had years during which the SGA has not had positions filled, and many years during which students have not been represented on committees. This is a major turnaround, and Mr. Rufrano is setting up a student government that promises to stay active after he has graduated, which is a tribute to him.
- Mr. Shaikh remarked that the Campus Activities Board (CAB) is going to allow us to do a lot more

streamlined large campus programming. The CAB, in conjunction with the SGA, is working on generously adding \$30 - \$40 thousand worth of equipment to the Student Union for student use. He looks forward to having this new board within the SGA to help strengthen student engagement. An engaged student body is retained, persists and graduates.

- Mr. Mattson commended the teamwork between the SGA leadership and Student Activities, especially Ms. Suzanne McLoughlin, in creating this engagement.
- Dr. Mignone inquired as to the Student Activities fee. Mr. Rufrano replied that the fee is \$87.50 per semester and they are not looking to increase it.
- Ms. Marquez Bell added to her report that study abroad is an important part of Applied Learning. Almost all of the courses have been incorporated into an Applied Learning format. Interest and participation in study abroad is increasing this year. The program that was held in Nicaragua last year is focusing on Bolivia this year because of the issues in Nicaragua. A number of students attended a program in Cuba last winter. The numbers are increasing and already we have seven applications for next winter. A new program in Greece that we are hoping to launch for next summer, is a course offered through Biological Sciences. Hopefully, we will also be offering a modern language course in Italy next summer. There is also growing interest in studying in China, Spain, London and Paris. While not a study abroad program, last summer we had 15 students participate in a SUNY initiative working with the Governor and SUNY in a program in Puerto Rico to volunteer and help with construction. The Governor is considering re-funding this program throughout the year.
- Dr. Mignone remarked that having been at Stony Brook for 49 years, he has seen both engagement and non-engagement by faculty regarding service on committees. Presently they have some difficulty finding faculty volunteers. Mr. Mattson said that we too have this difficulty, in part because we have so many committees. Faculty is trying to do so much, that the core of faculty members that are very engaged can become overwhelmed. Faculty needs to do what Mr. Rufano has done, which is to recruit more faculty to become more engaged. One of the important things about increasing full time faculty, for which he thanks Mr. Davis and Dr. O'Sullivan, is that new full time faculty can serve on these many important committees.

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

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 12:05 pm.

Submitted by:

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Irene Cotton  
Administrative Assistant to the President.