

SUNY COLLEGE AT OLD WESTBURY COLLEGE COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: Friday, November 18, 2016
Location: Student Union Multipurpose Room C

Attendance:

Appointed Members of the College Council
Dr. Gary Wadler, Chair
Ms. Jeanette Adelson
Ms. Melissa Archbold
Dr. Mario Mignone

Representatives of the College
Dr. Calvin O. Butts, III
Mr. Len Davis
Dr. Kathleen Greenberg
Dr. Barbara Hillery
Mr. William Kimmins
Mr. Michael Kinane
Ms. Mary Marquez Bell
Dr. Patrick O'Sullivan
Mr. Usama Shaikh
Dr. Jishan Zhu

I. Welcome and Meeting Opening

Dr. Wadler opened the meeting at 10:45 am noting that it appeared that we would be without a quorum, but asked that the minutes be approved by those Council members in attendance. The minutes were approved without dissent.

As there was no outstanding old business, Dr. Wadler introduced Dr. Butts.

II. President's Report on the College

- Dr. Butts began by thanking and congratulating Dr. Wadler on his many years of service on the Council, and expressed his appreciation for Dr. Wadler's service and friendship despite his many health challenges.
- Dr. Butts then went on to mention that the College has recently been named to the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll for the work of our First Year Experience students serving in not-for-profits throughout Long Island. It is part of our mission to be of service through the CALL program, and this is our eighth year on the honor roll. Dr. Butts asked that anyone seeing Dr. Laura Anker, Director of the First Year Experience program, congratulate her.
- We had a very successful Open House with more than 850 attendees of which 350 were potential students. Dr. Butts thanked Ms. Sarah Taiclet, Assistant Director of Admissions, who coordinates all facets of the event.
- On October 26th the President's Cabinet met with SUNY's Senior Management Team led by SUNY Provost, Dr. Alexander Cartwright. The meeting was held to review the College's Performance Improvement Plan and to discuss our progress against that plan. Much of the discussion centered on our need to improve student retention. We are addressing this issue via course offerings, counseling, and technology, and are making headway, but can improve. "Student Success" is the center of our Strategic Plan, and part of that is making sure students remain at Old Westbury and graduate in four to five years. Dr. Butts asked Dr. O'Sullivan to comment about the meeting, particularly as it pertains to our relationships with Farmingdale, Nassau Community, Suffolk Community, and Stony Brook University. To the degree that we all work together we will continue to be successful.
- Dr. O'Sullivan, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, commented that we are continuing our collaboration with Farmingdale. On December 2nd we will be hosting the Deans, Provosts and some faculty members to discuss areas of mutual interest, e.g., Farmingdale's

interest in an undergraduate degree in Gerontology, and our interest in an MS degree in Gerontology. We are also looking at possible collaboration in the areas of visual arts and fine arts. Farmingdale has a competitive program in computer graphics. Our program is similar but not as extensive. We will be discussing the possibility of students taking courses at both colleges, which would be mutually beneficial.

- Dr. O'Sullivan then noted that our Middle States Periodic Review Report was submitted in June, and, having received the reviewers report, we are awaiting the Commission's final statement which is expected before Christmas. We did very well overall, with two areas on which we are aware that we need to work...Strategic Planning and Institutional Assessment.

Dr. Butts noted that the school is doing very well, with the exception of the challenges of the budget.

- Mr. Len Davis, Sr. Vice President, Division of Business & Finance and CFO, stated that revenue is not being collected at the expected pace, but no cuts are needed now as revenue is expected. A SUNY Inspector General will be appointed, which is a positive thing, as our procurement flexibility will not be impacted.
- Dr. Butts asked that the Council Members and students lobby on the College's behalf, and said that we have concerns with our capital budget as we are working on some very important initiatives. Among them, as part of our retention, enrollment and STEM efforts, are a new science building, new lab space and up-to-date equipment which would cost \$130 million. Barring that possibility we asked for \$85 million.
- Mr. Michael Kinane, Assistant to the President for Advancement, mentioned that work has started on the drafting of a Request for Information (RFI) regarding the proposed Childcare Center to be sent to the community and potential operators. The responses to the RFI will help us to develop the Request for Proposal (RFP) necessary in our search for a partner by enabling us to determine what works for us in terms of finance, construction and operation of the Childcare Center. Capital funds being as limited as they are, our best avenue for this project is a public/private partnership.
- Dr. Butts mentioned that we are in the midst of a Strategic Plan Update. The committee is co-chaired by Dr. Duncan Quarless, Mr. Anthony Barbera, and Dr. Kathleen Greenberg who is representing the faculty. The theme is "Student Success"...helping students graduate in 4 to 5 years; giving students opportunities through applied learning; providing services to help students navigate through our educational process and then to navigate after graduation...to return as a graduate student, attend another institution for post-graduate work, or join the job market.

Dr. Butts asked Mr. Davis to speak about what currently is being done in the area of technology.

- Mr. Davis reiterated that our focus in the Strategic Plan is on "Student Success", not only in terms of graduation within 4 to 5 years, but also in terms of helping students graduate with the least accumulated debt. Nationally, the average student leaves a baccalaureate institution with a debt of \$30 thousand. For each additional year attended, beyond the 4 to 5 year period, the student accumulates another \$20 thousand in debt. We will be utilizing technology and data in the form of predictive analytics, including looking at risk factors, to advise students in their choice of courses. This is a long term project, and in December we will start using the Education Advisory Board (EAB), a consultant, to assist us.

Before concluding his report, Dr. Butts addressed his concerns about the rhetoric that has permeated the discussion during the election process, and stressed his commitment to protecting students and the entire campus community against bigotry and hatred of any kind.

III. New Business

- Dr. Mignone remarked that often students can't find the courses they need, and we need to

explore ways in which to assist them, whether by offering online or weekend courses, etc.

- Ms. Archbold suggested that an outline designating the path to degree completion would be helpful. She also asked if there was any data available providing answers to what contributes to the hindrance in degree completion, and if there were personal issues involved, how they are being addressed.
- Dr. O'Sullivan mentioned that we continue to add online courses every semester, and addressed the difficulties and objections that some faculty members have with online instruction. Some courses do not lend themselves well to an online format, and the faculty knows the curriculum and what courses can and cannot be taught online. A survey of undergraduate and graduate students in the School of Business indicated that they preferred hybrid or face to face instruction. We are working to determine the problems in order to offer the MS in Accounting degree online. The question also remains as to whether students sitting for the CPA exam after having completed a degree online will do as well as those who were taught in the classroom.
- Dr. Mignone remarked that in the online course with 18 students that he taught some years ago, there was more discussion than when the course was taught in the classroom, changing his opinion about online teaching. However, he went on to say that the teaching aspect was very laborious. He feels that younger faculty are better suited to teaching online than more senior faculty.

Dr. Butts asked Dr. Barbara Hillery, Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, for her opinion.

- Dr. Hillery responded that most of our online courses are capped at 25 students. She thinks that a lot depends on student motivation, and that most of the online courses work pretty well and do provide an opportunity to students who can't get to campus for many reasons. In response to Dr. Butts' inquiry as to how the School of Arts and Sciences is doing, she responded that it is doing very well. It is busy and there have been many interesting speakers. She went on to say that on December 6th the School of Arts and Sciences is expecting a preliminary external visit from the Council on Education for Public Health from whom we are seeking accreditation of our Public Health program within six months to a year.

Dr. Butts then asked Dr. Zhu, Interim Dean to report on the School of Business.

- Dr. Zhu remarked that the School of Business is doing very well. In the spirit of cooperation between SUNY campuses, the School of Business invited the entire Business Department from Nassau Community to our campus for a joint faculty meeting. Eleven of Nassau's twelve business faculty members attended. It is hoped that by bringing joint faculty together it will bring Old Westbury's name to the attention of Nassau Community College students. Dr. Butts mentioned that he had received a couple of emails from Nassau Community department chairs indicating how much they had enjoyed their visit, and congratulated Dr. Zhu on the success of the visit. Dr. Zhu went on to say that this year our Accounting Networking Reception on October 6th was the largest event in many years in terms of both student and outside firm participation.
- Dr. O'Sullivan returned to the issue of online courses and mentioned that SUNY leaders, in the area of SUNY Institutional Readiness, will visit within the next couple of weeks to assess whether or not we are ready to put degrees online.

Dr. Butts then requested that Mr. Usama Shaikh, Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs, who attended on behalf of Dr. Wayne Edwards, Vice President for Student Affairs and Chief Diversity Officer, report on that area.

- Mr. Shaikh reported that the Division of Student Affairs is engaged in creating its own Strategic Plan initiative as of this past fall. As part of this they have had conversations with more than 40

faculty and staff members and approximately 100 students with whom they conducted focus groups in order to gather data on the perception of Student Affairs and the College as a whole. They will also be conducting an internal SWOC (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges) analysis, of the division as well as evaluating the division's mission statement, looking at its values, goals and initiatives. Relying on all of this data, and based on the division's current student success model focusing on leadership and learning, as well as including their assessment program, they will complete the division's strategic plan with the focus on supporting the overall mission of the institution.

- Mr. Shaikh also thanked Mr. Len Davis, CFO, for much needed funding for capital improvements in the Student Union in the form of some updated furniture and equipment. Updates in the form of new mattresses and carpets in the residence halls, and state of the art water fountains, a green initiative because of less reliance on bottled water, are also underway.
- With regard to technology, the Career Planning and Development Office is reaching out to students by using software called "Purple Briefcase" and "InterviewStream", being referred to internally as "Panther Career Link". These programs allow employers to post positions directly online and also allow students to record practice interviews and receive feedback from staff.

Dr. Butts called on Ms. Jeanette Adelson, SGA President, to report, and asked her if she had noticed these improvements on behalf of the students.

- She replied that she and others had seen this progress. Ms. Adelson reported that the SGA hosted the SUNY Student Assembly in October giving Old Westbury students an opportunity to see how things are done at the executive level of SGA in the SUNY system. All SUNY SGA presidents met in Albany in September for a summit to discuss campus issues, advocacy, etc. She noted that in comparison to some of the problems being dealt with on other campuses, Old Westbury is doing much better.
- The SGA is getting involved in SUNY Student Assembly membership and Old Westbury student and SGA Vice President for Communications, Mr. Evan Rufrano, is also serving as SUNY Student Assembly Director of Academic Affairs.
- SGA events have seen capacity turnouts at a number of large scale events this semester, including parties, concerts, and a comedy show, and SGA is reaching commuters...one of its goals.
- Students are concerned about tuition costs and SGA wants to be at the forefront of bringing these concerns to the attention of legislators.

Dr. Butts asked Ms. Adelson to give an example of ways in which Old Westbury is doing better than some other campuses.

- She responded that one area is in the use of PEX cards by student clubs to make purchases necessary for programming. It has streamlined the process and taught students how to responsibly handle these funds. Mr. Shaikh remarked that through the services of our Auxiliary Services Corporation, a part time accountant, and a lawyer, we ensure that our practices are in line. We provide leadership and learning for our students creating an environment that empowers them and enhances the operations of SGA.

Dr. Butts called on Dr. Kathleen Greenberg, Chair of the Faculty Senate.

- Dr. Greenberg referred to the focus groups on retention that she conducted many years ago. The research centered on students who stayed in school as well as those who left. Students who left did not feel that they were on a path that would get them somewhere. Retention efforts need to

focus on supporting students and reminding them that they are on a path and in keeping them on that path. The student success movement is important, and the faculty is very excited about being involved in all of these initiatives. Supporting the students enables the faculty to support the College's mission.

- Ms. Mary Marquez Bell, Vice President for Enrollment Services, reported that we are expecting positive enrollment. We are ahead in applications for spring undergraduate and graduate, and are ahead for fall and are looking forward to a good year. Our yield rates were impacted in terms of trying to convert students from New York City, however, as it is a very competitive atmosphere due to the fact that the SUNY schools are actively recruiting via regional reps in New York City. We did increase our number of freshmen, and had increases by geographic region.
- Enrollment Services is now fully staffed with a new Admissions Counselor who will work on both domestic and international admissions, and a new Study Abroad Advisor.

Dr. Butts asked for comments from Mr. Michael Kinane, Assistant to the President for Advancement.

- Mr. Kinane said that he wanted to go on record to offer congratulations to Evan Rufrano who was mentioned earlier by Ms. Adelson. Mr. Rufrano is one of eighteen SUNY students selected from four hundred sixty thousand students to be a fellow at the annual SUNY Convention in October, where he got behind the scenes access to major media players, policy makers, etc. He is a very bright and articulate sophomore from Patchogue, majoring in Politics, Economics and Law.
- Mr. Kinane also mentioned that the prior week he had attended a SUNY Government Relations summit. While SUNY doesn't have a budget yet, Chairman McCall is asking that we amp up our local outreach once we get into budget season.
- It was also announced that SUNY has created its own not-for-profit foundation called the SUNY Impact Foundation to seek philanthropic funds to support, what Mr. Kinane hopes, will be system-wide initiatives.
- Tuesday, November 29th is "Giving Tuesday". We are running a pilot this year to see if we can get 150 donors. Emails will be sent out regarding this, and alumni have received a mailing.

IV. Open Meeting

With no further questions or comments the meeting was adjourned at 12:12 pm.

Submitted by:

Irene Cotton
Administrative Assistant to the President