

SUNY COLLEGE AT OLD WESTBURY COLLEGE COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: Friday, December 7, 2018
Location: Student Union, Multipurpose Room C

Attendance: **Appointed Members of the College Council**
Ms. Melissa Archbold
Mr. William Hohausner
Ms. Cania Infante
Mr. Scott Reich
Mr. Evan Rufrano

Representatives of the College
Dr. Calvin O. Butts, III
Mr. Len Davis
Dr. Raj Devasagayam
Dr. Wayne Edwards
Dr. Barbara Hillery
Mr. William Kimmins
Ms. Claudia Marin Andrade
Mr. Andrew Mattson
Dr. Duncan Quarless

Guests: (Co-Chairs of the Middle States Self-Study Steering Committee)
Mr. Anthony Barbera
Dr. Jacob Heller
Dr. Margaret Torrell

I. Welcome and Meeting Opening

- In Dr. Mignone's absence Dr. Butts requested that the Council members select a member to serve as Designated Chair for the meeting. Mr. Hohausner was selected as such. A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes of the October 5, 2018 meeting.
- Ms. Infante expressed her concern at the lack of attendance at meetings. Dr. Butts replied that the President of the Institution neither selects nor determines the status of Council Members. The President and his staff have contacted the Governor's Office about the status of our Council Members, but to date we have had no response.
- Since there was no Old Business to be discussed, Mr. Hohausner requested that Dr. Butts present his report.

II. President's Report on the College

- Dr. Butts began his report by citing the recent tragic deaths of three Old Westbury students this semester: Mr. Christopher Brown, a School of Business alumnus, who died in a motor vehicle accident, Ms. Madelyn Bowen, a student athlete who passed away from cancer, and Mr. Khalid Hill who also passed away in a motor vehicle accident. Dr. Butts also noted the passing of Dr. John Maguire, an outstanding former Old Westbury President who had a distinguished career in human rights. Dr. Butts asked those in attendance to observe a moment of silence.
- The Fall Admissions Open House on November 10 brought nearly 1,000 prospective students and their families to campus. Unfortunately, at this point, applications are down from the very strong year we had last year. Applications across the SUNY system are down because the number of high school graduates across New York will be 3 percent lower this spring than last year. Because of this, our admissions team is working specifically on communications and other strategies to promote an improved yield from our applicant pool. We are in competition with both private colleges as well as SUNY schools.
- Three Old Westbury students were among more than 4,000 participants in the 2018 Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students last month in Indianapolis. Ms. Sarah Sadik, a senior Biological Sciences major, earned an award for her poster presentation in the discipline of "Cancer Biology." Other Old Westbury students participating were, Biological Sciences major Ms. Kristelle Pierre and Chemistry major Ms. Amber Rosario.

- Associate Professor of American Studies Dr. Llana Barber has received the 2017 Kenneth Jackson Award for Best Book in North American Urban History from the Urban History Association. She earned the award for her book, *Latino City: Immigration and Urban Crisis in Lawrence, Massachusetts, 1945-2000*. The award is given annually to an original scholarly work that exhibits quality research, effective arguments and contributes to urban history.
- Professor of English Christopher Hobson recently authored *James Baldwin and the Heavenly City: Prophecy, Apocalypse, and Doubt*, which provides new interpretations on the works of the famous American novelist and social critic. Prof. Hobson's book focuses on Baldwin's six novels, as well as on selected essays, drama and short stories.
- Staff in Academic Affairs, Enrollment Services and Public and Media Relations are working to bring to market three new graduate degree offerings next fall:
 - MS in Students with Disabilities (Grades 1-6) – a degree that can lead to professional certification for teachers at the elementary levels.
 - MS in Data Analytics, which will prepare students for careers as data analysts and data-savvy managers in a wide variety of fields.
 - Online MS in Accounting – the College's first online degree program, which will now enable us to extend the reach of the high quality graduate accounting instruction we have provided since 2004.
- SUNY Old Westbury, in partnership with the Roosevelt Union Free School District, has announced a new Scholars Academy, a cohort-based learning community designed to promote a college-going culture across the Roosevelt School District. The partnership is being funded by a five-year \$700 thousand grant from the New York State Education Department. The Scholars Academy begins this year with twenty-five ninth grade students who will be identified this fall. In each following year, a cohort of twenty-five students will enter the academy, bringing total participation to one hundred students in the fourth year.
- Dr. Butts went on to say that as we near the end of the fall term, there have been a number of great programs over the past several weeks that showcase our students and promote their excitement about being a part of Old Westbury.
 - The Visual Arts Department hosted this week in the Amelie A. Wallace Gallery an exhibit and reception showcasing the work of students in the Tutorials Three course.
 - Last month the Modern Languages Department and the Hispanic/Latino Cultural Center conducted a symposium on Ancient American Cultures, bringing students and faculty from Old Westbury together with members of other local campuses in a series of lectures and other academic presentations.
 - On Wednesday, the College held a "SnOW Social" – emphasis on the O-W – to help students prepare and de-stress before finals. Nearly 400 students participated and offices across campus took part, having fun with students while providing critical information and support. The First Year Experience Office, Transfer Services, Athletics, Registrar, CSTEP, Student Government, the Honors College, International Enrollment Services and Study Abroad and others took part. Dr. Butts thanked Ms. Jerilyn Marinan of the Office of Career Planning and Development, Ms. Bonnie Eannone of the First-Year Experience Office, and Ms. Cris Notaro of the School of Arts and Sciences for putting this event together.
- Dr. Butts hopes to be proven wrong, but conveyed his disappointment in what he perceives as the distancing of the State from the State University. New York State Senator Todd Kaminsky called the public and private Long Island institutions together so that current as well as newly elected Democratic Senators could hear the higher education institutions' concerns. As the institution leaders spoke, it appeared that for the most part all had the same concerns, i.e., all are looking for money for space...in our case, a new science building. We offer diversity, access and affordability to our students, many of whom are poor. We have to get the word out, but our resources are dwindling. If we cannot get people appointed to the College Council, how do we convey to the State that we need help with the budget? It appears that we are going to have to absorb payment of the new terms of the UUP contract if the State does not help. We have been unable to get an increase in our capital budget in order to build a new science building. Competition between colleges is strong for what is a small number of students.

- Dr. Butts then asked Mr. Len Davis, Sr. Vice President for Business and Finance and CFO to report on the budget. Mr. Davis began by saying that SUNY has submitted its budget requests and is asking for more in almost every category. In the area of direct State support they are asking for 5 percent more than the prior year. They are also asking for approximately \$200 million more on the capital program side. SUNY is advocating having an increased budget, and an enhanced maintenance of effort going forth to cover costs such as contractual and utility increases. Requests for an enhanced maintenance of effort have been submitted in the past, however, and the Governor decided this was not something he wanted to do on an ongoing basis. The State's concept of maintenance of effort is the same amount of funding. However, with the same amount of funding we have many more commitments to meet. There is a \$200 increase in tuition again this year, but this does not cover anywhere near what we need to spend. The Chancellor wants to put money in areas such as diversity, EOC, EOP and enhancement of the Excelsior Program, which are all good programs, but they will not be funded at the level which we are requesting, if at all. The biggest concern right now is the UUP contract. There is no denying that these increases are deserved, but the cost of the contract is staggering. The estimated cost over the life of the contract is \$1.6 billion, with an estimated amount for Old Westbury to be \$16.2 million. At one time contractual increases were included in our allocation, but that stopped long ago, and costs were shifted to the campuses. There may be some hardship on the campus.

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

- Mr. Hohausser introduced the Co-Chairs of the Middle States Self-Study Steering Committee who were present to report to the Council. They are Mr. Anthony Barbera, Assistant VP for Academic Affairs, Dr. Jacob Heller, Assistant VP for Institutional Research & Assessment, and Dr. Margaret Torrell, Associate Professor, English Department.
- Mr. Barbera referred to a handout that was included in the meeting package, and referred to an overview of what is known as the “new” process. Formerly Middle States came to campus every ten years. The campus would prepare a Self-Study Report, a team consisting of peer reviewers from other colleges would visit and verify the information in the report, and then decide whether your accreditation would be reaffirmed. Since ten years was such a long time span, in the fifth year the campus would have to prepare a written Periodic Review Report, which was also reviewed by Middle States and formed the basis for whether or not reaccreditation was granted. Middle States has changed the process. There is now an eight-year gap between campus visits, and instead of the mid-point Periodic Review Report, campuses must prepare an Annual Institutional Update. There are various metrics that Middle States has determined are important, including dealing with student achievement and financial health, along with metrics on which campuses can voluntarily report. The College can also add things to the report to improve the context of the report so that Middle States understands what is happening on the campus. Rather than retention rate, we included the six-year completion rate, which means that whether a student received a degree from Old Westbury, or from another college at the end of six years, we helped prepare that student to obtain the degree. We've already submitted our Annual Institutional Report for this year. At the end of the fourth year Middle States assigns a reviewer who does not visit the campus, but rather reviews the last four annual updates and submits any questions to the campus. They are conducting what is, basically, a trend analysis. After four more annual updates there is the Self-Study Report and the site visit. This semester we have begun planning for our next site visit which will take place in spring 2021. In November, Mr. Barbera, Dr. Heller and Dr. Duncan Quarless, Acting Associate Provost, attended a Self-Study Institute, which is a workshop that Middle States presents to all of the colleges that will be reviewed in the next two and a half years. The three also attended the Middle States Annual Meeting in Washington DC to hear discussions and sessions on preparation.
- Dr. Heller then proceeded to review the various campus groups that are needed for the Middle States Self-Study and the Peer-Review process, including the Middle States Executive Committee, the Middle States Steering Committee and the Middle States Working Groups. He then reviewed the process which will take place over the next two years. Starting in the spring we will develop our Self-Study Design which maps the structure and content of what we will be doing during the following year, and includes “evidence inventory”, which potentially includes

documents related to anything that happens on campus. This spring our new Middle States liaison, Dr. Sean McKittrick, will visit campus. From fall 2019 through spring 2020 the majority of the work will be done. In the fall of 2020 the team Chair will make a preliminary visit, and in the spring of 2021 the entire team will visit. Middle States will then receive our report and the Middle States' team report, and then will inform us where we stand, i.e., whether we need to do a follow-up or are fine for the next eight years. The presumption is that we will be reaccredited. While there are issues to contend with, there should be no problems in terms of reaccreditation.

- Dr. Torrell then talked about the ways in which we have to show Middle States what we have been doing and how we plan to continue in the future. The Requirements of Affiliation set a basic standard of college operations that all colleges and universities belonging to Middle States must follow. Among other things they include, the stipulation that we are licensed to operate, the requirement that we use our mission and goals in our program development and in our budget allocations, the requirement that we follow ethical procedures and practices, and that we are actively performing assessment, etc. The Standards for Accreditation have changed slightly. They have been condensed from fourteen standards to seven. There is now a renewed focus on our mission and goals, a renewed focus on student learning experience and a large focus on assessment. Dr. Torrell went on to describe the seven standards, which were also detailed in the Middle States Accreditation Overview document that was part of the meeting package. These two lists, the Requirements of Affiliation and the Standards for Accreditation will provide guidance for the Design for Self-Study and the Self-Study itself.
- Ms. Cania Infante, Council Member, asked whether there was a particular area on which there will be more focus. Mr. Barbera said that in our prior reports we were deficient in a formalized system of assessment of non-academic areas. We now have a formalized system in place. This is one of the reasons Dr. Heller is filling a new position in order to coordinate this formalized assessment process. Dr. Heller added that we were asked for a follow up report in 2016 which Middle States accepted.
- Mr. Rufrano, Council Member and SGA President, mentioned that we increased our support for the student experience within the Student Success Center that was just opened this past year.
- Ms. Archbold asked whether the assessment was for both students and faculty. Mr. Barbera said that in the academic area it is the assessment of student learning goals, i.e., what we are trying to have students learn in terms of knowledge, skills and abilities. Means are then developed to assess whether they have achieved that. It is an assessment of the program rather than focusing on individual students.
- Faculty Senate Chair, Mr. Andrew Mattson stated that the administration and the deans ensure that courses are constructed with a clear idea of skills and learning objectives that are incorporated into the syllabus. The way students assess relates to those learning objectives, which are learning objectives for the particular course, and also for the department which fits into the mission of the College. It is a multi-tiered process, and attention is being paid to it at all levels.
- Dr. Heller said that the assessment program that is in place is very effective, and just needs to change a bit in response to the new standards. Each major needs to have its own learning outcomes, which are mapped from the College mission. Our mission of social justice and environmental sustainability needs to be reflected in all the curriculum. We can then see how well students are doing. Once that is known, programs can be changed to improve the learning experience.
- Mr. Barbera mentioned that there is also a non-academic assessment process that is keyed on the performance measures of individual Divisions.
- Mr. Rufrano asked whether the new software, *Blue*, which involves student evaluation of teaching, assists in assessment. Dr. Heller said it is not directly related to student learning outcomes. It gives us a piece of information regarding students' attitudes about their experience. We need to be skeptical about what those evaluations really mean in the classroom because of the inherent biases and reliability and validity issues which exist with student evaluations. While they are information, they are not authoritative information, so would not be part of the formal assessment process.

- Dr. Quarless mentioned that student evaluations do give students voice, which is important, and at some level this may be related to the standard regarding governance. He believes the administration views the course evaluation system as something being done at the request of the faculty, but it is something that advanced out of the need to have greater student voice.
- Mr. Mattson mentioned that the value of student evaluations rises and falls based on the number that are completed. We need to get buy-in from both faculty and students to make this great new system work and be a metric.
- Mr. Barbera said that Middle States, to a large extent, is focused on process. The fact that, with all its weaknesses, we have this system in place, and are providing students with an opportunity to have a voice, is looked upon favorably.
- Dr. Torrell commented that the College has been very good at addressing the concern that some students may not want to do the evaluations or take time to do them. We have reminders and a mechanism in place to allow students to do the evaluations on their phones during class time without the faculty member present.
- Ms. Archbold inquired as to whether research regarding this was evidence based.
- Dr. Quarless responded that the role that faculty governance plays is very important. Currently the administration is following what is in the spirit of resolutions that were passed by faculty governance in fall 2016. Even relating to the process for improvement, we are using the instrument that faculty governance voted upon and said was to be the instrument. This does not mean that the instrument cannot change. As a result of whatever is the ongoing feedback from students working through that governance process can lead to improvements in the instrument. We are actually collecting more data out of the instrument than we will ever use. As the process continues there exists the potential to determine what things may have more value and interest to us. The administration takes the position that we are the “technical administrators” or custodians.
- Mr. Mattson interjected that he wanted to stress to the Council that we are in a very good moment right now, in terms of the relationship between faculty governance and the administration. Working on Middle States, working with Bill Kimmins in Human Resources to respond to SUNY’s request for consensual relationships, the Strategic Plan...there is a lot of buy-in from both the administration and the faculty. Looking around the table, Mr. Mattson pointed out many faculty members who are now part of the administration. He feels the College Council can be reassured by the collegial, constructive atmosphere that exists.
- Mr. Hohausser mentioned that in a month or so he would be giving a talk at the Nassau County Bar Association related to Judge Robert Carter, a federal judge who tried the Brown vs. The Board of Education case and established many educational reforms. He won twenty-two of twenty-three cases brought in front of the Supreme Court.
- Mr. Hohausser then asked Mr. Evan Rufrano, SGA President to report.
- Mr. Rufrano said that the students were in a good place. He met with Dr. Butts the prior day to review some of the initiatives on which the SGA is working. Three ongoing SGA proposals which are being worked on are increased transportation availability, extended library hours and partnerships with local businesses. The SGA has had discussions with various departments regarding these proposals.
- Additional initiatives include doing more research on four-year graduation programs.
- With respect to faculty evaluations, some results from students have said that the new faculty evaluation program *Blue* software is user friendly and easy to utilize.
- As part of the “Breaking Bread with the Athletes” initiative the SGA met with the men’s and women’s soccer teams and the women’s volleyball team, and plan bagel breakfasts on each of their senior days to recognize the dual commitment of athletes as students.
- Additionally, the SGA has conducted their “Listening and Learning” tour in which members meet with various departments and members of the campus community.
- An SGA Day series of events will take place every two months, wherein SGA members will go out on campus to meet students and hear what their issues are.
- The SGA recently added four members plus another two coming to the Student Life Committee which is a hallmark in shared governance.

- Mr. Hohausser asked Dr. Raj Devasagayam, Dean of the School of Business to report.
- Dr. Devasagayam began his report by reaffirming 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.
- With regard to AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business) accreditation, the initial self-evaluation report is due in October 2019, and will be in the presence of the committee in February 2020. Dean David Martin from Western Connecticut State University, who is serving as our mentor, visited campus on November 16th and met with Provost O'Sullivan, faculty, students and various committees that have been working on AACSB accreditation. When he left he conveyed informally, his very positive impressions of the school and the School of Business faculty. He will visit campus again in spring and summer 2019.
- Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, Dr. Barbara Hillery reported that as mentioned in the past the College's Department of Public Health has been moving forward with CEPH (Council for Education for Public Health) accreditation. Our self-study was accepted and a site visit is taking place at the moment. We should know by next semester, or by June at the latest, if we will receive that accreditation.
- Dean of Students, Ms. Claudia Marin Andrade remarked that the passing of three students this semester has been quite difficult for many, and was grateful for the moment of silence earlier in the meeting.
- Homecoming, a huge campus celebration, was very well attended with sixteen events.
- The First-Year Experience and Common Reading had a record number of students attend. It was very well received, and the students presented great questions. We hope to have this happen again in the future.
- Winter Orientation starts next week, with several sessions planned to welcome our new spring students.
- The Women's Basketball Banner Unveiling Ceremony on November 28th was a big success.
- The College hosted the Long Island Council of Student Affairs Administrators Annual Conference. It was wonderful to have our Long Island colleagues see our campus.
- The increase in Student Union hours has given us the opportunity to enable the SGA and others to have late night and weekend programs. The space has been very well used.
- Dean Andrade had Mr. Rufrano speak about the game room, which is an SGA initiative. Mr. Rufrano, said the game room will be launched in late January 2019, and will include Ping Pong and billiard tables and provide a better atmosphere for students to relax.
- Commuter Appreciation Week took place this week. This was very necessary and resulted in a great deal of social media action.
- The Division is trying to restructure its assessment internally in order to provide Middle States with necessary solid data.

IV. Open Meeting

With no comments from the public, and there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:03 pm.

Submitted by:

Irene Cotton
Administrative Assistant to the President