



University Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 18, 2026

University Village Conference Room

Prepared by Dr. Naomi Baldwin, Chief of Staff and Executive Assistant

President's Cabinet Members Present: Stephen H. Kolison, Jr., Naomi Baldwin, Judith M. Horowitz, Kathryn Kendall, Wayne Lynch, Karen Rohr, Tracy Stenger, Jeff Woodard

Absent: Vicki T. Sapp, Michel Kouadio, Maria Carroll

University Council Members Present: Richard Alexander, AJ Dolce, Tamu Graham-Reinhardt, Stephen Keefe

Remote: Cynthia Ahlstrom

Absent: Frank Pagano, Richard Morrisroe, Jordan Stephens

Guests: Jesse Blum, ITS; Michael Puleo, ITS; Ms. Laura Koepke, Chair of University Senate

Meeting Called to Order

Presiding, Richard Alexander, University Council Member

The meeting was called to order at 10:10 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

There was a motion from Steve Keefe to approve the December 10, 2026 minutes, and Tamu Graham-Reinhardt seconded. The minutes were approved.

Report from the President

Presented by Dr. Stephen H. Kolison, Jr., University President

President Kolison reviewed a few key initiatives underway. The campus recently completed campus interviews for the Provost position, and President Kolison will be making the announcement to the campus and council members this afternoon. There has also been a comprehensive review of academic programs to examine the entire academic array and to make decisions about programs to continue investing in.

President Kolison reviewed the process thus far: The President's cabinet has had data and input about the programs, and they presented their recommendations to him

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yesterday. From this point, he will be reviewing the recommendations and consulting with key stakeholders, including departments, SUNY, and University Council members. President Kolison noted that universities nation-wide are undergoing similar reviews and making decisions about programs. This work takes time, and he will be very thorough in his reviews and consultations on potential impacts.

In addition to the full program reviews, President Kolison has asked a working group to explore Academic Affairs administrative structures that will enhance efficiency, ensure effectiveness, and reduce costs of the work in that division. The group will be holding various input sessions, and he anticipates their research and analysis will yield three models for him to consider. He reviewed some of the specific outcomes that the work of the division should support with a focus on student success, faculty support and development, and excellence.

President Kolison has recently returned from Albany, New York, where he met with elected officials and SUNY-wide administrators to support SUNY in the New York State budget. He reviewed several critical issues and priorities for funding requests. He has also been involved in advocacy efforts at the Federal level, focusing on supporting student financial aid and Pell, TRIO programs, and research funding.

There is an initiative to explore possibilities of a crime lab facility on the Fredonia campus, and President Kolison offered an update about the feasibility study underway.

Concluding his report, President Kolison asked for University Council members to keep the Bicentennial celebrations in mind, and he highlighted the Bicentennial Fund, specifically established to support students in access to a university education and completion of their degree programs.

Tamu Graham-Reinhardt asked about the university designation and whether this has opened additional possibilities. President Kolison noted that the status makes a difference, especially when developing the graduate program array and recruiting students from out of state and internationally.

Report from Academic Affairs

Presented by Dr. Judith M. Horowitz, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Provost Horowitz summarized some of the key highlights in the division, including the exploration of the crime lab, which would lead to new program development and

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opportunities for students. She also mentioned the work underway to implement the Academic Master Plan, through an Academic Master Plan Implementation Team, which meets twice monthly and has recently established timelines for program development.

She also highlighted several positive things happening in the colleges and schools. The School of Business recently hosted approximately 40 high school students and their teachers for a Shark Tank Business Competition, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences has expanded summer research fellowships, and the College of Education, Health Sciences, and Human Services was instrumental in hosting the Scripps National Spelling Bee, Western New York Championship, sponsored by the Fredonia College Foundation.

Report from Finance and Administration

Presented by Mr. Wayne Lynch, Vice President for Finance and Administration

Vice President Lynch reviewed the financial summaries. As of January, we are projected to end the year with under a \$3.85M structural deficit – this is great news compared to the earlier projections for the year. The campus still has work to do and is continuing to address issues as the campus builds its budget for next year. This year benefited from one-time funding, which will not be available next year. A continued area of focus will be salary expenses and scholarship expenses.

Richard Alexander asked if all departments and divisions have been collaborating, and Vice President Lynch noted that the overall budget process has improved in terms of divisional and department participation and management.

Richard Alexander asked about any impacts to the budget based on the Village water issues. Vice President Lynch noted that utilities overall can be difficult to project based on several uncertain variables.

Tamu Graham-Reinhardt asked how scholarship expenditures factor into the budget and how those are awarded, and Vice President Kendall reviewed the methods of awarding and projections. She also reviewed the revisions to the scholarship awards process, which ensures that we are maximizing the positive impacts to students, especially to assist students when it would make most difference in their ability to enroll and graduate.

Richard Alexander asked about the continuing JCC-Fredonia partnership. Vice President Kendall noted that we currently host JCC students on our campus. They are JCC students, supported by SUNY Fredonia learning spaces and by some of the services on

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campus. The benefits are that these students can get to know the campus to streamline their transfer process after completing their degrees with JCC and if they wish to continue into a four-year degree program.

President Kolison remarked on the overall financial sustainability plan and the success we have had so far. He noted that this work is important to ensure we can move the institution forward, and that SUNY is in full support and is underwriting the financial deficit throughout our plan's timeline.

Report from Student Affairs

Presented by Dr. Tracy Stenger, Vice President for Student Affairs

Vice President Stenger reviewed some of the specific areas receiving focused support from SUNY: Mental Health training, NCAA Division III/Athletics grants, a High-Impact Community Engagement through Athletics Grant, and expansion of the Empire State Services Corps.

SUNY is supporting many of these programs and is also supportive in the campus's ability to serve and respond to increasing mental health services demands.

Vice President Stenger concluded her report with an overview of the Bicentennial planning and highlighted the Bicentennial Fund to provide scholarships for students. The campus is in a soft launch this spring, and there will be more events starting in the Fall 2026 semester.

There is a new outdoor track and field ribbon cutting on April 25, which will coincide with the first Track and Field Meet since 2008. The council members were asked to save the date, and formal invitations will be sent in the near future. Also of note will be the September 18 Convocation event featuring keynote speaker Chris Bashinelli.

President Kolison acknowledged Co-Chairs of the Bicentennial planning group, Vice President Stenger and Dr. Baldwin.

Report from the University Senate

Presented by Ms. Laura Koepke, Chair of University Senate

Ms. Koepke reviewed the senate meetings activities since the last council meeting. She will be running for re-election as chair and looks forward to continuing to serve in this role next year.

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In terms of new programs, there is a new teacher certificate in computer science, a collaboration between education and computer science. The senate is also reviewing meeting procedures and working on ensuring their meetings are the most effective and informative as they can be.

She thanked President Kolison for the positive working relationship and the council members for their support. President Kolison echoed remarks of appreciation for the senate work and is looking forward to continuing the work next year.

Remarks from Chair of University Council and University Council Members

Richard Alexander offered remarks to express appreciation for the performances on campus. He recently attended a performance and regularly attends other events and presentations on campus, and his experience is positive and an important resource for his family.

Meeting Adjourned

Richard Alexander called for a motion to adjourn the meeting, and a motion was made by Steve Keefe at 11:14 and seconded by AJ Dolce.