



State University of New York at Fredonia  
College Council Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, March 30, 2022  
10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.  
University Townhouses Conference Room

---

**President's Cabinet Members Present:** President Kolison, David Starrett, Tracy Stenger, Naomi Baldwin, Betty Gossett, Maria Carroll, Jevon Hunter, Mike Metzger (virtual)

**Absent:** Vicki T. Sapp

**College Council Members Present:** Frank Pagano (virtual), Joe Johnson (virtual), AJ Dolce (virtual), Cynthia Ahlstrom (virtual), Stephen Keefe, JoAnn Niebel, Richard Alexander, Ilene Thompson

**Absent:** Russ Diethrick

**Guests:** Matt Sullivan, IT; Jules Hoeping, The Leader, Mary Beth Sievens, Chair of University Senate

### Meeting Called to Order

Called to order at 10am by Chairman of College Council, the Honorable Frank Pagano

### Approval of January 26, 2022 Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the January meeting minutes was made by Ms. Niebel and seconded by Mr. Alexander. The minutes were approved.

### Executive Session

Chairman Pagano requested a motion to move to executive session. A motion was made by Ms. Niebel and seconded by Mr. Alexander. The session moved to Executive Session, and guests were excused.

### Regular Session

A motion was made by Mr. Johnson to move into the regular session at 10:23, seconded by Ms. Ahlstrom. The guests were invited back to the meeting.

### **Report from Student Association**

Ilene Thompson, President of the Student Association, offered her report. The Student Association will be installing a game room on the 2nd floor of the Williams Center, which is scheduled to be completed in time for Fall 2022. Ms. Thompson reviewed discussions by SA related to the stipends built into the student activity fees. She also made an appeal for student jobs on campus. An issue that they are working on resolving is a hiring list in FSA. This creates problems when students are trying to find job opportunities on campus.

President Kolison expressed his support for more opportunities for students to work on campus. This has been demonstrated as having a positive impact on campuses and the retention of students.

### **Report from University Senate**

Mary Beth Sievens, Chair of University Senate, offered her report. The University Senate has passed a resolution and the Senate Executive Committee issued a formal statement regarding public statements made by Dr. Kershner.

A new screen dance program was approved, and an MBA Accounting, and a Master's in Mental Health proposal are under development.

The senate has been discussing equitable methods in calculating teaching load and how teaching modalities might develop as a result of what has been learned throughout the pandemic. Faculty are finding new ways to teach, develop new programs, and reach new students.

Spring 2022 is the last semester that Dr. Sievens will be serving as University Senate Chair, and she will be stepping down from this role to focus on teaching. Bruce Simon is, so far, an uncontested candidate for next year's chair.

Ms. Ahlstrom asked about student-faculty ratios and whether there is a set format for course caps. Dr. Sievens clarified that this varies from class to class, but there is an overall student-faculty ratio that is calculated. Ms. Ahlstrom requested a report on faculty:student ratio for a future meeting.

President Kolison offered gratitude and thanks for Dr. Sieven's leadership with the University Senate and for her collaboration with the campus leadership.

College Council members and Chairman Pagano echoed their gratitude for her service.

### **Report from the President's Office**

President Kolison was excited to announce that Commencement 2022 is being planned for in-person attendance. Dr. Baldwin has issued invitations to the College Council members. President Kolison announced the commencement speaker for the morning session, and he stated that he is still working on the speaker for the afternoon ceremony, which is anticipated within a week or two.

Chairman Pagano reminded the Council Members that they need to request VIP tickets for family members and RSVP for the lunch to Dr. Baldwin.

President Kolison reported on his recent trip to Albany to attend the SUNY system Presidential meetings with the Chancellor. State funding is shaping up to be an extraordinarily supportive year for SUNY. President Kolison encouraged College Council members to help support these positive outcomes as they are able.

The Understory is a new e-newsletter sent to faculty, staff, and College Council Members to offer updates on major initiatives. Part of the last edition of The Understory summarized SUNY Fredonia's Advocacy Priorities. President Kolison encouraged College Council Members to review these items and to use them as a guide for their advocacy efforts.

President Kolison highlighted one of the items in the priority list: Fredonia's academic array must be realigned with students' needs, and part of this involves streamlining the campus process to avoid lengthy delays in program approvals.

### **Report from the Division of Academic Affairs**

The collaboration between JCC and Fredonia is on track for Fall 2022 for a business and education program. They are nearly ready to start promoting the programs and recruit students.

The School of Business dean candidates met on campus last week, and they were all very strong candidates. SOM candidates will be on campus over this week and next. By the end of next week, Provost Starrett is optimistic that we can confirm these two individuals. All candidates have strengths in new program and curriculum development.

Provost Starrett reviewed the reorganization and new roles in enrollment services and retention staff. Deposits seem to be on track with what they were last year. We feel confident that we will come in around the same place as last year and we have halted the declining trend.

There are 8 other new programs in development, which will be updated at future meetings.

Retention efforts have picked up. We now have a full time position devoted to retention strategies. Fall to Spring retention is as good as last year; we are waiting to see who will return in the fall. One example of a new strategy is a summer 2022 bridge program: Credit bearing courses will be available to 40 students who will come early to campus for academic preparation and success workshops. Additional supportive courses will be offered through the fall to continue a supportive transition for these students.

We paused to discuss the current enrollment and what future expectations might be. Provost Starrett stated that fall numbers are used to establish the benchmarks.

The Good Neighbor Awards are increasing, and we are seeing interest pick up since the impacts of the pandemic.

We paused to discuss the role of marketing and public relations due to the departure of a staff member, and VP Gossett offered an update that we are moving quickly on filling that position. The current staff have established a seamless transition plan to ensure continuity of the duties.

Provost Starrett continued his report with an update about the Honors Program housing moving to Grissom Hall, which positions the program to better recruit students. There is additional reorganization among chair positions in CLAS and they are working on realigning the budget to be more strategic.

Mr. Keefe offered some insight about the local Puerto Rican community members and whether recruiting from high schools and Puerto Rican universities could benefit enrollment. We also discussed the proportion of international students.

#### **Report from the Division of Student Affairs**

VP Stenger offered her updates and started with the declining COVID-19 cases, which are staying very low. On-site staff have been supportive of students who have been in quarantine.

Spring sports are active. The teams are doing well, and we are conducting a number of coach positions that will transition from temporary staffing to full time.

Mental health services tend to be in demand with roughly 8% of the student population using the center. Around 25% of the students are able to be seen within a day. A mini grant has allowed a paid internship to help bolster education and awareness among students.

VP Stenger reviewed several other highlights including a new FREDpride website, the availability of a student food pantry, and a successful Multicultural Weekend. Historically, this tends to be a very good recruiting event.

Residence hall occupancy rate has increased by 7%, especially in single rooms and townhouse units. Already, there are 200 requests for the townhouses, which is more than the capacity.

Pool testing compliance has been very good. FREDwell lounge continues to be heavily utilized and is demonstrating positive outcomes.

An article in the local newspaper regarding masking and a student suspension was discussed. We reviewed several policies related to some of the details.

#### **Report from the Division of Advancement**

VP Gossett reported on the financial position of the Foundation and upcoming plans. The year ended with a market value of nearly \$51M.

Bicentennial support continues to be strong, and efforts to continue to build this fund continue to grow. April 27 will be FREDlanthropy Day. The student relief fund is down to around \$13,000,

from around \$25,000 at the beginning of the spring term. There have been over 87 requests and this fund has been critical in helping students.

Marketing efforts are showing increased engagement. Most have been digital efforts through this winter, and are incredibly strong - over 9 million impressions, up from 2 million as of the last report. There have been over 6,600 conversions and over 40,000 first-time website visitors.

Career development continues to be strong. The Job and Internship Expo connected 130 unique employers, and the NY Secretary of State visited the event. The FREDnetwork offers over 5,800 jobs and 2,400 internships.

We paused to honor the memory of Doug Manly and recognized the tremendous support he and his family have given to Fredonia.

#### **Report from the Division of Finance and Administration**

The Finance and Administration report was delivered by VP Metzger. The division continues to bring operations in line with the current enrollment. VP Metzger reviewed a number of cost-savings efforts over the past several months and the 2021-22 budget status. We will be able to end the year without unfunded shortfalls. We will be able to project the upcoming budget when enrollment numbers are more certain. We continue to work diligently to find savings where appropriate. We discussed what options there might be for next year and emphasized that any loan agreements are much too early to consider at this point. The discussions in Albany this week related to unfunded mandates and TAP gap are examples of external efforts that are likely to change the financial situation. President Kolison restated his encouragement for advocacy of the budget priorities he reported on earlier.

VP Metzger reviewed some of the state-funded construction projects that are ongoing. Houghton Hall is nearly completely finished. It will be fully operational this Fall 2022. The exterior of Reed Library - the steps and windows - are ongoing. The East side should be completed by this Summer 2022, but the West side will likely be ongoing for an estimated additional year.

Lanford is scheduled to be completed this Fall. There have been major upgrades related to safety and security on campus: The safety alert system, building card access of external doors, and classroom and large gathering spaces are being upgraded to allow for emergency lockdown.

Fuel tanks and backup power supplies have been upgraded, resulting in more reliable IT services.

Several other projects were listed as in the design and planning stages.

Mason Hall will be putting in place both short-term strategies to comply with accreditation requirements for music programs. Longer-term planning will involve a fuller rehab.

Chairman Pagano asked for a follow-up with Dr. Baldwin to plan for the future meetings and agendas.

### **Meeting Adjourned**

At 11:51, a motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Niebel and seconded by Mr. Johnson. The meeting was adjourned.