



## College Council Meeting Minutes

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**Wednesday, December 13, 2023**

**Williams Center S204DE**

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

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**President's Cabinet Members Present:** President Kolison, Naomi Baldwin, Maria Carroll, Michael Kelly, Michel Kouadio, Karen Rohr, Vicki T. Sapp, David Starrett, Tracy Stenger, Jeff Woodard

**College Council Members Present:** Frank Pagano, Richard Alexander, AJ Dolce, Stephen Keefe, Richard Morrisroe, Tamu Graham-Reinhardt, Rosemarie Rapisarda

**Absent:** Cynthia Ahlstrom, Joe Johnson (resigned)

**Guests:** Justin Rose, IT; Dr. Bruce Simon, Chair of University Senate, Stephen Wright, SA Vice President

### Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m.

### Approval of Minutes

There was a motion from Mr. Alexander to approve the October 4, 2023, minutes, and Ms. Graham-Reinhardt seconded. The minutes were approved.

### Report from the Chair of College Council

Presented by Hon. Frank Pagano, Chair of College Council

Chairman Pagano updated the members of the council that he has received a resignation letter from Mr. Joe Johnson. The letter was shared with the members of the council, and the letter of resignation was accepted.

## State University of New York at Fredonia College Council Meeting Minutes Wednesday December 13, 2023, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

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President Kolison invited the College Council members to share any activities or updates related to advocacy and/or engagement. VP Rohr asked the College Council members to consider a gift for the 2023 annual giving. The Fredonia College Foundation operates during a calendar year, and there is still time for council members to contribute to the Fredonia College Foundation, either online or via mail. Chairman Pagano encouraged the council members to consider setting an example by donating.

Dr. Simon has sent a letter from University Senate with some advocacy efforts and resolutions and requested an update on any actions planned. Chairman Pagano will follow-up with the council members to review the information from Dr. Simon. The state of the state address will be on January 9, 2024. Dr. Simon encouraged the members to engage in any informal efforts to help increase the amount of direct state aid, and that a group resolution would also be helpful. He clarified some of the financial figures that were used in the University Senate's resolution.

Chairman Pagano requested a draft of a resolution from Dr. Simon that endorses the University Senate's resolution. A motion to move forward to draft the resolution was made by AJ Dolce and seconded by Richard Alexander.

In recruitment efforts, Ms. Graham-Reinhardt has been reviewing grant opportunities that would help with funding for early college high school programs. She has been working with Fredonia's education programs and the dean, which may yield some early college outreach opportunities and dual enrollment with partners in Jamestown. She urged those attending to ensure follow-up and support of these efforts from the areas involved.

### Report from the President

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

President Kolison updated the council members on his most recent presentation regarding financial sustainability for the future. This is a continuation of other presentations he has made to the campus since 2020. The text of this most recent

## State University of New York at Fredonia College Council Meeting Minutes Wednesday December 13, 2023, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

---

presentation is accessible from the SUNY Fredonia website, along with a Question-and-Answer page and a form where comments and questions can be submitted.

SUNY Fredonia has been searching for a new Vice President for Enrollment Management and Services, and after a nation-wide search, President Kolison will be preparing an offer to a potential candidate.

In terms of advocacy and community engagement, President reviewed his recent activities, which included attendance at the Chautauqua County Chamber of Commerce annual meeting and a keynote address by NYS Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli. He also hosted a visit from newly appointed Erie County Community College President, Dr. Adiam Tsegai. There is mutual interest in a partnership, and President Kolison will offer updates as available.

There was some discussion about what specific cuts were presented. The information is still in proposal format and there are other layers of the plan to work through before any decisions are finalized.

### Report from Academic Affairs

Presented by Dr. David Starrett, Executive Vice President and Provost

Provost Starrett presented updated enrollment numbers for the coming Spring 2024 semester. Enrollment is moving in the right direction, and several strategies have been implemented over the past year that show positive results.

For the Fall 2024 semester, the numbers are ahead of projections, for example, up 24% in applications, and up 44% in accepted first-time first-year students. Graduate applications and acceptances are up. Provost Starrett noted that it is too early to project fall enrollment and that the deposit deadline is June 1.

The master's degree in Mental Health Counseling has been fully approved and they are actively recruiting for the program. There will be new students enrolled this Spring 2024 semester.

**State University of New York at Fredonia College Council Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday December 13, 2023, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.**

---

SUNY Fredonia also received approval to confer MBA-level degrees. As a next step, SUNY Fredonia will be proposing a new MBA degree with an anticipated ability to enroll students, if approved, by next Fall 2024. They are also working on the RN to BS in Nursing program, anticipating enrollment as early as Spring 2025.

There are new programs in various stages of proposal. In addition to program proposals that come directly from the faculty, Provost Starrett has an advisory group with key academic leaders and directors to help initiate and brainstorm new program ideas. Micro credentials, badging, and programs for adult learners are also in development.

Provost Starrett noted that due to investment in staffing in admissions and enrollment services over the last year, they anticipate that yields will improve compared to last year.

President Kolison added that in the program proposal process, there is a requirement that the proposal show the demand for the program and the cost analysis.

## State University of New York at Fredonia College Council Meeting Minutes Wednesday December 13, 2023, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

---

### Report from Student Affairs

Presented by Dr. Tracy Stenger - Interim Vice President for Student Affairs

Dr. Stenger summarized a new programming initiative around the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. legacy. There is a full week of programming January 22-26, including faculty, staff, students, K-12 students, alumni, and community members and organizations. These include days of service, days of creativity, days of education, and faculty teach-ins. The Keynote address will be delivered by Dr. Shaun Nelms, a SUNY Fredonia alum, and the full programming will be posted online. This program will help build stronger relationships with neighboring businesses and organizations, and the Northern Chautauqua Community Foundation has generously awarded a grant to help support the program.

### Report from Finance and Administration

Presented by Mr. Michael Kelly, Vice President for Finance and Administration

VP Kelly presented the financial updates. The headcount has been down by a few students since the October meeting, but the overall financial picture is about the same. Enrollment was up from projections for the fall semester, which has helped keep the university ahead of budget for the fiscal year. VP Kelly anticipates that the university will continue staying ahead of budget for the fiscal and academic year.

VP Kelly shared some highlights of the accomplishments of departments and areas within his division. Of note, the university has started planning the process of replacing fleet vehicles with electronic vehicles to meet the goal of zero net emissions. A new officer will be joining UPD in June, underscoring Fredonia's reputation as one of the safest campuses in the system. Assessors from NYS will be visiting the UPD program to review 111 program standards, and they anticipate positive assessments. FSA has expanded efforts to market items from the bookstore and are seeing positive revenue returns. They are continuing to look at all operations and services to find opportunities to cut costs.

## State University of New York at Fredonia College Council Meeting Minutes Wednesday December 13, 2023, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

---

In terms of capital projects, Lanford Phase 1, the interior of the house, was completed under budget by nearly \$295,000, and President Kolison and his family have been able to return to the house. The exterior work is still to be completed. Masonry rehab of Gregory is continuing and should be done by the end of this year. The \$4.7 million rehab of the Maytum Plaza was delayed due to contractor issues, and the work will be completed during Summer 2024. In the meantime, this area on campus has been opened back up and the fencing has been removed.

VP Kelly clarified that the capital projects funds are separate funds from the university budget and are allocated to campuses based on a rigorous application and review process. These funds are dedicated and are not able to contribute to other university operational costs. This is similar to how non-profits, other education facilities, and municipalities have capital funds separate from operational funding.

Chairman Pagano discussed an idea to use the campus facilities to offer camps during the summer. VP Stenger confirmed that there are already many camps that come to campus and that there are several programs that bring students to campus to live in the residence halls for the duration of the program. Examples are soccer camps, diving camps, and other athletics-focused activities. The price structures are different and based on length of camp and what programming is involved. VP Stenger will offer the council members a summary of the types of camps and the numbers of students involved. There are also camps hosted by other areas, such as the School of Music.

### Report from the President of the Student Association

Presented by Ms. Rosemarie Rapisarda, President of Student Association

Ms. Rapisarda reviewed some of the engagement from the SA leadership and the efforts they have been making to increase more direct involvement with the various student clubs. As an example, they collaborated with several areas to host a tie-dye fundraiser for cancer research. There were also about 650 families and children who attended the Safe Halloween event. They are also using an open-door policy for student clubs to be sure they have support to work through issues that arise with their clubs.

## State University of New York at Fredonia College Council Meeting Minutes Wednesday December 13, 2023, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

---

Activities Night will be organized by SA and this year, cohosted with Spectrum Entertainment for the January 2024 event only. Thereafter, SA will be organizing all future activities nights.

### Report from the University Senate

Presented by Dr. Bruce Simon, Chair of University Senate

Dr. Simon offered his summary of the University Senate resolutions and requested that the College Council endorse all University Senate resolutions from the past academic year.

Chairman Pagano asked for those resolutions to be resent to him for review. Dr. Simon will be sure that they are distributed once again.

Dr. Simon presented some of the recent activities of the standing committees – namely, the Academic Affairs Committee and Graduate Council. These two groups have been reviewing over 100 new courses and course revision proposals, which demonstrates how committed the faculty are to ensuring the curriculum is up to date.

The faculty take the responsibility of the curriculum very seriously, and they are reviewing proposals in the context of financial sustainability in addition to academic rigor. Dr. Simon anticipates that there will be an update about the academic program health process, which is a very distinct assessment process to ensure that the university will not be in a future position to discontinue programs. The intent of this academic health process is to routinely assess all academic programs and ensure that earlier work can be done to keep the programs strong.

Dr. Simon offered support for the strategic plan, *True Blue Transformation*, in terms of how it helps SUNY Fredonia make it clear how distinct the campus is. From his point of view, this semester could be one of the most significant semesters for transformation. Dr. Simon discussed the need to see stronger support from the SUNY-level system for transparency and restoration of trust from the faculty so that the local administration is empowered to work with the faculty body as a resource to aid in problem-solving.

## State University of New York at Fredonia College Council Meeting Minutes Wednesday December 13, 2023, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

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President Kolison emphasized his and the cabinet's commitment to continue the conversations.

College Council members offered their perspectives to underscore that there is also a much bigger context that must be kept in mind: There have been devastating impacts from the last decade and beyond. There are many other external factors related to the economy and fiscal outlook for New York state and population demographics are having a significant impact on higher education. Locally, SUNY Fredonia's success has huge implications for the immediate area and region, and other regional institutions are in a comparable situation. Success depends on local actions and collaborations and this larger context.

### Report from Information Technology

Presented by Dr. Michel Kouadio, Chief Information Officer

Dr. Kouadio presented two main efforts to increase efficiencies in operations across campus using Information Technology, which will contribute to financial sustainability. Workflows and services will be integrated to save time for staff members and students in doing their day-to-day work. In addition, Information Technology services are realigning to focus on supporting academic growth and availability and use of data for decision making.

### Meeting Adjourned

Chairman Pagano called for a motion to adjourn the meeting, and a motion was made by Mr. Alexander at 11:31 a.m. and seconded by Mr. Dolce. A motion was made to go into an executive session by Mr. Morrisroe and seconded by Mr. Keefe.