

**STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT FREDONIA  
MEETING OF THE COLLEGE COUNCIL  
ZOOM/LENNA CONFERENCE ROOM  
FEBRUARY 17, 2021, 10:00 AM**

Present: Cynthia Ahlstrom, Richard Alexander, Russell Diethrick, AJ Dolce, Joseph Johnson, Stephen Keefe, JoAnn Niebel, Israel Ortiz, Frank Pagano

Guests: Betty Gossett, Cedric Howard, Kevin Kearns, Stephen Kolison, Michael Metzger, Mary Beth Sievens, Denise Szalkowski, Jeffrey Woodard

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

The College Council meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The College Council minutes of December 16, 2020, were approved without modification with a motion by Mrs. JoAnn Niebel and seconded by Mr. Joseph Johnson. Motion carried.

**UNIVERSITY SENATE**

Dr. Mary Beth Sievens provided a brief update on behalf of SUNY Fredonia's University Senate. Several new programs were approved in the fall including an online MA in Strategic Communication, BA in Writing, revised BS in Computer Science, and a revised BS in Computer Information Systems. Senate continues to engage in conversations about online teaching as the result of ongoing online teaching. Dr. Sievens said hybrid modality is likely to inform program development going forward, however, a more robust technological infrastructure must be pursued in order to support continuation of online instruction. Dr. Sievens added that Fredonia's IT staff were extremely helpful to faculty and staff who worked remotely during the pandemic.

**STUDENT ASSOCIATION**

Student Association (SA) President Israel Ortiz discussed a new Student Association wellness check initiative. The purpose of the initiative is to allow SA Executive committee members to regularly check in with SA clubs and eboards about the mental health of their members and to offer support if needed. SA is also working with Campus Life, University Police, and the Counseling Center to create a FredWell Lounge. The FREDwell Lounge, created from a repurposed space, provides students with an area to relax and socialize. The lounge is staffed by graduate assistants and opened on February 10. SA is pursuing grants to purchase furniture and lighting for the space to make it more inviting. In the future, SA plans to rent the space out to clubs for educational workshops. A student advisory group has been working diligently with University Police Chief Brent Isaacson to improve campus safety. SA is also teaming up with Enrollment and Student Services to bring a FREDwell mental health speaker series to campus this spring. Topics include sexual violence advocacy as well as a suicide prevention summit on

February 22. Students on campus petitioned to reopen Erie Dining Hall as a student union center. FSA management has agreed to meet with students to discuss their proposal. Fredonia students have also questions about the CARES Act and the closing of campus cafes this past academic year. Vice President Michael Metzger explained that the decision to close a limited number of campus cafes was a fiscally responsible decision made by FSA. He added that the closing of cafes was communicated to students prior to closure. Signature cards were distributed to SA clubs. Jenna Woods, Kelly Aguilar, and Ilene Thompson were appointed SA class representatives. An SA meeting with Chancellor Jim Malatras is being planned for next month and a SA ad hoc committee was appointed to help interpret University Senate bylaws.

Mr. Richard Alexander said he's impressed with the level of SA activity this semester, especially during a pandemic. Chairman Pagano thanked Mr. Ortiz for his good work as SA President and wished him well on future SA initiatives.

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

In Fall 2020, President Stephen Kolison wrote to the New York State Thruway Authority and the New York State Department of Transportation to request SUNY Fredonia signage along Interstate 90, near exit 59. Both entities responded favorably to Dr. Kolison's request in December and are moving forward with designing signage which, Dr. Kolison hopes, will be erected before the Fall 2021 semester. SUNY Fredonia's teleworking agreement was expanded this spring to help reduce density on campus. Prior to the spring semester, only a limited number of staff were approved to work from home for health or childcare reasons, but the most recent agreement is open to all staff who can effectively work remotely. The teleworking agreement allows eligible staff to work from home two days a week. Supervisory and vice presidential approval are required and employees must submit a weekly work log if approved to telework. A minimum of fifty percent of Fredonia's workforce is expected to telework this spring. Privileges to telework will be revoked if abused.

The State University of New York at Fredonia has entered into an agreement with the Chautauqua County Department of Health to establish a mass vaccination site to serve eligible residents in the region. The site will be set up in the ice arena complex in Steele Hall. Appointments and the administration of the vaccine will be handled by the Chautauqua County Department of Health. Fredonia has requested to be a "closed vaccination site" for Fredonia employees.

Last year, the Class of 2020 was invited to return to campus for an in-person ceremony on May 16, 2021. However, it won't be possible to hold a traditional ceremony this spring, as a result, memento packages will be mailed out to graduates. Packages will include a congratulatory letter from President Stephen Kolison, Chancellor Jim Malatras, Senator George Borrello and Alumni Affairs President Greg Gibbs, as well as a QR code to a virtual keynote address by SUNY Fredonia alum Dr. Thomas Quatroche, '92. At this time, Commencement plans are undecided for the Class of 2021, but Dr. Kolison expects Fredonia will offer a hybrid celebration which will include an in-person stage walk in King Concert Hall. Pre-registration, masks, social distancing, and academic regalia will be required. Graduates will have their picture taken by Island

Photography, Latin honors will be acknowledged, and graduates will receive their diploma cover at the in-person stage walk. A Commemorative video will be released on May 15, and the recorded stage walks will be uploaded into that video. Commencement Co-Chairs Denise Szalkowski and Raleigh Hawk have been working diligently with Fredonia's Marketing and Communications team and students from the Class of 2021 to create a hybrid ceremony that graduates will be proud to share with their families and friends.

Dr. Kolison provided an update on key administrative vacancies he brought forward to the College Council in the fall. The campus is currently searching for an Executive Vice President and Provost, Chief Diversity Officer, Chief Information Officer and a Director of Human Resources. Once the Provost position has been permanently filled, searches will commence for three unfilled Dean positions. The Provost search, co-chaired by Dr. Mary Beth Sievens and Mrs. Betty Gossett, closes on Friday. Fifty-seven applications were received for this position. The Chief Information Officer search, Co-chaired by Drs. Cedric Howard and Holly Lawson, received 38 applications. Semi-finalists will be identified in the next week and campus interviews will follow. Drs. Kevin Kearns and Judy Langworthy are Co chairing the Director of Human Resources search, the deadline for applications is March 1. Mr. Michael Metzger and Mr. David White are Co-chairing the Chief Diversity Officer search, the deadline for applications is Monday. Ten qualified applicants, including two internal candidates applied. Dr. Kolison is hopeful we can address the Middle States concerns by filling these critical need positions.

### **ACADEMIC AFFAIRS REPORT**

To better determine efficiencies and to help build a roadmap for our future success, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Kevin Kearns announced that Academic Affairs will begin to utilize institutional data to assess academic program strengths and weaknesses. Historically, Fredonia has not been diligent about using statistics prior to developing academic majors. Academic Affairs will begin to review retention data before developing any future programs. Additionally, with the assistance of Retention and Academic Success Coach, George Morgan, retention will be an important focus going forward.

To address a recent student enrollment decline between Fall 2020 and Spring 2021, Academic Affairs deployed a SWAT team to connect with over 500 unregistered students for the spring semester. After intervention by the SWAT team, over 70 percent of unregistered students registered for the spring semester. Academic Affairs plans to implement this successful initiative on an annual basis.

Several Fredonia School of Music faculty and alumni received GRAMMY awards. Dr. Adam Luebke, received a GRAMMY for Best Choral Performance; Bernd Gottinger, head of Fredonia's Sound Recording Technology program, was nominated for a GRAMMY in the category of Best Engineered Album, Classical; and a number of alumni were recognized for their outstanding work by the GRAMMY Foundation.

Student engagement has been a growing concern especially after many courses moved to an online platform. As a result, Academic Affairs deployed the app Circelin which allows students to engage, upload study notes, and simultaneously receive points toward scholarships.

## **ENROLLMENT AND STUDENT SERVICES REPORT**

Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services Cedric Howard reported on Fredonia's successful and robust Reopening Plan and ongoing surveillance testing in Steele Hall. As of today's meeting, over 10,000 tests have been conducted on campus. Dr. Howard attributes the success of the surveillance testing to the entire campus community. COVID-19 tests cost \$15 to \$30 each. Fredonia is on track to conduct over 10,000 tests per month this spring. Every student tested prior to returning to campus this semester, and as of today, we've only had eight positive cases out of 6,000 tests, five of which were off campus. As identified, students who test positive are required to quarantine. Contact tracing is coordinated by the Chautauqua County Department of Health. Most recently, the guidelines for isolation were reduced from two weeks to 10 days from exposure. If placed in quarantine, students continue their coursework online.

As the result of the good work of Fredonia's SWAT team, spring FTE enrollment reached 3,725. Even though our enrollment numbers are down, they're consistent with the enrollment numbers of other SUNY comprehensive universities, which are down approximately 35 percent. Fall enrollment is on par with last year (1,300 first time, first year students). Three hundred and one first-time, first year (FTFY) spring applications were received. Accepted student and deposit numbers are up compared to last year. Dr. Howard said SUNY applications are down at the state level by roughly 2,000 because EOP applications are held up at the state level. Rather than dial back our recruitment efforts, Fredonia will continue with its outreach programs and be proactive in addressing students' concerns. New York State SAT and ACT testing requirements have been lifted for Fall '21. This is an equitable decision since 43 percent of students do not have the ability to test. Dr. Howard is cautiously optimistic about Fredonia's future enrollment. Dr. Kolison added that if we increase our enrollment to 6,000 by 2024, Fredonia will still face a shortfall of over one million. We need to consider more than enrollment as we plan to advance the university.

Joining the ESS staff, Dana Bearer was appointed Fredonia's new Director of Admissions. She brings over 20 years of Admissions experience, spanning both public and private universities.

Chancellor Jim Malatras and the presidents of the State University of New York Athletic Conference will meet on Monday to discuss whether SUNY should resume spring sports intercollegiate athletics. If approved, the continuation of spring sports will be contingent upon the continued positive trajectory of the pandemic and the number of COVID-19 virus cases on member campuses. Spring sports at Fredonia sponsored by SUNYAC include NCAA Division III-level men's and women's track and field, baseball, softball, men's and women's lacrosse, and women's tennis.

## **UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT REPORT**

The university campaign fund drive was a huge success, raising over \$24.5 million, and exceeding its goal by more than 20 percent, Mrs. Betty Gossett reported. She thanked the College Council for their part in helping to make the campaign a huge success. Many gifts came from multiple donations from the same people. Marketing and Communications is working on a virtual thank you to be shared through social media platforms. Additionally, *The Statement* will include a story on the campaign.

Fredonia's spring Reopening Plan is going very well. Under some very difficult circumstances, students and staff stepped up, as is evident by our low positive numbers, to keep our campus safe and open. Testing ramped up to daily and will continue through the spring semester. Testing results are available within a few days after testing and an online dashboard reflects the most recent campus and SUNY-wide testing numbers. Cabinet agreed to forego a spring break to avoid students traveling and bringing the virus back to campus. Hybrid modality continues with minimal face-to-face instruction to help reduce campus density. Fredonia's spring semester began in February and will conclude in May. We're cautiously looking forward to face-to-face instruction in the fall, and the academic schedule will be released in March.

#### **FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION REPORT**

Vice President for Finance and Administration Michael Metzger reported that due to careful planning, the campus fared financially better than expected. As the result of the good efforts by Academic Affairs and Enrollment and Student Service, we anticipate reaching our fall enrollment targets. Mr. Metzger said he's optimistic Fredonia will receive stimulus money because of ongoing advocacy efforts by state senators, legislators, congressmen, and union leaders. Union negotiated salary increases have been built into our budget plan, but not distributed yet. We were fortunate to reduce our campus utility bills during the winter shutdown by over \$300,000 (strategic teleworking). We are hopeful we'll receive federal stimulus money to cover our campus expenses associated with COVID surveillance testing. COVID-19 surveillance testing, personal protection equipment (PPE), and cleaning cost the campus roughly \$1.3 million. Fredonia continues to look for ways to increase its revenue, increase enrollment, and support shared services with other SUNY campuses including SUNY Brockport, Alfred, Geneseo and Buffalo State.

Even though the project was shut down temporarily last spring due to the pandemic, the reconstruction work (\$32 million) of Houghton Hall is expected to be completed by Fall '21. Furniture and staff will be moved into the renovated building over the summer.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mrs. JoAnn Niebel and seconded by Mrs. Cynthia Ahlstrom. The College Council meeting concluded at 11:47 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Szalkowski, Fredonia College Council Secretary