



College Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 19, 2025

Williams Center S204DE

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

President's Cabinet Members Present: President Kolison, Naomi Baldwin, Maria Carroll, Judy Horowitz, Kathryn Kendall, Michel Kouadio, Wayne Lynch, Karen Rohr, Vicki T. Sapp, Jeff Woodard

Absent: Tracy Stenger

College Council Members Present: Frank Pagano (remote), Cynthia Ahlstrom (remote), Richard Alexander, AJ Dolce, Stephen Keefe,

Absent: Tamu Graham-Reinhardt, Richard Morrisroe, Dakota Richter

Guests: Ed Blue, ITS; Jesse Blum, ITS,

Absent: Rob Deemer, Chair for Fredonia University Senate

Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m.

Chairman Pagano introduced Camryn Collins, the new Director of Facilities Services. She has been in her position for a few months and comes from Niagara Community College, with several years of related professional experience.

Approval of Minutes

Chairman Pagano asked for a motion to approve the minutes. A motion was made from Richard Alexander to approve minutes and seconded by Steve Keefe, and the minutes were approved.

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A motion to go into an executive session was called by Chairman Pagano. Steve Keefe made the motion, seconded by AJ Dolce. The executive session started at 10:05. The executive session ended at 10:22 and the regular meeting commenced at 10:24.

Report from the Chair of College Council

Presented by Hon. Frank Pagano, Chair of College Council

(No reports.)

Report from the President

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

President Kolison started his presentation with introductions to the new cabinet members, Dr. Judy Horowitz, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and Mr. Wayne Lynch, Vice President for Finance and Administration. They offered brief introductions including their experiences as alumni of SUNY institutions and their commitment to Fredonia and the region.

The spring semester has brought a tremendous amount of student energy and President Kolison offered some examples of the activities he has been part of. There are many reasons to celebrate.

In terms of the New York State budget process and advocacy, President Kolison offered a summary of important focus areas: Governor Hochul has been extremely generous and has continued including supports such as the ACE program, coverage of negotiated raises, critical maintenance upgrades, and TAP Gap costs. President Kolison acknowledged and thanked Chancellor King and his leadership team for their continued efforts on behalf of the campus. President Kolison sent a message to the campus and College Council members, which included a summary of the budget proposal as it relates to SUNY. This document summarizes executive, house, and senate proposals, with some areas showing increases.

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The Fredonia relationship with JCC is continuing to grow. President Kolison has called a group together to work with a JCC team to continue expanding the collaborations between the two campuses, and the kick-off meeting and charge to the committee was scheduled for today.

Richard Alexander asked about the utilization of the incubator as it relates to this relationship. There are further discussions needed, and in terms of the JCC-Fredonia relationship, the preference is to ensure the students can experience the benefits that the main campus has to offer, which would include access to learning facilities and experiences not offered at the incubator location. Dr. Horowitz is leading the charge for the Fredonia side of this collaboration, and President Kolison will continue keeping the council informed of the progress on this initiative.

Commencement will be on May 17, 2025, and President Kolison reminded the College Council members to save the dates and times for the 10:00 a.m. ceremony and the 3:00 p.m. ceremony, with further details to be sent from his office.

President Kolison reviewed some of the top priorities: Financial sustainability, student recruitment and retention, program development and alignment, and continued community engagement.

As a highlight of the campus's success, President Kolison reviewed the ACE program and noted that the program is showing great promise to the extent that SUNY has asked us to expand the program from 150 students to 250 students. The positive impact of this program is demonstrated through the better preparations of the students in the program and their increased retention rates compared to other student groups.

The campus recently completed the annual SEFA campaign, which benefits non-profit organizations in the surrounding community. The goal of \$25,000 was exceeded with a total of \$27,033 raised by SUNY Fredonia employees. Additional contributions to the community were made through the MLK Day of Service program.

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To conclude his report, President Kolison highlighted the March 4, 2025 Buffalo News article with quotes, "SUNY Fredonia is making strides," and "SUNY Fredonia is on the right track." He thanked the members of his cabinet for their dedication and work involved in this progress and many accomplishments.

Report from Enrollment Management and Services

Presented by Dr. Kathryn Kendall, Vice President for Finance and Administration

Dr. Kendall summarized the plans she had presented at the last meeting and offered a follow-up on the progress of yield activities, which has included expansions and enhancements to scholarship award mechanisms, earlier financial aid packaging, more strategic use of the Slate system, admission advisor outreach activities, and liaising between academic departments and admissions.

She noted that SUNY Fredonia has very competitive tuition, and students usually list cost of attendance among their top concerns. When scholarships can be offered earlier and a full financial aid package can be sent to students earlier, it is very helpful in the student decision-making process.

There is also more engagement between admissions advisors and other prospective student support areas to enhance their professional development and capacity to answer common questions from prospective students before sending them to the respective support office.

Richard Alexander asked if there were any strategies related to the dual competitive/cooperative environment within the SUNY system. As part of the SUNY system, the campus benefits from supporting the fuller system. There are many opportunities for the campus related to being part of the system, yet there are individual decisions that only the campus can make due to each campus's unique situation. With this in mind, the campus can make its own data-informed decisions to know where the strongest partnership opportunities will be. This puts the focus on building positive partnerships that will lead to student success. As another benefit, there

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are SUNY-wide enrollment groups that meet regularly throughout the year to share best practices and learn about each campus's unique contributions.

Ultimately, it is up to the SUNY Fredonia to establish its distinction, and this is the work that is being done in part through the Academic Master Plan. The plan will also help the campus explore areas to designate as Centers of Excellence, which would offer something that attracts students and that will not be found among other SUNY partners.

To conclude this section of her report, Dr. Kendall noted that there have been increased collaborations between academic departments and admissions teams to coordinate activities and ensure that investments in time and resources are moving in alignment. This ensures that both the faculty and content experts work alongside the admissions team for maximum engagement.

In summary, the division is making great progress, and there is still a great deal of work to do to enhance growth. Dr. Kendall reviewed the targets established with SUNY; the goal is to always exceed these targets, which are a key part of the campus financial stability plan.

Report from Academic Affairs

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

Dr. Horowitz began her report with a review and progress report on several initiatives that are underway. The Academic Master Plan has been in development for a while, and it is in the stage of receiving campus feedback, with completion anticipated later next month. The completion of this plan is critical to the SUNY Construction funding because the campus facilities and learning spaces are central to the success of academic programs. Therefore, the funding from the SUNY Construction Fund will rely on a strong Academic Master Plan. She noted that there will be clusters including 10-15 key academic programs that will be strategic for the institution to pursue in the next 1-3, 3-5, and 5-10 years. As an example, they are looking at where Chautauqua

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County ranks among its health indicators, which presents an area of great opportunity for the campus for program growth. Dr. Horowitz offered examples of some of the programs currently in place, which can form the hubs of some of clusters: The Communications Disorders and Sciences program and the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program. These programs serve high needs for the region and are not strongly represented at other SUNY campuses.

Part of the overall academic planning includes five online completion programs, which have been discussed at earlier meetings. These include programs in education, psychology, sport management, which will be ready to start in Fall 2025; two additional programs will be new and include music studies, which serves students who did not pass an audition but who still want to pursue music studies and be part of the hands-on experiences in the School of Music. This program will need further accreditation prior to launching. Fredonia and SUNY have a great working relationship in approving programs at the SUNY level, but the accreditation body is independent from the internal processes and could take additional time. Finally, an integrated studies program is a custom-built program that is anticipated to start in Fall 2026.

Dr. Horowitz invited the College Council to attend some upcoming events: The International Business Analytics Conference is scheduled May 8-9 and will offer over 60 sessions and welcome over 280 attendees. This will include employers interested in hiring SUNY Fredonia graduates in business analytics. The College Council members were encouraged to attend the May 1 OSCAR Expo, which is a great demonstration of the research, performances, and art that the students and their faculty mentors have been working on. This is one of the most exciting programs of the semester and shows the culmination of what the students have been working on in their academic programs. Dr. Horowitz also offered an overview of some of the recent activities. The School of Business and College of Education, Health Sciences, and Human Services co-hosted an in-service day to 250 Chautauqua County teachers, who attended sessions related to the science of reading, AI literacy, and financial literacy. This is planned to be an annual event. The School of Business also hosted a Shark Tank business pitch competition that included over 50 high school students and a full day of activities on the campus.

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To conclude the report, and follow-up on a concern about online programs mentioned in a previous meeting, Dr. Horowitz noted that online programs are concentrated in the graduate programs, and they all hold the SUNY Online+ status, an indicator that those programs have achieved high distinction. Since the campus has been concentrating online efforts at the graduate level, expanding these undergraduate completion programs will offer growth opportunities for the campus.

Report from Finance and Administration

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

Mr. Lynch noted the report and offered some updates for moving forward. First, he will be addressing an overall awareness of the various components of the budget, establish a more fine-tuned budget that represents the annual planned spending, and finally mechanisms to control the expenses within the plan.

The current model of communicating finances hasn't provided the best roadmap or control mechanisms for planning for the future. For future meetings, Mr. Lynch will present an updated model that helps with planning as well as updating the campus on the current status. The largest expense is salaries, and this is the area of both the most opportunity and expectation for expense control. Other expenses that are variable and non-salary dollars will be based on projections and need. Overtime, stipends, and extra pay are additional areas that the campus has some flexibility to control.

Chairman Pagano asked what approach other campuses use, and Mr. Lynch noted they all do this a little differently. Mr. Lynch is using what he feels has been successful in the past to be accurate and provide a good communication tool. The current reporting model doesn't offer the appropriate tools to know at any point in time about whether the campus is on target, and the new reporting model will be able to offer a better real-time status and better align with the approach SUNY uses. The campus is moving in the right direction, but without the appropriate reporting model, it will difficult to fully communicate the real-time financial situation. The goal is to be able to provide real time

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updates and also ensure that the SUNY financial reports and the campus financial reports are in alignment.

Based on the all-funds approach and based on the plan established with SUNY, within the 2027/28 year, the campus is positioned to overcome the deficit situation. Yet, achieving this will involve the continuation of difficult decision making. The success of the campus will involve change in the campus culture.

Chairman Pagano asked about the status of the Fredonia Voluntary Separation Program, and Maria Carroll, Director of HR updated the group on the current program and its criteria. She anticipates knowing more about the program's success after the spring break period.

Report from University Advancement

Presented by Ms. Karen Rohr, Vice President for University Advancement and Executive Director of the Fredonia College Foundation

Ms. Rohr offered an update on the 2024 fundraising activities. There was a major estate gift that will benefit student scholarships, and she and her division are working on how to maximize the benefits to as many students as possible. She noted a significant increase in giving from faculty and staff, which is a good indicator of the faith that faculty and staff have in the great work being done at the institution and their value of the work with the students, despite the difficult past year.

The division has just onboarded two new major gift officers, Erin Zinni and Tim Smeal, who filled two vacancies in the team and bring a strong background and professional expertise with fundraising.

April 2 and 3 are the Fredonia Day of Giving, and Ms. Rohr encouraged the College Council to promote this among their networks. With only 5% of the Foundation's funds are unrestricted, she noted that one of her goals moving forward will be to expand discretionary fundraising activities. Restricted gifts are devoted to specific programs or

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a purpose, but the unrestricted funds offer more flexibility in how we leverage the funding to benefit students and areas that need it.

President Kolison underscored the tremendous work being done by the division and the Foundation. Last year was very difficult and the division had fewer staff. Noting that more faculty and staff were contributing not only to Foundation programs, but also to the SEFA campaign is a great sign. He expressed his appreciation to the staff in the division, the Fredonia College Foundation, and the SEFA committee.

Report from the President of the Student Association

Presented by Mr. Dakota Richter, President of Student Association

(Not present.)

Report from the University Senate

Presented by Dr. Rob Deemer, Chair of University Senate

(Not present.)

Meeting Adjourned

Chairman Pagano called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made by Steve Keefe at 11:49 and seconded by Richard Alexander.