

FARMINGDALE STATE COLLEGE
College Council Meeting - In person Quinyne Hall room 100 or
Virtual via TEAMS
December 4, 2024 10 a.m.

Councilmembers present in person: Patricia Hill Williams, Randi Shubin Dresner, Jim Durant, David Curry, Robert Sweeney, Ralia Polechronis, Jairo Orozco

Councilmembers attending virtually: Paul Caroleo

College Administration: Robert Prezant, Laura Joseph, Greg O'Connor, Matt Colson, Rohan Howell, Chris Maio, Michael Nembhard, Kevin Jordan, Carolyn Fedder

Guests: Lloyd Makarowitz, Amanda Cataldo, Brett Southard

Chair Williams called the meeting to order at 10:00am. She entertained a motion to accept the minutes from the September 18 meeting. Councilmember Durant accepted the motion and Councilmember Sweeney seconded.

Motion carried.

Chairs Report: Chair Williams had hoped for better attendance at the ACT Conference in September. She is responsible to pass on pertinent information learned to councilmembers so that they are on target with the issues that are forthcoming and prepared to move forward with their duties. The Chancellor and SUNY administration are focused on making sure that College Council members have the opportunity to participate and share ideas on how they can best serve their institutions. Chair Williams confirmed that councilmembers received the materials and surveys sent to them. The next annual meeting will likely be in Albany. At the conference some councilmembers expressed that they are not known on their campuses. Chair Williams put forward a suggestion that when SUNY System sends out local press releases about college council appointments, the announcement should be sent to campus presidents, who in turn, can share it with their campus. A major topic covered at the conference was SUNY's Climate and Sustainability Plan led by Carter Strickland. There is funding available through the federal government and other sources for these opportunities. Chair Williams encouraged the council to try to attend more campus activities in the spring semester.

President's Report: Dr. Prezant reported that he recently attended the AASCU Annual Conference in Puerto Rico and a SUNY new presidents orientation program. He spoke to the SUNY Sustainability Plan that Dr. Williams mentioned, and informed that it focuses on education, career development, and K-12 education. The plan involves developing curriculum and partnerships with industry and Higher Ed, much of which we do already at FSC.

To further connect and collaborate with our partners, Dr. Prezant has toured Island Harvest Food Bank, Gurwin Healthcare facility, and Suffolk County Community College. He and cabinet members met with Long Island Railroad and Suffolk County Bus on how to better accommodate our students' transportation needs. In addition, he has met with Cradle of Aviation leadership, PSEG's Director of Energy Efficiency and Renewables, the president of the Building and Trades Council of Nassau and Suffolk counties, and many of our local elected officials.

Dr. Prezant had the opportunity to speak with Don Graham, Founder of the Dream.US. when he visited FSC last month. At the November SUNY presidents meeting there were conversations around Title VI, Title IX, the presidential election, student protests, online programming and micro-credentials- many of the same topics discussed at the AACSC Conference. About 6% of the State's operating budget is allocated to higher education. SUNY's enrollment has declined 20% in the past 10 years with a 32% decline in community colleges enrollment. This effects our transfer student enrollment. Dr Prezant said that Governor Hochul has a particular focus on Technology, advanced manufacturing, artificial intelligence and transferable skills. SUNY has done a study and concluded that 30% of SUNY related high impact practices are in research or field studies (FSC degrees require applied education components). Other practices showed 2% in study abroad; 10% credit bearing; 17% capstone projects; and 16% service or community-based activities.

Dr. Prezant informed the Council that the search for a Vice President of Student Affairs is winding down. A pool of 70 applicants has been narrowed to 15. The Provost search is up and running with the assistance of a search firm, AGB. We hope to have someone in place in July.

Dr. Williams was glad to hear about the president's meetings with constituents and reinforced how important it is to maintain strong relationships with our legislators, as we have been able to accomplish much for the campus through their support in Albany on our behalf. The collaboration with labor unions, workforce development, and training is also a priority for SUNY and the Governor. Councilmember Dresner suggested that we expand our outreach to elected officials across all of Long Island. Chief Marketing and Communications Officer, Chris Maio, said we continue to set up meetings with a broader pool of electeds, and that many more of them will be invited to future events. Ms. Dresner said that she is happy to work with us in any way to foster these relationships.

Chair Williams raised the topic of changing the College Council meeting times, which was a topic during the September meeting. She summarized the pros and cons of earlier and later times. After opening the floor to comments, Dr. Williams asked for a motion to maintain the current meeting time of 10:00 a.m. with the understanding that an alternate time could be arranged if necessary. A motion was made by Councilmember Durant and seconded by Councilmember Caroleo.

Motion carried.

Senior VP and Provost, Laura Joseph reported on the \$3M Title V grant that FSC received from the Department of Education. Our project is entitled EMERGE (Educational Milestones and Enrollment Retention and Graduation Excellence). It will allow us to establish a first year experience for all students, including transfers. The targeted groups will be mainly be Hispanic and first generation college students. New staff will be hired to launch the program fully in fall 2025. The Provost's office has been working with the Cradle of Aviation Museum to get in front of K-12 student populations in a meaningful way. We will be tabling at their STEM Summit and our faculty will do some hands on activities and presentations with students to show them disciplines Farmingdale has to offer. At SUNY's direction, we are looking at the way we evaluate for credit and will capture more types of prior learning and experiences for students to receive credit. We will hire our second ProdiG fellow, an initiative that SUNY supports to increase diverse faculty. Additionally, we will offer a one-semester course release for full-time faculty or a stipend for professionals (Proposal Incentive Program) for them to complete scholarly research proposals with a budget of \$150,000 or more. A Visiting Scholars program will connect our faculty with local K-12 educators so that they can join classes or provide an evening experience for K-12 students.

We are currently searching for 27 assistant professors and 9 lecturers (of those 20 are new lines). Councilmembers are invited to attend a virtual Celebration of Scholarship event on Friday December 6 with over 78 presentations. President Prezant said the Provost has been working hard to increase fulltime time faculty hires and that lecturer hires are important, as they will teach more credits per semester, which allows others to have time to pursue scholarship. Councilmember Durant asked how tenure is decided. Provost Joseph answered that faculty have renewable terms until their seventh year, at which point they need to demonstrate teaching excellence in the classroom, publish at least two peer reviewed publications, and have engagement or service with the campus community or at system level.

Executive VP and CFO Greg O'Connor reported that our athletics Teams won three conference championships this fall. Our teams also received numerous accolades for Rookie of the Year, Coach of the year, the Elite award for highest GPA in women's volleyball and three athletes named to the Academics District Team for women's soccer. The success of our athletics programs also plays a role in recruitment not only in New York but out of state as well. Mr. O'Connor said that our University Police department was recognized for rendering service to the community and Suffolk County on a number of occasions. University Police were also instrumental in finding a student that had fallen victim to a money scam and traveled to Cambodia.

Chief Marketing and Communications Officer, Chris Maio, said that her area needed to address several things this semester. There was a Free Palestine rally, which occurred without issue, but our emergency communications team was prepared. A freedom of expression resource page was designed to provide guidance to students and is very accessible on the website. Communications also was engaged to handle student objections to our moving to one Commencement Ceremony in the spring at Nassau Coliseum. They provided the commencement committee with responses and FAQ for inquiries from students and parents. Ms. Maio shared that we have FSC banners in three shopping malls and advertisements on Suffolk County buses, in Newsday, and LI Business News. We will also be doing a poster on the LIRR Farmingdale station platform. In addition, we'll have a digital highway billboard ad near the RFK Bridge to capture prospective students from the boroughs. Views to our homepage has increased 92% over last year and social media followers are increasing as well. A new 36-page view book, and an eight-page travel piece were created for our Admissions team. The Legislative Breakfast will be held on January 31 and our FSC day at the NY Islanders is on March 22. President Prezant's inauguration is planned for April 11.

Councilmember Durant asked for an update regarding the Dynamic Lacrosse land lease. Mr. O'Connor responded that a subcommittee of the SUNY Board of Trustees met in November to entertain a number of real estate proposals but our proposal was not passed. Concerns about the development company have to be navigated. The proposal does have attention and Mr. O'Connor will be meeting with the construction fund and other SUNY officials to discuss.

Matt Colson, VP for Development and Alumni Engagement, said that the President's Gala had positive feedback and about \$200,000 was raised. Provost Joseph was one of the honorees. Another honoree, The Dream.US, is the largest undocumented student scholarship program in the country. FSC has the largest number of students in the program throughout SUNY and on Long Island. To provide support for these students we will have trained staff trained available if they are looking for guidance. Mr. Colson said that nonprofits and other agencies can offer resources, and we plan for them to hold office hours in the alumni house. Councilmember Polechronis said her firm doesn't do immigration work but some

associates do pro bono work outside their area of expertise to gain experience and would be happy to help. Mr. Colson will follow up on that. He also said that the College and SUNY are lobbying with the Dream.US for the Empire Licensing Act so that these students become licensed nurses, social workers, and dental hygienists, etc. Many of our legislators are supporting the Act, and it would be helpful for councilmembers to advocate in their circles to help get it passed. Assemblymember Clyde Vanel has secured another \$250,000 from the State to reduce the financial burden for aviation students. The College is also working to address student homelessness. A suite is held in the residence hall for emergency use and a designated employee has been connecting homeless students and families with external partners. He also would like to coordinate more academic fundraising where school deans and department chairs get in front of Chambers of Commerce, the LIA and HIA, and potential corporate partners. Mr. Colson informed the Council that a new legislator, Kwani O'Pharrow, who will fill Kimberly Jean Pierre's assembly seat, and we want to make sure to keep him involved with FSC.

VP for Diversity, Equity and Inclusive Excellence, Kevin Jordan, reported that his office collaborated with the Modern Language Department to offer a program that recognized our indigenous people population. The DEI President's Award was presented to one faculty member and one student. Five student-led projects, and seven students were also recognized for their advocacy for DEI. SUNY has asked us to submit a nominee for the Harvey Milk Scholarship for LGBTQIA advocacy. FSC will host another STEM Diversity Summit this year for students from school districts across Long Island who are interested in careers in STEM. A three-day long first generation celebration was held and a new academic fraternity was introduced for first year students. SUNY would like an Interfaith Council established on all campuses and has provided FSC with a \$6,000 grant to renovate our prayer space. Dr. Jordan attended the meeting with LIRR and Suffolk County Bus. His area worked with a student assistant to provide a new transportation page that has links to the shuttle schedule, and the LIRR schedule, and bus schedules.

VP for Enrollment Management, Rohan Howell, reported that our fall 2024 enrollment was over 10,000 for the first time since the pandemic. We are still watching our transfer numbers as enrollment in both Nassau Community College and Suffolk County Community College have seen significant declines. We held two successful Open Houses this fall and group tours were increased by 100%. A professional day was held for guidance counselors across Long Island and New York City, and we will host Long Island directors of guidance in January. Our freshman applications for fall 2025 are up 19% over last year, along with a 20% increase in transfer applications. Outside of the University Centers, we have the largest student population within SUNY, and are the fastest growing institution.

President Prezant agreed that our numbers are very good but the metrics for Long Island in terms of student populations in high schools are projected to decline from 2027-2032. We have to be prepared for that. Dr. Prezant shared that our residence halls are at capacity with 565 students and if we continue to expand our geographic range, we need to think about more housing or online education.

Chair Williams asked about the degree completion for radiology technology students, Provost Joseph said we are still working with our legal department on a MOU with Zwanger-Pesiri to offer a program which would include advanced certificates and microcredentials that are helpful with career advancement in the field.

Councilmember Sweeney remarked that he appreciated receiving the student handbook, which we distribute to all freshman students. The updated handbook has information and resources for students

and much of it refers to the Student Code of Conduct policies and procedures that councilmembers reviewed and approved last year.

Dr. Prezant stated that if the College Council has topics they would like to talk about and put on the agenda for broader conversation for future meetings, please let us know. There will be some important changes effecting higher education after January 20, and this is a great forum for sharing input.

As there was no other business, Chair Williams called for a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Sweeney made a motion, and Councilmember Durant seconded.

Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 11:54am

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Fedder

Approved 2.5.25