

FARMINGDALE STATE COLLEGE

College Council Meeting - In person Quintyne Hall room 100 or

Virtual via TEAMS

February 5, 2025

Councilmembers present in person: Patricia Hill Williams, Jim Durant, Paul Caroleo, Robert Sweeney, David Curry, Jairo Orozco

Excused absences: Randi Shubin Dresner, Ralia Polechronis

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

Guests: Amanda Cataldo, Lloyd Makarowitz, Brett Southard

Chair Williams called the meeting to order at 10am. She asked if all had reviewed the minutes and if any revisions were needed. As there were none, she asked for a motion to approve them.

Councilmember Caroleo moved and Councilmember Sweeney seconded.

Motion carried.

Chair's Report: Chair Williams said she attended some excellent on campus events since the Council last met. The Legislative Breakfast had a strong turnout and many legislators were present. It was a great to learn about the achievements of the campus. Dr. Williams also went to the Town Hall meeting for faculty and staff. She reminded councilmembers that it is part of their commitment to be present at as many campus events as possible. Chair Williams will attend the Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic, and Asian Legislative Caucus in Albany. FSC is represented each year and it is an opportunity to network with community-based leaders in the state. Chair Williams informed that councilmembers will receive survey regarding the next ACT conference. Ideas for a theme for the 50th anniversary of ACT are being sought. Any feedback can be sent to Chair Williams or Zulaika Rodriguez at SUNY Administration.

President's Report: President Prezant said we have many activities occurring on campus including some for Black History Month. At the Legislative Breakfast, approximately 100 attendees seemed to enjoy hearing from the student speakers who were invited this year. Topics of focus included the needs of our aviation and nursing programs for updated equipment and facilities, and the additional space and staff necessary for expanding the programs. We also anticipate the increased needs of our undocumented students and support for our Advancing Completion through Engagement (ACE) programs. During the faculty and staff town hall meeting Dr. Prezant provided a summary of the Presidential Transition Team's report. He also gave updates on initial goals that were identified upon his arrival such as enhancing opportunities for research and creative activities, growing external research and creative activity grants, deepening outreach to industry and government, building graduate programs, extending our geographic range for recruitment and considering options for residence halls and student housing. Halfway through the year we've already submitted 20 competitive

grants as compared to 15 last year. Dr. Prezant recognized the great work of our faculty and staff who worked on these proposals. Money received from the grants will support scholarship with indirect funds being distributed amongst the faculty who brought in the grant, the Deans, and the departments chairs. He added that we definitely have the expertise and desire among our faculty and staff to increase graduate level education. Councilmember Durant asked about the decrease in our NYS grant activity and Dr. Prezant responded that there are many more federal grant opportunities which are more prestigious, so our faculty are doing more of them.

Dr. Prezant informed that VP for Student Affairs search is nearly done. Three finalists will be brought to campus. The Provost search has a strong pool of about 90 applicants. In addition, we will be hiring a Director of Strategic Initiatives in Enrollment Management and a Counselor of Prestigious Scholarships. Dr. Prezant welcomed Long Island high school principals at their annual meeting held here last month and MarComm will produce regular newsletters for them to keep FSC at the forefront. In addition, Dr. Prezant met with the Farmingdale Chamber of Commerce executive board. He brought the Campus Public Art committee together to discuss having more sculptures and art on campus in an effort to make the campus a destination for people to come and enjoy.

The President's Transition Team had identified communication, space usage, new graduate programs, maintenance of athletic facilities, and Title IX (reverting to 2020 standards and transgender/gender issues) as concerns. They pointed out the importance of supporting the grants office as we grow grant activities, monitoring the metrics of the strategic plan and providing good advisement. Dr. Prezant said that although our enrollment numbers are good, a 27% drop in high school enrollment is expected from now until 2041. We are considering more national and international recruitment which will require more beds for students, so there are discussions about opportunities for more housing both on and off campus. Dr. Williams remarked that in the past we used off campus rentals and hotel housing for students, and provided bus transportation. She said that federal and international funding was available at that time. Dr. Makarowitz informed that the College had experienced decreased numbers in high school populations in the 1980's. We responded by creating new upper division programs, reducing lower ones that were not considered consistent with the College's mission, and transforming into a 4-year institution.

Dr. Prezant said that the new Visiting Scholars program puts our faculty in front of K-12 students. The Proposal Incentive Program (PIP), is a way for faculty and staff to get reassigned time or remuneration to get grant proposals up and running. Funds will be available for faculty and staff to get their work published.

We will hold one large Commencement at the Nassau Coliseum in the spring. Holding Commencement is about the same cost, but there are no weather concerns, and parking and guests are unlimited.

Dr. Prezant reported that he has been visiting both academic departments and non-academic areas. FSC continues to grow partnerships with external entities, including a new relationship with the Viscardi Center, formally the National Center for Disability Services. The Ombuds committee proposal has been shared with the Farmingdale Executive Committee. Its purpose is to assist in handling

personnel differences and conflicts before they escalate to litigation. It will facilitate conversations in a neutral forum.

Councilmember Caroleo asked if Estee Lauder's downsizing has affected us and our bioscience interns. Mr. O'Connor replied as they are under obligation for their lease at the Broadhollow Bioscience Park and they have invested millions of dollars in the space, he has no concerns. They continue to increase their number of FSC interns and are very impressed by our students. Councilmember Sweeney asked if separate immigrant populations can be an opportunity to draw them as students. We believe that there are approximately 300 undocumented students at FSC currently. VP for Enrollment, Rohan Howell said that the 2008 recession and COVID contributed to less children being born in the U.S. SUNY has seen a decline in enrollment over the past ten years. Their free application initiative has inflated our application numbers because some students applied just because it was free. Though the applicant pool is up 10%, we need to heavily engage them to convert them to enrolled. Governor Hochul has proposed free community college, which might pull from enrollment at four-year schools. Councilmember Durant asked about the possibility of ICE coming to campus and what our responsibilities are. It is likely that if law enforcement comes to campus, they will go through University Police. Conversations are ongoing and a tabletop exercise was held to formulate a plan if such a circumstance should occur. Any immigration officer who comes to campus will need a judicial warrant to gather information or gather students. We are waiting for additional guidance from SUNY.

Executive Vice President Greg O'Connor reported that the campus fiscal environment is impacted by the campus budget, capital programs, Farmingdale Foundation, Research Foundation, Auxiliary Services, Broad Hollow Bioscience Park and the FSC Development Corporation. State budgets are limited but some of these organizations have the opportunity to grow. The campus budget has sources of funds coming from New York State support and tuition and fees, totaling \$115M. Additional monies were received this year, but we're also impacted by increased expenditures for faculty and staff hiring, collective bargaining negotiated increases, higher fuel expenses, utility costs etc. We are optimistic that advocacy will allow for continued increases in state funding for 2025-2026 based on enrollment, growth and success. There may be potential for cutting edge lab support and sponsored research funding (grants). This requires faculty commitment, administrative commitment and support from outside grant writers. Our capital program has been very successful, with over \$360M in projects currently in progress. The Construction Fund ranks campus buildings with a score. This affords us additional resources because of the age of some of our buildings. A recent walk through of Roosevelt Hall showed progress and completion is expected in August. Sinclair Hall is in demolition and will be home to the Center for Criminal Justice Studies. The Laffin Hall Welcome Center project, the Campus Commons and Thompson Hall renovations will begin this spring. The Construction Fund is negotiating a project labor agreement for the new Computer Science building. There are many more infrastructure, ADA compliance, and partial renovation projects planned for the future. Mr. O'Connor reported that the Capital Planning Team meets weekly, there is a monthly meeting with the Construction Fund, a quarterly work plan meeting, and an annual work plan meeting. It is beneficial to be prepared with projects that are designed and ready to go should an opportunity present itself. We are fortunate that our cash reserves are strong, it is possible we get unused funds from projects that do not advance.

New Business: Dr. Prezant stated that our College Council members have skills and expertise in many areas. He wondered if they would be interested in developing committees or advisory groups that take advantage of their expertise. For example, a lawyer who sits on the Council might serve as a resource for our criminal justice program, the campus' interest in sustainability benefit from the experience of a CEO of a food bank. Moreover, government activities and entrepreneurship are relevant to our curriculum and our students. Dr. Prezant asked councilmembers if they were open to being part of small teams and have conversations with faculty, staff and students. Councilmembers were receptive to the idea. Dr. Prezant asked councilmembers to more deeply inform him of their background, expertise, and passions to best align them with our programs. He will think about how to semi-formalize this and inform campus that opportunities are available. Chair Williams stated that advocacy, mentoring, and assisting in any way is part of the commitment councilmembers accepted in assuming their role.

Recent executive orders around immigration, Title IX, gender identity, DEI, grant proposals, environment and disbandment of the Department of Education will directly impact higher education. Many are tied up in court right now which allows some activity to continue but others are frozen. There are confounding issues and components and a lot of questions about what can and cannot be done. We are waiting on guidance from SUNY, but as things are changing daily, and they want to hold on issuing a uniform response until there is more clarity. Chair Williams said Chancellor King was interviewed on the subject and he is very much a tune to what is going on. Agencies who are involved in education will be navigating the direction we will have to take. Dr. Prezant said as you speak with corporate, political, and community colleagues, focus on how education being impacted by the executive orders. FEC Chair and Student Activities staff, Amanda Cataldo said that what she is hearing from students is congruent with what administration is saying but our population of dreamers and undocumented students are fearful about the unknown. We should consider the students feelings and help them in a better way.

Campus leadership is invited to FSC at the New York Islanders on March 22.

VP For DEI, Kevin Jordan shared that the LIEOC has been named the Best on Long Island in advocacy for adult education.

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

Meeting was adjourned at 11:40am.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Fedder

Approved April 9, 2025