

FARMINGDALE STATE COLLEGE
SPECIAL COLLEGE COUNCIL MEETING
COVID-19 Update
Virtual Meeting via Google Meets
May 27, 2020

College Council members present: Patricia Hill Williams, Randi Shubin Dresner, James Durant, Robert Sweeney, David Curry, Kathleen Ferrell, Richard Redmond

Excused absence: Kenneth Card, Paul Caroleo, Jahad Hoyte

College Administration: John Nader, Kevin Jordan, Erica Chase, Laura Joseph, Patrick Calabria, Greg O'Connor, Carolyn Fedder

Guests: Kathy Coley, Orla LoPiccolo, Brett Southard, Jeff Borah

Chair Williams called the meeting to order at 9:33am. She stated that the sole purpose of this special virtual meeting was for Dr. Nader to update the Council on the challenges, achievements, and safety measures taken by Farmingdale in response to the COVID pandemic.

President's Report:

Return Plan

Dr. Nader reported that our return plan must be submitted to SUNY system by June 5. He noted that in spite of massive adjustments and difficult circumstances we got through spring semester well. IT did a great job distributing technology to students, faculty, and staff that were in need. The work of the Provost office and faculty in moving to entirely remote instruction was remarkable. A pass/ fail grading system was implemented as an option for students, which was well received.

Dr. Nader shared three possible scenarios for fall 2020.

1. Preferred – A combination of face to face instruction (in some programs where an applied or clinical component are key, as well as deliver a freshman experience) along with several modes of remote delivery, such as online and synchronous offerings
2. If the course of the virus does not allow for restarting we will continue with all remote delivery
3. If there is a reoccurrence of the virus we would move to all remote for some portion of the semester

Provost Laura Joseph stated that our goal is to provide a high quality educational experience for students. To limit the numbers of students returning to campus and to account for social distancing and a 6 ft. radius between students, a walkthrough of buildings was completed to assess classroom usage. It was determined that we will be at about 1/3 capacity. In addition to some face-to-face offerings, programming will be delivered in online, synchronous, and hybrid formats. The Distance-learning staff have been training faculty, as we do not want to lose our reputation of delivering good programming. Courses of action in case of faculty and students becoming sick and accommodations for students with disabilities must be put in place. Dr. Nader added that Health and Wellness and IT have looked at additional spaces not currently used as classrooms that may be converted for safe instruction. We expect no external events for the fall semester to reduce demands on the custodial staff. We will closely examine the types of student activities that can be held face to face.

The preferred plan for a residential experience is to house international, out of state, and those who live 60 miles or more from the campus, which would total about 100 students. Each would have their own bathroom and space would be left for a quarantine area. No guidance has been issued yet on residence halls and if they will be defined family congregate living. Our proposal will be in our draft plan to the Chancellor.

Car-mencement will take place on June 13. Dr. Nader informed that seniors brought up the idea when he met with them and they are involved in planning the event. Many academic departments and programs also did their own ceremonies for students virtually.

Chair Williams asked about the Aviation program. Dr. Joseph and Dr. Canders, Aviation Center Director, worked on a two-page protocol document on how we can safely resume flight and it was submitted to SUNY. It is on a short list of high touch programs that may start this summer. Every instructor would be assigned one airplane and a diligent cleaning would be done after each flight. Hopefully, students can make up flight hours lost over the spring semester so they can move on.

Council member Durant questioned the use of BHBP for labs. For the fall lab space is not our biggest challenge. Our labs will be at ½ capacity, and we plan to accommodate by having ½ semester in hands on in labs, ½ virtual experiments using critical thinking. Scheduling may be shifted adding more Saturday and evening classes. There are constraints in adding to the day, as our custodial staff must clean between classes and SUNY has implemented a budget freeze and a hiring freeze so we cannot hire additional staff. Some returning departments will work a four-day schedule and stagger staff so that areas are left vacant 72 hours so that the virus life expires. Our plan calls for bringing back limited numbers of staff gradually.

50 nursing students have completed Johns Hopkins training as contact tracers. Dr. Nader said thanks to Lori Goodstone and Christine Glaser for coordinating the training.

Support

Erica Chase reported that the Foundation started a Student Emergency Fund, which has raised \$75,000. A matching grant from SUNY Impact Fund of \$50,000 is expected. The Foundation office, Student Accounts and Financial Aid have been working with applicants to make sure students receive refunds and CARES Act money from federal government. More than half of our students will get money from the \$3 million in CARES funding received using a tiered proposal that Administration and Finance, the Foundation office and Opportunity programs have put together.

Dr. Nader announced that *FSCNow* magazine will be published with a good news theme. It has many inspiring stories that we wanted to share. He thanked Institutional Advancement and Ru Jurow for their work on this project.

Enrollment

VP for Enrollment, Pat Calabria, reported that the College our summer enrollment numbers are up slightly over last year. Summer session B will probably not be face to face, and a decision will be made in early June. We are behind in deposits for the fall. Letters sent to incoming and returning students and parents informed them about the possible modes of delivery. Open House was held virtually and the three Accepted Student Days will be virtual as well.

Dr. Nader added that our new Chief Information Officer, Pete Grizzaffi, led distribution of technology during the spring semester and will continue into fall and our new Admissions Director, Jeff Levine, has been working aggressively to convert applicants to deposits. Matt Colson was hired as VP for Development and Alumni Engagement from a very strong pool of candidates.

Dr. Williams inquired about the athletics dept. plan for the fall. Mr. Calabria answered that teams may play a conference only schedule that would allow for a later start. In an effort to reduce exposure to the virus there will be no spectators, limited locker room use, all men and women teams will not travel together, buses will be used, not vans for smaller teams, or athletes will use their own vehicles. There will be discussion on an upcoming call with the Skyline conference. Mr. Durant inquired as to liability of student travel. We would need to check with SUNY counsel on students self-transporting. NYS and SUNY are self-insured.

Finance

Mr. Durant asked about student requests for reimbursement for the spring semester. We issued refunds of \$3.2 million in broad based fees. VP O'Connor, Admin. and Finance spoke about the class action suit against SUNY and said that we have a script prepared for inquiries. Mr. Durant asked if we have had transfers come from private colleges. Mr. Calabria said we have not seen substantial numbers of transfers. Our transfers are down due to the decline of community college enrollment at SCCC and NCC. Dr. Nader expressed concern about the financial picture, as we cannot control our spending even though we have reserves.

Dr. Nader said fabulous work has gotten us through a difficult time. Every area has contributed to insure a quality experience for students and we have continued to stay focused on our core mission.

Dr. Williams shared that a letter updating all ACT members will be sent next week.

Kathleen Ferrell said she was saddened to hear of the passing of Joe Egan. It is a great loss to FSC, as he was a great representative of the College.

Chair Williams thanked all for attending and thanked Dr. Nader, the staff, and faculty for all they are doing on behalf of the college, students, and the Farmingdale family. She entertained a motion for adjournment.

Mr. Durant made the motion.

The meeting adjourned at 10:21am.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Fedder

Approved September 30, 2020