

FARMINGDALE STATE COLLEGE  
College Council Meeting - In person Quintyne Hall room 100  
Or Virtual via TEAMS  
February 11, 2026

Councilmembers present in person: Patricia Hill Williams, Paul Caroleo, Robert Sweeney, James Durant, Randi Shubin Dresner, Michelle Torres

Virtual Attendees: Ralia Polechronis, David Curry

College Administration: Robert Prezant, Sean Lane, Rohan Howell, Chris Maio, Greg O'Connor, Kim Nyoni, Carolyn Fedder

Excused absences: Ron Jackson

Guests: Amanda Cataldo, Lloyd Makarowitz, Brett Southard

Chair Williams called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. She asked if all had reviewed the minutes from the November 19 meeting and if any corrections were needed. As there were none, she requested a motion to accept the minutes. Councilmember Caroleo made a motion and Councilmember Sweeney seconded.

**Motion carried.**

**Chairperson's Report:** Chair Williams said the October ACT conference was very successful. She thanked President Prezant, former President Nader and Bob Sweeney for attending. The conference is the best opportunity to learn about all the good things going on across SUNY, the second largest public university in the United States. The information provided is useful to share when advocating on behalf of Farmingdale and SUNY. Chair Williams said that a resolution was passed to change the ACT bylaws so that additional student leaders can take part in conferences so that they are familiar with ACT once a graduating student representative moves on. It would also be useful to have student representatives provide thoughts on what councilmembers can work on to make things better for campuses. Chair Williams asked councilmembers to share recommendations for the next conference, as the Executive Committee will be meeting and putting panels together. Possible topics being considered are scholarships, guidance from General Counsel on changes coming from the federal government, and AI. It was agreed that Albany is the best and most central location for November's meeting.

**President's Report:** President Prezant said that the more talking that is done about Farmingdale State College the better it is for us. At the recent cabinet retreat, the strategic plan and a list of campus priorities were discussed. It was determined that despite efforts that have been made, word is not getting out about what Farmingdale is doing and what we have to offer. We need to expand our image and become known across the region and beyond.

Farmingdale State College has been named a Carnegie Community Engaged Campus for the second time. There are only 230 named campuses out of 4000 institutions in the country, and it reflects how engaged FSC is.

The Taste of Long Island event will be held on campus again in September. We are working with CEO, Steven McKenna to better ingrain Farmingdale State into the event. Restaurants and vineyards will be represented and live music and giveaways on hand. In addition, conversations about programming in areas like hospitality management have begun.

We are still looking to hire a director for our Grants office, a promising candidate will be interviewed this week. EVP O'Connor, has been filling in and a few NSF proposals have been submitted.

With the retirement of Kevin Jordan, we have interviewed candidates for the position in the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusive Excellence. An offer has been made and accepted. An announcement will be made soon.

FSC is interested in growing its international programs, exchange programs and collaborations to grow our global footprint. It is difficult at this time because students are hesitant about coming to this country. Legislator Sam Gonzalez has some corporate partners and partners in the Department of Education in El Salvador. He met with President Prezant and the Dean of Engineering to discuss possibilities in aviation and health studies. A colleague of President Prezant's from New Jersey, Joe Farhat, is the Chairman of the Board of Middle East and North Africa, USA Association of Business and Economics. They are interested in collaborating with us through some Jordanian universities in engineering, construction, architecture and business.

There have been conversations with Empire State Development and SUNY leadership about a major project that's taking place near Republic Airport. They're going to be putting up a \$200 million apartment complex. The location needs mitigation so it will probably take at least seven years to complete. We would like to get our students involved via site internships, having opportunities to watch something like this grow from start to finish.

MarComm has updated our map. It's interactive and can be found on the website.

The owners of Adventureland have a new ride that they are naming the RAM we are partnering with them to do an opening event in early spring.

FSC's legislative breakfast was held on January 30th. We had about 110 attendees, including 14 legislators. We also had four student speakers who were very impressive. The LIA's Economic Impact Study was distributed. It supports that FSC is an economic engine and a workforce generator. Almost \$1 billion was added to the economy over the last five years and almost 10,000 jobs last year alone. We will send the link to councilmembers so can be used in conversations about Farmingdale and can also be shared via email. We will also send the electronic version to legislators. It was suggested that we also distribute it to students and their families.

Governor Hochul gave her State of the State address and has appropriated funds for SUNY in her 2026 budget (\$54M across 64 campuses). There is support for the SUNY Reconnect program which allows offers free education to individuals who do not have a college degree who are between the ages of 25 and 55 and are going into a workforce important field like nursing. This program is limited to community colleges. There will be no tuition increase again this year, and contract increases for personnel will likely be 3-4%. A discussion about FSC becoming a university ensued. Dr. Prezant explained that we are part of a university system. In addition, we are labeled a college of technology. Not everyone agrees that we need a change. Internal discussions, governance procedures, and other processes need to happen before moving in this direction. Dr. Prezant does believe that we should have more graduate programs here.

We are looking at an enrollment challenge on Long Island and across New York as the number of high school students is down and the trend is expected to last for 15 years. There have been conversations about what the most appropriate enrollment number is for Farmingdale State College, considering the costs of staffing, faculty, facilities, etc. If we want to maintain 10,000 enrollment we'll need to out-compete the other schools on Long Island and expand our reach to other areas. That presents the need for more residence halls. We are looking at developing public private partnerships to build housing on campus, which will take at least three years. In the nearer term we could enter into partnerships with hotels or work with institutions nearby that have space in their dormitories. Dr. Prezant asked the Council to share any creative ideas or contacts who might help. It was suggested that we investigate utilizing the facilities and dormitories at the closed Dowling College campus. It was also expressed that we reach out to legislators in nearby towns for their input.

Dr. Prezant informed that he ran a series of priorities workshops for faculty and staff. The feedback gathered from these discussions was blended with the strategic plan to narrow down the many goals in the plan. The objective was to identify the most important goal for the next year, top three-five priorities for the next three years, and get thoughts on how we can out-compete other institutions on Long Island. The overarching umbrella priority that emerged was that FSC needs to be better known. A Town Hall will be held in March to share the results with campus.

FSC will host a Presidents' Panel discussion called *Our Collective Reality, Challenges and Opportunities Facing Higher Education* on March 4 at 10:00am. Presidents from Stony Brook University, Old Westbury, and NYIT will take part.

Chair Williams said that she will be honored by Old Westbury at their 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala as an alumna on April 16.

VP Greg O'Connor gave a facilities and construction update to the Council. He reviewed what projects were completed in 2025 – Campus Steam phase 1, ADA bathroom rehabs, Lupton windows phase 2, University Police Training Center, and Site Infrastructure phase 4. We have over \$350M of ongoing projects in Roosevelt Hall, Sinclair Hall, Steam Phase 2, Thompson Hall, Campus Commons, Laffin Hall Welcome Center and the new Computer Sciences Building.

Roosevelt Hall should be completed in April and the multi-purpose room will accommodate up to 1,000 people. Upcoming construction includes, Laffin Hall safety upgrades for pedestrians and vehicles, Nursing Program renovations and ADA bathrooms for Gleeson Hall, playground for the Children's Center, upgraded power supply at the Data Center, and Knapp Hall second floor renovations.

Mr. O'Connor said that future planned projects are in concept. We need funding for design which comes from construction fund allocation. Part of the funding is formulaic and part is based on critical need scoring. The Board of Trustees requested that we conduct an RFP for the lacrosse field project. Bids were due in November 2025. We are following up now to address some outstanding questions as part of that process. After that a recommendation will be made to the BOT and ask for their endorsement. Of late the BOT is looking more closely at real estate transactions and scrutinizing matters dealing with disposition of public assets.

Dr. Prezant stated that fundraising is important because our state budget is not enough. The Corporate and Community Advisory Boards were developed to form collaborations that will help bring resources to the campus. We have plenty of naming opportunities with all the new facilities and renovations going on. A list of naming opportunities and pricing was distributed which can be useful when thinking about who can help Farmingdale.

VP for Advancement, Kim Nyoni, said that he has been talking to faculty and Deans about how to make FSC a destination for students. He has revised the Foundation bylaws, is working on improving customer relationship management software, and has implemented a management fee on endowed gifts. He informed that the division name has been changed from Development and Alumni Engagement to Office of Institutional Advancement. He reoriented responsibilities within the division to create clear functions in order to best serve donors and advance the mission of the College. A research analyst will be added to his team to build estate and gift planning, annual giving, and philanthropy. Mr. Nyoni stated those who need tax write offs at the end of the year are potential donors if their interests are aligned with an aspect of the College. Year to date fundraising for 2026 is \$2.5M.

Chair Williams reminded that SUNY offers resources to connect with consultants and corporations who can help with fundraising and partnerships. It is key for councilmembers to engage their local communities and increase awareness of Farmingdale and the important role it plays in the region.

As there was no other business Chair Williams adjourned the meeting at 12:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carolyn Fedder

***Approved April 8, 2026***