

Meeting Minutes | May 4, 2021

Via Microsoft Teams



COUNCIL MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

John Maggiore, chair; Donna Luh; Molly Reilly; Sheila Poole; Colleen West Hay; Arlene González-Sánchez; Roberta Reardon; Albert Culler; Mark Schroeder; Patty Salkin

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF IN ATTENDANCE

Meg Benke, Lexie Bonitatibus, Nathan Gonyea, Mary Caroline Powers, Thalia MacMillan, Janet Aiello-Cerio, Tiffany Williams

I. CALL TO ORDER — CHAIRMAN JOHN MAGGIORE

Council Chairman John Maggiore called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m. after dispensing with the period for public comment per Executive Order 202.1. The meeting is being recorded.

II. COUNCIL BUSINESS

Chairman John Maggiore asked for a review of the minutes from the March 9, 2021 meeting. Mark Schroeder moved for approval of the minutes as submitted. Roberta Reardon seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved by a voice vote of the council members.

A new member of the College Council, student representative Albert Culler, was introduced. Albert also serves on the presidential search committee. Colleen West Hay's service to the College Council was acknowledged and a proclamation read by John Maggiore.

Mary Caroline Powers' service to the College Council was also acknowledged and a proclamation read by John Maggiore.

III. PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH UPDATE

Chairman John Maggiore and Managing Director of Storebeck Search Steve Leo gave an update on the presidential search process. The committee was reminded that there are aspects of the search that are confidential. An update on the search was sent to the college community the morning of May 4, 2021.

An overview of the search was given to the Council. The search started in early March. The search firm has been aggressively recruiting since. This has included outreach to 3-400 people to identify potential candidates. Storebeck Search met with search committee last week.

Recruitment will continue through the end of May. Interviews with the committee will begin in June, and it is anticipated that five candidates will be presented to the college community in mid to late June.

After the college community meets and interviews the final five candidates, the search committee will review and the community will provide feedback using a survey. College Council will receive results of the survey and will make recommendations of three candidates to the Chancellor.

College Council members should be able to sit in in the final search committee meeting. College Council members will be able to engage directly with candidates. These are what used to be referred to as "campus visits."

Chairman Maggiore encouraged the College Council to engage in the interview process.

A concern was raised about search moving too far into July, due to reading period, by Thalia MacMillan.

John Maggiore asks that the Council be prepared to come together as part of the search committee.

Steve Leo excused.

IV. REPORT OF THE SENATE CHAIRWOMAN — THALIA MACMILLAN

Chairman Maggiore asked for the report from Senate Chairwoman Thalia MacMillan, who said the Senate met twice since our last College Council Meeting, in March and then in April.

Highlights from Thalia from March:

- Grad combined program, pathway program bachelor's to masters in business.
- Bachelor's to MBA

Highlights from Thalia from April:

- All College meeting occurred, held virtually
- At the State of the College meeting held April 9, 2021, there were 400 attendees. The Student Affairs Committee (SAC) was disbanded during that meeting. One of the most exciting initiatives coming from the April Senate meeting was the creation of the Student Government Association (SGA), which took the place of the SAC Group.

Student representative Albert Culler confirmed that the SGA slate of officers and bylaws were approved.

Student Representative Albert Culler updated the Council that the SGA would like to host a training and leadership retreat for the SGA. He added that before the bylaws were amended, Albert held an executive role which no longer exists due to the amendment.

Thalia suggested that John Maggiore meet with the SGA. John indicated that he has already done so but he would like to invite the SGA to do a presentation to the College Council once the SGA is ready to do so. Albert Culler, Thalia MacMillan, and John Maggiore agreed that we would wait until the SGA is tucked in.

Albert Culler thanked the administration for their support of the SGA, and he agreed that the SGA is not yet ready to present to the Council.

V. REPORT FROM OFFICER IN CHARGE — NATHAN GONYEA

Enrollment Update: Nathan indicated that there is positive news on both enrollment and the budget. He indicated that for the spring, the college is 'up' 4.5% over last year. For summer, the college is still in the midst of enrolling students. Nathan projects that the college will end up 'flat,' which is still positive. Historically, the summer is our smallest term, fall is biggest, then the spring term.

Budget Update: Lexie Bonitatibus indicated that the college has a strong cash flow currently due to higher enrollment, the stimulus, tightened controls on spending, and fewer operational costs due to COVID closures at physical locations. The college currently has a balanced budget with revenues greater than expenses. The CARES act (which was the first stimulus package) is all completed, and we haven't received state funding yet, which will be \$6M.

Lexie discussed the forecasted charts. She indicated that revenue, tuition, and fees are where we're 'up.' Costs were held flat. Last year, the college was 'around the \$71M mark for revenue and expenses.' Any excess money the college has is due to enrollment. An extra \$1M was due to collections of international funds and \$1.2M came from the state. Lexie gave a short update on the college's short term financials. In the long term, Lexie cautioned that growing revenue is tied to growing enrollment. The college will definitely save money due to the location change in Manhattan. Cash will dwindle if we don't stay on top of growing enrollment.

Lexie gave an overview of the Higher Education Emergency Relief Funding (HEERF), which included income from the CARES Act and Appropriations Act. Lexie also gave an overview of what we will spend HEERF II and HEERF III stimulus on, which will include technology investments, operational COVID costs, retention, etc. ...

Personnel Updates — Nathan Gonyea

An offer was made for a new vice president of human resources.

Provost Meg Benke will be stepping down this summer, rejoining faculty. She will be replaced in an interim role by Tai Arnold who will serve as acting provost. Vice President for Academic Affairs Nikki Shrimpton has also announced that she would like to return to the faculty, and she will be replaced by Deb Amory. These are temporary adjustments until the new president comes in.

Center for Autism Inclusivity — Noor Syed

Noor indicated that the goal of the Center for Autism Inclusivity is to increase access for those in the autistic community.

There is a strong need for supportive communities for autistic students. 1-2% of students identify as neurodiverse, but we think that that's conservative, as students report pressure to normalize. A significant number of students do not self-identify, as a result. For students who identify as students with autism, only about 40% graduate. The College Autism Program has identified 84 programs in the United States which report pathways for students with autism, but almost all of those pathways require self-disclosure and are in person. At SUNY Empire we are uniquely poised to offer services which don't exist currently, and that are online.

Noor Syed reminded the Council that we should remember that those who have health needs are disadvantaged financially and that employment is a significant area for growth in the community. Children with autism have the lowest rate of employment in young adults (58%).

There is strong research which suggests that a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) framework for K-12 students helps students make strong gains emotionally, academically, socially etc. This framework has not yet been investigated in higher education. SUNY Empire hopes to be the first to implement this framework for our college-age students. A challenge has been discussions regarding response efforts. There was a robust discussion about response effort. How can the college create a fully inclusive and sustainable supports and is also low-effort and low-cost.

Conversations have continued with stakeholders, including faculty and staff and working collaboratively with the Anderson Center for Autism. Our focus is to support our students and educate society at large.

Noor Syed presented an example of MTSS Framework. The college plans to build out an MTSS framework for faculty as well as students. This fall, the Center for Autism Inclusivity will launch a pilot peer mentorship program. Noor reports that much progress has been made to date including faculty and staff training which will be completed by the end of May. The implementation team will oversee progress and help the college to move forward. We plan to develop high school transition programs, develop workforce readiness programs, and resume building supports, for example. A grant has been awarded which will support this progress.

New Business

Council member Mark Schroeder asked that the budget report be shared with the candidates for president. Officer in Charge Nathan Gonyea indicated that the report would be shared with the search firm with up-to-date information regarding financials.

Chairman Maggiore reminded the Council that the next meeting would be held at 3 p.m. on Tuesday, September 14. The chairman asked for a motion to adjourn. Roberta Reardon moved to adjourn and Sheila Poole seconded the motion, which was passed by voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 4:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Aiello-Cerio
Liaison to the Council