

COLLEGE COUNCIL MINUTES
Tuesday, December 7, 2010

The College Council of SUNY Delhi met for a regular meeting on Tuesday, December 7, 2010. Present were:

<u>Council</u>	<u>Administration</u>	<u>Observers</u>
B. Nesbitt (via teleconference)	B. Jones	B. Kaplan
J. Abraham	B. Martin	J. Miller
P. Dopazo	J. Nader	
A. Gaitan	J. Smith	
W. Gladstone	C. Vancko	
K. Mario	C. Wesley	
J. Sands		

College Council meetings are web cast, in compliance with Executive Order #3.

I. Call to Order: The regular meeting was called to order at 4:35 pm by Chairman Nesbitt, who joined the meeting via teleconference. Meeting participants introduced themselves. Chairman Nesbitt offered holiday greetings and thanked President Vancko for inviting Council members to participate in campus holiday events and hoped that several members would be able to.

II. Approval of Minutes: Walter Gladstone moved to accept the minutes from the September 21, 2010 meeting. Katherine Mario seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

III. President's Report: President Vancko reported that we recently were hit with a \$220,000 mid-year budget cut, which makes our total cuts for this fiscal year \$1.7 million, (\$3.6 million over the last three years). She noted it is amazing how robust we are despite the difficult fiscal climate. We have a \$2 million deficit, which we reduced to \$1.5 million due to retirements and other savings. At some point, we will start spending our reserves at a higher level than in the past. This is not an emergency for the coming year, but will turn into a problem if it continues. We are taking a hard look at every position; trying to save money in energy (saved \$1 million last year); where possible, we have transferred expenses to auxiliary services; we are trying to find additional revenue streams. President Vancko will attend the presidents' meeting with Chancellor Zimpher on Thursday; she is interested in hearing about SUNY's strategy regarding tuition and the onerous legislation under which we operate. We need a tuition increase just to offset the cost of inflation. President Vancko will know more after that meeting, but hopefully unions will support whatever initiatives the Chancellor puts forward.

Katherine Mario said that Chancellor Zimpher was incredible at the ATC conference. When she talked about goals and encouraged people to come up with ideas, some college council members suggested we don't need packets anymore, we can help find savings; she was inspirational. President Vancko agreed that the Chancellor is inspirational and hopes she can part the waters.

President Vancko asked for a college council member to volunteer to serve as the liaison to ACT. Katherine Mario agreed to do it, but won't be available for the conference call next week. Chairman Nesbitt thanked Katherine Mario for volunteering to serve as liaison and for attending the fall ACT conference. He offered to attend the first session as her proxy, if she is unable to; he will also participate in the conference call next week.

President Vancko reported that SUNY has placed an enrollment cap on each state operated campus, based on fall 2009 numbers. SUNY cannot continue to take in more students and provide additional services when NY State is not providing a basic level of support for students currently enrolled. An enrollment cap is a concern, since we operate the online BSN on a tuition basis and we don't receive state support. Cutting off the BSN numbers would be problematic. President Vancko spoke to SUNY Provost David Lavallee who agreed that our case constitutes an exception to the enrollment cap and he awarded us an exemption. We are the only SUNY that provides baccalaureate degrees at community college sites. SUNY assigned us an enrollment number considerably higher than our fall 2010 number, with the understanding that some other schools would give us their 'excess' so all of SUNY would hold enrollment at the fall 2009 level. SUNY hopes that the cap will exert pressure on the legislature to support SUNY; when someone's son or daughter doesn't get admitted, the parent picks up the phone and calls their representative. That's the strategy; we are hoping it will be successful. President Vancko said we've been a hot school, with more than 6,000 applicants for 960 positions. Enrollment tends to ride waves and goes in trends; we don't want an external force to change that cycle when we're doing well.

Chancellor Zimpher has put forward a strategic plan for SUNY with six areas; each area has been assigned an implementation group to find out if we are meeting our goals. President Vancko is co-chair of the Vibrant Community team, which is comprised of 15 faculty, staff and students from across SUNY. They have met once in person, are meeting again in January, and have had some conference calls. The group is moving forward pretty successfully.

We recently won the Continuing Education association Exemplary Program Award for our online BSN. Glenda Roberts traveled to West Point to receive the award.

Our MSN proposal has been submitted to the SUNY Provost, David Lavallee. Provost Nader, Dr. Mary Pat Lewis and President Vancko have had conference calls with Empire State College to discuss partnering in the master's proposal. We would offer courses in public health and they would have interest in other specialty areas. We have not heard anything from SUNY.

The PGA voted not to accredit us; we are very disappointed, and have contested that decision. President Vancko sent a very strong letter to each member of the PGA's board of directors stating that the letter she received from the accrediting team chair was incorrect. President Vancko had a follow up call with the chair, in which he said he had no power to change anything. The CEO of the PGA called today, essentially using the phone call to review the process and say our proposal had many shortcomings and failed to meet PGA standards, which is not true. President Vancko has contacted SUNY Counsel about a law suit against the PGA. Another college has initiated a similar lawsuit because of the same situation: the PGA set up criteria, we met the criteria, they say ok you did that, but now you have to meet these criteria. President Vancko was flabbergasted at the way she was treated on the phone today. She is not sure we'll ever get accredited, but also not sure that's a bad thing – we have a strong program. Other schools should not have to go through such an unfair process. President Vancko is over her anger and channeling it into productive action.

Dr. Gaitan asked what the benefits of PGA accreditation are. President Vancko said it could help with the recruitment of students. Joel Smith noted that should students decide to pursue membership in the PGA, it would require a significant additional expense to take PGA levels and the student would have to go to Florida to take levels. If they earn their degree at an accredited institution, the PGA levels are taken care of.

Chairman Nesbitt asked if there is a PGA accredited college in the northeast at this point. President Vancko said no. Chairman Nesbitt noted that is discriminating. President Vancko said it is, particularly since she has a written statement that the PGA wanted to accredit one college in NY and invited us to apply.

Chairman Nesbitt wondered if we should try to review other proposals which have been accepted in the past five years and compare them to ours. President Vancko noted that our proposal is an A-1 proposal; as fine as one could ever submit. They do not want to accredit us. They are making any excuse. As soon as we meet all the criteria, they change the criteria.

Chairman Nesbitt noted if we do elect to file a suit, having an accepted proposal and matching it against ours would be a strong case.

Provost Nader said that a submission to the PGA (a private organization) becomes the property of the PGA, as clearly stated in the Request for Proposal process. The PGA is unlikely to share anything with us. If we move forward, our counsel would seek those documents under discovery.

President Vancko described the way SUNY counsel works. SUNY counsel is provided to represent us for liability purposes and provide routine legal counsel, helping us assess wrongdoing; they are not authorized to sue on our behalf, without the Attorney General's office granting permission or expressing a willingness to go forward. Our liaisons in the office of SUNY Counsel are consulting with the Attorney General's office; they believe we have a strong case. If the Attorney General's office represents us in this suit, there is no financial cost to us. If they decline to represent us, we have to decide if we want to hire private counsel to represent us and at what cost. Hopeful the Attorney General will see this in the same way we do; we think the PGA's decision not to accredit us is arbitrary and capricious.

On a more positive note, President Vancko reported that SUNY recently released student success rates across the system, by campus. The success rate is the graduation rate plus the successful transfer rate (that we know of within SUNY), plus the persistence rate for first-time/full-time students. Our baccalaureate student success rate was 88.6%; our associate rate was 75.2%; in both cases, we are above the sector rate.

We have had an inquiry from the International Black Sea University in Tbilisi. Representatives visited us late this summer; they would like to participate in a student exchange for the spring semester; all classes at IBSU are taught in English. CADI has agreed to help support the student's travel expenses. IBSU has also inquired whether we have interest in a faculty exchange. President Vancko believes this is a great opportunity for us.

There were several wonderful highlights this semester: we dedicated The Okun Theatre; the exercise and dance studio was dedicated to Theresa Molloy; the Wickham Information Commons recognized the Wickhams' special gift to the Resnick Library; and there was a dedication of Carol Brock's special collection of more than 3,000 books for culinary students. We are all greatly improved as a result of these gifts and President Vancko is appreciative of all the work members of the campus did to secure and celebrate these gifts.

Governor Elect Cuomo was invited to Delhi by the Democratic County Committee just prior to

the election. President Vancko has invited him to be our May commencement speaker; we haven't had a response yet. When Governor Elect Cuomo was in Farrell Center, his aide said he never expected to find such a place on a SUNY campus. President Vancko explained the long connection between Delhi and the Cuomo family through Lou and Mildred Resnick. Governor Elect Cuomo described SUNY as the jewel of upstate NY.

We are in the middle of planning our 100th anniversary celebration. Barb Jones, Maureen McKenna and David Brower are co-chairing the steering committee. Some exciting events are being planned and President Vancko thinks it will be a fun year; we'll celebrate all year long.

IV. President's Staff:

Jeff Abraham, Student Senate President, reported that we are off to a great year. The student senate is working on lots of opportunities for students, including a student internship they will sponsor with CADI. Dean Dominic Morales donated a very large hand-cut tree which is being decorated by students; the student senate will host a tree lighting ceremony for the campus. Student members of the Association of General Contractors built the tree stand. Over the course of the year, BSU has raised \$2,500 which they will use to donate gifts for foster children in NYC. The student senate and student clubs raised over \$3,000 for Zach Hilty and his family. Kudos to the students.

John Nader, Provost, reported that we have a lot of things going on. Faculty members are submitting a COIL initiative, in which students receive a portion of their course from another institution. Chuck & Kay Merrill have awarded \$63,000 for Veterinary Science student scholarships. The Merrills visited campus in the fall and seemed happy with what's going on. Dean Michael Petrillose and David Brower are doing consultation work with American Express studying travel demographics of 22-40 year olds and how to market to them.

Some of our Vet Sci students have visited South Africa, and two staff members from an ecolife program were here this semester. They visited with Vet Sci students and Dr. Bret Meckel has put together a proposal to send students there to take courses in January and return to finish the semester here; this would provide students another valuable international experience.

Our lead Criminal Justice instructor, Scott Swayze, helped organize an active shooter demo with many police agencies participating; we got word out in advance to make sure the public understood it was a demo.

We received approval for a BT in Construction Technology: Design and Build; Provost Nader thinks this program will grow.

Chairman Nesbitt asked if there are two Dr. Tessiers on campus. Provost Nader said Dr. Jack Tessier and his wife Lisa both teach for us. This is the first time we received the Hall Award, which Glenda Roberts identified for us.

Practicing vets and reps from Cornell are reviewing our proposal for the BS in Vet Tech. SUNY is very guarded about approving new program proposals that will impose costs on campuses. They want the totality of costs, including faculty salaries, how we will fund new hires, etc. included in the proposal. Chairman Nesbitt asked if Cornell has a BS in Vet Tech. They do not.

Chairman Nesbitt asked if Amanda Mitchell filled a new position. No, she replaces Angela Rhodes in the Library.

Bonnie Martin, Director of Administrative Services, reported that we have continued to be busy

with the retirement incentive; the first wave left in September; another wave leaves this month. This seemed like the ideal time to roll out the retiree organization; Bonnie is working with retired dean Rosalie Higgins and Senior Development Officer Maureen McKenna to start an organization of retirees to serve their needs and also give them opportunities to serve the college. Twenty retirees have been invited to a steering committee meeting in January.

Our master plan is almost complete after a year and a half of working with the State Construction Fund and Saratoga Associates to plan for our physical plant through 2023. The Master Plan process was funded entirely through the State Construction Fund.

We are accepting bids for the new child care center (DC4), which we expect will be completed in summer 2012. DC4 operates as a private non-profit; we used our capital dollars for the new building. We are allocated funds and this was one of our priorities. They have been running a spectacular operation in a poor facility. We want to raise North Hall and can't do that until we move DC4. University Police will move to a new location in Thurston. DC4 will double their capacity in the new state-of-the-art facility.

Joel Smith, Director of College Advancement, noted that over 50% of faculty and staff are now making gifts to the campus; this is an extraordinary milestone, particularly in this environment. Their gifts generate \$44,000 per year for student scholarships. Chairman Nesbitt asked if there is a committee under Joel that determines the allocations. Joel responded that if the donation is not designated for scholarship, it is allocated by the College Foundation board of trustees.

We have also reached another long milestone, completing the archaeological phase of the subsurface project. We have been in negotiations for over a year with several organizations, including the Oneida Indian Nation and H.U.D., to excavate artifacts on the site for holding ponds for the subsurface project. Artifacts were found, but none of historical significance. We are now waiting for the go-ahead from the state historical preservation office, so the engineering firm can complete the design. We then need \$1.5 million to complete project.

Joel quoted Tom Recinella describing Carol Brock's donation: this was a validation of someone in the food industry from outside giving to our program; this place is so special- I want to give this gift.

Joel distributed copies of *Horizons*, our annual report, which represents us well, and provides information members can use to talk about the college and what we're doing.

Chairman Nesbitt asked when the Phonathon starts. Joel responded that it is a spring semester initiative. During the fall, we focus on targeted groups. Lucinda Brydon is our alumni and annual fund coordinator and has advanced a tremendous amount after one year on the job. Between Lucinda and Maureen, we have a solid development plan in place. Joel is enthusiastic heading into the spring semester.

Craig Wesley, Dean of Enrollment Services, reported that his staff is working hard to enroll as many residential students as possible for the spring semester. Initial indicators for fall are promising; our net deposits are running 16% ahead of last year; it's still very early in the process. We continue to refine our use of technology to connect to prospective students and their families. Kishan Zuber has developed online tutorials and YouTubes for students to teach them how to use many different tools. Craig's staff is working on cellular based multi-media technology to provide self guided campus tours which would be helpful, especially for families visiting on weekends.

Although applications to the BSN program continue to grow in number, new student enrollments

have not kept pace because of capacity limits. Consequently, admission to the program has become more selective.

Barbara Jones, Vice President for Student Life, noted that we have final exams next week; we will be closing down our activities, and hope our students are going to step up their academic activities. Commencement dinner for December grads is next week. We are nominating students for the annual Chancellor's Award. Our men's and women's athletic teams are doing well. The RAs and RDs are collecting things in dorms for donation. Student Life is selecting two new faculty service fellows who will do service learning next semester, in which community service is tied to the curriculum. We are involved in several technology projects, including planning for a new door access system for the residence halls and new computer systems for our judicial program. We are also planning for new laundry facilities in Murphy and O'Connor this summer.

Barb is excited about our 100th anniversary and the steering committee is planning the launch of the website next year; there is also an events and activities committee.

Chairman Nesbitt asked if there were any applications for ACT scholarships. Barb responded that we submitted the "Hope for Haiti" project for the ACT student initiative award. We received a True Hero Foundation Award for that project, with a \$2,500 cash award, which we put toward our community service center. President Vancko noted that we didn't have any applicants for ACT scholarships and will see if we can do more to assist students in the process next year.

Chairman Nesbitt offered congratulations for the True Hero Foundation Award.

Chairman Nesbitt thanked everyone for coming and apologized for not attending in person.

Adjournment: Walter Gladstone moved to adjourn the meeting; Jeff Abraham seconded the motion. Meeting was adjourned at 6:00 pm.