

Meeting Minutes | December 1, 2020

Via Microsoft Teams



COUNCIL MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

John Maggiore, Arlene González-Sánchez, Colleen West Hay, Donna Luh, Shelia Poole, Roberta Reardon, Molly Reilly, Mark Schroeder

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF IN ATTENDANCE

Janet Aiello-Cerio, Meg Benke, Beth Berlin, Lexie Bonitatibus, Nathan Gonyea, Tracey Meek, Ali Ait Si Mhamed, Mary Caroline Powers, Anastasia Pratt, Tiffany Williams

I. COUNCIL BUSINESS

Council Chairman John Maggiore called the meeting to order at 3 p.m. after dispensing with the period for public comment per Executive Order 200.1. He reminded those attending that the meeting is being recorded for future use. He then asked for a review of the minutes from the October 13, 2020 meeting. Arlene Gonzalez-Sanchez 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.

Chairman Maggiore then updated council members on the work completed at the virtual ACT conference Friday, October 16. He noted that two important committees were established — one to study bylaws established by individual college councils and another to develop a mission statement for the ACT organization. He said if any members of the SUNY Empire State College Council are interested in participating the work of either ACT committee, they should contact him directly.

II. REPORT OF THE SENATE CHAIR

Chairman Maggiore asked for the report from Senate Chairwoman Anastasia Pratt. She described the strong focus the Senate has put on helping the college's students move forward. The Senate also received a resolution from its Student Affairs Committee requesting that the pass/no pass period be extended, and that a Student Assembly be created, an idea that has gotten a lot of positive feedback.

She said the second subject that has taken up a lot of time is the proposal to change the dates of the summer faculty "reading period" — a time when faculty members are freed up from other work obligations to do the necessary research to stay current in their fields, and prepare original scholarship, two requirements for continuation appointment and promotion. The reading period

also is part of the negotiated agreement the faculty have with college administration. She said the current dates run well into August, a time when increasingly more students are enrolling and need to be prepared and supported by faculty as they enter the college. A special meeting of the Senate was called to further debate the topic, a meeting she described as among the more difficult in her tenure as Senate chair. After discussing five different proposals, agreement was finally reached and the reading period will be moved to July.

III. DISCUSSION TOPIC: SUNY EMPIRE STATE COLLEGE'S Ed.D.

Provost Meg Benke, Graduate Studies Dean Nathan Gonyea, Associate Professor Ali Ait Si Mhamed

Provost Benke began the discussion by explaining that the college has predominately been a bachelor-degree institution with some master's programs offered. But, over the years, requests had been received from both internal and external sources about offering a doctoral level degree for adult learners that was flexible enough that the student could keep working, and also be a degree that would provide for career advancement and acquisition of new tools. After extensive research, it was agreed that a doctorate degree in higher education leadership and change would meet the needs expressed.

Provost Benke introduced School for Graduate Studies Dean Nathan Gonyea who explained that this is what is considered a professional degree that will combine research and practice and a data-driven mindset the college wants to foster in its students. It is designed to be a part-time study with individual cohorts, using both synchronous and asynchronous formats, delivered both online and at in-person residencies.

Dean Gonyea then introduced Professor Ali Ait Si Mhamed, who was calling into the meeting from Europe. He proceeded to review highlights of the Ed.D. curriculum, which will require earning 54 credits beyond a master's degree, and attending four residencies during the program through the duration of three years. The final residency will involve the defense of the student's dissertation, which will be an applied dissertation embedded in the student's professional context. It is intended to lead to students acquiring the ability to frame change in their professional work.

Provost Benke added that when the college first put the proposal forward for the Ed.D. it had several tracks, including one for adult education, and she guessed it is likely they will begin evolving as the program moves forward. Ms. Luh commented that the program ought to be quite successful.

IV. REPORT FROM OFFICER IN CHARGE

Chairman Maggiore introduced the report from Officer in Charge Beth Berlin by announcing that she will be leaving the college and Dean Gonyea will step in as officer in charge until a new president is selected.

Ms. Berlin began her report by explaining that she will be joining SUNY System Administration and Chancellor Jim Malatras as SUNY's new chief operating officer in that the current one is retiring. She said she has enjoyed being part of the SUNY Empire community. She then offered Dean Gonyea the

opportunity to make some remarks. He first thanked the council members for serving the college and said he is honored and humbled to have been asked to take on the officer in charge role. He said he has been with the college for five years. He said his plans include building on how the college can better partner with various state agencies.

One of the top priorities in the near term is to get the search process for the new president underway. The first step will involve issuing an RFP for a search firm. He mentioned that as Chairman Maggiore noted a lot has changed since the last search and that working with SUNY the process will be fine-tuned as we get more clarity on the budgets for the federal government and the state of New York. He said that Tracey Meek will manage the search, that Mary Caroline Powers will provide support and transitional advice, and the search process will be a shared effort. He added that he's hopeful the search will conclude in six to 12 months. He noted that this information will be publicly shared with the college community. He concluded his report by saying that the college is seeing very positive progress on enrollment.

Chairman Maggiore asked when the personnel changes take effect and Ms. Berlin said Monday, December 7. Chairman Maggiore then took the opportunity to thank Ms. Berlin for her service to the college and for making a big impact during her short time at SUNY Empire. He also thanked Dean Gonyea for taking on the new role and Mary Caroline Powers for doing all she has done with and for the College Council and for tutoring him.

Chairman Maggiore asked if there were any questions or comments. Mr. Schroeder asked to share a quick observation regarding the search firm. He said he was hopeful the college can say to the firm that given the significance of the college marking the 50th year since its founding that we should look for someone who is part of the SUNY Empire family, and noted that Jim Malatras is the first SUNY graduate to be named chancellor. He also said he wants to see a new president who can take the college to the next level.

Noting there were no additional comments or questions, Chairman Maggiore called for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Reardon so moved, with Ms. Poole offering a second to the motion, which was unanimously approve by voice vote at 3:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary Caroline Powers
Liaison to the College Council