

College Council Meeting September 24, 2020

Voting Members Present: Mr. Basch, Dr. Venables, Mr. Cozzolino, Ms. Hershenson (Student Association president), Mr. Law, Dr. Scott-Childress (non-voting faculty representative), and Ms. Bishop (non-voting alumni representative).

Campus Administration Present: President Christian; Interim Provost Lyman; Vice Presidents Blaisdell, Eaton, Halstead, Marks, and Wright.

Interim Chairman's Report:

Mr. Basch called the meeting to order at 3:06 p.m.

Mr. Basch welcomed Ms. Hershenson and Dr. Scott-Childress, who are serving as new Council members this academic year. He asked both to introduce themselves.

Ms. Hershenson said that she was recently elected president of the Student Association (SA) and is in her senior year at the College. She is majoring in Early Childhood & Childhood Education with a concentration in English and has a minor in Deaf Studies. Ms. Hershenson is from Manhattan, New York, and said that she came back to live in New Paltz this fall because she loves the campus and town. Ms. Hershenson noted that she has been involved in SA since her sophomore year and has held various positions, including in the student senate and as vice president for academic affairs. Ms. Hershenson said that she was excited to be here and serve as president.

Dr. Scott-Childress said that he joined the College in 2005 and teaches in the Department of History. He added that he is originally from North Carolina, went to school in New York City and earned his Ph.D. from the University of Maryland. Mr. Basch noted that Dr. Scott-Childress is also a resident of the City of Kingston.

Mr. Basch asked the broader Council to introduce themselves. All other voting and non-voting members in attendance went around and shared their backgrounds briefly.

Mr. Basch proposed adoption of the minutes of the May 20, 2020, meeting. Dr. Venables moved to accept the minutes, Mr. Cozzolino seconded the motion, and they were approved by voice vote.

Mr. Basch said that he was happy to observe that things are going well at the College, considering the environment that we're under in light of the pandemic. He said this is because of the efforts of faculty, students, staff and campus leadership.

President's Report:

President Christian said that he would report briefly on the current state of SUNY New Paltz about one month after his State of the College address. He noted that if the Council read that address and his report earlier this month, they would have a sense that the College's most

immediate and overarching focus has been on managing a successful fall semester and keeping everyone healthy and safe, while we plan for the spring semester.

The president said that he and campus leadership are proud and impressed with the behavior of our students and their adherence to safety protocols of mask-wearing, social distancing, hand-washing, and avoiding large gatherings. The president noted that the College asked students to sign a pledge to honor these principles as a condition of on-campus presence. We have made clear that even though we have emphasized educational approaches to influencing behavior, the College is ready to suspend students for non-compliance with behavioral expectations for preventing spread of coronavirus. The College has had relatively few violations of these rules that have resulted in disciplinary action.

President Christian outlined some notable features of the fall semester, including:

- About 75% of classes are remote and distant, 25% on campus, the latter at reduced in-class density with clear requirements for mask-wearing;
- Occupancy in the residence halls is reduced to about one-half compared to other fall semesters, with strict guidelines on gatherings and bans on visitations in other residence halls;
- Continued significant telecommuting for many employees;
- Plans to pivot to all remote instruction if the number of cases rises beyond our capacity to maintain health and safety.

The president noted that the College instituted new COVID-19 surveillance testing of students living in the residence halls to track the potential spread of the virus on campus, have added pool testing of students and today began pool testing of employees as part of that surveillance. In this protocol, saliva from 12 people is combined into a sample that is tested. If the result is negative, all in the pool are negative. If positive, the individual samples are tested as soon as possible to identify the individual or individuals who are positive. That approach will allow for fairly quick isolation to reduce the spread of the virus.

As of today, President Christian said that the College has two active student cases, eight students in quarantine, and no students in isolation. We have tested 1,300 students on campus and have a positivity rate of 0.8%.

The president said that Student Affairs leaders and other volunteers have been on “party patrol” in New Paltz, speaking with students at on-campus and off-campus gatherings about health and safety and as warranted distributing masks and hand sanitizers. They have found mostly small, appropriate gatherings, and report that our students could not have been more polite and gracious.

President Christian noted that we have had a great partnership with the Village and Town in a series of joint initiatives, education campaigns and cooperative enforcement measures. He added that the partnership is playing an important part in the College’s success mitigating the virus to date.

President Christian updated the Council about enrollment, noting that our overall enrollment this fall is within 5% of fall 2019. The president said that this is a great relief as we had feared a more dramatic drop as a consequence of a significant shift to remote instruction, student and family concerns about health and safety in an on-campus environment, and pandemic impacts on family finances of many of our students. The president said that the percentage of underrepresented students in our incoming first-year class (46%) is down only slightly from last fall's record-high 48%, belying national concerns that Black and Latinx students would disproportionately not continue their education. Our total EOP enrollment is within one student of last fall (575 vs. 576).

Turning to other topics, President Christian noted that while campus leadership is heartened by our fall enrollment, even that modest decrease represents a loss of about \$1.2 million in tuition revenue. The president reminded the Council that almost 80% of the College's operating revenue comes from tuition and fees. We are heavily enrollment dependent. The College is working already on recruiting students for spring 2021 and for the 2021-22 academic year. The residence hall budget is taking a severe hit this fall because of the reduced occupancy, on top of a major loss of revenue last spring when the College refunded housing fees after we went to totally remote instruction mid-semester.

The president noted that New York State is facing a serious budget shortfall. Economic recovery will be slow and tax revenues will lag. As a result, the president said that SUNY's direct taxpayer support will likely be cut substantially this year. These losses and uncertainties led SUNY to institute a hiring freeze and severe spending limits that the College is enforcing to reduce expenditures with substantial impact so far. State officials have made clear that budget figures for SUNY and other state entities will not be released until after the November election. The president said that he has tried to help members of our community understand the difficult budget decisions the College faces as the year unfolds.

President Christian said one of the College's major priorities this year is to advance our efforts to become an anti-racist campus, aligning with the belated recognition of all that our nation – and all of its institutions – must do to right longstanding racial inequities, injustices and violence. The College undertakes these initiatives recognizing both the urgency to make progress and the complexities that mean this is not an overnight task. The president acknowledged that the Council may have read the College's message to the campus community condemning the ugly verbal harassment that one of our students of color experienced in the Village earlier this week, and efforts underway by New Paltz police to identify those responsible for these actions. Incidents like this underscore our need as a campus and as a broader community to address these issues very aggressively.

The president noted that the College held several virtual listening sessions with students, alumni, employees and others this summer. He said that the Council may also have read the June 30 message from the President's Cabinet about our commitments and actions underway, and a more recent response to those conversations and to the demands of an alumni petition.

Among the steps we are taking include:

- ways to create a better pathway to respond to incidents of bias and to support students and employees who have such experiences;
- faculty will be reviewing the curriculum to highlight offerings about race, racism, and inequity in America;
- changing the structure of our diversity and inclusion work to expand involvement of community members;
- our University Police Department (UPD) has affirmed its commitment to anti-racism, explicitly outlining their dedication to fair and equitable policing. The president said that our UPD is one of only half of SUNY UPDs accredited through the New York State Law Enforcement Accreditation Program. Only 25% of non-SUNY law enforcement agencies in the State are accredited, which requires meeting 109 standards.

The president said that these are a just some of the efforts underway to address our anti-racist goals.

President Christian showcased a couple of other items that the Council would be hearing more about during the coming year.

He reminded the Council about the College's first-ever major fundraising campaign. The president said that we are now at 98% of our \$23 million goal. We're excited about that success that Vice President Marks had led.

The president also noted that the College is in the middle of its Middle States Reaccreditation review that is required every 10 years. He said that this is progressing well.

In closing, President Christian highlighted that the SUNY Board of Trustees has appointed Dr. Jim Malatras as the New SUNY Chancellor, replacing Kristina Johnson who resigned this summer to become president at The Ohio State University. Chancellor Malatras was most recently president at SUNY Empire State, served previously as chief of staff to former Chancellor Nancy Zimpher, director of the Rockefeller Institute of Government at University at Albany, and held various positions in New York State government including director of state operations under Governor Cuomo.

The president said that Chancellor Malatras chose New Paltz as the first campus to visit in his new role, on Sunday, August 23. He was especially interested in the College's fall semester reopening plans and our COVID-19 protections, along with the key role that the College's Hudson Valley Additive Manufacturing Center has played in producing face shields and other PPE for health-care workers and first responders and for the campus.

President Christian said that he was impressed with the chancellor's easy engagement with students they met during the tour. In his comments to a reporter, the chancellor described SUNY New Paltz as one of "the crown jewels" in SUNY. The president said that the chancellor is clearly a hands-on leader, great to work with and very engaged.

Mr. Basch recognized the president for keeping the institution open and healthy and said that New Paltz is a model for dealing with COVID-19 and succeeding in doing so. He added that it wasn't surprising that the chancellor would look to New Paltz as a crown jewel and for its efforts at keeping the COVID-19 positive rate to such low levels. While the pandemic is not over, Mr. Basch acknowledged that the College is off to a really good start. He said that students, faculty and staff should take pride in how well things are going so far and for taking personal responsibility to protect themselves and community members. The president said that this has been a team effort across many areas of the campus and by senior leadership.

Mr. Law said that the president, administration, students and faculty demonstrated that it is possible to navigate safely through COVID-19. He extended his congratulations to the team and best wishes for continued success.

Vice President Eaton said that he was proud of what we have collectively accomplished but cautioned that the pandemic is not over.

Mr. Basch asked how the testing pools are put together. Vice President Blaisdell said that due to the mechanics involved the pools are formed based on the way students line up for testing. She added that the College is mandating which groups of students are in line based on a representative sample from across campus for each week of testing.

Vice President Halstead said that Emergency Management was able to secure 50,000 masks for free that will be distributed to students, faculty and staff.

Budget Update:

See attached PowerPoint slides.

Vice President Halstead began her report with a summary of the fiscal year 2019-2020 budget, which ended on June 30.

When Vice President Halstead updated the Council last spring, she said that we knew that the College had missed its tuition target by almost \$2.5 million but did not know how much state support would be received for the fiscal year. The vice president said that the College ended up receiving \$2 million less than was anticipated and that represented a 13% reduction in state support. Overall, Vice President Halstead said that anticipated revenue was short by \$4.5 million.

On expenditures, the Vice President Halstead said that the College had been holding positions vacant for 90 days before the pandemic and had anticipated a certain amount of savings in personnel dollars. After COVID-19 hit, SUNY came out with a hiring freeze and the College was only allowed to replace positions that are for health and safety or revenue-generating. This freeze led to a further reduction in personnel costs, saving the College \$2.3 million. In addition, the vice president said the College saved on temporary service and utilities, as well as from the state's broader spending constraints.

Collectively, Vice President Halstead said that the College exceeded its anticipated expenditures by \$3.1 million. When comparing expenditures to revenues, the vice president said that the College had to use about \$4.4 million of reserves. She added that other budgets were reduced due to the pandemic, including the residence hall budget, as the College refunded housing fees after shifting to remote instruction last spring.

When considering the College's 2020-2021 fiscal year plan, the vice president said that there are many unknowns that make it challenging to compare year-over-year budgets. The variables include how much state support the College will receive and if activities on campus can continue through the full semester.

Vice President Halstead said the College has been told that we won't know our level of state support until after the November election.

Mr. Basch acknowledged that there are a lot of questions and most of them are unanswerable. He added that the College is doing very well, considering all of the circumstances.

Mr. Law asked if there has been an impact on giving to the campus from other sources as a result of COVID-19. Vice President Marks said that the Foundation lowered its fundraising goal this year from \$3 million to \$2 million for the first time following six years of surpassing the \$3 million mark annually. The vice president said that while the Foundation is about \$500,000 away from its \$23 million fundraising campaign goal, there has been a slowdown in giving. However, she added that people who have means truly have the capacity to give. As one example, the vice president said that they are seeing some extremely generous gifts, including six-figure gifts, and there has been an increased in planned gifts (e.g. wills and estate).

Vice President Marks said that several people she engaged with, including alumni, have mentioned how impressed they are with the College's communications throughout the pandemic. She thanked Vice President Wright for these efforts.

Wrap-Up:

Mr. Basch said the next meeting is scheduled for Oct. 21 at 3 p.m.

Mr. Basch adjourned the meeting at 3:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Richard Winters
Director of Community and Government Relations

College Council Budget Update

September 24, 2020

FY 19-20 Status of Core Instructional Budget

Final

REVENUE	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Total Revenue</u>	<u>Over/under</u>
Fall Tuition & Fees	\$26,397,663.00	\$25,333,925.25	(\$1,063,737.76)
Spring Tuition & Fees	\$25,148,837.00	\$23,724,458.60	(\$1,424,378.41)
Total Funds Generated by Campus Activities	\$51,546,500.00	\$49,058,383.84	(\$2,488,116.16)
State Support	\$15,994,300.00	\$13,932,625.00	(\$2,061,675.00)
Total Revenue	\$67,540,800.00	\$62,991,008.84	(\$4,549,791.16)
EXPENDITURES	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Total Expenditure</u>	<u>Over/under</u>
Personal Service	\$59,079,584.00	\$56,745,265.13	\$2,334,318.87
Temporary Service	\$4,969,004.00	\$4,946,453.50	\$22,550.50
Utilities	\$2,584,100.00	\$2,296,749.78	\$287,350.22
Supplies, Travel, Contracts & Equipment	\$3,848,674.00	\$3,383,549.41	\$465,124.59
Total Expenditures	\$70,481,362.00	\$67,372,017.82	\$3,109,344.18
Projected Deficit (use of reserves)	(\$2,940,562.00)	(\$4,381,008.98)	



This represents a 13% reduction in state support