



## **OCTOBER 2021 COLLEGE COUNCIL MEETING**

**Date:** Monday, October 4, 2021

**Time:** 5:30 p.m.

**Present:** Council Members:

RoAnn Destito-Chair, Darlene Burns, Mitchell Ford, Charles Greco, Nichole Hinman, Avenash Kemraj, and William Thickstun

Administration:

Michael Frame, Laurie Hartman, Susan Head, Tod Laursen, Mark Lemire, Marybeth Lyons, Steven Schneider

Guests:

Zulaika Rodriguez, Bradley Thiel, Linda Weber

### **Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Destito convened the Public Meeting at 5:35 p.m. and welcomed all participants to the meeting, which was held via Zoom.

### **Approval of Minutes**

***A motion was made by Ms. Burns and seconded by Mr. Greco to approve the minutes of the July 19, 2021, meeting as presented. All were in favor.***

### **Student Representative Update**

Avenash Kemraj, student representative to the College Council, shared updates from the SUNY Poly students.

Poly students have transitioned back to in-person learning with much success. The campus has seen more activity since last year and students are excited for this change.

Over the summer, SUNY Poly migrated their email platform from Google to Microsoft 365; Avenash advised that our this students have transitioned nicely to this new email platform.

Student Government at Utica has a newly appointed Secretary (Ariella Holbert) and new Director of Community Outreach (Lucas Nowlan). They are actively searching for more directors, as well as a new SGU Vice President.

On September 7, the Center for Student Involvement hosted an Involvement Fair, which was held on the Student Center Patio. Poly has a wide variety of clubs to join and this gives students the



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opportunity to browse these clubs and learn more about what each club does. Avenash advised that students really enjoyed the event and the opportunity to learn more on how to get involved on campus.

At the event September, the Utica campus held their Wildcat Weekend. The weekend consisted of a number of events including a cornhole tournament, tie dye event, paint a canvas, food trucks, bounce houses and live music. The students really enjoyed the variety of activities held across campus.

Avenash shared some of his current initiatives and they include working with SGU to elaborate on bills and resolutions, planning campus events, working with RA's on campus initiatives and making connections with his fellow students.

## **President's Report**

Dr. Laursen provided an update on SUNY Poly activities via a PowerPoint presentation.

In terms of enrollment, we are at 2860 student headcount and he is pleased to share that a large number of students are now on campus for their classes and other activities. There are approximately 800 students currently living in the residence hall. Thanks to effort of our enrollment team, both international student enrollment and graduate enrollment have increased for the fall semester. Dr. Laursen noted that student diversity has increased over the last few years.

Our admission's team is working hard and has recently started to attend in-person recruitment events, there are currently over 130 planned recruitment programs that our admissions team will participate in.

Dr. Laursen shared some statistics pertaining to our incoming 2021 first-year class, noting we remain very competitive with who we accept. The average student GPA is 91% with most of these students in STEM related majors, 26% are from Oneida County and 25% are under the age of 18. He explained that, during the pandemic, we believe a lot of students are choosing to stay closer to home.

The College of Health Sciences has new graduate programs coming online, they are Health Informatics (M.S.) and Psychiatric Mental Health (DNP and Advanced Certificate.)

Forging into fall, we have approximately two-thirds of our instruction either on campus or held via a hybrid format. On campus activities have resumed for students, this includes intercollegiate athletics, which will now allow for the return of fans in the stands, he advised that Poly has over 200 student athletes.

SUNY Poly is working closely with our local department of healths, both Oneida and Albany Counties, to keep our campuses safe; we update our guidelines frequently as new protocols are needed. A mandatory vaccination policy is now in effect for all students. Our Wellness Center and Academic Affairs staff have done a great job moving this initiative forward. We are currently at approximately 94% vaccination compliance. We are continuing to test all faculty, staff and students; either on a



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weekly or bi-weekly basis depending on their vaccination status. We have transitioned our testing to a saliva self-test through the RNA Institute at the University at Albany.

In the 2022 US News and World Report rankings, SUNY Poly was ranked #12 in the Best Regional Universities North Category, #2 in Top Public Schools, #4 in Best Colleges for Veterans, in the top 20 for Social Mobility and Top 50 for Best Value Colleges.

Newsweek Make: selects SUNY Poly as one of the “Best Maker Schools 2021.” Poly was identified among only 200 other colleges and universities throughout the world and the only SUNY school to be nominated, demonstrating “excellence or competency in the following areas – integrated learning-through-doing orientation, mentoring/guidance/coaching for making, physical makerspaces/fablabs/workshops/studies, accessible spaces and tools that support independent, collaborative projects, and a diverse, active community of makers.”

SUNY Poly recently welcomed Megan Valentine, as our new Athletic Director. Dr. Laursen thanked Kevin Grimmer, who recently retired, for his many years of commitment and service to our Athletics Department.

Dr. Laursen advised that we are actively seeking a SUNY matching grant to try and leverage additional dollars to assist with renovations across campus. These renovations will compliment the already anticipated renovations of The Francis A. Wilcox Engineering & Technology Wing.

The Poly Pantry has relocated to the first floor of Kunsela Hall within the Wildcat Den. As you are aware, food insecurities is an important initiative for Poly and with this move, we have been able to add refridgerated items to the pantry.

## **Faculty Representative Update**

Dr. Bradley Thiel joined today’s meeting, as the newly appointed Albany Campus Co-Chair of the Governance Council.

Dr. Weber advised that members of the faculty are happy to be back on campus, while we are not quite at return to normal, we are much closer than last year. She advised that faculty are in agreement with the student vaccine mandate, as required by SUNY.

A few priorities that Joint Governance is currently working on are a process to streamline their processes, a permanent pass/no-pass policy, and updating the process for external reviews for promotion and tenure. Also, our General Education Plan will be reviewed and updated per SUNY guidelines.

SUNY has decided to move away from Blackboard, which is our current platform used to deliver distant learning (remote) classes. We anticipate transitioning to a new platform next year.



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Dr. Thiel announced that graduate enrollment has increased at the Albany campus, which means increased research opportunities for our graduate students.

## **Convening of Executive Session**

At 6:16 p.m., Chair Destito requested a motion to convene an Executive Session under provisions of Section 105 of Article 7 of the Public Officers Law for purposes of a discussion related to matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person.

In addition to College Council members, she invited the following individuals to remain:

Zulaika Rodriguez from SUNY System Administration  
Michael Frame and Laurie Hartman from SUNY Polytechnic Institute

Chair Destito noted no further business would be discussed after Executive Session.

***A motion to convene Executive Session was made by Mr. Thickstun and seconded by Ms. Burns. All were in favor.***

## **Reconvening of Public Meeting**

***At 6:44 p.m., a motion was made by Mr. Thickstun to move out of executive session, and seconded by Ms. Burns. All were in favor.***

Chair Destito noted the actions taken in Executive Session were confidential and related to matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person.

## **Adjournment**

***Chair Destito requested a motion to adjoin. A motion was made by Mr. Thickstun and seconded by Mr. Greco. The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.***

Respectfully submitted,

*Laurie M. Hartman*

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