

COUNCIL MINUTES

December 19, 2014

Present from Council: Kathryn Grant Madigan, Esq., Linda Biemer, Patricia Cummings, Esq., Sarah Glose, Dennis McCabe, Esq., Albert Nocciolino, James Orband, Esq., and Matthew Salanger

Present from the Community: President Stenger, Vice President Broschart, Mr. Coker, Director Elliott, Ms. Fauci, Ms. Gahring, Ms. Hampton, Mr. Kane, Professor Lees, Professor Mischen, Vice President Navarro, Provost Nieman, Mr. Roma, Vice President Rose, Vice President Sammakia, and Mr. Yarosh

CALL TO ORDER:

The Binghamton University Council meeting was called to order at 9:22 a.m. on Friday, December 19, 2014 by Kathryn Grant Madigan, Esq., chair.

The minutes of the November 21, 2014 meeting were unanimously approved.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Students have left campus, or are getting ready to leave soon, for a well-deserved break. While most of the residence halls will close at 11 am tomorrow, three break halls will remain open, as well as the apartment communities, for out-of-state and international students. Students who remain on campus during the break will be invited to attend a "Home Away from Home" party on campus on January 6.

This past semester more than 2,500 students took advantage of the student-run Escape bus service. This service has taken students to various stops in New York City and, until recently, Nassau County on Long Island, and is substantially cheaper than the commercial bus service.

Freshmen applications for admissions are at a peak, up over 2,300 applications compared to this time last year. Over 10,000 students have applied for Early Action consideration, and over 4,000 students have been accepted for Early Action - this is the earliest (at least in recent history) that Early Action offers have been sent. The quality of the freshmen pool is extremely high.

The Southern Tier was, once again, a top winner in Governor Cuomo's Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) Awards ceremony, with the region receiving \$80.8 million in funding for a wide range of economic development projects. Binghamton University will benefit in a significant way as the Southern Tier REDC proposal included \$800,000 for the establishment of a Global Center on campus. This Center will ensure that New York remains a major force in the global economy. The University's role will be to establish a global nexus, bringing together most, if not all, of the University's international programs and offices into one central location. The Computer Center will also be renovated with spaces to provide for conferences, classrooms, and international resource space. The design and preparation work will begin in early 2015, with construction expected to begin by next fall.

Governor Cuomo and Chancellor Zimpher have announced a new SUNY-wide policy regarding sexual assault. The new policy clearly defines consent as "clear, knowing, and voluntary." Other provisions of the policy include amnesty for those reporting assaults with regard to other actions such as alcohol use that violate the student code of conduct. The policy also provides for increased training for campus police and administrators, increases confidentiality protocols, and requires campuses to develop a climate assessment regarding prevalence and attitudes towards sexual assaults. Binghamton University has many of these policies already in place, with the Interpersonal Violence Prevention Coordinator providing programs and events designed to increase information and awareness for students. University Police is providing more than 100 presentations each year focusing on campus safety, personal safety, and self-defense. The Binghamton University Council will review and vote on the policy for the new academic year in April.

President Stenger will be meeting with the Greater Binghamton Chamber of Commerce Government Affairs Committee later today to discuss the University's economic impact in the region. The expectations for the University's economic impact have increased. President Stenger will be highlighting many projects—the Center of Excellence, the new pharmacy school, the Southern Tier High Tech Incubator – and will be pointing out that the University's growth has already had over a \$1B regional impact.

Earlier this month, we recognized the legacy of our student athletes over the past 50 years at our annual Athletics Hall of Fame Ceremony. At the Ceremony, we recognized alums Zeynep Altinay '07, Joe Garbarino '58, Kevin McKeown '06, Helene Thomas '85, and the entire 1983-84 wrestling team and its coach, Steve Erber. The student-athletes deserve recognition for their commitment to their teams and for setting standards of personal achievement that our current athletes—and everyone on campus—can emulate. The work that they do, and the achievements of their teammates, provides excitement for the campus and the community and helps to raise the University's visibility and recognition.

We received 93 submissions for the 2016-17 Road Map proposals, targeting all of the University's five strategic priorities. Beginning in January, the Vice Presidents and division heads will prioritize a list of the proposals that will then be shared with the Faculty Senate Budget Review Committee. By next summer, the Road Map Steering Committee will narrow the selection for funded projects to those deemed to be of the highest priority, with the winning proposals to be announced by mid-July. The proposals will help Binghamton University achieve its goal of being the premier public.

Binghamton University has appointed a new University Ombudsman, Bathabile Mthombeni, who will begin her duties on January 15. This is a very important position for the University, as the Ombudsman provides independent, confidential, and impartial counseling and support for individuals on campus who have concerns or grievances. Mthombeni brings a great deal of experience to campus—having previously served as associate university ombudsman officer for Columbia University. She holds a bachelor's degree in sociology with concentration certificates in African Studies, African-American Studies, Women's Studies and Visual Arts. She earned her law degree from Columbia University School of Law. It will be great to welcome her to campus.

During this past month, we posthumously celebrated the academic and cultural impact of the life of one of the University's most respected faculty, Albert Schweitzer Professor in the Humanities and Director of the Institute of Global Cultural Studies, Dr. Ali Mazrui. Dr. Mazrui died in October, and this event was organized to give faculty and students an opportunity to describe the impact that his work has had in their lives. Dr. Mazrui will be greatly missed on campus.

STUDENT REPORT:

Ms. Glose reported that today marks the end of finals for students. Throughout the month of December, the Dean of Students Office and other University offices on campus organized Destress December offering the students free food, therapy dogs, crafts, and encouraging students to take time for them and to get plenty of sleep. Ms. Glose suggested that Destress December could be improved by offering more professional guidance to students through mental health counselors or by offering programs presented by the Counseling Center.

The Student Association (SA) has worked hard this past semester to strengthen relationships between the University administration, city officials, and various student organizations. Ms. Glose believes that the SA has in place groundwork which will lead to many improvements next semester.

Frost Fest, which was Nightmare Before Christmas themed, took place on campus on December 7. This event was scaled back due to the smaller number of students who participated in this event in the past. Despite the cut backs, Ms. Glose heard positive things about it.

This past weekend was graduation and Ms. Glose represented the Binghamton University Council, along with Dr. Biemer, as members of the Platform Party. Approximately 400 students graduated with their doctoral, masters, and bachelors degree. It was a very nice event.

The Graduate Student Organization (GSO) came forward in support of the student conduct revisions to use affirmative consent as the definition of consent in sexual assault protocol.

There has been a lot of interest in GSO events this year. The Welcome Event was an unprecedented success with over 500 students in attendance. The GSO also hosted three other graduate student social events, which have been well attended and have helped the graduate students to relax and connect.

Campus space has been an issue this year, but the graduate students are excited about the rooms that the administration has agreed to renovate for the GSO. This renovated space will include a lounge area for graduate students along with a larger meeting space and a separate workspace for the executive board. More importantly, the university will be providing the Bartle Library's graduate student study lounge with computers and printers.

The GSO has been working with the Fleishman Center for Career and Professional Development to provide additional workshops including a faculty panel on careers in academia, a workshop on CVs, and using LinkedIn for graduate students.

The GSO has also been working to increase the number and the amount of graduate stipends. The University is supportive of more funding for graduate students and has implemented Provost Fellowship awards for incoming students. The Provost Fellowship awards provide four years of summer stipend at \$4,000 per year. There are 54 new Provost Fellowship awards available each year. Next year, the University is also adding 19 TA positions.

In the spring, the GSO is looking forward to working on the dining services contract, working with the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment to implement a Graduate Climate Survey, pursuing more opportunities for graduate students for non-academic professional development, addressing international students' concerns, and collaborating with the Student Association and the Off Campus College Council on a range of issues and projects.

Some concerns of the students include the protests surrounding the recent decision in the Ferguson and the Eric Garner case. Students feel that the University and the police have been very accommodating of their desire to protest. The GSO issued an official statement that they denounce the decisions made, and called for students and administrators to take a stand against institutionalized racism in our country. The SA is committed to supporting students who wish to protest and applauds students who exercise their right to physical protest. The SA hopes that the "results from last year's Campus Climate Survey will help guide the University on a path toward even more dedication to social equity on campus."

The students are concerned about deer culling on campus. It became a graduate student project and an undergraduate student wrote an editorial about it. There are students on both sides of the issue, but students have, once again, made this a salient issue.

There have been undergraduate rumblings about an academic calendar issue in December 2016. Students are concerned about the lack of a reading period. Students would like the administration to work to communicate more with the students and they feel that their concerns are not being heard.

Ms. Glose will begin working on her communications project over the break. She has reached out to some contacts made by Vice President Navarro and Vice President Rose, and she will be attending meetings at the end of January and the beginning of February.

DIVISION OF OPERATIONS AND PHYSICAL FACILITIES ANNUAL REPORT:

See attached report from Vice President Navarro and Associate Vice President Roma.

There being no new business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:27 am.