

COUNCIL MINUTES

June 16, 2017

Present from Council: Linda Biemer, Anthony Fiala, Dennis McCabe, Kathryn Grant Madigan, James Orband, Matthew Salanger, and Ryan Sheppard

Present from the Community: President Stenger, Ms. Benner, Mr. Coker, Ms. Crane, Mr. Delviscio, Ms. Doyle, Mr. Elliott, Ms. Ellis, Ms. Fauci, Mr. Favela, Ms. Gahring, Mr. Gantt, Professor Guzman, Ms. Hornbeck, Mr. Kibel (via teleconference), Vice President Navarro, Provost Nieman, Mr. Parker, Mr. Yarosh, and Mr. Zacharek

CALL TO ORDER

The Binghamton University Council meeting was called to order at 9:19 a.m. on Friday, June 16, 2017 by chair Kathryn Grant Madigan.

The minutes of the April 21, 2017 meeting were unanimously approved.

Chair Madigan welcomed Mr. Gary Kibel, the new Alumni Association President, who joined the meeting by teleconference.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

President Stenger reported that Commencement was remarkable. The campus held eight graduation ceremonies within forty-eight hours and next year, we will add a ninth graduation ceremony. Unfortunately, next year's Commencement was scheduled on an important Jewish holiday, so we have scheduled a ceremony for those who are observant to attend on Friday morning.

One of the highlights of Commencement is the awarding of our Honorary Degrees. We go through a long process of choosing them, appointing them, and the SUNY Board of Trustees approving them. When the Honorary Degree recipients come, they are the shining light and the examples that we want to put in front of our students. This year we awarded four honorary degrees. Honorary Doctor of Letters degrees were awarded to award-winning author Nathan

Englander '91; sportswriter, author and broadcaster Tony Kornheiser '70; and retired AOL senior vice president Geraldine MacDonald '68, MS'73. An Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree was awarded to Easter Island archaeologist, Sergio Rapu Haoa.

We also welcomed Senator Charles "Chuck" Schumer to Commencement. He spoke at two Harpur ceremonies, and there were eleven student speakers who reflected on their time at Binghamton University.

Shortly after Commencement, the beginning of June, we had our annual BU Forum Black Tie Gala. Comedian, inspirational speaker and guitarist, Mike Rayburn, provided the entertainment and we even enjoyed a guest appearance by Bob Dylan. It was a great event and was well-received by all who attended.

The summer construction projects are in full swing and the campus is looking great! One of the highlights of this summer's construction is the installation of new salamander ramps on the Connector Road in the Nature Preserve. The new salamander ramps will allow the Connector Road to be plowed and will mean that the Road can remain open during the winter for the first time in over twenty years.

The Admissions Office received a record number of applications with over 33,000 applications for our 2017 freshman class of 2,650. We made offers and received the right number of freshman acceptances, but the mix of in-state and out-of-state students were a little off. We were looking for broader geographic diversity, but because of the Excelsior Scholarship Programs for New York State students, we saw a slightly higher yield on in-state students.

Graduate student enrollment has been doing well and was up about 30% over the last five years. This year, we didn't do as well because a lot of our graduate students are international students, specifically from India and China. We believe that this was not only due to the economy, the exchange rates, or the uncertainty of coming to the US as an international student, but because of the strong job market in India which makes a student want to stay in the country after they receive their undergraduate degree. There are a lot of factors which we think reduced our international graduate student applications by about 100 to 150 out of 2,000. In response, we have developed a program, the Preferred Destination Project, looking at how we can make Binghamton University a preferred destination for international students. Two PhD students, working with Professor Muhammed Khasawneh in the Watson Institute for Systems Excellence, worked on this as part of their thesis. They have come up with about 35 strong and positive recommendations from building a better brand presence in India, China and Korea, to improving how we admit the students, how quickly we respond to their applications, and how we get them on campus. This year we will schedule a bus to go to JFK to pick up international students every day for a couple of weeks. Also, we will be providing on-campus housing for them when they first arrive and while they look for off-campus housing and a part-time job. There is a lot that we can change to improve the enrollment of our international students.

We have two new deans who will be starting this summer. Dr. Elizabeth S. Chilton will be joining us in mid-July to serve as the new Dean of Harpur College. She was a professor of Anthropology at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst with a focus on Native American culture, and she also served as the Associate Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement, the Director of the Center for Heritage & Society, and as Department Chair and Associate Dean for Research in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. She will be an excellent addition to Binghamton University and to the community.

Dr. Aondover A. Tarhule will join us in August as the new Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School, and he also will serve as a Professor in the Geography Department. Dr. Tarhule comes to us from the University of Oklahoma where he served as Professor of Geography and Executive Associate Dean in the College of Atmospheric & Geographic Sciences. He has a great research background, but also understands the need for providing students with strong Master's programs in areas of career development and career direction. We are excited about the strengths which Dr. Tarhule will bring to his position at Binghamton University.

We thank Dr. Terry Deak for serving as the Interim Dean of Harpur College for the past year and also Dr. Susan Strehle who served as the Interim Dean of the Graduate School.

The SUNY budget looks good from our perspective. We expect that the New York Excelsior Scholarship Program will have a net positive impact on the University as it will open access to a group of students whose parents' adjusted gross income was between \$60,000 and \$100,000, where if you have one or two students in college, the FAFSA form says you don't need any money. That isn't necessarily true, especially when you are looking at the cost of living expenses in the areas where our students come from, i.e. Long Island and New York City areas. Having this scholarship available for those students, meaning full \$6,600 tuition (which does not cover room and board and fees) but to a student who was getting nothing before is a big deal and we think it will be a big deal for them when they choose what school they want to go to in the future. We saw an uptick this year, and we believe we may see more next year because of this program.

From the budget standpoint, the union negotiations are ongoing so we don't know what the expected salary increases will be or what sources of funding that we will have to cover those increases, but we will manage through that. The good news was capital, as we received approximately \$16M for a new research and development building which will be located next to the Pharmacy School in Johnson City, and an increase in our critical maintenance funds which will allow us to do a lot of renovation projects to make existing buildings more functional and efficient.

The School of Pharmacy building in Johnson City is on schedule and on budget and is expected to open next summer. This fall, the first class of 90 pharmacy students will begin; they are expected to come to their white coat ceremony in August. After four years, we expect to have 360 pharmacy students in Johnson City and at that time our School of Nursing will be located in

Johnson City. With other new programs that we expect to add within the next couple of years, this should relate to approximately 1,000 students spending the majority of their time in Johnson City.

We have been growing our faculty with the Pharmacy School being one of the major growth areas. The numbers are significant with our tenure track faculty currently at about 641 (we were about 470 five years ago), showing an almost 30% increase in tenure track faculty over this time. With the uncertainty of the budget, we will probably have a less aggressive hiring plan this year, but not a zero hiring plan.

Last week we opened and dedicated the Koffman Southern Tier Incubator in downtown Binghamton. There are currently eleven companies in the facility or in contract to be in the facility, which is almost a full house in a very short period of time. We are now working with the local community to find ways to support the entrepreneurs, specifically in terms of business and/or legal advice, and in terms of seed funding to run their businesses.

We had our Road Map renewal process this past semester which resulted in thirty-eight proposals. Yesterday, the Road Map Steering Committee met and narrowed the proposals down to a smaller subset. We are now working on a process of describing the projects in a way that the community can embrace. We will report on the Road Map renewal in the fall.

STUDENT REPORT

Mr. Sheppard reported that many have heard about the blue light controversy surrounding the proposal for blue lights on the west side of Binghamton and the small group of students who subsequently occupied the Couper Administration Building for two weeks.

Mr. Sheppard explained that there was a proposal to increase off-campus student safety by installing a system of blue lights on the west side of Binghamton, where a majority of Binghamton University students live. In theory, this sounded like a great project. However, there was a small group of students, associated with the Francis Beal Society, that argued the opposite citing the risk of targeting lower income community residents by utilizing a system of surveillance cameras mounted on top of the blue lights. The student protestors expressed fear that the Binghamton Police Department would exploit the cameras against minority groups and they believed that it wasn't a good use of the funds. The problem with this assessment was that there was very little community input with the protestors as, in fact, a large part of the community and the students were in support of this project including almost all of the Student Congress representatives. As of now, the project has been taken off the table pending the establishment of a new Town Gown Advisory Board. This Board will be made up of people from the campus community and from the Binghamton community who will decide the most appropriate way to spend the funds to help support and provide off-campus student safety.

The protest was disorganized and it was unclear what their demands really were. The protestors believed that the funds should be utilized to support mental health resources, and while that is

certainly important and valuable, the funds for off-campus safety were not earmarked for mental health resources. The protests were over the top as far as how they carried out the protest, such as occupying the Couper Administration Building before having a dialog between the President and any members of the Administration. Hopefully, if the protestors feel strongly about it, they will apply to be on the Town Gown Advisory Board, or become involved in Student Government to be part of the team to talk about the issues and utilize the proper methods to discuss them.

Spring Fling was held the beginning of May, but the stormy weather put a damper on it as it started to pour halfway through the event. Because of the rain, the Student Association relocated the evening concert to the West Gym which caused overcrowding. Between the overcrowding and the scaled down size of the Spring Fling festivities, it wasn't the best year. Some improvements are needed for next year; primarily the Student Association should secure the Events Center for the concert in the event of inclement weather.

Something that we usually don't get to talk about at a BU Council meeting is Commencement, since the last Council meeting is held prior to Commencement. Mr. Sheppard was impressed with how well all eight ceremonies went. It was a great privilege to join the platform party on the stage. Commencement keeps getting better and better every year! All of the speakers were excellent; the jumbo Tron was a huge help.

Mr. Sheppard updated Council on some of the initiatives that he agreed to address while campaigning.

- Quality in teaching surveys - The first step in the process was to lay the foundation for a comprehensive SOOT Survey program. After working with the professionals from ITS (Mike Allington and Tim Cortesi) and the professionals from Institutional Research and Assessment, a new online SOOT survey platform was integrated into the myBinghamton system and was used for the first time this past semester. It was much easier to use than the previous SOOT survey on BlackBoard. The goal is to use this online system uniformly across all schools within the University. Mr. Sheppard suggested that the platform should be better advertised moving forward. The last step is to have legislation on the matter passed through the Faculty Senate and the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. Mr. Sheppard will pass this on to the new representative to the Binghamton University Council for 2017-2018 to continue this work.
- Transportation Center – Mr. Sheppard suggested that the University should start planning for this project. We have many new blue buses, expanded BC Transit bus service on campus, and new bus lines will soon be added to service the new Health Sciences Complex in Johnson City. The University needs to create a larger and more central transportation hub to house them.
- Improve collaboration between the SA and the GSO – This went well throughout the majority of the year. However, there is still one remaining disagreement between the two government bodies, and that is funding for OCCT. The GSO has drastically cut funding for OCCT by about \$10,000. Mr. Sheppard implored the GSO to restore their funding to OCCT immediately since this makes things tough for the SA because undergraduate students have

to shoulder more of the financial burden while graduate students make up about 20% of the ridership. Next year, Mr. Sheppard hopes that the SA and GSO will be able to agree to a fairer OCCT funding contract.

Adam Wilkes will be the new student representative to the Binghamton University Council for 2017-2018. Adam will be a senior in the fall, he is a Sociology major, and he has served the Student Association as the former VP for Academic Affairs, and as a member of the Financial Committee and CIW's Community Council.

Mr. Sheppard said, "It has been an absolute privilege to work within a variety of capacities at the University. My time here has been extraordinarily memorable and I am really going to miss this place. Thank you all very much!"

Chair Kathryn Madigan thanked Mr. Sheppard for his excellent service to Binghamton University Council over the past academic year and she presented the student resolution to him.

PARKING POLICY CHANGE

Mr. Brian Favela, Executive Director of Transportation & Parking Services, presented the revised parking regulations. A motion was made and unanimously approved to accept the proposed changes.

REPORT ON ADVANCEMENT

Ms. Rebecca Benner, Associate Vice President for Advancement, and Mr. John Zacharek, Executive Director of Development, co-presented a report on the Division of Advancement.

REPORT ON BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION

Ms. Sheila Doyle, Executive Director of the Binghamton University Foundation, presented a report on the Binghamton University Foundation.

There being no new business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:42 am.