COUNCIL MINUTES
October 19, 2018

Present from Council: Linda Biemer, Anthony Fiala, Kathryn Grant Madigan, Jennifer Lesko, Dennis McCabe, James Orband, Matthew Salanger (by phone), Maureen Wilson, and Harry Bittker

Present from the Community: President Stenger, Dr. Bodur, Ms. Coker, Mr. Delviscio, Ms. Doyle, Dr. Edouard, Mr. Elliott, Ms. Fauci, Chief Faughnan, Ms. Huth, Ms. Ignarri, Ms. Legette, Prof. Lipo, Mr. Mastana, Vice President Navarro, Ms. O’Neil, Ms. Puma, Vice President Rose, Vice President Sammakia, Dr. Smith, Mr. Toussaint, and Mr. Yarosh

CALL TO ORDER

The Binghamton University Council meeting was called to order at 9:18 a.m. on Friday, October 19, 2018 by chair Kathryn Grant Madigan.

The minutes of September 21, 2018 were approved.

PRESIDENT’S REMARKS

1,400 alumni registered for Homecoming Weekend where 100 different events were held. A Tiers Talk session featured three alumni, Amy Hyatt ’78, Tasfia Nayem ’14, and Seth Schultz ’01 who spoke on issues relating to climate change. Both the EOP and the Black Student Union celebrated their 50th anniversary during the weekend. A men’s tennis reunion was held that brought together some 35 former players along with the naming of the tennis courts.

During Homecoming, President Stenger delivered his State of the University address to the Foundation and Alumni boards along with parents. He highlighted the university’s expansion over the past few years along with the financial challenges.

Family Weekend saw more than 5,300 of our students’ parents, brothers, sisters, and grandparents arrive on campus. A Saturday morning talk featured New York Times best-selling author Jessica Lahey who spoke about her book, The Gift of Failure: How the Best Parents Learn to Let Go So Their Children Can Succeed. A Bearcat pep rally and men’s soccer match saw a record 3,200 fans in the Bearcat Sports Complex to watch the team defeat the University
of New Hampshire. A comedy show featured the Second City Improv Troupe from Chicago that sold out the Osterhout Concert Theatre.

The Town-Gown Advisory Board submitted their final recommendations on proposals to foster better relations between the campus and the community. Five proposals will move forward with funding – Promoting and Cultivating Positive Community Engagement; establishing a community-owned, full-service grocery on Binghamton’s north side; seven BU interns to be trained by Binghamton City Code Enforcement on housing; Bike Share program expansion; and a north side transportation needs assessment.

This is the time of year when students begin considering housing arrangements for next fall. Students have expressed concern that October is too early to make a commitment, so Residential Life has extended the deadline to February 2019. There is now a two-step process where students sign housing licenses in October, and now are able to put off finalizing their room assignments until next semester. So far, the response to this change has been generally positive.

**STUDENT REPORT**

Mr. Bittker reported that last Friday was the deadline to register to vote before the 2018 elections, bringing to a close another remarkable effort by the Center for Civic Engagement. Boosted by the enthusiastic and tireless support of NYPIRG, Generation Vote, the Student Association, and countless other groups on campus, CCE collected over 2,500 registration forms from students either registering for the first time or re-registering at their off-campus addresses. For the next few weeks, CCE and student organizations are now focused on ensuring students show up to the polls with everything they need to make an informed decision.

A few weeks ago, Mr. Bittker met with Kimberly Peabody from Health Promotion & Prevention Services to learn more about what her office does and where students can fit into the picture. It was found that student leaders are still going to UCC and Decker to discuss health promotion efforts. This past Monday, Ms. Peabody was invited to speak to the Student Association Congress about what the HPPS office is working on. The general consensus seemed to be that her presentation was very helpful, and it is the hope that it will lead to more collaboration between HPPS and student groups. GSO leaders have also expressed interest in bringing her to their Senate to talk about how her office can address the needs of graduate students.

Mr. Bittker represented Binghamton at the ACT Conference, where he was one of three student representatives in attendance along with counterparts from Buffalo and Cortland. Mr. Bittker sat on a panel where he served as the student perspective on emergency funding and support services for students. He thanked Darcy Fauci and Beth Riley for helping him get all the information he needed on this topic. He highlighted Binghamton’s one-stop case management model through the CARE Team, giving students one point of contact that can lead them to any and all resources they might need.
Mr. Bittker also reached out to ACT President, Vita DeMarchi, about how to improve training, resources, and onboarding for student representatives across the SUNY System. Student representatives generally don’t receive much training from their predecessors and ACT doesn’t provide anything specifically geared toward student members of college councils. Mr. Bittker will put together information for his successor and serve as a workable model for onboarding student reps at other SUNY campuses.

To improve transitions and institutional memory, Mr. Bittker established an email account specifically for his role as BU Council student representative. This is intended to make sure emails and files are kept in one place so future student reps have them to refer back to. The address is bucrep@binghamton.edu, and he thanked Laura O’Neil for her help establishing the email account.

As Mr. Bittker mentioned at the last meeting, one of his goals for this year is to allow students who use a name other than their legal name to enter their preferred name into the University’s databases, a change that would primarily be meaningful to our transgender and international students. After conversations with President Stenger and CIO Niyazi Bodur, he will be working with DEI and ITS on formulating a policy. Mr. Bittker is in the process of connecting with leaders from the Rainbow Pride Union, SHADES, and International Connections to hear their thoughts on what a good policy looks like for them.

This past week, the Student Association partnered with the 20:1 program and Health Promotion and Prevention Services for Sexual Assault Awareness Week where participants raised awareness about interpersonal violence through tabling in the Union, holding a candlelight vigil, and the Clothesline Project, which hung shirts of different colors in the Peace Quad to honor survivors and victims of different types of interpersonal violence.

We are just one by-laws revision away from having a Vice President for Multicultural Affairs in each living community, with Off Campus College Council proposing the change at their most recent meeting. Mr. Bittker is particularly interested in seeing how that role develops once it’s instituted, and how that VPMA will operate in the context of the organization’s greater mission of fostering engagement with the local community.

One of the things impacted by the budget cuts that the GSO is concerned about is the general conference travel fund for the Graduate School. They are currently working to figure out how to make up that gap in funding, as well as ensuring that graduate students who wish to attend conferences know of the other funding options available to them.

Lastly, the student body is eagerly waiting for the SA Programming Board to announce who the Fall Concert performer will be. That announcement will hopefully come sometime soon.

**REPORT ON RESEARCH AND REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

President Harvey Stenger and Vice President Bahgat Sammakia reported.
NEW BUSINESS

At the Council’s April 20 meeting, a resolution was approved regarding the Council’s annual report. Chair Madigan recently participated in a call with Chairman Carl McCall and found that very few Councils have been submitting their reports. The education law calls for filing by September 1, but it is recognized that our academic year does not end until after Commencement and most Councils do not meet in the summer. Instead of changing the education law, an approved resolution provides that we would submit report as soon as practical after September 1.

Chair Madigan read the proposed resolution as follows:

*IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the Binghamton University Council Chair shall, on or before September 1 of each year, or as soon thereafter as may be practicable, submit to the Council, a draft report to the SUNY Board of Trustees regarding the activities of the Binghamton University Council during the prior academic year, including but not limited to the number of meetings held, the agendas and minutes from all meetings, and all Resolutions adopted by the Council; and*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the members of the Binghamton University Council shall, on or after September 1 of each year, or as soon after September 1 as may be practicable, review and approve the Annual Council Report for submission to the SUNY Board of Trustees.*

A motion was made and seconded to approve. After no discussion, it was passed unanimously.

There being no other new business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:21 a.m.