

COUNCIL MINUTES

November 19, 2021

- Present from Council: Chair Kathryn Grant Madigan, Linda Biemer, Jennifer Lesko, Dennis McCabe, Caroline Sandleitner (via Zoom), and Maureen Wilson
- Present from the Community: President Stenger, Mr. Alpaugh, Ms. Bello, Dr. Bodur, Mr. Brhel (via Zoom), Vice President Delviscio, Dr. Edouard, Ms. Ellis, Dr. Fatima, Ms. Fauci, Ms. Gahring (via Zoom), Professor Govindaraju, Mr. Hatami (via Zoom), Mr. Hayden, Mr. Huth (via Zoom), Vice President Jones, Interim Director Kalina, Mr. Khan, Vice President Koch, Ms. Legette (via Zoom), Vice Provost Loewen, Ms. Macargel (via Zoom), Interim Dean Mahler, Ms. Medionte-Phillips (via Zoom), Ms. Mignone, Vice President Navarro, Provost Nieman, Vice Provost Pitarresi, Vice President Rose, Mr. Yarosh, and Ms. Zwierlein (via Zoom)

CALL TO ORDER

The Binghamton University Council meeting was called to order at 9:19 a.m. on Friday, November 19, 2021 by Chair Madigan.

The minutes of the October 15, 2021 Binghamton University Council meeting were approved.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

President Stenger reported that this is the final Council meeting of the fall 2021 semester. Students are looking forward to the Thanksgiving break next week. The student run bus service, Escape, has scheduled 10 different buses to transport students down and back to the New York City and the Long Island region for Thanksgiving. The buses are sold out with around 550 students taking advantage of the discounted fares. Residence halls will reopen on Sunday, November 28th and classes will resume on Monday. After Thanksgiving break, there are just two more weeks of classes with finals scheduled for December 13-17. It has been a very smooth semester and we think it will continue that way.

This past month, we had the first visit of Governor Kathy Hochul to our Health Sciences Campus in Johnson City. She visited the campus and community many times as Lt. Governor, but this was her first visit as Governor. She was here to help celebrate the opening of our new home for the Decker College of Nursing, and while she was here she received her vaccine booster by a local nurse. During her visit, we talked about the lack of nurses, and recently Governor Hochul

announced a scholarship program for nurses which will help to grow the number of nurses in the state.

Vaccination on campus has been very effective with more than 99% of our students, and approximately 85% of faculty and staff, fully vaccinated. As a result, our infection rates are exceptionally low. We have three students that are currently in isolation housing, with 175 isolation beds available. Two of the three will likely still be in isolation housing over Thanksgiving break. We will be staffed to provide meals for the isolated students over the break.

During the Governor's visit, I thanked her for the role that she played as head of the state's Regional Economic Development Council, and for more than \$133 million in state funding that we received for the Health Sciences Campus in Johnson City. Those funds have been a catalyst for additional, private support for these projects. We are adding new programs in physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech and language pathology, and expect an additional 350 students when the programs are fully enrolled. We are hiring new faculty and staff in anticipation of the new students and have already hired 25 new faculty and staff. We expect around 450 total new faculty, staff, and students, bringing the total number of people associated with the Johnson City campus to around 2,500. This is a great thing for Johnson City.

We are creating information about what we are doing in Johnson City. Last week, I gave a presentation with Distinguished Professor John Frazier on the University's activities in Johnson City. The goal was to show them our idea to create a greenway between Corliss Avenue and Main Street, where students would find it safe, attractive, and well-lit to walk one block from the Nursing and Pharmacy Schools to Main Street. This will bring additional foot traffic and business activities to Main Street, and eventually will bring more tax revenue to Johnson City.

At the end of October, the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies held their 46th annual conference. This year's conference was held in hybrid form, with about 20 scholars joining on campus, and with several other scholars from around the world participating online. The focus was about how communities created cultural understanding and conceptions of heritage in the medieval world.

The School of Management hosted its 28th annual Briloff Lecture on Accountability and Society at the end of October. Alumnus and current CEO of Unysis Corporation, Peter Altabef, was the speaker. Peter's remarks focused on the ethics of biometrics and how technologies create conflicts between competing demands of privacy and security.

Congratulations to Professor S.B. Park, of Watson's Department of Mechanical Engineering, who was named a Fellow of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers in recognition of three decades of work in electronics packaging. Being named a Fellow is an honor reserved for the top 3% of members of the Association and reflects on the quality of work conducted by Professor Park.

We also learned this month that Chemistry Professor Eriks Rozners received a two-year \$428,330 grant from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases to look at how to

stop COVID viruses from multiplying, and prevent the reproduction of the RNA, which will hopefully lead to some amazing discoveries.

Congratulations to Jonathan S. Jones, doctoral student in our History Department, who was named the inaugural winner of the SUNY Chancellor's Distinguished PhD Graduate Dissertation Award. This means that Jonathan had the best PhD dissertation in all of SUNY this past year. His dissertation titled, "Opium Slavery: Veterans and Addiction in the American Civil War Era," looks at America's first opiate crisis taking place among Civil War veterans.

Exciting things are happening at Binghamton University and we look forward to a smooth ending to the semester.

STUDENT REPORT

Ms. Sandleitner congratulated the University on receiving three Outstanding Student Affairs Program Awards. These awards reflect the University's dedication to students' well-being, like in establishing the VARCC. The awards also highlight the success of our professional development initiatives, which makes the transition from school to the workforce that much easier on the student population. On behalf of my peers, thank you to all of the individuals who contributed to the success of these University initiatives.

It's been a great month for the student body, with our student leaders continuing their hard work on behalf of our graduate and undergraduate students.

On the Student Association side, the Planning Board hosted a number of events for students to come together and enjoy some comedy. A few weeks ago, Lucas Bianculli, the Vice President of Programming, hosted SNL comedians who performed in front of a crowded auditorium. Students really enjoyed the programming, and were also excited to learn that "Kevin" from the Office would be coming for a Q&A this past week. It's great to see students engaged in constructive and unique activities like those hosted more recently.

The Student Association Congress has been active, passing legislation in support of greater communication between students in residential living communities. Last week they also showed support for the collective bargaining of educational resources to reduce the individual technology costs that students have to pay in classes. The student government is moving more towards proactive measures to enhance the quality of living and education for students, and hopes for greater collaboration with the administration on these large-scale initiatives.

On the Graduate Student side, PhD students are glad to hear that the administration plans to cover their student fees, which would increase their annual income by 10%. Our PhD students would like to this implemented as soon as the Spring semester, and be expanded to include as many student Graduate and Teaching Assistants as possible. There are concerns among the graduate student body about who will be included in the proposed scholarships to cover graduate student's fees, and so these parties hope for increased communication about plans to administer the scholarships. The initiative to allocate more funding to PhD students is recognized and appreciated, and students understand that covering nearly 800 PhD students' fees each semester

would mean Binghamton is competitive with salaries offered through SUNY Buffalo and SUNY Stony Brook.

In the past week or so, students have been increasingly concerned about the impact of COVID on Broome County, with the New York Times COVID tracking map indicating Broome County as an area of higher risk. Although there was a dip in the number of students utilizing the asymptomatic testing options offered through the University last month, I think there will be an increase in the number of patients tested in Old Union Hall, especially as UHS lines become longer with Decker Health Services being focused on addressing COVID cases specifically. With the prevalence of COVID, especially in Broome County, it's important that we continue to offer students ways to address their health concerns and that faculty work with affected students to equitably accommodate quarantine or isolation requirements.

Overall, students are happy and preparing for finals as thanksgiving break quickly approaches, and everyone is thankful for the time off this semester.

REPORT ON STUDENT ADMISSIONS

Dr. Donald J. Loewen, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and Enrollment Management, and Ms. Krista Medionte-Phillips, Director of Undergraduate Admissions, presented their report.

REPORT ON ATHLETICS

Mr. Dennis Kalina, Interim Athletic Director, presented the report.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:13 a.m.

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