

## SUNY CANTON COLLEGE COUNCIL

### 293<sup>rd</sup> MEETING

OCTOBER 4, 2022

<b>Present:</b>	Ronald O’Neill, Chair Joseph Rich	Grace Burke Jennifer Stevenson	Toni Kennedy Abigale Fink
<b>Absent:</b>	Brian Plonka	Marie Regan	
<b>Others:</b>	Courtney Bish Shawn Miller Lenore VanderZee	Matthew Burnett Travis Smith Michaela Young	Peggy De Cooke Tracey Thompson Timothy Ashley (guest)

#### ***Call to Order***

The meeting was called to order at 8:46 a.m.

#### ***Minutes of the June 7, 2022, Meeting***

It was announced that everyone received a copy of the minutes by email.

Ms. Stevenson made a motion to accept the Minutes of the June 7, 2022, Meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Kennedy, with no additions or corrections; the Minutes were approved.

#### ***New Business***

##### ***Advisory Board Reappointments***

It was announced that everyone received a copy of the reappointments by email.

Mr. Rich made a motion to accept the Advisory Board Reappointments. The motion was seconded by Dr. Burke and was approved.

##### ***Academic Integrity Procedures – Addendum***

It was announced that everyone received a copy of the addendum to the procedures by email.

Ms. Stevenson made a motion to accept the Academic Integrity Procedures – Addendum. The motion was seconded by Ms. Kennedy.

When asked, there were no questions from the Council Members.

The Academic Integrity Procedures – Addendum was approved.

***2021-22 President’s Annual Report***

It was announced that everyone received a copy of the report by email.

Ms. Fink made a motion to adopt the Annual Report as the College Council's Annual Report. The motion was seconded by Mr. Rich.

The Council Members were asked if there were any questions. Lenore VanderZee extended her appreciation for the work that Travis Smith and his staff did to create the annual report. Travis thanked her and added that print copies will be coming soon. Other Council Members echoed Lenore's comments, and Chairman O'Neill added that he saw a wonderful piece on Channel 7 regarding the Dog Floor.

The 2021-22 President's Annual Report was adopted as the College Council's Annual Report.

### ***Campus Firearm Policy and Registrations***

Chairman O'Neill introduced Tim Ashley, as Chief of University Police, replacing Al Mulkin. He also noted that Chief Ashley previously worked at SUNY Canton and now rejoins the campus.

Chairman O'Neill reminded the group that at the last meeting it was announced that there would be a discussion about the campus firearm policy; with all of the mass shootings, this was felt to be an important topic.

Chief Ashley shared that there is a departmental policy, which is based on a SUNY policy that covers all campuses in the System and gives the authority to the President of each campus as to whether firearms are allowed on the campus or not. It was noted that we do allow students to store their firearms at UP. It was also noted that the policy can be changed, and some campuses have done away with this policy. There does however need to be a storage policy for firearms in place – i.e., for approved sporting clubs/organizations or programs that need to compete and practice.

Chief Ashley reported that currently there are only a couple of students registering and storing firearms for hunting purposes.

The group had a discussion, with the following points being offered:

- The current policy that allows on-campus storage of firearms at UP was developed as a safer option than having them left somewhere in the community or in a vehicle, which allows any number of people to access them.
- SLU partners with the Canton Sportsman Club to allow students to store firearms at the Club – students pay a membership fee of \$40/year, and SLU has a number of firearm safes on the premises for student use. It is unclear if there is a sign-in and sign-out process.
- SUNY Canton's current process is as follows – individual must have the firearm secured with a gun-safe lock and signs it in and out from UP, with transport being directly on and off campus.
- Years ago, there were 40-50 firearms stored each semester, but that number has drastically dropped to 1-2 per semester.
- Background checks are not done on students registering/storing a firearm; if it is for a rifle or shotgun, they are usually asked to show their hunting license.

- What we are doing now was felt to be a safer option than setting a safe somewhere else, which may make us liable and gives us less control.
- Felt it was worthy to get and consider the student's perspective – i.e., individuals who come from a culture of sportsman activities may be looking to continue with those activities in the area's natural resources.
- Reiteration of the reason for the initial policy was offered – safer, legal option rather than just keeping the firearm in a vehicle, and there is less direct access.
- ***An inquiry was made as to what Paul Smith's policy is. Matt Burnett offered to look into it and report back.***
- Thought that the minimal number of registrations/storages might be related to students not being aware of the policy; felt that the policy might need to be publicized more.
- The current process for signing out a firearm includes – first time: individual must fill out a form with all of their personal and firearm information. Then, there is a card that gets attached to the firearm, and the individual is required to sign and date the card – shows when they are taking it out and when they are bringing it back.
- It was asked and answered that there are instances associated with safety concerns, such as an individual being intoxicated or agitated, when UP may deny a request to sign out a firearm.
- Felt that this policy needs to be carefully consider before changes are made, and the following suggestions were offered: it is important to have a safe place and process on campus for individuals engaging in sportsman activities, a number of polices should be reviewed to be sure this is being done in the safest way possible, and student input and best practices should be gathered.
- An additional discussion topic to consider – requiring a definitive return day/time.
- It was asked and answered that there are not assurances in place that signed-out weapons immediately leave campus; it was further noted that the policy clearly implies that is the requirement though. A violation of this can be addressed in a number of ways – make them leave campus, revoke their privileges, issue a weapon's charge under the Code of Conduct (the later usually leads to suspension).
- Creating a policy that is balanced would be best as we do not want individuals who are willing to self-register and store their firearms to stop because we have made it too difficult.
- Felt that we do need a policy in place for liability purposes. It was noted that we currently follow SUNY's policy with approval from the President to allow individuals to store firearms at UP.
- It was asked and answered that the President's approval is broad (with their signature on each form), allowing UP to administer and enforce the policy.
- It was asked and answered that UP traffic stops resulting in a firearm in the vehicle are generally handled in a reasonable manner – educate them on the policy and process, ask them to leave campus, or register and secure firearm at UP until they can leave campus. There are occasions where arrests need to be made. The majority of those cases get referred to Student Conduct, and go through that system, which is often stricter than the normal process.

***It was clarified that this discussion was informational in nature and any review and revisions would be done in President's Cabinet and brought back to the Council.***

Matt Burnett stated that he requested Paul Smith's information.

It was asked and answered that SUNY Potsdam used to allow firearms to be stored on campus, but they revoked that policy about three years ago. ***Chief Ashley was asked to look into what Plattsburgh and Oswego do.***

It was asked and answered that there is a plan in place for an active shooter situation – UP staff are trained, and there is also an Emergency Response Resource Group with an emergency response plan. Discussions regarding holding active shooter scenarios and shelter in place trainings are happening, as well as development of emergency guides for everyone on campus. UP staff routinely train and qualify for active shooter situations. It was clarified that Chief Ashley has solidified contacts with other agencies that can help in emergency situations.

Chairman O'Neill thanked Chief Ashley for attending the meeting, and he offered the Council's assistance if it is needed.

### ***Old Business***

There was no Old Business to report.

### ***Chairman's Report***

There was no Chairman's Report.

### ***President's Report***

Dr. Peggy De Cooke provided the President's Report in Dr. Szafran's absence.

The Fall term has begun and things are going relatively well.

- Our new student enrollment for Fall improved nicely, and overall, we have around 2,900 students. This is actually up slightly from last year, which is a good result since we have still got two years of low enrollment from the Pandemic as part of our overall numbers. It was felt that the increase is due in part to how well we did with transfer students. Something that is still a problem is that the number of students in housing is relatively flat from last year and considerably down from pre-pandemic numbers. More students are studying online and more are living off-campus or at home, which cuts our revenue from housing.
- Reiterating what the President mentioned this last spring – the enrollment situation is challenging across the SUNY system due to declining numbers of high school graduates in New York (especially Upstate) until at least 2025. He is currently the co-chair of SUNY's Enrollment and Access committee responding to Governor Hochul's "Revitalize SUNY and Secure its place as a Global Leader in Higher Education by 2030" agenda. The goal is to increase enrollment to over 500,000 (a 1/3 increase), which would be a big lift. There was no increase in enrollments or fees, but we did get some good news. The new budget closes the TAP Gap, which will save us almost a million dollars. We also got \$113K to support new enrollment initiatives, \$125K to support under-represented minority students, and \$500K for new faculty.

- The budget is still a challenge, though we are doing better than many other SUNY campuses, and it looks like we will close out 2021-2022 with a \$1.8M deficit, which is about where we thought we would land. Shawn Miller was asked to provide a fiscal and facilities update.

Ms. Miller reported that there was a loss of \$1.8M inclusive of COVID money, and she does not expect that there will be federal money to help this year. She noted that things will be tight, as contracts are still being negotiated and at high rates. CSEA has settled their contract, but UUP is still under negotiation.

She went on to report that there are a lot of projects going on across campus, as we are fortunate for the funding we have received; a listing of what she shared is below:

- Upgrade to French Hall (Phase 2 – outside area between French and plaza) – \$2.4M
- Reconstruct Cooper Service parking lot – \$800K
- Replace HVAC in French Hall – \$8.5M
- Improve Accessibility in Nevaldine North and South – \$1M
- Renovate Center in Dana Hall – \$400K
- Replace roofs on Chaney and MacArthur Hall and new front on Chaney – \$2.7M
- Clean Energy Plan – \$200K
- Renovate Payson Hall (currently in planning phases and being used as swing space until French Hall is done) – estimated at \$23M
- Replace storefronts at Rendezvous – \$250K
- Critical maintenance – \$750K
- Reconstruct walkways from dorms to Campus Center (vision is to have covered walkways)
- Reconstruction of Parking Lot 4 – \$5M
- Reconstruction of Chaney Dining Hall parking lot – \$1M

Overall project total was reported to be about \$53M for projects that are either in construction, in design, or in the planning phase.

It was asked and answered that the French Hall renovations may take up to 18 months if there are no supply chain issues.

Chairman O'Neill inquired about nursing issues he has heard about and asked if there is a real problem. Dr. De Cooke stated that there is and noted that she felt that any college with a nursing program is probably facing these issues. She shared what happened over the summer to SUNY Canton's program – four nursing faculty resigned. Three new faculty were hired, and due to our Claxton relationship, we have been able to utilize their newly-hired Director of Clinical Education to help coordinate the clinicals. This allowed the program to open in the Fall with a full staff.

Dr. De Cooke also shared that it is difficult for college campuses to offer a competitive salary and workload compared to what they can make out in the real world. It is a daily struggle to keep the current faculty, and stabilization of the program is ongoing with

some promising paths (further details to be reported on at the next meeting) – regional partnership with Claxton-Hepburn Medical Center and Carthage Area Hospital, working with Upstate Medical on a proposal that has been green-lit by SUNY to share faculty and resources and make it easier for their faculty to teach for us, and for clinicals, students have been transported to Upstate once a week for a full-day clinical experience, which has allowed them to experience medical issues that are not normally seen in this area.

The group discussed and asked about other options that might help:

- Subsidization from hospitals – this is being worked on with Claxton-Hepburn to have their nursing staff get release time from the hospital to teach here. Part of the agreement is the consideration of a competitive offer that is comparable to what they make in the field – one option is, Claxton-Hepburn is offering our nursing staff positions in the off-terms and summer to supplement their salary.
- Every avenue is being pursued, including having conversations with Vanderbilt in Tennessee to explore partnerships.
- Tuition incentives to further their degree – there is no motivation in this area to further one's degree in this field, and lower-level degrees do not meet teaching criteria. Nurses that have the higher-level degrees are already in leadership positions at the hospitals. Unfortunately, there are no incentives through SUNY. Some of the hospitals offer tuition assistance, but the criteria to receive it is sometimes steep.
- Teaching criteria needs to be reviewed by SUNY and accreditors.
- The regional partnership options do not have expectations of having to work at those hospitals. However, if a student takes an Excelsior Scholarship, there are certain expectations related to that.
- Shortage of LPN/RNs at hospitals – particularly at Canton-Potsdam Hospital, they are working to fill the shortage before they can address the teaching shortage.
- In the Academic Affairs area, we are continuing in our preparations for next year's Middle States accreditation visit (a small group currently has a draft to review) and got a bit of a shock, that the person who was slated to chair our visit from the Pennsylvania system passed away. We are waiting to hear who our new chair is and if this will have any effect on the timing of the visit.

There are a number of personnel changes. First, we have a new dean for the School of Science, Health, and Criminal Justice – Michele Snyder, who comes to us from SUNY Broome and has already hit the ground running. She has been working to stabilize the nursing program.

A new Director of Advising started on Thursday – Dr. R. Chad Brown. We think students and staff will enjoy working with him. It was reported at an earlier meeting that the former Director, Sharon Tavernier, was appointed to be Registrar.

We are looking at a few new degree programs, one of which is a proposal to SUNY that we have asked them to fund to the tune of nearly \$1M over the next three years. We hope to hear about the outcome of our proposal soon. Our program in Cybersecurity is

growing so rapidly that we had to do an emergency hire a week ago to handle the enrollment. One of our faculty in Cyber, Dr. Kambiz Ghazinour, just received a \$100K grant prize from the Griffiss Institute, where we had a student doing a Presidential Internship over the summer. This program also just received the first level of accreditation from the NSA (National Security Agency) and is in the process of working towards the next designation. This makes us one of only a handful of programs in NYS that have that designation.

Another degree program that is doing well is Early Childhood, whose overall enrollment has now reached 96 – an all-time high for them. They are also part of a partnership between them, the SLC Childcare Council, the SLC IDA, and our SBDC in a \$300K grant over three years from the county to teach individuals who would like to open a daycare center in their homes as to how to do it. Speaking of Child Care Centers, we have submitted a proposal to SUNY to build a Child Care Center on our campus. The proposal is for \$3.4M, which would cover about a third of the cost. We are hoping to hear the results of this proposal later this month.

Another major accomplishment is the transition of our summer and fall courses to the new SUNY learning management system. SUNY decided to not renew our agreement with BlackBoard. We were the first SUNY campus to complete the migration, thanks to the hard work of our faculty, our Center for Learning Design, Innovation, and Online Instruction, and our IT folks.

- Our Student Life Area had a banner year last year, with SAIL offering 438 events, 31% of which had a strong diversity component. Counseling logged 1,772 sessions, and the Davis Health Center had 2,600 student visits. Courtney Bish was asked to give an update on what is new in Student Life and Athletics.

Ms. Bish shared that last year was a really good year, and she is proud of her area. This year has transitioned back to a normal year with typical student behavioral issues and events. Housing numbers are flat compared to last year at 754 students in the residence halls; that is 25% down from pre-pandemic numbers. This continues to be an issue for them, and they are in discussions regarding what to do about housing if there is no/little regrowth in this area.

COVID and the flu are not overwhelming the campus right now, but there remains to be ample isolation space in Smith Hall if needed. She reported that the Health Center is handling anything COVID related, and with SUNY dropping the mandate for surveillance testing, that is one task off the list.

She shared some exciting things happening in housing. As a way to incentivize housing and enrollment and to piggyback on the Pet Wing idea, the Dog Floor, which was mentioned earlier, was added as a single floor for students who require emotional support animals. Even though there are not as many as anticipated, those who are allowed to have their dog on campus are happy.

In athletics, there are seven Fall sports teams in play right now. They entered the Fall semester with full rosters (140 new student athletes). SUNY Canton eSports is also in full swing and popular with 100 students on the roster. eSports began competition with 52 schools and more than 2,000 students overall. SUNY Canton is leading the SUNY eSports initiative, and it is nice to get the credit for leading that.

She continued to report on athletics and added the following:

- Four new head coaches were hired this year – men’s basketball, softball, baseball, and women’s hockey.
- Men’s hockey has applied again for associate membership in the SUNYAC conference, and they are hopeful that they will get in this time.
- World University Games (WUG) are scheduled for this January (more information to come), and we will be hosting 6 of the 12 men’s hockey teams from various countries, with Clarkson hosting the remaining men’s teams and Potsdam hosting the women’s teams.

Mr. Rich asked if there was still an increase in the enrollment for Sports Management and eSports from southern NY/NYC area. Courtney indicated that she was not sure of the answer for the programs, but she offered some additional information regarding housing numbers. She shared that the area referenced above has the most decline, but eSports does see more students from the NYC and metro area. Peggy added that more students are going into Game Design or Graphic and Multimedia Design, rather than Sports Management. Matt Burnett added that there is a collaboration between those programs to help students who are interested in the aspects of those programs be able to choose the right path for them.

- Mr. Burnett provided a Faculty Governance update, and shared that items from the last Spring meeting are being worked through, with things being in a better place. Training and open forums have also been scheduled with the SUNY Faculty Governance leaders, as a way to help the campus have a better understanding of governance and how it works.

He also reported that an ad hoc committee has been formed at the request of the Provost to look at the flex and remote policy for employees. Regular meetings are happening, with a timeline of presenting to the full body by the end of the semester.

Chairman O’Neill asked Matt if he found that faculty are willing to participate. Matt responded that his perception since he started at SUNY Canton is that participation has always been a persistent problem. He further noted that his leadership goal is to make participation accessible for all. Peggy added that based on her experience she feels that overall participation has not been bad; she explained that there have been some larger factors that may have contributed to the lack of participation as well – outdated bylaws, change in expectations and willingness, and quorum levels became unrealistic and an effort to try to change them to help was made worse by inconsistent language in the bylaws. At the start of this semester, the quorum issue was addressed and righted to a more manageable percentage.



- Speaking of banner years, our Advancement Office surpassed all goals last year, and has some big plans for the future. Tracey was asked to provide an update.

Ms. Thompson reported that being able to travel again has been great for her area. They are working to catch up with events that they were not able to hold during the pandemic. She noted that they raised more than \$2.1M in cash, pledges, and planned gifts, which surpassed their goal. Of that amount, \$795,000 was for the unrestricted Canton Fund, providing significant support for a number of campus programs and events. The Foundation's largest yearly ask, the Fall Appeal, will be sent out soon, and all of the College Council members were encouraged to give generously.

She went on to report that they secured 15 new endowments last year, the largest number ever in a single fiscal year.

With the first quarter of this year done, they have reached half of their goal, including \$100,000 for the Canton Fund. Three new scholarships were created this year, with two of them being pledged at the \$25,000 level. Tracey mentioned this because it is a transition from the longstanding minimum of \$10,000, and they are looking to move to the higher level as most other colleges have done.

Other projects and events reported on are listed below:

- Outreach to all faculty and staff to educate them about the Foundation.
  - Alumni Weekend and Scholarship Luncheon went well.
  - The Hall of Fame dinner for 2021 will be held on October 15; all Council members were invited as Tracey's guests.
  - For the Foundation's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary next year, a new campaign will be launched, as it has been over 10 years since the last one. Tracey shared information as to why a campaign is important.
- Lenore was asked to give an update on the federal budget and what is new in community outreach and government relations.

Dr. VanderZee reported that we have received communication regarding approval of \$2.6M for the downtown center project, which is in the Senate's budget bill. The passing of this bill, and allocation of these funds, would significantly close the gap on needed funds. She additionally noted that \$1.5M has also been raised through other sources. Other avenues being pursued include: gaining site control and applying for the Restore NY program. This economic development initiative will be a win for the entire community and has received support from the local, State, and Federal levels. Lenore also noted that there is a possibility of breaking ground in the Spring.

Additionally, SBDC's accreditation is coming up, and she has been working closely with the Canton and County Chambers, Village, and Town to capitalize on the WUG coming in January.

Lastly, Lenore reported that once our new Assembly and Senate representatives are named she will be spending significant time getting to know them and helping them understand the campus and our needs.

Chairman O'Neill asked if current students would be eligible for the Federal Student Loan Forgiveness program. It was noted that the answer to this question was unclear, as the criteria has not been released yet.

- Travis Smith was asked to give an update on Public Relations. Below is what he offered:
  - New dog floor received coverage from Channel 7, WWTI, CNY Central, Watertown Daily Times, and Spectrum News. In addition, a number of Gray Media affiliates across the country picked up the story, and it appeared on their websites in a number of locations across the country.
  - Great coverage on the St. Lawrence Childcare Council/SBDC project – training assistance for individuals wishing to setup their own daycare centers. Additionally, NCPR did a follow-up interview with Maureen and Dr. Szafran on future plans.
  - Cybersecurity coverage this Fall has been good – the most notable is the NCA Program of Study recognition. In addition, Dr. Kambiz Ghazinour has been awarded approximately \$500,000 over the last year – NSF grant of \$250,000 and most recently \$25,000 for the SUNY Technology Accelerator Fund Grant, a first for SUNY Canton as it is normally reserved for SUNY Research Centers. One of the things that the funding is being used for is to gamify training and make it accessible to K-12 and the military.
  - New marketing campaign has been launched – Education at the Speed of Life – focusing on three of our most popular programs, as well as SUNY Online programs (Cybersecurity, Crime Analysis, and Healthcare Management). The ad campaign began a few weeks ago and have appeared in a number of places and on a number of platforms. Some in-person marketing for Cyber has also been done in the NYC area.
  - A new 30-second Cyber spot is linked to the Buffalo Bills on the NFL network; that video is at 47,000 views on YouTube – currently the third highest in our history.
  - ESPN will be broadcasting the WUG, potentially offering national exposure.

It was asked if the Cyber training project is public knowledge; **this will be checked on, and the answer will be shared.**

Dr. De Cooke noted that there was no Faculty Senate update to report on.

She continued by asking the group if they had any questions for Academic Affairs or Student Affairs. Ms. Stevenson asked what the average enrollment was pre-COVID. It was noted that our highest was 3,200, which puts us at about 300 students down.

Ms. Fink provided an update for Student Government. She indicated that they are trying to hit the ground running and with a new prospective. The Executive Board is a diverse group this year, and they are working to bridge the gap between students and faculty/staff. They are also working to finalize the water fountain initiative.

Abby also shared that she has a position with the SUNY Student Assembly, and she is working to share available opportunities with our student body. And, the Board is working to do transition and succession planning training for the Clubs and its members.

Chairman O'Neill asked Abby if there were any general concerns among students. Abby stated that she was not aware of any serious issues, but she noted that they are looking at hosting a digital suggestion box rather than a physical one to gauge student concerns.

That concluded the President's report, and Chairman O'Neill asked if there were any other questions or concerns. No questions or concerns were brought before the group.

Chairman O'Neill thanked everyone, including Tim, for coming and reporting, and he explained that the last meeting was rescheduled due to lack of quorum.

***Adjournment***

Mr. Rich made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:29 a.m. The motion was seconded by Ms. Stevenson and approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michaela Young  
Secretary to the College Council