



December 2022 COLLEGE COUNCIL MEETING

Date: Wednesday, December 7, 2022

Time: 4:00 p.m.

Present: Council Members:

RoAnn Destito-Chair, Darlene Burns, Mitchell Ford, Charles Greco, Christopher Giruzzi, Nichole Hinman, Keith Levatino, Nicholas Rossi, and William Thickstun

Administration:

Mary Ellen Burdick, Nate Cady, Bonnie Davis, Tod Laursen, Mark Lemire, Marybeth Lyons, Mark Montgomery, and Zora Thomova

Guests:

Michael Fasullo and Linda Weber

Welcome and Introductions

Chair Destito convened the Public Meeting at 4:00 p.m. and welcomed all participants to the College Council meeting. The entire Council is saddened at the news of Dr. Laursen's departure from Poly, but remain happy for him and his family. They tried everything possible to obtain permanency for him here. The meeting was held virtually via Zoom.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Ford and seconded by Mr. Levatino to approve the minutes of the September 13, 2022, meeting as presented. All were in favor.

Chairman's Report

Chair Destito – John B. King, Jr. has been named SUNY's 15th Chancellor with an expected start time of mid-January. RoAnn recalled when she was in the Assembly, he was the Commissioner of State Education and it is helpful he has familiarity with NYS. Last Monday, Acting Chancellor Deborah Stanley, Chief of Staff Aaron Gladd, and others visited Utica and began the dialog for our needs. It appears that CNSE only is to be rejoined with UAlbany, but no timeline has been shared. This is not a negative. RoAnn has met with many students as they requested, (and offered to meet with Nick as well), and met with Deans to discuss their input regarding support for our students, community and employers to secure our future in the Mohawk Valley. We have outside support with Heather Hage at the Griffiss Institute and Tod also helped to move this discussion forward. This is the direction that System wishes to go, and having almost daily conversations with them is good news.

RoAnn and Tod met with the Albany Faculty on September 15th and they made it known their desire to return to UAlbany. This allows for a forward plan. It pleased RoAnn to note all



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members' presence, and indicated that both the Council, Faculty, administration, and staff efforts for continued involvement will be very important during this next stretch.

On November 7th, Keith, our newest Council Member, RoAnn, and Tod toured Little Falls School District, which included the elementary, middle, and high schools. Keith continues to be active in many vital programs and shared a program, *Program by Design*, which shapes young children through the STEAM center. There is also a program, *Engineering by Design*, which guides students from Kindergarten to High School helping to prepare them for future employment in manufacturing industry, and will promote diversity and inclusion. The Liberty Grant shared via email, is currently what he is working on with Poly as well as a number of school districts. RoAnn answered questions on timeline for reunification (which is unknown) and for a permanent president. RoAnn and elected officials have made it very well known that a permanent president is needed and the requested timeframe is by graduation May 2023. This will be the third consecutive President search. Darlene commended everyone who has been able to continue to do amazing work despite the lack of permeance. The process to appoint an interim will come through the Board of Trustees. Bill thanks Dr. Laursen for doing an outstanding job leading the University during such extraordinarily difficult circumstances of Covid and growth, and all members added their thanks and credit.

President's Report

Dr. Laursen reports there are many great things happening on campus! His goal has been to position the college in the best possible future for this great team. For example, Free Application Week has been very effective and we anticipate a positive year-on-year numbers. First year applications are ahead 216%, same day as last year, which is 3x up from prior year. The applications office has been very busy. This coincided as we opened up and began functioning as normal, with counselor visits to schools and reaching out directly to the families and students. Over fall break, we hosted 2,500 ninth graders from our area in collaboration with 24 school districts, Utica National Insurance Group, Integrated Community Alternatives Network (ICAN), Oneida-Herkimer-Madison (OHM) BOCES, and Westmoreland Central School District. For many of these students, coming from many counties, this was their first time on a college campus. Admissions hosted three large scale events this fall which also brought thousands to campus: Mohawk Valley Counselor's College Night hosting several hundred high school students and parents meeting with over 70 college representatives from the Northeast, SUNY OpInform with 100 high school counselors from around New York State (NYS) to experience a day of professional development with many touring the Utica campus, and SUNY Poly Fall Open House with over 400 visitors to campus learning firsthand about our academic program and student services. This was our first full scale open house since fall of 2019. We are aggressively going after our enrollment goals. Notable rankings continue as evidenced by our placing in computer engineering by Best Universities, 2023 Hidden Gem by College Raptor, we were added to the list from Best Online Colleges in New York, and the list goes on. These rankings help improve our reputation. Also, in October, Senator Majority Leader Charles Schumer spoke to workforce development and the role Poly plays in the future of NYS.



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Foundation update: A Poly alumnus donated 8,000 for the purchase of laptops specifically for EOP students. These types of actions help with wraparound services which also boosts our mission to increase DEI. We also received \$6,000 for the Physics program from the Ekstein Family Foundation Charitable Education Trust, and more than \$13,000 from the Julia Wells Memorial Educational Foundation designated for nursing scholarships. The SUNY Poly Foundation hosted a “Women Who Mean Business” Program last month, featuring alumna Molly D’Agostino (’16) who spoke to her experience of taking on law school from the back of a tour bus and achieving her dreams as an artist.

The SUNY Poly Alumni Association is hosting several alumni events which started last Saturday, Dec. 3rd in the Capital District and continue December 10th in NYC, and January 22nd in South Florida. These activities have opened up with much enthusiasm post Covid.

Recognition for staff/faculty: Michael Fancher, Director of SUNY Poly’s Advanced Manufacturing Performance (AMP) Center and the New York State Center for Advanced Technology in Nanomaterials and Nanoelectronics (CATN2) was featured in the *Times Union* which highlighted how SUNY Poly is “bridging the workforce gap for New York’s growing semiconductor economy,” and featured the AMP Center’s Career Alignment Platform. Interactive Media & Game Design is a favorite at Poly, and The Genesis Group honored SUNY Poly’s B.S. in Interactive Media & Game Design as an “Outstanding Program” at their recent 16th Annual Celebration of Education. This high-level visibility is fantastic.

Academic Update: Highlighting just a few of the many significant Federal grants our faculty have received over the recent months. This helps to bring us closer to our goals and brings a transformative culture to our campus. Associate Professor of Engineering Dr. Carolyn Rodak, with co-investigators Associate Professor of Mathematics Dr. Edmond Rusjan, Assistant Professor of Engineering Dr. Jiayue Shen, and Andrew Cotronea, SUNY Poly Coordinator of the Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program, received \$750,000 in funding from the NSF’s STEM program to support student degree completion. Another example of outstanding effort is SUNY Poly Interim Vice President for Research and Empire Innovation Professor of Nanobioscience Dr. Nate Cady, with Ciencia, Inc. and the NYS Department of Health, Wadsworth Center, in receiving \$500,000 from Empire State Development’s NYS Biodefense Commercialization Fund to bring a more affordable and accurate 30-minute COVID-19 antibody test to market. Although we all hope Covid is over, this kind of research is tremendously important for public safety in the future. Continuing this impressive list is Interim Dean of CNSE André Melendez in assisting the University at Albany to receive \$459,000 from the National Cancer Institute, part of the National Institutes of Health to investigate how a selenium deficiency can chemically modify RNA, which may promote aging and cancer within humans. Also, Professor Ji Ung Lee received \$150,000 from the SUNY Applied Materials Research Institute to develop a novel approach to increasing transistor density in computer chips. SUNY announced Woongje Sung, Associate Professor of Nanoengineering, is receiving \$50,000 with matching funds from Indium Corporation and SUNY Poly spinoff NoMIS Power, to provide a more reliable, rugged, and efficient solution for power electronics. Additionally, Assistant



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Professor of Engineering Dr. Asif Ahmed was awarded \$50,000 in total funding from the NSF for the commercialization of recycled plastic pins to stabilize sloped highways. This highlights creative thinking regarding sustainability and novel construction techniques.

Student Experience: Melissa Prest is a familiar face and name as she is the Director of our EOP Program and also a past member of our faculty in business as well, and she recently received a “On Point for College Campus Angel Award.” Also, Graduate Kler Moo Ktray Paw was named as a “Utica Graduate Star Recipient.” For those who know Giovanni Harvey, he was a natural to host the virtual ceremony. There were many attending that virtual event all across upstate New York, and it is exciting to see that Poly takes a prominent place in these awards. RoAnn commented that she attended the ACT Conference where both Melissa and Gio presented, and it was very well received by the board members. There were several schools in attendance, and RoAnn was very proud of how well they answered questions and interacted with attendees. It is wonderful to see our own EOP program represented in multiple venues and in such a wonderful way.

Student Athletics: We have many outstanding athletes at Poly, but only time to mention a few.

- In Women’s Volleyball: Emma Draper was voted to the NAC All-Conference Third Team, and Sabrina Trimblett was named as the SUNY Poly representative on the Sportsmanship Team.
- The Wildcat women's soccer team received five awards: Quinlan Gowett earned First Team honors, Hannah Shipley and Katelynn Truax were Second Team selections, Kaitlyn Daley earned Third Team honors, and Montana Wolf was named as the SUNY Poly representative on the Sportsmanship Team.
- Abus Mohamed-Ali was voted the NAC Player of the Year in Men’s soccer. Wakeley Banker was voted the NAC Defensive Player of the Year and the NAC Senior Scholar-Athlete.

Our athletic leaders are truly also our academic leaders.

Thank you: Dr. Laursen profoundly thanks each of the Poly College Council Members for their support and welcoming attitude from his first day and forward. He had worked with SUNY for years prior, but as the ‘new person’ to this college, the whole college community welcomed him. He is grateful and filled with admiration of the community as a whole. To this day, he remains very appreciative of the spirit to improve Poly, continues to be impressed at the level of commitment to the students, and in short, it has been an honor to serve. He is proud that through everything, we’ve not lost sight that it is all about the students and the experience in what they expect, thanks in large part to the council, faculty, and staff. His last day is next Wednesday.

Enrollment: This fall we had a 25% increase in enrollment for our first-year students, and year-on-year numbers continue to grow. We’ve seen increases in transfer and graduate applications as well.



Student Representative Update

Nicholas Rossi, our newly elected student representative to the College Council. Nick shared he lives in Rome and is a commuter student traveling 30 minutes to attend classes. He is working on a double major in accounting, and his goal upon graduation is to stay in Rome and work at Griffiss Institute. The following are updates from the SUNY Poly students at both campuses in activities and events, student highlights both in general and in athletics. He is most appreciative to Dr. Laursen for the amazing leadership he has provided.

Both the recent Senate Resolution 2223-05-SGU and Senate Bill 2223-11-SGU, which passed, are important as they were student concerns to improve campus life. The Aunt Flow Campus Project references women's hygiene products and the 10 dispensary units are soon to arrive and be installed. The SGU Budget Reserve Pull, which provided funds to help student initiatives such as: game room refurbishments, community garden project, Poly pantry, Learning Center donation, Wildcat Fieldhouse equipment, and the Welcome Center renovation. Campus activities and events include live performances, goat yoga, Bob Ross painting event, DIY events, and casino night. Other events that had a big turnout are Drag Bingo, multicultural talent showcase, Smash Bros Weeklies, Rockstar Energy giveaway, Residential Life coffee house, and SGU blood drive which had a big turnout this year. Student Highlights include Wildcat Esports – Fragfest which was well attended. Also, the Smash Bros Weeklies competed in the CCEC East Regional Competition at Rutgers University with a big turnout, finishing 16 out of at least 60 competitors. In Student Athletic Highlights, both the Men's and Women's basketball teams are on three-game winning streak. Five of the Women's soccer team won awards. The Men's soccer team received end of seasons award.

Albany campus updates: Albany held a successful Nanotech Semiconductor Career Symposium and are appreciative to Career Services Coordinator Michael Badolato. They hosted their first-ever therapy dog event and plan to do this again. They also hosted a Halloween Party and Winter Holiday party and were entertained by the CNSE Music Club. Most clubs have been re-registered, and they have done well to foster new leaders after others graduate. They collaborated with The Wellness Center and Student Services Center on multiple events. RoAnn thanked Nick for a great presentation and anticipates meeting him in person soon.

Faculty Representative Update

SUNY Poly Joint Governance co-chairs, Drs. Michael Fascullo and Linda Weber. Linda thanked Tod for the close and collaborative relationship he has created for the Utica campus. The focus is to have a voice in the next Chief Administrator Officer (CAO) at Utica. Linda read parts of the resolution and noted that was in 2016 that we had the last permanent leader. The instability at the top has created problems in the faculty and programmatic level in leading us forward. She read the bulleted points regarding the next CAO, and concluded, "That the faculty and staff of SUNY Poly will collaborate with the Chancellor to identify and recruit an Interim CAO with the vision, leadership, and initiative to assure SUNY Poly's continuing success..." There is concern



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among the Faculty and Governance that there will be a future without one of the colleges and she referenced the resolution of April 7, 2022, and read portions of it. She reminded all that SUNY Poly has grown to be very important in the Mohawk Valley. The SUNY New GenEd is up and running in the fall, and switching the learning management systems, once again, in Fall 2023. Linda spoke to the importance of the accreditation processes, and that it is front and center. Faculty continues doing a great job, and the transition back into the classroom post-Covid although challenging, it is going well. RoAnn asked that Zora keep the Council in the loop regarding the accreditation. Zora shared that we are in the preparation stage. She laid out the timeline. It is an extensive undertaking with a very important outcome.

Mike spoke for the Albany Campus, and will have more to report after the full Assembly meeting on Friday. They will be discussing motions from the Utica campus regarding joint governance. He reported that Albany had a great semester. He expressed his thanks to Tod for his leadership.

Adjournment

Chair Destito requested a motion to adjoin. A motion was made by Ms. Burns and seconded by Mr. Levatino. The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie Davis