# **MINUTES**

**School of Arts & Sciences**

**February 3, 2023**

The Meeting was called to order at 3:03 by Speaker Kevin Williams.

Today’s Agenda and Minutes of the Dec 16 meeting were presented. There were no comments or changes. Send changes to Meg K.

**Remarks of the Speaker** - Kevin Williams**.** Welcome to first meeting of 2023 and our first meeting at Buffalo State University. There are a lot of issues carried over from the fall as well as new issues. Operational Plan Initiatives were sent last night and the Dean will discuss. A lot of good ideas, such as bringing students to campus for fairs. There is a fair tomorrow of WNY competition of Science Olympiad and many departments will have tables for the STEAM fair. There is another science fair in March at BPAC. As you can see, some of our operational plan ideas are things that are already happening, and we can improve their impact. Curriculum changes are being addressed in the Senate with Gen Ed, there is a Presidential search, and many other initiatives outside of teaching. Please be open minded, civil and kind.

**Report of the Dean –** Brian Cronk. **Commencement:** You may have heard we are changing commencement. Grad students will be spread across the ceremonies into the school ceremonies. There will be separate ceremonies for each school. SAS has the 5:00 p.m. slot. Please volunteer to be there for your students. We should have more faculty present than the other schools as we have more students.

Thanks for the **Operational Plan** work that you did over break. I apologize for the timeline, which was not of my making. I sent all materials to the Provost, who has asked us to revisit some of it. Kevin indicated in yesterday’s email that we would have a new version in the next week or two. The items presented are worthy of being worked on. I did not remove any items suggested, but prioritized them. They fall into several categories. Some were related to what Academic Affairs as a whole or the University as a whole should be working on. Those are now in different tabs and the Provost will take those to Cabinet or Provost’s council to share, though they will not be in our school priorities. For many items, although excellent, no one stepped forward to be contact person, and the Dean’s staff cannot do them all. If the item is important to you and you want to take the lead, then it will get it into the operational plan. Faculty are asked to volunteer to take the lead on these items.

**Cazenovia Teach Out Agreement:** Cazenovia College is shutting down. They defaulted on a bond payment last year. We are working on an agreement to take some of their students to complete their degrees. They initially approached us with 55 Interior Design students. There are several other SUNY schools participating. More small private schools may go out of business in the next few years.

**Program Deactivation:** This document was given to chairs this week and a hard copy has been passed out in the meeting. Electronic copies will be sent shortly. Roy Bakos requested the doc be sent to contingent faculty. The Dean says feel free to send it out.

Dean Cronk: Last fall I worked with several departments such as Art and Design. They came forward with a new proposal that removed their program from this document. Our meetings and their plan were productive. MCL responded to a formal proposal to end their degree programs. Based on their response, Spanish is being allowed to continue. But we are running out of time for departments to proactively make proposals. Without a firm deadline and consequences, progress has not been made in all departments. All the programs on the list may not be deactivated. This is a deadline for a response. These are programs I would recommend for deactivation to the new President if they say we have to cut programs. Departments can present proposals by April 7th so I can consider your arguments in time to create a final list by the end of the academic year.

Selection of programs on this deactivation list are made by 2 simple measures: not enough majors to ensure courses will be adequately enrolled or you don’t have enough graduates from your program. For graduate programs: 10 students enrolled last fall or 20 in last 3 years. UG: 30 students enrolled or 25 or fewer graduates over the last few years. For Minors, if there are 0 students enrolled, why are we keeping it without interest from students. Minors with 8 or fewer students enrolled as of last fall are also on the list. This list is an FYI list. I was shocked by the few minors in Women and Gender Studies, for example, as their courses are always full.

Question: What are cost savings of deactivating minors? The cost to offer a course. If a minor only used courses already being taught, that is not a no-cost program as it costs money for the registrar, or website maintenance. Too many minors have no or almost no students in them. Question: Financial aid parameters are not in favor of minors, which may have contributed to attrition of minor students. Why is financial aid not covering minor coursework? Dean – that is outside our control. Certificates can be covered by financial aid, while a minor cannot. Question: Will minors fair be brought back? Dean – we are planning one for Fall 23. Question: What do you mean by running out of time? Dean – Financially, the school can no longer support the same costs. Question: If you look at our efforts in SAS, we are not the reason there is less interest. Students are not interested because they are not being recruited to Buffalo State. What will you do to get the students we need to begin with? Dean: The people suffering the consequences are not always those at fault. VP Bowen spoke to us recently about ways to get involved in recruitment, but the overall pool of students is dwindling. We are out of money early next fall. Even with the timeline starting today, it will be years until these changes will play out. This gives us an opportunity to be prepared when the new President or Officer in Charge comes, and they may decide to all or none of these suggested plans. But I must prepare plans to present. This is the opportunity for departments to have input if they haven’t already. The policy on deactivation was just updated last year by the faculty. That is shared governance.

Chemistry: I disagree with the premise that there is much cost savings here. There are not short-term cost savings. They would only be realized when faculty retire from the department, short of retrenchment. After a cursory look at this list, there are programs without upcoming retirements. We are taking options away from students rather than saving costs. We are in the middle of gen ed which impacts this. If you cut programs, and you reassign faculty, gen ed will play out. We are doing this in a stage when there is no plan with a new president coming. Why is Academic Affairs out front on cuts? This could be the time to hold back and let another group make cuts. Dean: We are not in front, we are behind. Cost savings: 150 courses in SAS should have been cancelled this semester, according to the handbook of faculty and librarians. This list (shown in a slide) represents 2.5 million dollars in salary. Scott G:. That is not good math. The faculty teaching in these programs will need to do something else. Dean: Yes, they can retire or resign. Retrenchment is coming in the next year. This list is only about programs. Will it have implications on departments and people? Yes. But this is about programs, which is a separate process from Department consolidation, or retrenchment.

[Art & Design: a questions or comment from Art & Design could not be heard due to low volume of speaker.] Dean recap: How did some minors get on this list that have higher numbers than other minors? The base number of 8 for minors was arbitrary. Some minors overlap with majors. It is not no cost, but low cost. This data is all in Tableau. Question from Art & Design: The data is deceiving. There are 8 minors in Design, which combines several craft areas, whereas painting has 5 minors, but is on its own. So Painting is on the list of under-enrolled minors but the Design/craft areas are not.

Math: Majors are on your list that are of concern, but the corresponding major is not on the list and vice versa. This does not make monetary sense. All 3 math majors are on the list, but the math minor is not. Deactivating the math major would automatically kill the math minor. A minor piggybacking on a viable major does not have an effect if your deactivate it. Minors are also a way of recruiting majors, but also provide a way for students to get a credential from the field on their transcript that will serve them. Keeping minors in non-viable majors makes no sense. Dean: I did not connect the majors and minors in making this list. It is up to the department to justify the relationship in their arguments/proposals.

Question: Why is SAS proposing cuts to its programs? Are the other 2 schools looking at large list of majors to be deactivated? Dean: No, other schools are not creating lists like this. Only 30% of universities in the country have a physics major. Many institutions are getting rid of math. We are not a liberal arts college. Theater: There is a lot of work in managing majors/minors. It helped us with paperwork to combine theater and dance in one minor.

Question: is the timeline that current majors can finish the program for 3 full years following deactivation? If retrenchment takes 5.5 years, that would be a long time to realize cost savings. Dean: These programs are not a final list. I will not issue a formal memo until the end of this semester, then the department has 60 days to respond, it then goes to the Provost and CSCC. We would accept freshmen up through 2024 and offer courses through 2027 for deactivated programs. This action will not be immediate. But we must start now since our process, created by the faculty, is incredibly slow. Chemistry: There are 2 types of programs: programs that attract students to campus and programs that don’t have a lot of freshmen but graduate a lot of majors. If you get rid of programs that attract students to campus, you may hurt our budget rather than help it. Dean: This is the kind of argument you should make in your response. We need to know about students who come in, students in a major, and students who graduate. We need all those numbers. (The Dean shows slide of current numbers for F23, students who have paid deposits.) Question: it is January. It seems early to be looking at these numbers. 20 years ago we were a liberal arts school. What guidance is coming from SUNY about what kind of college we are? Dean: It seems like many in this room do not see our enrollment problem as a crisis.

Anthropology: There is a mismatch between people who expect a vision to emerge, and those simply looking at numbers for cuts. We need to have a clear identity and not wait for SUNY to tell us what that is. Offering only courses students want to take is not serving our students. We are not a restaurant, where you order from a menu, and we need to have an identity about achieving a liberal arts education. We are serving the public of NYS. Our students are underserved and need access to high quality education. This will affect our students’ futures. We need a clear identity. Dean: We will not define our identity for our students, but instead around our students’ interests. We have never been a liberal arts college and I’m sorry if people have told you that. We are comprehensive which means a mix of liberal arts and professional programs. We never will be a liberal arts college. Question: What is it we are? Dean: We are a state regional comprehensive. We offer BFAs, that is not a liberal arts degree. ART Dept: We are now a university, so the institution must have an arts program. It is in the criteria to be a university. Dean: Your programs are not in this document. This document creates a deadline and a kick in the pants to get a response from programs that have not responded so far. Outcomes have been positive. Anthropology: We have and do meet. We need to know whether we are an engineering school or a business school or some other type of school – we can work with that if we know what we are – then we can make a proposal to fit the new vision. We need the vision to work from. Our frustration is that we don’t know what direction to go it. Dean: Propose all the directions as we don’t know what is going to happen.

Also, If you are not on this list, you can’t relax. Your curriculum being more efficient might keep another department from having unfortunate consequences. We are all in this together. I’m happy to come to any department meeting to discuss this list. I’m ready to hear your reasons why you shouldn’t be on this list, which was only created from enrollments and graduations. Tell me why you shouldn’t be on the list. Art & Design: There is inaccuracy of this data. Can we provide new data with new information? Dean: I am using official data from institutional sources. That is what we will work from.

Question: Please send out a list of under-enrolled courses. Dean: I will send to chairs. Question: What about double majors? Dean: Only the first major is counted by the school. We cannot count 2nd majors or 2nd minors. I can generate those numbers but they are very small. The first major declared is the one that counts.

Question: What is a “state regional comprehensive”? Dean: We are designed to serve our region. Comprehensive is a mix of professional and liberal arts degrees. You can get a liberal arts and science education here OR a professional degree. Question: Regarding the nature of university education. How can we have the temerity to call ourselves a university when the richness of courses has been so reduced. Dean : This is above my paygrade. Theater: The budget crisis makes me scared when we are still discussing why and not how. At a grocery store with $100, we can’t leave with $150 of groceries to feed my family. We have to make decisions. Dean: The governor has proposed more money for SUNY but that will only help us a little at best. Communication: We should have a vision and plan before planning cuts. Cost cuts are needed, but we should know our direction and plan before making them. Dean: If you don’t have students in your program, we cannot have that program. The students’ interest will drive which programs remain. Communication: Following the earlier metaphor, If you are in a grocery store with $100, you wouldn’t buy only what the children selected. You would choose food from an overarching plan to provide overall good nutrition for your family. We need such a plan.

**Kevin: Operational Plan Initiatives:** There are a lot of good ideas that need shepherding by point people. Question: What does a point person on the Operational Plan do? Come up with a plan? Do they need approval? Dean: If you volunteer: There is a person and update frequency. Leaders will get an email requesting an update once a year. What you do in between is up to you as long as you are working toward that item/goal. Question: Is there pay to do this work – or is there any budget to implement these ideas? If there is no budget or the initiative will be rejected, why would I spend time on this? Dean: I did rank the items by priority. If you want to shift a priority let Kevin and Steering Council know. A budget is not out of the question in the long term, but no money this spring unless it is small amounts such as a couple hundred dollars, that could come from Dean’s office.

**Dean: SAS school level Strategic Plan:** Kevin and I discussed this. It would be nice if the school made an outline strategic plan this semester so a draft or outline could go to the President or Officer in Charge for feedback. A framework is a more reasonable thing to work on this semester.

Kevin: There is no formal report but the Presidential search affects us all. We are redoing our elections of faculty representatives on the search committee so they are consistent across the schools. You are eligible to serve as a faculty member and, you can nominate 2 people. The deadline for nominations is 11:00 tonight. Next week there will be an election of all nominated parties. There is not a mechanism to remove a nominee who does not wish to be on the ballot.

What is an Officer in Charge? If the search committee does not complete its work by the end of the semester, SUNY will appoint an officer in charge while the search continues.

**Standing Committee Reports –**

**Bylaws and Elections Committee – Barish Ali, Chair.** We have a college senate vacancy for the ARTS, I received 3 nominations, but 2 were not in the Arts. Naila Ansari will be appointed as the senator.

**Personnel Committee – Joseph Marren, Chair** This committee has not met. There are 8 promotion and tenure and 7 regular renewals due to the Dean on Monday 2/6.

**Curriculum Committee – Emily Boyce, Chair.** We expect a large influx of proposals. Please try to get them to us early.

**Contingent Faculty Welfare Committee – Roy Bakos, Chair.**  Everyone is concerned about jobs and health insurance.

**Report from the College Senators -- Susan Maguire, Senate Liaison** (no report – Senate meeting is next week). There is a new Senate assistant. The senate’s name is under discussion now that Buffalo State is a university.

**Conversion to Brightspace -- John Draeger**

Workshops are still available on campus but also synchronous and asynchronous online. Overview of how to start in BrightSpace: <https://buffalostate.teamdynamix.com/TDClient/2003/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=143983>

Importing course content: <https://buffalostate.teamdynamix.com/TDClient/2003/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=143985>

How do you move your course over? You can move your own material, but there Is a request form. <https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=RIMYxx9iH02jxmUhzBLuonyo6J6XFD9Bjkqf0wbkNdlURERFQVVQWERLMDJFWEM1Q1VRNlc3SDg5SyQlQCN0PWcu>

How do I move my courses that are not running in SP 23? You can request a Development Shell with an IT ticket. <https://buffalostate.teamdynamix.com/TDClient/2003/Portal/Requests/ServiceDet?ID=41980>

**Upcoming Meetings:** March 3, April 7. May meeting is being rescheduled, date TBA.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Meg Knowles - Secretary, SAS