



## CT BOARD OF REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

### ACADEMIC & STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Meeting – October 2, 2020  
9:30 a.m. – via video conference

#### MINUTES

Regents Present: Aviva Budd, Merle Harris, Holly Howery, Colena Sesanker

Regents Absent: Naomi Cohen

Staff Present: Jane Gates, Kevin Corcoran, Greg DeSantis, Pam Heleen, Ken Klucznik, Pat Ryiz, Mike Stefanowicz

Other Attendees: Shirley Adams (COSC), Missy Alexander (WCSU), Robin Avant (HCC), Kem Barfield (TRCC), Joe Cullen (QVCC), David Dauwalder (CCSU), Amy Feest (TxCC), Trudy Milburn (SCSU), Elisabeth Morel (WCSU), Elsa Núñez (ECSU), Catherine O’Callaghan (WCSU), Bill Salka (ECSU), Fatma Salman (MCC)

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Chair Merle Harris.

1. Approval of Minutes

a. September 4, 2020

**On a motion by H. Howery and seconded by A. Budd, a vote was taken and the minutes from the September 4, 2020 BOR ASA Committee meeting were approved.**

2. Consent Items

a. Discontinuations

- i. CT Parenting Educator Credential (all 4 levels) – C1 Certificate – Charter Oak State College
- ii. Certificate in Paraprofessional Studies – C2 Certificate - Charter Oak State College
- iii. After School Education Credential – C2 Certificate - Charter Oak State College

**On a motion by A. Budd and seconded by H. Howery, a vote was taken and the consent items were approved.**

3. Action Items

a. Modifications

i. Education: Instructional Technology Option – MS Education – Western CT State University [Modification of Instructional Delivery]

Chair Harris noted that the original BOR Resolution for this agenda item was incorrect. The BOR Resolution was revised to state that WCSU is replacing the on-ground modality for the Education: Instructional Technology Option – MS Education with an online modality. Provost Gates and Provost Alexander confirmed that the on-ground modality in this program will be replaced by a fully online modality.

**On a motion by A. Budd and seconded by H. Howery, a vote was taken to approve the modification to the Western CT State University Education: Instructional Technology Option – MS Education, namely to replace the on-ground modality with an online modality, and the vote to approve the modification was unanimous.**

b. Appointment of CSU Professor

i. Raouf Mama – Eastern CT State University

**Chair Harris called for a motion to approve the appointment of Dr. Raouf Mama, Eastern CT State University, as a CSU Professor. The motion was moved by H. Howery and seconded by A. Budd.**

Provost Gates stated that, effective October 15, 2020, upon approval by the BOR, Dr. Raouf Mama will become the 12<sup>th</sup> CSU Professor. She noted that the CSU Professor Advisory Committee awarded Dr. Mama an excellent rating in all three categories, Creative Activity, Teaching, and Service. President Núñez and Provost Bill Salka, Eastern CT State University, discussed Dr. Mama's education, professional history, publications, and, awards/honors. With the appointment of Dr. Mama as a CSU Professor, all twelve available slots for CSU Professors will be filled. CSU Professors, once appointed, serve for the duration of their time at their universities.

**Chair Harris called for a vote to approve the appointment of Dr. Raouf Mama, Eastern CT State University, as a CSU Professor and the vote was unanimous.**

c. CSCU Accessibility Policy for Electronic Information and Technology

Chair Harris noted that the CSCU Accessibility Policy for Electronic Information and Technology is particularly important for students with disabilities. Federal and State laws require all resources to be accessible for people with disabilities.

**Chair Harris called for a motion to approve the CSCU Accessibility Policy for Electronic Information and Technology. The motion was moved by A. Budd and seconded by H. Howery.**

Provost Gates noted that CSCU is committed to ensuring equal access to information, programs and activities through its information technologies. She enumerated the Federal and State laws that the CSCU Accessibility Policy supports. Kevin Corcoran, Executive Director of Digital Learning, and Elisabeth Morel, Director of Accessibility Services at Western CT State University, presented the CSCU Accessibility Policy for Electronic Information and Technology. Director Corcoran noted CSCU did not have any policies and procedures in place to guide faculty, staff, and administrators for creating accessible digital learning experiences. In January 2019, the CSCU Accessibility Advisory Council was formed, comprised of 40 members representing the 17 CSCU institutions including representation from Faculty, Accessibility Services, and, IT. In addition, individuals with disabilities served

on the Council. The Council concluded that there were no standards to guide faculty, staff, and administrators in support of accessible content. Director Corcoran reiterated Chair Harris' comments that because of Covid, the need for accessible learning is more critical now and the risk of non-compliance is greater. The policy was developed from national best practices and lessons learned from other institutions which had been cited for and settled accessibility violations. The proposed CSCU Accessibility Policy for Electronic Information and Technology was approved by the Accessibility Council, and the Directors of the Disability Council and the Library Council. It was shared with the CEOs and Presidents as well as with the CSCU Academic Council last month. The Accessibility Council has received feedback from some CSCU institutions. Revisions were made and CSCU Legal Affairs has reviewed and approved every iteration of the policy.

Director Corcoran noted that CSCU currently has systems in place to support the compliance and implementation of the policy:

- i. Kaltura is a video streaming system that allows for close captioning of videos;
- ii. Blackboard Ally assists faculty in identifying content that has accessibility shortcomings and provides a path to remediation. Students can download content in an alternate format, for example, text to audio;
- iii. MS Office 365 has built-in tools for checking accessibility; and,
- iv. MS Teams and WebEx are videoconferencing tools with built-in close captioning and recording ability. In addition, MS Teams has live captioning.

Other accessibility resources for faculty, staff and administrators to support the implementation of the policy are: a new website at [accessibility.ct.edu](http://accessibility.ct.edu), a checklist on how to make content more accessible, a compliance companion document, and, potential future HR training modules for annual training in accessibility and compliance. Director Morel commented that the Accessibility Policy will impact all students, including disabled and able-bodied students, resulting in greater student success and retention.

Questions from the Committee included:

- i. *If a faculty member is using non-compliant technology is the institution responsible? How do we monitor usage to ensure that this is not happening?* Response: It is stated in the policy standards that it's up to each campus to implement the policy and customize it. We want to make technology as accessible as possible. There is an exception policy if the technology is inaccessible and it applies to a small group of users. An alternate means of access can be provided for that group.
- ii. *Was this a problem before the pandemic?* Response: Yes. This has been a problem for a long time; but, going online as a result of the pandemic has compounded the issue. As we study more cases and settlements for non-compliance, we are learning what the requirements are, where the legal threshold is, and what our responsibilities are. We are continuing to change as we get more information.

**Chair Harris called for a vote to approve the CSCU Accessibility Policy for Electronic Information and Technology and the vote was unanimous.**

#### 4. Informational Items

##### a. Below Threshold

- i. Education: Instructional Technology Option – MS Education – Western CT State University [Modification]

**On a motion by H. Howery and seconded by A. Budd, the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting of the BOR Academic and Student Affairs Committee at 9:59 a.m.**