



## CT BOARD OF REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

### ACADEMIC & STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Meeting – October 7, 2021

9:30 a.m. – Conducted via Remote Participation

### MINUTES

- Regents Present: Aviva Budd, Merle Harris, Holly Howery, Richard Porth, Colena Sesanker
- Staff Present: Jane Gates, Alison Buckley, Kevin Corcoran, Greg DeSantis, Pam Heleen, Ken Klucznik, Lesley Mara, Steve Marcelynas, Steve McDowell, Fran Rosselli-Navarra, Pat Ryiz, Angelo Simoni, Mike Stefanowicz, Joanne Yurso, Brenda Zanta
- Other Attendees: Tuesday Cooper (MCC), Marianne Fallon (CCSU), Teresa Foley (ACC), Commissioner Manisha Juthani (CT-DPH), Kimberly Kostelis (CCSU), William Lugo (ECSU), Laura McCarthy (NCCC), Jayne Pearson, Bill Salka (ECSU)

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

Chair Harris welcomed new regent, Richard Porth, who will serve on the BOR Academic and Student Affairs Committee and the BOR Audit Committee.

An official roll call of the BOR Academic and Student Affairs Committee members was taken and the responses were as follows:

- Chair Merle Harris – Present
- Regent Aviva Budd – Not Present at roll call. Regent Budd joined the meeting at 9:36 a.m.
- Regent Holly Howery – Present
- Regent Richard Porth - Present
- Regent Colena Sesanker (ex officio) – Present

A quorum was declared.

1. Approval of Minutes
  - a. September 10, 2021

**On a motion by H. Howery and seconded by M. Harris, a vote was taken and the minutes from the September 10, 2021, BOR ASA Committee meeting were approved unanimously.**

## 2. Action Items

### a. CSCU Centers and Institutes

#### i. Center for Connecticut Studies – Renewal – Eastern CT State University

Provost Gates stated that Eastern CT State University seeks continuation of the David Morris Roth Center for Connecticut Studies until December 31, 2028. The Center collects preserves, and makes accessible materials on the state's history, genealogy and culture, with a focus on Windham, Tolland, and New London counties.

Provost William Salka, Dr. Patricia Szczys, Dean of Arts & Sciences, and, Dr. Jamel Ostwald, Professor and Chair of the History Department, presented. Provost Salka stated that the Center, established in 1986, is run on a very modest budget from an endowment and ECSU operating funds. The expenses for the Center this year were \$30,000, used mainly to support the release time of the co-directors who run the Center. ECSU is in the process of appointing a new director whose primary function will be to raise additional funds to support the Center. The Center is housed within the ECSU School of Arts and Sciences, and it enhances the academic experience of students who are future Social Studies teachers, those who wish to pursue post-graduate studies or those who seek employment in galleries, libraries, archives or museums. ECSU students serve internships at the Center. Dr. Ostwald summarized the services that the Center provides to faculty, students, Social Studies teachers, and members of the community, for example, journalists, genealogists, and historians.

Chair Harris asked how the ECSU Center for Connecticut Studies collaborates with the ECSU Library and other organizations like the CT State Historical Society. Dr. Ostwald responded that the Center is physically adjacent to the ECSU Library and shares some space with it. The ECSU Library focuses on the history of the University and the Center focuses on the history of the town, region and the state. The Center staff works closely with Tara Hurt, the ECSU Librarian and Head of Archives and Special Collections. The Center strives to avoid duplication with the CT Historical Society. The Center for Connecticut Studies focuses on Eastern CT, Willington and Windham.

**Chair Harris called for a motion to approve the continuation of the David Morris Roth Center for Connecticut Studies at Eastern Connecticut State University until December 31, 2028. The motion was moved by H. Howery and seconded by A. Budd. A vote to approve the continuation of the Center was taken and it was unanimous.**

### b. Revised Mission Statement: Eastern CT State University

**Chair Harris called for a motion to approve the modification of the Eastern Connecticut State University Mission Statement. A. Budd moved the motion and R. Porth seconded it.**

Provost William Salka presented. ECSU seeks to modify the University's Mission Statement as part of its most recent Strategic Planning process. The Mission Statement was revised to make it shorter and more concise while still reflecting the University's mission as CT's only public Liberal Arts institution. Provost Salka noted that in 1988 the then Board of Trustees changed Eastern CT State University's mission to make the institution a public Liberal Arts university.

*Questions/Recommendations from the Committee included:*

- i. *Should the Mission Statement include something about “careers” to match the CSCU mission regarding “personal and career goals”?* Response: The phrase that we used was that a liberal arts learning experience provides students the knowledge and skills to lead “enriching and purposeful lives”, preparing students for entry level positions in which students can evolve professionally and preparing students to become leaders in their communities.

**Chair Harris called for a vote to approve the modification of the Eastern Connecticut State University Mission Statement. A vote was taken and it was unanimous.**

c. CSCU Criminal Justice Task Force: Final Report and Recommendations

Chair Harris stated that Committee will consider the acceptance of the CSCU Criminal Justice Task Force Final Report and will take a motion after the Committee hears the report recommendations. She commended the Task Force Co-chairs, Dr. Tuesday Cooper and Dr. William Lugo, for their hard work on this very important initiative.

Provost Gates stated that Chair Harris suggested that the CSCU Provost and Sr. Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs form the CSCU Criminal Justice Task Force to identify, review and make recommendations concerning Criminal Justice studies at our institutions and how they advance or impede multicultural and diverse education at CSCU, as well as how our programs prepare students to work in law enforcement and criminal justice in Connecticut

Dr. Lugo noted that the impetus for the Criminal Justice task force was the death of George Floyd and the subsequent mass protests against policing and police brutality. These incidents were a call to action for everyone. Dr. Lugo thanked the BOR and the System Office for answering the call to action. He noted that our institutions of higher education play a critical role. Most police officers get college degrees, and our institutions are educating future police officers. Dr. Lugo thanked Provost Gates who gave the co-chairs the latitude and freedom to create and run the Criminal Justice task force. The two co-chairs included representatives of the following stakeholders on the Task Force: students, faculty, staff, community members and police officers. A list of task force members is on Page 3 of the report.

Dr. Lugo noted that the task force first met in October 2020 and established two goals. It created working groups which each investigated a particular charge. The task force created a timeline and met monthly throughout the academic year. The task force received a grant from the Davis Education Foundation to fund the surveys of students, faculty and law enforcement, and data analysis.

Dr. Cooper discussed the findings of the task force. She noted that there is intentional diversity throughout all Criminal Justice programs. What the task force did not find was intentional anti-racism curriculum, policies or practices. She noted that this is not a criticism but a call to action to work in order to shift curriculum from diversity to being intentionally anti-racist and from diversity to diversity, equity and inclusion. Dr. Cooper stated that the task force collected feedback from the CSCU Academic Council, program coordinators at the community colleges, and the chairs of the four-year institutions' Criminal Justice programs.

Each regent on the Committee commended the report, surveys and the thorough and thoughtful recommendations. Regent Porth stated that the findings and recommendations are an opportunity to shift the focus to a more current way to address the challenges we face.

*Questions/Recommendations from the Committee included:*

- i. Approximately 1,400 students responded. What percent of the total surveys does this number represent? Response: The response rate was 15%; but this does not represent all of the students. CCSU and SCSU did not send out the survey and are not represented in the number of students who responded.*
- ii. There was much opposition in the survey to mandating a course or mandating a course of action to resolve issues. We don't want to run into opposition. What would bridge the gap? How do we move forward? Response: (Dr. Lugo) We view the task force as a mini experiment. The final report was unanimously agreed to by the task force; but there was controversy within the task force. It will take time regarding curriculum. The faculty are on board with investigating issues and teaching anti-racist practices; but how we do this is still a question. We need faculty buy-in for support. Non-curriculum committees moved quickly. The curriculum committees did not move as quickly. Response: (Dr. Cooper) The curriculum committee got stalled with reaching a consensus on a definition of anti-racism and determining the impact of having an anti-racist curriculum. One of the ways to bridge the gap is to have a few courses in the system, such as Contemporary Issues, or Special Interests/Topics, tied to anti-racist content, while we work on how to create an anti-racist curriculum.*
- iii. Is there a working definition of anti-racist content? Do you have insight on how we might reach consensus? Response: (Dr. Lugo) There are two different issues. The first is coming to a consensus on the definition of anti-racism. The second is mandating curriculum. There's a willingness to engage. This is a healthy conflict, and this is a conversation that we should be having. Response: (Dr. Cooper) There are many definitions of anti-racism. One definition of anti-racism is actively opposing racist policies and practices and advocating for change around those policies and practices specifically regarding socio-economic and political life. The question is whether CSCU can agree on one specific definition of anti-racism after looking at many definitions or come up with a definition on its own. The CSCU system is already doing diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) work. Several groups are established and actively working. Anti-racism work should be done in collaboration with these groups. It should be a system-wide effort to come up with a definition of anti-racism.*

**Chair Harris proposed the following motion - That the Board of Regents for Higher Education accept the submission of the “Final Report and recommendations” from the CSCU Criminal Justice Task Force with deep appreciation to the chairs and members of the Task Force and refers the report to the CSCU Equity Council to review and integrate into its work, and that the CSCU Provost and Senior Vice President engage Criminal Justice chairs, program directors and appropriate faculty to continue work on the report’s curriculum and student-centered program recommendations. An update on the report’s Recommendations will be provided at the October 2022 Academic and Student Affairs Committee meeting.**

Regent Budd asked if the Criminal Justice Task Force will stay intact as appointed. Chair Harris stated that it would be more appropriate for the CSCU Equity Council and those engaged in curriculum work to continue the work of the CSCU Criminal Justice Task Force. Dr. Lugo stated that he and Dr. Cooper will continue to serve as needed, but that the work of the CSCU Criminal Justice Task Force is complete. Chair Harris agreed. The Equity Council and the faculty should continue the work. She asked the co-chairs of the CSCU Criminal Justice Task Force to continue to be involved in these discussions. Regent Budd stated that another consideration from the students' response to the survey is the need for mentoring. Is there a follow up to this issue? Dr. Lugo stated that he and Dr. Cooper have to write final reports for the grants that the task force received. They will address and expand upon the need for student mentoring and pass along the report to the BOR and Dr. DeSantis. Chair Harris commended the co-chairs on raising the money to support this very important work.

**Chair Harris called for approval of the motion. Chair Harris moved the motion and A. Budd seconded the motion that the Board of Regents for Higher Education accept the submission of the "Final Report and Recommendations" from the CSCU Criminal Justice Task Force with deep appreciation to the chairs and members of the Task Force and refers the report to the CSCU Equity Council to review and integrate into its work, and that the CSCU Provost and Senior Vice President engage Criminal Justice chairs, program directors and appropriate faculty to continue work on the report's curriculum and student-centered program recommendations. An update on the report's recommendations will be provided at the October 2022 Academic and Student Affairs Committee meeting.**

**Chair Harris called for a vote to approve the motion. A vote was taken and it was unanimous.**

d. BOR Policy: Student Athlete's Name, Image, and Likeness

**Chair Harris called for a motion to approve the proposed BOR Policy regarding Student Athlete's Name, Image and Likeness. The motion was moved by A. Budd and seconded by R. Porth.**

Provost Gates stated that the CT General Assembly enacted Public Act PA-21-132 Section 160 which requires that the governing boards of CT's institutions of higher education adopt policies for student athletes to be compensated for the use of their name, image and likeness. The policy statement has been reviewed and is compliant with Public Act PA-21-132 Section 160 and in alignment with the policies of other institutions of higher education in the state.

Angelo Simoni, Senior Executive Director, Compliance, Equity & Student Relations, presented. Director Simoni stated that this proposed policy applies to the CSCU System. It allows for student athletes to earn compensation through an endorsement contract or employment in an activity unrelated to the intercollegiate athletic program at the universities. Students are allowed to obtain legal or professional representation through a written agreement provided that students follow the rules of the proposed BOR Policy. CSCU's General Council met with the Presidents of the CSUs and Directors of Athletics. The proposed policy follows the format, requirements, and key components, required by the state law, at similar universities, such as the University of CT.

**Chair Harris called for a vote to approve the proposed BOR Policy regarding Student Athlete's Name, Image and Likeness. A vote was taken and it was unanimous.**

- e. BOR Policy: Selection of a Single Office of Postsecondary Education Identification Number (OPEID) for CT State Community College

**Chair Harris called for a motion to approve the proposed Single Office of Postsecondary Education Identification Number (OPEID) for the CT State Community College. The motion was moved by A. Budd and seconded by H. Howery.**

Dr. Alison Buckley, VP for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs, and, Steven McDowell, AVP Financial Aid Services and Title IV, presented. The CT State Community College (CSCC) seeks approval of a Single Office of Postsecondary Education Identification Number (OPEID) for the CSCC. The OPEID number will be used for the CSCU community college merger application with the US Department of Education. Dr. Buckley stated that this is the first step with the US Department of Education with the merger process. Since we are consolidating the 12 community colleges into one, the CT State Community College, the US DOE directed us to select an existing OPEID from one of the community colleges for the merged institution, and we are requesting to use the OPEID of Capital Community College. This selection will have no impact on Student Financial Aid at any of the 12 community colleges. The US DOE requires a BOR resolution to start the process of consolidation in Spring 2022.

**Chair Harris called for a vote to approve the proposed Single Office of Postsecondary Education Identification Number (OPEID) for the CT State Community College. A vote was taken and it was unanimous.**

3. Informational Items

- a. Update on Implementation of the ACME Policy – CT State Community College (CSCC)  
Michael Stefanowicz, Interim CSCU Associate Vice President for Academic & Student Affairs, Dr. Fran Rosselli-Navarra, Interim Associate Vice President of Academic Programs & Curriculum, and Laura McCarthy, Director of Academic Success Center, Northwestern CT Community College, presented.

In May 2021, the BOR approved the Alignment and Completion of Math and English (ACME) policy. This is the first annual update to the BOR on the progress of the implementation of the ACME Policy. Laura McCarthy, who is managing the implementation of ACME, stated that the ACME Committee was established to move the work of implementing the ACME program forward. There are eleven committee members comprised of BOR representation and faculty from English, Math, and ESL programs who are charged with driving the ACME curriculum forward and making the co-requisite model thrive in CT. Under the ACME policy, all community college students will start in a college-level course and receive the appropriate support to accomplish the goals of English 101 and the appropriate Math course. ESL programs will be given more time and different instruction while holding true to the tenets of the co-requisite model. Currently, we use a pre-requisite model in which students must first complete the support needed to get into the college-level math and English classes. The co-requisite model, used in several states, has shown better outcomes and improvement in equity.

The timeframe for the implementation of ACME is between Fall 2023 to Fall 2025 with the timeframe determined by the faculty. AVP Stefanowicz elaborated on the small core ACME working group comprised of Math and English faculty. The Math component is on a faster timeline. They have different math pathways to design, for example, STEM Math and Social Science Math, and have assigned leads to each pathway. The English component is designing

different levels of support for English 101 which every student takes. The ESL Council has written a white paper as part of the alignment process. One of the co-chairs on the ESL Council serves as a member of the ACME Committee. Dr. Forest Helvie has been named Interim Director of Professional Development for CSCC working to develop courses for faculty on how to teach the co-requisite model.

AVP Stefanowicz noted that charges are being finalized for the small core working group and for a larger advisory committee which will broadly advise the entire ACME project and will include representatives from the CSUs and CT Dept. of Education.

AVP Stefanowicz stated that the timeline for the full ACME implementation was changed to 2025; however, CSCC may start Fall 2023 with some traditional pre-requisite classes and piloting some co-requisite courses. The mix of prerequisite and co-requisite courses will be determined as the ACME implementation moves forward.

*Questions/Recommendations from the Committee included:*

- i. *Will you have high school and continuing/adult education representation on the ACME Advisory Council?* Response: Provost Gates and Interim Provost and VP for Academic Affairs Mike Rooke are forming the ACME Advisory Council. We can certainly include high school and continuing/adult education members on the Council.
- ii. *Are supports for co-requisite courses optional or required?* Response: (AVP Stefanowicz) The policy has not changed. Based on an assessment of student needs, a number of hours of support will be recommended. The student could opt out and just take the college-level course. This will be an informed decision. What has changed is that the support courses/hours will count toward the credit load and financial aid even though the support is non-credit. Response: (Dr. Rosselli-Navarra) The opt out is a one-on-one guided placement discussion. For ESL students the discussion will include the ESL instructor. It is an intensive process to opt out of what is being recommended to the student.
- iii. *Have you done or will you be doing analysis on bias testing where students of color are improperly placed in pre-requisite courses and on whether developmental courses and supports are compensating for under resourcing for students of color in K-12?* Response: (Dr. Rosselli-Navarra) Data analysis is built into the policy, the implementation and beyond. We are collecting data on KPIs and will develop additional measures beyond the KPIs. The placement tests that we were using before were biased. We will now be using a student's GPA and additional measures for placements into supports. GPA is a better predictor, even to address the issue of under resourcing for students of color in K-12. Students who come in at higher levels can also take advantage of supports. We are not getting rid of the supports that developmental courses provide. The ACME Model is an attempt to address the kinds of concerns that you are bringing up. Response: (Director McCarthy) We are continuing to bring on national experts to connect CSCC with people who've been teaching the co-requisite model in CA and GA.

Chair Harris thanked everyone involved in the ACME initiative for all their hard work and efforts. The work is difficult but important and the work needs to continue.

b. CSCU Accessibility Policy Update

Kevin Corcoran, Executive Director of Digital Learning, presented. The BOR passed the CSCU Accessibility Policy for electronic information and technology in October 2020. Director Corcoran opened with the definition of accessibility as adopted by the CSCU Accessibility Council – “Accessibility is the systematic removal of policies, procedures or practices that unfairly discriminate and can prevent individuals from participating fully in a situation. Systematic barriers are often put into place unintentionally”. Director Corcoran noted that not all disabled students self-identify; so, CSCU can only provide accommodations for those who do. He reviewed three laws that have been passed over the last 50 years which provided accommodations, equal access, opportunity and equity, and, incorporated provisions in technology for the disabled.

The CSCU Accessibility Council created a companion guide with recommendations for a starting point to the CSCU institutions. Within the last year, institutions have formed committees to address issues at the campuses, provided status reports on how they are progressing and have identified common barriers that can be addressed more broadly. Year 1 which commenced on September 1, 2021, will start the implementation toward specific standards.

Director Corcoran stated that accessibility efforts are about student success. He discussed the Higher Education Landscape, nationally and in CT, in terms of disabled students not self-identifying and the effects on their completion and graduation rates. Nationally, less than 10% of disabled students self-identify. In CSCU, the statistics are between 4-5%. The effects of failing to self-identify and not getting support result in students taking longer to graduate or not graduating at all. Director Corcoran discussed why students may not choose to disclose their disabilities and seek assistance. He noted that Accessibility Offices at our institutions have limited resources and staffing. He posed the question as to whether CSCU could support disabled students if more chose to self-identify. Does the infrastructure and funding exist? He discussed cognitive and physical barriers to education and how universal design for learning can benefit all students.

Director Corcoran summarized the achievements of the CSCU Accessibility Council which has created:

- i. An accessibility website which offers a broad collection of resources to faculty/staff
- ii. A content check list to help with course design
- iii. A PowerPoint Presentation for training that any campus can adapt
- iv. A companion guide for policy implementation

The Accessibility Council is working on the development of a fully online training course and a faculty/staff recognition program to celebrate accessibility innovations.

*Questions/Recommendations from the Committee included:*

- i. *Are you reaching out directly to disabled people regarding these accessibility initiatives? Are you ensuring that the terminology on the website and with the content is understandable to all?* Response: We have staff, faculty, and, two student representatives with disabilities serving on the CSCU Accessibility Council. The representatives have a wide range of disabilities. We agree that all content should be understandable to all.
- ii. *There are legal ramifications to institutions which don't make coursework accessible. Are you making institutions aware of what the legal ramifications are for not providing accessibility?* Response: We have presented to and are communicating with



the CSU Presidents, the Regional Presidents, and the Chief Academic Officers of the CSCU Academic Council. The risk of non-compliance is clear and present.

**On a motion by A. Budd and seconded by H. Howery, the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting of the October 7, 2021, BOR Academic and Student Affairs Committee at 11:06 a.m.**