



Board of Regents

SPECIAL MEETING BOARD OF REGENTS & THE STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE Meeting Minutes

10:00 a.m., Friday, March 4, 2022
Conducted Via Remote Participation

Regents	SAC/SGA Members & Alternates	Staff
Holly Howery (chaired meeting)	Julia Noriega, Chair – SAC	President Terrence Cheng
Rick Porth	Brandon Iovene, Vice Chair - SAC	Alice Pritchard
Elise Wright	Eliot Ryan, Sec’y - SAC	Alison Buckley
Aviva Budd	Kimberly Shropshire	Angelo Simoni
Julia Noriega	Will Herens	Pam Heleen
Brandon Iovene	Luis Sanchez	Kerry Kelley
Arrived late:	Matt Julius	Lesley Mara
- Felice Gray-Kemp	Nelson Rivera	Ben Barnes
- Ira Bloom	Haneen Alkabasi	Mark Rozewski
- JoAnn Ryan	Lysette Rojas	Sherry Paquette
- Ari Santiago	Chienye Emenyonu	
ExOfficio:	Tennel Rhodes	
- David Blitz	Eric Green	
- Kelli Vallieres	Tahira Gordon	
- Colena Sesanker	Yuxin Hao	
	Jocelyn Eagle	

CALL TO ORDER

Regent Holly Howery, as moderator, called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. Pam Heleen added that a quorum of the Board was present.

WELCOME

President Cheng welcomed everyone and introduced the agenda items.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

On a motion by Regent Wright and seconded by Regent Porth, the agenda was adopted by unanimous voice vote.

WELCOME REMARKS

Julia Noriega, Chair of the Student Advisory Committee gave her opening remarks and thanked everyone for attending.

DISCUSSION AND FEEDBACK ON KEY STUDENT ISSUES

Discussion took place on the issues of affordability and barriers to student success and completion:

- Julia Noriega asked if there are any increases in other types of aid for students as tuition increases (i.e., food or housing aid).
Ben Barnes noted the increased set-aside money for student aid, as well as the increase in Pell grant funds and the fully funded PACT program. Lesley Mara commented on how the issues of food insecurity are being addressed (i.e., gift from Stop & Shop), as well as a community college pilot program for affordable housing.
The Care for Kids program is also being looked at to address the issues of childcare for students with dependents.
Luis Sanchez suggested that we should investigate using some of the emergency grant to offset the cost of gas for commuter students.
- Will Herens noted that non-traditional students who are only offered loans in the aid package may choose not to continue their education rather than incurring the debt.
Alison Buckley noted the importance of community college affordability without student loans. It is one of our top priorities to find alternatives to support part-time students and adult learners.
- Brandon Iovene asked about the Board's top DEI priorities. Alison Buckley responded that the sense of belonging is at the core of their conversation. Professional advising staff has been hired to guide students, and it is important that these advisors reflect the student population. It was decided that a follow-up meeting to discuss DEI initiatives would be scheduled.
- Haneen Alkabasi asked about student aid options that aren't FAFSA based. Alison Buckley responded by suggesting that it is always best to fill out FAFSA first, then explore other options for grants and scholarships (work-study).
- Jocelyn Eagle asked about work-study possibilities for students to pay off tuition.
Alison Buckley responded by pointing out that work-study finances will flow better once the colleges are one merged institution. Work has begun on campuses to ensure that student services are available when and where students need them (i.e., students taking evening classes).
- Mark Rozewski (SCSU) provided information on the cost drivers of tuition at the universities. CSU is the least costly four-year degree in Connecticut and almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of the students do not pay the full price of tuition because of state, federal, and institutional aid. In part, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) drives the increases in the cost of education.
- Julia Noriega asked what might happen to students who are eligible for PACT but who wouldn't receive PACT funding because too many students register. Alison Buckley responded that all students who register by the priority deadline are evaluated and then any who come in after are evaluated on a first-come, first-serve basis. Kerry Kelley said that if we become oversubscribed, they are prepared to request more funding from the state. She also that discussion have begun to expand the program to part-time students, non-credit students, and other non-traditional students.
- Haneen Alkabasi asked about food pantry participation by all the campuses, as well as suggesting that students would be excited about adding gas gift cards. Lesley Mara indicated that all institutions (including Charter Oak) are running some form of food pantries. Many have used the pantry as a hub for providing other supports. She will investigate whether there are any gas station partners willing to assist students.

Angelo Simoni indicated that there are some community colleges who have used student activity funds to purchase gas cards.

- Brandon Iovene asked how we can ensure residential housing costs don't become too expensive for students and why CSUs have different housing pricing, making some campuses feel less accessible for some students. Mark Rozewski explained slight differences in costs may be attributed to the differences in dorm design, when they were built, and how they were financed.
- Regent Porth indicated that many of the community foundations around the state have pretty large scholarship programs; some require a FAFSA and some do not. He suggested that if it isn't being done already that we should publicize on websites the availability of the non-public scholarships. He also provided the link www.211ct.org for students to get additional assistance with non-academic supports such as housing, childcare, and mental health services.
- Eliot Ryan asked how PACT advertisement is being addressed. Kerry Kelley says marketing and a targeted launch is being worked on.
- Saphira Dorelus asked about extending PACT to part-time students. She indicated that it is very difficult to carry 12 or 15 credits with developmental/non-credit classes. Alison Buckley discussed accelerated terms and Guided Pathways. Saphira also asked whether Timely Care will be renewed at the end of the academic year. Angelo Simoni responded that the program is doing well and is running for two years.
- Regents Wright, Howery, and Budd thanked everyone for attending and urged them to continue these conversations within the SAC and on the individual campuses.

ADJOURN

On a motion by Regent Wright, seconded by Regent Porth, the meeting adjourned after a unanimous voice vote at 11:04 a.m.