

**BOARD OF REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION  
CT STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES (CSCU)  
Minutes of Student Advisory Committee Meeting  
Friday, September 17, 2021  
Conducted Via Remote Participation**

Asnuntuck CC	Kimberly Shropshire	Rep	Present
Asnuntuck CC	Claudia Cupe	Alternate	Present
Capital CC	Cynthia Zuniga	Rep	Not Present
Gateway CC	(no rep formally appointed)		
Housatonic CC	Jocelyn Eagle	Rep	Present
Manchester CC	Eliot Ryan	Rep	Present
Middlesex CC	Julia Noriega	Rep	Present
Naugatuck Valley CC	Will Herens	Rep	Present
Naugatuck Valley CC	Hailey Moran	Alternate	Not Present
Northwestern CC	Ruby Derefaka	Rep	Not Present
Northwestern CC	Luis Sanchez	Alternate	Present
Norwalk CC	Angenee Spencer	Rep	Not Present
Norwalk CC	Jacelyn Lopez	Alternate	Present
Quinebaug Valley CC	Kamila Correa	Rep	Not Present
Three Rivers CC	Lorenzo Enderle	Rep	Present
Tunxis CC	Nelson Rivera	Rep	Not Present
CCSU	Haneen Alkabasi	Rep	Present
CCSU	Joseph Young	Alternate	Not Present
ECSU	Samantha St. John	Rep	Present
SCSU	Brandon Iovine	Rep	Present
SCSU	Alex Grant	Alternate	Present
WCSU	Patrick Moody	Rep	Present
WCSU	Clinton Sosna	Alternate	Not Present
COSC	(no rep formally appointed)		

**Others Present:**

Angelo Simoni, CSCU Exec. Director for Student Relations, Student Advisory Committee Advisor  
Pam Heleen, Associate Secretary of the Board of Regents (recorder)  
Kelli Parady, CCSU Student  
Sherry Paquette, Director of Student Activities, Asnuntuck Community College  
Gordon Plouffe, Student Affairs, Manchester Community College

**CALL TO ORDER**

Angelo Simoni called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. Following roll call, Pam Heleen declared a quorum present.

### REMARKS FROM CANDIDATES FOR SAC OFFICER POSITIONS

- Angelo Simoni noted that at the September 17th meeting, it was announced that candidates for SAC officers could submit their letters of interest. We finally have three unopposed candidates. The Chair must be from a community college or Charter Oak and the Vice Chair must be from one of the universities.
- Each candidate spoke about why they would be good candidates for the position:
  - For Chair - Julia Noriega, Middlesex Community College  
Lorenzo Enderle asked if there was anything she expected of the representatives from the community colleges. Julia responded that she would like to see active participation, not being afraid to speak about your college.  
Will Herens asked what is one thing that she is most passionate about regarding either making change or pushing for it. Julia responded that instead of having students be at the front of people's minds, that students should be in the actual conversation while the decisions are being made.
  - For Vice Chair - Brandon Iovene, Southern Connecticut State University
  - For Secretary - Eliot Ryan, Manchester Community College
- As the three candidates ran unopposed, Angelo Simoni formally appointed the candidates.

### OPEN DISCUSSION

- Angelo Simoni noted that according to SAC bylaws, the SAC meets in the months that the BOR is in session. Normal meeting schedule is monthly on a Friday beginning at 10:00 a.m. and for right now, meetings will continue to be held virtually.
- The meeting is open to the public and is being recorded. It will be posted on the BOR YouTube channel.
- Members of the SAC are the student's voice from the individual campuses, and it is the responsibility of the Chair and the Vice Chair as voting members of the Board of Regents to bring the totality of the student voices to the table, to make decisions, and to vote according to student desire and needs.
- Angelo Simoni suggested that the SAC chose some high-level topics or issues to focus their engagement and advocacy so that all schools (no matter how different) can benefit (i.e., public safety, mental health, COVID, CT State). If the SAC would like to hear from anyone concerning these topics (or others), Angelo or Pam can make the arrangements. Correct information about issues will lead to informed decisions.
- Lorenzo Enderle asked what sort of reports or information the SAC would like to have shared from the individual campuses. Angelo Simoni stated that there needs to be a conversation with students about student activities and student government that reflects what's going on locally. Bringing back feedback from these conversations may be an option for an ad hoc SAC committee.
- Luis Sanchez noted that because of COVID, students feel disconnected and are still afraid of going out. He suggests that the SAC can have conversations about getting students more involved in activities and feeling more included in the college system. In addition, providing more information directly to students about the system and CT State would be helpful.
- Pam Heleen pointed out the BOR webpage. Historical documents (i.e., resolutions) for the BOR and its committees can be found there. Minutes of the SAC are found there and provide a sampling of the issues that have been addressed in the past.

### TIMELY MD UPDATE

- Angelo Simoni introduced TimelyCare (launched on October 11). It is for any student of the 12 community colleges enrolled in at least 1 class (credit or non-credit). Students will have access to 12 individual mental health counseling sessions with a health clinician via video or over the phone and can be scheduled via their website using your school credentials. Students can select their provider/clinician on the website. The sessions are reset every academic year.
- TimelyCare also gives community college students access to an on-demand health platform via telehealth where they can meet with a doctor, medical clinician, nurse, or physician's assistant to address any kind of health ailment or issue. Sessions are unlimited. They also can call in non-narcotic prescriptions. There's also a chat feature available 24/7/365.
- Meditation and yoga sessions are on the website now and can register to use them free of charge whenever you want.
- The colleges have been advised to offer a private space to students for their care if they do not have a computer or phone with a camera. This should be coordinated with each Dean of Students.
- Eliot Ryan stated that he thought this information isn't broadcast very well as it gets mixed in with the rest of the school emails. October 14 was National Depression Screening Day, broadcasting this sort of material differently would have been very beneficial to students.
- Angelo Simoni asked the group for suggestions about how to better communicate the availability of TimelyCare, especially to students who, for the most part, are attending school virtually. The information will be up on social media - web pages, Facebook, Instagram.
- Jocelyn Eagle noted that in the Housatonic Student Activities area, they get their best results via mycommnet.edu and BlackBoard. Can a page be built there? Angelo Simoni will follow up on the idea.
- Other ideas include having the TimelyCare message broadcast live to those students who are on campus and to have faculty mention it in their classes.
- Angelo Simoni asked that SAC members do their best to make sure that Deans of Students, Deans of Administration, Campus CEOs, and University Presidents are doing their part to share information about Timely Care.
- Claudia Cupe shared that a lot of students don't know how to locate their campus email which is a broader, bigger problem.

### COVID 19 UPDATE

- The System Office is working daily on COVID 19 and the restrictions that are in place. We had hoped to ease some of the restrictions for the spring semester, but that seems unlikely. Social distancing and mask restrictions will remain in place unless there is some major change in the health landscape.
- Most of our campuses have very high vaccination rates, whether they are fully or partially vaccinated.
- As emails go out to the system, faculty, and staff, Angelo Simoni will forward them to the SAC so they can have accurate data - vaccinations, testing, and medical and non-medical exemptions.
- Universities have exceptionally high vaccination rates, especially in their residential populations.
- There are no major outbreaks on any community college or university campus.
- Contact tracing and weekly surveillance testing (for the unvaccinated) are ramped up to make sure campuses are safe.
- Things are changing every day.

- Currently, for the community colleges, about 30% of classes are on ground (in person). We expect the number to rise to 50 - 60% for the spring. As classes start to repopulate on ground and students register for the in-person sessions, student activities will follow. Julia Noriega noted that it's important to continue to offer online classes to increase accessibility, student preference, or classroom anxiety. We can't go back to pre-COVID class delivery. We need to strike a balance for enrollment purposes while meeting students where they are.

#### **FINAL NOTES**

- Brandon Iovene shared that Southern faculty have been pushing back on the return to on ground classes, transitioning to more online classes. There was a 13% increase in the number of faculty who wanted to change their modality to either hybrid or fully online for next semester. It would be interesting to know what this looks like across the System and what the sentiment is behind it. We need to know how education will be permanently affected by something like this. We need to offer the best student experience that we can and that is not necessarily always online or hybrid.
- The meeting schedule for the rest of the semester will be sent out.
- The orientation session will be set up for the Chair and Vice Chair.
- Angelo Simoni will reach out to President Cheng and the staff of Students First to see if they can attend the next meeting.
- Jocelyn Eagle from Housatonic had a questions about the Attestation Form and revisions to System policy for accepting non-medical exemptions. Angelo Simoni stated that the changes are under advisement and review right now. No decisions at this time have been made for spring semester.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

*The meeting adjourned at 11:08 a.m.*