

**Board of Regents for Higher Education
Student Advisory Committee
May 04, 2018
10:00 am – 12:00 am
Board Room, Ground Floor
61 Woodland Street, Hartford, CT**

Meeting Minutes – Special Meeting

1. Call to order 10:00 am

2. Roll call

ACC|CCC|**ECSU**|HCC|MXCC|NVCC|QVCC|**SCSU**|TRCC|TXCC|**COSC**

3. Adoption of Agenda – Unanimous

4. Remarks from Angelo Simoni,

- Provided a brief update on the recent news of the NEASC response to the substantive change. Provided a letter of concern written by Hector to NEASC President in regards to their decision. Also provided an online article published by the Hartford Courant with Hector and President Ojakian’s remarks concerning the NEASC response.
- Angelo suggested that we should wait until the Fall semester to further discuss the specifics of a system wide student senate proposal due to the several members of the SAC graduating, SGA elections, Finals week, and Summer approaching.
- Indicated that he is researching with the General Council to see what the state statutes are in order to ensure that we are following proper protocols and standards when discussing the plans of a student wide system senate.
- Angelo suggested that instead of soliciting additional volunteers and spreading the students thin, the SAC should consider keeping the structure that is currently in place with only minor changes and perhaps create a subcommittee of the SAC. Suggested that we table this topic for further discussion in the Fall semester.
- Further clarified that there is no intention of merging the SGA or no intention of merging student activities fees.
- Indicated that we will move forward with the decision to consolidate some services after we further understand the details of how Student’s First will shape itself after NEASC’s decision.

- Matt Dunne, SAC Faculty Advisor, stated that he had sent an email to Hector with examples of the California and New York institutions and how their student systems work on a state level. Matt suggested that members of the committee should look through these and other institutions, at a national level, to provide us more insight on possible practices that we can adopt here in Connecticut.

5. Remarks from Kevin Corcoran, Executive Director of the Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium

- Provided the Student Advisory Committee an update on what the OER initiative is and how students can advocate to cut costs and provide savings on their textbooks, which can significantly impact the cost of college for some students.
- Requesting for current SAC members to ensure that they pass on the information of this initiative to their replacement and peers.
- Requesting to perhaps have a student representative from the SAC sit on the OER Advisory Committee in order to gain valuable student feedback that will help the initiative move forward.
- Hector asked how a student can advocate or locate more information about OER. Kevin stated that they can contact their local librarian for more information or speak to their teachers or faculty members.

6. Remarks from Angelo Simoni, Diversity and Inclusion

- Provided students an update on the details of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee and its current functions and affairs.
- Answered questions from students regarding the Diversity and Inclusion Committee and how to get involved.

7. Remarks from Mark Ojakian, CSCU President, Student's First Community College consolidation & NEASC decision.

- Expressed his disappointment with the decision of NEASC to deny the substantive change request submitted. Stated that he still plans to move forward with a singly accredited community college. Indicated that the timeline may shift and a lot of the hard work that has been done will be used as a basis to move forward. He has told the consolidation committee to continue the work of moving forward and he suggests that the Student Advisory Committee members continue to look at what a student wide senate would look like and also suggested that we still work on a proposal with our concerns listed as well as our ideas.
- Indicated that most of his remarks in regards to raising tuition and closing campuses is to make people aware of the budgetary decisions that need to be made at a higher level. President Ojakian stated that he has no intent or desire to choose to make that an option. He stated that he wants to raise awareness to the regular citizen that these discussions are based on financial issues such as the SEBAC Wage increases going into effect on July 1st of

this year, and next year the community colleges will be in a \$35 Million deficit. President Ojakian stated that he will continue to remain transparent and present the facts of the fiscal issues that we are facing and the possible solutions that we have to take in order to remain a sustainable system. He indicated that he will have more of a sense of direction after the board meeting next week.

- Matt Fleury, Chair of the Board of Regents came and spoke in agreement with President Ojakian and in support of his initiative. Chairman Fleury thanked the students for their hard work and dedication throughout this year.
- Housatonic Community College student asked how we would be able to maintain student services and keep our financial situation in check without closing campuses or cutting back on services. President Ojakian stated that the best way to do that is to move in the direction that we started a year ago, we need to make sure that with limited funding and resources we prioritize our assets. Indicated that sharing services and even Presidents throughout the entire system has shown a significant increase in revenue through enrollment rates.
- Asnuntuck Community College student asked how we can as students help in support of his decision to move forward with the certain parts of Student's First. President Ojakian stated that the best thing to do is continue to move forward and advocate on behalf of the Student's First initiative.
- Hector asked how the students of the Community Colleges of Connecticut can help show support given the negative press that President Ojakian has been receiving after the NEASC decision. President Ojakian indicated that the decision on how that is done is completely up to us.
- Middlesex Community College student suggested that perhaps partial consolidation could be an answer to the fiscal issues we are currently facing.
- Tunxis Community College student asked if there is still a plan to consolidate administrative services that don't necessarily need NEASC approval to move forward in saving money. President Ojakian indicated that they will be looking into the options available for us after next weeks board of regents meeting.
- Houstanic Community College student asked what specific pieces of the Student's First is moving forward. President Ojakian stated that no strategy has been in place yet but after speaking with NEASC he stated that we will be able to move forward with consolidating certain administrative services which is where we will save money, however, he will not have the details until after the board of regents meeting next week.
- In support of President Ojakian the students of the Community Colleges of Connecticut drafted a statement of support to be presented to President Ojakian in support of some phases of Students First moving forward in an attempt to not close any campuses or raise tuition.

8. Remarks from Greg DeSantis

- Provided an updated and report to the SAC regarding Guided Pathways
- Answered student's questions and concerns regarding Guided Pathways

9. Discussion for election of new officers for upcoming semester.

- Angelo suggested that at some point there needs to be a revision to the SAC bylaws because they do not line up on how the colleges and universities do business. Provided examples of student governments running elections towards the end of the semester and at times there is no SAC representative elected. To ensure continuity Angelo suggests the discussion of revising the bylaws this Fall semester.
- Angelo stated that according to the bylaws you can't be nominated to Chair or Vice Chair unless elected by the SGA to be a SAC member. In order to follow the general statute we have to delay our elections until the fall to allow student the opportunity to express interest, be nominated, and elected so that if they would like to run for Chair they can do so. At this point there was only one student from the entire CSCU system that displayed interest in the Chair position from the Community Colleges.
- Matt Dunne commented on the issue of cyclical challenge and the problem of continuity that we should try and resolve. Matt suggested that we start thinking about institutionalizing the committee, he is concerned that in the current model we become too dependent on the SAC rep without anticipating or preparing for the student's graduation. Suggests that we have someone that can promote these positions when throughout all campuses and have all faculty and students aware that this position is open
- Hector stated that there are still numerous open items that need to be resolved by the members of the SAC moving forward; The issue with Student Wide Senate structure and what that looks like after NEASCs decision, the issue of voting for Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary, as well as the issue of changing the bylaws to reflect continuity and effectiveness throughout the CSCU system.
- Hector suggested that we hold off meeting during the summer and reconvene once again during the Fall Semester. Students concerned that we will not have any leadership in the SAC or any representation from the students during the summer at the Board of Regent meetings. Angelo suggested that it is best to heed the legal advice from the general council and not convene during the summer if we do not have a Chair or Vice Chair running the meeting. Greg indicated that and Angelo along with Matt will also stated that they will be present

10. Adjourn at 11:30 am