



**Board of Regents for Higher Education
Student Advisory Committee (SAC)**

3/22/19

10:00am – 12:00pm

CSCU Office, Ground Floor

61 Woodland Street, Hartford, CT

Present

T. Cruz (NVCC), S. Maier (TCC), T. Wong (COSC), M. Long (MXCC), S. Moore (ACC),
(HCC), (TRCC), (MCC), (CCC), (GCC),

Advisor

A. Simoni (Executive Director for Student Relations and Compliance)

I. Call to Order: 10:02 am by S. Maier

II. Remarks Mr. Mark Ojakian, President of the CSCU System

- M. Ojakian thanked the SAC for inviting him to speak at the SAC meeting.
- M. Ojakian also thanked the students who attended the appropriations committee hearing and thanked those who testified at said hearing.
- Student testimonies make a huge impact on how much will be given to the CSCU's in terms of funding.
- M. Ojakian mentioned that the Finance Committee has agreed on a 5% increase on tuition fees for the state universities.
- The CSCU system is looking at finding additional funding to keep state universities and community colleges affordable for all students.
- M. Ojakian briefly mentioned that he will be meeting with students from all the community college's to clear up any misinformation about the Student's First Initiative.
- A representative from Three River's Community College expressed concern that student's may be forgotten with Student's First. The representative asked how Student's First will effect faculty positions and class sizes.
- M. Ojakian assured the members of the SAC that no college will be forgotten during the process. He also mentioned that no faculty positions will be affected by Student's First. The intention is to add more advisor and faculty positions to better cater to the students on each campus.
- M. Ojakian reminded the SAC that the president's from individual campuses will not be removed. President's from each campus will still be leading on campus and working with the community and the foundation.
- Student's First will allow for students to have a smooth transfer between colleges as well as take advantage of multiple institutions.
- M. Ojakian also shared that the BOR has selected search committees for each of the three regions in the regional president search. Who serves on each advisory committee is decided in each individual region. These committees then decide how forums for the search is run.
- A representative from Asnuntuck Community College expressed concern about a recent executive order from President Donald Trump.

- M. Ojakian assured the SAC that he will be reviewing the order to understand how we would be effected. He then stated that student's opinions will be respected but behavior or that threatens the safety of students will not be tolerated.
- S. Maier encouraged members of the SAC to review the Myths vs. Facts sheet provided. The sheet is available online but will also be attached to the minutes.

III. Mr. Ben Barnes, Tuition on Community College

- B. Barnes discussed the financial issues that Connecticut faces and how that effects community colleges. He further discussed the hole in budget and funding.
- He mentioned that Student's First will be taking a look at funding and addressing the need to consolidate certain functions.
- There are reserves for community colleges, however 40 million dollars cannot cover a 25 million dollar downfall.
- It is currently unclear whether tuition at community colleges will be increased. It is believed that the community colleges will not have a large tuition increase.
- In the past four years, community colleges have raised tuition by 2.5%. It is expected that there will be a 0% - 2.5% increase in tuition.
- Charter Oak has recently had a tuition increase that was just under 3%.
- B. Barnes also stated that if there is a tuition increase after class registration students will be covered. Students may be asked to meet with financial so that their financial aid package may be adjusted.
- B. Barnes further stated that there are plans in place to refill the reserves. It is a goal to limit the amount withdrawn from the reserves by 2020.
- B. Barnes expressed the importance of calling state representatives and expressing your concern for higher education. If a representative receives more than one call with the same concern they can take a deeper look at the issue.
- A. Simoni asked if CSCU's receive money from the CT lottery.
- B. Barnes answered saying that the money from the CT lottery goes into a general fund to pay for general things.
- B. Barnes expressed that he is more than happy to visit different institutions and inform students with correct information. Anyone with questions should reach out to B. Barnes via email.

IV. Remarks from Angelo Simoni, Executive Director for Student Relations and Compliance, CSCU:

- A. Simoni stated that if they wish to host B. Barnes on their institutions they should reach out to A. Simoni. These discussions should be open to all students and should host as many students as possible.
- A. Simoni discussed that the CSCU Public Safety Task Force has been reviewing all public safety procedures across all institutions.
- There has been discussion of performing physical training drills as a way to involve faculty and students.
- It is important that students and faculty are informed when there is a possible dangerous situation on campus. Often times students are unsure of what to do in an emergency and distribution of information is also be looked at.
- Aside from distribution of information the task force is also reviewing the

institutions themselves and their buildings. This could include electronic locks and having room numbers displayed within the classroom.

- Every institution is different and it may take time to tackle the issue of public safety. However, the task force intend to implement tighter emergency plans by fall 2019.
- A. Simoni shared the success of the Regional President Search in Region 2 – North West. (Asnuntuck Community College, Naugatuck Valley Community College, Northwestern CT Community College, and Tunxis Community College)
- Students should be attending the open forums provided during the search. It is a great opportunity to ask questions and have a voice. Any student can attend the open forums no matter the college they are hosted at.
- Each region hosts the forums differently and the forums will be announced the week before they are set to take place.

V. Discussion on SAC Sub-Committee:

- S. Maier shared that the sub-committee met recently and decided that there are few things that need to be changed on the SAC by-laws.
- A. Simoni mentioned that by – laws were last reviewed many years ago and haven't been reviewed since. One of the main issues with the by-laws is that the SAC elections do not mirror those of local SGA elections.
- S. Maier suggested changing the language of the by-laws so that the SAC elections can be held later in the year rather than earlier.
- M. Dunne expressed that much of the concern comes from the fact that there was no student leadership for the SAC for at least five months.
- M. Dunne stated that the by-laws revision should be finished no later than May 3rd.
- It is important that the by-laws also clarify how long representatives and officers are supposed to sit on the SAC.
- If a member of the SAC is interested on sitting in on the by-laws sub-committee they should reach out to S. Maier. It is also important to let her know whether you can or cannot attend the meeting so that she is made aware.
- M. Dunne urged the members of the SAC to join the sub-committee as it's important to have student voices. It is important to have more than one person deciding the revisions. He also mentioned that a report from the sub – committee should be added as an official agenda item.

VI. Open Discussion

- A. Simoni will send out an email regarding the EPass system and how that effects non-credit students.
- A. Simoni will also email to find out more information about MXCC proposals.

VII. Adjournment: 11:28am by M. Long

Respectfully recorded and submitted by Tabitha Cruz