
[FacultyStaff] Message from President Stephen H. Kolison, Jr. March 21, 2025

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To: Faculty/Staff group <facultystaff@fredonia.edu>

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OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

March 21, 2025

Dear Faculty and Staff,

I hope that your spring break has been restorative and you are enjoying a well-deserved break from classes. We have had two key meetings on campus during the spring break, and I want to share some highlights from those meetings.

College Council Meeting

The President's Cabinet members and I host quarterly College Council meetings during the academic year. Through those meetings, we share key highlights and progress on campus priorities with the College Council members. The meetings also provide opportunities for members of the College Council to make recommendations on various matters to the administration. The leadership of Governance groups (the University Senate and the Student Association) are included in all College Council meetings and make presentations on subjects of their choosing. At the March 19, 2025 meeting, Cabinet members and I offered updates on initiatives you may have read or heard about in other venues, and I believe it will be helpful for you to see a summary with some updates on these items.

My Presidential priorities remain focused on ensuring the success of our financial plan, student recruitment and retention, and academic program development and alignment with student demand. Discussions of those priorities drove most of the conversation at the meeting.

You may recall that I shared with you, in my March 17, 2025 email, that the New York State budget discussions are continuing and are favorable for SUNY. Because the budget process is not over, it is important that I ask you to please continue to keep up the great advocacy efforts on behalf of the SUNY system and our campus. Securing state support, in addition to the diligent work on the priorities I mentioned above, are all necessary components of ensuring our bright future. Below, I would like to share more details from the discussion at the meeting.

For Academic Affairs

- Student retention is up from Fall 2023, and the ACE program continues to be successful under the leadership of Assistant Vice President for Retention and Academic Success, Erin Mroczka. We currently have about 157 students in the program, and SUNY has awarded us additional funding (pending the final state budget approvals) to expand the program to 250 students starting in Fall 2025. This was due to the student success indicators our campus has demonstrated. Congratulations to AVP Mroczka and her team for this great achievement and recognition from SUNY!
- The Academic Master Plan has been sent to the campus for review and input. The plan provides a framework for developing academic programs that are strategic for our future. This master plan will also impact our funding for the facilities plan.
- Dr. Horowitz reported that work to launch five online undergraduate degree completion programs has been underway, and three of these in Childhood Education, Psychology, and Sport Management are on track for Fall 2025. Following those will be an additional two, Music Studies and Integrative Studies, pending further steps related to accreditation and curriculum approvals. The College Council has a keen interest in increasing our online presence, and I am looking to the leadership of Dr. Horowitz and the Academic Affairs team to ensure the success and timeliness of these program launches.

For Enrollment Management and Services

- Under Dr. Kendall's leadership, the team has been collaborating with various areas on campus to focus on efforts to enhance student yield. Their efforts have resulted in more streamlined processes for scholarship awards, financial aid packaging, student engagement through the Slate system, and service to prospective students.
- The Admissions Liaison Group is a collaboration between admissions and the academic units with the aim of shifting to a consistent, student-centric approach, sharing best practices, and promoting cross-academic unit collaboration. Thank you to those faculty and chairs in the academic

programs who have been working with the admissions team to ensure our efforts have the best possible outcomes for recruitment.

- In terms of applications, Dr. Kendall reported that we are on track with the trends from last year. While the target for enrollments for the next three years established in partnership with SUNY is reasonable, our goal is to continue exceeding those targets to further strengthen our position as we work through the financial plan. I thank Dr. Kendall for her leadership in this area and her team for their diligence in keeping our enrollment targets on pace. I cannot overstate the importance of meeting and exceeding the enrollment targets established with SUNY.

For University Advancement and Community Engagement

- I reported on the 2024 SUNY Fredonia SEFA campaign. Thank you again to those of you who contributed to the SEFA campaign. The goal of \$25,000 was exceeded, with a total of \$27,033 raised by SUNY Fredonia employees. These funds will directly benefit the community, and your generosity is a testimony of one of the many ways we all contribute to improving the conditions in our communities. Many thanks to Kellie Sacilowski and members of the SEFA committee for spearheading last year's campaign.
- VP Rohr noted the significant increase in giving to the university from faculty and staff in 2024, which demonstrates the faith that faculty and staff have in the great work being done at our institution. Thank you for your gifts and for the value you place on the work we do with our students despite our challenges.
- VP Rohr just welcomed two major gift officers, Erin Zinni and Tim Smeal, who filled two critical vacancies in her division. Both Erin and Tim bring strong backgrounds and professional expertise in fundraising. She noted that this upcoming year, they are focusing on ways to increase unrestricted giving. Enhancing this area of giving will provide additional flexibility in the ways we are able to leverage Foundation funds to serve our students and programs as we continue navigating our financial realities. Kudos to VP Rohr and her team for these significant achievements!

JCC and Fredonia Explorations

Another key meeting this week was on March 19, 2025, when President of Jamestown Community College, Dr. Daniel DeMarte, and I held a kick-off meeting with staff in key leadership positions to discuss ways that we can collaborate better to serve students in the northern part of Chautauqua County. You may recall that I mentioned this to you in my communication on January 27, 2025. The steering committee was charged with accomplishing goals that include (i) enhancing the preferred partnership culture and collaboration, (ii) identifying programs compatible with building seamless and value-added

pathways for prospective students in Chautauqua County, and (iii) exploring and identifying dedicated learning environments on the Fredonia campus for JCC students and related services. We will continue to update the campus as their work continues. Thank you to the members of this group from both the JCC campus and SUNY Fredonia.

Meeting with SUNY System Partners

The plan we have in place for financial sustainability is an ongoing project, and we continue working in partnership with SUNY with regular check-in meetings. As described in previous communications, our approach can be summarized in terms of three pillars: Growth, Strategic Reductions in Expenditures, and Enhanced Efficiencies. Vice President Lynch, Interim Provost Horowitz, Vice President Kendall, and I are scheduled to travel to Albany next week to meet with Chancellor King and members of his senior leadership team to discuss progress on our financial plan and receive feedback. I anticipate a productive and good meeting.

Very truly yours,

Dr. K

Stephen H. Kolison, Jr., Ph.D.
President and Professor

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