

**SUNY Cobleskill College Council Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, December 3, 2025**  
**DRAFT**

**College Council Members in Attendance:** Eric Stein, Anna Blinn Cole, Erik Hage, Martin Messner, Tracy Purcell, Susan Rightmyer, Marilyn Wyman, Daniil Usmanov

**College Council Guests:**

*Cabinet Members* - Marion Terenzio, Derwin Bennett, Laura Gross, Anne Hopkins-Gross, Gus McGiver, Darcy Medica, Anna Miarka-Grzelak, Jason Politi, John Zacharek, Cynthia Zinzow

**Apologies:** Theresa Heary, Linda Cross

**Welcome / Opening of Meeting**

- Mr. Stein welcomed all and called the meeting to order at 8:30
- Nick Testa, Department Chair for Applied Career and Digital Technologies, was introduced. Mr. Testa welcomed the council to Curtis Mott and has offered to give a tour to them after the meeting
  
- Erik motioned to approve the minutes from the October 29<sup>th</sup> meeting, and the motion passed.

**Part I Information Sharing with On-Campus Contingencies**

**President's Update – *Marion Terenzio, President***

- Agrivoltaics
  - Upcoming NYPA press conference about the agrivoltaics project.
  - Description of \$9 million project, Cobleskill as the only agriculture-related energy partner.
  - Research on grazing and crop production under solar panels.
  - Estimate that energy savings could reach “about half our electric” usage.
  - Solar construction begins in 2027.
  - Advocates can explain it as, “It is a research project to see the power, the issues, and the impact of agrivoltaics in the second largest industry in the state.”
- SUNY Agriculture Tech Center Announcement / Ag Initiatives
  - Recent press conference on SUNY AgriTech Center.
  - Upcoming meeting with Chris White of SUNY.
  - The first step is to complete the inventory we suggested of all programs related to agriculture, so we can gain a clear understanding of what currently exists. Based on that information, we will propose the next steps to connect these

efforts and identify opportunities for broad, coordinated reach across all agriculture-related initiatives.

- Connection to the state Blue Ribbon Panel on agriculture education.

### **Enrollment Management Plan** – *President Terenzio*

- Enrollment numbers did not meet the aspirational target.
- Ania is doing some very creative and innovative restructuring for recruitment
- Increase in marketing investment and new commercial.
- “Numbers are already starting to show” improvement.
- Retention task force, “boots on the ground” frontline staff involved.
  - Staff given authority to make immediate changes.
- Plan to discuss more in executive session.

### **Budget Summary Report** – *Laura Gross, VP for Finance and Operations*

- Census at week 3 was 1,824 students; we have lost some students since then for various reasons.
- Analysis of 120-day vs. 90-day pause showed “significant frictional savings.”
- Approximately \$300,000 in savings across ~10 positions since July 1.
- Mid-year cut required
  - We will review all funds and will have to pull the allocation.
- FEMA reimbursement of \$550,000 received; “pure cash”; cannot be spent due to deficit.

### **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Update** - *Derwin Bennett, Chief Diversity Officer & Exec Dir of Edu Support Services*

- New Unity Center director: Anthony Tesiero.
- Anthony will be providing the day-to-day operations for the Unity Center, multicultural educational offerings for the campus, and providing leadership for our Greek life program
- Diversity, equity, inclusion, sense of belonging course on Brightspace; “well received.”
- Students selected “respect” when asked which of our values resonates with them the most.
- Universal Design for Learning task force professional development in January.
- MLK Day celebration planning underway.
- DEISJ credit-bearing course planned for Fall 2026.

### **Student Development Update**– *Anne Hopkins Gross, VP for Student Development*

- SUNY service corps summit scheduled for Friday. The Wellness staff is presenting a session.
- Governor will speak; wellness center highlighted.
- Wellness center appointments are up 25%.
- Campus engagement numbers (1,600 unique attendees, 64 orgs holding events; up from 12 last year, 1,629 total events; up from 300 last year).
- Food pantry usage numbers, 400 visits with just under 2000 items taken.
- Housing insecurity: 19 students assisted with multiple “touches” per student.
- Discussion of students staying in Alumni Commons during breaks.

### **Faculty Governance Update** – Erik Hage – Presiding Officer of the Faculty

- Upcoming campus governance meeting is on December 18.
  - Will be reviewing five different academic policies and voting on them
  - Focus on appeal sections of the grade policy, transfer credit appeal, withdrawals, and academic integrity.
- Pilot institutional governance committees starting next semester.
- Committees mentioned: fiscal advisory, strategic planning, and infrastructure committee.
  - Student well-being and engagement committee to start in the Fall.
  - Governance structure explanation (academic vs institutional).
- The President and Provost will be attending the Executive Committee.
- Professional development funding for employees is available.
- Governance rubrics being developed and vetted.
  - Aim to assess governance bodies using rubrics.

### **Advancement, Foundation and Alumni Updates** - John Zacharek, VP for Development

- Annual fund letter included real laminated leaves handpicked on campus.
- Positive donor reactions.
- Handwritten notes to lapsed donors.
- Annual funds are seen as a pipeline for major gifts.
- Current fundraising total ~1.4 million; pipeline ~4 million.
- Prior years saw \$500–800k annually; last year raised 3.325 million.
- New staff accomplishments (e.g., \$100,000 Apple stock gift).
- Impact program applications totaled \$220,000; will receive prorated amount.
- SUNY Albany is ending management of charitable gift annuities in 2026.
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### **Student Government Update** – Daniil Usmanov, SGA President

- Campus is running smoothly after Thanksgiving. Students focused on academics and finals.
- Report on last SGA Senate meeting.
  - Introduction of two new clubs:
    - Cyber Security Club
    - Jiu-Jitsu Club
- The President adds details about students asking about scholarships and how they work. We will be doing a scholarship campaign.
- Constitution revisions underway; strengthening expectations for senators and executive members.
- Mr. Stein added remarks on the agricultural roundtable with Chancellor King. Daniil was one of just a handful chosen to sit on the panel. Daniil was asked, “*What more can we do?*” Daniil’s response, *right now, all of us at the table, being part of the agriculture department, know what agriculture is to us. However, if you give the same question to a person in the city who has no idea what agriculture is, they only think of one thing: a*

*farm. Our priority when it comes to this is to actually educate them on all the opportunities, all the career options that are within agriculture.”*

**SUNY Academic Momentum** *Darcy Medica, Provost/VP Academic Affairs*

- All SUNY campuses have been given targets for retention for students completing their first-year course and credit accumulation.
- Cobleskill highlighted for strong math completion.
- Other areas needing improvement include retention and graduation rates.
- “Aspirational yet attainable” goals for each campus.
- Report due in February.
- Team meeting Monday: three faculty are included, the SUNY requirement is only one faculty member
- Retention task force work will feed into the plan.

**Grants, Workforce, Entrepreneurship, and Dairy Product Development** *Scott Ferguson, Chief Economic Development Officer*

- SUNY–NYPA grant proposal: expected ~\$300,000 per year for two years.
- Related to green workforce development, EV, and microcredentials.
- Value-added product cohort: recruiting businesses (goal ~20); current cohort produced ~45 products.
- Small business workshop: LLC formation session tonight.
- DOT workshop is held on campus every other week.
- EMPOWERS program: subsidizing agribusiness training; some free.
- OPE grant (\$750,000 over three years) back online.
- Ice cream and milk tasting events upcoming; need to homogenize milk for CAS supply.
  - Description of milk processing changes; flavor development.
  - Strawberry & cream ice cream identified as “winning flavor.”
  - Discussion on lactose intolerance, nondairy options, and cheese aging.
- Description of cheddar and cheese logs.
  - Discussion of cheese sales (“pick your three for \$20”).
- Mention of farm operations, restructuring to improve revenue while keeping the educational mission.
- Farm-to-table initiative for campus.
- Partnership with Fordham in the Bronx; Cobleskill to consult on agricultural curriculum and facility design.

## **Part II – Council Reports, Discussion and/or Actions**

### **Advisory Committee Appointments (Applied Psychology)**

- Overview of the purpose of advisory committees (curriculum input, industry relevance, connections).
- Names submitted: Hannah Snider, Jennifer Golden, Samantha Perry, Deborah B.
- Motion to appoint; motion approved unanimously.

### **Council Member Questions / Advisory Committee Participation**

- Discussion about the number of advisory committees.
- Noted several fell off during COVID and are being rebuilt.
- Mentioned active committees in agriculture, John Deere, ag business, culinary, early childhood, and graphic design (uncertain, “have to check”).
- Request for updated list.

### **College Council Calendar / Events**

- Holiday breakfast December 18; council invited.
- January convocation was described, with an open invitation to the council

Martin made a motion to end the meeting, Tracy seconded, and the meeting at 9:41 a.m.