

University at Buffalo Council

Meeting minutes

June 12, 2023, 8:00 a.m.

Buffalo Room, 10 Capen Hall

Members present:

Jeremy M. Jacobs, Chairman

A.J. Franklin

Scott E. Friedman

Michael Cropp

Jonathan Dandes

Brenda W. McDuffie

Other participants:

Satish K. Tripathi, President

Jason Diffenderfer, Interim Vice President for University Advancement

Ann Bisantz, Dean of Undergraduate Education

Brian Hamluk, Vice President for Student Life

Attendees:

Marcelo Araujo, Dean of the School of Dental Medicine

Brice Bible, Vice President and Chief Information Officer

Beth Del Genio, Chief of Staff to the President

John Della Contrada, Vice President for Communications

Venu Govindaraju, Vice President for Research and Economic Development

Graham Hammill, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Graduate School

Laura Hubbard, Vice President for Finance and Administration

Jocelyn Jakubus, Director of Presidential and University Events

Allison Korta, Assistant Director of Presidential Events

Dan LaDelfa, Assistant Director for Presidential Communications

Kemper Lewis, Dean of the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences

Elizabeth Lidano, Dean of Students

Eileen Sherman, Deputy to the Provost

David Shurtleff, Instructional Support Specialist, UBIT

Timothy Tryjankowski, Chair of the Professional Staff Senate

Opening business

Call to order

Chairman Jacobs called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m.

Approval of minutes

Chairman Jacobs called for a motion to approve the minutes of the March 27, 2023, meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Friedman, seconded by Ms. McDuffie and approved unanimously by Mr. Friedman, Mr. Franklin, Ms. McDuffie, Mr. Dandes, Dr. Cropp, and Chairman Jacobs. None voted to oppose.

Topics for discussion or action

Report of the Chairman

Chairman Jacobs began his report by acknowledging out-going student-representative, Mr. A.J. Franklin. Mr. Jacobs thanked him for his service and presented him with a commendation. Mr. Jacobs added that he is looking forward to working with the new student-representative-elect, Alike Turton. Chairman Jacobs then asked Interim Vice President Diffenderfer to present details to the Council about a proposed re-naming resolution.

The resolution is for the re-naming of the Brittany Murchie Sports Performance Center to the Brittany Murchie Mulla Sports Performance Center. Ms. Murchie Mulla was recently married and requested the performance center name reflect this change. Chairman Jacobs called for a motion to approve the resolution. A motion was made by Ms. McDuffie, seconded by Mr. Friedman and approved unanimously by Mr. Friedman, Mr. Franklin, Ms. McDuffie, Mr. Dandes, Dr. Cropp, and Chairman Jacobs. None voted to oppose.

Mr. Jacobs then asked President Tripathi to provide information regarding UB's Chancellor Charles P. Norton Medal recipient, Mr. Marcus Yam. Mr. Yam is a foreign correspondent and photojournalist for the Los Angeles Times. He graduated from UB in 2006 with a degree in aerospace engineering. Mr. Yam has received three Pulitzer Prizes for his work. He was presented with the Norton Medal at UB's graduate commencement ceremony for the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences. Mr. Jacobs called for a motion to approve a resolution honoring Mr. Yam as the 2023 Norton Medal recipient. A motion was made by Mr. Dandes, seconded by Mr. Friedman, and approved unanimously by Mr. Friedman, Mr. Franklin, Ms. McDuffie, Mr. Dandes, Dr. Cropp, and Chairman Jacobs. None voted to oppose.

Drafts of the resolutions can be found on the [UB Council website](#). Chairman Jacobs then asked President Tripathi to give his university report.

University Briefings: Report of the President

President Tripathi began his report by thanking Mr. Franklin for his service and stating that he also looked forward to working with Ms. Turton.

Dr. Tripathi updated the Council on UB's commencement activities during the spring semester. UB held 18 conferral ceremonies and five recognition events. During the academic year, approximately 10,350 undergraduate and graduate students received their degrees. The most popular undergraduate majors were business administration, psychology, computer science, mechanical engineering, and communication. The top five graduate majors were computer science and engineering, engineering science, management information systems, social work, and medicine. In addition to Mr. Yam receiving the Norton Medal, two people were honored during the College of Arts and Sciences graduate commencement. Ms. Agnes

Williams received a SUNY Honorary Degree and SUNY Distinguished Service Professor emeritus, Oren Lyons, received the UB President's Medal.

President Tripathi also updated the Council on the approved New York State budget and its impact on SUNY and UB. The enacted SUNY budget includes \$163 million in additional operating aid for state-operating campuses. It also creates a one-time, \$60 million Transformational Initiatives Fund. In terms of capital funding, UB will receive \$100 million. The SUNY budget also includes \$650 million for critical maintenance projects. The budget establishes a state-matching fund for endowment contributions to the 4 SUNY Centers. The state will contribute up to \$500 million by granting \$1 for every \$2 contributed to university endowments.

In terms of UB's success in attracting highly competitive, major federal grants during the past academic year, UB received a \$4.8 million award to apply UB's concussion protocol to active-duty military; a \$5 million grant to help older Americans identify online scams; a \$7.8 million collaborative grant to explore the influence of the oral microbiome on cancer; a \$15 million collaborative grant to support entrepreneurship in rural areas and small cities; and a \$20 million National Science Foundation grant to create the AI Institute for Exceptional Education. The university's federal research expenditures continue to rise year after year, topping more than \$200 million last year for the first time in UB's history.

President Tripathi also highlighted UB faculty members who have recently been recognized for their excellence. He noted two-time Fulbright Scholar Daniel Hess, a professor in the Department of Urban and Regional Planning; Guggenheim Fellow Eduardo Mercado, professor in the Department of Psychology; and Deborah Chung, professor in the Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, who was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Seven UB faculty were named SUNY Distinguished Professors this past academic year.

UB also remained deliberate in providing students transformative educational experiences and developing new academic programs that address contemporary issues. UB is just one of five universities nationwide chosen for funding to pilot a curriculum that addresses medical misinformation. Other new programs included a master's degree in computational earth science that enables students to model climate change; an advanced certificate in affordable housing; and a master's and PhD in engineering education. President Tripathi also noted accomplishments among UB students, including two Goldwater Scholars; a Marshall Scholar; the university's second-ever Truman Scholar; and five who were selected for the National Science Foundation's Graduate Research Fellowship Program.

President Tripathi invited Ann Bisantz, Dean of Undergraduate Education, and Brian Hamluk, Vice President for Student Life, to give presentations on the UB student experience.

University Briefings: Presentation by Ann Bisantz

Dean Bisantz reported on the variety of programs across UB that support student academic success. One third of UB's students are Pell-eligible. UB graduates the highest number of Pell-eligible students among AAU institutions. UB's signature general education program is called UB Curriculum—a nationally innovative program in education. The model uses high impact practices including first-year small class seminars and a capstone project. UB offers a wide variety of academic support programs to aid the university's diverse student population. These programs include the Center for Excellence in Writing and the Math Place, the Experiential Learning Network, and peer-assisted learning and tutoring services. UB has recently initiated a student success coaches program. This began in the winter of 2023. UB also has several targeted programs including Proud to be First—targeting first-generation students, and an early alert program to ensure students falling behind are receiving the support they need. Mr. Friedman asked how academic institutions trying to strike a balance for students between offering in-person and online educational programming. Dean Bisantz stated UB continues to refine its balance of these offerings.

Vice President Hamluk reported UB's Student Life strives to support student academic pursuits, foster a campus environment that encourages student involvement, and support student career outcomes to become engaged alumni. Student Life focuses on four areas: student support; engagement and success; health and well-being; and diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice. UB has placed specific focus on accessibility resources to ensure UB is current with technologies and appropriately staffed to accommodate student support. UB has enhanced its orientation and student transition programming as well as offering more opportunities for students to participate in community service and civic engagement. UB is enhancing its health and well-being programming for students through its counseling center, student health services, and health promotions programs. UB is also embedding in its programming the importance of diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice. This includes UB's process for staff recruitment and hiring. Mr. Dandes inquired about UB's application numbers. Provost Weber stated applications are up approximately 10-15% from the previous year. Mr. Dandes also asked about UB's dormitory occupancy. Vice President Hamluk stated that occupancy has been at 99% the past year and expected to be the same for the coming academic year. Dr. Cropp asked if there is secondary metric in terms of graduates—such as the number of graduates who stay in the WNY area. Dr. Tripathi stated it is something that UB tries to measure. The trend is that more and more graduates are staying in the region. Mr. Dandes asked about UB's enrollment trends. President Tripathi stated that enrollment has gone up for UB, Stony Brook and Binghamton, while most other SUNY campuses have seen enrollment declines.

President Tripathi thanked Dean Bisantz and Vice President Hamluk for their presentations and thanked the Council members for their continued advocacy.

Report of the Student Representative

Mr. Franklin began his report stating that he has had an amazing year serving as the student representative to the Council. Mr. Franklin highlighted several points of pride including the student success coaching program, diversifying food options on campus, improving Wi-Fi dependability on campus, and an academic calendar change to include a two-day fall semester break. Mr. Franklin is hoping to see even greater support for UB's LGBTQ+ community on campus and more financial literacy programming for students. Mr. Franklin thanked the Council for their support during the year.

Adjournment

Chairman Jacobs called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Dandes seconded by Ms. McDuffie and approved unanimously by Mr. Friedman, Mr. Franklin, Ms. McDuffie, Mr. Dandes, Dr. Cropp, and Chairman Jacobs. None voted to oppose. The meeting was adjourned at 9:02 a.m.

A video recording of the entire meeting, including all presentations, can be found at this [link](#) on the UB Council website.

Minutes approved at the September 11, 2023 meeting of the UB Council.