

DRAFT of the meeting minutes of June 1, 2026

University at Buffalo Council

Meeting minutes

June 1, 2026, 8:00 a.m.

Buffalo Room, 10 Capen Hall

Members present:

Jerry Jacobs Jr. Chairman

Julie Bargnesi

Michael Cropp

Scott Friedman

Shaurya Jain

Brenda McDuffie

Patrick Roche

Joseph Stefko

Other participants:

Satish K. Tripathi, President

Scott Weber, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

Attendees:

Craig Abbey, Vice Provost for Institutional Analysis and Planning

Keith Alford, Dean of the School of Social Work

Mark Alnutt, Vice President and Director of Athletics

Marcelo Araujo, Dean of the School of Dental Medicine

Ann Bisantz, Dean of Undergraduate Education

Allison Brashear, Vice President for Health Sciences and Dean of the Jacobs School

Chris Connor, Vice Provost for Enrollment Management

John Della Contrada, Vice President for University Communications

Julia Czerniak, Dean of the School of Architecture and Planning

Beth Del Genio, Vice President for Government and Community Relations and Chief of Staff to the President

Seth Gilbertson, Chief Campus Council

Allison Giunta, Associate Director of Presidential Events

Katie Gorman, Director of Corporate Social Responsibility and Strategic Initiatives, Delaware North

Jeffrey Grabill, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences

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

Kathleen Heckman, Vice President for University Advancement

Laura Hubbard, Vice President for Finance and Administration

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

Jocelyn Jakubus, Director of Presidential and University Events

Stacy Knapper, UB Foundation CEO

Dan LaDelfa, Assistant Director for Presidential Communications

Gary Pollack, Dean of the School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences

Suzanne Rosenblith, Dean of the Graduate School of Education

Eileen Sherman, Chief of Staff to the Provost

David Shurtleff, Instructional Support Specialist, UBIT

Kristin Stapleton, Chair of the Faculty Senate

Health Tuttle, Vice President and CIO

Jean Wactawski-Wende, Dean of the School of Public Health and Health Professions

Evva Weinraub Lejoie, Vice Provost for University Libraries

Annette Wysocki, Dean of the School of Nursing

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 9, 2026, meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Friedman, seconded by Mr. Roche and approved unanimously by Ms. Bargnesi, Dr. Cropp, Mr. Friedman, Mr. Jain, Ms. McDuffie, Mr. Roche, Mr. Stefko and Chairman Jacobs. None voted to oppose or abstain.

Chairman Jacobs also called for a motion to approve the minutes of the April 1, 2026, meeting. A motion was made by Ms. McDuffie, seconded by Mr. Roche and approved unanimously by Ms. Bargnesi, Dr. Cropp, Mr. Friedman, Mr. Jain, Ms. McDuffie, Mr. Roche, Mr. Stefko and Chairman Jacobs. None voted to oppose or abstain.

Topics for discussion or action

Report of the Chairman

Chairman Jacobs began his report by welcoming the newest member of the UB Council, Mr. Joseph Stefko. Mr. Stefko earned his bachelor's, master's and PhD from UB. He also served as president of the UB Alumni Association Board of Directors. He is the CEO of OneROC.

Chairman Jacobs also congratulated Mr. Jain on his reelection as the Student Representative to the UB Council.

Chairman Jacobs then asked Council members to vote on each of the resolutions before the Council.

The first resolution is for the naming of the John F. and Marietta A. Briggs Professorship in Glaucoma Research. Chairman Jacobs called for a motion to approve the resolution. A motion was made by Mr. Friedman, seconded by Dr. Cropp and approved unanimously by Ms. Bargnesi, Dr. Cropp, Mr. Friedman, Mr. Jain, Ms. McDuffie, Mr. Roche, Mr. Stefko and Chairman Jacobs. None voted to oppose or abstain.

A second resolution is for the naming of the Frank H. and Marilyn D. Clement Chair in AI Business Analytics. Chairman Jacobs called for a motion to approve the resolution. A motion was made by Ms. McDuffie, seconded by Mr. Roche and approved unanimously by Ms. Bargnesi, Dr. Cropp, Mr. Friedman, Mr. Jain, Ms. McDuffie, Mr. Roche, Mr. Stefko and Chairman Jacobs. None voted to oppose or abstain.

A third resolution is for the naming of the William R Kenan Jr. Scholars program. Chairman Jacobs called for a motion to approve the resolution. A motion was made by Dr. Cropp, seconded by Mr. Friedman and approved unanimously by Ms. Bargnesi, Dr. Cropp, Mr. Friedman, Mr. Jain, Ms. McDuffie, Mr. Roche, Mr. Stefko and Chairman Jacobs. None voted to oppose or abstain.

A fourth resolution is for the naming of the McMillen Elliot Medical School Scholarship for Tonawanda in the Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences. Chairman Jacobs called for a motion to approve the resolution. A motion was made by Mr. Stefko, seconded by Ms. McDuffie and approved unanimously by Ms. Bargnesi, Dr. Cropp, Mr. Friedman, Mr. Jain, Ms. McDuffie, Mr. Roche, Mr. Stefko and Chairman Jacobs. None voted to oppose or abstain.

A fifth resolution is for the naming of the Richard and Charlene Osborne Chair in Faculty Innovation. Chairman Jacobs called for a motion to approve the resolution. A motion was made by Ms. McDuffie, seconded by Dr. Cropp and approved unanimously by Ms. Bargnesi, Dr. Cropp, Mr. Friedman, Mr. Jain, Ms. McDuffie, Mr. Roche, Mr. Stefko and Chairman Jacobs. None voted to oppose or abstain.

A sixth resolution is for the naming of the Stevens Family Equipment Support Fund. Chairman Jacobs called for a motion to approve the resolution. A motion was made by Mr. Stefko, seconded by Mr. Roche and approved unanimously by Ms. Bargnesi, Dr. Cropp, Mr. Friedman, Mr. Jain, Ms. McDuffie, Mr. Roche, Mr. Stefko and Chairman Jacobs. None voted to oppose or abstain.

A seventh resolution is for the naming of the Dr. A. Scott and Jo Ann Weber Professorship. 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 Ms. Bargnesi, Dr. Cropp, Mr. Friedman, Mr. Jain, Ms. McDuffie, Mr. Roche, Mr. Stefko and Chairman Jacobs. None voted to oppose or abstain.

An eighth resolution is for the naming of the Christopher A. Wightman Chair in Law. Chairman Jacobs called for a motion to approve the resolution. A motion was made by Mr. Stefko, seconded by Mr. Roche and approved unanimously by Ms. Bargnesi, Dr. Cropp, Mr. Friedman, Mr. Jain, Ms. McDuffie, Mr. Roche, Mr. Stefko and Chairman Jacobs. None voted to oppose or abstain.

With the approval of the Council, all eight resolutions will be forwarded to the State University of New York System Administration for final review and approval by the SUNY Chancellor and the SUNY Board of Trustees.

There were also four additional resolutions to be approved that do not require approval from SUNY.

The first resolution is for the naming of the Frank H. and Marilyn D. Clement Endowed AI Innovation Fund. Chairman Jacobs called for a motion to approve the resolution. A motion was made by Ms. McDuffie, seconded by Mr. Roche and approved unanimously by Ms. Bargnesi, Dr. Cropp, Mr. Friedman, Mr. Jain, Ms. McDuffie, Mr. Roche, Mr. Stefko and Chairman Jacobs. None voted to oppose or abstain.

A second resolution is for the naming of the David Kountz, MD, Classroom for Inclusive Excellence. Chairman Jacobs called for a motion to approve the resolution. A motion was made by Mr. Jain, seconded by Mr. Friedman and approved unanimously by Ms. Bargnesi, Dr. Cropp, Mr. Friedman, Mr. Jain, Ms. McDuffie, Mr. Roche, Mr. Stefko and Chairman Jacobs. None voted to oppose or abstain.

A third resolution is for the naming of the Leslie and Rebecca Chung Laboratory for Materials Research. Chairman Jacobs called for a motion to approve the resolution. A motion was made by Ms. McDuffie, seconded by Mr. Roche and approved unanimously by Ms. Bargnesi, Dr. Cropp, Mr. Friedman, Mr. Jain, Ms. McDuffie, Mr. Roche, Mr. Stefko and Chairman Jacobs. None voted to oppose or abstain.

A fourth resolution is for the posthumous awarding of the Chancellor Charles P. Norton Medal to Jonathan Dandes. Chairman Jacobs called for a motion to approve the resolution. A motion was made by Mr. Friedman, seconded by Ms. McDuffie and approved unanimously by Ms. Bargnesi, Dr. Cropp, Mr. Friedman, Mr. Jain, Ms. McDuffie, Mr. Roche, Mr. Stefko and Chairman Jacobs. None voted to oppose or abstain.

A copy of all the resolutions can be found on the [UB Council website](#).

Chairman Jacobs asked President Tripathi to give his university report.

University Briefings: Report of the President

President Tripathi began his report by acknowledging the Council's memorializing of Mr. Dandes with the Norton Medal. He also congratulated Mr. Jain on his reelection and congratulated Mr. Stefko on his appointment to the Council. Dr. Tripathi then thanked Provost Weber and his wife, Jo Ann, for their meaningful gift to UB and the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences.

President Tripathi gave the Council an update on the state budget which includes a \$54 million increase to SUNY for support to state operated campuses. SUNY received \$795 million in critical maintenance for existing facilities. The budget also adds \$100 million in research capital funds for SUNY.

Eight UB faculty and one UB Librarian were promoted to the SUNY Distinguished Faculty and Librarian ranks. The members faculty are Joseph Balthasar in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Suzanne Dickerson in the School of Nursing, Leonard Egede in the Department of Medicine, Thomas Feeley and Melanie Green in the Department of Communication, Maria Kraimer in the Department of Organization and Human Resources, Pauline Mendola in the Department of Epidemiology and Environmental Health, and Sriram Neelamegham in the Department of Chemical and Biological Engineering. Christopher Hollister from University Librarians was appointed to the Distinguished Librarian rank.

UB held the Celebration of Student Academic Excellence during the spring semester. Students earned a wide range of competitive honors and fellowships including SUNY Chancellor's Awards, Fulbright awards, Goldwater Scholarships, National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowships, and several others that recognize academic excellence, public service, and global engagement. UB also held commencement activities at the end of the spring semester where the university honored four SUNY Honorary Degree recipients, Mary McLean Wilson, Jonathan Beane, Graham Colditz and Marcus Yam, as well as four President's Medalists, Greg Bauer, Allison Brashear, Scott Weber, and Andrew Whittaker.

Two UB alumni won Pulitzer Prizes. Journalist Sara DiNatale was awarded the Pulitzer for explanatory reporting. Juliana Spahr won the Pulitzer Prize in Poetry for a collection that explores how to write amid ecological and political upheaval.

UB is co-hosting the U.S. AI Summit on June 3-4 along with *Inside Higher Ed* and *Times Higher Education*.

President Tripathi then asked Provost Weber to update the Council on the UB Hauptman-Woodward (HWI) Medical Research Institute.

University Briefings: Report of the Provost

Provost Weber stated that HWI joined UB in January of 2025 and provided some background information on the history of the institute. HWI and UB are longstanding partners and international leaders in research and education in structural biology. In 1994, the institute was renamed for Dr. Herbert Hauptman, a Nobel-laureate, president of HWI and UB faculty member, and Helen Woodward Rivas, a philanthropist whose gift established the original Medical Foundation of Buffalo in 1956. UB-HWI enables new collaborations, accelerates research advances, enhances engagement, and further grows UB's strength and impact in structural biology. The future of this partnership is called UB-HWI: BRIDGE Advancing AI & Biotech. This is supported by \$50 million from New York State to establish a bio-fabrication and imaging research hub.

The federal government's flagship initiative to use AI, supercomputing, and federal datasets to accelerate scientific discovery, strengthen national security, and secure long-term technological leadership is called AI Genesis Mission. UB-HWI BRIDGE positions UB to focus on one of the three main pillars for this initiative, Discovery Science.

Chairman Jacobs then asked Mr. Jain to give his report.

Report of the Student Representative

Mr. Jain began his report by providing an update on the academic year. The Career Design Center has created a list of WNY companies across disciplines that offer internships that could lead to employment for UB students. This includes companies that are friendly to international students. The Stepping Blocks Career Exploration Platform will become available to students starting in the fall semester. The platform draws on job data from approximately 90% of the U.S. active workforce and offers career realization tools to help students explore their opportunities. Mr. Jain also highlighted an example of student innovation at UB—the Smart Parking Management System. UB's Parking Services is now actively exploring the possibility of implementing the system on campus.

Mr. Jain thanked the Council for his opportunity to give a report and thanked President Tripathi for his dedicated service and impact to the university.

Chairman Jacobs noted that he was pleased to present President Tripathi with the Norton Medal during commencement. He added that at a time when the value of higher education is being questioned in many places, President Tripathi has provided steady, principled leadership that reinforces why institutions like UB matter. He thanked President Tripathi for his service and leadership.

President Tripathi then thanked the Council for awarding him the Norton Medal. He expressed his gratitude to the Council for their guidance and commitment to UB as well as his pride in advancing the university's mission along with the Council and that serving as UB's president has been one of the greatest privileges of his life.

Adjournment

Chairman Jacobs made a motion to adjourn the meeting to executive session. The motion was seconded by Ms. McDuffie and approved unanimously by Ms. Bargnesi, Dr. Cropp, Mr. Friedman, Mr. Jain, Ms. McDuffie, Mr. Roche, Mr. Stefko and Chairman Jacobs. None voted to oppose or abstain. The meeting was adjourned to executive session at 8:33 a.m.

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

Minutes to be approved at the Fall Semester, 2026, meeting of the UB Council