

## **University at Buffalo Council**

Meeting minutes

March 9, 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

### **Other participants:**

Satish K. Tripathi, President

Kathleen Heckman, Vice President for University Advancement

Scott Weber, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

Laura Hubbard, Vice President for Finance and Administration

### **Attendees:**

Tomás Aguirre, Dean of Students

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

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

Venu Govindaraju, Senior Vice President for Research, Innovation and Economic Development

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

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

Jocelyn Jakubus, Director of Presidential and University Events

Stacy Knapper, Chief Executive Officer, University at Buffalo Foundation

Dan LaDelfa, Assistant Director for Presidential Communications

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

Annette Wysocki, Dean of the School of Nursing

Evviva Weinraub Lejoie, Vice Provost for University Libraries

Seval Yildirim, Vice Provost for Inclusive Excellence

## **Opening business**

### ***Call to order***

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

Before turning to the agenda, Chairman Jacobs acknowledged the recent passing of UB Council Member Jonathan Dandes. Chairman Jacobs describes Mr. Dandes as a thoughtful and reliable council member, a fixture of the Buffalo business and philanthropic communities, and a loving family man. Chairman Jacobs then asks President Tripathi to say a few words.

President Tripathi stated Mr. Dandes was one of UB's most dedicated champions. An alumnus of UB, Dandes was deeply proud of his alma mater, always engaged, and resolutely focused on UB's mission of excellence. Tripathi added that Dandes worked tirelessly to strengthen UB's role as a driver of opportunity, innovation and public good.

Chairman Jacobs then called for a moment of silence in honor of Mr. Dandes.

### ***Approval of minutes***

Chairman Jacobs called for a motion to approve the minutes of the December 15, 2025, meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Roche, seconded by Ms. McDuffie and approved unanimously by Dr. Cropp, Ms. McDuffie, Ms. Bargnesi, Mr. Jain, Mr. Friedman, Mr. Roche and Chairman Jacobs. None voted to oppose or abstain.

## **Topics for discussion or action**

### ***Report of the Chairman***

Chairman Jacobs began his report by discussing the Norton Medal resolution. Chairman Jacobs stated during President Tripathi's tenure, he has had a transformative impact on UB. Tripathi's accomplishments include increasing UB's sponsored research expenditures, enhancing the educational experience for UB's students, modernizing UB's infrastructure, cultivating unprecedented levels of philanthropy, and elevating UB's stature and rankings.

Chairman Jacobs then called for approval of the Norton Medal resolution. A motion was made by Ms. Bargnesi, seconded by Ms. McDuffie and approved unanimously by Dr. Cropp, Ms. McDuffie, Ms. Bargnesi, Mr. Jain, Mr. Friedman, Mr. Roche and Chairman Jacobs. None voted to oppose or abstain.

Chairman Jacobs asked Vice President Kathleen Heckman to present details to the Council about five naming resolutions.

The first resolution is for the naming of the Dr. Steven A. Guttenberg Scholarship. 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 Dr. Cropp, Ms. McDuffie, Ms. Bargnesi, Mr. Jain, Mr. Friedman, Mr. Roche and Chairman Jacobs. None voted to oppose or abstain.

A second resolution is for the naming of the Dr. Angelo Anthony Montagna Chair in Chemical Engineering. 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 Dr. Cropp, Ms. McDuffie, Ms. Bargnesi, Mr. Jain, Mr. Friedman, Mr. Roche and Chairman Jacobs. None voted to oppose or abstain.

A third resolution is for the naming of the Svein Øie and Barbara Woodruff Scholarship in UB's School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences. 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 Dr. Cropp, Ms. McDuffie, Ms. Bargnesi, Mr. Jain, Mr. Friedman, Mr. Roche and Chairman Jacobs. None voted to oppose or abstain.

A fourth resolution is for the naming of the Dr. Burt H. Rubin Fund for Athletics. Chairman Jacobs called for a motion to approve the resolution. A motion was made by Ms. Bergnesi, seconded by Mr. Roche and approved unanimously by Dr. Cropp, Ms. McDuffie, Ms. Bargnesi, Mr. Jain, Mr. Friedman, Mr. Roche and Chairman Jacobs. None voted to oppose or abstain.

A fifth resolution is for the naming of the Joanne and William Conway Nursing Scholarships. Chairman Jacobs called for a motion to approve the resolution. A motion was made by Dr. Cropp, seconded by Mr. Roche and approved unanimously by Dr. Cropp, Ms. McDuffie, Ms. Bargnesi, Mr. Jain, Mr. Friedman, Mr. Roche and Chairman Jacobs. None voted to oppose or abstain.

With the approval of the Council, all five 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. A copy of 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 thanking the Council for awarding him the Norton Medal. Tripathi then shared a few highlights from Governor Hochul's proposed budget that are of interest to UB. The budget proposal calls for holding tuition flat. UB is advocating for additional operating aid in the one-house bills to cover anticipated costs such as salary increases associated with union collective bargaining agreements. In terms of capital funding the proposed budget provides \$595 million in critical maintenance funding for state-operated campuses. UB is advocating for capital funding to support its research enterprise in areas such as quantum science, AI and healthcare, and neurological diseases.

UB celebrated the grand reopening of Foster Hall on UB's South Campus in February. The Graduate School of Education moved into the building during the fall semester. Foster Hall was the school's original home until it moved the North Campus in 1973.

President Tripathi then asked Vice President Hubbard to update the Council on UB's campus master plan.

#### ***University Briefings: Presentation by Laura Hubbard***

Vice President Hubbard stated her report is an overview of how UB's investments are advancing the university's comprehensive master plan, as well as an update on the South Campus revitalization projects and how UB is reimagining the North Campus. Adopted in 2009, the plan's core objectives include reducing deferred maintenance and addressing priority infrastructure, revitalizing the South Campus, improving campus life across all three campuses, creating a downtown presence, and reimagining the North Campus. The objectives advance academic excellence, student experience, research capacity and long-term stewardship of state assets.

On the South Campus, UB has renovated Hayes Hall, Townsend Hall, Allen Hall, Crosby Hall and Foster Hall since 2015. Future projects include a new James Joyce museum, a nursing simulation center, and renovations to Clark Hall and Parker Hall. Over the past decade, UB has also completed numerous projects on the North Campus. These include Davis Hall, Heart of the Campus initiatives including One World Café and One Capen, and the renovation of the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of Cooke and Hochstetter Halls. Future

projects include CAVE—to house autonomous vehicles and conduct research, Agrusa Hall, the Interdisciplinary Research and AI and Society building, and renovations to Lockwood Library and the Computing Center. Mr. Friedman asked how the master plan gets updated based on changes in the future. VP Hubbard stated a long-term vision needs to be flexible depending on funding and other priorities that may arise. Mr. Roche asked if the funding for planned projects is secured yearly or if all the funding is secured first before a project is started. VP Hubbard stated that while some private money is used, for most projects the funding comes from critical maintenance funding from the state. That annual funding can only be used for existing buildings.

President Tripathi then asked Provost Weber to give his report.

### ***University Briefings: Report of the Provost***

Provost Weber began his report by highlighting UB faculty who have recently received national recognition and significant grant support for their groundbreaking research, scholarship and teaching. Andrew Whittaker, SUNY Distinguished Professor of Civil, Structural and Environmental Engineering, has been elected to the National Academy of Engineering. UB is among the nation's colleges and universities with the highest number of scholars selected in the 2025-26 academic year for the Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program for faculty. UB was one of 25 institutions in the nation to be named a top Fulbright Producing Institution. This year, six UB faculty members received Fulbright awards to study and teach abroad.

Provost Weber also highlighted several recent research grants. These include UB's Philosophy, Politics and Economics program which received a nearly \$4 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education for a four-year civil discourse initiative that will help students cultivate the virtues, skills and norms essential to productive civic dialogue and community engagement. UB researchers from dental medicine, medicine and philosophy are participating in a \$17 million multi-institution study funded by the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research to better understand temporomandibular disorders (TMDs) and develop more effective treatments. Ashlee Ford Versypt, professor of chemical and biological engineering, has received a \$2.1 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to study how diseases impact the balance between the growth and break-up of tissues in normally healthy conditions - allowing clinical medical professionals to predict and promote regeneration across different tissue systems in the body.

Provost Weber also reported on UB's partnership with 11 SUNY campuses across Western and Central New York to promote responsibly integrating AI into classrooms, labs and other learning environments. The effort, called "AI in Action: Transforming Higher Education through AI," will feature 25 fellows from partner campuses who will participate in UB-led workshops that focus on infusing AI into curriculums.

President Tripathi thanked Provost Weber for his report and expressed his gratitude to the Council members for this continued support for UB.

Chairman Jacobs then asked the student representative, Shaurya Jain, to give his report.

### ***Report of the Student Representative***

Mr. Jain began stated international students remain a vital part of the campus community contributing significantly to intercultural learning, research and a diversity of perspective that strengthen the academic environment. Mr. Jain thanked Vice Provost for Enrollment Management, Christopher Conner, and Vice President for Student Life, Brian Hamluk, for their receptiveness to student perspectives and willingness to collaborate on ideas that help strengthen the student experience.

Mr. Jain also discussed the importance of enhancing Curricular Practical Training (CPT) and Operational Practical Training (OPT) data. The Offices of Enrollment Management, International Education, Institutional Analysis and Student Life have worked together to help develop a tool to help clearly visualize this information. The data helps demonstrate to prospective students quantifiable evidence of the strong career outcomes achieved by international students at UB. It also enables the Career Design Center to engage with companies that do not currently sponsor international students.

Mr. Jain has also had conversations with Vice President Hamluk regarding the creation of a specialized division within the Career Design Center that focuses on the needs of international students. Another topic of discussion was the development of an international cohort within UB's Blackstone Launchpad as well as the creation of a one-credit class where a student can shadow a UB alumnus.

Mr. Jain thanked the Council for his opportunity to give a report.

### **Adjournment**

Chairman Jacobs made a motion to adjourn the meeting to executive session. The motion was seconded by Ms. Bargnesi and approved unanimously by Dr. Cropp, Ms. McDuffie, Ms. Bargnesi, Mr. Jain, Mr. Friedman, Mr. Roche and Chairman Jacobs. None voted to oppose or abstain. The meeting was adjourned to executive session at 8:48 a.m.

During the executive session, Chairman Jacobs called for approval of a resolution endorsing the naming of the Broadview Federal Credit Union Scholarship. A motion was made by Mr. Roche, seconded by Mr. Friedman and approved unanimously by Dr. Cropp, Ms. McDuffie, Ms. Bargnesi, Mr. Jain, Mr. Friedman, Mr. Roche and Chairman Jacobs. None voted to oppose or abstain.

Chairman Jacobs also called for approval of a resolution endorsing the Broadview Federal Credit Union's sponsorship of UB Athletics and the naming of the Broadview Credit Union Stadium, the Broadview Credit Union Arena and the Broadview Athletics Village. A motion was made by Ms. McDuffie, seconded by Mr. Roche and approved unanimously by Dr. Cropp, Ms. McDuffie, Ms. Bargnesi, Mr. Jain, Mr. Friedman, Mr. Roche and Chairman Jacobs. None voted to oppose or abstain.

With the approval of the Council, both 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. A copy of the resolutions can be found on the [UB Council website](#).

The executive session was adjourned at 8:59 a.m.

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

*Minutes approved at the June 1, 2026, meeting of the UB Council*