

Council of Rhode Island College, 2018-2019
Council Meeting
Friday, November 9, 2018
2:00 – 3:30 p.m.
Faculty Center Main Dining Room, Donovan

MINUTES

Present: M. Baker, A. Barlow, N. Blasdell, E. Christiansen, R. Clark, C. Connelly, L. Downes, D. Freeman, W. Holmes, D. Kaspin, A. Kazemi, K. Kemp, J. Kim, R. Kim, M.E. Kregler, P. Mettaufer, M. Mock, A. Montali, M. Motte, S. Oliveira, S. Pearlmutter, J. Percy, L. Pinheiro, M. Raimondo, J. Rosario, F. Sánchez, A. Shonkwiler, P. Tiskus, K. Tunnicliffe, S. Weiss, B. Young

Excused: V. Bohlinger, J. Eagle

Absent: E. Basile, J. Diem, M. Duncan, M. Lawrence, A. Smuts

1. Call to Order	2:04pm
2. Minutes of the October 26, 2018 Council Meeting	R. Clark made motion to approve minutes, seconded by Christine Connolly. Approved as written.
3. Chair’s Updates	Marianne Raimondo, Vice Chair of Council, is serving as chair for the meeting today.
4. President’s Discussion Items	<p>President Frank Sánchez discussed the following:</p> <p><u>Budget:</u> F. Sánchez thanked all for voting “yes” regarding Question #2 on ballot, which included a \$25 million bond to upgrade Horace Mann. In addition, he recognized the entire AFT leadership, especially Quenby Hughes, in its ongoing contract negotiations and explained that this is a historic change. There will be budget cuts focused mainly on administration positions and faculty areas will not considered unless absolutely necessary. We need to analyze revenue streams, etc., and must find new ways to apply for and receive external funding in the future. In addition, he reiterated that there will be more transparency regarding the budget (i.e., overview/education to Council regarding how money is spent will be presented on an annual basis). He mentioned that in the past the budget was not explained.</p> <p><u>Hiring:</u> There is an ongoing search for the Chief of Campus Police, and faculty, staff, and students will be engaged for their input in the position. Candidates for the Dean of the School of Nursing will be visiting the campus soon.</p>

	<p><u>Capital Projects</u>: There will be changes in how we prioritize capital projects. For example, there was a \$4 million dollar modernization project slated, but it was decided that the changes were not urgent and the project was stopped and will instead be scaled down. Moving forward, the new leadership members will keep a closer eye on how we spend our dollars.</p> <p><u>Negotiations</u>: F. Sánchez explained that RIC’s strengths include faculty/student interactions and coaching/advising students. He stated that he supports shared governance and affirmed the value of small class sizes. Council members agreed. F. Sánchez suggested that Council pass a resolution for small class sizes, but several Council members discussed that it would be difficult to make a resolution at this time because negotiations have not been finalized. F. Sánchez understood the concern and stated that although it is not urgent, there is a need to re-affirm our core values for the strategic plan and for accreditation purposes. After discussion, Council members agreed to defer the resolution until the December meeting.</p> <p><u>Online Initiatives</u>: A small number of classes are interested in the online process and a few plan to go fully online. F. Sánchez stated that we would receive state financial support for developing online strategies. He stated that he has an idea of where to support faculty in this area, which would occur in the budget cycle for next year.</p>
5. Commencement	<p>Kavinda Arthenayake (Director of College Events & Conference Services & Commencement & Chair of the Committee on Convocations) discussed the following:</p> <p><u>Proposed Changes</u>: K. Arthenayake presented a handout to members of Council and stated that the ceremony needs to be “student focused.” He argued that Marshals should have academic credentials and be assigned roles and the Registrar needs to have a specific role. He recommended combining the undergraduate and graduate ceremonies while at the same time shortening the overall ceremony. Currently, Commencement takes 3 hours and 37 minutes to complete. With efficiencies, it is possible for each graduate to walk across stage and receive a diploma in 10 seconds instead of our current rate of 17 seconds. He encouraged limiting the numbers of speakers and explained that Marshals should be trained to keep the flow moving swiftly. He asserted that there should be a formal training process for Marshals as to their duties. K. Arthenayake stated that he did not know whether we could justify the cost for a December/ January ceremony (the idea for which had been floated last academic year).</p> <p><u>Discussion</u>: There was discussion as to whether having the ceremony</p>

	<p>on the RIC campus was more expensive than having it at the Dunkin' Donuts Center. There were also concerns voiced about graduates leaving the ceremony early after receiving their diplomas. K. Arthenayake explained that it was important to create a meaningful event and to always remember the last student who is graduating. Because the ceremony is a long process, everyone agreed that the graduates need a reason for staying for the entire ceremony. F. Sánchez stated that perhaps the graduates could walk away with their real diplomas. Other ideas included having donors contribute money so that all graduates who stay for the entire ceremony would be eligible to win a prize (reducing/eliminating up to \$20,000 in loan debt, receiving a brand new car, etc.). As far as logistics, it was also suggested that graduates need to know in advance the length of the ceremony so that they can plan their dinners and activities after the function. For evaluation purposes, K. Arthenayake plans to have the Registrar send out a survey to graduates after the commencement ceremony. Council members stated that in the past they enjoyed meeting with students after the ceremony and suggested having an opportunity to do so for those departments/schools that are interested. Everyone agreed.</p> <p><u>Goal & Challenges:</u> One challenge of having a single ceremony would be the number of tickets per family. With the current system of two ceremonies, students receive 6 tickets each. If we combine ceremonies, each student would receive only 4 tickets. A single ceremony in 2019 would not conflict with Providence College Commencement. Council members questioned who makes the final decision on how Commencement should be operationalized. After discussion, Council decided to make the final decision on how to proceed at the December 14th meeting. K. Arthenayake agreed to present a proposal at the next meeting. An additional concern is that faculty attendance at commencement has been extremely poor. A Council member mentioned that graduates are disappointed when they do not see the faculty at the ceremony. No suggestions were made.</p> <p><u>Graduation Requirements:</u> Currently, students may have a maximum of 16 credits outstanding to participate in graduation ceremonies. Council members discussed this number. It was decided that Paul Tiskus (Chair of the Committee on Academic Policies and Procedures) would present the policy at the December meeting.</p>
6. Accreditation Self-Study	<p>Provost Sue Pearlmutter announced an accreditation visit in 2022, with our goal over the next 1½ years to produce a document on how we meet the criteria for NECFHE. She plans to put together a team that will cover each standard (e.g, Mission & Goals, etc). The process is the same as before; however, the rules and reporting have changed. There is a 100-page limit for our self-study. More information will follow,</p>

	and volunteers to help in the process would be greatly appreciated. She will be asking faculty departments/schools for assistance in the next couple of weeks.
7. Open Discussion	None
8. Adjournment	Motion to adjourn was M. Mock and seconded by R. Clark. Meeting adjourned at 3:29pm.
	Minutes to be taken by Nancy Blasdel, Secretary of Council