



742 UPPER MAPLE STREET
DANIELSON, CT 06239
CTSTATE.EDU

Academic Senate Meeting Minutes

December 16, 2024

Members Present: J. Spjut (President), S. Buchbinder (Vice President); B. Kaufman (Curriculum Coordinator); B. Alves; J. Andersen; P. Clifford; B. Clinton; B. Dubovsky-Porter; E. Espitia-Loaiza; N. Germain; T. Greer; K. Griffiths; M. Hall; L. Kelley; J. Knapp; Phill Lemieux, J. Lewis; B. D. Lynch; E. Michalski; J. Oliver; M. Philion; D. Rimkus; T. Shizume; S. Van Orden; D. Walsh; K. Zvoma

Guest: Mac Griswold

1. Meeting convened at 2:01 pm
2. Motion to approve November 18 meeting minutes (motion by S. Buchbinder and seconded by N. Germain). Motion passed unanimously
3. Willimantic Faculty Support Resolution follow-up: Dean Mac Griswold
 - a. In November, Dean Griswold advertised four faculty positions for AR or release time (6-9 hours per position) and requested interest for the positions: PTK advisor, Let's Get Ready, BCI Support, and Willimantic support.
 - i. 5 faculty submitted interest, and Mac met with the interested faculty. 3 positions were filled (all but Willimantic Support).
 - ii. Willimantic Support: The goal was coverage until 7 pm. There were discussions about AR/release time and the role (e.g., back or front of center).
 1. Concerns that 5 faculty expressed interest before this process.
 2. That position will not be filled in spring 2025.
 - b. Plan for the spring in Willimantic
 - i. Plan for the Generalist to be hired early in the spring.
 1. The position has not been posted at the time of the meeting.
 - ii. Student services positions will shift to the evening (vs Fridays) to match class times.
 - iii. Work Study students will be recruited: Mac will send a work-study job description to the Willimantic faculty.
 - iv. Concern was voiced that there will not be coverage leading up to the semester and at the start when students need help, which is why the resolution was passed. This problem has not been fully addressed.
4. Willimantic Welcome Tabling - Interested folks should email Nicole (nicole.marcouxbowen@ctstate.edu) with a day you'd like to help out. The goal is to answer student questions. People should bring laptops to help students in real time.

Willimantic Welcome Table		
Day & Time	Volunteer 1	Volunteer 2
Friday, 1/24 10am to 12pm		
Monday, 1/27 3pm to 5pm		
Monday, 1/27 5pm to 7pm		

Tuesday, 1/28 5pm to 7pm		
Wednesday, 1/29 4pm to 7pm		

5. DEI Committee – Shelley Buchbinder selected as QV Faculty Representative
 - a. The CT State DEI committee held its first meeting the first week in December. There are 18 representatives, and we will come up with a system for infusing DEI into the curriculum, which will likely include assessing courses for inclusion in a Diversity course list and supporting enhancing DEI content throughout the curriculum.
 - i. This process builds on previous iterations of the committee that have drafted rubrics (through reviewing course descriptions and learning objectives).
 - ii. Currently, only CCS 1001 meets Diversity requirements. A stated committee goal is to review CCS and add more courses to the Diversity list.
6. Curriculum Coordination – Brian Kaufman
 - a. The CT State Senate sent out a governance survey to help inform the governance changes being made in spring 2025. The deadline is December 20th. **Complete the governance survey if you haven't.**
7. CT State Senate: discussion on cell phone policy proposal
 - a. Housatonic has requested that CT State Senate consider a cell phone policy.
 - i. Here is an old policy from Housatonic: Cell Phones/Pagers
Cell phones and other electronic devices are to be used in class only for class related activities at the discretion of the instructor. Students who ignore this policy may be asked to leave class or face grade penalties. When there are extenuating circumstances that require students to be available by phone or pager, the students should inform the instructor prior to class, so that together they can arrive at an agreement concerning the device.
 - b. Discussion
 - i. Concern about cell phones being distracting and there are reasons to use them (e.g., take notes) or for family/work issues.
 1. There are broader technology concerns (e.g., Smart watches)
 - ii. Some faculty have cell phone policy in a syllabus already, for example.
 1. “Cellphone: Cellphone usage in class is a distraction to the instructor and to your classmates, and thus should not occur. PLEASE DO NOT USE YOUR CELLPHONES AND YOUR HEADPHONES DURING THE CLASS. DO NOT USE YOUR COMPUTER/LAPTOP WITHOUT THE INSTRUCTOR’S CONSENT.”
 - iii. A faculty shared that they reduce the participation grade for the day for cellphone use.
 - c. **Send feedback to Jayne Battye.** Informally, she shared that she doesn’t support a policy because it’s a classroom management issue. However, she will vote based on the consensus of the Senate.
8. Faculty Advisory Committee Report and NCHEMS – Jon Andersen
 - a. J. Andersen presented on the NCHEMS report.
 - i. Background: NCHEMS was contracted by Governor Lamot to review CSCU structure and make recommendations. NCHEMS is contracted to justify cuts to

higher education, and it is incentivized to find issues. Their methodology has been challenged by other systems, including in Arizona.

- ii. Their report is based on the premise CSCU is fragile due to declining revenue from declining enrollment from declining high school graduates.
 1. They proposed making cuts to faculty and staff as the biggest expenses in the system. The rationale is to cut redundancies and run leaner.
- b. FAC identified problems with the NCHEMS report including:
 - i. ECSU economist Brian Cunningham's analysis shows how the report misrepresents data. The graphics showing declines in population are close up, making them look larger. Additionally, Professor Cunningham showed how population forecasting is unreliable.
 - ii. The report claims that the system expanded during the Great Recession and never contracted with the drop in enrollment.
 1. However, the system has shrunk and QV has reduced administrative positions, including the Willimantic director.
 - iii. The report claims CT is too generous with higher education.
 1. From 2007- 2017, state funding has decreased 9.1%, while enrollment increased 8.6%.
 - iv. There are concerns about the expectation of higher education of public higher education as a business that makes money.
 1. Higher education is a public good, and public goods don't pay for themselves through fees (e.g., public transit).
 1. One of the goods is that community colleges exist to mitigate the harms of educational and economic inequality.
 2. Public goods need funding to provide quality services (e.g., avoid being a dead mall)
 - v. Discussion
 1. This release of this report is political (e.g., during contract negotiations) and will be used to push for cuts and as justification not to extend AR to post-2017 faculty.
 2. UConn is not included in the NCHEMS report, and their funding is much larger per student.
 1. The report included nothing about CSCU vs UConn funding inequality.
 3. The report talked about the ineptness of the CSCU system (management). Concern about condemning the entire report.
 1. J. Andersen stated that critiques of the merger have been shared by other bodies and are not unique to the report.
 4. The identity of the local college has been lost (e.g., specific to places)
 1. We are losing community functions from reductions in nontraditional learners and Learners in retirement.
 2. There is value in serving Willimantic as a community that has different needs from the Danielson community.

- vi. **Motion to support the FAC Resolution condemning the NCHEMS report (motion by S. Buchbinder and seconded by B. Kaufman). The motion carries 18 affirmed and 3 abstentions.**

9. Response Re-Open Meetings

- a. J. Spjut sent out a resolution about the Senate not being in compliance with Open Meetings and not believing we need to be. We haven't received further guidance affirming that we actually do need to be in compliance from Provost Hynick.

10. General Education Committee Info – Brian Donohue-Lynch

- a. No updates this meeting.

11. Follow Up Re: Accommodations

- a. S. Buchbinder requested data from the Provost. The Provost shared that there are plans to provide more education for students in the accommodation process.
- b. Discussions
 - i. Should faculty be promoting accommodations beyond the note on the syllabus?
 - 1. Can there be more materials on how to complete the self-disclosure?
 - ii. The new process requires self-disclosure.
 - 1. This process is preferred in some of the literature since most disclosures are between 10 pm and 2 am.
 - 2. Students who need accommodations may have the most difficult time with self-disclosure (e.g., disposition, ability).
 - 1. Concern about seeing a trend against support services, including tutoring.
 - iii. This is a cross-campus issue. How do you help non-home campus students since they need to contact the office on their home campus?

12. Next meeting **TBA**

13. The meeting adjourned at 3:19 pm (motion by S. Buchbinder and seconded by B. Kaufman).