

Bridgewater State University
Board of Trustees Meeting
April 16, 2024
6:30pm
Heritage Conference Room, Maxwell Library
Hybrid

MEMBERS PRESENT: Trustees Alexander, Allen, Battaglino, Caulfield, Giles, Longo, Taylor, MacCormack, Turchon

MEMBERS ABSENT: Trustee Prince

ALSO PRESENT: President Clark; EVP and Provost Ismaili; Chief of Staff Leuenberger; Vice Presidents Bell, Gentlewarrior, Jason, Jean, Powers, Shropshire, Zuromski; Interim Vice President Croft; CDO Oliver; Senior Advisor deMacedo

Under the order suspending certain provisions of the open meeting law of the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30A, as declared on March 12, 2020 by Governor Baker, having been complied with, and a quorum of the Board present, the Board of Trustees held a meeting on April 16, 2024 with Chairperson MacCormack presiding.

Chairperson MacCormack called the meeting to order at 6:45pm. She put forth a motion that a unanimous vote will be deemed to eliminate the need for a roll call. If a vote is not unanimous, then a roll call vote will be conducted.

On motion duly made via roll call vote, Trustee Longo-yes, Trustee Caulfield-yes, Trustee Allen-yes, Trustee Giles-yes, Trustee Taylor-yes, Trustee Turchon-yes, Trustee Alexander-yes, Trustee Battaglino-yes, Trustee MacCormack-yes, it was that the Board of Trustees dispense with a roll call vote for each unanimous vote for the duration of this meeting.

VOTED
FOR: Unanimous
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Caulfield, Alexander) it was to approve the minutes from the Board of Trustees meeting held on February 22, 2024.
(Attachment)

VOTED
FOR: Unanimous
CARRIED

**Chairperson's
Report**

Chair MacCormack noted the Governor has appointed a new Trustee to replace Trustee Mark Oliari – Tiffany Cesero. She is very active in the community (Old Colony YMCA, Chamber of Commerce, Salvation Army) owner of a minority-owned business, serves on

BSU's Business Advisory Board for the Ricciardi College of Business, etc., and the Board looks forward to working with her.

Student Trustee Update

Trustee Allen offered his congratulations to the newly-elected Student Trustee, Emily Rose. She will be a great value to the Board. His updates: a career fair and Admitted Students Day were recently held and were very successful. An email from Interim Vice President Croft was sent to students addressing safety on campus which was appreciated.

President's Report

President Clark acknowledged Jenna Shales, Director for Student Accessibility Services, who organizes 'Being Seen' which is an annual event where the campus community is encouraged to wear hot pink to promote disability awareness. Boyden Hall will be lit up in pink.

President Clark sadly announced that the president of Massasoit Community College, Ray Dipasquale, passed away suddenly. His whole career was in higher education. Our thoughts are with his family.

Other Updates:

*On behalf of the campus community, he thanked Mark Oliari for his service to the Board. We are grateful for his dedication to BSU as well as the Town.

*Trustees attended the unveiling of the Wyatt Sculpture Garden this afternoon.

* He offered his congratulations to Chair MacCormack who will receive an Honorary Degree from Stonehill College. He is very proud of her leadership.

*Giving Day was successful and they exceeded their goal.

*Bear Essentials Drive was successful.

*FAFSA update – the changes have disrupted the enrollment process; students are waiting for the financial aid packages before making a decision. He is grateful to Assistant Vice President Biechler for her efforts. Her team is sending out over 6,000 award packages today.

*The House Budget came out and it is far better than expected – funding was granted for internships, the endowment incentive, and formula funding; \$14M in SUCCESS funding to help state universities to lean into retention programs.

*BSU's Cheerleading team is eight-time national champions.

*Serenity Sands, senior, earned All-American honors finishing fourth in the high jump.

*BSU was asked by the state to help migrant families find employment. BSU hosted a job fair for those individuals to apply for jobs on campus.

Presentation: Interdisciplinary Studies/Integrated Learning

Provost Ismaili introduced two faculty who are leading interdisciplinary

studies and integrated learning, Dr. Sue Eliason and Dr. John Kucich, who provided a presentation on the work they are doing. Some key issues – what is education in the 21st century given we are in a world shaped by complex problems (immigration, democracy, sustainability). The career landscape that the students will face is a huge unknown. It's important to think broadly and widely to get students to their next step.

Looking to focus more on integrated learning which is the goal of interdisciplinary studies to allow students to make connections or integrate their learning to solve problems.

In conversations, they want to find ways to think about undergraduate research, course work, and internships. The campus climate survey showed there is a lot of interest for integrated/disciplinary learning. There is an effort to see how they can build some really good foundational structures. In conversations with other faculty, it let them know that they weren't aware of what other faculty are doing; therefore, students aren't aware of their opportunities. A suggestion is to have a hub for integrative learning and function as an incubator for innovation, undergraduate research ideas, faculty research ideas, internships, etc. and provide administrative support.

Provost Ismaili stated this is an opportunity to creatively think about how we are preparing students to address these issues and bring the richness of these various disciplines together. Venues have been created to have these conversations.

(Attachment)

ACTION/
INFORMATION
ITEMS

EXECUTIVE

President's Updates

Updates were provided by President Clark at the committee meeting.

Distinguished Service Award-Spring Commencement 2024 (Mary Price)

President Clark spoke about the nomination of Mary Price to receive a Distinguished Service Award. With Senate President Spilka involved in the expansion of the Mass. Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Initiative, and being honored at commencement, the time is right for Mary Price to also be recognized for her efforts with MAICEI as well as the program she built at BSU when she worked with us. Ms. Price now oversees this at the state level.

Trustee Battaglino noted Ms. Price was an outstanding leader who embraced the idea to include BSU in this work and include students with intellectual disabilities.

VOTED
FOR: Unanimous
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Taylor, Giles) it was that the Board of Trustees approves the recommendation to award a Distinguished Service Award to Mary Price at the University's 2024 Graduate Commencement Convocation as recommended by the Executive Committee and outlined in the memorandum from President Clark dated April 11, 2024.
(Attachment)

Delegation of Authority - Contract with Atrium Campus LLC, Amendment

Chair MacCormack stated the contract is for the Campus One Card Solution and was approved by the Executive Committee under the Delegation of Authority. It is now brought as an information item.
(Attachment)

Enterprise Risk Management Update

Chair MacCormack noted Vice President Zuromski presented at the Executive Committee meeting and provided an overall update on risks.
(Attachment)

ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS

Promotions to the Rank of Full Professor

Committee Chair Taylor commented it's a proud moment for Provost Ismaili to put forward the promotion candidates. There are 15 candidates representing 9 academic departments. Candidates spend 4 years at the rank of associate professor. These are exceptional candidates who are committed to BSU.

VOTED
FOR: 8
ABSTAINED: 1
(Battaglino)
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded via a roll call vote, Trustee MacCormack-yes, Trustee Allen-yes, Trustee Battaglino-abstained, Trustee Caulfield-yes, Trustee Alexander-yes, Trustee Giles-yes, Trustee Turchon-yes, Trustee Longo-yes, Trustee Taylor-yes, it was that the Board of Trustees approve the candidates for Promotion to the Rank of Full Professor as recommended by the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and described in the memorandum from President Clark dated March 21, 2024.
(Attachment)

Tenure Recommendations

Provost Ismaili stated the faculty are evaluated over a 6-year period. All individuals have demonstrated that they are effective teachers who have conducted research and scholarship. There are 16 candidates representing 14 departments as well as the Library.

VOTED

On motion duly made and seconded via a roll call vote, Trustee MacCormack-yes, Trustee Allen-yes, Trustee Battaglino-abstained, Trustee Caulfield-yes, Trustee Alexander-yes, Trustee Giles-yes, Trustee Turchon-yes, Trustee Longo-yes, Trustee Taylor-yes, it was that the Board of Trustees approve the Tenure Recommendations as

FOR: 8
 ABSTAINED: 1
 (Battaglino)
CARRIED

recommended by the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and described in the memorandum from President Clark dated March 21, 2024.
 (Attachment)

M.S. Degree in Cybersecurity and Justice (Full Proposal)

Provost Ismaili stated the LOI was fast tracked at the Department of Higher Education and this now completes the suite of programs to be offered. He thanked Hannarae Lee, Dean Boehm, Wendy Haynes, Michael Young, Dean Crane, Dean Alcon, and Interim Dean Arndt for their steadfast work in putting this together.

VOTED
 FOR: Unanimous
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Battaglino, Turchon) it was that the Board of Trustees approve the submission of a full proposal for a new M.S. degree in Cybersecurity and Justice to the Department of Higher Education as recommended by the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and described in the memorandum from President Clark dated March 21, 2024.
 (Attachment)

Student Life Update

Interim Vice President Croft noted there has been a focus on Residence Life and Housing. There are 3 key implementations to enhance services for the students: StarRez, which is a content management system to onboard housing applications, room assignment, maintenance, track when deposits are due, etc. Team Dynamix, which is a customer software program for students to enter concerns, issues, etc. and the ability to track these. This will assist in being proactive vs reactive. Lastly, a new ID key card access for students to access the residence halls. This will help with safety concerns and tracking students entering the buildings. This is a 3-phase system.

Interim Vice President Croft also mentioned her division is trying to enhance BSU's exposure on a national level and several staff attended a conference in Washington to highlight the work being done at BSU.

FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

Facility Condition Assessment Presentation

Committee Chair Longo noted a presentation was given at the committee meeting where the consultant provided a detailed report of BSU's facilities which also contained costs associated to repair/update them over a span of time. The consultant reviewed 38 buildings including 5 Foundation properties and the residence halls.
 (Attachment)

Residence Hall Rent Schedule – AY2024-25

Committee Chair Longo stated the residence hall rent schedule was

brought as an information item. Pricing is controlled by the MSCBA. The increases are between 3.5-5.5%.
(Attachment)

FY2025 Budget

President Clark stated they have met with Senate leaders to advocate for funding. Vice President Shropshire and his team are starting to model the FY25 budget based on what comes out of the House.

AD HOC ENROLLMENT/MARKETING

Recap of Enrollment Management Organization

Committee Chair Alexander reviewed the committee report. He stated other institutions across the nation are not focusing on recruitment, retention or informed database decision making. BSU is making this a priority.

Fall 2024 Admissions Funnel Reports

Vice President Jean stated the admissions report data is as of March 15. The updated numbers as of April 1: continue to be over 7% where we were last year in terms of applications for first year students; 4% over for admits; deposits are lagging due to FAFSA; transfer students running close to even from last year; up in inquiries from transfer students; for graduate students, they are seeing strong numbers. Completed applications are up by 18%, admits are running close to 16%, and deposits are up by 6%.
(Attachment)

Search and Application Campaigns

Committee Chair Alexander remarked AVP Biechler is doing a remarkable job managing this environment in terms of FAFSA and there is a sense of calm due to her efforts. Vice President Jean's team is doing great things by connecting with high school students and conducting early outreach, which is terrific.

Strategic Enrollment Plan 2.0 Presentation

Committee Chair Alexander noted Dean Crane covered enrollment from his perspective in the College of Continuing Education and Dean Boehm talked about the Graduate School and the programs that are being offered.
(Attachment)

Vice President Jean stated they are taking a comprehensive look at a number of strategies to deal with the demographic cliff and looking at many types of solutions. It's important to look at how we want to retain the student populations that are on campus. Dean Crane has ongoing programs and is moving forward to grow the relationship with

Durfee High School – fifty percent of their seniors are coming to BSU. They are also working with Brockton and New Bedford High Schools.

Vice President Gentlewarrior highlighted efforts for the LGBTQIA community at BSU. Retention rates are rising and this community is the fastest growing group who are enrolling. BSU is a safe haven and word is getting out.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Outreach and Engagement Updates

Vice President Bell provided information at the committee meeting on outreach and engagement activities, and Dr. Gerald Tang, Executive Director, Career Services, presented on career services and internships. (Attachment)

Uniquely Abled Project

Senior Advisor deMacedo and Dr. Jon Cash presented on the EXCEL program and the Uniquely Abled Project. The program is designed for autistic individuals in the state to attend this program and be trained to their unique skillset, typically repetitive tasks. The program includes soft-skill training at BSU through EXCEL and technical training at South Shore Vocational Technical High School. The initiative appears to be a remarkable success; parents and participants have called the offering a “life changer”. (Attachment)

OTHER
BUSINESS

None

VOTED
FOR: Unanimous
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Turchon, Caulfield) it was that the meeting be adjourned (8:05 pm).

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Longo

Scott Longo
Secretary

Minutes prepared by:
Tracey Keif