

**The Academic-Student Life Committee
meeting of the Board of Trustees was held
on May 7, 2025 at 8:00 a.m.
in the Robert Michael Sdao Memorial Board Room
at SUNY Niagara
and via ZOOM**

Academic-Student Life Committee Board Members

Ms. Sheila Smith, Chairperson
Mr. David Haylett, Jr. Vice Chairperson
Mr. Kevin Clark
Mr. E. Bryan DalPorto (ZOOM)

Board Member Excused

Mr. Jacob Fleming, Jr.

Administration Present

President Lloyd A. Holmes, Ph.D.
Dr. Maher Ghalayini, Vice President of Academic Affairs
Dr. John Delate, Vice President of Student Services

Committee Chairperson Smith called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m.

A roll call acknowledged the following trustees were present: Trustees David Haylett, Jr., E. Bryan DalPorto (Zoom), Kevin Clark and Sheila Smith.

Chairperson Smith began the meeting welcoming the new Vice President of Student Services Dr. John Delate.

Academic-Student Life Committee Minutes

Committee Chairperson Smith stated that no Academic-Student Life Committee meeting was held in the month of April, therefore no meeting minutes to approve.

Academic Affairs Update

Strategic Plan Update

Dr. Maher Ghalayini, Vice President of Academic Affairs, provided an update on the new strategic plan planning process. Feedback sessions have been held since the kickoff of the planning process in April. The sessions gathered data from faculty and staff on what the mission, vision, and values of the college should be. A broad environmental scan has been conducted on the local WNY area and Ontario to review the demographics and various needs of the community. A review of the previous strategic plan has been conducted to outline what has been successfully completed and what was not, with the potential for moving those items forward to be included in the new plan. Based on the feedback from the sessions, creative writing faculty will work together to create the new mission/value statement. Sessions this week and next week will gather further information from faculty and staff specially related to academic innovation, student success, finance, facilities, and workforce development.

In the coming weeks, working groups will begin their task of reviewing all data and begin developing the overarching pillars of the strategic plan. These pillars should be drafted by mid-June. From there, a draft plan will be created and reviewed by community partners. By August, faculty and staff will have another opportunity to review the plan and provide feedback. The draft plan will be continually reviewed and further updated throughout the summer and early fall.

Committee Chairperson Smith raised the question on how the external stakeholders and community partners are determined. Dr. Ghalayini stated that recommendations would come from the vice presidents at the college, county manager, and clinical site leaders.

Updates on the strategic planning process will continue at each month's board meetings and committee meetings to keep the trustees and community well-informed.

Curriculum Changes

Dr. Ghalayini updated the committee that there were currently no changes to any curriculums for 2025-26. A curriculum committee meeting will take place next Monday, May 12th.

Assessment Update/Progress

Dr. Ghalayini updated the committee on the assessment process which will take place over the summer. Dr. Fabio Escobar and Dr. Akie Yanagi will work to identify and create reports needed for assessment. A consultant, Dr. Ginny Taylor, will be delivering training sessions on how to measure assessment. Templates will be rebuilt for assessment and a framework created to provide better evidence on assessment which can be reviewed on an annual basis by faculty. The need for better assessment and policy on assessment stems from the Middle States visit and recommendations in March. President Holmes reiterated that the college responded in April to the recommendations of the Middle States site visitors and the Middle States commission will meet in June to review our visit outcomes.

Student Services Update

Dr. John Delate thanked the committee for the warm welcome and provided a positive overview since his start at SUNY Niagara in mid-April. Dr. Delate detailed that enrollment is up for both the summer and fall semesters. The Niagara Falls Culinary Institute hosted the spring open house on Saturday, May 3rd. It was a great success with a lot of positive feedback and engagement from the attendees.

Graduation Snapshot Report 2025

Dr. Delate provided a report on the graduation numbers for the current spring semester and detailed reports on the trends in graduation related to wages, degrees vs. certificates, and employment after graduation. There is a slight decline in graduates earning degrees but an increase in certificates and micro credentials. This is a trend amongst all colleges. A preliminary graduation total for the spring 2025 semester is noted at 703 degrees/certificates.

Policy Updates

Dr. Delate provided an update on upcoming policies. The college's hazing policy is currently in the process of coming to the committee for review. SUNY issued a statewide requirement that colleges need to have a hazing policy in place by July. The draft of the policy will be reviewed by the College Council today, May 7th, and will be brought to the Academic-Student Life committee in June.

The next meeting scheduled is on Wednesday, June 4, 2025, at 8:00 a.m. in the Robert Michael Sdao Memorial Board Room.

The meeting adjourned at 8:28 a.m.

Kristin Leszkowicz
Assistant to the President