

**Massachusetts Board of Higher Education
Strategic Planning Committee Meeting Minutes**

The December 5, 2017 meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) was held in the 21st Floor Conference Room, One Ashburton Place, Boston, Massachusetts.

SPC Members Present: J.D. LaRock
Committee Chair Fernando Reimers
Commissioner Carlos Santiago, ex-officio, non-voting member

Deleted:

Other BHE Members Present: Secretary of Education, James Peyser

Department Staff Present: Constantia Papanikolaou; Winifred Hagan; Robert Awkward; Jonathan Keller; Tom Simard, Elena Quiroz-Livanis; Patricia Marshall, David Cedrone; Kate Flanagan

Campus Guests: Salem State President John Keenan, Provost David Silva, Executive Director for Strategic Initiatives Beth Bowers, Chief of Staff Nate Bryant and CFO Karen House

I. CALL TO ORDER

SPC Chairperson Fernando Reimers called the meeting to order at 12:12 p.m. He invited all SPC members and campus guests in attendance to make introductions.

II. MINUTES

Chair Reimers brought forth a motion to accept the minutes of the October 24, 2017 SPC meeting. The motion was seconded and the minutes were approved unanimously by all SPC members present.

III. REMARKS AND REPORTS

- A. Committee Chair's Remarks**
- B. Commissioner's Remarks**

In the interest of time, there were no remarks made by either Commissioner Santiago or Chair Reimers.

IV. MOTIONS

List of documents used:

Salem State University Institutional Strategic Plan FY2018-FY2021

A. SPC 18-01 Approval of Bridgewater State University's Strategic Plan

Chair Reimers turned the meeting over to Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs and Student Success Winifred Hagan to introduce the motion and make remarks on Salem State University's (SSU) Strategic Plan. Associate Commissioner Hagan stated that SSU began developing their strategic plan during the summer of 2016, and the campus Collaboration Committee developed a transparent and campus-wide strategic planning process. She continued that Touch Point I occurred on September 8, 2016 with Commissioner Santiago, SSU President Patricia Meservey, BHE staff and members of the Collaboration Committee, noting that the BHE Revised Campus Planning Guidelines and Procedures were reviewed at this time. Touch Point II took place on June 13, 2017, and emphasized the importance of building regional collaborations, particularly with community colleges and other public universities, as well as the importance of developing prime partnerships with specific employers or with other institutions for marquee academic programs. Associate Commissioner Hagan stated that Commissioner Santiago's view is that there is significant value for institutions and the network of public higher education to work together in developing strategic plans. She noted that throughout the planning process, including SSU's presidential search and leadership change, SSU Board members were kept apprised of progress through the appointment of a board member liaison to the Collaboration Committee. She concluded her remarks by stating that on November 29, 2017 the plan was approved by the SSU Board of Trustees and that staff recommend approval of the SSU Strategic Plan. She then turned the meeting over to SSU President John Keenan to make some remarks.

President Keenan began his remarks by introducing his staff members CFO Karen House, Chief of Staff Nate Bryant and Provost David Silva. He remarked that the finished plan was a long time in the making, taking 18 months to completion and is the epitome of shared governance, with over 2000 touch points on campus. He then highlighted the plan's four primary goals: (1) student success; (2) academic excellence; (3) financial viability and sustainability; (4) collaboration, inclusion, stewardship and commitment to civic engagement.

President Keenan continued by highlighting their plan's alignment with the DHE's "Big Three" priorities, which can be found on page 13 of the plan. He noted the increase in the SSU graduation rate enjoyed under President Meservey's tenure, as well as the increase in student diversity, noting that SSU is working toward becoming a designated Hispanic serving institution. He continued that they have a goal to eliminate their achievement gaps within the next decades. President Keenan remarked that they have a lot of work to do, but are optimistic as they move forward. He noted that some of the plan's features are contingent upon a new science building and their ability to enroll more STEM and nursing students to supply the North Shore's workforce needs; the need for nurses will become significant as baby boomers age. He

concluded his remarks by stating that he thinks the SSU plan aligns with the workforce and capital needs of the North Shore.

The SPC then engaged in a lengthy question and answer period about SSU's plan. SPC Chair Fernando Reimers thanked President Keenan for his remarks, and for a very clear plan that aligns well with their goals, and commended their transparent process. He then asked about the use of a campus climate survey and how the results of the survey informed the plan. President Keenan responded that SSU hired a renowned campus climate person to conduct the survey and they disclosed the results to the entire campus community; the results of the survey were not surprising and reflected what campuses nationally are grappling with. He continued that the survey found that while the majority of students and faculty felt safe, there were many reported microaggressions, and they are working with the community to develop strategies to address this. Further, they learned from the survey that a sense of belonging was incredibly important for the success of their students. He concluded that they are incredibly proud of the diversity and inclusivity of their campus community. Commissioner Santiago commended Salem State on taking this initiative and asked them to share what they have learned from these findings.

Committee member J.D. LaRock remarked that he found the strengths of the plan included general structure SWAT analyses, however for his tastes, he found the plan to be a bit discursive and analytical. He asked President Keenan for their general plan to increase graduate rate by 10%. President Keenan responded that they had a 15% increase and have momentum, and there has been thoughtful consideration of the number in this plan; they want to increase enrollment by 2,000, which is a bold and challenging considering demographic declines, but SSU will need to be creative with the competitive marketplace. President Keenan again remarked that some of their growth is contingent on DCAM and the approval of their new science building, but that they have a multi-year business plan and make decisions in a data driven way. Further, they have also prepared the campus to make difficult decisions to figure out where their investments will be going forward.

Secretary Peyser commended the plan, remarking that he came away with a clear sense of their direction moving forward. He referenced the in-process business analyses that are unfinished, and asked about their timeline for completing these analyses that are essential for developing metrics in the plan, or in other words he rephrased, *'how much of this document is in flux?'* Secretary Peyser cited the "2,000 in a decade" growth figure, and remarked that will require a major adjustment in strategy. President Keenan acknowledged that some of the plan is dependent on change, but he is comfortable with this analysis, and remarked that SSU needs to be self-reliant and sustainable, given the state budget climate. He noted that he believes increasing enrollment is the way to go.

Chair Reimers echoed the importance of looking to non-traditional sources and/or lifelong learning to enroll more students and asked, *'how flexible is this plan to accommodate these types of strategies?'* Provost Silva responded that he has seen unrealized capacity for undergraduate enrollment and unrealized potential for graduate enrollment, and they are considering different ways to be more strategic on this, including hybrid programs and programs for returning students seeking degree completion.

Commissioner Santiago asked about possible expansion including the recently closed Marian Court College in Swampscott, or Montserrat College of Art in Beverly. President Keenan responded that they have decided to focus priorities into expanding their science facilities and programs, and cited deferred maintenance concerns of those properties as disincentives to acquisitions; he added that the decision is strategic.

SPC member LaRock asked about the interplay between North Shore Community College and Salem State. President Keenan responded that they are enhancing their collaborations with all community colleges in the area, and working with Mayor Kim Driscoll of Salem and mayor elect Tom McGee of Lynn, to improve transportation which has proven to be a significant obstacle for their students, including getting an MBTA stop on campus.

There being no further discussion, Chair Reimers called for a motion on SPC 18-04. On a motion duly made and seconded, the following motion was approved with one abstention; Secretary of Education Jim Peyser abstained.

18-04: APPROVAL OF SALEM STATE UNIVERSITY STRATEGIC PLAN

MOVED: The Board of Higher Education hereby approves the Salem State University 2018 Institutional Strategic Plan and authorizes the Commissioner to forward the same to the Secretary of Education for final approval pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15A, Sections 9(1) and 22(1).

AUTHORITY: Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15A, Sections 7,9(f), 9(l) and 22(l); BHE By-Laws, Article I, Section 3(d), and Article III.

CONTACT: Winifred M. Hagan, Ed.D
Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs and Student Success

V. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business, Chair Reimers called for a motion to adjourn, which was seconded. The meeting adjourned at 12:45 p.m.