

University Senate

December 13, 2023 | 1:30 P.M. | Zoom

- Meeting Minutes: S. Sangregorio

Senate Membership Attendance

Voting Members in Attendance:

Baglieri, Baldwin LeClair, Bellum, Beringer, Brater, Broderick, Carr, Chica, Collins, Curnutt, Field, Gharehgozli, Gorman, Heller, Jacobson, Kamenetskiy, Korotkin, La Fountain, Madson, McCarthy, McKinley, Misra, Panorkou, Rodriguez, Sangregorio, Schmidt, Sullivan, Trubatch

Voting Members Missing:

Alvares, Gavin, Higgins, Kurze, Mamonov, McDermid, Nauta, Peterka-Benton, Steiner-Otoo, Temoney

Meeting Documents:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1AFk3oVdp2mFzG_p6-BNY0agkzQgnz7Jbzg4j3qEC8UY/edit?usp=sharing

Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order/ University Senate President Welcome Reading of the Land Acknowledgement Statement

- Call to Order: 1:33 PM
- **Erik Jacobson:** Land Acknowledgement Statement was read. Due to having college students in his family, he notices other land acknowledgment statements at other colleges and their work to make these efforts more concrete. We are hoping to also make this work more concrete.

2. Approval of the Minutes

- **Erik Jacobson:** Move to approve the meeting minutes. Approved by acclamation.

3. Report from the Administration (Provost Gonzales)

- Dawn Soufleris - Student Development & Campus Life (SDCL) Updates
 - The Division of Student Development and Campus Life has been working on initiatives related to the mental health and well-being of its students. This semester has been challenging due to a high rate of mental health issues, suicide ideations, and attempts and two completed suicides on campus, one a student and the other not a member of the university community. We are also seeing significant food and housing insecurity. The CARE team has noted that this generation of students is having difficulty coping and missed out on social capital development during the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - To address these issues, the SDCL has conducted [Mental Health First Aid](#) training for 400 faculty, staff, and students. These trainings provide the opportunity to recognize mental health issues, refer students and peers to resources, and stay informed about mental health-related issues. The training is free. It is "intense, but it is incredible". We have the goal of training as many faculty, staff, and students as possible. There will be a training the week of January 8th. You can register by searching for [Mental Health First Aid on the Montclair website](#) or the [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\) portion of the website](#).
 - **Comment from Chat: Elizabeth Emery:** The MHFA training is easy and fun. Highly recommend!
 - Seconded by **Dawn Meza Soufleris**
 - In addition, the SDCL received an \$800,000 grant from the Office of Higher Education in New Jersey in the Spring for various mental health initiatives. These include energy pods, which provide short-term energy, and massage chairs, which have been well-received by students.
 - The SDCL has also received an [\\$800,000 grant from the Office of Higher Education in New Jersey for various resources](#), such as energy pods and massage chairs, to help students deal with stress. These resources are designed to help students cope with their mental health challenges and improve their overall well-being. They have been well-received by students.
 - The school has received funding to support Pebbles, our therapy dog recovering from spaying, to go through official therapy dog training. Pebbles will be available for therapy sessions in the Spring, providing students with a quiet environment to play with and interact with the dog.

- Thanks to the Governor's office, the school has also secured a [telehealth service called Uwill](#), which allows students to meet with a counselor online. They can choose their therapist by ethnicity, gender, race, sexual orientation, and 10 languages. Over 700 students have signed up for this service, and CAPS has a strong relationship with Uwill, ensuring that mental health issues are addressed effectively
 - **Comment from Chat: Elaine Gerber:** From what I've heard from students, they like UWill.
 - Seconded by **Marshal Chaifetz, Dawn Meza Soufleris, Jessica Brater**
- SDCL has also received a third grant from [The Hunger Free New Jersey program](#), which has provided just under \$75,000 to continue its food and housing insecurity efforts. The [Food Champion Program](#) allows faculty & staff to register as food champions, allowing them to leave leftover food at events or organizations and invite students to take food with them and connect with other students struggling with food insecurity. This initiative has been successful, with additional funds being used to pay for compostable plates and freezable containers for students to take with them.
- The school is part of a high-level campaign called [Basic Needs for New Jersey College Students](#), which focuses on food, clothing, shelter, love, security, and feeling of safety. The school is working with the state to connect with their website about basic needs and ensure students are aware of all on-campus and off-campus resources. Many mental health issues are related to food and housing insecurity, a general sense of not feeling safe, and a lack of coping skills and resilience skills.
- The school is committed to working towards creating the best possible well-being for students. The school is working hard on suicide prevention, with a specific committee on the topic, and starting with measures scheduled for completion in January: fencing and netting installed on two parking decks on the first two floors. They will be reevaluating and potentially implementing the same on the next two levels.
- **Question from Chat: Elizabeth Emery:** If we are already trained in MHFA is there someone we should tell?
 - **A: Dawn Soufleris:** If you have already been trained somewhere else and it is recent, you can contact either [Dr. Melissa Zarin](#), who is the Associate Director of CAPS or [Dr. Jude Uy](#), staff psychologist/lead trainer/suicide prevention specialist within CAPS.

Please let them know because they would love to be able to add you to the list.

- **Q: Erik Jacobson:** Is there a remote graduate students-specific training? I'm teaching in a remote program - students are all over the state. I never see them in person; I only see them online. Are there some good resources and practices for thinking about the mental health of students who are not on campus with you?
- **A: Dawn Soufleris:** We're trying to incorporate the Mental Health First Aid and other training to include remote students for undergraduates as well as graduates. We're now offering so many options for students in terms of hybrid and asynchronous and synchronous. We know that students are struggling. Some of the skill sets for the Mental Health First Aid are very applicable for online students. If there's ever a question about something very specific, don't hesitate to reach out either to the Dean of Students Office or reach out to CAPS because they do have some strategies and things that you can utilize with the online students. Also, you can recommend the Uwill program because it is an online counseling and intervention service and it's free to all students, both online and in-person students. It is a great referral option for those graduate students who are totally just online but may need some services.
- **Q: Erik Jacobson:** Is that already in the default syllabus template on Canvas for courses?
- **A: Dawn Soufleris:** I don't know if it is there, but it's certainly on the CAPS website. If it's not in there, we'll make sure that it is. Emily Isaacs said she would double-check.
 - **Comment from Chat: Emily Isaacs:** Here is what the Montclair the model syllabus has for CAPS [live links that don't come through in text]: Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) provides free short-term counseling, group therapy, online therapy (TAO resources and Uwill Teletherapy), online therapy resources, Let's Talk "walk-ins" and referrals that are confidential. Phone: 973-655-5211. In a crisis after hours, select option "2" or University Police at 973-655-5222. The National Suicide Prevention Hotline offers 24/7 support at 800-273-8255. Here is what it looks like "live" in a fake course:
<https://montclair.simplesyllabus.com/en-US/doc/8os00d5p7/>

[SPRING-2024-GNED-199-GNED199-101SP24-NEW-STUDENT-SEMINAR?mode=view](#)

- **Q: Pascale LaFountain:** For clarification, does the Uwill service cost anything?
 - **A: Dawn Soufleris:** No, it's free. The governor's office paid for a subscription for all of the New Jersey State institutions that wanted to take part in it. It was only going to be through this coming April, but the governor has re-upped it. It appears that we will have it for free at least for 2025. We're just so happy because it's very expensive. I think we're one of the first states that have a state contract with Uwill and we were actually trendsetters in the country to do that. It's all through the governor's office and OSHE.
 - **A: Pascale LaFountain:** I'm sure many of us have encountered those students who feel like they've gone to CAPS but then CAPS for whatever reason is not able to serve them for exactly what they need or for long enough and so on. I hope that this can fill in some of those gaps.
 - **A: Dawn Soufleris:** CAPS loves it. The students love it. It's a great relationship back and forth. It's the students who just need some triage and someone to talk to for a little bit can be on the Uwill side. For the students who have significant mental health issues that we need to be doing more, CAPS can manage sort of the higher end more critical issues, and getting those students to the hospital, on medication, or whatever they need.
 - **Comment from Chat: Jessica Brater:** Thank you so much, Dean Soufleris - you and your staff do an outstanding job in supporting our students!
 - Seconded by **Elizabeth Emery.**
 - **Dawn Meza Soufleris:** Thanks Jessica!!!!
- Ashante Conner - Office of Inclusive Excellence and Institutional Equity
 - The Office of Inclusive Excellence and Institutional Equity (IE Squared) at Montclair State University has been a long-awaited organizational change, with President Koppel's message last week highlighting the need for a bifurcation of duties. The compliance frame will remain, but the aspirational DEI efforts will now become part of the President's office.
 - The university has been meeting with various departments and groups across campus to disseminate findings from the campus climate assessment. This approach was chosen because it allowed

for intimate conversations with faculty, staff, and students about the findings and the feedback they received from the assessment process. The goal is to create space for meaningful engagement and engagement with missing voices before moving into a more long-term strategy around goal setting.

- This year, the focus will be setting aspirational goals that focus on supporting a diverse cross-section of students while also creating a safe and inclusive work environment. The goal is to hear from employees to identify ways to make the work environment more inclusive. Montclair is doing great things on the student affairs side, but there is still work to be done on the employee side. We will work with our colleagues in Student Services and other operational areas of the university.
- The decision to name the office was timely, as Middle States had re-authored their standards and now had DEI concepts interwoven into every standard instead of a standalone one - it aligns with the Middle States self-study process.
- We hope to reinstitute the President's Commission for Affirmative Action and Diversity which will now be known as the University Collaborative for Inclusiveness and Equity. We will work to establish a broad cross-section of membership that represents all voices at the university. The goal is to be a hub or one-stop model that operates from a Shared Equity model. At a high level, that is what we are looking to do.
- **Q: Erik Jacobson:** I was already getting emails: "Who can be on the council?" "What's the council going to be?" So there's certainly a lot of campus-wide interest in the revitalized Council and making sure that it's really, really diverse in terms of perspectives. A couple of questions came in already: one from **Elaine Gerber:** "What does this new office mean for the OSJD?" Alicia is on the stack after that.
 - **A: Ashante Conner:** It's a great question. Essentially, it means a continued strong partnership. We will continue to partner closely with that office in their work, as they predominantly support our students and sometimes as needed faculty and staff in supporting our students. Dawn and I were actually talking earlier today and we kind of have the same vision as we're going to continue that partnership, but again, as we evolve, the partnership may look a little bit different next year. We're also willing to kind of go along with

that as again, the needs of the university changes. Dawn, do you want to add anything to that?

- **A: Dawn Soufleris:** There will be no significant changes in the reporting structure, but we want to emphasize the importance of collaboration and co-sponsorship with Ashanti and the new office. We are excited about these partnerships and the work we do with individual students, highlighting the need to work across divisions to create a successful environment for students. We are eager to work with Ashante and the new structure; we can achieve incredible things together.
- **Comment from Chat: Elaine Gerber:** Thank you both.
- **Q: Alicia Broderick:** Can you give us a sense of the entities around campus that you're doing like debriefing conversations and how to tell if you might be on that list? If you're not, how can we reach out? The Disability Caucus would very much like to have a follow-up conversation. If we're not on your list, I would like to invite you to attend and have that conversation with us.
 - **A: Ashante Conner:** I would be more than happy to schedule that with you in the spring semester. Just to give you a highlight of the folks that we have met with to date, we've met with the management team, Student Development and Campus Life, the HR leadership team, IT, and Enrollment Management. We also met with the College of the Arts leadership team. We met with the Sprague Library. We met with Residence Life. The Disability Resource Center is scheduled for later this month and the Student Health Center. We also met with our standing working group - we debriefed them and also brought them the high-level findings.
 - I'll be more than happy to schedule that with you. We also have several sessions scheduled for this spring. So I will be meeting with the Center of Pedagogy in January. I'll be meeting with the Academic and Career Services leadership team, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, and CSAM. If you're not in there, I'll be more than happy to come and do a presentation just for the Disability caucus. I think any feedback that we'll get from the Caucus will be really meaningful.

- **A: Alicia Broderick:** Thank you so much. I'll be in touch shortly. Thank you.
- **Q: David Trubatch:** The Senate has three Councils. I would suggest coordinating with Erik as the president. It would seem to me that the Senate Councils should be on that list. Also, when you say “the college”, do you mean meeting with the faculty and staff at the College meeting or do you mean something else?
 - **A: Ashante Connor:** It's to my understanding that I was invited to the college meetings.
- **Q: David Trubatch:** Is the self-study you mentioned the one that precedes the Middle States re-accreditation? Has the self-study started already? I know that's not what you came to talk about, I'm just trying to understand. Are you saying the self-study for Middle States has started or that you're just looking forward to that process because it's coming?
 - **A: Ashante Connor:** I'm looking forward to that process. We can double-check with Joanne or Christine, who can tell you when it actually starts.
- **Q: Johnny Lorenz:** My question was about the renaming of the President's Committee on Affirmative Action. It just seems like the phrase “affirmative action” is no longer to be in the title of that committee. I'm just wondering if you could speak to the thinking there because I think we all know that the phrase affirmative action is disappearing from a lot of language across the country. I didn't know if it was in some way a response to the mood in the country or if there were either political or legal reasons why we're not using that phrase.
 - **A: Ashante Connor:** I can say that I think it's beyond the word “affirmative action”. We were really thinking about what is going to be the scope of this group and really trying to understand where we're trying to take the University. “Inclusivity and equity” was that direction. The title doesn't include diversity, right? It doesn't include belonging, because we were really thinking about where we want to take the University from an aspirational perspective. I think it was more about the scope, and who we want to be versus a word or a buzzword that defines us.
- **Erik Jacobson:** Can someone let me know how to put a superscript in the title of an e-mail? [**David Trubatch** responded that you can use a

carat.] Thank you, Ashante, for coming. We wish you luck with the new office and new position.

- Esperanza Brizuela-Garcia, Katherine McCaffrey (Core Curriculum)
 - **Katherine McCaffrey:** We have launched an interim two-year certification process. Our priority is getting the new core curriculum up and running for the fall. So to do that, we are certifying existing classes on an ongoing rolling basis.
 - Courses do not need to be in the old gen ed program. They just need to be existing classes in the curriculum.
 - Second, we are not expecting any new syllabi, descriptions, or titles. We're dealing with the existing curriculum.
 - We are not limiting submissions to 100-level courses. But there can be no prereqs and any course should be aimed at the non-major general student body.
 - We recommend that everyone just keep it simple.
 - Choose one Student Learning Outcome. Faculty are not expected or encouraged to choose two SLOs.
 - Speak to your class's strengths. What does your class do best? If you teach a lab class, choose the scientific reasoning SLO. Don't contort your syllabus to make it address interactive communication. Speak to your strength and keep it simple.
 - **Esperanza Brizuela-Garcia:** We have received around 50 submissions for certification, and we are working to move them along to the advisory board. There are two basic requirements for certification: submitting a syllabus and a brief explanation of how your course addresses the objectives of the selected learning outcome. While not asking for course modifications or course titles, some courses may need to rethink how their course fits within the new learning outcomes of the SEEDS curriculum.
 - The second requirement is choosing a SEEDS value. The SEEDS values are more vague and broad, so people must reflect on how their course helps students cultivate a particular SEED value. This is about the broader value that the course adds to the curriculum. We want to see how you interpret the SEEDS values and how your courses speak to those values.
 - We're looking to start with the Explorations area of the curriculum in January. At that point, we can start having conversations about new courses people might want to create for the SEEDS curriculum or

for their programs that could also be used for this curriculum. If you are thinking about this, please let us know.

- We also want to start thinking about how the courses can be clustered, maybe to create some kind of interdisciplinary themes. Don't think just about your course like its own little isolated unit. Think about whether you can partner with other faculty members to create interdisciplinary courses. This will help students make greater meaning of the curriculum. For your courses, you can also find probably a more meaningful and more visible place in the curriculum.
- Sometime in the middle of next semester, we will also then start organizing elections. Right now, we're working with an interim advisory board, but we're hoping that by the end of next semester, we will select the advisory board that will continue this work for the next three years. Think about whether or not you'd want to participate.
- **Q: Rebecca Madson:** This is for Fall 2024, for new freshmen, correct?
 - **A: Esperanza Brizuela-Garcia:** Yes.
 - **Q: Rebecca Madson:** The fall schedule's first draft is due February 2nd. The advising team that does enrollment for freshmen has to select what classes they want for freshmen by that time. With this process, some things have come through, but you expect there will be more approvals. We don't need it for registration, but we do need to know who's teaching what. Do you anticipate that we will be able to kind of make all these approvals before the schedule is finalized?
 - **A: Esperanza Brizuela-Garcia:** We don't anticipate approving the entire curriculum by that point. That's why we're focusing right now on the Foundations area, which are the courses that we expect freshmen will be taking. With regards to that particular section of the curriculum, we hope to have as many of those courses available for advisors to create that curriculum as soon as possible. That's what we're telling people. We had a lot of questions about deadlines - the deadline is as soon as possible, especially if you are teaching courses in the Foundations area of the curriculum. That's what we're hoping to achieve.
- **Q: Matthew Calvert:** Rebecca asked my questions, but I have an additional question. You said it's rolling. What do you see with the

non-Foundational courses? When do you think we'll have a good sense of the majority of that curriculum set?

- **A: Katherine McCaffrey:** I think that we're going to see a flurry of courses come in during the break. I know that faculty are pretty stressed right now and are planning on getting to some work over the break. It's rolling.
- **Q: Bill Sullivan:** This change is going to affect work programs, and it's going to affect the suggested curriculum. At what point are people going to be required to revise those programs?
 - **A: Esperanza Brizuela-Garcia:** The current two-year temporary certification is being implemented because we knew we didn't have time right now to go through program and course modifications if we wanted to ensure that the courses are available for students in Fall 2024. The faculty can teach these courses for the next two years and evaluate the courses further. At the end of these two years, the course will have a formal or permanent sort of certification. In the next two years, we are going to find out what changes or modifications need to be done either to programs or to courses. That's the rationale behind having a two-year temporary certification.
- **Q: David Trubatch:** The Senate made several recommendations about improving and regularizing the curriculum process several years ago with an extensive report, but there has been no 100% formal response to the recommendations from the administration. One key element of these recommendations is that elections should be handled as a matter of execution by the Senate Elections Committee. This committee would execute elections in a capacity that everyone understands and has confidence in. The Senate's interest is not in specific curriculum, but rather in achieving it through governance or as a disinterested and able body to have the capacity to run the election. I just wanted to clarify also about some other criteria you gave. If they're on the [SEEDS website](#), I don't see them. If you set up a course in Foundations, it should have no prerequisites. How would this be open to non-majors or something like that?
 - **A: Katherine McCaffrey:** The core classes should be aimed at the general student population, not majors and they cannot have prerequisites. If you are submitting a class that

currently has a prereq, but you think it would work in the SEEDS, then we will just have to remove –

- **A: David Trubatch:** At the risk of being parochial, I'll raise this because it applies to all of CSAM. In CSAM, there is a mathematics track. It affects all departments - it's not just one department that offers the courses. As is typical in many institutions of higher education, there are mathematics courses for CSAM majors and there are the gen ed mathematics courses. They are distinct because the Gen Ed math courses don't have prerequisites, but they also don't serve as prerequisites to other courses. As far as I know, there's a precalculus course that doesn't have prerequisites. Students only take that course because they are going to use it in a CSAM major. This is something that needs to be worked out. The curriculum needs to be reconciled before faculty members submit their courses. This reconciliation should be open and transparent and should be resolved.
- **A: Katherine McCaffrey:** We understand that in CSAM, in particular, there are classes that we need to pay attention to that might require some –
- **A: David Trubatch:** There is no math course that meets the CSAM requirements and the criteria that you suggested. This requires attention. I am not suggesting a solution, but rather pointing out that many courses meet the Gen Ed requirements but do not meet all the criteria you stated. I do not want people to get tripped up later because they didn't realize it was happening.
- **A: Katherine McCaffrey:** We appreciate that and we will follow through on that suggestion.
- **A: Esperanza Brizuela-Garcia:** I also think that maybe we just need to clarify the language a little bit there. If we think about it, the vast majority of the courses that existed in the core curriculum, were, in fact, courses that were created for specific programs and then were also certified for the Gen Ed. If there are courses that were created in the context of a major but could also be useful and have a place in the new SEEDS curriculum, that is perfectly okay.
- **A: David Trubatch:** They don't meet the criteria of having no prerequisites, for example.

- **A: Esperanza Brizuela-Garcia:** That is the case for a lot of programs that were asked to set prerequisites in the more recent past.
- **A: David Trubatch:** Is that a hard requirement?
- **A: Esperanza Brizuela-Garcia:** No, it's not a hard requirement. We have talked to a lot of people about this because a lot of programs are in the process of removing those prerequisites because they didn't think that they were significantly important or meaningful or necessary for those particular courses. Their requirement is not that courses should not have prerequisites, the requirement is that the courses should be able to be open to the wider population because that's the population that they need to serve. That is the requirement.
- **Comments from Chat:**
 - **Emily Isaacs:** Wouldn't what David is saying also be true for science majors who take different science classes than non-science majors?
 - **David Trubatch:** Maybe so, but I am less familiar with the specifics of introductory Biology, Chemistry, etc. 200-level courses must have a prerequisite. 300-level courses must have a 200- or 300-level prerequisite. That requirement is related to the division of jurisdiction with County Colleges.
 - **Shannon Bellum:** Under Gingerich, we had to add prereqs to all 200 levels. Many of us added Writ 105 to classes to meet this criteria. Do we remove it now to submit it to SEEDS?
 - Seconded by **Timothy Gorman**
- **Erik Jacobson:** For folks that have questions along these lines, I would certainly follow Esperanza's invitation to put your name in the hat to become part of the group that's working on some of these details.
- **Esperanza Brizuela-Garcia:** To clarify my language when we said we would organize elections, we meant we would ask the Senate to help us organize for elections. That has always been the policy that we needed to follow.
- **Erik Jacobson:** Thank you for the update and thanks for the continuing important work for the school.

- **Erik Jacobson:** Wendy Lin-Cook is not here, but the Senate invited her because the Senate has been contacted about registration issues, particularly concerning hidden courses. If a course doesn't have a room yet, students can't register for it, causing problems for the course and the program. Issues with software and other factors have led to these issues. The Senate will continue to follow up with Wendy to ensure clarity about this for faculty, staff, and students. The goal is to ensure that all parties have a clear understanding of when and where courses will be offered.

5. Voices of the Community

A. Reports from Caucuses

A. African American Caucus (Summer Jones)

- The [African American Caucus](#) meets on the second Wednesday of the month at noon. The African American Caucus is open to anyone of African descent and their allies, so anyone can join as long as you're an ally.
- We are working on our Black History Month events for February 2024. Some of the events that we're looking at include
 - themed lunch
 - a museum visit
 - film festival
 - voter rights documentary screening
 - guest speakers
 - panel discussion.
- We met today just to try to iron out some of those items. You will start to see some more advertisements around things that are happening for Black History Month.
- **Erik Jacobson:** I want to encourage folks who maybe can't make the meeting because of their other schedules, you can still support the caucus by becoming a member and showing your material support for the organization.

B. Asian and Pacific Islanders Caucus (Sumi Hagiwara)

- a. The AAPI Caucus is relaunching, with eight faculty and staff meeting yesterday to discuss ways to increase membership, activities, and presence across campus and amongst the caucuses. The plans for bylaws, the executive board, and events for spring are set to be firmed up in January.
- b. I've been able to include [AAPI Montclair](#), AAPI New Jersey, and [Teach Asian American Stories](#) as potential partners in planning

events and inviting scholars, practitioners, and individuals in the field to bring their expertise to Montclair. Hopefully, we'll have a more robust program for you this spring, and more to come. If you are interested, we are inviting allies as well and there will be a nice membership fee to help us build the budget for the caucus.

- c. **Erik Jacobson:** My suggestion still stands - there should be a punch card that if you're a paying member of four caucuses, you should get a fifth caucus membership free, or at least a cup of coffee.

C. Disability Caucus (Alicia Broderick)

- a. We've talked about the important idea of cross-movement silos. On behalf of the [Disability Caucus](#), I want to thank our staff from the [Office for Social Justice and Diversity](#). Adela Caceres and Darius Edwards joined us at our general membership meeting last week. We reached out as a Caucus because we've been focusing this year on supporting disabled students as an identity group and affinity group within Montclair's community. Those overtures were met with enthusiasm from OSJD. We are so excited and so thrilled that OSJD is going to be working with us in the Spring on different items like adding observations to the calendar that the university generally acknowledges and that are observed in their office. This includes celebrations like pride days, flag-raising days, and events of this nature that are specific to various disabled, Deaf, neurodivergent, and otherwise minoritized communities on campus.
 - We've had some shifts in our executive board membership. We have finally settled upon a fixed time for our general membership meetings in the Spring 2024 semester. They will be held on the fourth Friday of each month, which is not necessarily the last Friday of the month, from 10:30 am to noon. Announcements will be sent out.
 - We will meet at the end of January on the 26th. Topically, it will be focused on neurodivergent-inclusive and neurodivergent-affirming practices. It will be curated by myself and Andrew Wallace, who is a librarian at Sprague. Be on the lookout for that conversation and we welcome everyone to come and participate.
- b. **Erik Jacobson:** In terms of the Friday meetings, as one of the proposed new versions of the weekly grid, there would be separate common hours on Wednesday and Friday. The idea is to give more

flexibility when it comes to people able to meet as caucuses and as groups.

D. Latinx Caucus (Johnny Lorenz)

- The [Latinx caucus](#) invites Latino, Latina, Latinx, or allies to join their monthly meeting on the third Wednesday of the month. The meeting may shift based on scheduling needs. The meeting is usually held at 3:30 pm, either in-person or online. The most recent meeting discussed the potential opening of a Latin-themed restaurant on campus by Dining Services, focusing on the importance of feeling welcome on campus and having representation in terms of food.
- The caucus plans to invite [students from various organizations](#), including the Latin American Student Organizations (LASO), Mexican American Student Association, Dominican Student Organization, and Puerto Rican Student Organization, to discuss issues specific to their needs.
- [This semester](#) saw an exciting flag-raising ceremony in October to celebrate Hispanic and Latinx heritage at Montclair State University. The university president and New Jersey Senator Therese Ruiz spoke about political engagement. Panels were organized by Milton Fuentes and Laura Quiros about making Latinx students feel more welcome in the classroom.
- In November, Mayida Zaal, one of our members, [organized a conference](#) on liberation-based healing and the conceptualization of freedom as a daily practice.
- We invited [Melissa Baralt](#) to discuss her efforts in Paterson and concerns about getting University involvement in activities, particularly in involving the Latinx community in the democratic process.
- We co-sponsored an event - a documentary screening and discussion about a community of young people in Puerto Rico dealing with hurricane aftermath and taking matters into their own hands.
- The Latinx Caucus invites anyone interested in raising a toast to celebrate the end of the academic year and looking forward to next year to join them at an event taking place at Tierney's on Valley Road from 5 pm to 7 pm on Valley Road.
 - *Comments from Chat:*
 - **Summer Jones:** Great Cheeseburgers!
 - **Johnny Lorenz:** If you want to join the Latinx Caucus, feel free to reach out to me: lorenzj@montclair.edu (Johnny Lorenz). Today at Tierney's (138 Valley Road) 5-7 pm - Feel free to join us to raise a toast recognizing the end of a busy year and to look forward to 2024!

E. Montclair Votes (Pascale LaFountain)

- No report.

B. Open Floor

A. Wendy Lin-Cook - VP for Enrollment Management

- **Erik Jacobson:** People had concerns about things like hidden courses and not being able to find courses and students not being able to register for them. Do you want to give us an update on the hidden course situation?
- **Wendy Lin-Cook:** I apologize for being late - this meeting was not on my calendar. I had to investigate the question. There are different times when we purposely hide some courses during registration for specific populations.
- In the case that we are discussing, I think there's a misunderstanding of the registration process. When we are scheduling classes, we receive multiple requests from everyone. In-person classes are not considered ready to go until they have a physical classroom space assigned. This delay may have caused confusion about the availability of classes. There is a long lag time with the negotiation of space, leading to confusion about class availability.
- I am working with staff to review the entire process and make it more efficient. If a department is unable to find a space for a class, they may need to move it to a different time or modality. However, if a department waits to see if the classroom will free up, the class is technically invisible as they cannot open it for registration.
- This is the beginning of a larger review of scheduling and campus space usage, which has been discussed in prior meetings. We plan to provide more updates to the Senate as we review these business processes.
 - **Q: Hugh Curnutt:** In my school, if I'm not mistaken, there were something like 70 courses that were supposed to be available for our majors to take that were not listed. I believe this has never happened before. Was there a particular reason why this happened this semester, as opposed to in previous semesters?
 - **A: Wendy Lin-Cook:** I can't answer about this semester versus the prior semester because I have to look at the data. My understanding is that there is no process change in the process if we go back to the department and say that we

don't have classroom space. The department chose to wait, so the class sat in limbo. We don't want a process where a student can be allowed to register for a class without a classroom assignment because the class could be changed to a different time or modality.

- As the student population increases, there is a need for more efficient space allocation. We acknowledge that the registrar's office needs to be faster in resolving space issues and ensuring efficient use of space. We are working on improving these issues in the calendar committee, examining course blocks, and ensuring all available space is known during scheduling. Some of the issues may disappear as we work on the grid, but we will continue to keep an eye on this.
- **Erik Jacobson:** When the new weekly grid is finalized, I think this is also going to prevent a lot of issues along these lines and make sure that people know all the times and all the blocks. I think we're getting a head start on that and trying to answer some of those questions as early as possible.
- **Wendy Lin-Cook:** We on the subcommittee and the committee are very close to the final first draft of the class blocks. We'd like to send it to the Senate so that everybody has a chance to take a look and give feedback. I'm hoping that in the next couple of weeks, we will be able to push that forward. Then, we could do what we did with the calendar where everybody gave us feedback. We go through the feedback systematically. I could do a presentation to the Senate so that I could keep everybody updated as to the progression of that project.
 - **Q: David Trubatch:** I want to address the complexity of the question and feedback in this process. Besides the need for broad-based open feedback before implementation, it is not just about familiarity with the system, but also about the likelihood of its effects on the current processes. I want to remind the group of the history of room assignments at our University. There was a program called the Optimizer which, the first time it was implemented, assigned non-lab courses in labs. Running a process like this is not trivial. Certain units and subdivisions agreed to opt out of the program in exchange for maintaining a specific set of rooms. Efficiency with a large number of rooms is a clear reason for change,

but not all classrooms and courses have the same requirements. Efficiency modeling should consider these factors to avoid making mistakes and repeating errors made in the past.

6. NAL Report (Hugh Curnutt)

- This upcoming Friday is the last day to vote on ratifying our new contract. The local is urging members to vote on the ratification of the new contract, as it is crucial for the greater influence the Local has in negotiations with the state. The contract includes retroactive pay, which will be dispersed by HR, who is updating their systems. Questions can be directed to HR through workday@montclair.edu or you can contact Local 1904.
- The Board of Trustees will hold their first monthly meeting on the Bloomfield campus on Thursday, and attendees are encouraged to attend either online or in-person to show solidarity. There is plenty of parking available.
- The Local wishes everyone a good holiday season and a restorative winter break. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me or one of the other officers in the Local.
- **Comments from Chat:**
 - **Hugh Curnutt:** Here's the Zoom link for tomorrow's BoT meeting: https://montclair.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_fEEjiBBIT9Kn97wgAu5MV
- **Erik Jacobson:** I made sure to read the contract thoroughly before voting. The contract is not complex and I encourage others to read it, as it is not that difficult to understand and work through.

7. Standing Committees and Senate Liaisons

A. Constitution (Erik Jacobson for Pascale LaFountain)

- We finally got the numbers from the administration per unit. The Constitution committee is having our first meeting about the numbers this Friday, to figure out what an equation might be. The idea is to have a responsive equation in the Constitution so we don't have to vote every time the University grows or contracts. This is the first step of folding the Bloomfield campus into the Senate. It's a good first step and we look forward to taking it. I want to thank everybody who's agreed to serve on the Constitution committee as part of that.

B. Just and Sustainable Practices (Tim Gorman)

- Last month, an event was held on belonging, which will be followed up in the spring semester. The other primary focus is on the sustainability of campus operations. The university is hiring a new director of sustainability. The organization is not actively engaged in this process but will keep

everyone updated. We look forward to working with the new director and with Ashanti Connor, and the office of I.E. Squared.

- We are also promoting membership for those interested in issues of social justice or environmental sustainability as they pertain to campus operations or academic affairs. We would love to have you on the committee. We are in the process of scheduling meetings for the spring and welcome any input on scheduling. If interested, please contact me as soon as possible.

C. Task Force on Global Outreach (Daniel Mengara)

- The Provost's Office created a task force in Fall 2022 to audit all international activities and internationalization efforts at the institution. The task force is chaired by Ethne Swartz of the School of Business and Carlos Molina of CSAM. The first installment of their work resulted in an interim report shared with the campus community in September. The final report is expected to be delivered to the Provost sometime in January.
- The committee is currently working on analyzing data from three surveys conducted this fall: one faculty survey and two international student surveys targeting both graduate and undergraduate international student populations. The response rates were satisfactory, and the committee will not conduct qualitative analysis of all the surveys.
 - The Student Services survey focused on practical matters such as academic support, campus resources, and students' sense of belonging at Montclair State University. Some results were positively surprising, such as 72% of undergraduates reporting a positive sense of belonging. We still need to kind of interrogate you know, what happened to the rest, so we're kind of going through the data to better understand, for example, those who didn't necessarily say negative comments but didn't strongly share this opinion.
 - The faculty survey examined international faculty engagement, including research, initiatives, and collaboration. The survey was complex and required extensive work from the committee to extract qualitative information for a final report. The data showed a strong investment in Western Europe, which is a dominant area of faculty engagement compared to other regions. This data will help understand why this is the case and suggest recommendations for fostering more engagement with other regions like Africa and South America. The committee is still working on assessing the benchmarking data and prioritizing recommendations.
 - Additionally, they are working on organizing the recommendations into coherent action items and categories. The committee is also working on assessing the benchmarking data and prioritizing

recommendations, with the final report expected in January.

D. Task Force on Student Success (Evin Deschamp)

- The report writing phase is ongoing, with Mayida and I working diligently to keep up with changes and initiatives that have happened over the past year since our work began and including collective voices from our five different working groups. We aim to include the most updated data and will provide a draft report to the provost in early January. We plan to share and communicate the report, gathering feedback from campus stakeholders afterward. We express gratitude to Danielle Insalaco-Egan for her support throughout the process.
- **Erik Jacobson:** I thank all the liaisons, all the committee chairs, and all the working group chairs for all the work that you do. This is a key part of the Senate Business on a weekly basis.

8. Council Reports

A. Student Affairs (Jessica Brater)

- Some of you may have seen an article in the Montclarion that discusses student concerns about the lack of bus shelters on campus. We understand that New Jersey Transit will arrange for and cover the cost if the university is willing to maintain and insure them. This issue came up in a town hall with students and facilities so they are aware of the issue. Sean Connolly confirmed that they are taking action to provide shelters on campus. We hope to report back with more details by the next meeting or Shawn may join us to give a report. We wish everyone fortitude in grading and a wonderful holiday season and break.
- **Erik Jacobson:** I look forward to seeing if we are going to be able to give design input on them. It'd be nice if students could be involved in designing what the shelters look like on campus. It may be something that we're not allowed to do. We will see.

B. Administrative Affairs (Shannon Bellum)

- The inquiry into email loss for adjuncts and temporary employees over the summer months has been resolved, with the VP of IT stating it could be an HR offboarding issue.
- The safety committee reported that the drop-up drop-off pickup and waiting zone idea has been moved to capital planning for both design and costing phases. The executive board will follow up with the administration to monitor the situation. The Safety Committee report is attached to this council's report.
- The administrative IT liaison, Pascal La Fountain, has been active in the ITVP search committee, and candidates are being assessed.

C. Academic Affairs (Marshall Schmidt)

- The Academic Affairs Council has two important projects to discuss. The first is an announcement and call for potential volunteers regarding a project involving Emily Isaacs and OFE, who has a future project on student surveys (formerly called course evaluations). They want to create a resource around student surveys across the university and aim to collect student surveys as a resource and possibly construct a best practice document and create a repository for student surveys. Academic Affairs will work with the OFE in some capacity. We would like to open this up to the rest of the Senate and invite anyone interested in participating in these conversations to reach out to me or Emily directly. This isn't an immediate thing, but it would be possibly something to work on in the Spring.
 - **Comment from Chat: Emily Isaacs:** Just a minor clarification -- the repository exists. Kirk McDermid and Kathleen Kelley, OFE Board members, are seeking to work with other faculty to develop an advisory set of resources for how to develop surveys, read surveys, etc. Here is the IRE repository:
<https://www.montclair.edu/provost/course-evaluations/>.
- The Academic Affairs Council has been working on an update to the current academic integrity policy, which has not made much progress. However, a recurring issue has been the relationship between academic integrity and artificial intelligence. We plan to discuss this topic in the Spring and we aim to come up with a recommendation or something more concrete.
- We welcome any new business or inquiries.
- **Erik Jacobson:** When the executive board met with the President and the Provost on Monday, the issue of academic integrity came up, particularly concerning equity across campus. Questions arose, including, within faculty discretion, who gets reported? Who doesn't get reported? Having that much discretion creates opportunities for inequalities in terms of who gets a break and who doesn't get a break. That's one of the things that we're also discussing is making sure that that's done fairly and equitably, and not just some people getting a second chance or a third chance.

9. New Business

- None.

A. First Reads

- None.

B. Second Reads/ Voting

- None.

10. Old Business

- None

11. Report of the Senate President

- Last Giving Tuesday, the Development Office at Montclair State University received significant support from faculty and staff members, raising over \$61,000 to support student success at the University.
- The Development and Alumni Engagement Team is grateful for the generosity of faculty, staff, alumni, and donors who made a difference for Montclair students. They look forward to the university's big day of giving, One Day for Montclair on April 25.
- A reception for alumni, faculty, and staff at Bloomfield College of Montclair State University was held on November 29. Attendees had the opportunity to meet with President Koppell and Chancellor Marcheta Evans to discuss the vision for Bloomfield College at Montclair State University. Attendees enjoyed the festivities and the chance to gather and engage in dialogue with each other and campus leadership. We hope to strengthen the relationship between the two campuses.
- The Senate is encouraging individuals interested in shared governance to consider serving on the Executive Board (E-Board) of the Senate. Many members are either term-limited or have completed their time and want to transition off the board. The Executive Board is a good way to be involved in campus life. We really would encourage those of you that are interested in this aspect of shared governance, to toss your hat in the ring, and reach out to any executive board member about our particular position, or about the E-Board generally, to kind of see what it entails and what it involves.
- A non-Senator sent a letter to the executive board regarding my involvement with Students for Justice in Palestine. The Senate lacks policies to clarify the process for dealing with complaints from outside the Senate. The Senate is working on creating a procedure for responding to such situations as transparently as possible. The lack of bylaws and a less robust constitution sets a precedent for similar issues in the future. The administration has been consulted for advice on handling such cases.
 - **Q: Rich Wolfson:** I'm speaking now as a past president. In developing that policy, why reach out to the administration? The administration does not vote.

- **A: Erik Jacobson:** It's to get advice from folks who have developed similar policies. It's not just the administration but other folks who are knowledgeable about creating those types of procedures and policies.
- **Q: Rich Wolfson:** It's just input?
- **A: Erik Jacobson:** Yes, it's just input. They're not gonna put their thumb on the scale. It's just input to figure out how we would set something like this up.
- I want to thank everybody for your work for the Senate this semester. Good luck finishing up the semester and wrapping things up. Have a safe and happy holiday season.
 - **Comments from Chat: Nicole Panorkou:** Happy holidays everyone!

Meeting Adjournment

- **Call to Adjourn:** 3:04 PM
- **Erik Jacobson,** Call to Adjourn
- **Hugh Curnutt,** Seconded
- **Erik Jacobson:** Adjourned by Acclamation