

MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Public Minutes

April 9, 2026

Present: Mr. Eric Brophy, Mr. Leonard Carr, Ms. Tara Colton, Ms. Mary Comito, Dr. Francis Cuss, Ms. Michelle DeAngelo Bucceri, Ms. Marie-Marthelle Guervil, Prof. Mary English, Mr. Jameson Klinsky, President Jonathan Koppell, Mr. Quentin Ocampo, Ms. Arlene Quinones- Perez, Ms. Shelia Rostiac and Mr. Kent Sluyter

Absent: Mr. Anthony Abrantes, Ms. Tracy Higgins and Mr. Sreeni Kutam

By Invitation: Dr. Joseph Brennan, Ms. Althea Broomfield-Michel, Mr. Shawn Connolly, Mr. Benjamin Durant, Ms. Meredith Gatzke, Dr. Fatma Mili, Dr. Tara Morlando-Zurlo, Mr. Suresh Murugan, Mr. Adam Rathbun, Mr. James Solodar, Dr. Dawn Meza Soufleris, Ms. Rita Walters, Mr. Keith Barrack and Ms. Katie Comanto

Mr. Sluyter called the meeting to order at 10:42 a.m.

STATEMENT REGARDING MANNER OF PUBLIC NOTICE OF MEETING

Mr. Sluyter read the following statement regarding the public notice of the meeting: “As of March 1, 2026, Montclair State University will now publish all official public notices on its website at least 48 hours in advance of each public meeting in accordance with the requirements of the amended New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act.

ROLL CALL - As reported above.

MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF FEBRUARY 5, 2026

Trustees approved the minutes from the February 5, 2026 meeting, as distributed.

No. 3573

TUITION HEARING

President Koppell presented the factors impacting the University’s decision regarding budgeting and tuition rates. The following students provided testimony to the Board of Trustees: Krishita Vaghani, Ruth Fernandez, Gabriel Leal, and Ximena Valencia.

Student Trustee Quentin Ocampo reported on the feedback from the tuition listening sessions held by the Student Trustees.

President Koppell and Mr. Sluyter thanked the students for their thoughtful comments.

Honorary Degree

Mr. Sluyter moved for the Board to confer upon Governor Mikie Sherrill the degree of Doctor of Law, *honoris causa*, to be awarded on May 12, 2026.

The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

No. 3574

UNION REPORTS

AFT President Laura Field commended the students who testified during the tuition hearing, noting the impact of their experiences. President Field commented on the upcoming labor contract negotiations. President Field noted the implementation of five new certificate programs and acknowledged the contributions of the faculty. President Field

recognized the increase in approved sabbaticals and congratulated faculty receiving emeriti status. She referenced the Interdisciplinary Science Building, requesting that the Board maintain rigorous oversight and ensure transparency for the University community. President Field concluded with wishing everyone a smooth ending to the spring semester.

STUDENT SUCCESS

Mr. Butler reported that the Committee met on April 7, 2026, approved the minutes from its February 2, 2026 meeting, and received reports from Vice President of Student Development and Campus Life, Dr. Dawn Meza Soufleris. The Committee discussed four new undergraduate programs and one new graduate program.

New Certificate Programs

Mr. Butler moved that the Board of Trustees approve the following new certificate programs, which will be in effect beginning Fall 2026:

- Undergraduate Certificate, SCHOLAR Certificate (Stewardship, Community History, and Opportunities for Leadership and Academic Readiness)
- Undergraduate Certificate in Esports Management
- Undergraduate Certificate in Applied Spanish for the Professions
- Undergraduate Certificate in Science Writing for STEM Majors
- Graduate Certificate in Healthcare Management

The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

No. 3575

HUMAN CAPITAL COMMITTEE

Ms. Rostiac reported that the Committee met on April 7, 2026. The Committee approved the minutes from the February 3, 2026 meeting and reviewed personnel actions and anticipated hires between Board meetings. Meredith Gatzke, Chief Human Resources Officer, updated the Committee on the HR division and discussed upcoming changes to the State health benefits plan and forthcoming contract negotiations.

Personnel Actions

Ms. Rostiac moved that the Board of Trustees approve the following personnel actions:

- 1 - Assistant / Associate Teaching Professor Appointments
- 3 - Librarian Appointments
- 28 - Faculty Reappointments
- 28 - Sabbaticals
- 5 - Professor Emeriti
- 10 - Managerial Staff Appointments
- 15 - Professional Staff Appointments
- 1 - Professional Staff Reappointment

Assistant/Associate Teaching Professor (AY2026)

**10 month, ^12 month*

² two-year, non-tenure-track appointment

Name	Department	Title	Effective	Degrees	School Attended
Jhoniell Santiago ^{2^}	School of Nursing	Assistant Teaching Professor, Nursing	8/28/26	BS MS	Montclair State University Montclair State University

Librarian: Non-Tenure Track (AY26)

Name	Department	Title	Effective	Degrees	School Attended
Theresa Corbin	Research & Reference Services	Research & Instruction Librarian	2/9/26	BS MLIS	University of South Alabama Louisiana State University
Robert Jensen	Research & Reference Services	Research & Instruction Librarian	2/9/26	BA MA MA MA MLS	SUNY at Stonybrook Adelphi University Texas Tech University Fordham University CUNY at Queens College
Melissa John	Research & Reference Services	Research & Instruction Librarian	2/9/26	BA MA MLIS	Rutgers University, New Brunswick Fairleigh Dickinson University Rutgers University, New Brunswick

Faculty reappointment (AY2026-27)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Highest Degree</i>	<i>Department</i>	<i>Rank</i>	<i>Year of Current Appoint.</i>
College for Community Health				
Mitra Britton	PhD	Communication Sciences/Disorders	Assistant	2
Grace Clark	PhD	Communication Sciences/Disorders	Assistant	2
Jongho Moon	PhD	Kinesiology	Assistant	2
Jessica Bihuniak	PhD	Nutrition and Food Studies	Assistant	2
Jong Min Lee	PhD	Nutrition and Food Studies	Assistant	2
Rebecca Ofrane	DPH	Public Health	Assistant	2
College for Education and Engaged Learning				
Wendy Castillo	PhD	Educational Foundations	Assistant	2
Suman Rath	PhD	Educational Leadership	Assistant	2
College of Communication and Media				
Dongdong Yang	PhD	Communication and Media Studies	Assistant	2
College of Humanities and Social Sciences				
Jason Abbott	PhD	Political Science and Law	Professor	2
Yoshira Macias Mejia	PhD	Political Science and Law	Assistant	2
Martina Santia	PhD	Political Science and Law	Assistant	2
Jackie Vimo	PhD	Political Science and Law	Assistant	2
Pevitr Bansal	PhD	Psychology	Assistant	2
Roxanna Ast	PhD	Social Work and Child Advocacy	Assistant	2
Daniel Douglas	PhD	Sociology	Assistant	2

College of Science and Mathematics

Carlos Molina	Biology	Fall 2026
Il Hyung (Eli) Lee	Chemistry/Biochemistry	AY26-27
Mikako Munakata	Mathematics	Fall 2026
Jing Peng	School of Computing	Spring 2027
Dajin Wang	School of Computing	Fall 2026

College of the Arts

Charlotte Kent	Art and Design	AY26-27
Maxine Steinman	Theatre and Dance	Fall 2026

Managerial Staff Appointment (AY 2026)

***Gift Funded, #Grant funded**

Name	Department	Title	Effective	Degrees	School Attended
Nimaako Brown#	College for Education and Engage Learning	Senior Research Manager	2/9/26	BS MS	University of Southern California Columbia University
Robert Cole	Treasury and Finance	Director of Auxiliary Operations and Retail	2/23/26	BA	University of Scranton
Kristina Fripps	Financial Aid	Deputy Director of Financial Aid Operations	2/23/26	BS MBA	Jefferson University (Philadelphia University) Eastern University
Jennifer Marci	Financial Aid	Assistant Director of Financial Aid Systems & State Programs	3/23/26	BS MA	New Jersey City University New Jersey City University
Stefania Ruiz	Human Resources	Human Resources Business Partner, Information Technology and Enrollment Management	2/16/26	BAS MS MBA	Montclair State University Columbia University Montclair State University
Marissa Sheldon#	College for Education and Engage Learning	Grow NJ Kids Project Coordinator - Evaluation	2/9/26	BA MS	Brown University University of North Carolina
Sarah Smyth	Bloomfield College	Director of Academic Success	3/23/26	BSW MA	Rutgers University Saint Peter's University

Regina Tindall	Human Resources	Director of Labor Relations	4/6/26	BA JD	Brown University University of Connecticut, School of Law
William Versfelt	University Counsel	Senior Associate Counsel	4/6/26	BA JD	Cornell University William & Mary Law School
Sherrell Watson-Hall	Financial Aid	Assistant Director of Financial Aid, Federal Programs	3/2/26	BA MA	Kean University Rutgers University

Professional Staff Appointment (AY 2026)
****Gift Funded, #Grant funded***

Name	Department	Title	Effective	Degrees	School Attended
Samantha Bassford	Human Resources	Learning and Talent Development Specialist	2/9/26	BA MA	Pace University Pace University
Luzaidy Calderon	Undergraduate Admissions/ Marketing and Outreach	Recruitment Marketing Coordinator	3/2/26	BA MA	William Paterson University William Paterson University
Briana Casagrande	College of Communications & Media	Academic Advisor	2/16/26	BA MA	Montclair State University Montclair State University
Kyle Cashin	Bloomfield College	Program Coordinator	1/12/26	BA MA	Montclair State University Montclair State University
Kyara Castano	Financial Aid	Financial Aid Counselor	4/6/26	BA MA	Kean University William Patterson University
Hannah Glynn	University Development	Associate Director of Alumni Engagement	3/23/26	BS	University of New Haven
Jane Greenberg	Information Technology	Workday HCM Analyst	1/9/26	AA BA	Fairleigh Dickinson University Fairleigh Dickinson University

Franchely Inoa [#]	OSB Advocacy & Outreach	EOC Project Manager	1/26/26	BA	Bloomfield College
Abhishank Khadka	Undergraduate Admissions/Data and Technology	Assistant Director for CRM Data Analytics and Technology	3/16/26	BS MBA	Caldwell University Caldwell University
Lauren Klemans	Facilities Learning and Development	Division Coordinator	3/23/26	BS	Montclair State University
Tory Ludington	University Development	Associate Director of Digital Engagement	2/23/26	BA	Rutgers University
Jordan Meredith	College for Community Health	Academic Advisor, College for Community Health	3/23/26	BA MA	Ramapo College Ramapo College
Vidya Reddy Vanga	Information Technology	Workday Technical Developer	3/23/26	BS MS	Lovely Professional University, India Texas Tech University
Jhonel Richards	Counseling & Psychological Services	Staff Clinician	2/23/26	BA MSW	Fairleigh Dickinson University Rutgers University
Magali Romero	Student Services	Career Development Specialist	3/19/26	BS MS	William Paterson University Montclair State University

Professional Staff Annual Reappointment
July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027
***grant funded**

Academic Affairs
1 - year contract

<i>Employee</i>	<i>Department</i>	<i>Title</i>
Crystal Murillo	Health Careers	Academic Advisor

Professor Emeriti

PROFESSOR ANN MARIE DiLORENZO

- Whereas: Pursuant to Montclair State University personnel policies, the Board of Trustees, upon recommendation of the President, may provide emerita status for a retired professor should it desire to recognize meritorious performance, and
- Whereas: Professor Ann Marie DiLorenzo has retired from Montclair State University, College of Science and Mathematics, Department of Biology, and
- Whereas: Professor DiLorenzo served the University for fifty years, and
- Whereas: She established the first laboratory of Cell Culture and directed numerous Independent Research undergraduate students and Master's Thesis students. She served on several Curriculum Committees, as Director of the Sokol program, and was a Group Leader for the President's Commission on Affirmative Action. She also served as a member of the Planning Board of the Institute for Critical Thinking and the Wehner Symposium Committee and the inaugural Committee to establish Co-Operative Education. Further, she served as Chairperson of the Committee to establish International Global Co-Op, as member of the Grant Committee at the School of Education, and served for three years as Special Assistant to the Dean of the College of Science and Mathematics, and
- Whereas: She published twenty-three research papers and abstracts and served on the Committee of the GK-12 Grant. She was a founding member of the Teacher Recruitment for Urban Schools of Tomorrow Program, received a Global Education award, and served on the Society for Toxicology Education Committee. She was a mentor for Post-Baccalaureate Research Experiences for LSAMP students and served as a member of Board of Education of Glen Ridge.

Now, therefore, be it

- Resolved: That Ann Marie DiLorenzo be designated Professor Emerita of Montclair State University with all the rights, duties, and privileges thereunto appertaining.

PROFESSOR MARSHA GRANT-FORD

- Whereas: Pursuant to Montclair State University personnel policies, the Board of Trustees, upon recommendation of the President, may provide emerita status for a retired professor should it desire to recognize meritorious performance, and
- Whereas: Professor Marsha Grant-Ford has retired from Montclair State University, College for Community Health, Department of Kinesiology, and
- Whereas: Professor Grant-Ford served the University with distinction for twenty-four years, and
- Whereas: She was the Coordinator for Clinical Education of the Athletic Training program and lead the first undergraduate and graduate Athletic Training Programs at the University accredited by the Commission on the Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE); Professor Grant-Ford is also an accomplished scholar on cultural competence and literacy in athletic training with several published journal articles and book chapters; and
- Whereas: Professor Grant-Ford was awarded the 2024 Paul Grace Leadership Award by the Board of Certification (BOC)A longstanding leader and member of the National Athletic Trainers' Association's Ethnic and Diversity Advisory Committee, she is also the namesake of the Marsha Grant-Ford EDAC Distinguished Research Award. Professor Grant-Ford has authored national educational standards on cultural competence, and her research and advocacy for cultural literacy have led to numerous invited publications, presentations, and leadership roles. In 1975, she broke barriers as the first African American woman to become a Certified Athletic Trainer, and her enduring impact continues to shape the field and inspire future generations.

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved: That Professor Marsha Grant-Ford be designated Professor Emerita of Montclair State University with all the rights, duties, and privileges thereunto appertaining.

PROFESSOR JESSICA S. HENRY

Whereas: Pursuant to Montclair State University personnel policies, the Board of Trustees, upon recommendation of the President, may provide emerita status for a retired professor in recognition of meritorious performance; and

Whereas: Professor Jessica S. Henry has retired from Montclair State University, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Department of Justice Studies, and

Whereas: Professor Henry served the University for twenty years; and

Whereas: In 2010, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences bestowed the Award for Excellence in Teaching. She was further recognized with both the 2015 University Distinguished Teacher Award and the 2022 University Distinguished Scholar Award. She served as Chair of the Department of Justice Studies and advanced innovative initiatives while mentoring faculty and students alike; and

Whereas: Professor Henry authored *Smoke but No Fire: Convicting the Innocent of Crimes That Never Happened*, thirteen peer-reviewed articles and multiple book chapters. Her scholarship and teaching brought national recognition to Montclair State University and exemplified the University's commitment to academic excellence and civic engagement; she is a nationally-recognized expert on wrongful convictions and criminal justice reform, and has served as a commentator for major media outlets. In 2024, she was appointed by Governor Phil Murphy to the State of New Jersey's six-member Clemency Advisory Board to advance and support the Governor's clemency initiative.

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved: That Professor Jessica S. Henry be designated Professor Emerita of Montclair State University with all the rights, duties, and privileges thereunto appertaining.

PROFESSOR JOHN J. SIEKIERKA

Whereas: Pursuant to Montclair State University personnel policies, the Board of Trustees, upon recommendation of the President, may provide emeritus status for a retired professor should it desire to recognize meritorious performance, and

Whereas: Professor John J. Siekierka has retired from Montclair State University, College of Science and Mathematics, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, and

Whereas: Professor Siekierka served the University for nineteen years, and

Whereas: He served sixteen years as the founding director of the Sokol Institute of Pharmaceutical Life Sciences, initiated the graduate program in pharmaceutical biochemistry, developed a graduate course in biochemical pharmacology, and trained and directed the research projects of numerous undergraduates, Master of Science, and PhD students. He was inducted into the New Jersey Inventors Hall of Fame in 2011 for his contributions to anti-inflammatory drug and delivery devices, and initiated a thirteen-year research partnership with Celgene Corporation in parasitic drug discovery that culminated in the advancement of a drug candidate into investigational new drug studies, and

Whereas: He published eighty-three peer-reviewed articles, presented at eleven national and international scientific meetings, participated as an associated member of the Center for Immunity and Inflammation at Rutgers University, receiving over three million dollars in extramural funding as a principal and collaborating investigator.

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved: That John J. Siekierka be designated Professor Emeritus of Montclair State University with all the rights, duties, and privileges thereunto appertaining.

PROFESSOR KENNETH E. SUMNER

Whereas: Pursuant to Montclair State University personnel policies, the Board of Trustees, upon recommendation of the President, may provide emeritus status for a retired professor should it desire to recognize meritorious performance, and

Whereas: Professor Kenneth E. Sumner has retired from Montclair State University, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Department of Psychology, and

Whereas: Professor Sumner served the University for twenty-six years, and

Whereas: He served the University as Associate Provost from 2017 to 2025 and as Acting Dean of the Graduate School from 2022-2025; he served the Department of Psychology in many capacities, including as Graduate Program Coordinator and Department Chair, increasing enrollments and developing new programs, including the Clinical Psychology Ph.D. and the Industrial/Organizational Psychology Ph.D.

Whereas: His scholarship in the field of Organizational Psychology was focused on the inner workings of organizations, and on diversity in the workplace. Dr. Sumner published twenty-three papers. Other scholarly activities included supervising more than one hundred internship students conducting case studies in a variety of organizations and mentoring numerous master's theses in the Department of Psychology, and

Whereas: He also served his profession through participation in SIOP committees, including the Education and Training, and the State Affairs Committees. Additionally, he served as a conference, program, and convention reviewer for SIOP, APA Division 14, and the Eastern Academy of Management. Dr. Sumner was also an editorial reviewer for the Journal of Social Behavior and Personality, Sex Roles, and Journal of Interdisciplinary Research.

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved: That Kenneth E. Sumner be designated Professor Emeritus of Montclair State University with all the rights, duties, and privileges thereunto appertaining.

The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

No. 3576

INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Mr. Sluyter reported that the Infrastructure and Operations Committee met on April 6, 2026 and approved the minutes from the February 3, 2026 meeting, discussed the delegated contract approvals, received a capital project report and reviewed contract awards.

Contract Awards

Mr. Sluyter moved that the following contract awards be approved:

- 102 Kitchen Renovations: The Village (Blackstone Group, LLC) - \$3,115,101
- External Auditing Services, 2-year extension (Grant Thornton LLP) – increase of \$374,000, total of \$1,740,000
- Nuvolo (ServiceNow) Workorder System License Increase (Carahsoft Technologies, Inc.) – increase of \$223,065, total of \$1,350,000
- Yogi Berra Stadium Light Pole Removal Emergency Procurement Ratification (South Shore Construction & Suburban Consulting Engineers) - \$100,000
- SCOM Virtual Reality Classroom & Development Laboratory Increase (Brahma Construction Corp.) – increase of \$102,704, total of \$1,283,004

- Panzer Athletic Center Flood Emergency Procurement Ratification (Mr. Fixit NJ LLC) – \$65,475

The motion was seconded and approved.

No. 3577

AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Dr. Cuss reported that the Audit and Risk Management Committee met on April 8, 2026 and approved the minutes from the February 4, 2026 meeting, and received a presentation from the University's Financial Advisor First Tryon focused on debt financing with respect to the new Interdisciplinary Science Building.

The Committee also received two presentations from the Assistant Vice President for Budget and Planning, James Solodar, one on proposed tuition and fees for the 2026-2027 academic year and the other on the University's FY2027 budget outlook.

Interdisciplinary Science Building Debt Financing and Bond Refinancing

Dr. Cuss moved for the Board to authorize the Senior Vice President/Chief Operating Officer and/or Vice President of Finance to take all actions necessary to enter into a second supplemental indenture of trust and certain other agreements in connection with the issuance by the University of general obligations bonds in a principal amount not to exceed \$170,000,000 and to take other actions in connection therewith.

The motion was seconded and approved.

No. 3578

GOVERNANCE

Ms. Comito reported that the Governance Committee met on April 8, 2026 and approved the minutes from the December 15, 2025 meeting. The Committee discussed the accreditation visit from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education in March.

MATTERS FROM THE CHAIR (continued)

Mr. Sluyter highlighted President Koppell's exemplary service and forward-thinking contributions to the University's growth over the past five years. In recognition of this impactful leadership, Mr. Sluyter moved for the Board to delegate authority to the Chair to negotiate and execute a five-year contract with President Koppell to continue to serve as the President of Montclair State University with an initial salary of \$725,000, a discretionary bonus of up to 25% of the base salary, and a retention bonus of each year President Koppell remains at the University.

The motion was seconded and approved.

No. 3579

MATTERS PRESENTED BY THE PRESIDENT

President Koppell thanked Chair Sluyter for the kind words and vote of confidence. President Koppell highlighted the portrait unveiling of former President Susan Cole. The President acknowledged recent student awards and athletic achievements, as well as faculty awards and publications during the academic year. President Koppell invited the campus community to participate in the upcoming "One Day for Montclair" fundraiser on April 23, 2026, to directly support student success initiatives. President Koppell highlighted the upcoming May commencement at the Prudential Center, which is set to be the largest in the university's history with over 4,000 graduates. President Koppell concluded by expressing gratitude to the university's dedicated faculty and staff who will be officially celebrated during the second annual Red Hawk Recognition Day on June 10th.

Reports – Student Trustee

Student Trustee Quentin Ocampo concluded his final meeting by thanking the Board and reflecting on his tenure. He noted that the position provided valuable learning experiences and allowed him to build strong relationships with both administration and the student body. Mr. Ocampo closed by emphasizing his continued commitment to Montclair students.

Mr. Sluyter moved that the Board recognize Quentin Ocampo's service to the Board of Trustees and extend its gratitude for his contributions to the University.

The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

No. 3580

Reports - Faculty Representative

Faculty Representative Mary English addressed the Board during her final meeting, expressing gratitude for an engaging and collaborative tenure. Professor English commended the students who participated and shared their stories during the tuition hearing. She concluded her remarks by emphasizing the importance of ongoing dialogue between the faculty and the administration.

Mr. Sluyter moved that the Board recognize Professor Mary English's service to the Board of Trustees and extend its gratitude for her contributions to the University.

The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.


No. 3581

CLOSED SESSION

Mr. Sluyter moved that Pursuant to *N.J.S.A.* 10:4-13 that the Montclair State University Board of Trustees shall enter into Closed Session prior to the next Public Session to discuss the following pursuant to *N.J.S.A.* 10:4-12.b: 1) pending litigation filed against the University; 2) personnel matters; and 3) other matters which may arise consistent with *N.J.S.A.* 10:4-12.b. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

No. 3582

The meeting adjourned at 12:56 pm



Keith D. Barrack