



## BUFFALO STATE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL



### **University Council Meeting April 8, 2025 MINUTES**

#### **COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:**

##### **In person:**

Chair Linda Dobmeier  
Mr. Pete Grum  
Mr. Kevin Horrigan  
Mr. Robert Zak  
Mr. Mo Sumbundu  
Mr. Gary Siddall

##### **Excused:**

Ms. Patricia Farrell  
Ms. Michelle Cox

#### **Student Attendees:**

##### **In person:**

Ms. Kirby R. Briggs – Graduate Student, President’s Medal  
Mr. Imran Fazal – Undergraduate, Chancellor’s Award  
Ms. Lorinda John – Undergraduate, Chancellor’s Award

##### **Virtually:**

Ms. Sophie Tversky – Graduate, Chancellor’s Award  
Ms. Kiara Woodward – Norman R. McConney Jr. Award

#### **Faculty and Staff Present:**

Interim President Bonita R. Durand  
Chief Diversity Officer, Lisa Morrison-Fronckowiak  
Interim Vice President for Management and Operations, Lisa Krieger  
Interim Vice President for Finance and Controller, James Thor  
Interim Vice President for Student Affairs, Wayne Brumfield  
Associate Vice President for Government Relations, William Benfanti  
College Senate Chair and Head of Information Commons, E. H. Butler Library, Ken Fujiuchi  
UUP Chapter President and Professor, Economics and Finance, Fred Floss  
Dean, School of Professions, Carol DeNysschen

Dean, School of Arts and Sciences, Kelly Frothingham  
Dean of Students, Elizabeth Ching-Bush  
Chief Campus Counsel for Western Campuses, Kristin Klein Wheaton  
Administrative Assistant II, Kristine Kaminsky

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Dobmeier called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. A quorum was established.

## **ACTION ITEM**

Chair Dobmeier called for a motion to approve the minutes from the February 4, 2025, meeting.

Mr. Robert Zak moved to approve the minutes with modifications. It was noted that an “o” was missing from Chief Diversity Officer, Lisa Morrison-Fronckowiak’s name, the word “council” needs to be changed to “counsel,” and on page 5, the phrase, “applications have surpassed COVID numbers,” should be changed to “pre COVID numbers.” Mr. Gary Siddall seconded the motion.

The motion to approve the minutes with modifications was carried by unanimous vote.

## **CHAIR’S REPORT**

Chair Dobmeier began by expressing her thanks for all of those in attendance. It was pointed out that the next University Council obligation will be the 153rd Commencement, which will be happening on May 17, 2025. The ceremonies will be held as follows:

- 9:00 a.m. School of Professions
- 1:00 p.m. School of Arts and Sciences
- 5:00 p.m. School of Education, including Individualized and Multidisciplinary Studies

Chair Dobmeier encouraged everyone to attend.

Vice President for Institutional Advancement, James Finnerty, was congratulated for a fantastic Bengala event. It was mentioned that if anyone would like to lend their support, they still can.

## **PRESIDENT’S REPORT**

Interim President Durand mentioned that a lengthy written report was provided in Boardable for the University Council. She invited anyone with questions to please reach out to her.

Interim President Durand thanked the council members for their continued support and mentioned that the Bengala was a wonderful event. She reiterated that there is still time to “Stand for Students,” and to lend support.

It was agreed that the space where the Bengala was held was beautiful, and the food array which was catered by Chartwell’s was unbelievably good.

Interim President Durand ceded her time to for the introduction of the student award recipients. She introduced the Interim Vice President for Student Affairs, Wayne Brumfield, who read a short bio for each of the students (see attached.)

Carole Miller, Senior EOP Counselor, and Interim President Durand introduced Kiara Woodward, (Kiki), the Norman R. McConney award winner (see attached.)

The students were given a round of applause, and Interim President Durand concluded her report.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- President’s Community Advisory Committee (Interim President Bonita R. Durand, Chair)
  - No report.
- Naming of Buildings and Grounds (Robert Zak, Chair)
  - No report.
- Facilities (Linda Dobmeier, Chair)
  - No report.
- Government Relations (Linda Dobmeier, Chair)
  - No report.
- Nominations & Presidential Advisory Committee (Linda Dobmeier, Chair)
  - No report.
- Budget (Robert Zak, Chair)
  - No report.
- Student Life (Pete Grum, Chair)
  - See attached.
- Strategic Initiatives (Robert Zak, Chair)
  - No report.

There was a Day of Service held on April 4, 2025, to prepare for the Bengala and Open House that occurred the following Saturday. After discussion, the following points arose:

- There were 81 faculty, staff, and members of the arboretum community who volunteered.
- The campus was strategically divided into sections.
- There were five team leaders: Interim Vice President Brumfield, Dean of Students, Elizabeth Ching-Bush, Provost Amitra Wall, Senior Associate Director of Intercollegiate Athletics, Jeff Ventura, and Assistant Campus Planner and Arboretum Manager Steve Sypniewski.
- The groups worked in two shifts: 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
- Over 400 bags of trash and leaves were collected.

Interim Vice President Brumfield thanked Interim Vice President Krieger, the Finance and Management office, the Student Affairs office, friends of the arboretum, and all who volunteered for their help.

Open House was a very successful event. Rockwell Hall was full, and Interim President Durand gave a well-received address. The weather was nice, and there were a lot of student attendees. Tours of residence halls were given, and the students were able to see two different types of dorm rooms. Fraternity and sorority members performed to give new students an idea of how life can be on campus. The cheerleaders did a quick performance, and the music was exciting. It was pointed out that the Buffalo State spirit was amped up.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Interim President Durand drew attention to the successful addition of Greek letter organizations to Buffalo State University. It was mentioned that Greek organizations are guests on campuses, and each SUNY university decides if they'd like to host the organizations. Many SUNY schools have decided not to, but the Greek organizations have always been beneficial to Buffalo State's students. It was pointed out that the Greek organizations are the best finishing schools for the students. Buffalo State provides them with a few items and couple of rooms. In return, the students learn parliamentary procedure, complete community service, protocol, how to dress for success, how to do presentations, and management. The students build a strong community and support system that can last forever. The organizations go through a rigorous program. Every organization pre-qualifies, and they are on probation for a year. Students excel academically as well as in the community. The Greek organizations are something to be very proud of.

SUNY has provided money specifically for mental health usage. The Counseling Center has hired two interns with these funds. It was pointed out that Buffalo State University is not using funds from the campus's payroll, but funds that are designated by SUNY. It was mentioned that Buffalo State University also receives funds for food insecurity which helps Milligan's Food

Pantry. There is also funding for Accessibility Services. Buffalo State University can provide very specific and advanced services for those that need it.

It was pointed out that Buffalo State had demonstrated the ability to deliver quality services in accessibility, in mental health services and in food insecurity. Because of this, SUNY continues to send the campus reinforcement.

University Council members can volunteer to be a part of a Student Conduct Hearing. The Student Judicial Board may want a University Council member's expertise. It was mentioned that University Council Members wouldn't have to attend every conduct hearing. There used to be a rotation of University Council Members who would attend. This is an ad hoc position.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The Chair called for a motion to move into Executive Session: In accordance with section 105d. of the New York State Open Meetings Law, based on the law that pertains to pending litigation. Mr. Robert Zak moved that the Council enter executive session. Mr. Mo Sumbundu seconded. Interim President Durand was asked to remain, and she requested that her Cabinet stay, as well.

The Chair called for a motion to move out of Executive Session. Mr. Gary Siddall moved that the Council move out of Executive Session. Mr. Mo Sumbundu seconded the motion.

No action was taken.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Dobmeier called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Robert Zak moved to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Mo Sumbundu seconded the motion. The motion carried by unanimous vote. The meeting was adjourned at 4:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



For Secretary LeVar Burke  
Secretary to the University Council

**Buffalo State University  
Student Bios (100 words)**

**President's Medal:**

**Graduate**

**Kirby R. Briggs – *confirmed UC attendance***

**Buffalo, New York**

**Master of Science in Education (7–12 Generalist)**

Ms. Briggs is an outstanding leader, zealous advocate for minority youth, and champion for children and young people with disabilities. She founded the nonprofit Kirby's Korner Inc. to provide accessible enrichment activities, workshops, and events for those with physical limitations and all abilities in Buffalo. In addition, she is the author of the children's book, *D is for Different: An ABC Guide for Disabilities and Differences*, and its companion coloring workbook. As part of her master's degree program, she interns as an educational resident at Erie I BOCES Maryvale Work Readiness Program, teaching high school students with severe disabilities.

**Chancellor's Award:**

**Undergraduate**

**Imran Fazal - *confirmed UC attendance***

**Arakan State, Myanmar**

**Social Work**

Mr. Fazal, a stateless Rohingya refugee from Myanmar, is a human rights activist and aspiring social work professional. He worked as a reporting fellow with the Pulitzer Center and has lobbied extensively on refugee issues. He serves as a Rohingya American Council board member and founded Rohingya Empowerment Community Inc. to provide case management and citizenship classes. At Buffalo State, he earned an Undergraduate Summer Research Fellowship to conduct a survey of local refugee resettlement agencies and resettled people. He will present his findings at the 2025 National Conference on Undergraduate Research and Buffalo State's Student Research and Creativity Conference.

**Lorinda John - *confirmed UC attendance***

**Gowanda, NY**

**Hospitality Administration**

Ms. John is an accomplished business owner and entrepreneur who has distinguished herself as an Indigenous private chef, award-winning cultural bearing artist, and junior compliance analyst with Seneca Holdings. Her LoMade Meals, which creates culinary menus and experiences highlighting Indigenous culture, serves elders in the Seneca community as well as high-profile events hosted by the Buffalo Bills, Buffalo AKG Art Museum, and others. She received the Creatives Rebuild New York Fellowship for emerging artists and established the Aurora Treasures art studio. She also volunteers with

World Central Kitchen, traveling domestically and internationally to prepare fresh meals during times of crises.

### **Graduate**

**Sophie Tversky – *confirmed UC attendance, Teams***  
**Melbourne, Victoria, Australia**  
**Creativity and Change Leadership**

Ms. Tversky has a 4.0 GPA in her master's degree program while working full time as a lead consultant with Nexus Communications in Toronto, Canada. She assumed several major leadership roles in 2024, including program facilitator for the CREA Conference in Italy, Europe's largest creative problem-solving and innovation conference; one of 20 emerging female leaders in the Executive Leaders Mentoring Program hosted by International Women's Forum Canada; and member of the Organizing Committee for MindCamp Canada, the nation's largest and longest running creativity conference. She has been instrumental in recommending further improvements to the distance learning experience at Buffalo State.

### **Norman R. McConney Award Winner**

**Kiara Woodward - *confirmed UC attendance, Teams***  
**Communications**

Kiara Woodward is an outstanding EOP student and a passionate advocate for social justice. She actively engages in meaningful dialogue to educate and inspire her peers. As a member of the NAACP, Kiara consistently fosters discussions about the challenges faced by people of color, providing insightful perspectives and promoting understanding.

A Communications major with minors in Africana and Women and Gender Studies, Kiara's professors commend her for her impact in the classroom.

Notably, she was recognized as the recipient of the Norman R. McConney Award from SUNY, celebrating EOP students who have overcome significant obstacles in life to achieve educational and personal excellence

**Unconfirmed UC attendance:**

**President's Medal:**

**Undergraduate**

**Mathea G. Riley**  
**Derby, New York**  
**English**

Ms. Riley holds a 3.96 GPA while balancing the demands of the English B.A./M.A. Combined Pathways Program and her work as a waitress. Members of the English Department, who awarded her the prestigious Excellence in English Award in her junior year, note her intellectual acumen and ability to produce original scholarly writing that place her among the top students they have ever taught. Her graduate seminar research and presentations on Walter White's 1924 novel, *The Fire in the Flint*, and her upper-level analysis of works by Mary Wollstonecraft, have shed new light on social justice and representation of the marginalized and disenfranchised.

**Athletes**

**Natalia Sawyer – Women's Track & Field, Junior, Psychology, Schenectady, NY**

Natalia became the first ever three-time national champion when she captured the 400-meter hurdles at the 2024 NCAA Division III Outdoor Championships in Myrtle Beach, SC. She has continued her dominance this season, recently winning three SUNYAC Championships at the 2025 indoor conference meet and was named the SUNYAC Women's Most Valuable Performer of the Meet. She will represent Buffalo State at the indoor national championships on March 14-15 in Rochester, NY.

**Diego Rivera – Men's Soccer, Junior, Childhood Education, East Meadow, NY**

Diego became the first Buffalo State men's soccer player to earn first team All-America honors since 1984 after he helped the Bengals reach the "Sweet 16" in the NCAA Championships. The SUNYAC Offensive Player of the Year finished with 44 points on 18 goals and eight assists while starting every game for Buffalo State.

**Manu Prieto – Men's Soccer, Senior, Business Administration, Cascais, Portugal**

Manu was named second team All-American after playing an integral role in pushing the Bengals to uncharted territories finishing 16<sup>th</sup> in the NCAA Division III national rankings. The midfielder set the program record for most assists in a single season with 17, which also led the nation, while also adding 10 goals for 37 points on the year.



**Makhia Laster****Women's Track & Field, Senior, Africana Studies, Buffalo, NY**

Makhia earned the third All-America certificate of her career last May when she placed third in the long jump at the NCAA Division III Outdoor Championships in Myrtle Beach, SC. She will look to add to her trophy case when she represents Buffalo State at the indoor national championships on March 14-15 in Rochester, NY.



**University Council Student Life, Conduct, Housing, and Safety Committee Meeting**  
**Agenda**  
**4/3/2025**

Committee members: Peter Grum (chair)  
Kevin Horrigan  
Patricia Farrell  
Michelle Cox

Staff: Wayne Brumfield, Interim Vice President, Student Affairs  
Amy Pedlow, Chief of Police  
Jeffrey Hammer, Senior Director, Environmental Health and Safety  
Elizabeth Ching-Bush, Dean of Students

Guests: Rock Doyle, Associate Vice President, Student Affairs

---

**University Council Student Life, Conduct, Housing, and Safety Committee**  
**AGENDA**

**DATE: 4/3/2025**

**TIME: 12:00PM**

**Campus House**  
**Boardroom**

**Student Affairs, Student Life, Conduct, Housing, and Safety Committee**

- 1. Dean of Students- Elizabeth Ching-Bush**
  - a. New Structure of Dean of Students Office
  - b. Residential Life
  - c. Career and Professional Education
  - d. Student Leadership and Engagement
  - e. Conduct
    - Conduct Board Structure Policy Review
  - f. Celebration of Life
    - April 21, 2025, at 2pm in the Social Hall
- 2. Weigel Health and Wellness- Dr. Rock Doyle**
  - a. Overview of Staff structure and new employees
  - b. New employees
    - Dr. Jon Lindner
    - Dr. Michael Lewis
- 3. Athletics- Dr. Rock Doyle**
- 4. Childcare Center**

- a. No Report
- 5. Campus Environmental Health and Safety- Jeff Hammer**
  - a. Update
- 6. University Police- Chief Amy Pedlow**
  - a. Update
- 7. Other Items- Dr. Wayne Brumfield**
  - a. Day of Service April 4, 2025
  - b. Open House April 5, 2025
  - c. Bengala April 5, 2025
- 8. Adjourn**