A rescheduled meeting of the University Council was held on February 17, 2017, at SUNY Global in New York City. Council members present included: Michael Castellana, Chair; Patricia Caldwell; John Fallon; Stanley De La Cruz (Graduate Student Representative). Joining via Webex video conference: James Jackson; Nancy Burton; Karin Reinhold (Faculty Representative).

Also present were Interim President James Stellar; Vice Presidents Joseph Brennan, Jim Van Voorst; Michael Christakis, and James Dias.

Mr. Hyde confirmed that the membership present constituted a quorum and Chairman Castellana called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. The Chair requested a motion to approve the consent agenda items, (Caldwell motion, Fallon second) and then turned the floor over to Interim President Stellar.

In the President’s report, Dr. Stellar discussed the University’s legislative agenda including a focus on the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences capital project. He also discussed items in the Governor’s budget. Conversation ensued about the fiscal state of the City of Albany (Castellana; Caldwell; Fallon; Stellar). Discussion then turned to public/private partnership possibilities for use of the facility as a revenue source. At the conclusion of his remarks there was a discussion about the current topic of a sanctuary campus (Reinhold; DeLaCruz; Stellar).

Chairman Castellana then introduced Dr. Kim Boyer, Dean for the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences. Dean Boyer discussed topics including enrollment; academic program offerings; the status of the Schuyler project as well as the school’s projected growth and impact on the local community. Discussion ensued regarding the school’s collaboration with the local public school system; the importance of the role of Humanities within a Stem education; new hires and external research funding and strategic initiatives (Jackson; Castellana; Caldwell; Dias; Boyer).

Chairman Castellana then introduced Michael Christakis, Vice President for Student Affairs. Dr. Christakis, as a follow up to Sandra Starke’s retention presentation in the previous Council meeting, discussed collaborative initiatives employed by Academic and Student Affairs to enhance the student experience, thus positively impacting student retention. As a result of their efforts, student retention from Freshman to Sophomore year increased 3% which is an incredible success. With no questions, the Chairman then introduced Joseph Brennan, Vice President for Communications and Marketing.
Dr. Brennan discussed in detail with the Council the results of his brand research findings. Discussion ensued about reputation; changing the University’s message/brand and how Council members can assist going forward.

Fardin Sanai, Vice President for University Development, joining via conference call, provided the Council with a brief update on the status of his campaign.

This was followed by a brief update on the status of the Presidential Search by Chairman Castellana.

After some conversation there was a motion to adjourn which was approved at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

James D. Hyde
Liaison to the University Council