



**WMCC COLLEGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 12, 2020**

Present: Pamela Laflamme (Chair), David Backler, Heidi Barker, Kevin Carpenter, Cathy Conway, Janice Crawford, Julie King, Mike Laracy, Chuck Lloyd, Paul Pinkham, Al Smith

Absent: Ben Gaetjens-Oleson

Guests: Trustee Jeffrey Cozzens, Colbie Ayotte, Mark Desmarais, Trustee Steve Ellis, Scott Fields, Kristen Miller, Melanie Robbins, Gretchen Taillon, Suzanne Wasileski

The White Mountains Community College Advisory Committee convened virtually via Zoom on August 12, 2020, at 12:00 PM.

Approval of Previous Minutes

A motion was made by Ms. Crawford and seconded by Ms. Conway to approve the meeting minutes of March 4, 2020. A vote was taken, and all were in favor.

Introductions

President Lloyd welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

Presentation

Dr. Suzanne Wasileski, Institutional Researcher, presented information regarding where WMCC students come from geographically. She started her presentation by saying that broadening access to higher education is part of the college's Strategic Plan. Dr. Wasileski showed the group that most students are from Coos County. Ms. Crawford asked if there was a particular course outlier, such as Nursing, that was influencing the trends on the map. Dr. Wasileski told the group that the outliers tend to be Diesel Heavy Equipment Technology, Welding, and Culinary Arts. In regard to housing, Dr. Desmarais let the group know that housing lists are made available for students that include hotels, apartments, and bed-and-breakfasts. Typically, Diesel and Culinary students utilize these housing options the most. Dr. Wasileski is also currently monitoring where students are coming from for online classes. President Lloyd said that he would like to see how much of a change there will be in online enrollment due to COVID. Even though there will be an increase in the number of online courses offered, he does not feel the areas in which we are getting students from for these classes will change.

Programs the college offers for high school students were also discussed, including Dual Enrollment, Early College, and Running Start. Running Start has been very successful with 87% of those high school students moving on to higher education, most of whom end up going to four-year institutions. President Lloyd said the data Dr. Wasileski presented indicated where the schools are that we need to increase our recruiting efforts. Mr. Laracy asked if WMCC had compared the number of students enrolled in these programs from previous years and what the year-to-year trend was. Dr. Wasileski responded that the way that the data is stored makes it difficult to compare yearly trends, but that she is working on pulling this information.

Ms. Crawford asked what efforts are made to encourage students to take classes with us, for example, in Kennett. Dr. Desmarais told the group that he and Chrissy Grant, Coordinator of Educational Access and Partnerships, recently met with Kennett guidance staff, the new principal, and teachers. Similar meetings have been taking place with schools throughout the region, as well. Dr. Miller spoke about how teachers at the high schools must have a Master's degree or several credits in a specific area to teach our courses, and that we have been working with schools and teachers to help prepare them for this.

President Lloyd said that we are being proactive in these areas; ultimately, it will look different like everything else due to COVID.

Reopening Plan

President Lloyd went into detail regarding the college's reopening plan, which has a two-pronged approach: a video that will highlight the safety precautions that have been implemented, and all guidelines will be posted on the website and throughout all buildings. We established a task force, which has been planning how to safely reopen, and Academic Affairs has been developing a strategic schedule with different course modalities. There has also been a lot of community collaboration. About 8.2% of our students are coming back face-to-face in some capacity. We prioritized face-to-face classes for first year students as research shows the retention rate of this group is increased with this type of course delivery. As a system, students will not be coming back after Thanksgiving, due to potential exposure and the anticipated resurgence. We have started bringing staff back on campus in a phased approach based on need, and faculty will return next week.

Dr. Desmarais said that throughout the next few weeks, we will be inviting incoming students from each program to campus for mini orientation sessions. These orientations will be held at the academic centers, as well. All COVID guidelines and precautions will be followed and will help establish the new normal to students.

Trustee Ellis asked what the health screening process entailed. Ms. Robbins answered that we ask everyone who enters our buildings to fill out a health assessment form and we take everyone's temperature upon entry to the building. Employees have been completing this process as well. We have touchless thermometers to check temperatures.

Dr. Miller spoke to some of the steps Academic Affairs has taken to make the semester a success. All students are able to decide on method of course delivery when they register. All classrooms will be equipped with video technology for remote instruction, including special cameras. We have purchased a number of laptops for students and faculty. President Lloyd said we probably would have gotten this technology down the road, the pandemic just sped up the timeline. We will continue to use this technology after the pandemic is over.

Finance/Facilities

Mr. Fields gave a finance and facilities update. We are in a very strong position for FY20. We are taking an ultra-conservative approach to spending as we continually monitor enrollment. We have received \$250,000 in state and federal funding to support our students. For students this fall, \$106,000 in aid has been used from the GOFERR fund. We had received 650 applications for GOFERR funding as a system, 11% of those applications being from WMCC students. Plexiglass, signs, and precaution stickers have been purchased to prepare for our reopening. We are being strategic, investing where needed to keep our community safe.

Commencement

President Lloyd explained that a survey was sent out in April asking students what they wanted for a Commencement ceremony and the feedback indicated something virtual in May and something physical in the fall. We set aside the weekend of September 26th for this. We know now that we will not be able to hold the full traditional ceremony and recently sent out a new survey to the graduates to find out how many are planning on attending and what they feel are the most important parts of Commencement. We are now looking at different models and how similar gatherings have taken place in the last few months.

Golf Tournament/Fundraising

President Lloyd said that in early March we had to decide whether to move forward with our annual golf tournament and decided to cancel. When the Governor announced the re-opening of golf courses, we decided to hold a mini tournament. With only a few weeks to prepare, we organized this mini tournament and raised approximately \$10,000. While things were different because due to COVID, it was great success.

Questions, Regional/Individual Updates, Community Needs

Mr. Pinkham asked if we are seeing a difference in courses that students are enrolling in, subject-wise. President Lloyd responded that students are taking more classes online and Health Science has seen a significant increase in enrollment. We are watching the programs that have been deemed essential in industry.

Ms. King said under our reopening model, anyone doing remote in high school should be checking the course schedule at the college. The high school will be starting later than WMCC. Ms. King said the team was doing a great job preparing for the reopening and thanked everyone for sharing information on what the reopening plan looks like. President Lloyd told the group that we are documenting how we have responded to the pandemic. Keeping a record might help WMCC down the road if there is another emergency.

Ms. Conway reported that the workload for her firm has picked up significantly recently. She said they are looking to hire additional staff but trying to find professionals in the North Country is not easy.

Mr. Carpenter said that Kennett is opening fully face-to-face starting September 8th. They will be promoting Early College if they have access to STEM scholarships. President Lloyd responded that the STEM scholarships are for two free courses during a student's junior and senior year of high school. Kennett is considering becoming a five-year high school, with students being able to graduate high school with an Associate's degree.

Mr. Backler said that SAU20 will be onsite, in person, starting on September 8th with a remote option. He said that it has been great working together with WMCC and SAU3 as this has been a very collaborative experience with a focus on student learning.

Ms. Crawford from the Mount Washington Valley Chamber spoke about a new charter school, Northeast Woodland Charter School, that has been certified by the State board. The charter school is for students in grades K-7 who learn in a different way from what is taught in traditional schools. The charter school is located at the old Granite State College building.

Mr. Ellis said that WMCC has a great team and should continue to work with people who are committed to the same cause. He asked if all the online education happening due to the pandemic is an opportunity to recruit out-of-state students. President Lloyd responded that we are reaching more students from out-of-state. Dr. Desmarais agreed and added that online offerings are also being introduced at the high school level with mixed methods of delivery.

Trustee Cozzens said that he is proud of the WMCC team's resilience. He said necessity is the mother of invention, and he is proud to be a part of this effect. President Lloyd responded that the Board of Trustees is a part of our team and we are all working with the same goal.

Chair Laflamme thanked everyone for attending the meeting and for the work they were doing to make the next academic year a success.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:27 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Colbie Ayotte
Human Resources/President's Office