

MOHAWK VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Utica and Rome, New York

COLLEGE SENATE MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, December 6, 2016, IT 225

College Senate web page: <http://www.mvcc.edu/senate/senate-home>

Present: J. Baumann, L. Charbonneau, S. Dar, J. Dewan, A. Doughtie, A. Haines-Stephan, M. Henningsen, R. Huyck, D. Hyldelund, R. Jubenville, P. Katchmar, D. Kelly, S. Kenyon, M. McHarris, B. Molinaro, S. Myalik, A. Radlowski, M. Radlowski, J. Rahn, J. Roberts, R. Santos, B. Scantlebury, G. Searles, M. Sykes, R. VanWagoner, G. Warchol, and J. Wilcox

Student Senators: B. Ayers, A. Kalashnik, D. Kulev, J. Rothrock

Absent/Excused: K. Capone, S. Frisbee, P. Lotto, D. McDermott, S. McGovern, C. Miller, T. Palumbo, N. Snyder, and R. Spetka

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 2:30 p.m.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

R. Santos moved, and B. Molinaro seconded, to approve the minutes of the November 1, 2016 meeting (with some grammatical changes). The motion carried with none opposed.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

A Haines thanked M. Radlowski, who is retiring after 35 years of service, for his considerable contributions to the Senate and the College.

STUDENT CONGRESS REPORT

A. Kalashnik reminded the Senate about the Hawks for Hardship dinner on Thursday, December 8th. Student Congress is very grateful for the donations from across the community, and all are invited to attend.

D. Kulev remarked that Student Congress voted in support of arming Campus Safety, and that they would discuss the post Labor Day start next year.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President R. VanWagoner commented that he was excited to have met with staff members from the Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees to discuss all of the efforts the College makes to connect with refugees and immigrants, including our ESL program, cultural events, and DGV.

FACULTY COUNCIL OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES REPORT

J. Roberts reported that there are no updates from FCCC.

FACULTY CAUCUS REPORT

A. Radlowski reported on behalf of C. Miller that Faculty Caucus discussed copier and printer issues in AB at the last meeting, as well as an update regarding Starfish. The Microcredential team presented their vision of what

microcredentials might look like at MVCC. The Caucus did not make any decisions on this matter, and C. Miller will report on this topic further in the Spring.

There was a comment that the University Partners & Transfer Office is now located in AB239 while their office in ACC is under construction. While the copier is still located in this room, the office will be locked when nobody is there, which may limit availability of the copier. P. Katchmar commented that the copier can also serve as a printer, and to contact the IT helpdesk if you are having trouble printing to the copier.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to discuss.

NEW BUSINESS

SENATE SAFETY COMMITTEE PROPOSAL – ARMING PEACE OFFICERS

The Senate Safety & Security Committee voted unanimously to recommend arming Public Safety by August 2017. Student Congress also voted in favor, 27-8. The Committee is looking for a vote of approval from the Senate, and will also bring the recommendation to the Board of Trustees.

D. Amico and C. Neary presented on the history and motivation surrounding arming officers in Public Safety. The office is composed of professionals with experience from a variety of police departments (including Boonville, Cazenovia, Dolgeville, Frankfort, and Phoenix, AZ). D. Amico has over 30 years of experience, including 15 years as Chief of Police and 15-16 years training police. Currently several of the employees in the Public Safety Department carry firearms off campus, and officers are disarming when they come to MVCC, where it is their job to protect the community. Protecting and serving the students on campus is their top priority.

Members of the Department undergo rigorous training, and the Department conducts monthly 8-hour inservice trainings as well. The officers are trained in the justification of force and the force continuum, and currently carry a baton, Taser, and pepper-spray. The first force used is verbalization, and the Public Safety staff are trained to listen carefully, and to first try talking with offenders in order to de-escalate situations.

Numerous college campuses have been the locations of gun violence over the past several years. Both of our campus locations are in cities where gun violence exists, and there's a possibility that this could spill onto our campuses.¹ If that were to happen, our trained officers lack the necessary tools to protect the community. Response time is critical in instances of public shootings, and while the Utica police may be able to respond within 1-2 minutes if they are a block or two away, it's also possible that they may be on the other end of the patrol area and may take significantly longer. Public Safety officers can respond sooner and will be the first to arrive at the scene. In a recent incident, it took two peace officers 1 minute to respond and the Utica PD 6 minutes.

We have had several gun calls on campus, including in the residence halls, childcare center, and facilities parking lot. In each instance, Public Safety officers ran towards this lethal danger with just a baton and radio. MVCC is the only campus out of 19 SUNY institutions in the general CNY region whose Public Safety officers are not armed with a firearm. (Sullivan County has limited arming).

¹ R. VanWagoner later indicated that about a year ago, there was a Shelter in Place on the Rome Campus with an armed suspect in the area. Furthermore, in 2008 there was a gang related murder in public housing directly behind the residence halls. So gun violence from the cities could very easily find its way onto our campuses.

The Officers would be using a Safariland level-3 holster, which has 3 locking mechanisms and covers the trigger. It's one of the most secure holsters and it would be extremely difficult for a person to grab an Officer's weapon while it was holstered.

There were several questions asked by senators, including how long training would be, who owns the firearms, where they would be stored, and what would be the cost. D. Amico replied that the training would take place over several months, and there would be 80 hours of intense training. The College will own the firearms, which would be given to officers on a firearms permit. When not in use, the firearms would be housed securely on campus. The secure housing is in the planning stages, but will consist of a steel locker in an alarmed room, with cameras and somebody on duty. SUNY classifications require that our peace officers have a pistol permit, and that the firearms are owned by the College, registered to the officer, and left on site when the officer returns home. This is different from police (on 4-year campuses) in that police officers can have their weapon assigned without a pistol permit. There would be 11 armed officers and the schedule would be set to have at least 3 officers during the day, 2-3 in the evenings and weekends, with preferably 2 or more armed officers on duty at all times. Costs would include holsters (\$180 each), magazines, body armor (\$750-800), and the cost of secure housing.

Additionally, senators expressed several concerns about arming the peace officers. One member of the Senate commented that guns don't save lives, but instead take them, and that this causes some members of the community to no longer feel safe. Others remarked that there are already guns on campus. A concern about racial profiling was expressed, and that some students do not feel safe around police officers. Moreover, there was some concern about ongoing physical and psychological training and evaluations. While the peace officers undergo a psychological evaluation at the time of hiring, there are not routine evaluations afterwards. However, any officer who is involved in any lethal or traumatic incident is provided with counseling and psychological services.

A. Kalashnik requested that an active shooter response training be provided for commuting students. The response was that Public Safety has been working on putting something together, but lost some momentum on that project over the summer. They will continue to work on this request.

J. Roberts thanked D. Amico and C. Neary for their presentation and for risking their lives for our students before making a motion in favor of arming Public Safety officers. M. Henningsen seconded the motion, which carried with 22 in favor, 3 opposed, and 1 abstention.

ACADEMIC CALENDAR

There is a proposal moving through the College to change our calendar to a post Labor Day start. S. Reynolds discussed some of the history surrounding this issue. The College wanted to move the graduation date up by one week to lessen the time between the end of finals and commencement for residence hall students. Furthermore, the Enrollment Management Council suggested that the Calendar Committee investigate starting after Labor Day in an effort to boost enrollment. These two factors encouraged a request to the Calendar Committee to revise the 2017-2018 Calendar.

MVCC starts classes earlier than other area colleges, which decreases our appeal to students who work summer jobs, parents whose children are not in school yet, and students who return to the area after trying a 4-year residential college who then decide that it was not a good fit for them. EMC analyzed data from 1999 onward and recommended that the College seriously investigate options for starting after Labor Day to better serve and attract students. The Calendar Committee (D. Porcelli, R. Pucine, and R. Spetka) created a draft of

the schedule, which was reviewed by the Cabinet, followed by Academic Affairs, who came back in favor of the post Labor Day start semester.

In a post Labor Day start semester, classes would meet for the same total number of minutes, which would be achieved by increasing each 50-minute class meeting by roughly 5-10 minutes. This would mean the loss of one class period during the day from 8:00am–5:00pm. Additionally, classes with lab sections would likely need to cut one lab from their schedules, moving from 15 labs to 14. It has not been decided how much time would be given between each class period, but the class start times would be shifted so that they no longer begin on the hour or half-hour.

Based on the proposed calendar, classes would begin after Labor Day, on the first Wednesday of September, and end on Friday, December 15th. This would cause final grades to be due December 22nd. The college will need to address the grades processing time that is required with the departments that accomplish this.

Another concern is that faculty were not given the opportunity to have meaningful input on the decision. While some departments have had email conversations about the move to a post Labor Day start semester, this is the first that Senate has heard about it, and some Senators expressed disappointment that there wasn't more discussion within academic departments, with the Senate, and in Faculty Caucus. Faculty Caucus will need to hold a Special Meeting before the December Board of Trustees Meeting if they want to have input. R. Pucine commented that it will take a significant amount of time to rebuild the Fall class schedule, which is why the decision cannot be postponed.

The representatives from Student Congress expressed their concern that condensing material into fewer weeks may make it more difficult for students to fully understand the material. Moreover, longer class times may result in students becoming unfocused towards the end of the class session, which could result in lower grades. There was also a concern expressed about the effect this would have on A and B term classes as well.

COMMENTS/QUESTIONS FROM SENATE MEMBERS

D. Kelly again expressed appreciation to Mark Radlowski, for all of the work he has done for the College and the Senate.

ADJOURNMENT

D. Kelly moved and S. Dar seconded, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 4:24 p.m. by common consensus.

NEXT MEETINGS

The next meeting of the College Senate will be **Tuesday, February 7, 2017, at 2:30 p.m. in IT 225.**

The next meeting of the Senate Advisory Committee will be Monday, January 30 2017, at 3 p.m. in PH 304.

Respectfully submitted,
Anna Radlowski