

SUNY Oswego
UNIVERSITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, March 5, 2026

1:15 pm – 3:30 pm

114 MCC and via Zoom video conference

University Council Members Present:

In-Person: James McMahon, Richard Farfaglia, Oghenetega Adjoh, Christine Patrick

On Zoom: Carol Bradlinski-Watros, Darlene Baker, Kristin Shanley-Graves

Absent: Brian McGrath, Tara Fitzgibbons

Cabinet Present:

In-Person: Peter Nwosu, Jamal Coleman, Kristi Eck, Kristin Eichhorn, Vicki Furlong, Kendra Cadogan, Kathleen Kerr, Murat Yaşar, Karen Crowe, Heath Wood, Rick Buck

Observers:

In-Person: Andrea Vickery

On Zoom: Jennifer Janes

AGENDA

1. **Welcome and call to order** - James McMahon, University Council Chair
 - **Call to order:** The meeting was called to order at 1:19 p.m. by James McMahon
2. **Approval of Minutes of November 5, 2025** - James McMahon, University Council Chair
 - **Motion to approve the minutes** – James McMahon
 - **Second** – Richard Farfaglia
 - **Vote** - All in favor
 - **Result** - Minutes approved

3. **Alumni Report** – Jennifer Janes

Below is a brief summary of the discussion during the meeting.

- Went through the Slide Presentation
 - **Alumni Engagement Updates (Since Last Meeting):**
 - Hosted Women’s Ice Hockey 20th Anniversary Reunion (45 attendees).
 - Held December Commencement Eve Reception (91 attendees).
 - Organized Naples Alumni Reception, first since 2016, during the University Foundation board meeting with President Nwosu; strong alumni re-engagement.
 - **NYC Career Connections (25th Year):**
 - Morning alumni-hosted site visits at Adobe, W5WPR, KPMG, and NBCUniversal (70+ students).
 - Afternoon program at LinkedIn HQ (Empire State Building) featuring LinkedIn staff presentation, alumni panel, and tours (35 students; 4 alumni participants).
 - **Upcoming & Ongoing Initiatives:**
 - Alumni volunteers participating in Admitted Student Days and Spring Open Houses.
 - Continued promotion of the Alumni Sharing Knowledge Program.
 - **Communications & Media:**
 - Oswego Alumni Magazine (Dec/Jan) focused on the transformation theme, including Hewitt Hall CMA celebration, Strategic Plan, and an alum-to-alum kidney donation story.
 - New Oswego Alumni Podcast episode featuring a 2012 alumna and immigration law firm owner.
 - **Upcoming Event:**
 - Reunion Weekend: June 4–7; includes 11 class milestone anniversaries and 2 affinity group milestones. Registration opens early April.

4. **Faculty Report** – Andrea Vickery

Below is a brief summary of the discussion during the meeting.

- Went through the Slide Presentation
 - Faculty Assembly continues to focus on curriculum and program review.
 - Recent guest speakers included UFS Senate President, the UFS Ethics Chair, President Nwosu, Vicki Furlong (budget), Brandon Bennett (student conduct), Mitch Fields (facilities), library representatives, and Murat Yaşar and Corey Kohlbach discussing a new advisement model.
 - New programs approved: Computer Science Education and MBA in Business Analytics and Applied AI.
 - Program updates: Cinema and Screen Studies, Criminal Justice, Higher Education Leadership (M.S.), and Bioinformatics track.
 - Curricular activity: Gen Ed civic discourse statements (26 program statements), 13 courses approved and 20 under review by UCC, and several micro-credentials in development.
 - Other actions: Approved the 2028–29 academic calendar.
 - Formed an ad hoc committee to develop Faculty and Staff Handbook language to help faculty manage classroom disruptions, with participation from Student Affairs and the Dean of Students Office.

5. **Student Association Report** – Oghenetega Adjoh

Below is a brief summary of the discussion during the meeting.

- Went through the Slide Presentation
 - Secured its first bid through a newly vetted middle agent, marking progress after reviewing previous processes.
 - SA is advancing its strategy to support the student activity fee, conducting outreach through tabling, flyers, and upcoming digital messaging across campus.
 - Elections: One candidate is running for each of the president and vice president positions, indicating both roles are expected to be filled for the next academic year.
 - OzFest Planning: Logistics are underway, with efforts focused on securing event details well in advance of the event.
 - Budget Process: The SA budget process is progressing steadily; clubs will soon receive their Round One budget allocations.

6. **President's Report** – Peter O. Nwosu

Below is a brief summary of the discussion during the meeting.

- Went through the Slide Presentation
 - The President reported on ongoing efforts to strengthen industry–university partnerships, highlighting recent engagements with regional partners including Constellation Energy and the Greater Oswego Chamber of Commerce. These partnerships are considered critical to advancing the university's mission.

- The Council was updated on the Micron semiconductor project in Clay, NY, which officially broke ground on January 16. The \$100 billion investment is expected to create approximately 10,000 direct jobs and up to 40,000 indirect jobs in the region. SUNY Oswego is working closely with Micron to support workforce and education needs.
- The university has developed a relationship with Micron that has already resulted in seed funding and an additional \$1 million grant to expand teacher preparation programs through the Oswego Center for Regional Excellence in STEM.
- SUNY Oswego has also served as the lead convener of the Oswego County Micron Strategies Steering Committee, bringing together public and private partners to prepare the region for Micron's arrival.
- The President discussed plans to reimagine the Syracuse campus, to be branded "SUNY Oswego at Syracuse." The site will focus on: Undergraduate completion programs in partnership with community colleges, Graduate programs, Micro-credentials and workforce development.
- The Syracuse location is strategically positioned across from Micron's headquarters and will support workforce preparation, industry partnerships, and expanded academic programming. Planning includes potential expansion of instructional space and development of a self-supporting center that generates revenue.
- The President emphasized the growing importance of micro-credentials and stackable certifications to enhance student career readiness and earning potential while complementing traditional degree programs.

- **Enrollment Update – Rick Buck**

- **Spring 2026 Enrollment:**

- Goal: 420 new students (first-year, transfer, graduate).
 - Outcome: 411 enrolled – second highest in five years. (98% of Target)
 - Graduate programs led growth with the largest increase.
 - Transfer enrollment strong.
 - First-year enrollment impacted by international visa challenges.
 - Strategies:
 - Leveraged National Student Clearinghouse data to boost transfers.
 - Collaboration with Marcom on targeted campaigns proved effective.
 - Key takeaway: Strong spring intake; lessons applied to fall planning.

- **Fall 2026 Enrollment:**

- Total enrollment goal: 6,715 students.
 - Current deposits: 460 (as of a few days ago).
 - Deposit goals by category:

- First-year: 1,700
 - Transfer: 640
 - Graduate: 450
- Focus areas:
 - Encouraging students awarded scholarships to confirm deposits.
 - Marcom-led campaigns targeting parents to raise awareness of scholarships.
- **Events and Engagement:**
 - Recent on-campus event: 112 prospective students attended; strong faculty involvement noted.
 - Upcoming regional events (next week): Buffalo, Syracuse, Albany, NYC, Long Island.
 - Faculty and deans to participate, engaging prospective students and families.
- **Transfer Partnerships:**
 - Four community colleges committed to partnerships:
 - Tompkins Cortland Community College, Jefferson, Cayuga, and OCC.
 - College presidents attended the recent transfer summit.
- **Overall Status:**
 - Enrollment efforts are ramping up, with continued focus on deposits, outreach, and strategic marketing.
- **Direct Admit and Laker Scholars – Kristi Eck**
 - **Oswego Direct Initiative** - Objective: Streamline admission for high school students with clear, direct pathways.
 - **Fall 2026 Focus:**
 - Target: Oswego County & 5 Syracuse City School District high schools
 - Goal: 95 enrollments from 342 applications
 - Current: 320 applications received, 28 deposits secured
 - Free application extended through March 15
 - **Pathways & Programs:**
 - Direct admission for students with 80%+ GPA
 - Conditional admission & Laker Scholars Summer Bridge for students below 80% GPA
 - 4-week summer program, live on campus, 4 credits, meals, work opportunities
 - Successful completion guarantees Fall enrollment
 - **Scholarships & Support:**
 - Oswego County students: \$3,000 additional award
 - Syracuse City students: up to \$3,000 + last-dollar tuition via CS Education partnership
 - **Engagement & Outreach:**

- February 26 campus event: 100+ students, 40+ departments represented
 - Continued high school and community engagement planned
- **Next Steps:**
 - Monitor applications & deposits
 - Prepare for full Fall 2027 direct-admit rollout
- **Budget Update – Vicki Furlong**
 - Enrollment remains a critical driver of the university’s financial health.
 - Current institutional efforts are focused on enrollment growth, retention, and recruitment, as stable and robust enrollment provides financial stability for the university.
 - These priorities guide financial stewardship, investment decisions, and resource allocation across the institution.
 - The financial plan (budget) beginning July 2021 projected a \$4 million deficit, largely due to anticipated enrollment declines.
 - At the mid-year review, the projected deficit increased to \$5.1 million.
 - Enrollment projections for the fall term were slightly higher than actual enrollment, resulting in lower-than-expected revenue.
- **University Advancement Update – Heath Wood**
 - Since July 1 (start of the fiscal year), more than 3,500 donors have contributed over \$7.5 million in philanthropic support to the university.
 - The total amount raised has already surpassed the contributions received during the previous fiscal year.
 - This indicates that the university’s message and engagement efforts are resonating with donors.
 - Of the \$7.5 million raised, slightly over \$300,000 is unrestricted funding.
 - More than 90% of donations are designated for donor-restricted purposes.
 - While restricted gifts significantly support university priorities, including students and faculty, they are separate from funds used to address general budget challenges.
 - The university’s endowment continues to grow, supporting long-term financial sustainability.
 - Endowment annual returns outperform the average across multiple time horizons, including 1-year, 3-year, 5-year, and 10-year periods.
- **Hometown University - Kathleen Kerr**
 - The initiative previously known as “Cruisin’ the Campus” began prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and was paused during that period.
 - After 2021, the program was reinstated as a winter-term initiative designed to bring community members onto campus during periods when student activity is lower.

- As part of the university's most recent strategic plan, the Division of Student Affairs identified expanding this program as a key action step.
 - The initiative was rebranded as "Explore SUNY Oswego: Your Hometown University."
 - The program aligns with ongoing outreach and recruitment efforts in Oswego County and Onondaga County, supporting broader community engagement and enrollment goals.
 - The program aims to familiarize local students and families with the university at an early age.
 - By engaging community members before students reach their junior and senior years of high school, the university hopes to build familiarity, excitement, and interest in SUNY Oswego.
 - The initiative highlights both academic and recreational opportunities available on campus.
- **Strategic Plan Implementation – Murat Yaşar**
 - Responsibility for strategic plan implementation falls under this area of leadership.
 - Implementation began in Fall 2025, following completion of the strategic planning phase.
 - It was noted that implementation is often the most challenging stage of the strategic planning process, but progress to date has been positive.
 - Implementation Progress
 - A Strategic Plan Implementation Committee has been established to support the process.
 - The committee includes colleagues specializing in assessment, data analysis, and evidence-based decision-making.
 - Their role is to track progress, monitor outcomes, and guide the implementation process across the institution.
 - The strategic plan includes 714 institutional action items.
 - Approximately 90% of the actions scheduled for completion in Fall 2025 have been completed.
- **Branding at SUNY Oswego – Karen Crowe**
 - The university is currently engaged in a four-phase rebranding process aimed at strengthening institutional messaging and market positioning.
 - Phase 1 focuses on establishing the brand foundation and core messaging.
 - Key areas of focus include:
 - Identifying the university's distinct strengths and assets
 - Understanding how the institution is perceived in the marketplace
 - Determining factors that differentiate the university from competitors

- An external vendor has been working closely with the university, conducting interviews with members of the campus community to gather insights.
- Future Phases
- Phase 2: Visual Identity Development
- Development of a new visual identity, including potential updates such as:
 - Updated visual design elements
 - Consideration of a university mascot
 - Review of institutional colors
- The university plans to engage stakeholders from across campus in discussions during this phase.

7. New Business - James McMahon, University Council Chair

- No updates at this time.

8. Old Business

- No updates at this time.

9. Executive Session

- James McMahon announced a motion for the meeting to enter Executive Session and dismissed attendees.
- **Second** – Richard Farfaglia
- **Vote** - All in favor
- The meeting was adjourned at 2:51 p.m.
- The Council entered Executive Session with President Nwosu; no minutes were recorded.