



Board of Trustees HIGHLIGHTS & SUMMARY

Vol. 26, No. 2 | December 9, 2019

President's Report

President John J. Hurley discussed recent events involving the Movement to Restore Trust and expressed his appreciation to the Board and the Society of Jesus for their support on this initiative to reform the Catholic diocese in Buffalo. He noted the results of Canisius graduates on the recent CPA exam. Students who sat for the exam for the first time within one year of graduation, earned the highest overall pass rate on the exam in New York State, ranking first overall. Canisius candidates also ranked first in New York State on the regulation/tax portion of the 2018 CPA exam; first (1st) on the audit portion of the exam and second (2nd) in New York State on the financial reporting section of the exam. Nationally, Canisius participants scored in the top four percent overall, among first-time test takers of the 2018 CPA exam. Mr. Hurley announced that two Jesuits have been assigned to Canisius. Frs. Adelmo Dunghe, S.J. and Jack Mattimore, S.J. Both will assist part-time in Campus Ministry and Fr. Mattimore will also assist in implementing the initiatives of the New Buffalo Institute, which has recently received seed funding to hire its first director. The search for this position has begun and the college hopes to have a candidate selected before the year ends. Mr. Hurley updated the Board on his listening sessions with academic and administrative departments across the college. He reported that he had completed 16 such sessions this fall. He said these are productive discussions that give him a more granular view of the challenges and opportunities faculty and staff face in their day-to-day work. Mr. Hurley also reported that the Diversity Plan on Inclusive Excellence and a Diversity and Inclusion Statement are in development following a significant data gathering process. Finally, Mr. Hurley touted the results of the recent Graduation Student Success Rate data published by the NCAA. The scores of Canisius College student-athletes are the highest since the NCAA began issuing the report in 1998. They graduated at a 94 percent rate, up one percent from last year's report, which was the previous high for the College's athletic department.

Academics Committee

Sara M. Morris, Ph.D., Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs, reported that searches for the Director of School and Community Partnerships and the Director of New Buffalo Institute are currently underway. The Academic Program Board has approved proposals to create a Master of Science in Cybersecurity, an advanced certificate in coaching, and minors in both Medieval and Ignatian Studies. Dr. Thomas Chambers, Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, explained that one highlights of Canisius' cybersecurity program will be a dedicated cybersecurity lab in Science Hall. Dr. Morris presented revisions to the Faculty Handbook to incorporate the Physician's Assistant Studies (PA) Clinical Faculty. Fatima Rodriguez Johnson, Associate Dean for Diversity and Inclusion, shared the survey results from the implicit bias workshop that was held as part of the Academic Affairs division meeting in November 2019. Future workshops have been scheduled for faculty and a diversity statement and strategic plan focused on inclusion are near completion. Andrew Stewart, PhD, Associate Professor of Biology, made a presentation to the committee on the NSF-funded BIO Boot camp, which was developed by the Science Scholars Program in response to noticeably declining skill levels of entering students in biology 111. Dr. Stewart also shared that the Educational Policy Committee is working on updating the grade grievance policy or grade appeal process. Enrollment, student conduct in class, and student-athlete absences have also been discussed. He also reported on the Faculty Senate's call for formal search for the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Enrollment Management Committee

Ian S. Day, Interim Vice President for Enrollment Management, updated the committee on the Fall 2020 recruitment campaign. Inquiries for first-year undergraduates have increased; however, applications, admission and deposits are all seeing declines compared to last year. Mr. Day noted that he expects to see the shortfall in applications to close somewhat as we approach the deadline for the Apply & Visit grant on December 18, which is later than last year. The Enrollment Management team is responding to the challenges by implementing a variety of new outreach initiatives. Mr. Day also distributed results for both Spring transfer and graduate students, which are tracking slightly ahead of last year. The committee determined that it would like to host a teleconference on December 20 for an update on the admissions campaign.

Finance & Facilities Committee

The Finance & Facilities Committee reviewed the current year operating budget that shows declines in graduate revenue and an increase in financial aid. Mr. Hurley reported on various real estate transactions and he reported that the revenue from the SUNY Erie partnership was up. Lee Wortham reported on the activities of the Investment Advisory Committee. The endowment stood at \$135 million at the end of October. The committee also discussed an article published in *Inside Higher Ed* about an analysis of private colleges' finances and predictions about when particular colleges might run out of cash and be forced to close. The publication of this report had been halted because of great concern over the devastating impact such a prediction could have on individual colleges. Mr. Hurley presented the proposal to set tuition for the 2020-2021 academic year. The committee approved this resolution and it was subsequently approved by the full board:

Resolved, that the Board of Trustees approves the following guidelines for the 2020-21 operating budget to be submitted to the Board for approval at its May 2020 meeting: full-time undergraduate tuition of \$28,630 an increase of \$690 or 2.5%.

Mission & Identity Committee

Committee members had an in depth discussion about the importance of lay Trustee formation for mission and identity as the Jesuit presence on campuses declines across the country. The committee reviewed Mr. Hurley's update report on the college's Jesuit mission and identity and decisions reached by presidents and provincials at their October meeting. Mr. Shelley discussed his participation in the AJCU Trustee Forum, a new mission-based retreat for lay Trustees. The committee discussed a range of recommendations aimed at amplifying Trustee understanding of their responsibilities for mission, including: a regional orientation program for new Board members hosted with other AJCU schools; scheduling periodic Board retreats focused on mission; and integrating mission formation experiences into regular Board events. Sarah Signorino, Director of Mission & Identity, reported on her experiences as a delegate for the Rome Congress celebrating the 50th anniversary the Society of Jesus' Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat.

Institutional Advancement Committee

William Collins, Vice President of Institutional Advancement, informed the committee that 12 commitments of \$150,000 have been obtained from donors for the Canisius Fund 150 campaign. Three-year commitments are also being sought at other levels, ranging from \$15,000 to \$75,000. The Division is tracking towards a goal of \$2.2 million in unrestricted cash this fiscal year which would represent a 100% increase over FY19. Annual restricted giving presently stands at \$575,000, with a large percentage of contributions directed to the Blue & Gold Fund, academic programs and departments such as Campus Ministry. Total commitments of cash, pledges and signed bequests stand at \$6.7 million, which is approximately \$3 million more than this time last year. The committee heard a presentation on Institutional Advancement's increased focus on planned giving as approximately 30% of annual cash received comes from estate gifts. The committee was updated on the Sesquicentennial celebration and a special point was to highlight *Canisius 150: A Blue & Gold Gala* on May 2, 2020, which will take the place of the traditional Regents Ball.

Student Life Committee

Mark Harrington, Ph.D., was introduced as the new interim Senior Associate Dean of Students and Director of the Griff Center. Dr. Harrington gave an overview of the changes made in the Griff center, including rebranding the center as the Griff Center for Student

Success, and more clearly defining structure, roles, and responsibilities in the center in three distinct areas: Academic Achievement, Career Development, and Support Services. The committee discussed innovative approaches to assisting students in distress (both academic and personal) through the college's online iAdvise platform and crisis intervention teams. In addition, Dr. Harrington discussed the work of the Retention Committee, and the predictive model used to assist students in achieving academic success. Five senior members of the Undergraduate Student Association (USA) addressed the committee to discuss what was most transformational for them as individual students at Canisius. The students noted that they had seen a marked improvement this year in student participation and engagement. Daniel Dentino, Ph.D., Vice President for Student Affairs, announced that the position of Engagement Coordinator, funded in part with assistance from USA, has been posted. Dr. Dentino also discussed the opening of Petey's Pantry, the campus food pantry, and led the committee on a tour of the space.

**Future Board
Meeting Dates**

March 2, 2020
May 4, 2020

Erica C. Sammarco, Secretary