



## Board of Trustees HIGHLIGHTS & SUMMARY

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### President's Report

President John J. Hurley remarked on how wonderful it has been to be back in person for the fall semester and to open the year with the Mass of the Holy Spirit and President's Convocation. The ever-evolving Covid-19 situation has continued to occupy much of the college's attention. He reported that the college has mandated the vaccine for employees by November 22, 2021 and for students by the start of the spring semester. Requests for exemptions on the basis of medical or religious grounds will be considered. Testing will be required for those who qualify for exemptions. He announced asbestos remediation continues in the parking garage and provided an update on plans to demolish the ramp and construct a surface parking lot in its place. The sale of Griffin Hall and Main-Humboldt apartments closed over the summer for a net of \$2.3 million. The college has Demerly Hall and the Health Science Center (HSC) on the market and hopes to sell HSC to a strategic purchaser whose operations could be synergistic with the college's. Proceeds would be used to complete Science Hall. The college will also utilize grant funds from the Higher Education Capital Grant Program (HECap) and gifts to finance the project. Mr. Hurley announced that the college's endowment has reached a high watermark value of \$168.8 million as of August 31. The endowment returned 32 percent for the fiscal year ended May 31.

### Report on Strategic Planning

With the conclusion of the college's current strategic plan, *Canisius 150*, Mr. Hurley discussed next steps in the planning process. The college intends to use this year to develop a situation analysis and engage the campus in a series of visioning activities and discussions aimed at developing a foundational report to assist the incoming president. The report will help to frame the challenges, strengths and opportunities the campus community sees for Canisius in the years ahead, provide some context for the priorities the next president should consider, and support the development of a new strategic plan for the college.

### Academics Committee

Dr. Sara Morris, vice president for academic affairs, reported on the implementation of the new First Year Experience (FYE), an optional, one-credit course that would provide new incoming students with the support and skills needed for the transition into college life at Canisius. Course content for the FYE was developed with the goal of fostering academic success, building a sense of community and belonging, and to support student development and wellness. Students were grouped by major, and, when possible, a professor and peer mentor from that discipline were assigned to the class to provide common content. Dr. Morris reported on Covid-19 response planning and efforts to prioritize in-person teaching and learning. The college imposed a mask mandate and social distancing requirements in the classroom. Dr. Morris reported on academic program development and accreditation. The Middle States Commission on Higher Education postponed the midpoint review until next summer. Our next self-study will occur in 2023-24, with a site visit in 2024-25. Sustainable assessment of the core curriculum and honors programs, with clear demonstration that assessment is used for program improvement, must be addressed for the Middle States review. Academic Affairs continues to examine online options for graduate programs and is exploring new programs to complement existing curricula. The committee heard a report on faculty development programs and reviewed plans for the completion of Science Hall, including the sale of Health Science. Howard Stanger, PhD, chair of the Faculty Senate, reported on Faculty Senate concerns, including preference for a vaccine mandate, pay raises and the reinstatement of the retirement benefits, and the Presidential Search Committee process. Representatives of the Educational Policy Committee (EPC) and the Core Curriculum Committee (CCC) discussed revisions to the assessment of the Core. Full implementation of the assessment protocol is anticipated to occur in fall 2022. The CCC is also working on revisions to the Diversity and Global Awareness attributes and evaluating the Core Capstone. Members of the academics committee discussed concerns about the number of courses included in the Core and encouraged the CCC to continue to evaluate this in light of lower enrollments.

**Audit Committee**

Mr. Chris Devine, committee chair, reported that the college has concluded the FY 21 audit process with its new auditors, the Bonadio Group. He reported that the college's experience with the new firm was excellent and Bonadio provided robust reports in its presentation of the results, including peer comparisons and an IT/Cybersecurity evaluation. The Bonadio Group identified an issue with agency accounts maintained in several departments in the college, which while not material to the financial statements have not been accounted for in accordance with GAAP. The College is addressing this by adopting the GAAP standard going forward and unwinding the non-GAAP compliant liability over time. The Board accepted the Audit Committee's report and the Committee had previously approved the audited statements, consistent with the bylaws.

**Enrollment Management Committee**

Dr. Danielle Ianni, vice president for enrollment management, provided an overview of the fall 2021 freshmen class and highlighted the increases in the number of females, out of state students, and students of color, as well as the net tuition revenue per student. She explained that the results demonstrate a strong execution of last year's recruitment plan. The first year class is the most diverse in the history of the college and the admissions team made gains in out of state and out of the region markets. Looking ahead, Dr. Ianni identified opportunities for improvement in our primary market of Erie County, increasing applications for the Wehle School of Business, and the transfer student market. She discussed the summer melt phenomena and said that the college will be working on a more comprehensive plan to limit the melt among deposited students. Dr. Ianni also gave an update on summer and fall graduate enrollment and recruitment efforts. New student graduate enrollment missed the new student headcount goal for fall. However, the college was still able to meet its revenue and credit hour goal. Over the past year, the graduate admissions team was able to improve the conversion rate of inquiry to application by 5%, yield by 3%, and application completion rates. The graduate admissions team is focusing on growing the School of Education and Human Services graduate enrollment, building more inquiries, and strengthening relationships with Canisius' educational and corporate partners.

**Finance & Facilities Committee**

The Finance & Facilities Committee reviewed the final audited financial statements for FY21. The operating deficit was lower than anticipated due to better than expected tuition revenue and lower expenses due to the pandemic. The committee reviewed the FY22 forecast, which projects an increase in the expected operating deficit when compared to FY21 levels. Full-time undergraduate student headcount is lower, but expenses are expected to normalize as we emerge from the pandemic restrictions. The committee reviewed plans for financing the renovations of Science Hall. Other facilities maintenance projects include the replacements of roofs and air handling units for both Bosch and Frisch Halls and the digital upgrade to the Montante Cultural Center. The committee also discussed the ramp demolition project and the Buffalo Sewer Authority's (BSA) interest in installing a drainage tank under the parking lot to handle overflow from heavy rains and alleviate strain on the sanitary and storm sewers. If the college coordinates the ramp project with the BSA, it may need to establish a temporary surface until the tank is installed in 2023. The committee reviewed the performance of the endowment, which as of August 31, 2021, was valued at nearly \$169 million.

**Mission & Identity Committee**

The committee reviewed its charge and the college's mission statement and discussed the importance of mission formation for Board Members, particularly as the college embarks on its search for its next president. The committee reviewed reports prepared by Mr. Shelley and Mr. Hurley following their attendance at a national ACJU Trustee Formation Program in fall 2019. The committee will consider proposing the addition of mission-oriented discussion topics at regular board meetings and developing some type of online retreat experiences for this academic year. Dr. Sandra Estanek, interim vice president for student affairs, provided an update on the collaborative grassroots approach Campus Ministry is taking this year for retreats and other spiritual and service-oriented programs in light of staff vacancies at the college.

**Institutional Advancement Committee**

Kim Venti, vice president for institutional advancement, provided the results of the FY21 fundraising activity. More than \$8.8 million in cash was collected, a 20 percent increase over FY20, and the Canisius Fund surpassed its goal, raising \$2.1 million. Gifts to the endowment amounted to \$4.2 million, \$975,000 over FY20, and \$708,516 was raised for capital support. For FY22, the fundraising goal is \$8.8-\$9 million in cash collected with continued focus on current use support from Canisius Fund and Annual Fund Restricted gifts. Completion of Science Hall is a top priority. Canisius is seeking a lead gift that would help us meet the match requirements of the \$4.4 million HECap grant from New York State. Mary Ellen Bakowski reported that \$3.4 million in planned gifts were realized

in FY21. Summer Handzlik, director of the Canisius fund, provided an overview on this year's fall solicitation strategy, including the Minehan Magis Challenge, a matching gift campaign that resulted from a substantial estate gift that will be used to leverage gifts to the Canisius Fund. The committee also heard a report on the "More than a Game" crowdfunding campaign in support of Athletics that will launch on October 15. Ms. Beth Edbauer, chair of the Board of Regents, reported that due to the ongoing impacts of Covid-19, the Celebrating Canisius event scheduled for Friday, November 5, 2021 will be postponed. The committee is working out the details for rescheduling the event.

**Student Life  
Committee**

The committee was introduced to Dr. Sandra Estanek, the interim vice president for student affairs. Dr. Estanek reviewed her goals for 2021-2022, which include grounding the work of the various offices in Student Affairs in the professional standards of the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS), increasing engagement with students back on campus, and reviewing the organizational structure of the Division of Student Affairs. Dr. Estanek reported that Campus Ministry has been reassigned to the Division of Student Affairs. At present, there is no full time campus minister. Campus Ministry will operate as a collaborative grassroots effort under the leadership of a team of three, including adjunct professor Deacon Greg Feary. The Mass of the Holy Spirit was organized using this model and plans are already underway for participation in the Ignatian Teach-In for Social Justice in October, a first-year student retreat in November, Kairos in the spring, and other events and opportunities for worship and spiritual growth. A search for a new director of campus ministry will commence in the spring. Dr. Estanek also reported that a new Title IX coordinator has been hired, and she is moving forward to hire a new director of student engagement. President of the Undergraduate Student Association (USA), Alyssa Deacon '22, updated the Board on the goals and activities of the USA. She shared that student leaders are happy to be back on campus and there has been strong student participation in the activities held to date. Dr. Mark Harrington, assistant vice president for student success, reported to the committee on the Freshman Year Experience described above.

**Future Board  
Meetings**

**2021 - 2022 Meeting Dates**

**Sep. 27, 2021**

**Dec. 6, 2021 – In-person, on campus**

**Mar. 14, 2022**

**May 9, 2022**

**Submitted by Erica C. Sammarco, secretary**