GREENFIELD COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Board of Trustees Meeting
December 17, 2020 8:00 a.m.
ZOOM

Present: Chair Robert Cohn, Cady Coleman, Chris Donelan, Claire Higgins, Joanne Marqusee, Robyn Provost, Judith Roberts, Julia Stahnke and Hector Toledo

Absent: Isaac Mass

Others Present: President Yves Salomon-Fernandez, Anna Berry, Mark Boudreau, Regina Curtis, Mary Ellen Fydenkevez, Charles Jordan, Shannon Larange, Joan Murphy, Karen Phillips, and Matt Noyes

Call to Order
Chair Cohn called the meeting to order at 8:04am.

Minutes
On a motion by Trustee Marqusee and seconded by Trustee Toledo, the Board of Trustees voted unanimously to approve the draft minutes of the October 15, 2020 and November 19, 2020 meetings.

Committee and Liaison Reports/Updates

Academic Affairs
Academic Affairs Committee Chair, Trustee Donelan, introduced Dean Chet Jordan to provide background for the Academic Affairs motion.

Background
The Division of Social Sciences and Professional Studies and the Department of Business & Information Technology are proposing a new Associate in Science, Business Administration General (BAG) program to be launched in the 2021-2022 academic year. Dean Chet Jordan and Chair of the Business Department Michelle Barthelemy submitted their plan for the new program to the Curriculum and Academic Policy Committee on November 16, 2020 after several months of departmental and divisional planning. Below describes the rationale and need for the new program and details of the academic and financial reasons for streamlining the degree and certificate programs in the department.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the college retrenched a faculty position in the business department whose specialization was accounting. With one fewer faculty member, the instructional staff of the Business Department, in conjunction with the Dean of the division, recognized that efforts need to be effectively streamlined in order to promote student success and offer pathways that are congruent with current demand. Our department proposed integrating many of our standalone degrees into a singular A.A. in Business Administration General program. The purpose of this degree program will be to provide an introduction into the myriad branches of business administration, exposing students to topics in management, digital marketing, computer information systems, and economics, doing so in a singular degree so that students have the flexibility to take courses across different topical areas without changing majors or earning excess credits while attempting to determine an appropriate pathway.
GCC’s Accounting major has experienced a decline in enrollment since 2011. In 2011, there were 46 declared majors and by 2019 there were only 12. This shift in demand for the major reflects a market change for the profession since the recession. Financial services have radically transformed from human-driven to a field rich in automation. As such, GCC recognizes that there are key courses in its Accounting program that will be essential to the proposed Business Administration General major. Fundamental accounting courses will be preserved to introduce students to the principles of accounting so that they can effectively apply the conceptual knowledge to their chosen major and career without being confined to a purely accounting profession.

The standalone management, marketing, and economics programs have all also experienced a significant decline in enrollment since AY11. As such, GCC has determined that the new associate’s degree in Business Administration will have three advising tracks in Computer Information Systems, Digital Marketing, and Management. We have selected these three advising options in response to local and regional economic shifts and to preserve the components of the standalone programs that have been most impactful. Western Massachusetts, and especially Franklin County, is experiencing entrepreneurial growth focused on providing goods and services that are inherently local. The proposed degree will be both broad and market-focused. The introductory content will lay the groundwork for career and baccalaureate exploration while the specific advising tracks will integrate with GCC’s burgeoning focus on how best to link to the growth in entrepreneurship in our area.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and high unemployment in the low-wage sector of the regional economy, there is a large portion of the population that will require additional credentials and skills in order to effectively reenter the labor market. For these individuals who have recently been furloughed or permanently terminated, the proposed business program is an opportune pathway to reskill and reenter the economy with college credentials. The Pioneer Valley Labor Market Blueprint identifies finance and insurance, professional services, and health care and social assistance as priority and critical industries necessary for the economic health of the area (p. 33). The proposed business program at GCC will be broad enough to capture a student body that will, after graduation, return to the community to stimulate economic growth in a range of professions.

This program will also be deeply integrated with GCC’s Workforce Development programs. GCC is currently developing a diverse series of courses ranging from leadership to applied manufacturing to personal finance that will be offered in short, high-intensity modules online to help reskill the regional population quickly. These programs will be offered as certifications linked directly to industry but will also offer potential students an opportunity to engage with the college through workforce development to determine whether a degree pathway is appropriate. As both standalone courses and onramps to credit-bearing programs, workforce development courses in business will be taught by the same faculty who are designing this proposed business program. This integration will provide critical on-ramps to the business program and will help interested individuals earn their degrees as well as key industry certifications. We believe we must streamline our resources to more effectively focus our efforts toward driving student success.

Another priority for the college is to attract a larger student body by increasing our digital classroom presence. All of the courses that are part of this program have been taught in online format. Although many of the courses were already fitted to be delivered in a distance format,
COVID-19 accelerated the development of additional in-person classes. We believe that the reach for this program will be much broader than just the population of Franklin County. We are extending our capacity to serve individuals in the North Quabbin region, an area of Western Massachusetts that has been particularly negatively impacted by deindustrialization and the rise of automation in the workforce. In an area where public transportation is limited and postsecondary options are far away, online options will allow for individuals to pursue a degree remotely. This program will be critical for individuals who are looking for ways to improve their employability and to help reconfigure the marketplace in the Quabbin region.

**MOTION**
Based on the recommendation of the President and in accordance with the current policies of the Department of Higher Education, Trustee Donelan moved the Board of Trustees grant approval of an Associates of Science degree in Business Administration General effective beginning the 2021 Fall semester. Trustee Coleman seconded.

**Roll Call Vote:** Chair Cohn, Trustee Coleman, Trustee Donelan, Trustee Marqusee, Trustee Provost, Trustee Roberts, Trustee Stanhke, and Trustee Toledo – yes (Trustee Higgins was not yet present for this vote). Motion Carried.

**Alumni Liaison**
No Report.

**Finance Committee**
Chair Cohn introduced Karen Phillips to review the Quarterly Statements for the period ending September 30, 2020. Karen reviewed the September Quarterly report with the Board. Currently the College projects a surplus of $431,000 as of September 30th. Karen cautioned Trustees that while the College currently shows a projected surplus, there are still many unknowns related to Spring enrollment. Current enrollment is down 26% from the projected level at this time. The College is anticipating level funding for the final FY21 budget, and should have a finalized budget to present at the next Finance Committee meeting.

**MOTION**
On a motion by Trustee Donelan and seconded by Trustee Coleman, the Greenfield Community College Board of Trustees approved the Quarterly Financial Report and Certification Statement submitted by the President for the period ending September 30, 2020

**Roll Call Vote:** Chair Cohn, Trustee Coleman, Trustee Donelan, Trustee Higgins, Trustee Marqusee, Trustee Provost, Trustee Roberts, Trustee Stanhke, and Trustee Toledo – yes. Motion Carried.

**Foundation Liaison**
Trustee Provost reported the Foundation is currently working on their year-end gift mailing along with a targeted mailing to alumni. She also reported the search committee for Regina Curtis’ replacement has been formed and officially begun its process.

**Personnel & Policies Committee**
No Report.

**Student Senate**
No Report.

**President’s Report**
President Salomon-Fernandez introduce Anna Berry, Dean of Students, to report on supporting students in distress and GCC’s approach to helping students in crisis. Dean Berry reported student support offices have been working diligently to support students throughout the pandemic. A recent survey of GCC students showed many students are feeling supported by and connected to their faculty and advisors. The survey also revealed students are struggling feeling connected to the campus and their student body without physically being on campus. The student leadership has been remarkable in this moment and tremendously engaged. The student senate helped design the survey sent to students and have been organizing many outreach events. Dean Berry reviewed the resources available and processes to assist students in distress.

Chair Cohn inquired about resources available for faculty and staff to assist them during this difficult time. Dean Berry and Executive Director of Human Resources, Joan Murphy, shared the ways in which the leadership and colleagues are reaching out to support each other.

President Salomon-Fernandez informed the Trustees will be sharing her end of year report just after the New Year. The campus is currently engaged in Spring and Summer recruitment along with beginning to plan for the upcoming Fall semester and what that may look like. The team is systematically looking at program enrollment data, design, and areas for new innovation and programming. President Salomon-Fernandez expressed her gratitude for the leadership team and Board for their continued support.

**New Business**
No Report.

**Adjournment**
On a motion from Trustee Hector and seconded by Trustee Roberts the Board of Trustees unanimously voted to adjourn at 9:02am.

Respectfully submitted by,
Shannon Larange