



# Faculty Association Suffolk Community College Executive Council APPROVED MINUTES

**Date:** Thursday, October 10, 2024

**Time:** 3:45 pm

**Location:** via Zoom

## 1. Approval of Minutes from August 22, 2024, and September 12, 2024, EC Meeting

- **D. Morelli:** Meeting called to order at 3:48 pm. Any corrections to August 22 minutes? None.
  - ➔ Motion to approve August 22 minutes made by M. Sierra, seconded by N. Pestieau.  
Motion is approved 18/0/6.
- **D. Morelli:** Any corrections to September 12 minutes? None.
  - ➔ Motion to approve September 12 minutes made by L. Behnke, seconded by D. Handel.  
Motion is approved 20/0/4.

## 2. Making Strides Update

- **C. Brewer:** Thank you to all who came! Weather was magnificent, long overdue for a sunny day for Making Strides. We have raised over \$2,400 so far and had 14 participants on our team plus Grant Campus Rotaract Club students; we also posed with the SCCC cheerleading team and mascot Finn. [You can still donate to Team FA](#). Please consider contributing.  
  
**D. Morelli:** Our member [Teresa Noto in the automotive department is one of our best fundraisers and will be featured in an October NYSUT article about Making Strides](#). Thank you, Teresa!

## 3. Political Action Committee

- **D. Morelli:** Committee consists of Lisa Behnke, Ed Champ, Tim McHeffey, Bruce Seger, and me. Goals are to increase current VOTE COPE contributions, bring in new contributors, and have full participation from the EC. Also doing advocacy work for John Avlon in CD1 who is endorsed by NYSUT and NYS AFL-CIO. Dates and locations for these labor walks and phone banks are in the chat. Join us! We only visit and call fellow NYSUT members.

Please know that our state unions endorse candidates based on their support of education and labor. John Avlon has publicly said, "Three things built the great American middle class: Labor unions, the GI bill, and community colleges."

#### 4. EC Restructure Task Force Update

- **C. Eaton:** Task force includes John Capurso, Jen Champagne, Brian DeMasi, Deb Provenzano, Mary Sierra, Eric Weinstein, and me as *ex officio* member. We've met a few times and discussed ideas for restructuring the EC so that we don't have constituencies larger than 100 or in the single digits regarding number of members. Several combinations were suggested. Task force is awaiting some updated information and responses before they bring a proposal to the EC. As a reminder, the protocol is that we need EC approval before bringing it to entire membership for a vote in spring (in same envelope as election materials).

#### 5. EC Rep Issues

- A constituent has issues with credentials handbook; someone told them the FA is supporting it as is and wants to know why because math department "has huge issues with it." Their example is a high school teacher currently teaching calculus through Beacon who doesn't have a master's in math and has never taken a calculus class. Being too lenient regarding alternative credentials is a problem.

**D. Morelli:** FA has not supported anything yet. We have a draft of the credential handbook, received the same time as chairs. Our position is that departments should be having conversations and sharing feedback with admin. We've said this at all three governance meetings, and we're working on adherence to the contract. **C. Brewer:** There is a lot of misinformation about Beacon going around. **C. Eaton:** Contract specifically says that the college has authority to credential teachers, departments work with VPAA to credential the courses, and the FA has purview over mentoring of teachers.

**D. Morelli:** We also currently have a Beacon labor management committee as well as a Beacon working group to address mentoring issues. Contract talks about "comparable" credentials for teachers of dual credit courses, and we're well aware of need for academic integrity. We're happy admin is asking for feedback from departments on credentialing of teachers! In early November, Dr. Rios will hold meetings with chairs and deans to collect that feedback. It is a long process. Dual credit has been around for many years, and it's very popular with parents and politicians. Parents want their kids to get college credits in high school. Nic Pestieau has been a Beacon mentor and can attest that while some teachers are great and others not so much, most are doing a fine job.

- There had been an issue with departments adding courses at last minute during summer overload process. What is the follow up? **D. Morelli:** As much as we'd prefer that the chairs create a schedule and stick to it, it's also good when they have to add late in process because it means more students. If an added class has more contact hours, yes, it can get tricky. **K. McCoy:** I will reach out to math chairs to discuss how to assign classes a little bit later to help avoid all that juggling at the end when classes are added. Some campuses strict about NORA/overload requests but others are not. Overall, the math chairs do seem to work well together with collegewide assignments, e.g., redoing all assignments if appropriate.
- A constituent is upset because very soon after President Bonahue's email about not electioneering on campus, a colleague posted a gif of Kamala Harris—clearly aligned with

Democratic party—in the chat as a way to say hello during a PA shift meeting. Is that allowed? **D. Morelli:** The area supervisor should address it; these situations are often best handled with a polite, professional conversation about avoiding overtly political images during work time.

- There was an issue regarding seniority for adjuncts disappearing from the website when it was updated. Follow up? **K. Ng Southard:** Dean Gherardi is looking into it, but we're unsure of timeframe. Have your constituent to reach out to me. The new seniority list usually comes out around first week of November.
- Constituent asked about system of tuition reimbursement for dependents and spouses. Discrepancy among language on forms, what administration says, and how it actually happens—and it seems to be different among campuses. Need to have one system, with consistent and accurate language. I'll send specific info to Dante. **K. McCoy:** Thank you. Also, a point of common confusion is about prior approval; members are not required to get prior approval for dependents, but we do recommend it just to be on the safe side.
- Member concerns about plan for classroom observations for all online classes. Dante already explained it is the right of management to do so, but asking will union keep an eye on it? **D. Morelli:** For past few years, admin has been observing online faculty, which significantly increased as a result of Covid. Process is underway already. Faculty should know the rules, e.g., that they can have a peer observer, they get 48 hours' notice, and admin must follow rules in contract. There's some rumor about Middle States doing observations; that is false. Middle States does, however, need to know that the college is doing those observations.

**C. Eaton:** I have [an article about DE observations in October issue of \*The WORD\*](#). Keep in mind that if everything is fine, not every observation has to result in a formal evaluation form being added to your personnel file. However, there should be some way to formally document those observations happened and were fine regarding RSI to show to Middle States and others.

- Constituents have concerns about environmental issues in Riverhead Building regarding renovations, A/C issues, leaks, and bug infestation in building. People starting to question to what degree administration even cares about their daily work environments. It's an issue of morale. Ammerman Campus feels like it is falling apart physically. **D. Morelli:** We have monthly meetings with President Bonahue and Dean Rios and constantly bring up these issues, which impact morale for faculty and retention for students. Plant ops has been notified about bug infestation (wood roaches). Areas are being addressed, and this Friday they will be fumigating the ceilings.

Related constituent concerns about lack of cleanliness in Huntington Library. Building does not look presentable for employees or students and there are also wood roaches there. Is it an understaffing issue? **D. Morelli:** Yes, we do know that understaffing in AME is a major issue, but still admin cannot entirely neglect these issues. We will follow up again and again.

- Morale issues persist within counseling; we often hear that administrators do not respect counselors and suggest we are overpaid, over credentialed, underutilized, etc. We are working so hard only to feel like we're not viewed as professionals. We feel like we are being fractured. Can we bring counseling discipline together to see if there's any merit to this administrative

perspective and if there are structural changes coming can we have a voice at the table? **D.**

**Morelli:** We officers have met with counselors repeatedly on this and are willing to do so again. You know we also host monthly FA office hours for members to speak with us. Also, we meet monthly with VP Munsch and have never heard her say she fails to understand your value.

- A PA constituent was asked to do more than one job not originally hired for, so they have questions about job description line that says “other duties as assigned.” Issue involves a PA being split between two areas. Does an area supervisor have the ability to say, “I don’t want my PA doing work in another area because I need them here”? **D. Morelli:** “Other duties” cannot be *anything*; it should relate to their work and title, and it has to be FA work and in your discipline. I’ll follow up with you privately.

## 6. Officers Reports

- **President Dante Morelli reports the following:**
  - We continue addressing concerns with the faculty credentialing handbook; the academic side is being addressed first, then student affairs will be included later.
  - Enrollment is about even compared with last year; the number will settle in November.
  - We attended a wonderful nursing program luncheon last Friday that honored Jane F. Shearer, who had been president of Guild, which raised funds for nursing students. President Bonahue was there, as was Suffolk County Executive Ed Romaine who is always supportive of the college.
  - We co-hosted with the Guild an excellent retirement workshop, also last Friday, that had about 50 attendees. In addition, we co-hosted with Guild and administration an Ammerman health, wellness, and benefits fair with vendors for all employees at the college. It was very popular, and we’ll likely do it again next year at Grant Campus.
  - Title VI training mandate from SUNY: About 30 full-time and 300 adjunct faculty did not submit it; please complete ASAP. It’s about 25 min. long and you’re allowed to complete it during work hours.
  - Program sustainability conversations with President Bonahue and Dean Rios ongoing.
  - Other items of note: We’ll get new ID cards for EMHP health plan in early December and coverage under Aetna starts on January 1; there was a Board of Trustees meeting but I was unable to attend; as of January all employees will be required to use 12 alphanumeric symbols in college password; and a bit of good news is that student participation in clubs and activities has increased.
- **Executive Vice President Courtney Brewer reports the following:**
  - I know the meeting is running long, so in the interests of time, I’ll just note that for promotions, full-time faculty are in the thick of the cycle and getting their observations done at this time.
  - I am so grateful to all CPC reps and peer observers. There are fewer faculty around than in the past, so your assistance means even more. We appreciate you.
  - I have an article in the [October issue of \*The WORD\* about how helping colleagues with the promotion process is an excellent opportunity to do service.](#)

- **Secretary Cynthia Eaton reports the following:**

- Sabbatical applications due October 15. I've spoken with about a dozen interested applicants but only received three drafts thus far (likely because some are re-applying). [You saw my article about sabbaticals in the September issue of \*The WORD\*](#). Who knows if it will have any impact; I know admin is understandably worried about finances and the impending demographic cliff.
- Distance ed committee: Focus this year will be on [helping faculty prepare for DE/online observations and ensuring that they are achieving regular and substantive interaction \(RSI\)](#) in their classes.
- October issue of *The WORD* will be distributed on Tuesday. Keep an eye out for that. We're proud of contributions of our members in collaboration with admin for our September 13 workshop, [Navigating Controversial Topics on Campus](#). We are especially grateful to our members who presented: [Dante Morelli](#), [Kevin McCoy](#), [Nick Giordano](#), [Kailyn Giaccone](#), [John Brush](#), [Courtney Brewer](#), [Deb Provenzano](#) and [Christina Bosco](#). Other presenters who kindly shared their time and expertise include [Chief Diversity Officer Christina Vargas](#), [VP for Student Affairs Patty Munsch](#), [College General Counsel Ashley Pope](#), [SCCC President Ed Bonahue](#), and [VP for Academic Affairs Irene Rios](#). In addition, we were thrilled to have [Suffolk County Legislator Jim Mazzarella](#) present as well.

- **Treasurer Pete DiGregorio reports the following:**

- On treasurer report: You see budget year starts September 1, and approved budget is noted on right side; on page 2, membership numbers are 387 full-time members (100% membership rate) as well as 910 adjunct members and 140 adjunct nonmembers (86.7% membership rate). We have 50 fewer adjuncts than in fall 2023 due to declining student enrollment.
- Adjunct dues were submitted to payroll for early end and full semester; it's four of seven paychecks only and adjusted for late start and early end classes.
- I'll be giving the constituency lists to Cynthia, who will update our google groups and send your updated lists to you.
- Other items of note: Board of Election filings done, updated membership data sent to NYSUT, and we'll be scheduling the forensic audit soon.

- **Grievance Officer Kevin McCoy reports the following:**

- I've been really very busy. Since our last meeting, this includes two Title IX meetings which seem to be getting more common with students, assisting two members with discipline issues, and two meetings with faculty who are having problems with their department chair or area supervisor.
- I attended one observation today for promotion which was positive. Also have one observation scheduled for next week but that one involves some concerns that make it better to have an officer present.

- A member didn't submit for tuition reimbursement over the summer in time, but we intervened and were able to get her reimbursed so that's good news.
- I've been working with Kim on dual-discipline seniority lists. We need to make sure seniority is followed and need to see where everyone is on those lists.
- **Adjunct Coordinator Kim Ng Southard reports the following:**
  - Courtney and I held two promotion workshops with adjunct members, one on Zoom and one in person; we met with ten members and emailed 24 related to that, so those workshops had a great response.
  - I hosted an adjunct meet and greet with the FA officers on Monday, and we ended up talking about students and instructional issues, including how online students are not always prepared for the modality.
  - We found an adjunct member who had a Beacon assignment listed as one of their courses. I alerted Deans Gherardi and Sprows and worked to remove those from the list, to avoid preventing the adjunct member from getting another assignment.
  - Grant Campus: Adjunct offices have moved around, and I will send out info to all.
  - Get your NORA submitted by the October 29 due date because you will not get an assignment if you miss the deadline.
  - As Dante mentioned, please do the Vector training before October 29 just to make sure you're good to go for assignments.

## **7. Unfinished Business**

- None at this time.

## **8. New Business**

- **D. Morelli:** Please review the upcoming dates to know on our EC agenda. Also, we will be ordering a gray FA fleece for each of you as a thank you gift, but we need your preferred size. We'll be in touch so you can let us know.
- The in-person EC101 workshop was so nice! Is there any possibility for the EC to meet in person? We will follow up on that.

## **9. Adjournment**

- **Motion to adjourn made by M. Sierra, seconded by N. Pestieau. All in favor. Meeting adjourned 5:14 pm.**

## Attendance: Members present on October 10, 2024

### Officers

- [Dante Morelli](#), President
- [Courtney Brewer](#), Exec VP
- [Cynthia Eaton](#), Secretary
- [Pete DiGregorio](#), Treasurer
- [Kevin McCoy](#), Grievance Officer
- [Kim Ng Southard](#), Adjunct Coordinator

### EC Reps: Ammerman Full Time

- [John Capurso](#): Accounting, Business Administration, Business Information Systems, Legal Studies
- [Sharadha Sambasivan](#): Biology, Physical Sciences
- [Rich Lauria](#): Communication, Languages, Reading, TV/Radio/Film
- [Ben Laudicina](#): Counseling, Cooperative Ed
- [Stephanie Taboada](#): Engineering, Computer Science/Industrial Technology
- [Emily Lauer](#): English
- [Deb Provenzano](#): Library, Central
- [Alexander Atwood](#): Math
- [Alex Nohai-Seaman](#): Music, Visual Arts, Theatre, Philosophy, Women's Studies
- [Marlene Kellner](#): Nursing, Health and Human Services, Physical Education
- [Christina Bosco](#): Social Sciences, Behavioral Sciences

### EC Reps: Eastern Full Time

- [Mary Sierra](#): Library, Humanities, Counseling
- [Nic Pestieau](#): Science, Math, Social Science, Business, Nursing, Culinary, Physical Education

### EC Reps: Grant Full Time

- [Eric Weinstein](#) — Business, HVAC, CIS, Technology, ETU Coordinator
- [Naomi Edwards](#) — Humanities
- [Tara Fagan](#) — Library, Counseling, Media
- [Anabel Darini](#) — Natural Sciences, Math
- [Josh Wolfson](#) — Nursing, Health Science, Physical Education, Vet Sci
- vacant* — Social Sciences

### EC Reps: PAs & Specialists Full Time

- [Lisa Behnke](#): Programmatic
- [Madeeha Rahat](#): Instructional Labs
- vacant*: Technical Areas/Instructional Centers

## EC Reps: Collegewide Adjuncts

- [Brian DeMasi](#): Business, Accounting, Communications, Telecom
- [Debra Handel](#): Counseling, Education, Freshman/College Seminar
- [Pat Bergel](#): Culinary, Fire Protection Technology, Library, Electrical Tech, Drafting, Interior Design
- [Robert Schmidt](#): English
- vacant*: Foreign Languages, ESL, ASL, Reading
- [Steve Clark](#): Guild, Retiree, PAs/Specialists in Programmatic Areas
- [Dean Karahalıs](#): Humanities, Arts, Music, Philosophy
- vacant*: Math
- [Jennifer Champagne](#): Nursing, Physical Education, Health Sciences
- [Kailyn Giaccone](#): PAs/ Specialists in Academic Skills Centers
- vacant*: PAs/Specialists in Instructional Labs
- [Mary Griffin](#): Science, Engineering, Auto
- vacant*: Social Sciences

## Guests

- [Ed Champ](#), Specialist I, Enterprise Resources, Ammerman