

SUBJECT: Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee Meeting Report for September 25, 2024

The Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee of the Board of Trustees met remotely via Zoom on Wednesday, September 25, 2024, pursuant to Governor Baker’s executive order of March 10, 2020, entitled “Order suspending certain provisions of the open meeting law, G.L., ch. 30A, section 20,” to allow public remote participation and participation of the public body remotely and extended by Governor Healey on March 29, 2023.

Present for the Committee were Trustees, Billings (vice chair), Cabral, Davis, DiPalma, Garcia; President Keenan (ex-officio); Vice President Galinski; Provost Silva; Assistant Vice President Cronin; Associate Vice President Castillo; Dean Newton; Directors Jewell, Willis, Amado, Ohannesian; Registrar Miller; Professor Everett; and Executive Assistant Putzig.

Vice chair Billings called the meeting to order at 4:10 pm. The following items were discussed:

Fall 2024 Update: AVP Valenzuela shared data that shows total university enrollment is up and this trend is expected to continue. Some other successes include 2024 being the first year on the Common Application, continuing to have strong transfer connections programs with NSCC and NECC, and 400 (30%) of new incoming fall day students identifying as Hispanic. Dean Newton presented on the progress made to improve the residential experience for students on campus. One of the big successes in residence life this year was capitalizing on a two day move in process instead of the typical three-day process. Director Jewel shared an update on the financial aid simplification the country has been dealing with. Good news is state funding continues to go up and we received \$7 million more aid from the previous year. There has also been new funding for undocumented students including the Dream US scholarship which 15 students were awarded. (Attachment A)

Recruitment Plan for Academic Year 2025-26: AVP Cronin started the conversation by explaining the order of recruitment steps also known as the industry wide “enrollment funnel” and what marketing tactics are being utilized to capitalize on recruitment efforts – awareness, interest, apply, admit, deposit, yield. Director Willis continued the conversation outlining specific enrollment and recruitment initiatives. First introducing the new direct admissions programs with Lynn public schools and the Common Application. Willis also shared admissions has increased out of state outreach and recruitment specifically in Texas and Florida. There has been an increase in traction from out of state students, and they disclose it is due to the supportive LGBTQIA+ nature on campus. Lastly the admissions team has been focusing on promoting the value of education and affordability. Overall positives across the board. SSU is up in enrollment for the first time since 2012. (Attachment B)

Collaboration in Action: Academic Advising: Director Amado and Ohanesian started the conversation by sharing the projects from the past five years in academic advising. Phase III, the final stage, has most recently started – The year of Advising. Registrar Miller outlined a few goals of this phase are to continue to increase collaboration between faculty advisors, professional advisors, and students; create more defined pathways, increase student retention, and enhance advising culture and collaboration. To achieve these goals the Navigate 360 Academic Planner has been created which is an online collaboration advising space between an advisor and student. There is a degree map template/semester by semester planning tool, centralized repository for advising recommendations and notes, and it also provides actionable data for student off track interventions and schedule planning. The year of advising entails different efforts such as expansion of the Peer Advisor Program, professional development workshops, and an opening day event. (Attachment C)

Update: SSU’s Emergence as an HSI/MSI: AVP Castillo started the conversation by providing background information on what it entails to be a Hispanic and Minority Serving Institution. Salem State has the opportunity to lead the commonwealth as we are close to being the first four-year public institution to reach this designation. SSU received the HEIF 2024 DHE Grant which is part of a consortium with Bunker Hill, Holyoke, and MassBay Community Colleges. The grant allowed for the inaugural New England Hispanic and Minority Serving Institution Conference this summer. There was over 400 participants and 24 sessions which many described as “transformative”. The grant provided the opportunity to host the first student summit for students across the consortium to get together. (Attachment D)

Committee Q&A

No questions were asked due to time restrictions.

There being no further business to come before the committee and upon a motion made duly by Trustee Cabral and seconded by Trustee Garcia it was unanimously:

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 5:18 pm.

Voting in the affirmative: Billings (vice chair), Cabral, Davis, DiPalma, Garcia

Voting against: None

Prepared by: A. Putzig, Executive Assistant, Student Success

Fall Enrollment Headcount & Credit Hours*

	2023	2024	YoY	% difference
Undergraduate Day Headcount	4137	4138	+1	0.02%
Total Headcount	6343	6375	+32	0.50%
Continuing Ed (Evening)* Credit Hours	4576	4597	+22	0.45%
Graduate Credit Hours	10488	10649	+161	1.54%

*As of 9.18.24 (CE as of 9.24.24)



Enrollment and Recruitment 2024 Recap

- Successful first full year in the Common Application
- Transfer Connections program with North Shore and Northern Essex Community Colleges yielding results: new transfers for FA24 up 16%
- First-to-second year retention rate is slightly up (75.9% vs. 74.5%)
- 400 (30%) new incoming Fall day students (first-year and transfer) identify as Hispanic
- ReUp program led by The School of Continuing and Professional Studies continues to yield results: 32 Fall students reconnected
- School of Graduate Studies: MSW, MBA, and Counseling are up Year over Year with Counseling faculty working to modernize curriculum to remain competitive and innovative.



Preliminary Data: Fall 2024 Housing

- Two-Day Move in Process
 - August 31st-September 1st
- Current Resident Count = **1573** (preliminary)
- Items that can impact the Resident Count
 - September 18: Occupancy Verification due to MSCBA (MA State College Building Authority)
 - September 10: Add/Drop Period Ends
Allows us to begin verifying credit requirement

Longitudinal Housing Data: Fall 2020 - 2024

Semester/ Year	Fall Occupancy (actual)	Occupancy Goal	% of Goal	MSCBA Design	% Bed occupied per MSCA Design
FA 20	934	1253*	75%	2282	41%
FA 21	1511	1586**	95%	2282	66%
FA 22	1595	1706 [^]	93%	1926 [^]	83%
FA 23	1528	1706***	90%	1926	79%
FA 24	1573	1585	99%	1926	82%

** FA21 Housing Options Adjusted Due to COVID (Only Singles Offered)

*** FA22 Housing Options Adjusted Due to COVID and the discontinuation of use of Bates complex

**** FA23 Housing Options Adjusted Due to gradually returning to Designed Occupancy post COVID

[^] MSCBA Design value reduced to 1,926 due to the closure of the Bates complex

Financial Aid Update

FAFSA Simplification

- Resulted in significant delays in students being able to submit their FAFSA which also delayed sending award letters
- Created challenges for the FA office

State Funding (Mass Grant Plus and Mass Grant Plus Expansion)

- Increase of approximately \$7 million from the previous year
- Anticipating level funding for 24/25 - waiting for confirmation

New Funding for Undocumented Students

- State of MA – MASFA
- The Dream.US - awarded 15 students received full tuition scholarships

Note: A student with high need (Pell eligible) who commutes to SSU can attend for **\$0**

Attachment B

Recruitment Steps

- Traditional Undergraduate
- Transfer Students
- Continuing Education
- Graduate Students



Awareness



- We capture prospect info and drive traffic through college fairs, high school visits, campus events, community-based organizations
- Before we visit these places, we warm up this prospect audience through geo-fencing campaigns and other tactics
- Identify prospects through list buys, opt-in campaigns, SEM, digital campaigns, virtual tour viewership, web visitors
- Once we have some identifiers for a prospect—IP address, home address, cell phone number, etc.—we do third party data matching so we can start targeting them with digital campaigns
- Part of the awareness effort is brand advertising such as billboards, limited print ads, radio, and programable audio ads, and more
- Publicity and media relations allow us to tell the Salem State story and create awareness

Interest



- We target prospects with different digital and email campaigns based on their home location and interests
- We promote the value of a Salem State education—and the affordability message is very important
- Key tag lines include:
 - Educating you for life
 - Leading the charge to change
 - No place so close will take you so far
- For CE, transfer and graduate students have a clear academic focus and the value proposition is crucial to this audience usually
- This same group wants to know program details right away, make a personal connection, and learn how this program will help them reach their goals
- The goal is to get students to attend a tour, come to an open house or another in-person or virtual event, to connect with Salem State in some way so they will APPLY!

Apply and Admit



- We measure open and click rates, and once a prospect has completed the CTA, such as starting an application, the messaging changes to get them to complete
- Parents and families play a crucial role in the college process, so we increase marketing to them during these phases
- Our digital advertising continues to remind them what a smart choice Salem State is for them
- We also highlight the academic and campus experiences they will have as a Viking
- This is a crucial period when we want to get prospects on campus

Deposit and Yield



- Our digital campaigns continue through these phases, and we increase tactics with family members
- Strong messaging about the value of a SSU education is key at this phase
- We host events, such as accepted students' day, to get undecided students to deposit—and to deepen the connection with those that have paid
- Students are still shopping after depositing and often deposit at multiple colleges, so it is important to continue to deepen the connection with them
- The period from May to September is crucial to ensure they actually matriculate to Salem State
- Once new Vikings arrive on campus, we reinforce that they have made the right choice

Sample Affordability Ads



A sample advertisement for Salem State University. The top features the university's logo and name. Below is a photograph of a smiling Black woman with curly hair sitting at a desk with a laptop. A dark blue banner at the bottom contains the text 'Aprender más >' and 'Ahorre hasta un 50% de matrícula en Salem State.'

Salem | STATE UNIVERSITY

Aprender más >

Ahorre hasta un 50% de matrícula en Salem State.



A sample advertisement for Salem State University. The top features the university's logo and name. Below is a photograph of a smiling Black woman with curly hair sitting at a desk with a laptop. A dark blue banner at the bottom contains the text 'Learn More >' and 'Save up to 50% Off Tuition at Salem State.'

Salem | STATE UNIVERSITY

Learn More >

Save up to 50% Off Tuition at Salem State.

Enrollment and Recruitment 2025 Admissions Initiatives

- Direct admissions programs with Lynn and through the Common Application
- Increase Out-of-State outreach/recruitment: Texas & Florida
- Expand Transfer Connections program to Bunker Hill CC
- Focus on value of education and affordability
- Hosting Fall events: High school counselor luncheon, NEACAC college fair, and community college transfer advising event

Charting the Future: Transforming Academic Advising at SSU

Phase I – Rollout and Implementation of core
Navigate360 (2019-Present)

Phase II – Rollout and Implementation of
Navigate360 Academic Planner (2023-Present)

Phase III – The Year of Advising

Goals

- Increase collaboration between faculty advisors, professional advisors, and students
- Increase student agency and engagement with their educational pathway
- Increase student retention
- More clearly defined student pathways (including ability to explore)
- Improve student outcomes
- Enhance advising culture and collaboration


Navigate360 Academic Planner



- Online collaborative advising space between advisor and student
- Degree Map Template/Semester by Semester Planning tool
- Centralized repository for advising recommendations and notes
- Generates actionable data for student off-track interventions and schedule planning




Attachment 16



Academic Planner Fall 2024

Coming Soon to an Advising Appointment Near You!



Benefits for Faculty

Prepares Students
“Students appreciated seeing a path forward. This was very helpful for students considering an internal transfer into our program. It worked much better than the Polaris ‘What if.’”

Easily Record & Access Recommendations
“Once I become more comfortable with the planner, I think it will be a fantastic tool.”

Saves Time *“Very helpful and efficient”*
“Really like that all of the minor requirements are easy to access in one spot as well.”

Allows You to Showcase Your Advising Practice
“One can prepare multiple plans ahead and then students can pick an option as per their choice and convenience.”

Advising Transparency & Consistency
“I see the promise of the tool and will be onboarding my faculty in the fall.”
“Overall, I like it.”
“Academic Planner is a very useful tool. It helps you plan the graduation path of the students.”
 – Pilot Faculty



Welcome to Salem State University

Navigate360

Login with your school account

Scan to Learn More About Academic Planner!

Benefits for Students

Students Like It
Rate the overall effectiveness of Academic Planner in helping you select classes and create a Schedule.

I would recommend using Academic Planner to other students.

Overall, how would your rate your experience with using Academic Planner to pick classes and create your schedule.

Using Academic Planner to pick classes and create my schedule was worth my time and energy.

Easy Access to Advisor Recommendations
For advising and course selection, I prefer my faculty advisor using Academic Planner as opposed to them not using it.

Using Academic Planner adds value to my meeting with my Faculty Advisor.

Fosters Independence & Develops Student Agency
Using Academic Planner helps me understand what classes I need to take.

Academic Planner helps me understand the order of when I need to take classes.

Builds Student Persistence
I plan to use Academic Planner to help me schedule my classes for future semesters.

Simple to Use
Rate the difficulty of using Academic Planner

Presented by The Academic Planner Implementation Committee.

Source: Academic Planner Survey for Pilot Faculty Advisors (Spring 2024)

Source: Navigate360 Academic Planner Student Survey (Spring 2024)

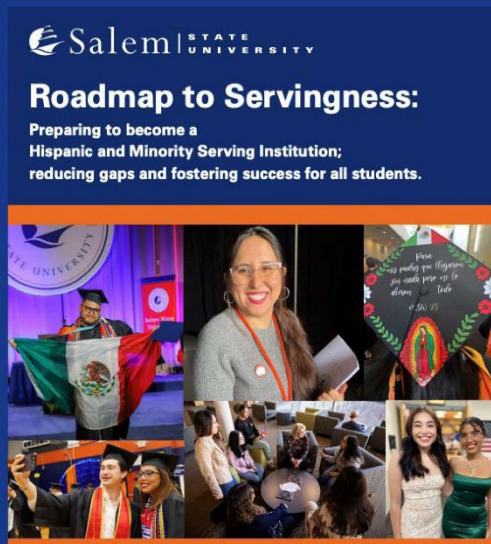
The Year of Advising

- Expansion of Peer Advisor Program (begins fall 2024)
- Community Kickoff Event (January 2025)
- Opening Day Event for Academic Year 2025-26
Full Suite of Advising Workshops
- Faculty/Staff Professional Development Workshops (February 2025 – May 2026)
 - Focus on asset-based advising
 - Faculty engagement in developing workshop content
 - Creating a community of advising practice
 - Increasing advising collaboration

Attachment D

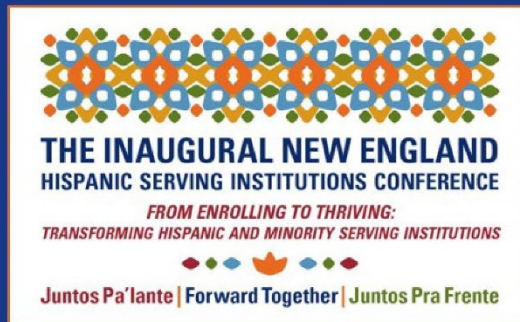
SSU is proud to be an emerging Hispanic and Minority Serving Institution.

- Currently emerging HSI
- Intentional about engaging our growing student population with focus on equity and cultural wealth
- Year 1 of Roadmap
 - Translation protocols
 - Building capacity
 - Increasing programming
 - Expanding networks



Inaugural New England Hispanic and Minority Serving Institution Conference

- Commonwealth's Civic Engagement University and emerging HSI-MSI
- HEIF 2024 DHE Grant: Consortium with Bunker Hill, Holyoke and MassBay CC
- Summer conference and student summit



- Over 400 participants, 24 sessions
- Presidents' and Provosts' Strategic Lunch with Deborah Santiago
- Described as "transformative"
- Desire for annual or biannual regional conference.

Collateral Benefits

- SSU is now recognized as leader in HSIs in our region.
 - Press
 - National Organizations and scholars
 - DHE
 - Beacon Hill
 - Regional institutions
- Next steps: Creating MA consortium of HSIs with New England Associates.

