

**East Stroudsburg University
Council of Trustees Minutes
September 26, 2024
In Person and Via Zoom**

1. **Call to Order:** The regular meeting of the East Stroudsburg University Council of Trustees was called to order at 4:20 p.m. by Chair Pat Ross.

2. **Roll Call:** Completed by the Recording Secretary Marcy L. Cetnar, the following members were present:

Mr. Thomas Grayuski	Ms. Tameko Patterson	Mr. Paul Shemansky
Mr. Marcus Lingenfelter	Mr. John Pekarovsky III	
Ms. Elizabeth O'Brien	Mr. Patrick Ross	

The following members were not present:

Mr. Frank Epifano	Mr. Edward Abraham	Ms. Damali Jackson
Ms. Tina Nixon		

3. **Trustee Shemansky made a motion to approve Resolution 24-02 – Jeff Wilson Recognition; Trustee Grayuski seconded; no abstentions. The motion carried.** Trustee Ross and President Long presented Resolution 24-02 to Jeff Wilson, recognizing his 400th victory as head coach of ESU's Men's Basketball Team.

Trustee Lingenfelter made a motion to approve Resolution 24-03 – Sandra Miller Recognition; Trustee Patterson seconded; no abstentions. The motion carried. Trustee Ross and President Long presented Resolution 24-03 to Sandra Miller, Recognizing her 500th victory as head coach of ESU's Field Hockey Team.

4. **Public Comment:**
None

5. **Approval of Minutes:**
Trustee Patterson made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 6, 2024, meeting; Trustee Shemansky seconded; no abstentions. The motion carried.

6. **President's Report:**

President Long reported we are in the fifth week of the Fall 2024 semester, and excited to say that the energy and activity across campus are at a level we haven't experienced in years. President Long highlight some of the key events and accomplishments from this past summer.

This summer, our campus was bustling with internal and external camp groups, alongside several New Student Orientations and two Apply in July events. At the same time, we completed several facilities and IT projects while managing year-end processes and preparing for the fall semester. Some of the notable projects include technology upgrades in classrooms, enhancements to the stage and restrooms in Abeloff, academic repairs in Koehler and Sci-Tech, renovations and branding in Dansbury and Zimbar, and repairs to the Innovation Center following a fire.

Additionally, thanks to the support of Governor Shapiro and the Pennsylvania State Legislature, the State System received a 6% increase in funding—an additional \$35.1 million for the System Educational and General Fund—bringing the total state appropriation to \$620.8 million. For ESU, this translates to \$45.5 million, an increase of \$4.2 million over the previous year.

Also, this summer, the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education authorized no changes to undergraduate tuition rates for the seventh consecutive year.

Finally, just before the semester began, ESU had the privilege of hosting both the PASSHE President's Retreat and the PSAC Board of Directors Meeting.

President Long reported on current semester highlights noting that move-in was a seamless process, with over 2,500 students moving into our residence halls, bringing our occupancy rate to nearly 97%.

We started the semester with several key events, including the Inaugural Red & Black Breakfast, followed by Academic Convocation, a faculty reception for new and promoted faculty where we celebrated Professor Andrea McClanahan as the recipient of this year's Distinguished Professor award, a dinner honoring our student orientation leaders and residential advisors, and the Legislative Fellows Breakfast, where we recognized State Senator Marty Flynn as the 2024 East Stroudsburg University Legislative Fellow.

Our enrollment numbers offer another reason for optimism. Last week, we reported a total Fall 2024 enrollment of 5,636 students, marking a 3.2% increase over last year. This is our third consecutive year of enrollment growth, surpassing our budgeted goals by over 1%. This success is the result of hard work and collaboration among our faculty, staff, coaches, administrators, students, and alumni. It was truly a team effort. Looking ahead, we recognize that the number of high school graduates in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York will peak between now and 2026. This means we cannot rely solely on traditional first-time undergraduate students for sustained growth. In response, we are launching two initiatives this fall to bolster both undergraduate and graduate enrollment. For undergraduates, we are establishing a new department dedicated to transfer admissions. This department will have a Director of Transfer Enrollment, working parallel to the Admissions Director, with its own budget, plan, and specific goals. This new position will report directly to the Vice President for Enrollment Management.

We are also in the final stages of developing a new Strategic Plan, which we will present at your December meeting for approval. I would like to express my appreciation to Michael Sachs, Professor Artress White, the Strategic Planning Committee, and our vice presidents for their leadership and contributions throughout this process.

For the tenth consecutive year, we continued our Good Neighbor Visits initiative. As in previous years, students, faculty, staff, coaches, and administrators participated in door-to-door outreach to reintroduce ourselves to the local community. While this initiative has been highly successful, we are considering sunsetting this program next year in favor of new approaches to engaging with our neighbors.

The university is continuing its Self-Study for Middle States Reaccreditation, with the Middle States Visiting Team scheduled to arrive on campus in Spring 2026. Until then, we will be working diligently to compile the necessary data for the review. I would like to thank Michael Sachs, who serves as our Middle States liaison, and Kizzy Morris and Associate Professor Chris Dudley, co-chairs of the Self-Study Steering Committee, for their leadership in this process.

In athletics, last year was a banner year for ESU Athletics, both in the classroom and in competition. Our student athletes achieved an impressive collective GPA of 3.267, with 90% of our teams earning a GPA of 3.0 or higher, the highest percentage in our department's history. 296 student-athletes, or 60%, earned PSAC Scholar-Athlete recognition, men's wrestling earned the highest PSAC team GPA award, we had 5 Academic All-Americans, and we had 14 All-Americans across all sports.

In sports competition, 12 of our 22 teams advanced to NCAA postseason play, while 20 of 22 teams competed in PSAC postseason play. As a result of this success, ESU finished 3rd in the Dixon Trophy standings, the best in our school's history. The Dixon Trophy is awarded to the PSAC member institution with the best overall finish in conference championships and regular season play.

Last year also saw Coach Jeff Wilson achieve his 400th win as Warriors Basketball Coach, and we're starting this year strong with Coach Sandy Miller's 500th win as Warriors Field Hockey Coach.

Finally, I'm pleased to announce that tomorrow, we kick off Family Weekend with Latin Fest on the circle, followed by a Classic Car Show on Saturday morning. The weekend will feature several exciting events, including football, volleyball, and soccer games, as well as the Legacy Family Pinning Ceremony. If your schedule permits, we invite you to join us and spend some time with our students and their families.

That concludes my report.

7. Chair's Report:

Trustee Ross expressed appreciation to Vice Chair Trustee Pekarovsky for his leadership during his absence and shared how glad he is to be back in person. He noted that the various committee reports and presentations shared today clearly demonstrate why ESU stands out as the most sustainable university in the system, thanks to the leadership of President Long.

8. Secretary's Report:

There is no correspondence to report, but Trustee Shemansky echoed Chair Ross's sentiments, expressing how good it is to see everything going well for the university. Trustee Shemansky emphasized that this success starts with President Long and his team. With rising numbers and many positive developments, there is much to be proud of.

9. Committee Reports

A. University Affairs Committee:

Trustee Ross provided an overview of the committee meeting discussions and presentations.

Steve Schonberger from the Smith Group presented a comprehensive report on the Space Utilization Project conducted on campus. The report covered various aspects, including the university's space needs, classroom space, teaching laboratory space, and provided key recommendations. The study was designed as a long-term strategy to ensure that future decisions align with the university's needs and goals. Not all recommendations will be implemented, but the focus is on optimizing space usage moving forward. All questions and concerns raised during the presentation were thoroughly addressed, with an emphasis on making the best use of available space. All questions and concerns were satisfactorily addressed.

Lorna Hunter, VP of Enrollment Management, updated the committee on the current new student enrollment numbers which are up by 3.2%. Also discussed were the fall admissions events from 2024-2025 and admission initiatives for the coming year including establishing a department for Transfer/Non-Traditional Students, create an Alumni Admissions Outreach Network, and reinforce the "Where Warriors Belong" brand. All questions and concerns were satisfactorily addressed.

President Long reported that work on the Strategic Plan (SP) has been ongoing for over a year and a half, with progress slowing in the past six months to align with MSCHE assessments. During the week of September 16th, the university held seven roundtable meetings with the campus community to gather feedback on the draft plan. The collected data has been compiled and is being reviewed to incorporate necessary updates. Once this process is complete, the draft will be presented to the University Senate, unions, and Student Government for final review. The final document will then be brought back to the COT for approval at the December meeting. All questions and concerns were satisfactorily addressed.

Donna Bulzoni, Greg Bleakly, Robert Smith, and Margaret Ball presented a detailed overview of the CPP submitted to the State System. They provided a timeline highlighting the university's progress, particularly in improving the student-to-faculty ratio. The presentation emphasized the positive steps taken since 2019,

demonstrating that all efforts are moving in the right direction. All questions and concerns were satisfactorily addressed

Michael Sachs, Interim Vice President of Administration and Accreditation, and Kizzy Morris, Associate Provost of Student Success, provided an update on the MSCHE self-study process and the ongoing work related to the seven standards. They outlined the lines of inquiry for each of the seven groups, shared the 2024-2025 timeline, and discussed the next steps in the process. A key focus will be integrating the Strategic Plan (SP) into the MSCHE self-study report. The goal is to use the self-study not merely as a required document, but as a continuous improvement exercise to enhance the university's practices. All questions and concerns were satisfactorily addressed

B. Campus Environment Committee:

Trustee O'Brien provided an overview of the committee meeting discussions and presentations.

Mr. Curtis Dugar, Special Assistant to the Vice President of Campus Life and Inclusive Excellence, provided an update on residential life and housing. With enrollment rising, housing numbers are similarly increasing, with most dorms and University Ridge operating at over 95% capacity. Laurel and Minsi Halls are at half capacity, and University Apartments are around 80%. Mr. Dugar also reviewed the new second-year residency requirement, which began with the first-year class in 2023. The University Ridge Student Center, closed since March 2022 due to flooding, is set to reopen in December 2023 with exciting enhancements. The university also offers specialized living-learning communities: Business Management and Education in Hawthorn Suites and Lenape, STEM and Honors in Sycamore Suites' upper floors, and Nursing and Health Sciences on the lower floors. These communities' foster student engagement and academic collaboration, providing a supportive environment beyond the classroom.

Christopher Bean, Equal Opportunity & Title IX Coordinator provided a high-level review of the regulation changes, internal and community partnerships, prevention and training, and reporting trends. All questions and concerns were satisfactorily addressed.

Allen Sook, Director of Athletics, provided an update on Intercollegiate Athletics. Sarah Ross highlighted the academic success of student-athletes, noting that retention rates exceed both the conference and Division II averages. The athletics staff and coaches emphasize a "triple threat" approach, focusing on sports, academics, and life after college. Dr. Sook reviewed the past year's athletic achievements, with ESU having the largest athletic conference in both the private and public sectors. Fall sports are currently performing at an 82%-win rate. All questions and concerns were satisfactorily addressed.

C. Finance Committee:

Trustee Pekarovsky provided an overview of the committee meeting discussions and presentations.

Mr. Richard Santor, Executive Director of the ESU Foundation provided the committee with updates on fundraising results which resulted in \$5.6 million dollars raised in gifts which exceeded their goal and a 3.1% alumni participation rate, outlined initiatives and goals for the 2025 fiscal year which includes \$5.7 million of new gifts and pledges and increase alumni donor participation by 10%. Other information discussed included upcoming events, and staffing updates. All questions and concerns were satisfactorily addressed.

The Committee reviewed the Cash Disbursement Reports for May 1, 2024, through August 31, 2024, and found that all were handled appropriately and were in order. All questions and concerns were answered

satisfactorily. **Trustee Grayuski made a motion for the approval of the Cash Disbursement Reports for May 1, 2024, through August 31, 2024; Trustee Patterson seconded; no abstentions. The motion carried.**

Mr. Gregory Bleakley, Director of Budget & Special Accounting, provided an update on the proposed Fiscal Year 2025 Budget providing information on the E&G funds and total university budget in all funds. The Committee's questions and concerns were satisfactorily answered. Trustee Pekarovsky asked for a motion to accept the Fiscal Year 2024 budget as presented. **Trustee O'Brien made a motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget; Trustee Ross seconded; no abstentions. The motion carried.**

Donna Bulzoni, CFO, presented to the committee preliminary audit results and anticipates a clean audit. A high-level review of the 2024 audit results will be presented at the December meeting for approval. The CFO also presented the Procurement Activity Report for review. All questions and concerns were satisfactorily addressed.

John Bloshinski, Director of Facilities Management provided an update on the new University Center, which is currently 40% complete. Comparing photos from February to September 2024, construction progress is evident, and the building is shaping up to be a state-of-the-art facility for the campus, local community, and alumni. The project is on track for completion in Spring 2025, with occupancy expected in Summer/Fall 2025. Mr. Bloshinski also provided a summary of the Facilities Project Status Review and the Report of Notice to Proceed on Construction Contracts. All questions and concerns were satisfactorily addressed.

C. Strategic Initiatives Committee:

Trustee Grayuski provided an overview of the committee meeting discussions and presentations.

Elizabeth Richardson, Director and Greg Knowlen, Assistant Director of Marketing and Communications presented to the committee the many avenues of branding and marketing currently being used to showcase ESU in remarkable ways. The importance of outreach is key to admissions and then in retaining our students and the importance of showcasing our students, faculty, and staff help to recognize the amazing people all over campus that makes ESU such an extraordinary place. This is all being done through publications, internal branding, earned media, photography, various video segments, social media, and our website, which will be receiving a new look soon. All questions and concerns were satisfactorily addressed.

Dr. Gerard Rozea, Professor and Chair of the Department of Athletic Training, presented "Building on Success: Expanding our Athletic Training Program through Continued Engagement in Puerto Rico," highlighting an educational trip he took in March 2024 with four colleagues and two students. The trip aimed to meet with students and faculty worldwide, conduct educational presentations, and recruit new students. They connected with ESU program graduates in Puerto Rico. Students Alejandro Paez and Jadon Diaz shared their experiences from the trip. The team visited six schools, engaging in groups with over 200 students and faculty as part of their recruitment efforts. Dr. Rozea also discussed the growth of the Exercise Science program, noting that ESU graduates are landing strong jobs in healthcare, collegiate, and professional sports. All questions and concerns were satisfactorily addressed.

10. Old Business:

A. None

11. New Business:

- A. **Appointing Interim and Acting Chief Executive Officers: Trustee Ross** asked for a motion to accept the Appointing of Campus Interim and Acting Chief Executive Officers for the 2024-2025 Academic Year as required by the PASSHE BOG Policy 1983-14-A. **Trustee Shemansky made a motion to approve the Appointing Interim and Acting Chief Executive Officers for the 2024-2025 Academic Year according to BOG Policy 1983-14-A; Trustee Pekarovsky seconded; no abstentions. The motion carried.**
- B. Chair Ross presented the Presidential Review Committee which includes Trustees Grayuski, Patterson, and Shemansky for approval. **Trustee Pekarovsky made a motion to approve the Presidential Review Committee as presented; Trustee O'Brien seconded; no abstentions. The motion carried.**

12. The next meeting of the Council of Trustees is scheduled for Thursday, December 5, 2024.

13. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned by Trustee Ross at 5:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Shemansky
Council Secretary

Recording Secretary: Marcy L. Cetnar