



**Buffalo State College Senate
President's Report
September 8, 2017**

1. Welcome: Changes Inside and Outside Buffalo State College

It is my pleasure to welcome all senators to the first College Senate meeting of the 2017-2018 academic year. I trust that you have all transitioned easily into the new semester. In some ways there have been major changes in our landscape since we were together last spring. Among the changes are:

a. New SUNY Chancellor:

We have a new Chancellor. Chancellor Kristen Johnson joined the SUNY family this week. We are already receiving communications from her as she reacts to some of the issues that we are facing as a country. In particular, she has communicated just this week about how SUNY might become involved in providing assistance to those in the Houston area that were impacted by the hurricane. And she has also communicated her concern regarding the repeal of the DACA legislation that provides some safeguards for children who have grown up in the United States with an undocumented status.

Chancellor Johnson visited Buffalo State in August and we were able to spend a few hours together discussing our institution. She seemed to be very impressed with our goal to be a nationally recognized Urban Engaged campus and the many ways we provide an excellent, engaged, and socially responsible education. She also had a short tour of campus. She seemed impressed with our new and renovated spaces and of course I shared with her the additional facility needs we have. It was a pleasure to introduce her to Buffalo State and to share with her both the shining stars and the needs of our campus.

b. Excelsior Scholarship

This summer thousands of Buffalo State students applied or were eligible for the much anticipated Excelsior Scholarship. The State has not aggregated information and made public the total number of students that applied and received funding through Excelsior nor have they provided the average award. This is information that should be forthcoming soon. Many are curious, including the media, of what the impact of the Excelsior Scholarship will be. What is clear is that the Excelsior Scholarship increased the discussion and consideration of those who were thinking about attending college and ultimately that is a good thing.

c. DACA Repeal

I am sure you have read about President Trump's repeal of the existing DACA legislation and you may have seen the response from the higher education community, business leaders, and many politicians. I also made a statement that was in the Daily today. This has unsettled the 800,000 young people who registered with DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program) and many of our citizens and friends worldwide. We are hopeful that Congress will quickly develop a policy that will safeguard these individuals, but it is yet another unsettling moment for the country.

d. Opening of the Year Activities

We hosted many opening activities for every segment of our community the week before and the first week of classes. We welcomed first year, returning, residential, commuter, and graduate students to Buffalo State College. We held a convocation and invited recent alumni to share their stories with new students. We held orientation sessions for new faculty and staff. We had student picnics, student get togethers, a staff Corn fest, and a UUP BBQ. So we have come together in multiple and varied ways to remind us that we are here for each other and that the semester has started.

e. Organization Realignment

We are starting the year with several new organizational realignments in place that will better serve our students and better

allow us to meet our goals. All changes have been announced to the campus community and the units impacted have been aware of the changes. We will continue to communicate to the campus community changes as they are finalized.

2. Enrollment Update

As you know, a full enrollment report will be provided after drop/add is completed and following the freeze file date. This report will be provided by Interim Vice President Mayrose in October. However, at this meeting I always give a brief snapshot of our current recruitment efforts and the estimated class size.

As of September 1, we had 1843 first year students and 819 transfer students enrolled at the college. This is slightly up from this time last year. It was especially good to see the gain in transfer students and part-time students, an area where we had seen decreases last year. We also saw a decrease in new graduate students, but an increase in returning graduate students. Overall, this is a positive enrollment picture for the campus. In the budget report Vice President Levine will discuss the picture related to returning students.

On retention levels, the college introduced many retention efforts across campus. These efforts are seeming to have a positive impact and we will continue to follow and assess them. I would like to thank you all for the creative thoughts that have gone into retention and the many new ways (or expansion of programs) that have been implemented by faculty and staff.

This focus on retention and completion is the new normal for our campus. We must continue to focus our energy on student success, completion, and roaring in 4.

3. Upcoming Events:

I like to share a few upcoming events to add to your calendar.

- Bengals Dare to Care Day- Saturday, September 16, 2017
- The Anne Frank Project Festival, Tuesday – Wednesday, October 3 and 4, 2017
- President’s Opening Year Address, Tuesday - October 24, 2017
- Homecoming and Family Weekend, October 23 – 28, 2017

4. Budget Update:

Vice President Levine will now give the budget report.

[After V.P. LeVine’s Report]

This concludes my report.