

**Minutes  
SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University  
Council Meeting  
Via Zoom  
October 22, 2024**

**Council Members Present**

Rev. Kirkpatrick Cohall, Chair

Dr. Miriam Zavala

Joya Ahmad

Marlene Dietrich Heath

Dr. Constance Shames, Alumni Association representative

**Downstate Administration Present**

Dr. Wayne J. Riley, President

Jamie Grecco

Dr. Pascal J. Imperato

Dr. Jeffrey Putman

Lori Bruno

Kane Gillespie

Dawn Walker

Alishia Goodridge

Dr. Anika Daniels-Osaze

Isaiah Marshall-Thomas

Ellen Watson

Council Chair Reverend Dr. Kirkpatrick Cohall called the meeting to order, and the minutes from the March 18, 2024 meeting were approved by consensus. Reverend Cohall reminded the Council that efforts to secure approval for new members are ongoing.

**REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT**

President Riley updated the Council on collaborative efforts between the State University of New York (SUNY) and the Office of the Governor to initiate a Transformation Plan for SUNY Downstate's University Hospital at Downstate (UHD). The plan tackles ongoing challenges such as a deficit, inpatient services, and the aging infrastructure of the hospital building.

Chancellor King and his team have engaged in extensive discussions with the Governor's Office, city-state legislators, and labor partners to chart the most effective path forward. Through meticulous planning, outreach efforts, and ongoing dialogue, progress continues to be made toward implementing a comprehensive strategy for the hospital's revitalization.

New York Governor Hochul has allocated \$300 million in capital funding and up to \$100 million in operating support in the current budget, which marks a pivotal moment for SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University and University Hospital at Downstate. This substantial State of New York investment underscores a commitment to strengthening Downstate's inpatient and outpatient clinical services and addressing system health disparities within the community.

The budget also directs the creation of an advisory committee to determine the hospital's future. Chancellor King will sit on the advisory board with eight other members whom the Governor and state Legislative leaders will select. The committee will work over the next year, and submit a final report with recommendations for UHD's renovation and revitalization to the Governor and Legislature by April 2025.

### **Report on Upcoming Site Visit from Middle States Commission on Higher Education**

The leaders of the Middle States Steering Committee updated Council members on progress towards completion of the Self Study Review being prepared for submission to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), which will be conducting a site visit at Downstate in Spring 2025. The presenting panel included Dr. Pascal J. Imperato, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Jeffrey Putman, Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs, Lori Bruno, Assistant Vice President for Planning, and Kane Gillespie, Director of Evaluation, Outcomes Assessment, and Accreditation. Over the past year, more than 100 members of the Downstate community, including faculty, administration representatives, and students, have contributed narratives and data to prove that Downstate meets all elements of the core 13 Standards mandated by Middle States. Accreditation is essential for demonstrating educational and institutional strength. Without it, students would not be eligible for federal financial aid.

The panel gave a quick review of Middle States standards. The Working Groups have submitted narratives for each standard, and the Steering Committee is now reviewing and editing them. The Steering Committee is also reviewing the documents submitted as evidence to support the narrative and document compliance with the standards. The external team chair is the President and CEO of the Helene Fuld College of Nursing, who, among other leadership positions, formerly served as Dean of the SUNY Upstate College of Nursing.

Mr. Gillespie shared the timeline. The final document is due to be submitted to Middle States on February 23, 2025. The campus visit will take place from April 6-9, 2025. The campus anticipates the MSCHE Commission action, via an official memo and published on the MSCHE website by June 2025.

### **Report on IMPACT 2023**

Lori Bruno, Assistant Vice President for Planning, reviewed key elements of IMPACT 2030, Downstate's strategic plan. Impact 2030 consists of campus-wide priorities in five distinct areas, clinical care, education, research and discovery, community relationships, and organizational culture and transformation. Ms. Bruno provided a brief overview of the five pillars, but concentrated her focus on the section on Educational Excellence.

These priorities include: 1) Achieve active learning excellence through access to a broad and distinctive range of clinical, practical, and research experiences. 2) Engage in interprofessional learning activities that advance academic, clinical, and research excellence. 3) Expand Downstate's academic programs through innovation and strategic partnerships.

Reverend Cohall concluded the meeting by expressing the Council's support for Downstate and how it is honored to work alongside a dedicated group of professionals.

There being no further business, Reverend Cohall adjourned the meeting.