

**East Stroudsburg University
Council of Trustees Minutes
March 20, 2025
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 4:00 p.m. by Secretary Paul Shemansky.

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

Mr. Frank Epifano (zoom)
Ms. Damali Jackson

Ms. Tina Nixon (zoom)
Ms. Elizabeth O'Brien (zoom)

Ms. Tameko Patterson
Mr. Paul Shemansky

The following members were not present:

Mr. Edward Abraham
Mr. Thomas Grayuski

Mr. Marcus Lingenfelter
Mr. John Pekarovsky

Mr. Patrick ross

3. **Trustee Nixon made a motion to approve Resolution 25-01 – John Kochmansky Recognition; Trustee Patterson seconded; no abstentions. The motion carried.** Trustee Shemansky and President Long presented Resolution 25-01 to John Kochmansky, recognizing his 500th victory as head coach of ESU's Men's Baseball Team.

4. **Public Comment:**

None

5. **Approval of Minutes:**

Trustee Jackson made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 5, 2024, meeting; Trustee O'Brien seconded; no abstentions. The motion carried.

6. **President's Report:**

President Long reported as we approach the final stretch of the Spring 2025 semester; he would like to take a moment to reflect on recent achievements at East Stroudsburg University since our last meeting.

Academic and Student Achievement:

- Dean's List Recognition: 1,771 students earned a place on the Fall 2024 Dean's List for their exceptional academic performance.
 - Special Educator Certification Program: Seventeen ESU students successfully completed the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Accelerated Special Educator Certification program, contributing to the state's efforts in addressing special education needs.
 - Sport Management Student Success: ESU students showcased their talent at national competitions, including the COSMA conference in Las Vegas and the National Collegiate Sport Sales Competition.
 - Research and Scholarship: The Psychology Department hosted its 52nd Biannual Research Forum, which celebrated student research achievements.
 - International Engagement: Nine ESU students participated in the International European Union Simulation in Belgium, gaining valuable diplomatic experience.
- Student and Community Engagement
- Aspiring Educator Pathway Program: ESU hosted 120 aspiring educators as part of the state's initiative to address the teacher shortage.
 - Warrior Esports Room Dedication: The ESU Foundation celebrated the opening of the new Warrior Esports Room, expanding both academic and recreational opportunities for students.

- **Mental Health Resources Expansion:** ESU introduced TalkCampus, a peer-to-peer support app, and TELUS After Hours Crisis Support, offering 24/7 mental health resources.
- **Transfer Partnerships:** ESU strengthened partnerships with regional institutions to improve transfer pathways for Pennsylvania students.
- **Workforce Development:** Through a collaboration with AT&T and the Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry, ESU launched the Employer Provided Innovation Challenges (EPIC) Program, enhancing students' career readiness.
- **Older Adult Learning Initiative:** ESU exercise science students provided local seniors with life-saving skills training.
- **Criminal Justice Internships:** The university expanded its internship program to include school-based law enforcement roles, giving students valuable field experience.

These initiatives gained positive media coverage, reinforcing ESU's commitment to student success, academic innovation, and community impact.

ESU student-athletes continued to excel academically:

- Student-athletes achieved a record-breaking Fall 2024 semester GPA of 3.376, with over half (424) earning a GPA of 3.5 or higher.
- Impressively, every athletic team achieved a semester GPA of 3.00 or higher for the first time in ESU history. Notably, the Women's Cross-Country team posted a record-setting 3.773 GPA, while our men's teams collectively achieved their highest GPA at 3.257.
- A few weeks ago, ESU's Baseball Team extended their season record to 8-0, marking Coach John Kochmanský's 500th career victory, an exceptional milestone that ranks him 7th all-time in the Pennsylvania Athletic Conference.

The next seven weeks are filled with campus activities and celebrations:

- **Next Week:** The Madelon Powers Gallery will host the "Celestial Calling" Juried Art + Media + Design Student Exhibition. We will also hold the Accepted Student Celebration Warrior Showcase, where nearly 700 admitted students are already registered to attend, exceeding attendance from previous years.
- **The Following Week:**
 - o The ESU Foundation will host the 16th Annual Scholarship Dinner, where donors connect with their scholarship recipients.
 - o ESU will partner with SAFE Monroe for the Annual Take Back the Night March to raise awareness about sexual assault.
 - o Our Relay for Life Walkathon will support cancer research and the American Cancer Society.
 - o The College of Education will hold its Spring Formal, and the Student Organization's Awards Banquet will follow on Sunday.

For the remainder of the semester, the campus will remain vibrant with activities leading up to Commencement on May 9-10. For our undergraduate ceremony, ESU alumna and Pennsylvania Supreme Court Judge Christine Donohue (Class of 1974) will serve as the Commencement Speaker. We are currently finalizing the speaker for the Graduate Commencement. Following Commencement, ESU will host the Annual Economic Summit at Kalahari Resorts on May 16, and the ROTC Commissioning Ceremony will take place in conjunction with the University of Scranton. In closing, these achievements reflect East Stroudsburg University's unwavering commitment to student success, academic excellence, and meaningful community partnerships. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated faculty, staff, and students for their continued contributions to advancing ESU's mission.

That concludes my report. Thank you.

7. **Chair's Report:**

No Report.

8. Secretary's Report:

No Report.

9. Committee Reports

A. University Affairs Committee:

Trustee Shemansky reported Interim Michael C. Sachs, Interim Vice President for Administration and Accreditation, Kizzy Morris, Associate Provost of Student Success, and Chris Dudley, Associate Professor of History & Geography presented an update of Middle States Institutional Accreditation Self-Study Progress to date. Self-Study teams are responding to lines of inquiry and providing “fat bullet” initial drafts to the self-study steering committee and editor. The self-study evaluation team chair assignment is expected in the next few weeks. Site visit is expected to be scheduled for Spring 2026.

Timothy Hahn, the new director of first year admissions reported the department is fully staffed by dedicated professionals who are committed to representing ESU to prospective students, families and other constituencies that influence college decision making. Key initiatives this year included defined territory management focusing on relationship building between ESU and prospective students and families. And new publications designed for brand retention culminating in the viewbook – Where Warriors Belong. Mr. Hahn also shared the Admitted Student Celebration is the largest event of the year, with anticipated attendance of over 1,600. ASC is the official kick off to yielding the Class of 2026. The team will continue to work the funnel with yield and melt strategies through the start of fall term.

CFO Donna Bulzoni provided a high-level budget update for the current and next fiscal year was presented. With regard to the current fiscal year, projections at this time indicate we were able to reduce the deficit submitted in the CPP Fall Update from \$7 million to approximately \$3 million. However, a full quarter of the year remains, and we will continue updating our projections as we approach year-end and have better information. Regarding the next fiscal year, projections submitted in the CPP Fall Updates were reviewed. Discussion ensued regarding the major assumptions used in preparing the budget.

Michael C. Sachs, Interim Vice President for Administration and Accreditation, and Amy Colwell, Assistant Director of Facilities Management, provided an overview of some current facilities projects, including a flythrough of the New University Center and a brief overview of Sheska Soccer Stadium, Flagler-Metzger HRTM renovation, Linden Hall Health Science renovation, and Kemp Library Life Cycle renovation.

President Long concluded the meeting with insight on several Higher Education updates.

That concludes my report.

B. Campus Environment Committee:

Trustee O'Brien reported Samantha Williams, Counselor and Instructor in the Office of Counseling & Psychological Services or CAPS shared some data about the Current State of Student Mental Health both nationally and at ESU. A presentation on two new initiatives to support student mental health: TalkCampus and TELLUS. TalkCampus is a 24/7 peer support platform that provides instant, around-the-clock support for students. It is globally accessible in 26 languages and includes a dedicated Trust & Safety team for crisis detection and intervention. The app also offers in-app wellness resources such as mood tracking, journaling, guided meditations, and interactive mental health tools. TELUS after-hours crisis support provides real-time phone support for students when CAPS is closed. It offers access to professional counselors for confidential emotional support, multilingual assistance in over 150 languages, and community referrals for ongoing local resources.

Kizzy Morris, Associate Provost of Student Success, and Joe Akob, Executive Director of the Student Activity Association, presented a brief overview of the new ESU mobile app which went live this past Monday. As of today's meeting, there are over 500 downloads with great feedback from students. The app puts all necessary information and tools at the fingertips of both current and prospective ESU students. A full presentation will be shared at the June COT meeting.

C. Finance Committee:

Donna Bulzoni, CFO reported Melissa Davis, Senior Director of Finance & Administration of the ESU Foundation provided and update and everything appears to be on track. Ambitious goals for Fiscal Year 2025 have been set, and they are making solid progress toward achieving them. This year's primary fundraising target is \$5.75 million, which will support key initiatives across campus, including student scholarships, the completion of the soccer stadium campaign for athletics, and unrestricted giving to sustain operations, fundraising, and alumni programs

The \$4.5 million goal on the Sheska Soccer Stadium Campaign has been met, having secured a little more than \$4.5 million in commitments. With anticipated construction overages, they are launching a final appeal this week to bridge any remaining gaps. Great strides have been made in expanding scholarship funds, which is a crucial component in making higher education accessible. So far, 22 new scholarships have been established toward their goal of 25. The Foundation has hosted several successful events this year including alumni gatherings in Florida, along with scheduled visits which have strengthened alumni engagement. Upcoming events include the annual Scholarship Dinner in April and a collaboration with Athletics on an Athletic Day of Giving. Finally, the Foundation is expanding its team and is in the process of hiring two new frontline fundraisers and a new Executive Assistant.

Gregory Bleakley, Director of Budget & Special Accounting, reviewed the Local Fee Proposal for Fiscal Year 2025. Increases were requested as follows: Residence Halls: 6% doubles, 8% singles; Meal Plans: 4.5%; Health Center 5.4%; Student Activities Fee: 4.3%; Technology Fee: 10%; University Center Fee: 10.7%. All other fees will remain flat with the exception of the Instructional Support Fee and Nursing fee which increases at the same rate as Tuition & Tuition Technology Fee combined. All questions and concerns were satisfactorily addressed. The Committee reviewed and discussed the proposed fees, and all questions and concerns were answered satisfactorily. **Trustee Jackson made a motion to approve the local fees for the fiscal year 2025-2026; Trustee O'Brien seconded; no abstentions. The motion carried.**

The Committee reviewed the Cash Disbursement Reports for November 1, 2024, through January 31, 2025, and found that all were handled appropriately and were in order. All questions and concerns were answered satisfactorily. **Trustee Patterson made a motion for the approval of the Cash Disbursement Reports for November 1, 2024, through January 31, 2025; Trustee Jackson seconded; no abstentions. The motion carried.**

The Procurement Activity Report for the period November 1, 2024 – February 28, 2025, was reviewed. It was noted the bid threshold increased from \$23,200 to \$23,800 effective January 1, 2025. All questions and concerns were satisfactorily addressed

Michael C. Sachs, Interim Vice President for Administration and Accreditation provide a report noting facilities has added 6 "Notice to Proceed" and 21 projects added to the Facilities Management list. Currently, there are 48 active projects, 28 completed, 20 on hold, and one canceled. Twenty-eight projects have been completed since the last COT meeting. All questions and concerns were satisfactorily addressed.

That concludes my report.

D. Strategic Initiatives Committee:

Margaret Ball, Provost reported Dean Williams and Dr. Kizzy Morris (Associate Provost of Student Success) explained the importance of ESU students participating in the EPIC program. This will elevate ESU's Work Based Learning Initiatives to a state and national level while giving our students a chance to develop and showcase their skills. Student Zandry Thompson, a junior majoring in finance, shared his experience working through the EPIC project.

Dr. Jason Narvy (Director) and Prof. Bethanie Watson (Designer) introduced a performance excerpt from the musical Ride the Cyclone which was recently produced in the Smith McFarland Theatre. They gave a brief background on the rehearsal process and skills learned (performance and technical) by the students involved in this production.

8. Old Business:

A. None

9. New Business:

A. Trustee Shemansky noted the Graduate and Undergraduate commencement ceremonies will be held on Friday, May 9, 2025, and Saturday, May 10, 2025, respectively. Please consider being present at these significant events celebrating our newest Warrior graduates. RSVP to the President's Office.

10. The next meeting of the East Stroudsburg University Council of Trustees is scheduled for Thursday, June 5, 2025.

11. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned by Trustee Shemansky at 4:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Shemansky
Council Secretary

Recording Secretary: Marcy L. Cetnar