



**Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee Meeting**

Wednesday, March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025

**Rhode Island Nursing Education Center  
350 Eddy St., Providence, RI 02903  
Room 329  
Meeting Minutes**

Chair Michael Mello called this meeting to order at 4:30 pm and acknowledged that a quorum was present.

**Council on Postsecondary Education present:**

Michael Mello, Chair  
Lawrence Purtill

**Council on Postsecondary Education absent:**

Jeffery Williams

**Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner (RIOPC) staff present:**

Gregory Ebner, Assistant Commissioner of Academic Student and Success  
Jailene Colon, Part-time Administrative Assistant

**Rhode Island College (RIC) participants:**

Alexis R. Rogel Director of Academic Operations and Policy

**Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI) participants:**

Suzanne Carr, Dean of Health and Rehabilitative Sciences  
Elizabeth Del Sesto, Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs  
Blair Harrington, Interim Dean, Business, Science, Technology and Mathematics  
Amy Kacerik, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs  
Greg LaPointe, Vice President of Student Affairs and Chief Outcomes Officer  
Barbara J. Nauman, Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs  
Suzanne Carr, Dean of Health and Rehabilitative Sciences

### **1. Acceptance of the Agenda**

Chair Mello called for a motion that the Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee accept the agenda for the meeting of March 19, 2025.

On a motion made by Michael Mello and seconded by Lawrence Purtill it was:

|        |           |   |
|--------|-----------|---|
| VOTED: | THAT      | The Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee accept the agenda for the meeting on March 19, 2025. |
|        | VOTE:     | 2 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.                                 |
|        | YEAS:     | Lawrence Purtill, and Michael Mello   |
|        | NAYS:     | 0   |
|        | ABSTAINS: | 0   |

### **2. Approval of the Minutes**

Chair Mello called for a motion that the Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee approve the minutes of the meeting that took place on February 12, 2025.

On a motion duly made by Michael Mello and seconded by Lawrence Purtill it was:

|        |           |  |
|--------|-----------|--|
| VOTED: | THAT      | The Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee approve the minutes that took place on February 12, 2025. |
|        | VOTE:     | 2 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.                                      |
|        | YEAS:     | Lawrence Purtill, and Michael Mello  |
|        | NAYS:     | 0  |
|        | ABSTAINS: | 0  |

### **3. Discussion Items**

#### **a. Creation of Certificate: Pathway to Cyber Readiness (CCRI)**

Interim Dean of Business, Science, Technology, and Mathematics, Blair Harrington, led the discussion on CCRI's new certificate program. Interim Dean Harrington explained that the program is housed within the Computer Studies and Information Processing Departments and consists of seven courses. The certificate is stackable, allowing students the opportunity to pursue a degree in Networking and Cybersecurity offered by the department. She also mentioned the rise in cyber-related job opportunities in Rhode Island. In terms of transferability, all courses

transfer to RIC and URI as free electives and fully transfer to Johnson & Wales University and Roger Williams University.

Council Member Purtill asked about the types of jobs students could pursue after completing the certification. CCRI's Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs, Barbara J. Nauman, explained that the program provides a career pathway. Additionally, Interim Dean reported that students could pursue careers in IT Support, Help Desk, Network Data Analysis, Data Security, and more. CCRI's Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs, Elizabeth Del Sesto, added that CCRI has partnered with CompTIA to help students obtain professional certifications.

**b. Revision of Degree Program: Applied Engineering and Energy System; Associate in Science (CCRI)**

Interim Dean Harrington continued by introducing the revised degree program, highlighting that Applied Engineering and Energy Systems now combines physics and engineering. She explained that the revision and renaming were due to the \$1.8 million grant from the Department of Energy, which allowed CCRI to develop courses related to both electrical and mechanical engineering aligning with employer expectations. Finally, she explained that the associate's degree is terminal, meaning the credits do not transfer. It was designed for students planning to enter the workforce immediately after graduation, with potential careers as electromechanical technicians or energy technicians.

**4. Action Items**

**a. Approval of the recommendation to the Council for its approval of amendments to Council Policies S-12, S-12a, S-12b, and S-12c (Joint Admissions Agreement)**

Assistant Commissioner on Postsecondary Education, Dr. Greg Ebner, briefed the Committee on the amendments made to the Joint Admissions Agreement (JAA). Dr. Ebner noted that the last time this policy was amended was in 2007.

The Interinstitutional Articulation/Transfer Committee (IATC), which includes the Vice Presidents of Student Affairs from all three institutions—Greg Lapointe, Cindy Kozil, and Dr. Dean Libutti from URI—met several times during the fall and winter of 2024-2025 to discuss potential changes to Policy S-12, S-12a, S-12b, and S-12c.

Dr. Ebner reviewed the amendments to the policy, which include the removal of policies a-c, the elimination of outdated dates and broken websites (with responsibility for these now falling on OPC), changes to IHE reporting from annual to bi-annual, making OPC the central point for all JAA information sharing instead of IHEs, and codifying the 10-30% tuition reduction that CCRI graduates can receive at RIC using a "may" clause. Dr. Ebner stated that representatives of URI, RIC and CCRI had all agreed to the changes and the new policy is out to presidents for approval and signature.

Alexis R. Rogel, Director of Academic Operations and Policy at Rhode Island College, stated that the provost's office has reviewed the amended policy and is fully supportive of moving forward.

On a motion duly made by Lawrence Purtill and seconded by Michael Mello, it was:

VOTED:        THAT        The Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee  
   approve a recommendation to the Council for its approval of  
   amendments to Council Policies S-12, S-12a, S-12b, and S-  
   12c (Joint Admissions Agreement).  
VOTE :        2 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in  
   The negative.  
YEAS:        Lawrence Purtill, and Michael Mello  
NAYS:        0  
ABSTAINS: 0

- b.** Approval of the recommendation to the Council for its approval of amendments to Council Policy S-6 (Articulation and Transfer Between Public IHEs)

Dr. Ebner explained that the changes made to Policy S-6 were based on a reference to NEASC and ensuring the policy aligns with changes made last spring.

In April 2024, the council approved a change to Policy S-6, which determined that graduates from CCRI with an Associate of Arts (AA) degree who transfer to RIC would have met RIC's general education requirements. Previously, the policy allowed graduates with an Associate of Science (AS) or Associate of Fine Arts (AFA) degree to also meet the general education requirements at RIC. Upon reviewing the policy, it was found that the paragraph referencing AS and AFA degrees and general education had not been updated. Dr. Ebner concluded by stating that the newly proposed change removes the reference to those degrees and general education.

## **5. Next Meeting**

Chair Mello announced that the next Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee meeting will be on April 2, 2025, at 4:30 PM.

## **6. Adjourn**

Chair Mello called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

On a motion duly made by Lawrence Purtill and seconded by Michael Mello, it was:

VOTED:      THAT      The Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee of the  
Council on Postsecondary Education adjourn the meeting of  
March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025

VOTE:      2 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the  
negative.

YEAS:      Lawrence Purtill, and Michael Mello

NAYS:      0

ABSTAINS: 0

**The meeting adjourned at 4:48 PM.**