



**Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee Meeting**

Wednesday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025

**Community College of Rhode Island | 400 East Ave, Warwick, RI 02886  
President's Conference Room  
Meeting Minutes**

Lawrence Purtill called this meeting to order at 4:30 pm and acknowledged that a quorum was present.

**Council on Postsecondary Education present:**

Lawrence Purtill  
Jeffery Williams

**Council on Postsecondary Education absent:**

Michael Mello, Chair

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

Jailene Colón, Part-time Administrative Assistant  
Greg Ebner, Assistant Commissioner, Academic Affairs and Student Success

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

Jennifer Boulay, Director, Hope Scholarship  
Manyul Im, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Cindy Kozil, Vice President for Student Success

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

Elizabeth Del Sesto, Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs  
Greg LaPointe, Vice President for Student Affairs and Chief Outcomes Officer  
Amy Kacerik, Associate VP for Student Affairs  
Barbara J. Nauman, Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs  
Christine Turenus-Bell, Interim Dean, Business, Science, Tech & Mathematics

**1. Acceptance of the Agenda**

Lawrence Purtill called for a motion that the Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee accept the agenda for the meeting of October 22, 2025.

On a motion made by Lawrence Purtill and seconded by Jeffery Williams it was:

VOTED: THAT The Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee accept the agenda for the meeting on October 22, 2025.  
VOTE: 2 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.  
YEAS: Lawrence Purtill and Jeffery Williams  
NAYS: 0  
ABSTAINS: 0

## 2. Approval of the Minutes

Lawrence Purtill called for a motion that the Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee approve the minutes of the meeting that took place on September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025.

On a motion duly made by Lawrence Purtill and seconded by Jeffery Williams it was:

VOTED: THAT The Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee approve the minutes that took place on September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025.  
VOTE: 1 member voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.  
YEAS: Lawrence Purtill  
NAYS: 0  
ABSTAINS: Jeffery Williams

## 3. Discussion Items

- a. Notification of application for approval to operate institution of higher education in the State of Rhode Island (William James College)

Assistant Commissioner of Academic Affairs and Student Success, Greg Ebner, informed the committee about William James College's application to operate as a non-profit institution in Rhode Island. He stated the college applied in June and met all regulatory requirements. Founded in the 1970s and renamed in 2014, the college plans to offer classes in 2027, including a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (PsyD) program. Currently, only two schools in the state offer similar programs.

- b. Report on the Hope Scholarship (RIC)

Jennifer Boulay, Director of the Hope Scholarship at Rhode Island College, presented the Hope Scholarship's annual 2025 report.

Council Member Purtill asked a clarifying question about program costs and whether RIC's scholarship range includes Pell Grants. Director Boulay clarified that it only includes scholarships.

Council Member Purtill then asked about students who drop out and, as more students become eligible, how information about the program's success is being shared with the community.

Director Boulay stated that she has testified at Senate committee meetings, along with RIC Hope recipients. She added that, based on conversations at RIC events, most students learn about Hope through their schools.

RIC Vice President for Student Success, Cindy Kozil, noted that nearly 99% of first-time students are Rhode Island natives and first-generation college students. She said students often choose RIC over private institutions in the state because of cost savings.

Council Member Purtill emphasized that the opportunity to avoid debt is significant.

RIC Provost Manyuel Im added that in the past, there was no recruitment and highlighted the impact of current efforts, recognizing Vice President Kozil and her team.

**c. Notice of Change: Renaming the Computer Studies and Information Processing Department to the Department of Computer Science and Cybersecurity (CCRI)**

Community College of Rhode Island's Interim Dean of Business, Technology, and Mathematics, Christine Turenus-Bell, presented a notice of change to rename the Computer Studies and Information Processing Department to Computer Studies and Cybersecurity. Interim Dean Turenus-Bell stated that the change will improve program recognition, align with peer institutions across the region, strengthen transfer agreements with the University of Rhode Island and Rhode Island College, and increase visibility with industry and academic partners.

**4. Action Items**

**a. Approval of the recommendation to the Council for its approval of the operation of a proprietary school through online instruction (National Institute for Medical Assistant Advancement – NIMAA)**

Assistant Commissioner of Academics and Student Affairs, Greg Ebner, presented the National Institute for Medical Assistant Advancement (NIMAA), an online proprietary school that has met all regulatory requirements and received approval.

NIMAA seeks to train Rhode Island residents through online instruction and on-site externships. The only physical presence NIMAA plans in Rhode Island will be for externship training.

On a motion duly made by Lawrence Purtill and seconded by Jeffery Williams, it was:

VOTED:      THAT              The Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee approve a recommendation to the Council for its approval of the operation of a proprietary school through online instruction (National Institute for Medical Assistant Advancement – NIMAA)

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

YEAS:              Lawrence Purtill and Jeffery Williams

NAYS:              0

ABSTAINS:      0

- b.** Approval of the recommendation to the Council for its approval of recommendation to the Board of Education for approval of the Concurrent Enrollment List of Course Offerings for the 2025-2026 Academic Year.

Assistant Commissioner Ebner presented the Concurrent Enrollment List of Course Offerings for the 2025–2026 academic year. This updated list includes proposed concurrent enrollment courses from the public institutions of higher education. The courses were reviewed by the Rhode Island Department of Education and the Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner.

On a motion duly made by Lawrence Purtill and seconded by Jeffery Williams, it was:

VOTED:      THAT              The Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee approve a recommendation to the Council for its approval of recommendation to the Board of Education for approval of the Concurrent Enrollment List of Course Offerings for the 2025-2026 Academic Year

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

YEAS:              Lawrence Purtill and Jeffery Williams

NAYS:              0

ABSTAINS: 0

**5. Next Meeting**

Lawrence Purtill announced that the next Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee meeting will be on December 3, 2025, at 4:30 PM.

**6. Adjourn**

Lawrence Purtill called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

On a motion duly made by Lawrence Purtill and seconded by Jeffery Williams, it was:

VOTED:	THAT	The Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee of the Council on Postsecondary Education adjourn the meeting of October 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 2025
	VOTE:	2 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.
	YEAS:	Lawrence Purtill and Jeffery Williams
	NAYS:	0
	ABSTAINS:	0

**The meeting adjourned at 5:15 PM.**