**TO***:* SUNY Old Westbury Faculty Senate

**FROM:** Ashley Alvarado, Laura Anker, Helidon Gjergji, Carol Quirke

**DATE:** November 8,2019

**Resolution: On Replacement of “Freshman” with “First-Year”**

RATIONALE:

WHEREAS the word “Freshman” is understood to have certain perceptions and schools like Yale have publicly announced their changing of the word freshmen to the non-gendered term “First-Year.”[[1]](#footnote-2)

WHEREAS the word “Freshman” also connotes a certain age of students,

WHEREAS the SUNY mission statement seeks to provide the people of New York educational services of the highest quality, with the broadest possible access, fully representative of all segments of the population,[[2]](#footnote-3)

WHEREAS SUNY promotes the “fully representative” aspect of their mission statement in their usage of the term “First-Year” students instead of “Freshman” on their website,[[3]](#footnote-4)

WHEREAS the term “First-Year” is used on multiple SUNY campuses including but not limited to SUNY Potsdam, SUNY Plattsburgh, SUNY Canton, and SUNY Geneseo,[[4]](#footnote-5)

WHEREAS Old Westbury promotes an inclusive environment and critical awareness of the multiplicity and range of human perspectives and identities,[[5]](#footnote-6)

WHEREAS these identities include gender, age, among others through the interactions of students, faculty and staff within its diverse learning community,[[6]](#footnote-7)

WHEREAS our campus utilizes the term Office of First-Year Experience rather than Office of Freshman Experience, [[7]](#footnote-8)

WHEREAS being in accordance with SUNY goals and SUNY Old Westbury goals involves understanding how the terminology we use is an essential to inclusivity,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the term “First-Year” should be used instead of “Freshman” in all online and print literature. This should occur no later than the beginning of 2020-2021 academic year.

1. <https://yaledailynews.com/blog/2017/09/15/yale-formalizes-freshman-to-first-year-change/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. <https://www.suny.edu/about/mission/> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. <https://www.suny.edu/attend/get-started/first-year-students/> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. <https://www.potsdam.edu/studentlife/support/first-year-programs/first-year-experience>

   <https://www.plattsburgh.edu/plattslife/first-year-student-programs/index.html>

   <http://www.canton.edu/fye/>

   <https://www.geneseo.edu/residence-life/first-year-experience> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. <https://www.oldwestbury.edu/sites/default/files/documents/PresOffc/2018-23-SUNYOW-Strategic-Plan.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. <https://www.oldwestbury.edu/sites/default/files/documents/PresOffc/2018-23-SUNYOW-Strategic-Plan.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. <https://www.oldwestbury.edu/academics/first-year> [↑](#footnote-ref-8)