

**State University of New York
University at Albany
Fall Meeting of the Faculty**

November 3, 2010

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

- Senate Chair, Dr. Eric Lifshin welcomed those in attendance and called the meeting to order at approximately 11:00 am. He referred to the documents available at the door which included the meeting's agenda and the minutes from the Spring Faculty meeting of April 19, 2010. Other informative materials are available on the Senate web site.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- The first order of business was to approve the minutes of the April 19 Spring Faculty Meeting. A motion to approve the minutes was made and seconded, and the minutes were approved as distributed.

3. MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR DECEASED COLLEAGUES

- Dr. Lifshin read the names of those colleagues who had died since the spring meeting. A moment of silence was observed in their memory.

4. REPORT TO THE FACULTY

- Dr. Lifshin introduced President George M. Philip, who delivered the following message at the 2010 Fall Faculty Meeting:

President Philip thanked Senate Chair Lifshin and welcomed everyone. He stated the importance of coming together each semester as it gives us an opportunity to pause from our daily activities. This is a time to reflect on where we are and offer perspective on where we are going.

The President acknowledged the success and hard work of our faculty and staff. Those accomplishments contribute immeasurably to the advancement of the University at Albany and the pursuit of learning, discovery, and service. He cited some recent successes:

- In the Department of Atmospheric and Environmental Sciences which will be celebrating its 50th anniversary, many of the faculty in the Department recently received nearly \$2 million cumulatively from major national funding sources. He congratulated Professors Braddock Linsley and Mathias Vuille for their awards from the National Science Foundation; Professors Christopher Thorncroft and Richard Perez for grants they received from NASA; Professor Vincent Idone for receipt of funding from the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency; and Professor Ryan Tom who received a grant from the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research.
- The School of Public Health launched its 25th anniversary this semester by announcing two federal grants totaling \$7.9 million from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

- Psychology Professor Cheryl Frye received nearly \$1.3 million from the National Institute of Mental Health.
- Chemistry Professors Jayanti Pandi, Alexander Shekhtman, and Dan Fabris received nearly \$4 million combined from the National Institutes of Health
- Physics Professor Carolyn MacDonald was awarded \$330,000 from the Illinois Institute of Technology
- Information Studies Professor Dr. Xiaojun Yuan received \$325,000 from the Institute of Museum and Library Services
- Sociology Professor Kate Strully received a \$625,000 grant from the National Institute for Child Health and Development
- History Professor Gerald Zahavi's documentary film "Red Montana" is being funded by Humanities Montana

Other notable successes include:

- Six UAlbany faculty members – David Andersen, Deborah Andersen, Mark Blum, Stephen North, Carol Rodgers, and Lawrence Schell – are bringing their academic expertise to Europe, Mexico and Africa as Fulbright Scholars this year.
- Criminal Justice Professor Shawn Bushway has been appointed to the New York State Sentencing Commission.
- English Professor Eric Keenaghan has been awarded the David Gray Chair Library Fellowship at the University at Buffalo's Poetry Collection.
- Congratulations go to English Professors Helene Scheck and Lisa Thompson for the awards they received from the Society for Medieval Feminist Scholarship and the National Women's Studies Association, respectively.
- Art History Professor Amy Bloch was invited to lecture at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.
- Atmospheric and Environmental Sciences Professor John Delano presented at NASA this past summer.
- History Professor Sheila Curran Bernard was selected for the 2010 Kennedy Center Summer Playwriting Intensive.
- In the School of Business, the European CEO Magazine recognized it as the "Most Innovative Business School in the Northeast Region of the U.S." and it now ranks #2 in the United States for "Greatest Opportunities for Women" by the Princeton Review.
- In Criminal Justice, Professor Frankie Bailey received the 2010 George N. Dove Award.
- Distinguished Teaching Professor James Acker was invited to deliver the inaugural lecture in connection with the Cleere-Francis Lecture Series at the University of Northern Colorado.
- School of Education Professors [Kevin Kinser](#) and [Jason Lane](#) presented research at an international conference in Paris, France.
- The Counseling Psychology Department was ranked 5th in the nation for the number of faculty publications by the *Journal of Counseling Psychology*.
- Finally, it is also worth noting that the School of Education now hosts the Secretariat of the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES).

President Philip asked everyone to join him in applauding the success of our colleagues across the University.

President Philip spoke of the previous day's election giving New York a new Governor, a new Attorney General, and a new State Legislature, with control of the State Senate in unknown at the time. He hoped that the changes would signal a new beginning for Albany and the State of New York. In the aftermath of yesterday's Elections, we are once again reminded of how our elected officials can profoundly shape public policy, and how those policies directly affect every one of us. He said the University at Albany knows this all too well – given the extraordinary disinvestment public higher

education has experienced under previous elected officials. He said these are difficult time and the harsh reality of the budget is taking hold. The campus is engaged in challenging conversations and choices are being questioned. Members of the University family have and will continue to be impacted. He said the simple fact remains that more than 30% of the University's state tax base allocation is gone. Over the past several weeks, he had been presented with many view point on the proposed budget actions. He said while the way forward will continue to present challenges, the best way to see our through these trying times is to continue with a constructive dialogue and with open minds. The President said we need to encourage creative thinking and constructive problem-solving, work cooperatively and with shared purpose, and to look pragmatically and dispassionately at how best to move our great University forward.

President Philip said some have questioned the process by which current budget scenarios have been developed and said a number of inaccurate assertions have been made which include statements that the humanities are endangered at UAlbany, students have to graduate by May 2012, there will be no languages in our curriculum, only the College of Arts and Sciences is being cut, and all budget decisions have already been made. To correct the record, he said the truth is that the Humanities have absorbed the least percentage of faculty losses and all current majors and minors will have the opportunity to graduate beyond May 2012. He further noted that languages will continue to be a core part of the University's curriculum and areas outside of the Arts and Sciences have taken and will continue to take a far greater cut. He said budget discussions are on-going. The President said that over the past two years only 11 percent of our faculty losses were in the arts and humanities, while 17 percent were in science and math and 72 percent were in the social sciences and professional schools. Further, the programs under discussion amount to approximately 6% of the more than \$33M in cuts exacted on the University. He reminded everyone that misinformation and misunderstanding will not solve the University's fiscal woes. To advance our University, we need to continue to work cooperatively and deliberatively.

Unfortunately, as we look to the future, we simply cannot anticipate major new infusions of government support. Recent fiscal and economic reports suggest tougher times ahead. Recently, the Division of the Budget released its Mid-Year Financial Plan Update, which projects the State deficit to be at \$9 billion for next year, over \$14 billion for 2012, and over \$17 billion for 2013. President Philip said the State's financial future continues to look ominous, and it is vitally important we seek constructive solutions and alternative sources of revenue. Under New York State's highly restrictive regulatory environment, we are striving to find new ways to bolster our resources. These include:

- Increasing the number of out-of-state students, which generates higher tuition revenue
- Securing differential tuition for select professional programs
- Focusing increased efforts on fund raising
- Advancing entrepreneurial public-private partnerships.

President Philip commended the University Senate Executive Committee for initiating an important conversation about how our faculty might be able to develop alternative sources of revenue, and he looked forward to partnering with them on this. He said we will take a hard look at new opportunities for cost savings in administrative areas, as well as athletics. But to make a real and meaningful impact in moving our institution forward, every one of us needs to get involved. Recently, President Kennedy's speechwriter and counselor, Ted Sorensen, passed away on Sunday. Mr. Sorensen is known for the historic words he penned when President Kennedy challenged America: "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." These words of personal accountability, which moved a nation, should be a source of inspiration for us here today. They are a clear reminder of the opportunity and obligation we have as University citizens to collectively take control of our institution's destiny. In these challenging times, the President asked everyone to work cooperatively together to find constructive solutions, and to find ways to change the conversation.

At present, the essence of the conversation has centered on “where” this university should absorb these devastating cuts. Members of our campus community are in conflict over how to implement the massive budget reductions imposed on our campus by the State of New York. He said he believed the conversation should be focused on “why” public higher education is being asked to sustain an unprecedented level of reduction – a more than 30% cut to this University in just three years. In the wake of potentially even greater losses in our state assistance, the President said it would be incumbent upon each of us to voice our concerns to our elected representatives in government frequently, passionately, convincingly, credibly, and with a unified voice. President Philip said this is a time to exercise our constitutional right to influence public policy, to voice our concerns, and to argue for the preservation and betterment of public higher education, the State University and the University at Albany. He said many times he has told our legislators the public higher education is not an expenditure but an investment in the next generation, and educated and thoughtful citizenry, the workforce, innovation and discovery and in our future. He said the challenges facing our newly elected officials will be difficult, but now is the time to have our voices heard and now is the time to change the conversation.

President Philip discussed the need for a strategy and a road map to move forward, especially given the uncertain fiscal environment around us. As resources for higher education are increasingly constrained, there are even higher expectations and demands on our public universities and colleges, and UAlbany is no exception. With this complex set of challenges, he initiated a strategic planning process in October 2009 with the goal of defining the University’s path forward. The process was informed by the Middle States Self-Study and developed with an awareness of the then-emerging SUNY-wide strategic plan. The goal was to create a new statement of mission, a statement of strategic goals and a 5-year blueprint for achieving our objectives. The strategic planning process began with an overview of innovations and emerging trends in higher education. This information helped us consider how UAlbany could best serve the needs of a local, state, national and global population. Over the past year, more than 300 faculty, staff, students, alumni and community members came together to develop the plan. They examined a variety of trends; from economic to social and political. They explored the interests of UAlbany stakeholders and institutional strengths and weaknesses. He said the final plan will be formally unveiled in a few weeks. He said some of its key components are to provide a framework for action and define our mission, values, goals, and key objectives. Our mission statement articulates our shared purpose, namely: “Expanding knowledge and transforming minds to shape the future of our community and our world.” The President discussed important values we share in carrying out our mission and our commitment to excellence in our endeavors; access to our programs; collaboration in our work; engagement with diverse communities; and respect for individuals; and integrity.

The President said we will focus our actions on six key goals designed to capitalize on our strengths and propel UAlbany forward. He outlined the goals as follows:

Goal 1

- Enhance the quality of undergraduate education at UAlbany and attract and serve a highly qualified and diverse group of students.

Goal 2

- Create an excellent student experience that integrates academic and co-curricular experiences, engages the surrounding community and the world, and fosters lifelong pride in the University.

Goal 3

- Advance excellence in graduate education in support of the University’s reputation, role, and stature and the preparation and competitiveness of graduates.

Goal 4

- Increase UAlbany's visibility in, and resources for, advancing and disseminating knowledge, discovery and scholarship.
- Goal 5
- Add to, and reconfigure, our teaching, research, student life and support spaces in a manner compatible with our contemporary mission.
- Goal 6
- Engage diverse communities in strategic partnerships to increase public, scholarly and economic benefits.

For each of these goals, key objectives and action steps have been identified. We are in the process of forming a steering committee to develop a plan for implementing these steps. As a result of this plan, Our University will advance in a variety of ways. We will be home to an increasingly selective group of undergraduate and graduate students. They will have an excellent student experience that integrates curricular, research, and co-curricular activity, and prepares them for successful futures in the global world. We will offer a balance of undergraduate and graduate programs consistent with a research mission that reflects a strong foundation in the arts and sciences, and strong areas of distinctiveness in traditional, professional, and emerging disciplines. Those areas of distinctiveness will correspond to societal need, student interest, and to our competitive advantage in nanoscale and life sciences, social sciences and public policy.

President Philip acknowledged that the world is changing, and so must our University, as it has throughout its history. A new way forward requires new thinking and new actions, and the courage for all of us to work together. The President said he was deeply grateful to all who have helped develop our strategic plan and asked those individuals to stand and be recognized. Together, we will overcome our challenges and continue to play a vital role in the success of our students, our community, and our world. While these are difficult times, there is a new day before us, with new State leadership, a new strategic plan, and new opportunities ahead. He said it is a time to come together and ask ourselves "What can WE do for our University." He said he was confident that we can change our conversation with our elected State officials, foster creative thinking and constructive problem-solving, and together ensure a brighter future for our University.

President Philip thanked everyone for their everyday accomplishments that make the University an outstanding place of learning, research and discovery for our students and the world.

President Philip fielded several questions concerning recent decisions concerning cuts to the budget:

- You recently said there may be consideration of cuts to non-academic programs such as Athletics. Why weren't non-academics cuts, specifically Athletics, a consideration before making cuts to academic programs?

President Philip responded that non-academic areas have been cut disproportionately to the academic areas. He said that Athletics had taken a 22% reduction in its funding over the period of the current budget crisis. He said a committee had been formulated to study the role of Athletics going into the future. The President said that an outside entity will look at the administrative structure at the University to determine if further efficiencies can be realized in those areas. Athletics and administration have not been spared in the areas of cuts.

- A request was made for the President to release a line by line budget, and called for a complete and transparent release of information to the campus community as a prerequisite for constructive participation in a dialogue with him.

President Philip said he was in favor of transparency and would consider an additional level of transparency.

- Reference was made to a recent newspaper article concerning expenditures at SUNY Central. President Philip was asked if the 64 university and college presidents were having a conversation about taking a hard look at the money going to SUNY Central instead of it going directly to SUNY campuses.

President Philip said he believed there were opportunities to address the budget problems of all 64 campuses. He said major efficiencies need to be done at a statewide level. The President said questions need to be addressed such as the possibility of consolidating administrative functions among the different schools, and other issues such whether there is a need for 64 campuses and eight technical schools. President Philip is one of two presidents on a committee that is studying the budget allocation process.

- Can you talk about opportunities to collaborate with our unions on PHEEIA?

The President said that people will continue to disagree concerning PHEEIA, but in order to get some level of relief, and tuition is a critically important part of relief as well as some opportunity to get unshackled from the constraints the NYS Legislature has placed on the University and the University system, we need to unite with the unions and confront the governor and legislature. We all want to enhance the level of support the University gets. It is critically important that the administration and the unions fight together for these opportunities to save public higher education. Without any tuition relief and alternatives like public/private partnerships, the future is very bleak. We need to have a revenue source to address the losses from the state.

The President discussed conversations with the new governor whose agenda is focused on the economic vitality of the state. President Philip believes that our argument can be made that public higher education is the principle tool available to the state for economic development. The fiscal future of the state is much better protected if we invest in public higher education.

- At the last meeting of the University Senate, there was a call for a public forum for the entire campus to discuss the budget. How will we go about this?

President Philip referred to the town meetings that have been held over the past three years. These have been open to the entire campus community with significant participation. These are opportunities to ask questions and have answers provided. The President said the feedback from these events has been very helpful in formulating how we move forward. He said we will continue to have forums on campus to discuss whatever issues come forward. He said it was important to maintain a level of communication. The President said that when he has news, he will continue to share it but there will be opportunities to have forums on campus to allow people to participate and to discuss issues that are of interest in addition to the budget.

- The President was asked about efforts to take these issues directly to our legislators in massive numbers and advocate for the University through lobbying efforts.

The President said our lobbying efforts need to be more targeted than they have been in the past. We have to target our efforts differently and this may mean a far more “surgical” approach to lobbying to maximize the impact we have. The best people to lobby on our behalf are our students. Past efforts have proven that legislators takes advantage of photo ops with students and then make a hasty exit with no impact. We need to redirect our efforts to have greater impact on what happens, meaning we have to redirect our efforts towards the leadership.

- Chancellor Zimpher said on floor of Senate of the SUNY-wide Senate that legislators have been telling her that SUNY does not have any constituency. Her argument is that we have over 400,000 students, 80,000 plus employees and millions of alumni that vote who are our constituency.

President Phillip said there 465,000 students, 88,000 employees although that is a declining number, and millions of alumni. These are meaningful numbers to provide a constituency. He said the question is how to mobilize disparate interest groups in order to create the kind of political clout we need. Our biggest political clout is the 465,00 students and they could have a significant impact if we can get them mobilized, either at the ballot box or to flood people with correspondences, and talk to the media about what would serve the best interests of the students, people and New York State. The Chancellor is correct in saying we don't have the type of constituency that you see advocating for K-12. K-12 does far better than higher education and has far greater constituency from those who voice opposition to school taxes. Those taxes create a very direct impact on every individual who owns a home. This puts legislators in a position that creates enough political pressure on the part of those people who are impacted by K-12 cuts that legislators fear for their jobs. The President said that cuts in higher education do not cause legislators to fear for their jobs but they need to have this fear. We haven't been able to marshal the critical mass to make people worry about it.

- There is agreement in the argument that we need to lobby and the conversation should include funding sources for higher education. It is also essential to have a conversation about what a university does. The current understanding is that cuts have been disproportionate to non-academic areas. Most in the room would agree that what a university does first and foremost is academics and that it cannot be disproportionate enough. The core of a university's mission is about teaching, research, and education. When talking about our successes, the focus is on the funding that is brought in and not the research that was conducted. This is a problem. The cuts that have been made are not telling about the Universities' priorities and that needs to be part of the conversation while we are doing the lobbying.

President Philip appreciated this point of view but there have been enormously disproportionate cuts that have impacted the non-academic areas. At the end of this period of cuts, 80% of the job losses on this campus will be outside of the academic areas. We are here for the students, but we need to have bus drivers, academic advisers, people who maintain the facilities, people who support the dormitories and public safety, and we need to have a viable health enterprise in place. All of these are not frills--people perform vital functions on this campus. There is a point of diminishing returns. If we cut out all of the non-academics, academics will not have anything to work with. The President said he understood those view that the cuts have not been disproportionate enough, but suggests that everyone have a conversation with coworkers in the non-academic areas that have been cut, and ask them whether or not they feel the same because there has been a heavy toll on the non-academic areas.

- *This was a long, rambling question/statement made by Lana Cable I believe but really could not understand what she was saying*

President Philip responded that what was stated is certainly something that has been considered. He said does not want Albany Tech but would like UAlbany to be viewed in the same regard as MIT. The President said he recognizes the value of humanities but in looking at the budget cuts, of the nine schools and colleges, the College of Arts and Sciences had the lowest percentage of cuts in its budget. This recognizes that we are a University and need to educate students. He said often there are not a lot of outside sources of funding that occur but these are areas that are core disciplines that should be valued at any university and thinks we have valued them. When you look at making difficult decision that are enrollment based and based on other criteria, you have to look at them in the context of the University community as a

whole , as well as in the context of how they impact our students. President Philip said we try to make decisions that have an impact on the least number of students as possible. He said we need to continue to invest in the humanities and continue to value them. Making cuts in other academic areas will not please those areas any more than they have the Humanities and he would prefer not to have to make any cuts at all. Professional schools, which account for much of the prestige of the University, have taken a disproportionate cut and a bigger cut than other areas. It's important for us to work on opportunities to improve the financial health of this University. He said no cut is appropriate or acceptable but cuts to other areas would probably generate an equal volume of emails and negative press from other people representing different constituencies. The bottom line is we have \$33.5 million less than we did two and a half years ago.

- When will public forum be scheduled?

President Philip said we could schedule this as soon as we possibly can. He said it would be scheduled in a facility where as many people as possible could participate and make sure it is open to participation. The President said much of the negative publicity received by this campus has been part of a very, very effective campaign on the part of some people to make sure that his attention has been brought to issues surrounding the impact of those cuts. This could have been done differently and he said he does not like to read articles in the newspaper that denigrates this university. The President said he does not take any pleasure in making budget cuts, eliminating programs or much of what has needed to be done over the past three years. We do need to change the message that public higher education is critically important for the future of this state. We cannot be associated with bloated government or have articles in the newspapers where the University and the unions are saying opposite things. We cannot be talking about having a SUNY wide conversation where we have people on different pages because of self-interest. We need to address all of these and a community forum is important as is changing the message and redirecting the conversation in the community. President Philip said he would appreciate any opportunity to do that.

- Many of the newspaper articles suggest that your words and your actions don't match up to your evaluation of the humanities. Some of the things you said today seem to reinforce that--saying there is a lot of misinformation out there such as the humanities being in danger but you have said they are not. That seems to be like saying that athletics are not in danger at Berkley where they have cut many of their sports programs. In this state where we have 2nd largest French speaking city on the planet as our neighbors and where we are cutting French and theater, this seems counter to the President's statement of saying the humanities are not in danger and shows a lack of valuing the humanities. Talking about disproportional cuts being necessary implicitly implies, perhaps not intentionally, that athletics should be unharmed.

President Philip said there was no qualitative judgment as far as Athletics is concerned. The statistics that were given had to do with the cuts suffered by Humanities or by CAS relative to Math and Science and relative to our professional school programs which are critically important. As far as Athletics are concerned, this is the obvious place people look to make cuts. If programs are cut from Athletics the entirety of its budget as far as it concerns the campus financial plan is a little over \$4 million. The balance is funded from student fees which cannot be redirected and used for other purposes. If we remove the entire Athletics program and save \$4 million there would still be a \$29.5 million shortfall that needs to be addressed. The President said there will be cuts to Athletics including program cuts. We have 400-500 athletes that participate in athletics and they are here because they are students and there is value in athletics in terms of campus life. The athletic fee was put to a vote and overwhelmingly approved by the student body for that purpose. President Philip said he does not suggest that Athletics it is more important than French or Theatre. He said there were a number of groups that convened in a deliberative process, and in order to start a conversation about academic

programs, suspending new enrollments is a way of making sure that it is a fulsome discussion. If we continue to accept enrollment going forward, we're creating perpetuity. The President said we will honor our commitment to every student enrolled in any program should those programs ultimately be cut because the decision is only to suspend new enrollments in those programs. If we admitted students into a program they will have opportunity to graduate from that program. We cannot continue to admit students to a program if it's being considered to be cut while the metrics attached to cutting those programs have to do with a low level of enrollment and other criteria that do not support continuing the program. As things are now, the Theatre program is not viable and the University did not have the money to hire new people to make it viable. These decisions were made based on a deliberative process over a long period of time and enable us to continue the discussion. In looking at future budget cuts with no opportunities to increase the revenue that come in or to replace the cuts, we can expect much broader cuts in academic and non-academic areas. President Philip said we need to convince our legislative representatives of the economic impact that the University at Albany has as a profit center for New York State.

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The President said he agreed and took exception to the presidents' of well-endowed schools and their spearheading role in the preservation of the humanities. He said if UAlbany received a small percentage of the state money received by other schools such as Cornell, it would help to solve a lot of our problems. Schools such as Cornell get more in direct state aid than UAlbany even though Cornell is a private institution. This is the only state in the nation where a land granting institution is a private institution. SUNY has been not been viewed in the same high regard as other state universities because we are not a land grant institution and we do not receive the type of support that other land grants receive.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

- Dr. Lifshin thanked President Philip for his address. He recognized those who are or who have been involved with the Senate and thanked them. He encouraged everyone to attend future Senate meetings in force and to participate in activities so this critical dialogue can continue. He asked if there was any new business from the floor. A motion was made to have a faculty forum to discuss budget issues. The motion was seconded and opened for discussion. A statement was made in support and the motion was put to a vote. The vote supported holding a faculty forum. While the number present did not constitute a quorum, President Philip suggested that without a formal resolution, he would work towards creating a faculty forum.

6. ADJOURNMENT

- There being no additional new business, a motion to adjourn was made and seconded, and the meeting was adjourned.