

January 15, 2008

Dear University Faculty Senate Members:

Welcome to the University at Albany. We are delighted to host this Winter Plenary Meeting of the University Faculty Senate and invite you to explore and enjoy our campus while you are here.

Your service as members of the University Faculty Senate is a clear indication of how much you value our State University of New York system of higher education and your commitment to making it stronger. I want you to know, in turn, how much I value the contributions made through faculty governance both at the UAlbany campus and throughout the SUNY system.

With the release of the report of Governor Spitzer's Commission on Higher Education and the higher education proposals being considered this year, the SUNY system is at a critical point in its history and your input will be particularly important.

The UAlbany campus, like the SUNY system as a whole, has evolved over time to meet the changing needs and demands of our society.

UAlbany began as the New York State Normal School on May 7, 1844 with 29 students and four faculty in an abandoned railroad depot on State Street in the heart of Albany.

Today, UAlbany is an internationally recognized research university with a broad mission of undergraduate and graduate education, research and service. We enroll more than 17,000 students in ten schools and colleges which offer 189 undergraduate, master's and doctoral degree programs.

UAlbany faculty are leading researchers as well as outstanding teachers, offering nationally ranked academics. In addition, our campus boasts championship Division 1 sports and vibrant arts and culture. Our global alumni community numbers more than 140,000.

As UAlbany's interim president, as well as a UAlbany alumnus and the parent of three graduates of SUNY campuses, I take great pride in the accomplishments of the State University of New York system, which has served our state so well. The continuation of this long tradition relies on the best thinking of all of us and the wise use of our resources. With this in mind, I hope our campus will prove to be a conducive setting for your deliberations.

Sincerely,

George M. Philip
Interim President