

SUNY UFS Winter 2022 Plenary Report

Prepared by UFS Senators Billie Franchini, Kabel Stanwicks, and Zina Lawrence

The 190th SUNY University Faculty Senate Plenary was held over Zoom January 20-22, 2022.

The full Plenary report can be found on the [SUNY UFS website](#). Below are highlights from the Plenary. Please feel free to contact UFS Senator Billie Franchini (branchini@albany.edu) with any questions or to request additional details about any item in this report.

President's report

- The Board will meet next week to begin setting parameters for the search for a new SUNY Chancellor. The President believes that we can expect a robust national search with an aggressive timeline.
- Searches are underway or will be launched soon to fill several system-level positions.
- There are multiple presidential searches underway across SUNY campuses.
- SUNY played a much more prominent role in the Governor's State of the State address than it has in past year.
- The executive state budget was released this week. Further details about this budget appear in the report of the Acting CFO.

Faculty Council of Community Colleges Report

- Outlined the work of four committees of the council: academic affairs committee; communications, professional development, and awards committee; campus and student life committee; and governance committee
- Presidential searches are underway at six community colleges
- Community college sector will continue to advocate for additional funding in state budget.
- FCCC has several events planned for the remainder of this year.

CUNY Faculty Senate

- CUNY got much but not all of what it asked for in the budget—received less direct support than it had hoped. About half of requested lines were awarded.
- Concerns about the imposition of modalities at system level without consultation with faculty—fear of accretion of power to central administration during pandemic will become permanent.
- Expressed enrollment concerns, especially in light of the Governor's expressed desire to drastically grow enrollments in SUNY: where will these students come from? CUNY and SUNY will be in competition for students.

United University Professions

- Focus on budget advocacy: NY is flush right now, but we have a short window of opportunity to take advantage.
- UUP is entering contract negotiations and wants full involvement in process. CSEA has not started negotiating a new contract, which may benefit UUP because it keeps us from getting locked into what they have agreed to.
- UUP was surprised by the mention of vaccine mandate for faculty in State of the State. UUP supports a vaccine mandate in principal, but terms must be negotiated with the union. The goal

is to have the maximum number of people vaccinated, not to have people unvaccinated and dismissed from work. Much work still needs to be done here, and the expectation that this cannot not be fully implemented before Fall.

- UUP urges that Faculty Senates must be engaged in the work indicated in the State of the State address.

SUNY Student Assembly

- SA is advocating for free tuition to be phased in over time (“From Freeze to Free” campaign)
- Emphasizing mental health concerns and training efforts to help students support mental health
- SA is monitoring what is happening across campuses around COVID—policies, etc.

JCOPE Panel Discussion

UFS Ethics Committee chair lead a panel discussion about the ethics law that govern New York state employees. Details about these laws are available in the [Plain Language Guide to the Public Officers Law and Other Related Ethics Laws](#).

SUNY Financial Report

The Acting CFO, Bob Megna, stated that the Governor’s executive budget is a very good starting point for SUNY. Below are notable features of SUNY funding in the executive budget:

- adds to programs (e.g., EOC and EOP) that have recently started at 0 in the executive budget
- closes the “TAP Gap”
- adds funding for on-campus child care
- adds funding for debt service match
- includes funding for critical maintenance at four-year campuses

The budget will enter the legislative process in February.

Provost’s Report

- General Education implementation: SUNY’s new General Education framework includes 10 knowledge and skills areas, with 4 required for all bachelor’s candidates. Also required are 2 refined core competencies. New requirements will be implemented in Fall 2023 for baccalaureate degree programs. Details regarding the new framework are available from the [SUNY General Education webpage](#), and additional training resources will be available to campuses by Fall 2022.
- Digital Learning Environment: Kim Scalzo provided an overview of the current state of the transition to the new unified Digital Learning Environment (D2L’s Brightspace). Campus Implementation Groups have begun their work. Cohort 1 campuses (listed in the most recent [Update Bulletin](#)) will begin the initial implementation phase in February 2022. The most current information is available on [the SUNY Digital Learning Environment website](#).
- Enrollment and Marketing: While enrollment overall has stayed relatively steady in doctoral institutions, overall SUNY enrollment has declined substantially in the last 10 years. Five key campaigns in 2021 included the following: Online Training Center/EOC/Attain; Community College; SUNY Online; Equity (Big Dreams); and Brand Campaign, Round 1

SUNY Board of Trustees

Chair Merryl Tisch offered the following updates regarding the search for the next SUNY Chancellor.

- At next week's meeting, the BoT will begin to plan for parameters of the search, being mindful of concerns regarding the lack of a credentialed search for the previous Chancellor.
- Chair Tisch will propose a model that will include creation of subgroups of different interested parties (e.g., students, community partners, administrators, etc.). Each subgroup would have a chair who becomes part of the BoT search group and reports to that larger group on behalf of their subgroup.
- Chair Tisch hopes that the BoT will finalize the selection of an executive search firm to lead the search. The Board has sought a firm that understands New York, SUNY's multi-campus structures, SUNY's commitment to DEI, etc.

Q&A with the Interim Chancellor

Dr. Deborah Stanley made very brief remarks (acknowledging that she has been in this position for less than a week). She expressed optimism about the Governor's expressed support of SUNY in the State of the State and in the executive budget. She stated that SUNY needs to look at enrollment with new eyes and take a more 21st-century approach to this problem. She then accepted questions from Senators and guests.

Resolutions

Note that all resolutions can be found on the [SUNY UFS website](#).

The Senate passed the following resolutions:

- Advancement of Historically Underrepresented Faculty: urges campus governance to work with administrations to address inequities facing historically underrepresented faculty and applauds Governor Hochul's vision for strengthening diversity, equity inclusion as expressed in her State of the State book.
- Successful implementation of the SUNY General Education category: requests funding and resources to support campuses needing support to implement the SUNY General Education category "Diversity: Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice."

The Senate endorsed a resolution from the FCCC urging the SUNY Board to develop a set of procedures for executive searches.

VP/Secretary Election Update

Election for the VP/Secretary position will be held at the Spring plenary. Senators were invited to submit nominations to chair of the nominations committee.