

January 15, 2008

Dear Colleagues:

On behalf of the University at Albany Senate and its Chair, Reed Hoyt, welcome to Albany for this Plenary Meeting of the SUNY Faculty Senate. Please do not hesitate to contact any of us if you have questions.

Like many of the SUNY campuses, Albany started as a Normal School, founded in 1844. Albany was a small (200-400 students), largely two-year institution with the mission of training new and existing common school teachers. In 1914 it was transformed into the New York State College for Teachers, a moderate sized (~2500 student), four-year institution with the mission of training secondary school teachers. While dedicated to training teachers, Albany in these years displayed many of the characteristics of a small liberal arts college. In 1962, Albany was named one of SUNY's University Centers and is now a 17,000 student broad-based research institution.

With its rapid expansion in the 1960s came the new Uptown Campus designed by Edward Durell Stone (1902-1978). While the architecture of this campus has been controversial from its beginning, Stone is now recognized as an important mid twentieth century architect and the Albany Campus as an important expression of modernism in architecture. In addition to this Uptown Campus, the university occupies a Downtown Campus (the old teachers college) and the relatively recently added East Campus located just on the east side of the Hudson River.

The University at Albany is organized around a traditional College of Arts and Sciences with professional colleges and schools in business, education, public health, social work, public affairs, criminal justice, with recent additions of the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering and the College of Computing and Information Science. The University has made special efforts to try to integrate its research efforts with those of private corporations with the goal of improving the economy of New York State.

The University has an art gallery, which unfortunately is currently closed for installation of a new show. Other museums in Albany include the Albany Institute of History and Art founded in 1790 with major holdings of Hudson River School paintings and an important collection of decorative arts from the Hudson Valley. The New York State Museum is one of the country's largest cultural museums. The State Museum is part of the Nelson Rockefeller Empire State Plaza, an architectural complex well worth a visit in itself.

Please let us know if there is anything we can do to make your visit more productive or more enjoyable.

Sincerely,

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