

February 11, 2009

Vice Chair Michael Range opened with a request for a motion that no votes be taken today regarding any matters before the SEC today unless a majority of at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of the members present agrees to take a vote. Motion was seconded and approved.

Past Chair Reed Hoyt proposed that each side present a brief summary of their views.

Senate Chair John Delano began the discussion. He stated that they were not there to rehash the women's sociology bill but that he had specific concerns. The Senate is an advisory body which needs to be persuasive, must have good will and respect, and must have a solid reputation to persuade at the administrative level.

He further stated that there has been great effort expended on issues that seem simple, but hundreds of hours have been expended to prepare and he referred to the CNSE Resolution as an example. The Chair did not believe the issue needed to be elevated to the level that it was, because in the end it was seamless.

He continued that this is not intended to be personal, but it is in the interest of the Senate to work together constructively, professionally and effectively, and in a way that does not alienate. Currently, there are serious alienation problems from floor to ceiling of Deans on up. It is important to have the attention of those needed instead of offending them all the time.

Vice Chair Michael Range responded that what will be transparent as this discussion progresses is that it would be a sad day for him, governance and many individuals. He stated that he fully understood the Chair's concerns but believed that the issues are much deeper and he will lay those out as things move along and offered to let others speak at that point.

COMMENTS:

Eric Lifshin : The communications sent by the Vice Chair in which he uses his signature, including name and title, implicates that one carries weight of the office specified. He felt strongly that we have detailed process in place for debate. Sometimes the results are not what we like. One has to be super careful not to imply that the individual has not spoken against an established process. It is important that as a person moves on, that level of partiality has to happen. He congratulated Carolyn MacDonald on the way she conducted faculty meetings—that it was clear that she did not let on how she felt and hopes that in the future the president of the Senate will present themselves in that fashion. It is important that you hang your affiliation at the door.

MRRange: Thanked Eric and felt he made a valid point. Apologized on the matter of the correspondences and did not mean for it to look like he represented the faculty. He understands the concern and from now on will use extra care when making his own opinion, and will use a disclaimer that he does not represent the faculty and suggest that all do that. It does not necessarily mean that we represent a group or groups when we use the auto signature in e-mails and does not think every message sent indicates that people are speaking in an official capacity.

Dan Smith: (Concerns re: middle states, president) We need to get beyond administration. We've alienated both administration and staff.

MRRange: Stated that when he researches a matter he does want to convey that he is a senior member of the faculty, and all pieces of information in the signature such as vice chair indicate that he has earned the trust of his colleagues. He indicated he is not shy about putting this on record so that people will pay attention to what he writes.

Malcolm Sherman: Does not believe there is any misunderstanding that he is speaking for the Senate.

Bill Lanford: Stated he did not disagree with much being said so far but did not think that tag lines are the issue. Was not clear whether or not MR had gone over the line. Agrees that the institution is in great danger and part of the reason is the failure of governance although not rooted in the faculty members being impassioned about issues. He has disagreed at times with both JD and MR on issues. He thinks they both have strong beliefs on how we should behave but also thinks there should be less emotion. Both are loyal to the institution but have different personalities and views. He would like to see the governance go forward without making a spectacle because does not believe this will help the university. He further stated that he hoped there was a mechanism in place to resolve these differences but believes it's truly a matter of difference of opinion and not a lack of loyalty to the institution.

Joan Savitt: Does not see what the issue is or why we are doing this all are trying to do something good for the University.

Dick Collier: Addressed the issue of signature and feels the title should be typed in manually but overall it's unnecessary. Does not believe that the Senate's objective should be seeking the good will of the administration. He expressed his disappointment in the appointments that the Senate has allowed, and its failure to step in when it should have. RE: the women's studies bill, he wondered if SUNY thought we were trying to put something over on them. Now a tone has been set that the Senate and the President did not do their jobs. The Senate did not agree with MR but MR did not get it.

Carolyn MacDonald: Believes it comes down to how we communicate and how we should communicate better. She stated that she does not believe the Senate has been inclusive enough. Clearly there are issues with personal communication. She thought the Senate should have been communicating more during the summer re: interims. Need to decide to process information more efficiently and should have been more controlling.

Nick Farhenkopf: Discussed workshops he attended in DC which encouraged people to feel free to speak out but once a board votes, you should stand behind your decision. If you don't, the board looks divided. The issue that JD brought up defines this.

ELifshin: He expressed concerns about how leadership can lead a group without imposing his/her own set of desires on the group. In the case of the Senate, we get the best ideas from everyone, sort it out and come to closure. If the leader has a personal agenda, that will be a problem and spilt the group. It is important to become an impartial leader and forgo some of one's own opinions.

Reed Hoyt: Problems with being the Chair is learning to know when to keep mouth shut.

JDelano: We are not necessarily here to be friends of the administration but we do need their respect. Without this they will not listen and he fears that this is what is happening. Without respect and clear evidence of confidence among peers, the Senate carries little persuasion into meetings. He states he knows how important it is to get that done and the need to be careful how you say things. He warned that the Senate is on the verge of alienating on this campus to the point of being dismissed.

MSherman: Asked if the issue is of “we” or MRange specifically? He didn’t think that MRange was conspicuous on the particular issue. Those that are being criticized need to deal with it.

JDelano: Wants to see arguments be phrased so they invite persuasion. He’s concerned that MRange does have a reputation with the current administration and outside of the University, and that his arguments are on the verge of being dismissed. This does not bode well for the Senate.

Dan Truchan: He stated that he understands that the SEC operates behind closed doors and this is a concern of students. The relationship students have with the administration affords them a quicker response because they are willing to listen and compromise more. Students don’t want to get bogged down with politics. He expressed concern about administrative appointments being made without Senate input and approval. Another concern among students is they are not involved in Senate decisions. They expressed concern when MRange was appointed Senate Vice Chair because students didn’t consider him “student friendly”. But they needed to get past that.

MRange: Addressed the issue of his latest letters and emails. He did not send the packet to the whole SEC. Regarding the women’s studies bill, once he decided to take the matter to SUNY he did not see any reason to re-engage the SEC. He did however, copy people from the group who are SUNY Senators and three Senate Officers. JDelano felt it was a matter for UAlbany SEC to consider. MRange had specific reasons to copy certain individuals and JDelano took steps to include the entire SEC and reopen the conversation which he now says is a waste of time. MRange stated that he used his right as a faculty member to take the matter to appropriate bodies, to SUNY Administration which is the most reasonable course of action. The SUNY Provost’s office was the next level to take the matter to and stated that we will see that there are reasons why people should be alienated.

BLanford: Stated that he was looking for something constructive to come out of all of this. Concerned that we are approaching critical times. Need to think how to make SEC more efficient and need to educate selves on becoming more effective. Feels this is an unpleasant dispute.

HBaran: Provided his historical perspective of having been on the campus for a long time but stated that he was new to governance. He addressed MRange. He stated that processes have to have conclusions and after the decision on the bill was reached, the discussion should have been closed off. He has found the tone of e-mails to be abrasive. Whatever one feels about the administration, that should not be a factor in constructing messages in a provocative way. He was troubled during the meetings with the presidential finalists on some comments made about Provost Phillips status being changed, and shortly after those comments were made she walked in. Those were unwise comments

and sent the wrong message to the people coming in as candidates. He does not want to see that kind of upset in SEC and sees a need for greater discretion.

MRange: Finds it troubling that the issue of him alienating is now on the surface. He believes that a number of things have happened where he has been smeared and his credibility and integrity have been questioned. He has to respond to these challenges he has been faced with. (Provided handouts). MRange proceeded to go through the handouts which he believed proved that JDelano had been incorrect re: timelines and sequence of events.

ELifshin: (Addressing MRange) If you were president of the Senate would you be sending these e-mails and letters?

MRange: No because I would have access to administration for consultation.

BLanford: What is our mission now?

JDelano: I will apologize to mr and recollection of events; thought it was accurate nothing malicious iw as wrong about timeline and apologized

Dick: we had a rogue admin and not happy w/manythings of oic in charge after that; at times we do need to attck admin; in terms of people to be concerned about and objecns he has is the impact dt on students in program and suny got ticked off and went to media; its improtnt to worry bout image of senate and image of ua; must also worry about students; insist we think about befoe proceeding unless situation was flagrant

MR: another handout: this packet is here to doc understndng of senate offcirs and sec of status of bill; bill was on pres desk and numrs discussions; discussion of jd w/stakeholders of bill; 9/22 see highlights agrmt was gac was supposed to do; all was charged to gac; think its everyone;s respsnblity to read this aand what charge was to subcommittee and gac; minutes of nov 18 frm gac; keypt no vote in support of wss/soc but vote to acctpt recomm of subcomm nothing to do w/narrtv of bill; discussion that we are allintg dean of grad studies; sec charged gac to investigate and report to senate; last item whatever gac perspectv...as far as secknows there were no new perscptvs; in lst version of 11/17 minutes there was statemt that gac recomm apprvl of bill; statmt was questioned by member of council andw/out informing gac the minutes now appear on senate web page no longer mentions recomm apprvl; the fact that there is a recomm to apprvt bill by gac; on page 12 that jd sent sue ph to risa palm in this letter SP clearly states that not admin decision; stand by that; rather action taken...

DSMith: wn be sitting here if someone enforced standard for thes poposlas to come to senate and why do councils not have these stndrd. This is job of gov and ha snot been done; if gac had volntrd can this be put into format that is reqrd for program proposal from suny central we would not be sitting here; problem w/communication; we have failed our job want more comm.

MR: yes put finger on the problem; dean of grad stud ther respons and admin to put proper paperwork in place

DS: you are not in position to make recomm

RH: things that went wrong with list including proponents of bill not well thought out

DS : dn get full review

LR: jd and mr havd diffrent styles of comm. To admiin; and grating to jd; this discussion re: MR has gone one too long gotten personal conflict of styles and should decide to home

Dick: gove gave charge to gac and not reopen proposal inseed wld look into standard implemtntaion and infrom pres before making decision on bill frm may; gac rprtd that it opened new ground and ok o send dt; no problem w/irritating admin this is counter product

LK: MR presentation is accurate; gac felt nothing dditiona necessary and pres free to sign; we recommend no additional procedures necessary and LK argued angst bill and we need to be forthright and not doing anything underhand but admin dn proceed to investigate

MS: we don't want to take action angst anyone if that case we can adjrn

DS; we have to comm. w/constituany and not being done

CM: can we agree not to undercut each other?

SUMM; we discussed that comm. Need to be better

Wil not seek out compromise on things we don't believe in ; andn not apprvcrap;

And not alienate each other in room or committee mebers:

Reed: propose motion to adjourn;

MR: understand sentiment and endorse its bu on record that jd should seriously take into consideration; jon you have taken it upon yourself to be negotiator only for senate and mr suggested we sit around table w/mpryse

Voting to agree not to undercut each other voted and al in favor

Minutes that we discussed comm. Issue

JD: never done anything amlicous and mr made good case; sorry for making a mistake