

**University at Albany
State University of New York**

University Council

Minutes

October 5, 2012

A regular meeting of the University Council was held on October 5, 2012 in University Hall, Room 306. Members present were: Pierre Alric (Presiding Officer), Patricia Caldwell, James Clancy, John Fallon, James Jackson, Abner JeanPierre, Daniel Tomson (by teleconference), Michael Stein and Arthur Rushforth (Student Member); also Christine Wagner (Faculty Representative), Gary Roth (Graduate Student Representative) and Canon Kay Hotaling (Alumni Representative).

Also present were: President George Philip, Vice President/Provost Susan Phillips, Vice Presidents Steven Beditz, Christine Bouchard, James Dias, Lee McElroy and Fardin Sanai; Vincent Delio (Chief of Staff), Dr. Paul Agris and Dr. Jen Montimurro of the RNA Institute, and Dr. Martin Tenniswood of the Cancer Research Center.

Mr. Alric called the meeting to order at 2:05pm and asked each person in the room to introduce themselves, which they did. He then called for review of the May 18 minutes and those of the special meeting on August 15. Upon motion duly made a seconded (Caldwell/Jackson), the minutes of both meetings were approved.

Moving to the President's Report, President Philip noted that newly appointed President, Dr. Robert Jones had been on campus two weeks ago for an initial introduction and that he plans to return to the campus again, prior to his assuming the position on January 2. Mr. Philip then provided an update as the new academic year begins noting that some 45 new faculty had joined the institution. He reported that there were 2567 new freshmen and 1385 new transfer students and that there were increases in both out-of-state and international students, 38 percent minority bringing the total to approximately 13,000 undergraduate and 5,000 graduate students.

Continuing with his report, he congratulated Vice President Sanai for receiving a special award from the Council and Support of Education (CASE) for notable fundraising and observed that the UAlbany Foundation had the best financial performance of the SUNY-related foundations.

He reported on several major construction projects on campus including the School of Business in its final stages and the new Data Center. He pointed to several major campus improvements and upgrades including the Carillon Tower and the Fountain areas on the Podium. He said that our NYSUNY2020 proposal had been submitted to the Governor (copies included in the agenda packets) and called on Mr. Delio who presented the proposal through a power point presentation including its financial and personnel aspects.

In concluding his report, President Philip invited the Council to the various Homecoming events on October 12-14 and noted the annual Citizen Laureate Awards Dinner, sponsored by the UAlbany Foundation on November 1. This year's Community Laureate recipients will be Norman and Micki Massry and University Dean Katharine Briar-Lawson will receive the Academic Laureate Award. He observed that the event is sold out so our SEFCU Arena will be used to accommodate the attendees.

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Moving to the Student Report, Mr. Rushforth outlined several Student Association (SA) sponsored events including a community outreach initiative to local high school students and the annual SA Speaker Series which will feature Russell Simmons during Homecoming Weekend.

Professor Wagner, Vice Chair of the University Senate and new representative to the Council reported that the Senate held its first meeting of the year and various functional councils and committees were formed and held initial meetings. She announced that the first general faculty meeting would be held on October 29 in the Campus Center Ballroom.

Gary Roth, the new Graduate Student Representative, introduced himself and noted he is enrolled at the College of Nanoscale Science & Engineering. He said that the Graduate Student Organization (GSO) held its initial meeting and he reported that, given the number of graduate students in the colleges on the Downtown Campus, a GSO office would be located there, as well. He noted that the GSO had experienced some financial problems due to overestimating revenue. Mr. Stein requested some additional information and Mr. Roth explained that the student leadership was working with campus and UAS auditors to assure that the budget was balanced. He said that it should be accomplished by the end of the current year.

In providing an Alumni program update, Canon Kay Hotaling distributed a report highlighting numerous Alumni-sponsored programs and commented on them including alumni class reunions, joint efforts with Admissions and with Development activities as well as a new program that offers students contacts with alumni in a variety of career fields.

Moving to Old Business and on behalf of the Council, Mr. Alric thanked the members of the Presidential Search Committee for their service over the past ten months and for the successful outcome with the appointment of Dr. Robert Jones. Ms. Caldwell added her appreciation, as well. She noted that the breach in confidentiality harmed the search process and many of the candidates, who had been assured of confidentiality. She outlined what had happened and when and proposed that a formal investigation be undertaken. She said that a number of members of the committee felt betrayed by the leak. Mr. Fallon asked if this would be a campus or a SUNY responsibility and Ms. Caldwell noted that both entities were injured by the publicity and the effort would be joint.

Upon motion duly made a seconded (Caldwell/JeanPierre), it was proposed that the Council request the Chancellor to consider undertaking an investigation. A discussion ensued with Mr. Stein, Mr. Rushforth, Canon Hotaling, Mr. Clancy, President Philip, Ms. Caldwell and Mr. Fallon commenting. Mr. Alric called for a vote and the resolution was adopted unanimously. The Secretary was asked to prepare a draft resolution to be shared with the Council in developing the final wording.

Moving to New Business, Provost Phillips outlined the first year report of the campus Strategic Plan (First Year report in packet) implementation. She reviewed each of the six stated goals and highlighted the initiatives that will be addressed for the 2nd year. Mr. Fallon noted the outstanding leadership Dr. Phillips had given to this major institutional plan and the involvement of faculty, staff, students, and other constituent representatives on the several committees working on aspects of the plan. Additional comments were offered by Dr. Jackson, Mr. JeanPierre, Mr. Beditz, and President Philip. Upon motion duly made and seconded (Fallon/Caldwell) the Council congratulated Provost Phillips on the development of the plan and its accomplishments to date. Mr. Alric called for a vote and the resolution was adopted unanimously.

Moving to the next agenda item and upon motion duly made and seconded (Alric/JeanPierre), the change in the title of the faculty representative to the Council as noted in the By-Laws was unanimously approved as in the May 18 Council meeting minutes to be “The Representative of the University Senate.”

Moving to the next agenda item, Vice President Sanai introduced a resolution to name the Physical Education Building “The Swyer Family Physical Education Building” in recognition of Mr. Edward Swyer’s long service and leadership as a volunteer and his special contribution of \$1 million to the Multi-Purpose Sports Stadium Campaign. Upon motion duly made and seconded (Stein/Clancy), the resolution was unanimously approved and will be submitted to SUNY.

Mr. Sanai provided an update of development activities highlighting the work of the UAlbany Foundation. He reported that there were 399 endowment funds in the Foundation and elaborated on the numerous scholarship funds as well as data on alumni support and areas of giving. Comments were offered by Mr. Stein and Ms. Caldwell.

Moving to the next agenda item, Dr. Jackson commented on the growing issue of college student debt across the nation. He said that more needed to be done to educate students and their families on how to manage funds for education. He said that students are often unaware of the relationship between a career path and the amount of money needed for educational preparation for that career. President Philip and Provost Phillips said that programs of this type were offered on campus noting the importance of this issue. Dr. Agris said that this topic is addressed in his work with students. A lengthy discussion ensued with Mr. Stein, Mr. Roth, Ms. Caldwell, Mr. Rushforth, Mr. Delio, Mr. Sanai and Mr. JeanPierre commenting.

As the hour was growing late, Vice President Dias offered to present his item at the December 7 Council meeting. Moving to the last agenda item, Mr. Delio, using a power point demonstration, introduced the REDC initiatives. First, Dr. Agris commented on the RNA Institute and its focus on the Life Sciences. He said that this initiative was part of the UAlbany Impact Plan and SUNY2020. He provided a detailed report on the components of the Institute and its programs. He said that the total funding would be in excess of \$9,335,000 and he described the facilities and equipment that are part of the program. He introduced Dr. Montimuro, the Assistant Director of the Institute. President Philip commented on the decision to establish the Institute and the extraordinary outcome of that decision. Mr. Delio added similar comment.

Continuing with the power point presentation, Dr. Tenniswood spoke about the BioTech Initiative at the Cancer Research Center (CRC). He noted the scope of activities being undertaken on the East Campus which include a private-public partnership of 15 small companies. He described the arrangement developed with Hudson Valley Community College toward the development of a BS in Bio-instrumentation, which would include training at the CRC and its affiliated biotech firms. He said it is the development of a Biotechnology Corridor with other educational institutions and the small biotech firms. He provided the details of the process of purchasing technical equipment, the renovation of facilities on the East Campus, the approval of the new BS degree, and formalization of the articulation agreements with several regional community colleges.

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As the meeting came to conclusion, Mr. JeanPierre suggested that an additional Council meeting should be held to discuss the Council's role and activities in advance of the arrival of Dr. Jones. Dr. Chesin suggested that it might be convenient to hold the meeting in advance of the December 7 regular meeting. He said that he would submit the suggestion to the group to see what dates might be convenient.

There being no further business and upon motion duly made and seconded (Stein/Clancy), the meeting adjourned at 4:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sorrell E. Chesin, Ph.D.
Secretary to the University Council