

2009-2010 University Senate

Monday, March 8, 2010

3:30 pm, Campus Center Assembly Hall

Michael Range, Chair

AGENDA

Present: J. Philippe Abraham, Heidi Andrade, Robert Bangert-Drowns, Brea Barthel, Jeffrey Berman, Lance Bosart, Daryl Bullis, Andrew Byon, James Castracane, Richard Collier, John Delano, Sue Faerman, Nicholas Fahrenkopf, Susanna Fessler, Elizabeth Gaffney, Robert Gibson, Stephen Guarneri, Eric Hardiman, Andrew Haas, Kristen Hessler, Allen Israel, Richard Johnson, Donald Keenan, Ryan King, Laurence Kranich, Kajal Lahiri, William Lanford, Dustin Lanterman, Cristian Lenart, Eric Lifshin, Candace Merbler, Gwendolyn Moore, Dale Morse, Robert Nakamura, John Pipkin, Marjorie Pryse, R. Michael Range, Carlos Rodriguez, Joan Savitt, John Schmidt, Shadi Shahedipour-Sandvik, Benjamin Shaw, Daniel Smith, Kabel Nathan, Daniel White, Gary Yukl

Guests: William Hedberg, Rebecca Mendelsohn, Joe Sanders, Christine Wagner, Benjamin Weaver, Kathie Winchester, Edelgard Wulfert

The meeting convened at 3:33 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes were approved with suggested changes.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT - GEORGE PHILIP

President Philip discussed the status of the Public Higher Education Empowerment and Innovation Act (PHEEIA). The legislation faces opposition from UUP and, the President sees the lack of a recommendation from the University Faculty Senate as problematic. The Student Assembly has voted to support the legislation while the State Assembly is opposed to providing autonomy that would relinquish control of monies appropriated through the State. The President informed Senate members that New York is the only state that has tuition and room and board appropriated through the state and given back to the colleges. President Philip will join Chancellor Zimpher and other university presidents tomorrow to lobby members of the State Assembly. There will continue to be informative sessions on campus to explain the merits of the legislation. The President understands the concerns voiced by UUP regarding using tuition for state funding and those regarding labor. President Philip urged everyone to contact their legislators about their views on the legislation. A website will be available soon that will allow everyone to directly communicate their opinions. The proposed executive budget will likely mean a \$137 million cut in state assistance for SUNY, excluding negotiated salary increases. The cuts will be addressed at budget hearings next week and Chancellor Zimpher will testify at that time. Without restoration of funds, UAlbany's share of the cut could be as high as \$9+million. If the University receives a percentage of a modest tuition increase, the amount could be reduced to the range of \$6.3 to \$6.9 million. This budget gap will not be easily addressed. Sources such as attrition and discretionary spending have been exhausted.

President Phillip thanked everyone who participated in UAlbany Advocacy Day. The President was joined by Chair Range during visits to legislators. The President and Chancellor Zimpher met with Senator John Sampson. UAlbany faculty, staff, administrators, alumni and students participated in thirty legislative visits during the day. President Philip expressed his appreciation of our students for their advocacy.

Enrollment:

UAlbany is striving to reduce the number of freshman and transfer students accepted for the fall semester. Admitting too many students could harm the faculty/student ratio. We are confident our target for freshman enrollments of 2,250 will be met. Transfer applications are up 5.7% above this time last year and graduate applications are up 10.5% over this time last year.

Campus News:

- Dr. Alan Lizotte has been appointed the new dean of the School of Criminal Justice. President Philip is very pleased with the choice and confident Dr. Lizotte will continue the prestigious work of the School.
- Results of the 24th Annual Business Climate Survey have been released. The survey is compiled by the School of Business and Marvin & Company. Most firms surveyed expect to maintain or increase the number of workers in the coming year. The cost of health care is the most important issues for area firms.
- The University held a community meeting to discuss strategic planning. Attendees included US Congressman Paul Tonko, State Assemblyman Bob Reilly, local chamber of commerce presidents and business leaders.
- Town hall meetings continue to be held on campus. The next one is scheduled for March 24 at 10:30 am on the downtown campus.
- The Small Business Development Center has established the Champlain Bridge Business Assistance Center for those displaced by the loss of the Champlain Bridge.
- The Martin Luther King Luncheon was very well attended. Susan Taylor, former editor of Essence Magazine, gave an inspiring address.
- Professor JoEllen Welsh from the Department of Biomedical Sciences recently appeared on Good Morning America and discussed her research on vitamin D and its affect on breast cancer cells.
- Professor Ronald Toseland will be inducted as a Fellow of the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare. The ceremony will take place on April 21 at the National Press Club in Washington, DC.
- Distinguished Professor Eric Block has published a definitive book on garlic and other alliums.
- History Professor Gerald Zahavi received the Billington Award for best article of the year on U.S. Western History.
- Chemistry Professor Igor Lednev is the recipient of “spotlight” from the Royal Society of Chemistry.

President Philip addressed an agenda item under New Business regarding faculty evaluations of administrators. The President has met with Chair Range and Chair Lifshin and has indicated to them that he would like the focus to be on services rendered by administrative units instead of individual people and personalities. He does not believe the broad language of the resolution addresses what’s important and asked that in the upcoming discussion consideration be given to services rendered as opposed to individuals. President Philip indicated that there were some areas in the resolution that were problematic but did not discuss acceptable language with Chairs Range and Lifshin. He referred to the low participation rate on other campuses such as Binghamton and Stony Brook and does not view the process as being as constructive as it could be. He also expressed concerns about creating a potentially adversarial environment. The President was asked if the resolution could pass in its current form. He called for a “tightening up” of the language and stated that the section concerning Middle States was not totally accurate.

President Philip noted the passing of Murray Blair, the husband of former UAlbany President Karen Hitchcock. President Philip conveyed her thanks to the university community for its support during her loss.

SENATE CHAIR'S REPORT – MICHAEL RANGE

Gen Ed Task Force. The Task Force has been constituted as stipulated in Senate Resolution 0910-01 approved on February 8, 2010. Information about the membership has been sent to Senators in an earlier mailing. The work of the Task Force is ongoing, and the SEC and UAC will be receiving initial recommendations by March 19, 2010.

SUNY UFS Senators. UFS President Ken O'Brien has officially confirmed to President Philip that UAlbany is eligible to be represented by *three* senators rather than two. Consequently UAlbany will choose two new senators by university-wide election in April. Dan White will continue with the second year of his first 3-year term. The Chair encourages senators to consider standing for election and to encourage colleagues across the university to consider representing UAlbany on the SUNY senate. An invitation will be sent out in due time to all faculty and staff.

Review and Evaluation of Administrators. The SEC discussed materials from the SUNY UFS regarding faculty evaluation of administrators. These materials have been sent to Senators last week. There was a consensus that UAlbany should consider setting up such an evaluation process, which is in place, for example, at Binghamton and Stony Brook. However, there also was consensus that endorsement by the Senate would be needed before proceeding further. Discussion and vote of a resolution proposed by the SEC concerning this matter is on today's agenda. The text of the proposed resolution has been mailed out together with the agenda and other materials.

OTHER REPORTS

SUNY-WIDE SENATE REPORT – WILLIAM LANFORD AND DANIEL WHITE

Senator White discussed a letter he received from SUNY Senate President Ken O'Brien who responded to an e-mail request from UAlbany's Senate Executive Committee concerning the faculty senate role in response to the HEEIA legislations.

GRADUATE STUDENT ORGANIZATION REPORT – NICHOLAS FAHRENKOPF

Nothing to report.

SA (STUDENT ASSOCIATION) – DUSTIN LANTERMAN, ACADEMIC AFFAIRS DIRECTOR, SA

The spring 2010 edition of the *World Within Reach Speaker Series* will feature Howard Dean and Karl Rove, discussing the important issues of today's world.

MSCHE STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT – REED HOYT, UNIVERSITY SENATE REPRESENTATIVE

Nothing to report.

COUNCIL/COMMITTEE REPORTS

CAA (Council on Academic Assessment) - Heidi Andrade, Chair

The Council on Academic Assessment met on February 11, 2010. The chairs of the Program Review and the General Education Assessment Committee provided updates; the potential impact of the new SUNY General Education requirements for the work of each committee was discussed. We also discussed the need for the Graduate Academic Council to review assessment reports from the CAA pertaining to graduate programs. We revisited an earlier discussion of ways to create incentives to engage faculty in constructive assessment and voted to allow programs with extraordinarily effective assessment plans to move to an alternate year reporting schedule. Finally, we continued our review of the Graduate Student Support report and edited a draft response to the Provost.

CAFFECOR (Committee on Academic Freedom, Freedom of Expression, and Community Responsibility) - Susanna Fessler, Chair

Two members of CAFFECOR conducted an "in service" training session for the Res Life professional staff on Wednesday, February 10th. The topic was free speech in the residence halls: what defines it, how to handle borderline situations, and ways to engage the student body in meaningful dialogue that promotes both free speech and diversity. A follow-up session took place with the student staff.

CERS (Committee on Ethics in Research and Scholarship) - John Monfasani, Chair

The Joint CERS-GOV committee of Carolyn MacDonald, Edward Cupoli, and me completed a draft of a revised CERS policy text in December. There have since been conversations with John H. Reilly, the University's Counsel. CERS itself has started to meet concerning the text. When it has finished its deliberations, the text will be sent to GOV and COR for their reaction. We hope to be able to bring the revised CERS policy text to the Senate floor in April.

Chari Range reported that at the last SEC meeting a discussion took place to have the President assist with obtaining the review of the policy from Legal Counsel as quickly as possible.

COR (Council on Research) - James Castracane, Chair

Nothing to report.

CPCA (Council on Promotions and Continuing Appointments) – Carlos Rodriguez, Chair

CPCA has nothing to report.

The Council met on Friday, March 5, and will meet again on March 10th. The Council expects to meet almost every week until the end of the semester.

GAC (Graduate Academic Council) – Laurence Kranich, Chair

At its meeting on March 2, 2010, GAC approved a proposal to deactivate the Russian MA and Certificate of Advanced Study programs. This matter will now go to UPPC before advancing to the full Senate. In addition, the Council acted upon a grievance before its Committee on Admissions and Academic Standing. The Council also discussed the Initial Allocations for 2010-11 Graduate Student Support, distributed by Dean Pryse on February 26, and it continued its discussion of the 2009 GSS Review Final Report.

GOV (Governance Council) – Eric Lifshin, Chair

The Governance Council met on Friday, March 5th and discussed spring elections. A call letter will be sent to all voting faculty asking for nominations for the positions of Senate Vice-Chair and Senate Secretary. GOV members began putting together a slate of nominees for Senator-at-Large positions and those people will be contacted to identify their willingness to serve. In addition, GOV members identified possible candidates for SUNY Senators to fill Senator Lanford's vacancy and for a third SUNY Senator. Call letters will be sent as soon as the volunteer web application is up and running. IT has been contacted to assist with coordination of this effort. Senate Secretary Collier will be contacting the schools and colleges to inform them of pending vacancies in their various departments. GOV's next scheduled meeting is Thursday, March 18.

LISC (Council on Libraries, Information Systems, and Computing) – Gwen Moore, Chair

Report from Dean of Libraries, Mary Casserly: The Libraries are working with Einhorn Yaffee Prescott, an architectural firm chosen last year, to develop a plan for renovating the University Library. A steering committee and working group have been appointed and are meeting today. It will be important to work in close collaboration with those planning the Campus Center renovations in order to assure that services and functions that are needed by the University Community are available in the appropriate places but are not duplicated unnecessarily.

The Library Advisory Committee reported that this committee is looking at issues related to open access journals. OA journals are freely available online. They do not charge subscription fees to libraries or individuals but they cover their publication costs through author fees, endowments, institutional subsidies, sponsorships, etc. The committee is particularly interested in those that charge author fees. Some journals charge lower fees to institutions that have "memberships" to their parent organizations/associations. Some of our faculty have had questions about these memberships and about whether there is funding to support OA journal author fees.

Report from the CIO, Christine Haile: Chris presented the ITS Operating Plan for the July to June fiscal year. Chris distributed the *Office of the CIO Priority Areas 2009-2010* handout to the committee, which highlights ITS priorities for the fiscal year, explained some of the priorities spearheaded for this year, and answered questions from the committee. She stated that most things are on schedule and within budget.

She also reported on UDID (University Digital Database). The software package, known as LUNA, is up and running. Brian Keogh was appointed project manager and is ready to unveil. So far, 2500 objects from the museum archives have been loaded into the system. The next step is to identify areas around the University for departmental or personal content.

Report from IT Committee, Larry Raffalovich: The IT Committee plans to look at the ITS "Draft Strategic Plan." As a result of the meeting on November 23, it was concluded that the University does have the authority to monitor content and usage of one's University-owned machine if it is warranted.

UAC (Undergraduate Academic Council) - Joan Savitt, Chair

UAC passed a bill clarifying and changing the way excuses for student absences can be obtained and reviewed (for Senate vote 3/8). UAC continues to collect and discuss data on the way students who begin their university studies at UA and those who transfer in complete their minors at UA and the problems they encounter in doing so. For example, UAC has learned that about 300 seniors whose degree programs require them to complete a minor are yet to declare one. Four UAC members have been appointed to the Task Force on General Education.

ULC (University Life Council) – Daniel R. Smith, Chair

ULC met on February 8th. Smoking Policy: We are at a point where we can schedule campus *fora* later this term to gain feedback on the proposed policy; we will also be contacting Institutional Research about a survey this coming fall of employees. This year was heavy with surveys due to Middle States and other initiatives so it is impossible to get another survey done. We are also having a yearly discussion with Dr. Lee McElroy, Director of Athletics, about the NCAA academic scores, annually published in spring. One of our items is to discuss divisional, campus, system and NCAA controls for eliminating violations.

UPPC (University Planning and Policy Council) - John Delano, Chair

The two previously scheduled meetings on February 12 and February 26 were cancelled due to (a) key-individuals for agenda items being unable to attend, and (b) scheduling conflict with Strategic Planning Retreat on Feb. 25-26, respectively. Six (6) UPPC members are on the Strategic Planning Committee. Efforts to schedule a UPPC meeting on Friday, Feb.19, were again not successful due to key-individuals for the agenda being unable to attend. The next UPPC meeting is scheduled for March 12 when the agenda will include discussions of (i) a proposal to suspend admission to a M.A. program, (ii) the GSS report, and (iii) a question bearing on the university budget.

NEW BUSINESS

Proposal for Revised Absence Policy:

UAC Chair Savitt opened the discussion by informing the Senate of the current situation where almost 20% of the student population is obtaining excuses for absences from the dean's office. The bill being introduced is an attempt to have faculty make some determinations on excusing absences of less than one week. The dean's office would provide support to students who have acceptable excuses for missing exams and those of a personal nature. Students who experience long-term illness exceeding two weeks would be responsible for obtaining a determination from a physician. The bill attempts to be rational in having faculty determine if students have acceptable excuses. It would also restrict the time frame in which students would be able to make a claim of illnesses.

Senator Lanford pointed out that the bill should include the same language as the rationale concerning make-up exams. Chair Savitt indicated that it is intended to be in the bill and the bill will be modified to reflect that. Senate members questioned how they would know if a student has returned to campus since the student is expected to notify their instructor within one week of their return. Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, Sue Faerman, informed the Senate that the doctor's note will indicate the time period and students are required to provide her office with this information.

There was a discussion concerning language that addresses absences for participation in athletic competition. Since students know well in advance what the schedule is, it was suggested changing the language to "on or before the official deadline to add a course". A motion to accept this language was made and seconded, and approved through a vote. A motion to approve the bill was made and seconded and the bill passed.

Resolution on Faculty Evaluation of Administrators

Chair Range opened the floor for discussion. SUNY Senator Lanford stated that this is a fairly common process and chancellors and the SUNY wide senate have, in the past, advocated for this. He did not disagree with President Philip's concerns but believes that in order for the process to be useful, feedback is required. Chair Range stated that the Middle States self-study does not recommend that faculty do this and doing so would be inconsistent with the report. Sue Faerman stated that in Middle States, performance appraisal literature is different from assessment literature. Middle States specifically addresses job performance which is different from evaluating individuals and different from assessments. This would be a more summative process. She made a motion to strike the reference to the Middle States report in the resolution and the motion was seconded. Senate Secretary Collier indicated that striking that portion of the resolution puts the focus on administrators. An approval of an administrator is not necessarily an approval of the overall performance of a unit and voiced his support for evaluating units. Ms. Faerman agreed to withdraw her motion if the resolution addressed administrative units.

A debate ensued as to whether the resolution should address administrators or administrative units. Senator Berman voiced support for evaluating administrators with the argument that since administrators regularly evaluate faculty, faculty should have the opportunity to evaluate administrators. GOV Chair Lifshin responded that in the discussion he and Chair Range had with President Philip, there may be some things faculty are not in a position to evaluate. The President felt it would be more important to evaluate services to determine if those services are fulfilling faculty needs. Secretary Collier supported the evaluation of administrative units. He stated that evaluating units would allow for improvement of services and identifying those that may no longer be needed. Evaluation of an administrator may not reveal very much about the service.

CAA Chair Andrade suggested having the Executive Committee identify a committee that would explore the process for evaluating administrative units. This was supported by Senator Gaffney and additionally suggested that we would need a new resolution. Senator Lanford said that by changing to administrative units we could ask

for the formation of a committee and he supported changing the resolution to administrative units out of respect for the concerns expressed by President Philip.

Chair Range asked if there were any objections to changing the resolution to administrative units. Marjorie Pryse, Dean of Graduate Studies, felt that the faculty is seeking control of the superstructures that control their lives. She found it curious that the Senate would want to restrict the resolution to administrative units. She further stated that governance should be included since there is no mechanism for faculty to evaluate the Senate and since it is a policy making unit it should be evaluated. She made a motion to have the faculty evaluate governance. UAC Chair Savitt responded that faculty has the opportunity to make that evaluation through its election process.

Chair Range made a motion to extend the meeting for an additional fifteen minutes. The motion was seconded and approved.

A motion was then made to close the debate on Dean Pryse's amendment which was seconded and approved. Chair Range then asked for a vote on the amendment to include the evaluation of governance. A vote was taken and the amendment was defeated.

Senator Lanford made a motion to amend the resolution by changing administrators to administrative units and to delete the word "job" in the first whereas. Objections were voiced by Senators Merbler and Berman who felt the focus should remain on administrators. Chair Kranich said we are mandating that the entire staff of a unit should be included in a faculty evaluation. Dr. Delano used an analogy with Toyota cars by suggesting that the quality of the product (e.g., Toyota cars) was the ultimate responsibility of the person-in-charge of that product (e.g., President Akio Toyoda). Therefore, evaluation of UAlbany administrative units/functions would be largely inseparable from evaluation of the administrator's effectiveness. Chair Delano further stated that administrators provide cohesion by exhibiting leadership and responsibility, and he opposed the amendment. Senator Barthel inquired about the intent of the Executive Committee. Senator Lanford said he believed the intention was for evaluation of administrators. Senator Lanford was now in favor of administrative units based on the words he heard from President Philip. Although administrative units appeared vague, formation of a committee could develop the proposal more clearly. The intent of the SEC was further clarified by Chair Range. He informed the Senate that the starting point began with materials received from the SUNY-wide faculty Senate which supports evaluation of administrators, and from two university center campuses, Binghamton and Stony Brook, which currently are engaged in a process of evaluating administrators. He informed the Senate that we can decide what is best for UAlbany. Senator Berman stated that we could still show respect for the President and have a process of evaluating administrators. GOV Chair Lifshin provided additional clarification in support of administrative units. In the conversation that he and Chair Range had with the President Philip, the President had expressed concerns, from a human resources perspective, of making information available to faculty that might be shared more broadly than desired and, that confidentiality could be compromised.

A motion was made to extend the meeting for an additional fifteen minutes. The motion was seconded and approved. Chair Lifshin continued with his discussion with President Philip. The President had no overall objections to the concept but he felt the most useful results would come from the evaluation of service provided. Senator Barthel made a motion to refer the resolution back to the Executive Committee and the motion was seconded. Senator Lanford spoke against doing so. Chair Range asked for a count of the Senate membership present for purposes of a vote. The presence of a quorum was lacking and the debate ceased.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:23 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,
Gail Cameron, Recorder