

COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE SUMMARIES

University Senate, November 16, 2009

As submitted to Dick Collier, Secretary, University Senate

UNIVERSITY SENATE CHAIR'S REPORT – R. Michael Range, Chair

SUNY UFS Meeting: In his capacity as CGL (Campus Governance Leader), Chair Range attended the SUNY UFS Fall Plenary meeting at SUNY IT in Utica on October 23 and 24, 2009. A meeting of the CGL group provided opportunity to compare the implementation of shared governance across many SUNY campuses. Practices ranged from the CGL being part of the President's Cabinet and thus formally in the loop at the highest level, to situations where governance leaders are informed of important decisions in advance of the broader campus community. Manfred Philipp, the President of the CUNY University Faculty Senate, was also present and reported on some of the practices at CUNY. In contrast to SUNY, at CUNY, faculty governance has a strong voice which is not just advisory but makes policy decisions, subject to Board of Trustees review, relating to the academic status, role, rights, and freedoms of the faculty, university level educational and instructional matters, and research and scholarly activities of university-wide import. The same structure is implemented at the campus level.

MSCHE Self Study: The draft of the Self Study Report has been released to the University Community for comments and suggestions. At its last meeting, the SEC and Vice Provost Sue Faerman, co-chair of the MSCHE Self Study Steering Committee, agreed on having individual councils thoroughly review those chapters that relate to their respective charges, as well as comment on other aspects of the report that may be discussed. **Councils should submit their comments and recommendations to the SEC and to the co-chairs of the Steering Committee by December 7, 2009.** Furthermore, two open forums have been scheduled for faculty and staff to discuss the draft report, as follows: Monday, November 23rd, 3:30-5:00pm, Campus Center 375 and Tuesday, November 24th, 10:00-11:30am, Campus Center Assembly Hall. *All senators are encouraged to consult with their constituencies and to participate in at least one of these events.*

Selection Committee for Distinguished Teaching/Service Professors. Following recommendations of the Governance Council, the membership for the 2009/10 committee has been approved by President Philip. The members are Distinguished Professors E. Acosta-Belen, A. Applebee, and E. Hannan (President's appointee), Distinguished Service Professor G. Spitze, Distinguished Teaching Professors J. Acker, H. Hirsch, and R. Rosellini, and Senate Chair Range (ex officio).

UFS (University Faculty Senator's Report) – William Lanford & Daniel D. White, SUNY Senators

[Please see attachment at end of this "Summaries" report.]

GSO (Graduate Student Organization) – Melanie Breganza, GSO President

Nothing to report.

SA (Student Association) – Josh Sussman, SA President

Nothing to report.

MSCHE Steering Committee Report – Reed Hoyt, University Senate Representative

Nothing to report.

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

The CAA met on October 21 to 1) identify examples of best practice in the Student Learning Objectives reports to share at the Provost's assessment seminar on November 5, 2) discuss incentives for carefully crafting the SLO reports, and 3) generate feedback on the most recent draft of the First Year Experience report. [CAA's response to the Provost regarding FYE has already been distributed to SEC members.] Several high quality SLO reports were identified. A memo about the FYE report was sent to the Provost on October 23rd. The discussion of incentives was tabled.

Evaluation of General Education Assessment process (10/27/09): This memorandum outlines the General Education Assessment Committee's plans for the 2009-2010 academic year.

The GEAC plans to both carry out its current charge and conduct a much needed review of the General Education Assessment process. In order to do so, we have successfully sought additional volunteers from the teaching faculty, including those with teaching and assessment experience in the General Education program. We now have 12 members, including five members from the College of Arts and Sciences.

The University at Albany campus has been conducting General Education assessment according to its General Education Plan since 2002. As part of that plan, the General Education Assessment Committee (formerly the General Education Assessment Subcommittee of the General Education Committee) has been charged with reviewing the assessment materials and results and making recommendations to the administration to improve the process and the program.

The General Education Assessment Committee has found that the assessments have yielded some important insights into the General Education program, and prompted a few changes to the process. There have even been a few faculty who have embraced the process and used the results from their own classes to make positive adjustments to their teaching and curriculum choices. Most faculty, however, are skeptical about the usefulness of the process,

and justifiably so, since under the current plan, the results obtained are often too vague to support change to either pedagogy or program. The Council has concluded, therefore, that an evaluation of the current process is needed to address the concerns that have been raised.

It has, therefore, been resolved by the Council that in 2009-2010 the General Education Assessment Committee will conduct a review of the assessment process. Its intention is to find ways to streamline the assessment process for faculty and develop a revision of the campus' General Education Assessment Plan. We anticipate that the results of this review will lead to better use of faculty time and produce results that will be more useful to the faculty and to the General Education program.

The Council will develop a timeline to guide the work of the General Education Assessment Committee in October. In general, it would begin by gathering background information, then use the fall semester for developing an outline and consulting with the Council. In the spring semester, it will open up the discussion further, providing multiple opportunities for input from additional faculty. A final revision of the plan is expected to be ready for Council approval in March and for the University Senate in April. If it passes, it would go to GEAR for approval over the summer, in time for implementation in Fall 2010.

The CAA also met on November 3. Henryk Baran shared information about a summer conference on College Portraits, an initiative that claims to provide "a source of basic, comparable information about public colleges and universities presented in a user-friendly format" (see <http://www.collegeportraits.org/>). SUNY-Albany participated in beta testing several years ago. The Council asked to be informed if our campus considers participation in the future.

We also discussed potential nominees to the upcoming strategic planning group. Finally, we provided feedback on the rubric used to provide guidance and feedback regarding the Student Learning Outcomes Annual Reports. The general consensus was that the rubric was well written and likely to be useful to department chairs as they prepare their reports and interpret the feedback from IRPE and the CAA. Several suggestions for revision were made.

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

We continue to work on bringing policy into a cohesive whole. We've also been asked by Student Success to do an "in-service" for students/young professional staff in the Residence Halls on First Amendment issues, especially as they might pertain to the issues they face on a daily basis. This event will probably take place in the Spring 2010 semester.

CAFFECOR met on Monday, November 9th to discuss the revisions to the Community Rights and Responsibilities document. This document is revised every three years, and the current version "expires" in 2010. The Vice President for Student Success will work with CAFFECOR on these revisions. Our intent is to bring the document in line with current New York State law and practice.

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

The ad hoc Joint Committee of CERS and GOV charged with revising the CERS policy document and consisting of Carolyn MacDonald and John Monfasani of CERS and Edward Cupoli of GOV, met for the first time on Monday, October 26th. It has been meeting weekly henceforth and making good progress. We have already begun to schedule consultations with parties outside of the Joint Committee in December. We remain hopeful that CERS will be able to present the revised document to the Senate early in the Spring semester.

COR (Council on Research) – James Castracane, Chair

Since the last general Senate meeting, COR has convened (October 21st) and several issues were discussed:

- 1). At this meeting, we had Provost Philips attend to discuss the integration of the Rockefeller Institute for Government (RIG) into UAlbany. The search for a permanent Director is ongoing and several members of COR raised questions about the Council's role in the interview process. It was recommended that COR contact President Philip to see what level of input would be appropriate.
- 2). It was decided that COR would contact Interim Director Tom Gais to invite him to attend a future meeting of COR to discuss the situation.
- 3). A discussion of the Library faculty's eligibility for participation in the FRAP B award led to a recommendation to IVPR Dias that this Library faculty should be included subject to the same conditions as all other units: Faculty FTE and indirect cost expenditures. In a memo from IVPR Dias to Dean Casserly, these conditions were specified.

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

CPCA has nothing to report.

GAC (Graduate Academic Council) – Laurence Kranich, Chair

GAC met on November 9. First, the Council approved revised membership lists for its standing committees. Next, there was discussion of the statutory responsibility of GAC vis-à-vis the GSS program assessments as specified in the Charter of the University Senate. This was referred to GOV for interpretation. The Council approved several measures: (1) a proposal by the Departments of Biological Sciences and Computer Science for an Advanced Graduate Certificate in Professional Science Management (this will come before the Senate at a later meeting), (2) a proposal by the School of Public Health to add an online course, HEpi 625, Zoonoses, to its Public Health Surveillance & Preparedness Certificate and to give students the choice between taking this and HEpi 605, Infectious Disease Epidemiology, and (3) a proposal by the School of Education to revise the MS in ETAP program by no longer requiring ETap 530, Writing and Reading across the Curriculum, since students are already required to take six hours of literacy-related courses for

teacher certification.

Other items of discussion were (1) inconsistencies between the information appearing on departmental web pages and Graduate policies, (2) the process for revising and approving the Guidelines for Graduate Assistantships, Fellowships and Tuition Scholarships, and (3) the Middle States Commission on Higher Education draft self-study.

Finally, the Council approved proposals by the School of Education to change the names of several degree programs so that the titles registered with the State Education Department conform with current usage.

GOV (Governance Council) – Eric Lifshin, Chair

At its October 30th meeting, GOV continued its discussion of how best to fulfill its functions of selecting/nominating members as requested by non-University governance committees, task forces, and the like. When the council is requested to fill a vacancy on an *existing* committee, the Chair was directed to ask the person making the request to provide GOV: the names of the members who are continuing on the body, when their terms end, and their affiliation; the criteria or credentials (rank, affiliation, etc.) desired/required for the new member(s); and any special circumstances that suggest a need for particular experience or expertise of the new member(s). A form may be developed for this purpose and posted on GOV's web pages. When a new committee or task force is being formed, council members agreed that requests received on "short notice" may not allow sufficient deliberation for GOV to meet the spirit of formal consultation as specified in the *Faculty Bylaws*.

GOV's committees for 2009-2010: (1) The council membership meets the criteria for the Committee on Liaison and Elections, which meet as a committee of the whole (chaired by the Senate Secretary *ex officio*). (2) The council reaffirmed its decision last year not to constitute the Committee on Assessment of Governance and Consultation until the council can be informed by the Self-Study draft, campus community responses to the draft, and the final Self-Study document. (3) As stipulated in the *Senate Charter*, the Committee on Council Nominations will be formed later in the spring term and chaired by the Vice Chair. The Committee on Mediation is constituted only when triggered by a call for it, the circumstances determining the membership of the committee (i.e., not including anyone whose membership might be perceived as having a possible conflict of interest in the issue involved); Mediation Committees are normally chaired by the Vice Chair (or designee, if the Vice Chair might be perceived as having a possible conflict of interest.)

SIRF Committee: The council selected the four University governance-appointed representatives on the Course and Instructor Evaluation Policy Committee in addition to the chairs of CAA, CPCA and UPPC. These names have been given to Bruce Szelest.

Strategic Planning Committee: GOV began deliberation on selection of Teaching Faculty and Professional Faculty for the SPC and a list of nominations was started. The Chair emphasized the breadth, historical perspective, and "vision" desired for the committee. On November 6th GOV held a special meeting where, since it was learned other groups had been requested to submit suggested members, GOV voted to send the Provost a long list of 85 names as *suggestions*. On November 9th Chair Lifshin sent this list to the Provost, noting that GOV, in accordance with the Bylaws, awaited her list of suggested member culled from all the lists received. Instead, as members arrived at another special meeting of GOV called for 4 p.m. Friday November 13th to discuss Excellence Awards Selection Committees [see below] GOV was informed that the Provost had made "final" selections and was planning to send out invitations at 5 that day. It was agreed that a future GOV meeting or the Senate Executive Committee would need to discuss whether the Strategic Planning Committee could be considered to have been formed through appropriate formal consultation with University governance. Members pointed out several omissions that seemed serious, but noted that some of the individuals omitted may be included as part-time instructors, alumni, emeriti, etc. Although the Strategic Planning Committee was described as having around 35 members, given the importance that the activity be seen to have been done well and credibly it was noted that additional members could be added, and this will be discussed at GOV's November 20th meeting. However, the council felt compelled to point out the following very serious concerns, and this information was delivered to the Provost before 5 p.m. on Friday:

1.No part-time faculty were included; 2. no members were included from English, biology, or art, music, or theatre); 3. there were two members from the School of Education and also two from the School of Business; and 4. the council members were in strong agreement that both the representative from one college and one school appeared to lack the experience, historical perspective and understanding desired compared to other candidates who had been suggested from those units.

Graduate Course Amendment: In a special meeting on November 10th, GOV agreed that no wording clarification was needed in the Graduate Course Amendment passed by the Senate last year and that arguments raised against the amendment had no merit. Chair Lifshin was instructed to convey this reaffirmation to the President.

Excellence Awards Committees: GOV was asked to approve a list of members for those committees sent from the Provost's Office. It was discovered that while the local President's Excellence Awards are not bound by external regulations, if the local recipients are to be eligible for the Chancellor's Excellence Awards: "The campus selection committees for these awards shall be appointed by the campus governance structure (as is currently done by each campus for appointment of other faculty committees) with the concurrence of the campus president. The committee shall include the chair (or chair's designee) of the campus faculty governance organization; one member, designated by the campus president, to act in an *ex officio* capacity; and faculty and student representation...**Failure by a campus to comply with the procedures established for the**

selection of nominees will result in the disqualification of all nominees from that institution.”

(<http://www.suny.edu/facultySenate/chancawdsexcl.cfm>)

At its November 13th meeting, GOV chose the Teaching and Professional Faculty membership of the committees, largely though not entirely from the suggestions provided by the Provost's Office. These lists are in the process of being sent to the President for his consideration along with a request that he designate his representative to each committee. Senate Chair Range has already chosen his designee to each committee. The committees also require a student member, who should be selected by SA. In its discussion GOV noted that the information from the Provost included mention of a "Convener." Since each committee has a dual purpose of picking local President's awards and in most cases (though not for part-time faculty or teaching assistants, for instance) choosing persons appropriate for the Chancellor's awards, GOV thought it appropriate that the President's representative on each committee also convene the group and preside over the group's election of a member to chair the committee. The designees of the President and the Senate Chair are voting members on the committee (and eligible to chair). There is no place on the committees for non-members, and SUNY does not recognize "convener" status. It was also noticed that last year the Teaching Awards Committee selected only 6 members, two of whom were in the part-time/TA groups, leaving only 4 eligible for the Chancellor's Award, even though SUNY apportionment allows UAlbany to have nominated **eight** full-time Teaching Faculty for that Chancellor's Award. GOV hopes each committee will be able to solicit sufficient nominations to submit UAlbany's full complement of nominees to SUNY this year.

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

LISC has nothing to report.

UAC (Undergraduate Academic Council) – Joan Savitt, Chair

UAC has been studying possible revisions to rules for minors. UAC discussed Chapter 9 of the Middle States draft document. Committees have been reviewing curricular changes and general education policies. We expect to bring several bills to the December 14th Senate meeting related to these matters. In the spring of 2010, UAC will meet on Wednesday mornings.

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

The University Life Council met several times since the last senate meeting. We continue to discuss the implementation of the smoking policy and will likely form a subcommittee to address the issues raised. We did receive some rough estimates from Facilities Management on the number of person-hours and the cost of cleaning up trash produced from smoking, and the council is looking at other models of smoke-free campuses in the US.

ULC heard a presentation by Clarence McNeill, with assistance from Mr. John Murphy, about the Office of Conflict Resolution and Civic Responsibility. Mr. McNeill distributed the *Community Rights and Responsibilities* document and reviewed his office's mission, along with the structure of the judicial system. We have requested an update on the number of academic integrity cases adjudicated by his office over the past several years, in line with Senate legislation which requires such reporting. ULC will be meeting to discuss the Middle States Self-Study draft.

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

The UPPC met for 90-minutes on Thursday, October 22, to discuss two items on its agenda. **(i)** Strategic planning model; and **(ii)** Freshman Year Experience Task Force report. Prior to addressing these two topics, the Council clarified its understanding of the discussion at its October 8th meeting on the issue of receiving information about the University's annual, State-appropriated budget for the last several years.

Strategic Planning model: The model described by Provost Phillips at the October 8th meeting was discussed. Several suggestions emerged during the October 22nd discussion. **(a)** Page 2 of the Provost's handout listed several kinds of documents that would be consulted during the strategic planning process. The UPPC members suggested that these documents should be explicitly identified as belonging to several categories in order to highlight their different sources and pedigrees. In addition, more documents should be included on that list, including published financial projections for New York State and student enrollment projections. Since these documents are publicly available and come from authoritative sources, they could provide valuable perspectives during the University's strategic planning process.

Freshman Year Experience (FYE) Task Report: **(a)** With the onset of a strategic planning process, concern was raised whether embarking on a major academic initiative (FYE) prior to having a strategic plan would be premature. **(b)** The estimated costs of the three conceptual FYE models were generally considered to be higher than needed. **(c)** It was not clear to the UPPC members whether the elements for successfully recruiting and retaining high-quality students were adequately known. Such information would be critical for developing a successful and sustainable FYE program. **(d)** Since transfer students constitute a major proportion of students at the University, concern was expressed that transfer students, not only freshmen students, also warranted an FYE experience, if one was to be designed. **(e)** If ~90 sections of FYE course would be needed each year, concern was expressed about how to incentivize faculty to participate in a sustainable program.

Another UPPC meeting that was scheduled for Thursday afternoon, November 5, was canceled due to a lack of agenda items. The next UPPC meeting is scheduled for Thursday afternoon, November 19, which has a *full* agenda.