

**University at Albany, State University of New York  
Governance Council**

**Friday, October 16, 2009**  
Eric Lifshin, Chair

**Minutes**

**Present:** Nan Carroll, Richard Collier, Edward Cupoli, Jane Domaracki, Reed Hoyt, Sung Bok Kim, Eric Lifshin, Candace Merbler, John Pipkin, John Schmidt, Daniel White

**Guests:** Susan Phillips

The meeting convened at 4:00 pm.

**MINUTES:**

The minutes of October 2, 2009 were approved.

**CHAIR'S REPORT BY ERIC LIFSHIN**

The Freedom of Expression policy was sent to the Vice President of Student Success, Chris Bouchard, for review and forwarding to the University Council. Recommendations for the DST/ DSP nomination committee have been forwarded to the President. Of those recommendations, one person has declined. GOV will make an additional recommendation (see Old Business).

Senate Chair Range has suggested to Chair Lifshin that a portion of today's meeting with Provost Phillips be used to obtain further clarification on the amendment concerning graduate courses (Bill No. 0809-09). However, the Provost believes the discussion needs to take place with a smaller group in greater detail.

Edward Cupoli has accepted his nomination to the joint CERS and GOV Ad Hoc Committee and he will report back to GOV on the progress of the committee.

Chair Lifshin clarified the portion of his report from October 2<sup>nd</sup> concerning the President's request for him to review the UA Faculty *Bylaws* and *Senate Charter*. He stated that on certain occasions he will speak on behalf of the Governance Council but will make that clear when he does.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Strategic Planning: Provost Susan Phillips**

Provost Phillips informed GOV members there were two issues she would like GOV to move on quickly. The first item she discussed was Strategic Planning. She provided a handout which included

a draft of the design principles and the three phases of the process. The Provost has met with a number of constituencies across campus to obtain their input and now asks for GOV's input into the design and to begin thinking about names for assembling the strategic planning committee. The Provost discussed in further detail the design principles and timeline for the plan which is to have it completed in one year. Launching of the plan should occur sometime between Thanksgiving and the end of the semester. A large part of the campus has participated in the Middle States process and this could allow the campus to forward quickly. The SUNY-wide strategic plan will be occurring at this time and the University will want to stay in step with that plan.

A discussion followed the Provost's presentation with relevant questions concerning GOV's role in the process. The Provost was able to confirm that GOV would be the body through which recommendations for committee members will be made. She informed council members that they will need to begin this process in about two weeks, followed by ideas for the design.

Other questions arose concerning what has been done in the past. The suggestion was made to review the history of past strategic plans to see what was accomplished, what worked and what did not. In answering a question about how this would relate to the budget, Provost Phillips said that if this had been done three years ago, it may have provided guideposts on how to proceed in our current budget situation. The outcome of the new plan will assist in guiding the University in what steps to take next.

### **Honors College Governing Board:**

Provost Phillips informed GOV that a member of the board has stepped down and she would like to see a recommendation representative of the sciences to fill the vacancy. She provided a list of possible names and there was a discussion that, in addition to the natural sciences, representation from computer science and math could provide the appropriate component to fill the vacancy. Several names were discussed and the Provost was provided a list of six names for consideration.

### **SIRF Advisory Committee:**

Senate Secretary Richard Collier provided background, informing GOV members that paper course evaluations will no longer be used. A bid has been made to a company to provide an electronic SIRF. The questions that have made up the evaluations have not had recent review. This has prompted a request from Assistant Vice President Bruce Szelest, to form a committee to review the evaluation, and he has asked for governance input. The benefits of an electronic system were discussed. The system would afford departments the flexibility to ask their own questions and allow open ended remarks, as well as getting quicker responses. This will also be an important tool for junior faculty. Also discussed was how to assure that students complete their evaluations. A few scenarios from other schools were mentioned that could be effective, such as putting a hold on grades until evaluations are submitted.

Secretary Collier reviewed the initial membership that has been proposed for the committee. In addition to members of the faculty, representation is needed from the Student Association and Graduate Student Organization. A discussion ensued on the process for providing the membership. Chair Lifshin asked to have suggestions for the process and recommendations provided via e-mail. The recommendations should include justification for their appropriateness. These will be compiled into a matrix and discussed at the next meeting. The committee will need to ensure a high level of participation and will need to respond to concerns of the community.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Additional Recommendation for DTP/DSP Nomination Committee:**

A discussion took place for a name to provide to the committee and a selection was made. The recommendation will be made to Provost Phillips.

**NEW AGENDA ITEM:**

Chair Lifshin received a message from the Director of Personal Safety, Thomas Gebhardt, asking for faculty members to serve on the campus advisory committee for security. Candace Merbler informed Council members that she would be serving on that Committee.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:33 pm.

Respectfully submitted by  
Gail Cameron, Recorder