COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE SUMMARIES

Senate Executive Committee, November 2, 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. On a number of occasions the CUNY Faculty Senate has used FOIL requests to obtain information from the highest administrative level. Chancellor Zimpher attended the UFS meeting on Saturday morning and gave a very clear overview about the current budget challenges. The Budget Advisory Group she has formed (our President George Philip is one of the members) is working intensively to formulate a plan to be submitted to the BOT at their November 17 meeting to address the current $90m cut ordered by Governor Patterson.

MSCHE Self Study: Sue Faerman, co-chair of the MSCHE Self Study Steering Committee, contacted Chair Range with plans to have at least one faculty forum to allow the faculty to discuss and provide feedback on the soon to be distributed Self Study Draft Report. After further discussions, two such meetings are currently planned for the second half of November. A discussion of procedures for review of the report by the senate has been placed on the agenda for today's meeting. The Chair has invited the Steering Committee's co-chairs to join in that discussion.

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

The SUNY University Faculty Senate Fall 2009 Plenary session took place at SUNY IT in Utica New York on October 23-24. Bill Lanford and Dan White attended as Senators and Michael Range as a Campus Governance Leader. Resolutions passed by the University Faculty Senate (UFS) The full resolution text and vote for the Fall 2009 Plenary at SUNY IT in Utica will be available on the SUNY website: http://www.suny.edu/facultysenate/. In brief the resolutions were:

1. Reporting the count amendment: Amendment to bylaws to be voted on in the next plenary session. The membership will vote on whether the actual vote count will be reported at the end of each election as required by Robert's rules.

2. Nursing resolution: Unanimous vote to add the UFS to the list of supporters of NY Assembly Bill A2489/Senate Bill S294 which creates a new requirement for registered nurses to earn a bachelor's degree before licensure.

3. Resolution to reactivate the Faculty Exchange Scholars program: This resolution recommends to the Chancellor that resources be devoted to reinstituting the Faculty exchange scholar program that would send prominent SUNY scholars to other SUNY campuses to communicate with students and colleagues around the system.

4. Student mobility resolution: UFS unanimously resolved to support the plan developed by the UFS Special Joint Committee on Articulation and Transfer. The Student Mobility plan as it is called by the Chancellor aims to ease the transition for transfer students from two year institutions to four year institution. The SUNY Provost is working with Governance to make recommendations to individual campuses about courses and course titles.

The Interim Provost (David Lavallee), Vice Chancellor (Phillip Wood), and the Chancellor gave reports to the UFS. All three leaders gave frank and thorough reports of the state of academic, finance, and strategic planning for the system. The Interim Provost spoke about improving the ability of students within the system to move from one institution to another with as little disruption as possible. There is a high level of agreement around the system for courses like introductory chemistry for example while other courses like Anatomy and Physiology are taught at various levels throughout the system. The Provost will be working with individual campuses to align some of these courses for easier portability. Vice Chancellor Wood gave a presentation about the current budget situation which reflects what we have been hearing at our campus. The Chancellor has been making connections with the leadership in the budget office to try to develop a stronger relationship between the agencies and to help these leaders better understand the constraints and special considerations a system of higher education requires.

The Chancellor spoke about her strategic planning program that began with her visit to all 64 SUNY campuses. She invited all faculty to go to the strategic planning web site to see the progress and offer suggestions and questions http://www.suny.edu/strategicplan/. The planning staff have an email address that can be used in addition to Twitter and Facebook StrategicPlanning@suny.edu. The strategic planning web sites of a number of campuses are posted on the SUNY site as well. The themes are: the economic revitalization of New York and the improvement of the quality of life of our citizens through a strong SUNY system.

Interested UAlbany constituents should feel free to see me to discuss the events in more detail. Dan White, UFS Senator

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 because the MSCHE Steering Committee has not met.

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.

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.

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 will be meeting weekly henceforth and will shortly begin consulting with relevant persons in the faculty and administration. The goal is to have a document that CERS can present to the Senate early in the Spring semester.

COR (Council on Research) – James Castracane, Chair

During the last COR meeting (October 21st), multiple issues were discussed. The COR sub-committees are nearly fully populated; few more "volunteers" are being sought/coerced. Two items, in particular, surfaced:

Acquisition of Centers/Institutes by UAlbany: COR involvement in the search Susan Phillips, Provost responded to questions about Rockefeller Institute for Government regarding what happens at UAlbany for this center. RIG is now an existing center at SUNY and is legitimately under the auspices of UAlbany. The search committee is defined by the Chancellor; therefore, not an opportunity for a COR member to become a member. Furthermore, the search started before the decision was made to move the institute to UAlbany. A few members changed and President George Philip is now the chair of the search committee. Jeffrey Straussman, Dean of Rockefeller College, is also on the committee.

FRAP Eligibility for University Libraries After some discussion, Elaine Bergman motioned to recommend to the Interim Vice President for Research that University Libraries be included in the FRAP B calculation which was seconded by Danny Goodwin. The Council on Research voted unanimously to make the recommendation to the Interim Vice President for Research Dias.

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

CPCA has nothing to report.

GAC (Graduate Academic Council) – Laurence Kranich, Chair

GAC has nothing to report.

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, whose membership meets the criteria for the Committee on Liaison and Elections, will 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, by campus community responses to the draft, and by 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.)

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

The council approved a faculty member who volunteered to fill a position on the Safety Advisory Committee. Chair Lifshin will forward this name to Tom Gebhardt.

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 desired for the committee (campus, academic program, alumni, rank/Distinguished, personal descriptors, etc.) It was agreed that GOV members would send Gail Cameron additional names (with rationale, affiliations, etc.) by this close of business Wednesday, November 4th, and that the Chair would ask elected faculty on the SEC to submit names to Gail as well by that deadline. On November 6th GOV will hold a special meeting at its 4 pm Friday meeting time to make final selections. Suggestions were also made for members who are deans, members of the Classified Staff, and emeriti; the council agreed that such names, as well as perhaps those of undergraduate and graduate students, would be passed on to the Provost as *suggestions* for inclusion, though GOV presumes representatives of those constituencies have received a similar request from the Provost.

In addition to the Strategic Planning Committee, the special November 6th meeting will be devoted to the charge from the President and SEC to determine if there is a need to clarify wording of the Graduate Course Amendment passed by the Senate last 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 is exploring making minors optional and substituting instead a requirement for a certain amount of coursework at the upper level. At this point in our discussions, "upper level" might be defined as courses numbered 300 or above, or it might be defined using the rules allowed now in minors, that is, as "courses with prerequisites". The "certain amount of coursework" is also far from decided.

Before moving forward, we will be collecting some relevant data:

(a) we will be researching how our current majors would fit either model, in particular comparing majors of 36 credits with combined majors in the range of 60 credits, to be sure that any rules we might create will not add requirements to a student completing a combined major now unless we determine that such an increase should be instituted for all students.

(b) We are also looking for statistical data from other SUNYs who do not have minors to see how many of their students do complete minors to estimate the effect such a rule might have at UA. We can only predict that demands on some departments might increase under certain scenarios and wonder how departments might restrict entry into their advanced courses if they were overwhelmed.

We do not plan at this point to alter the residence requirements in UA's majors and minors, but might have to make some new rules for students who do not elect minors to be sure that a sufficient amount of advanced work is done in UAlbany's courses.

The goal will be to define a UA degree which is at least as strong as our current one that also allows students some additional flexibility in how they prepare themselves for the future.

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

ULC has met once since the senate meeting. We continue to discuss the implementation of 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.

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.