<h1 style="text-align:center">SEC Chair's Report for SEC meeting of September 1, 2021
Timothy D. Sergay, Chair</h1>

Introductory remarks: I do not presume that all members of the Senate Executive Committee (SEC) and the Senate itself already know me. I stress the teamwork aspect of the new Senate leadership circle, which operationally I regard as made up of four people, not three, not just the immediate past chair, the current chair, and the current vice chair (Sean Rafferty, Timothy Sergay, Sydney Faught)—I also consult closely and all but constantly with the Senate secretary Chris Poehlmann, whom I regard as something like a radio producer in the studio for whoever happens to be sitting behind the microphone.

The difficulty and humanness of all politics for me is reflected in a famous bon mot by the Russian prime minister who served under Boris Yeltsin, Viktor Chernomyrdin: "We wanted things to work out for the best, but they worked out the way they *always* do…" His accidental wisdom is not necessarily that politics always fails, but that it's always skirting failure. Jacob Bronowski made very similar remarks about the progress of science in his famous essay series of the mid-1970s *The Ascent of Man*.

I remind SEC members of the **function of the SEC** under Charter VII.5. *The Executive Committee shall review proposals and agenda items and may recommend for or against them. The Executive Committee shall either refer a proposal to an appropriate Council or place it on the Senate agenda. The Executive Committee may not prevent such items from appearing on the Senate Agenda.* My first two priorities as chair are this year's staffing-up effort, still in progress, and the overall improvement of the Senate's communicative functions.

Filling Senate vacancies: I report coordinated email nudges from Senate leadership to various deans of schools and colleges to beat the bushes for more senators.

Secretary Poehlmann notes that council chairs need to be reminded of their **monthly and annual reporting duties** and the need to update their respective web pages at https://www.albany.edu/universitysenate/councils-and-committees.php.

Arranging a new administrative support person under Charter VI.1.7 for both SEC and Senate, to be "designated by the President." We are on track to define duties for Judy Lasher, the officer manager at ITLAL, who will inherit this role from Elizabeth Gray, who departed last year.

The degree of stenographic burden on the "recorder" at SEC and Senate functions depends on **the model we establish for the minutes of the Senate** as a whole and all its councils and committees. Recalling that the Senate is a "Robert-governed" deliberative body under Bylaws II.7.6, Senate leadership is in agreement that we should strive toward the model of minutes prescribed in *Robert's Rules of Order* (RONR) §48 "Minutes and Reports of Officers": "In an ordinary society, the minutes should contain mainly a record of what was *done* at the meeting, not what was *said* by the members" (468).

Discussion of the problematic aspects of maintaining, during Zoom sessions of the full Senate, **the "everyone to everyone" mode of the Zoom chat area** concluded in a clear consensus

within SEC in favor of disabling that feature for the first and subsequent meetings of the Senate. SEC's specific responsibility for such measures is clear under Bylaws II.4.2: "The Executive Committee shall be responsible for the general operation of the Senate by making recommendations for *improving the operation and maintaining the orderly process of the Senate.*"

Previewing of **coming administrative/political issues for the Senate** turned to the expected migration of the SUNY system from one learning management system, Blackboard, to Desire2Learn's Brightspace, and briefly, in my chair's report, to the need to process in some way or other the report of the chair of the 2021-22 Shared Governance Task Force, which is now posted to the Senate website (https://www.albany.edu/universitysenate/assets/Shared%20Governance%20Task%20Force%20Report%20Final%20Draft%2009%2006%202021.pdf).