

**University at Albany  
State University of New York**

**2005-2006 University Senate Executive Committee  
Monday, January 30, 2006, 3:30pm – 5:30pm**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Present:** J. P. Abraham, N. Chiuchiolo, R. Collier, D. Dewar, K. Hall, S. Herbst, V. Idone, W. Lanford, A. Lyons, C. MacDonald, S. Messner, E. Redkey, M. Rodriguez, J. Savitt, D. Shub, D. Wagner, R. Zitomer

**Minutes:** The minutes of December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2005 were approved.

**President's and Provost's Report:**

**Provost Herbst:**

- Undergraduate Writing: Provost Herbst discussed faculty complaints concerning undergraduate writing. She noted that this problem exists throughout the country. There is a need for conversations about how best to address the problem, which may require investments in faculty development. It could be beneficial to initiate some sort of Ad Hoc Committee to consider how to enhance undergraduate writing. C. MacDonald noted that there are available models. The CAS Faculty Council, with Kathleen Kendall as Chair, submitted a proposal to address undergraduate writing, but the proposal required funding and was not implemented. A. Lyons noted that the Senate had passed a resolution calling for more resources to support writing initiatives. Provost Herbst stated that this issue is worthy of our sustained attention.
- Graduate Support: Provost Herbst announced that M. Pryce will attend the next EC meeting with an update on issues that she is exploring about the graduate program, including financial support for graduate students. Provost Herbst noted that we need to be competitive, and sometimes our graduate students have heavy teaching responsibilities that impede their progress toward degrees.
- Dean of Rockefeller College: There are a series of interviews set up for this position that will be conducted early in the spring semester.
- Vice President for Research: There will be five to six interviews sometime around late February early March.

**President Hall**

- Board of Visitors: President Hall discussed the upcoming visit of the “Board of Visitors.” The University expects about twenty people. Members have shown real enthusiasm and a genuine interest in the University as well as a good understanding of our situation. Steve Porch, Chair of the Board, has been here before and knows the campus well.
- Compact Planning: President Hall provided an update on compact planning. Currently, the Colleges are in the second round, and the Vice Presidents are in the first round.
- Alumni Events: President Hall has been traveling from coast to coast speaking with SUNY Alumni. These events have been well attended. President Hall shared some of the concerns that are brought up at these events. The alumni are concerned about the “party school” image. The Honors College has generated a lot of interest with alumni; initiatives in nanosciences and life sciences appear to be less prominent in the minds of alumni.
- Signage: President Hall handed out a signage plan and explained that a sum of \$1 million has been allocated for signage. This will take place in three phases, and will be finished by September 1<sup>st</sup>. The East Campus is not owned by the University, and therefore, was not included in the project. The first phase includes the downtown campus (including a public relations event with a chainsaw). The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> phases are on the uptown campus. The University has requested \$20 million to spruce up the podium and plans on going back for an additional \$15 million for this project, in hopes of correcting some of the critical “way finding” issues on campus. This funding will include the “Purple Path” project that is being designed.

- Security Office Parking Lot Construction: President Hall reported on a new maintenance facility for equipment such as salt trucks that will replace what is currently on Fuller Road. This is going to be in the Security Office parking lot, that is currently closed and under construction.
- Student Facility: The President was asked about a new “Student Facility.” Committee members agreed that such a facility is badly needed, although funds are not currently available.
- Division One: President Hall noted that students made an interesting comment at their lunches, stating that this is more a party school than an athletic school. This is unfortunate, in that we lose many good athletes to other local colleges that would otherwise attend. C. MacDonald reported that there was a statement in the Times Union concerning a new \$40 million stadium. President Hall noted that while there may be a need for such a facility at some point, this is not on the immediate horizon. D. Shub expressed a concern that the move to Division I athletics may have restricted access to recreational facilities and thus contributed to the alcohol problem on campus. Discussion continued concerning the elimination of credit bearing athletic or physical education courses and the potential benefits of such courses.
- Loud Music: E. Redkey expressed a concern about loud music being played outside the GSO office. President Hall noted that there is a need for greater supervision of such student activities.
- Governance Role in Facilities: Chair Messner asked about the responsibilities of the Facilities Committee of UPC to review plans for major facilities. President Hall noted that building associated with nanoscience is run by the Fuller Road Management Corp and is outside the University’s jurisdiction. Similarly, the East campus is owned by the University Foundation. Members of the Committee discussed the “Athletics Master Plan” and indicated that the Facilities Committee of UPC should have an opportunity to review the plan. President Hall stated that he could ask L. McElroy to meet with the committee at an appropriate time.
- University Master Plan: President Hall mentioned that the “University Master Plan” should be updated, but that compact planning needs to be completed first.

**Chair’s Report: Steven F. Messner**

- Council Summaries: Chair Messner reminded members that council summaries should be sent to A. Lyons prior to noon on Friday before the February 13<sup>th</sup> Senate meeting.
- Bill Template: The Chair introduced a template for bills that provides a brief summary and rationale for the bill, separate from supporting documentation. The purpose is to minimize the amount of material that needs to be photocopied for Senate meetings. The Chair reported that the support staff for the Senate can now get materials posted on the web more easily and promptly, and thus full documentation can be made available electronically. The Chair stressed that this proposed procedure is not intended to stifle debate at meetings, or to push bills through without careful consideration. The plan is to have the bills available on the web page a week prior to a meeting to give individual Senators ample time to review them. Occasionally this may not be possible, but in these cases hard copies can be provided at the meetings. President Hall suggested that if full bills are not available at meetings, we might consider using a projector. J. Savitt expressed concern that everyone have access to and sufficient time to review documents. Chair Messner noted that hard copies would be supplied to anyone requesting them.
- Brown Bag Lunches: President Hall has generously agreed to hold brown bag lunches on the following dates: February 10, March 9<sup>th</sup>, April 18<sup>th</sup>, and May 8<sup>th</sup>. These will be in the Science Library Conference Room at noon.

**SUNY-Wide Senate Report: Richard Collier**

- Winter Plenary Meeting: The 142<sup>nd</sup> University Faculty Senate Winter Plenary Meeting was held on January 26-28<sup>th</sup>, 2006 at Farmingdale State University.
- New Gen Ed Assessment Program: R. Collier stated that UAC will be presenting a bill concerning Albany’s method of meeting the enhanced Gen Ed assessment program requirements.
- Open Meetings Law: Legal staff at the plenary meeting gave a presentation concerning the Open Meetings Law. R. Collier noted that it was SUNY counsel’s opinion that the law applies to the University Senate and its councils and committees. There are a few exceptions, such as meetings pertaining to personnel issues. R. Collier stressed that it is important that minutes faithfully reflect the discussions at meetings. In a following discussion, Chair Messner reported that he had been in contact with J. Reilly for his legal analysis. His office

is investigating the applicability of the Open Meetings Law to the University Senate, but his initial assessment is that it will apply. The Chair noted that the Senate is in compliance in many respects. The meetings are open, and agendas and minutes are posted on the web. There might be some logistical difficulties associated with requirements for a record of the votes of every senator, given that proposals are often voted on with voice votes. The legal department will provide a formal opinion at a later date. President Hall noted that it is very important to record the presence of a quorum. If a quorum is not present, the actions of a Senate body are subject to being nullified.

- SUNY Stony Brook: R. Collier announced that P. Salins has accepted a full time faculty position at Stony Brook.
- Mission Review II: R. Collier reported that community colleges are concerned about the “University in the High Schools” impact on their enrollments. The head of the Faculty Council was very outspoken on this subject. President Hall noted that the program is critical to the budget of some units of the University and advised that any changes be undertaken carefully.

### **Items for Senate Agenda 2/13/06:**

(a) LISC: Proposal for E-mail as an Official Means of Communication with Students.

D. Wagner met with C. Haile on how to proceed with this proposal. C. Haile is concerned that LISC and her advisory board may get caught in an infinite loop, with changes from each body going back and forth with no resolution. Several members advised that LISC take an active role reviewing policy and present recommendations to the Senate. D. Wagner reported that LISC would continue to work on the issue.

(b) GAC: Proposal to Separate CNSE M.S. and Ph.D. Programs into Distinctive Nanoscale Science and Nanoscale Engineering Programs; Standards for Social Work Education

M. Rodriguez reported that GAC will meet this Thursday and will consider the CNSE proposal. GAC has solicited input from Dean Wick-Pelletier on whether the proposal might have a negative impact on units within the College of Arts and Sciences, and this input will be considered at the meeting. GAC and GOV are considering establishing a working group to address concerns about the bill pertaining to Standards for Social Work Education.

### **New Business:**

(a) Governance Input on Compact Planning.

C. MacDonald reported that on February 21<sup>st</sup> there will be an all day meeting of members of UPC to review compact plans. She explained that reviewing this material is a daunting task and asked for assistance from any members of the Executive Committee who might be willing to read and comment on compact plans. C. MacDonald will contact B. Szelest to arrange for access to compact plans on the web.

(b) Response to President Hall’s Decision on the Academic Calendar Bill.

President Hall in his letter to the Senate stated that he would consider legislation that takes into account suspension for Federal holidays, and addresses “shoulder days” off, as well as includes broader student participation in the decisions. The members agreed that the issue remains a divisive one. N. Chiuchiolo noted that students would like to have more input into the decision, as many have strong feelings. C. MacDonald will try to develop mechanisms to ensure undergraduate and graduate student input as UPC develops recommendations on the academic calendar.

### **Adjournment:**

Meeting adjourned at 5:30pm.