

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

**Spring Meeting of the Faculty
Wednesday, April 18, 2011
2:30 pm**

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

- Senate Chair, Dr. Susanna Fessler welcomed those in attendance and called the meeting to order. She referred to the documents available at the door which included the meeting's agenda and the minutes from the Fall Faculty meeting of October 26, 2011. Other informative materials are available on the Senate web site.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- The first order of business was to approve the minutes of the Fall Faculty Meeting. A motion to approve the minutes was made and seconded. The minutes were approved as distributed by a voice vote.

3. MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR DECEASED COLLEAGUES

- Dr. Fessler read the names of those colleagues who had died since the fall meeting. A moment of silence was observed in their memory.

4. REPORT TO THE FACULTY

- Dr. Fessler introduced President George M. Philip, who delivered the following message to the faculty:

President Philip greeted those in attendance and thanked them for pausing at this busy time to come together. It is especially busy since work is in progress to finalize next year's incoming class of students, prepare our graduating students for the next chapter of their lives and tend to the everyday responsibilities of our academic institution as we near the end of the spring semester.

During the week, nearly 1,300 accepted students and their families were hosted at our admissions' open house. President Philip thanked the faculty and staff who participated and encouraged even more participation in the future. Those efforts to welcome and introduce incoming students to the many opportunities that exist play an important role in our recruitment efforts.

President Philip reported on the groundbreaking that took place the previous day for the new multi-sports complex which has been a long time in the making. A \$2 million campaign was launched to name the football field after our beloved coach Bob Ford. Already alumni and former coaches have contributed. The complex will better support our student athletes and recreational programs, which are an important part of the UAlbany experience. The President thanked those who are helping to make this project a reality.

On April 19, the University will sign the United Nations Sustainability Declaration. This signifies our on-going commitment to teach sustainable concepts, research environmental issues, and make the campus greener. In honor of Earth & Wellness Day, a sustainable living fair will be held which is designed to promote sustainable practices and personal wellness. All of these activities are a reflection of our University's many facets and of the exciting and important mission we share.

President Philip continued with an update on the state of our University and the progress being made in carrying out our mission as a public research university.

The President was pleased to announce that a regular feature of previous faculty addresses has been eliminated -- namely, the report on the latest state budget cuts. In the newly adopted state budget, state assistance to the State University of New York was not cut for the first time in five years. Between the rational tuition plan enacted last year and the state budget approved this year, we now have greater predictability about available resources which strengthens our ability to plan. After some challenging years, the University is now in a position to finally grow.

At our fall faculty meeting, we talked about the UAlbany Impact Plan – a five-year economic blueprint for strengthening our academic, research and service mission. Guided by our strategic goals, it calls for investment in new faculty and researchers in areas of strength and opportunity. It also calls for the construction of a new academic and research complex.

While we remain in discussions with the Governor's office to finalize our NYSUNY 2020 plan, we have been moving ahead with faculty hiring. As you may have heard, we have been impressed by creative, inspiring and transformational hiring proposals advanced across the University. The new state budget includes \$32.5 million to modernize our teaching, research and student support spaces across campus, and to upgrade our central utilities. This brings our total capital investment to nearly \$400 million in the past five years.

This summer, the new residence hall complex, Liberty Terrace, located near Indian Pond, will come on line just in time for the fall semester. We are improving the Indian Pond area with enhanced trails and plantings, the installation of benches, an overlook and a footbridge. When completed this fall, it will be an attractive environmental and recreational asset for our community. We plan to have an event there to welcome everyone back to campus this fall.

We are also looking forward to the new School of Business building opening in Fall 2013. Our New Data Center will be completed in 2014 and the Campus Center addition in 2015. While these projects add tremendous value to our campus community, the capital needs across the University are many. This past month, we had several sessions to present a new draft Facilities Master Plan to help guide future capital improvements across the university for decades to come. We expect to complete the plan later this year following campus feedback.

With our strategic plan, we are now in the initial implementation phase. Teams of faculty, staff and students have been focusing on seven areas selected to be "first up" including:

- 1. Undergraduate Academics;
- 2. Student Engagement, Advising, Mentoring, and Support
- 3. Student Recruitment and Enrollment
- 4. Graduate Education
- 5. Research
- 6. Keeping Pace with Emerging Technologies, and
- 7. Faculty and Instructional Development

While a full progress report will be available at the end of the semester, President Philip highlighted a few steps taken so far:

- Proposed changes in the General Education program have been under discussion in the Senate and are now moving toward implementation.
- In the coming months, we'll see a proposal to "enhance the availability and quality of undergraduate writing instruction."
- A new academic support service – "Advising Plus" has been established. This service connects students to the resources they need to succeed in their studies. Two new support programs are now offered: One is for departmental academic advisors and the other a mentoring program where faculty, staff, and students serve as mentors for new students.
- A new group on Community College Connections focuses on student recruitment and enrollment. This group aims to develop strategies to make it easier for the best community college students to transfer to UAlbany. Just this morning we hosted Hudson Valley Community College students whom we hope will become Great Danes.
- Also underway is the design of a special unit for our educational offerings for Professional and Continuing Education.
- We are working to enhance the atmosphere of academic excellence on campus and to showcase our students' outstanding accomplishments.
- We have been studying the needs of our non-tenure-track faculty, developing a mentoring program for faculty, and designing better systems for pre- and post-award support.

We are also making progress on our objectives to design a set of metrics for assessing doctoral program quality and to increase our research portfolio in order to keep pace with emerging technologies, particularly those concerned with online teaching and learning. A full update will be coming at the end of the semester on this first phase of implementation. We will also be mapping out plans for the coming "year 2" of implementation. All of these initiatives are made possible because of the more stable budget environment.

As we map a new way forward, UAlbany continues its prominence as a leading research university. Our research and scholarship are yielding new knowledge and discovery, generating best practices and spurring innovation. With research expenditures totaling \$438 million in 2010-11, our faculty are:

- Advancing novel approaches to treating disease
- helping to improve governments and build democracies
- improving education and public health systems
- strengthening business and industry
- creating a richer society through the arts and humanities.

President Philip highlighted recent projects in both research and scholarship:

- An international effort, led by UAlbany climate scientist Mathias Vuille to address the impact of shrinking Andes glaciers on water supplies in that region, and
- An \$8.7 million project designed to turn computer games into powerful learning tools, led by College of Computing and Information Professor Tomek Strzalkowski and Jennifer Stromer-

Galley in the Department of Communication.

- Recognition of our RNA Institute's potential economic benefits came in a \$2-million award to promote translational research. This award was from Governor Cuomo's "Open for Business" grant competition.

Through the same program, \$1 million was designated for the East Campus, home of our School of Public Health and Cancer Research Center, to further develop a biotech hub in the Capital Region.

The President highlighted additional UAlbany faculty success:

- Sheila Curran Bernard of the Department of History wrote the script for a documentary film, *Slavery by Another Name* – one of only 16 American documentary films selected to compete at the 2012 Sundance Film Festival.
- The 34th Annual Photography Regional exhibition, currently underway, was curated by our own Danny Goodwin of the Department of Art. It is being exhibited at the Sage Colleges Opalka Gallery.
- Distinguished Teaching Professor Jeffrey Berman was chosen as one of the 300 best professors of undergraduate students in America.
- Meredith Weiss of the Department of Political Science was selected to receive a Chancellor's Award for Internationalization for her project on "Diversity and Development in Southeast Asia."

President Philip also highlighted some of the initiatives that have distinguished our students:

- Prestigious national recognition went to student Sheila Smith, a sophomore majoring in nanoengineering. She is a 2012 Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship recipient.
- UAlbany continues to have a tremendous impact through community service. For the second year in a row, we were named to the U.S. President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll. This designation recognizes students, faculty and staff for meaningful service that *achieves measurable results*.

Three UAlbany programs were highlighted: the Communities for Healthy Living program initiated by the School of Public Health; the Middle Earth Peer Assistance Program; and the Urban and Regional Planning Program in Arbor Hill and the South End.

- More national recognition came from the Newman's Own Foundation for the UAlbany student group Reclassifying All Children Equally or R.A.C.E. for short.

R.A.C.E. and its partner organization - Big Brothers and Big Sisters of the Capital Region -- received \$10,000 from Newman's Own to help expand mentoring services for our region's at-risk youth.

- A few weeks ago, our students undertook a very delicate mission. The Five Quad Student Volunteer Ambulance Service transferred two 3,000-year-old Egyptian mummies from their home at the Albany Institute of History & Art to Albany Medical Center to undergo X-rays and CAT scans. The *Chronicle of Higher Education* has interviewed the students about their experience which will be featured in an upcoming article.

Last year alone, nearly 7,400 UAlbany students participated in community service through volunteer work, courses and internships. The *collective force* of UAlbany faculty, staff and students is making an impact at home and around the globe.

President Philip invited everyone to attend a special forum at the end of the week on Community-Engaged Scholarship in Research Universities. He said it would be a wonderful opportunity to further explore ways our research and learning can benefit our communities.

President Philip reflected on a speech he gave when he assumed the position of UAlbany's interim president in November 2007. One of his messages at that time was to take pride in the University and to seek out ways to share that pride. What we communicate about UAlbany has a very tangible impact on our institutional success. Each of us plays a role in shaping how we are regarded in our community and in the world.

The President commented on the University's growth since he was a student and throughout his professional career. He said the UAlbany has developed and grown in truly remarkable ways:

- From 1 campus to 3 over two counties
- From less than 6,000 to more than 18,000 students
- From a newly minted University Center to major Research Powerhouse with nine colleges and schools.

As UAlbany's president, President Philip said he has had the privilege and opportunity to meet many of our accomplished alumni who speak fondly of their time here and the faculty who made a difference in their lives. So many of our alumni are grateful for the foundation our University provided. President Philip said UAlbany had provided him with two great educations; the first being his undergraduate and graduate degrees and the second, coming later in life, the experience of serving as President. During this time, he has developed a much deeper appreciation for the impact and reach this University has on the world around us. President Philip said he was grateful to everyone for his learning experience as the president. While a search is under way for UAlbany's next president, and when his successor arrives, he said he would leave with tremendous pride about all that has been accomplished and with tremendous optimism about UAlbany's future. He said it has been a great privilege to work with everyone.

President Philip introduced Arthur Rushforth and Bryant Barksdale from the Student Association who made a special presentation recognizing the great work of two faculty members. Mr. Barksdale spoke on behalf of the Student Association to present the Outstanding Faculty Award which has been in the works for the past three years. The award goes to a faculty member who goes above and beyond what is required of them here at the university and who has made significant contributions to enhance the quality of life for students at UAlbany. There were over 57 nominations received in the past month which were reviewed by a committee of nine students. The names of the nominees were kept anonymous in order to eliminate any favoritism. This year's recipient is Dr. Ewin McNay, Assistant Professor in the Psychology Department who specializes in behavioral neuroscience. Dr. McNay was nominated by five students. Students commented that Dr. McNay has greatly enhanced the life of students on campus. He has allowed them to make discoveries and advancements in research for both Alzheimers and Diabetes. Dr. McNay's students have won the University Research Excellence Awards and received top awards in biology and psychology. The students that have worked with Dr. McNay have presented both nationally and internationally. Dr. McNay is the faculty advisor and mentor to students in the neuroscience club on campus. Mr. Barksdale said it was his distinct pleasure to present the award to Dr. McNay.

Mr. Barksdale recognized Student Association Senate Chairman, Arthur Rushforth who presented the Student Association Award for Excellence in Teaching. Mr. Rushforth said the award is given to a faculty member who has shown dedication both inside and outside the classroom. The last time the award was presented was in 1988. This year's recipient, Paul Morgan, Jr., is an adjunct professor in the School of Business. Dr. Morgan's students commented that he is supportive both in and out of the classroom and goes the extra mile to help his students, putting them first. Dr. Morgan's lectures include real life cases worked on as a law clerk. Dr. Morgan's creative teaching methods and positive attitudes have helped many students achieve academic success. Mr. Rushforth said it was his pleasure to present Paul Morgan Jr. with the 2011-2012 Award for Excellence in Teaching.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

- Dr. Fessler said there was no old business from the fall faculty meeting but took the opportunity to update the faculty on the presidential search process. Most news of the search is on the presidential search web page. A link to the page can be found on the University home page. The most recent news is that an ad for the position has been posted in a number of periodicals. The search committee conducted two listening sessions in the past month and half to gather feedback from the faculty and UAlbany community about the most important characteristics of a presidential candidate. The committee is scheduled to meet once in May and once in June. It is hoped that candidates will be met at a meeting in late June or sometime in July.

6. ADJOURNMENT

- There being no additional business, a motion to adjourn was made and seconded, and the meeting was adjourned.