

Text of Chair's Report for Senate Meeting of May 4, 2022
Chair: Timothy D. Sergay

Today's meeting is my final one as chair of the UAlbany University Senate. For entrusting the position of chair to me for this academic year I wish to thank all of my colleagues from all the constituencies that unite in this body to carry forward a distinctively democratic and, dare I say it, a distinctively *American* tradition, the tradition of shared governance in higher education. Shared governance itself is a value by which UAlbany and the SUNY system as a whole set great store. Caring for shared governance expresses commitment to UAlbany itself; shared governance is very often where all constituencies of the university affirm a shared set of core values. The institution pursues excellence in all its diverse forms while seeking to govern itself collaboratively, collegially, as I say, democratically. That shared academic governance—like all governance—remains a work in progress wherever we encounter it, that it must be continually self-critical and self-improving—that has been widely acknowledged among participants in shared governance and scholars of the subject. I reviewed this very question in my report on shared governance, a report that was so thoughtfully reviewed at the Senate Forum of April 11. I thank all colleagues who spent time reading and responding to that report. It has been a privilege to have a custodial role in shared governance at the campus level and also to interact with the SUNY-wide University Faculty Senate during its plenaries.

I want to take only a moment to summarize what the Senate has concerned itself with and accomplished this academic year. Too much remains for us to do on this very agenda. I would say that for Senate it was a second year of continuing adjustment to the Age of Covid, in which the Senate devoted itself in part to its own process concerns, but also to policy, budget, and Strategic Planning review and reporting on many specific matters from Covid management to inclement weather instructional policy to lecture center renovations to student wellness management. The Senate has adopted UAlbany's Land Acknowledgment statement, whose content harmonizes well with last year's very important April 26 forum titled "Indigenous Peoples of the Northeast: Past, Present and Future." It seems the Senate has been inclined to pocket the advantages afforded by the electronic format of meetings, for both the full body and its councils and committees. Thanks to Governance Council and the efforts of Vice Chair Sydney Faught, we now have a workable set of amendments to the Senate Charter governing the electronic conduct of meetings. That's certainly progress. Much remains for Governance Council in particular to review and improve: I have begun suspecting that *too* much work ends up at the door of Governance Council, and that some creative redistribution of tasks may be called for. The number of new undergraduate and graduate academic programs that Senate has reviewed and approved this year, from Letters of Intent through full proposal documents, seems impressive; *everyone* has worked hard and with dedication, to be sure, but I would say it has been an especially strenuous year for UAC, GAC, and UPPC. It's *always* a strenuous year for CPCA! I suspect that the coming academic year will see, along with further program review, something of an upsurge in Senate review of policy concerns, such as the crafting of recommendations regarding the recent UFS resolution on support for historically underrepresented faculty, to which we will turn later today. To that end I must conclude my chair's report here and turn to New Business. We have, as usual, a great deal of it.