



UNIVERSITY FACULTY

SENATE REPORT

Albany
January 31-February 2, 2008



SENATE PRESIDENT

The President of the University Faculty Senate is **Carl Wiezalis** (Professor of Respiratory Therapy Education, Upstate Medical, Syracuse).

President Wiezalis reported an extensive list of activities since our last meeting. It is worth noting that (finally) President Wiezalis is a member of the SUNY BOT and he reports that being a member allows him to represent our interest much more effectively than in the past. Carl reports that he continues to have an excellent relationship with both Chancellor Clark and Provost Palm. They are accessible, collegial, and supportive of the role of faculty governance. Chancellor Clark, who has been interim president on several campuses that experienced troubles, reported that he feels shared governance is a no-brainer. In his experience, it is campus presidents who do not fully involve faculty that get into trouble.

Governor's Commission

Carl Wiezalis, along with Norm Goodman and Joe Hildreth were members of the Chancellor's Advisory Committee for the Higher Education Commission. In this role, they advised both members of SUNY Administration and members of the Governor's Commission on how best to improve the future of SUNY.

Chancellor Search

Carl is also a member of search committee to find a new Chancellor. This process is in its initial stages with the last members of the committee just appointed. Because of confidentiality, he is restricted in what he can say and refers those interested to the SUNY webpage.

SUNY is 60

SUNY will be 60 years old this year and is attempting to recover, organize, preserve, and study the historical documents relating to SUNY. A History Symposium is planned (within next 18 months) and a written history will be undertaken.

Articulation

There is pressure from the Legislature to make student transfer within SUNY "easier." Partly out of the concern that if we don't do something the Legislature may do something we won't like (e.g. have universal course numbers throughout SUNY!), a Special Joint Committee on Articulation and Transfer has been formed (Joe Hildreth, Chair) and is working. This is a very thorny issue pitting faculty authority over curriculum against administrative need for efficiency. The (tentative) initial task of this committee will be to try to identify (and list) those 100 level courses that are taught on all campuses. *Note, there is some question about how extensive this problem is but it is clearly a serious political issue and cannot be ignored.*

RISA PALM, PROVOST AND VICE CHANCELLOR FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Provost Palm is pleased with recommendations for Governors Commission:

- 2000 new faculty lines
- 250 star (senior) faculty with distinguished research.
- Proposed SUNY Endowment

Need for Faculty Lines

Provost Palm has been studying both the decline in the number of faculty lines and the graying of our faculty. She sees the decline in numbers and the increase in the proportion of "older" faculty a double problem that needs to be addressed. (Tables were distributed showing how many faculty were needed to reach the same student/faculty ratios as our aspirational peers and showing the percent of faculty in their 50, 60 and 70 in 2006 vs 2001.)

Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA)

Provost Palm distributed copies of the webpage for the one fully participating VSA college (Buffalo State). She stated clearly that she was NEUTRAL in participation and the VOLUNTARY means VOLUNTARY. She has doubts about using just numbers for such comparisons. It was reported that the faculty at Buffalo State did not support their participation. It was also reported that the President of Buffalo State had some involvement in the development of the VSA system.

VSA generated considerable discussion, as at the previous meeting. A key point was made that campuses do assessment to improve their own product. If such an assessment metric is made public, it may no longer be used as an effective tool for self improvement but instead would become a marketing tool.

KIM CLINE, SUNY CFO

In his introduction, President Wiezalis announced that Kim Cline will step down from her position as of April 2008 to assume the presidency of Mercy College.

Cline reported on the budget. It is a long term process. The Governor's budget proposal resolves the \$4.4 Billion budget gap mainly through \$ 2.3 B in savings, \$1.1 B in revenue initiatives, and \$1.1 B in non-recurring activities. The budget gap for 2011-2012 is estimated to grow to \$9.5 B, which can be reduced to \$ 6.8 B by continuing actions proposed for this year.

The budget includes funding of mandates for SUNY, including negotiated salary increases, adjustments for inflation, and increased energy costs. There are some cuts in the latter, funds are available to restore. The overall economy is weak, which necessitates cuts for SUNY totaling \$ 34.2 million (about 2.5% of the base for 08-09). It is expected that these cuts are absorbed through efficiency savings in OTPS (other than personal service). There is hope that the legislature will restore these funds.

There is no tuition increase, and there is no funding for enrollment growth. Kim suggested that SUNY should lobby to address the latter.

The Governor proposes to create an endowment to finance new faculty positions for SUNY by monetizing part of the lottery. It was emphasized that this would not affect the lottery revenue stream for K-12 education.

NICHOLAS ROSTOW, UNIVERSITY COUNSEL AND VICE CHANCELLOR FOR LEGAL AFFAIRS.

Rostow was appointed to this position in March 2006. He has a faculty background, having taught at University of Tulsa College of Law and at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy of Tufts University. He has worked in several positions for the federal government, most recently as General Counsel and Senior Policy Adviser to the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations.

He talked about the following "hot" legal topics.

- i) The Attorney General is investigating practices involving credit cards issued to students through colleges. There is the potential for exploitation of students.
- ii) Work on a bill to encourage more competition for textbooks. There also is an issue with professors assigning their own work for class room use.
- iii) Authors writing about controversial subjects (e.g. terrorism) are at risk to be sued under British libel laws. If Great Britain ends up having jurisdiction, the costs for defense are huge. Academics should join and lobby parliament to change the laws.
- iv) The Higher Education Commission Report recommends to liberate SUNY from micromanagement. Senator Lavelle is supportive of such steps.

SECTOR CONCERNS

- Articulation -Clark: It is a faculty issue, not for Legislature.
- Graduate TA stipends too low- Clark: He knows this.
- VSA-Clark: It is voluntary. If your President does not consult, let him know and he will "speak" to your President.
- Student Fees getting too high- Clark: What we really need is more money.
- Too few full time faculty- Clark: This is our highest priority.
- Differential tuition- Clark: What we really need is more money.

MICHAEL TRUNZO, SENIOR ASSOCIATE VICE CHANCELLOR FOR UNIVERSITY RELATIONS

Briefly discussed budget priorities, SUNY public relations and lobbying efforts, status of a SUNY Endowment.

PHILLIP WOOD, MANAGER OF CONSTRUCTION FUND

SUNY has 95 million square feet of space, most of which is 40 years old.. The new budget has funds to begin to repair and get our campuses back into acceptable condition over a projected time span of 15 years.

Greening of campuses is supported with the State providing capital and SUNY paying back out of energy savings. There is \$75 million pilot project funded.

LLOYD CONSTANTINE, SENIOR ADVISOR TO GOVERNOR SPITZER.

Constantine is close to Spitzer (together they started their law firm) and is impressive. His message was that Spitzer is committed to education and to SUNY. While some could not be funded this year, Spitzer "is committed to the top ten recommendations of the Commission."

- \$3 billion research fund
- low cost student loan fund
- NYS compact for higher ed (state funds ongoing, but state, students, and SUNY share expansions)
- rebuild the faculty
- more flexibility "Let my people go"
- partnerships with high need schools
- transfer within SUNY
- campus maintenance

We found Constantine convincing. This was supported by comments of Clark that Constantine was a great help in pushing SUNY's needs in the budget process.

DON BOYCE, PRESIDENT OF STUDENT ASSEMBLY (a University at Albany student).

- articulation
- total cost of education is not \$4300 but more like \$18,000
- text books expensive
- Compact, while we do not like any tuition increases,...maybe

MILTON JOHNSON, PRESIDENT OF FACULTY COUNCIL OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES

- Access, especially for under represented minorities a concern
- Myth of low quality of CC
- Articulation
- VSA for CC (Miami-Dade CC working on one)

NORM GOODMAN, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

- concern about treatment of adjuncts
- VSA, same discussions again
- Articulation

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS AVAILABLE:

For any interested, reports are available from the Graduate, Governance, Awards, Undergraduate, Student Life, Operations, and Campus Governance Leaders committees.

***NOTE:** The Awards Committee declined to remove the restrictions on Chancellor's Awards and promotions to Distinguished ranks for those holding administrative positions or those already holding (any) Distinguished rank.*

SENATE LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS

Governance committee proposed resolution on President and effective campus governance. Briefly "that campus presidents (and Interim, etc Presidents) be encouraged by the Chancellor to establish a budget to ensure effective campus governance...." Passed.

REMINDER OF THE FACULTY SENATE PAGE

Although material is slow to appear on the site, eventually the full text of motions should appear on this site:

<http://www.suny.edu/facultySenate/>.

Respectfully submitted,

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