

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

*University Council*

Minutes

December 9, 2011

A regular meeting of the University Council was held on December 9, 2011 in University Hall, Room 306. Members present were: Daniel Tomson (Vice Chair/Presiding Officer), Pierre Alric, Robert Balachandran, Patricia Caldwell, James Clancy (by teleconference), John Fallon, James Jackson, Abner JeanPierre, Michael Stein and Student Member Tremayne Price; also Nicholas Fahrenkopf (Graduate Student Representative, by teleconference), Andi Lyons (Faculty Representative), and Canon Kay Hotaling (Alumni Representative).

Also present were: President George Philip, Provost/Vice President Susan Phillips, Vice Presidents Stephen Beditz, Christine Bouchard, James Dias, Catherine Herman, Lee McElroy, and Fardin Sanai; Vincent Delio (Chief of Staff), Janet Thayer (Associate Counsel, SUNY), Aimee Bernstein (Associate Vice Chancellor, SUNY) and Professor Susanna Fessler.

Mr. Tomson called the meeting to order at 2:05pm. Upon motion duly made and seconded (Fallon/Balachandran), the minutes of the October 13, 2011 meeting were unanimously approved.

Moving to the next agenda item, President Philip reported on an excellent and well-attended December graduation ceremony held on campus on December 4, noting that Senator Schumer was in attendance. Continuing with his report, he commented briefly on the SUNY2020 Initiative and noted that each of the University Centers had submitted plans for funding and were awaiting final actions on those proposals.

He said that the Five-year tuition plan approved by the SUNY Trustees allowed an increase up to \$300 per year for a total of \$1,500 over the period. He noted that Master's and Doctoral students would have a tuition increase, as well. He said that SUNY had submitted its budget request to the State totaling over \$896 million for the coming year. He reported that Carl McCall had been appointed Chair of the SUNY Board of Trustees

President Philip announced a number of major awards and grants coming to our campus including several from the Governor's Regional Economic Development Council. Among them was \$2 million for our RNA Institute and \$1 million for a "biotech corridor" at the University. In addition, he noted that the campus energy savings program received an Environmental Energy Award in recognition of campus energy savings of some \$700,000 on an annual basis.

Commenting on several major campus events, he reported that the annual Citizen Laureate Dinner sponsored by The University at Albany Foundation had been quite successful this year with some 340 people attending and he commended Vice President Sanai and his development

staff for an extraordinarily successful fund-raising year which attracted some \$12 million in private support commitments.

President Philip recognized Vice President Lee McElroy for being inducted into the national McClendean Athletics Administrative Hall of Fame for his outstanding leadership of UAlbany's athletic programs.

In response to a question from Mr. JeanPierre regarding the Management Study launched by President Philip, Vice President Beditz said that over 600 people responded to a recent special survey of employees and that the results were currently under study.

Concluding his report, President Philip said that construction of the School of Business building was ahead of schedule and also reported that the new dormitory complex would be available for occupancy for the fall semester.

Moving to the Student Report, Mr. Price outlined several activities sponsored by students over the course of the semester and highlighted the Student Speaker Series that brought acclaimed professional basketball player "Magic" Johnson to campus noting its very successful outcome. He especially recognized the students who volunteered to help the regional areas that were flooded by the recent major storm.

He observed that the present Student Senate overturned the action taken last year by the body and now opposed the SUNY2020 Plan. Referring to the student activity fees which the Student Association manages for supporting various student clubs and programs, he said that while the SUNY policies require a reserve fund of 5%, it had not been implemented in the past but was now being addressed. Comments/questions were offered by Mr. Stein, Mr Tomson, Mr. JeanPierre, Mr. Balachandren, President Philip and Vice President Sanai.

Moving to the Faculty Report, Professor Lyons expressed the faculty's interest and inquiries regarding the forthcoming Presidential Search. She also reported that the University Senate was discussing an administrative review that might be undertaken by a Senate Council and added that there was some interest in calling for a "smoke-free" campus.

Moving to the Graduate Student Report, Mr. Fahrenkopf referred (by phone) to his written report in the folders since he was not personally present at the meeting.

Moving to the Alumni Report, Canon Hotaling distributed a report entitled 2011-2012 Strategic Initiatives, drafted by the Alumni Association and elaborated on each of five initiatives in the Plan. She also described the overall membership of the Alumni Association Board of Directors noting the committee structure, Board meetings, and Board member vacancies.

There being no Old Business, Mr. Tomson called on Ms. Thayer for the first New Business agenda item. She provided extensive and detailed background that led to the development of the

policy on use of campus facilities by third parties regarding Free Speech on campus. Comments/questions were offered by Mr. Balachandran, Ms. Caldwell, Mr. JeanPierre, President Philip, and Mr. Stein.

Mr. Tomson asked if the proposed policy might allow some campus flexibility in the location of the speaking area based on campus safety, referring to the possibility of a demonstration or counter-demonstration in a rather defined area. Ms. Thayer thought that might be possible and would follow-up on that inquiry. Upon motion duly made and seconded (Balachandran/Stein), the policy was unanimously approved with note of the pending request.

Moving to the next agenda item, Vice President Phillips noted that she had provided a report on the Strategic Plan last year and now offered an update, referring to materials included in the agenda packet distributed prior to the meeting. Referring to the Implementation of Priorities for Years 1 and 2, she pointed to the various components of the Plan in sections on Undergraduate Academics, Student Engagement, Advising, Mentoring and Support, Student Recruitment and Enrollment, Graduate Education, Research, Keeping Pace with Emerging Technologies, and Cross-Cutting: Faculty and Instructional Development.

She pointed to the work of the Steering Committee and the various working groups, each focusing on the specific areas noted above. Comments/questions were offered by Mr. Tomson, Mr. JeanPierre, President Philip, Ms. Caldwell and Mr. Alric.

Moving to the next agenda item, Vice President Herman offered a power point presentation on the University's mobile strategy. She reported on the growing use of smart phones and other electronic devices in communication and their increasing contacts with the University's website. She said that there had been approximately 11.2 million visits to our University website this past year. She elaborated on aspects of web traffic including the increasing number from mobile platforms.

Continuing her presentation, she said that campus studies showed which of our webpages were visited. She reported that about 75% of UAlbany students had smart phones. Comments/questions were offered by Mr. Tomson, Mr. Fallon, Mr. Balachandran and Mr. Stein.

Moving to the next item, Mr. Alric reported on the October annual ACT Conference in Cooperstown and commented on some of the key initiatives which attracted considerable attention at the meeting.

Moving to the next item, Vice President Sanai showed a video clip that had been made at the December graduation of a student whose father is in the military in Afghanistan, which was then sent to him. He then reported that fund-raising was 37% ahead of last year and highlighted a special gift of \$200,000 from the Second Chance Foundation which our campus would be matching. He also noted that the UAlbany Unite Initiative that was launched last year had received an award for its uniqueness and success.

He also reported on a new initiative designed to make contact with highly successful alumni who had been difficult to contact. This program would have trained students visit and interview these individuals based on their interest and, perhaps, career path. The hope was that such a contact would open the door for cultivating these individuals and renewing their affiliation with their alma mater. He said that eleven such interviews were to take place during the intersession and the results would be studied.

Moving to the final agenda item, Mr. Tomson reported that the first formal announcement from the Council to the campus regarding the Presidential Search would be sent this afternoon. He introduced Ms. Aimee Bernstein, Associate Vice Chancellor at SUNY, who would be serving as the Chancellor's representative on the Search Committee.

Ms. Bernstein distributed copies of the SUNY Search Guidelines and commented on recent searches including the most recent one at SUNY Binghamton. Referring to the Guidelines, she noted that a Search Committee would be formed and outlined the categories of committee membership, including full-time teaching faculty to be selected through a process of election to be undertaken by the University Senate. She said that there also are representatives from other constituencies – one student, one alumni representative, one campus-related foundation representative, one academic dean, and one professional or support staff member.

She noted that a search consultant would be engaged to assist with the process. Given the lateness of current semester, she estimated that the faculty election would likely be undertaken when the spring semester begins in late January or early February.

Professor Fessler inquired about the process of selecting the professional or support staff member given that the University Senate includes representatives of those constituents groups. Ms. Bernstein noted that the Guidelines call for the Council Chair to appoint all remaining members from names submitted by the constituent groups.

Mr. JeanPierre asked about the search timeline and Ms. Bernstein noted that one would be developed, noting that the goal would be to have a President for the start of the new academic year. Mr. Tomson added comment and said that a sub-committee of the Council would work with Ms. Bernstein in the process of selecting a consultant, as part of the first stage. Dr. Fessler also inquired about the timeline and the personal commitment that would be required for membership on the Search Committee.

As the discussion came to closure, Mr. Tomson noted that the search was a major responsibility for the Council and he praised the leadership that President Philip had offered during this especially challenging time. Dr. Jackson expressed a similar view and noted that President Philip would be a valuable resource in view of his past service as Chair of the University Council and the two Presidential Searches in which he, President Philip, had led.

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There being no further business, upon motion duly made and seconded (Stein/Jackson) the meeting was adjourned at 4:10pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sorrell E. Chesin, Ph.D.  
Secretary to the University Council