

**University Faculty Senate 2011 Spring Plenary Meeting Report  
SUNY Fredonia (April 15-16, 2011)**

To: Julee Miller, Presider, College Senate

From: Terry Hamblin, University Faculty Senator

Subject: University Faculty Senate 2011 Spring Plenary Meeting Report

Date: April 17, 2011

### **Introduction**

The University Faculty Senate 158<sup>th</sup> Spring Plenary meeting took place on Friday, April 15th and Saturday, April 16th, 2011 at SUNY Fredonia. Among the several key issues discussed were the SUNY budget, the rational tuition policy plan, program deactivations, the SUNY strategic plan, and growing concerns about shared governance.

### **President's Report, UFS President Kenneth O'Brien**

- Discussion of concerns over possible “sweeps” of any tuition increases into general fund revenues.
- Five-Year Rational Tuition plan includes a statement that tuition charged to students must go to the University and not the State. Various plans being circulated in State Legislature. One plan includes a “lock box” that would prevent tuition revenues from being “swept” by state legislature for general revenues.
- Discussion about concerns over further SUNY funding cuts.
- Discussion of SUNY unrestricted reserves and confusion about the actual amounts. Discrepancy between UUP reports and SUNY system amounts.
- Discussion of visitation to Cobleskill over faculty concerns about subverted governance. Final report due in late April.
- Discussion about the role of shared governance in program deactivation. Knowing your campus culture is the key. Governance needs to be involved by which decisions are made and help write the rules by which administrators are supposed to be proceeding and discuss consequences and academic impact of decisions. Governance should never make the actual decisions. Campus governance body should talk with campus carefully about how planning process should proceed.
  - Shared governance needs to ensure that established procedures need to be followed when programs are deactivated.
- Discussion of SUNY Strategic Planning process. Bright ray of light in time of doom and gloom. Unique mission of “public” higher education.
- Unanimous re-election of Ken O'Brien as UFS President for 2011-2013.

## Provost's Office Report, David Lavalley, Senior Vice Chancellor and Provost

- Update on Student mobility. Website should be finished by end of April 2011. Searchable course database ready  
([http://www.suny.edu/student/transfer/transfer\\_mobility.cfm](http://www.suny.edu/student/transfer/transfer_mobility.cfm))
- SUNY Delhi transfer equivalency websites  
([http://www.delhi.edu/academics/registrar/transfer\\_equiv.php](http://www.delhi.edu/academics/registrar/transfer_equiv.php));  
([http://www.suny.edu/student/transfer\\_equiv.cfm](http://www.suny.edu/student/transfer_equiv.cfm))
- SUNY-wide initiative on degree evaluation. \$5 million grant from Sungard “Degree Works” software allows easy migration from CAPP and Banner.
- Provost's Office examining a common start date for academic calendar.
- Discussion of program integrity (quality assurance), program content, integrity of grades, standards, degrees. Review of existing programs on a five-year rolling schedule.
- Discussion of developmental education and variability of student learning assessments. Investigation of developmental pathways for mathematics, and the reporting of off-site courses.
- Discussion of onerous program requirements.
- Discussion of continuing appointment and promotion. Need to take a hard look at tenure. Innovative teaching as a research platform not appreciated. Non-traditional accomplishments not recognized in the past for tenure/continuing appointment.

## Chancellor Nancy L. Zimpher's Report

- Discussion of SUNY Strategic Plan and the need for regional economic development and the cultural enhancement of the citizenry.  
(<http://www.suny.edu/powerofsuny>)
- Chancellor's office working daily with Governor Cuomo to demonstrate the regional diversity of higher education.
- SUNY report card forthcoming in May. Three benchmarks and accountability metrics: “Competitive SUNY”, “Competitive New York”, “Commitment to Diversity”. Accountability metrics based on 2008-2009 base-year.
- Discussion of SUNY ‘Universities as Economic Drivers’ conference in Buffalo Sept. 26-27, 2011  
([http://www.suny.edu/powerofsuny/Deliverable\\_Conference.cfm](http://www.suny.edu/powerofsuny/Deliverable_Conference.cfm))
- Update on the SUNY budget and need for a five-year rational tuition policy. Restoration of cuts for teaching hospitals, community colleges, and SUNY still in play as New York State Legislature still in session. Chancellor claims that SUNY has a good working relationship with Governor. Cuomo is a strong advocate for SUNY, though acknowledges difficulties in “walking a very fine line”.
  - \$1.4 billion in cuts during last 4 years. 35% of operating budget

- Support for UB 20/20 predicated on differential tuition for all University Centers.
- Discussion of Strategic Planning Committee on Shared Governance. Chancellor argued for a more robust review process. Zimpher: “Must be an uneasiness and unevenness of shared governance across system.”
- Discussion of regional partnerships and consolidation of administration services to divert resources for instructional support.
- Discussion about the development of a policy regarding the use of campus reserves.

## **Sector Reports with Chancellor Zimpher**

### Campus Governance Leaders

- Discussion of budget cuts, program deactivations, issue of continuing appointment, public relations, and long-term consequences of differential tuition. Concerns of “Balkanization” of system. Chancellor: “what drives me everyday is the integration of the system; system-ness”.

### Health Science Centers

- Concerns about faculty participation in governance, state-budget cuts, reductions in Medicare and Medicaid funding, changing demographic of faculty (clinical vs. teaching faculty).

### Special and Statutory Colleges

- Need for more visibility and identity (esp. Alfred College of Ceramics), need for entrepreneurial spirit (brand expression), and budget concerns.

### Technology Sector

- Concerns about subsidizing funding cuts to state teaching hospitals, the impact of enrollment caps (some schools within technology sector below last year’s enrollment target), and the definition of the technology sector’s mission within the new strategic plan.

### University Centers

- Need to hold line on enrollment to protect quality and program integrity, unintended consequences of rational tuition policy on graduate education, and growth of administrative positions.

### University Colleges

- Discussion of unrestricted reserves. Need for more accurate budget data to engage in proper shared governance. Misconceptions and “fog” about the use of reserves. Concerns that comprehensive colleges are getting the disproportionate negative cut.

## **Resolutions**

- Resolution in Support of a Five Year Tuition Plan for the State University of New York (passed unanimously, 4/16/2011).
- Resolution on the Governor’s May 2011 SUNY “Summit” (to expand scope of summit include focus on five-year rational tuition policy and additional flexibilities for all campuses) (passed unanimously, 4/16/2011).
- Resolution on Appropriate Use of System-Wide Data (passed unanimously, 4/16/2011).
- Resolution on Grade Change Authority (passed unanimously, 4/16/2011)
  - Next step is to craft policies and procedures at the campus level with local governance bodies.

## **University Faculty Senate Committee Reports**

### Operations Committee

- Impact of SUNY budget crisis on system as a whole. SUNY snapshot
  - Vacant positions left unfilled and/or held over; many campuses drawing on reserves; elimination and deactivating of academic programs; retirement incentives pushed; reduction in workload; travel restrictions; increased class size; reduction in heat; over-reliance on adjuncts; and SUNY IT eliminated all academic deans positions. Overall, there is a general culture of fear and worry within SUNY.

### Executive Committee

- Development of survey for Campus Presidents and Vice-President for Academic Affairs on role of shared governance and effectiveness of shared governance.
- Discussion of resolution regarding grade appeals.
- Discussion of UB 20/20 summit and impact on SUNY.

### Diversity and Cultural Competence

- Organized conference focused on STEM education.
- Ongoing study of impact of changes to General Education to students of diversity.
- McNair conference for research and training for minority student
- Study on SUNY ‘s compliance with Title IX

### Governance Committee

- Worked on resolution for By-Law Change to allow for conduct of special meetings of the Senate and the Senate Executive Committee by electronic means which will be voted on at Fall 2011 plenary meeting.
- Support for campuses going through Middle States accreditation visits.

#### Graduate Committee

- Graduate research symposium “Research that Matters” on March 8, 2011
- Development of a sustainability workshop for 2011-12 academic year
- Ad Hoc Committee on Grading
- Graduate research portal ([www.rfsuny.org](http://www.rfsuny.org))

#### Programs and Awards Committee

- Continued work for Conversations in the Disciplines funding in the areas of entrepreneurship and sustainability

#### Student Life Committee

- SUNY Campus Traditions III (survey status of campus traditions in the community colleges)
- Presence of Honors codes in SUNY
- SUNY and the World-Creating Global citizens
- The pleasures and perils of social networking

#### Undergraduate Committee

- Revised Program Review Guideline document presented for comment. Final version to be presented at Fall 2011 plenary for endorsement.
- Undergraduate Instructional Support by Undergraduates.
- Undergraduate Research Symposium for April 2012

**Next Meeting: UFS Fall Plenary Meeting, October 20-22, 2011, Purchase College**