

University Faculty Senate 170th Plenary - SUNY Plattsburgh

April 23-25, 2015

Submitted by M. Scott Goodman and Joe Marren

UFS President's report – *Peter Knuepfer, President University Faculty Senate*

The President report covered a wide range of topics affecting SUNY and faculty governance:

1. *SUNY Budget* – The final approved SUNY budget is disappointing. There was only \$4.76 million added to the 2015-16 budget for negotiated salary costs—very far short of the \$131 million SUNY estimated it would need to fully fund the salary costs for next year. The only real gains came in discretionary moneys: significant increases for opportunity programs (EOP, Educational Opportunity Centers, and Attain), and an \$18 million “investment fund” (SUNY Excels). This is well short of the \$50 million SUNY requested. With the add-ons there is a bit more than a 2% increase in State funding for SUNY, with the authorized tuition increases adding much more to the spending authority. In the final analysis, most campuses will fall short of necessary revenue, assuming no change in enrollments or spending other than required increases.
2. *Applied Learning*. A troubling aspect of the budget process was the Governor’s initiative to insert a graduation requirement for all SUNY students to complete an applied or experiential learning experience. We pushed the Chancellor very hard on this point at the previous plenary. Since then, the UFS leadership worked closely with the leadership of FCCC and CUNY to send a series of letters to the Governor’s office, the chairs of the Senate and Assembly Higher Education committees, and the leaders of the Senate and Assembly requesting that the graduation mandate language be removed from the budget. In the end, the language was changed so that there is no graduation requirement. And the language also points to the faculty and student governance groups as stakeholders that must be consulted in the preparation of a plan that offers applied learning *opportunities* to degree-seeking SUNY students. A resolution that meets the letter of the adopted legislative language is expected from the Board of Trustees on May 6
3. *SUNY Excels*. Language in the Enacted Budget requires SUNY and CUNY campuses to develop metrics for performance assessment. The SUNY Excels framework will provide the basis for SUNY’s response, as these metrics have been vetted, communicated, and approved by the SUNY Board of Trustees. There will likely be further campus action on the use of SUNY Excels metrics, possibly during the summer.
4. *Presidential Review*. A process of 360 review of Presidents is being implemented. A questionnaire based on one developed last year by the UFS is being used and will be sent to a wide group serving under the President under review. The process is beginning for 10 of the longest serving SUNY Presidents. Many of these long-serving Presidents have not had raises of any kind in many years. This has led to salary compression as new Presidents have been hired across the system. The review process may well lead to bonuses, paid out of the \$18 million in new performance-based funding.

Q: Many campuses already perform reviews of their Presidents. Will our existing processes be respected in this new review process?

A: The Chancellor’s review is just being rolled out, and we haven’t heard this issue mentioned. Of course these campus-based reports should be included in the process.

Q: Perhaps we should be doing Presidential evaluations on all our campuses, and these should be sent to the Chancellor?

A: It is within the purview of the faculty to do so.

Seamless Transfer and Degree Works – *Dan Knox, Director of Student Mobility*

Transfer paths are in place for 52 disciplines covering about 95% of student transfers within SUNY. 32,000 courses are now guaranteed to transfer. New paths are being requested and developed with faculty.

32 campuses are now live with Degree Works. More will be added next year and will be finished by Fall 2016. Transfer Finder Network, a new component of Degree Works, is being tested on 9 campuses. More campuses will be added next year.

Intellectual Property– *Heather Hage, Senior Director of Innovation and Partnerships–SUNY RF and Elise Puzio, Assistant General Counsel, SUNY*

The SUNY intellectual property (IP) policy is outdated and in need of revision. The speakers identified several issues and solutions being proposed for the new guidelines. The new guidelines may be in place as early as next Fall.

Changes being proposed:

- New definitions of ownership of IP

- Removal of barriers to contracting with industry—more flexibility with local control
- Promotes student innovation. Students can create IP and work with the university system
- Processes for dealing with non-patentable IP income
- Faculty can assign or waive royalties
- Change to *net* income for royalty distribution calculations

Research at the Comprehensive and Technology Campuses: What Can We Do? – *Dr. Richard Burke, President Fellow Research Foundation*

The presenter, on sabbatical at the RF, presented his visions related to the future of research and teaching at comprehensives and technology colleges.

1. Faculty at comprehensives will form more collaborations with research universities. This provides access to colleagues, students, and equipment.
2. Temporary coalitions of investigators will form as needed to solve real world problems.
3. The focus at comprehensives will be on applied research rather than basic research.
4. Research will be more aligned with economic development.
5. Others will choose to study pedagogy.

Budget Report – *Eileen McLoughlin, Vice Chancellor for Finance and CFO*

The executive budget was \$12 M less than the ending budget last year. We got some back from the legislature through the process. SUNY ended \$42.5 M up from last year. The capital budget is less than we wanted. SUNY is now pushing for a new SUNY 2020 law to be enacted with “predictable” tuition increases.

Q: How will we continue to fund Open SUNY?

A: We are not sure. We are now considering some sort of loan process for OpenSUNY implementation.

Provost’s Report – *Alex Cartwright, SUNY Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor*

The Provost began by saying that SUNY is taking on big issues, and that SUNY is big enough to be number one in anything we set our minds to. He then gave a report on ongoing SUNY initiatives, including:

- SUNY Excels
- Presidential recruitment, development, and review
- Seamless transfer (269 waivers requested. 62 approved, 185 programs redesigned, 22 still under review)
- OpenSUNY. Things are on track, but we see some infrastructure deficits still. We are thinking of ways to loan campuses funds to be prepared. The loans would be paid back with new enrollments. This is still a dream for now.
- Applied learning initiatives (SUNY Works, SUNY Serves, and SUNY Discovers)
- Diversity Task Force

The Provost then answered questions from the sectors. Usually the Chancellor performs this task, but she was unable to make the meeting. The Chancellor has apparently also indicated that she may be missing more plenaries in the future, as she feels that her travel schedule is starting to interfere with her other duties. Questions to the Provost covered the following topics: program approval time, salary compression, open access publishing, StartUP NY job creation, and difficulties with TAP.

The Comprehensive Colleges (our sector) asked the following:

Q: Systemness has not been working in favor of the comprehensive colleges. As state support for public higher education has continued to erode, campuses have become increasingly dependent upon student tuition and fees. There has been some mission creep from other colleges and there has been a decline in interest in teacher education programs, and a decline in graduating seniors, and it is no wonder that the comprehensives are experiencing enrollment challenges. So, how may the system work to ensure that the mission of the comprehensive colleges is valued?

A: As you point out, you have lost enrollment and income is down, therefore you are feeling a lot of pressures. I think what it is that you might want to think about is: How do we embrace what it means to be a system? We like to tell our students there is a place for everyone in system, not everyone should go to Stony Brook. The comprehensives have something that is different, but we need to be telling a better story—you need to tell a better story. What are the benefits of going to a comprehensive college? There are really great students who want that environment. There are some comprehensives that are doing very well, so we need to look at them and figure out what they are doing.

Q: We are wondering about the process being developed to distribute the \$18 million in performance-based funding. Will this be a competitive process? What will be the criteria used to judge the proposals? What is the timeline?

A: Will it be competitive? Yes. The criteria for judgment are being developed. Basically, how do we have continuous improvement in those SUNY Excel metrics. We may focus an enormous amount of attention on completion for the \$18 million. *It may be the only focus this year.* We would like to disburse the money in October. We would want a process that goes something like this: we can envision a white paper phase, an invitation to submit a proposal, and then within three or four months we can get the whole process done. We want to start that process in June. This is an aggressive timeline. We have a group thinking about what the right way to a competitive process.

Q: The presidential review policy involves six presidents from the comprehensive college sector. But the timing this time around is rather tight. How can faculty be more involved in the future for a richer review process?

A: You are right that the time is very tight with the presidential review. We wanted to implement as soon as possible and to get the review process in place. It will continue as an annual process so that people will know in the early fall that they are being reviewed. The point is well taken, but we felt that if we didn't do it now then it would be put off again. Next year we hope that we will build on the survey and make the process far more robust. We want it to be a more informative process on both sides. We learn more about the school, and they learn more about what we can do to help.

Community College report – *Tina Good, President, FCCC*

Community Colleges are still concerned about the 64-credit cap in seamless transfer. They are also feeling a variety of pressures from the national and state levels. Finally, they are starting a communication campaign on Twitter and other social media sites to tell good stories about SUNY community colleges.

Student Assembly report – *Lori Mould, President, SUNY Student Assembly*

Advisement has been identified as the number one concern of students. Also, the student assembly reached a compromise position on renewing rational tuition. Some wanted a tuition freeze, and there was additional concern about the “TAP gap”.

CUNY report – *Terry Martell, Chair, CUNY Faculty Senate*

CUNY faculty are concerned with the budget as it relates to mandatory salary increases and the “TAP gap”.

OpenSUNY report – *Ken O'Brien, Chair, Provost's Open SUNY Advisory Committee (POSAC)*

SUNY MOOCs have enrolled over 100,000—Buffalo State's seems to be the largest so far. Warning: ASU has teamed with edX to make MOOCs credit bearing (Global Freshman Academy). OpenSUNY resources:

- POSAC webpage: <http://commons.suny.edu/opensuny/about/the-provosts-open-suny-advisory-committee/>
- Open SUNY FAQs: <http://commons.suny.edu/opensuny/faq/>
- MOOC/Coursera FAQ: <http://commons.suny.edu/opensuny/mooc-faq/>
- COTE (Center for Online Teaching Excellence): <http://commons.suny.edu/cote/>
- Open SUNY Toolkit: <http://open.suny.edu/toolkit>
- Institutional Readiness: <http://commons.suny.edu/opensuny/institutional-readiness/>
- SUNY Research about On-line Instruction: <http://commons.suny.edu/cote/suny-research-abstracts/>

Elections report – *Gwen Kay, Vice President of the UFS*

Peter Knuepfer re-elected UFS President. Joe Marren will continue as the Comprehensive Colleges rep.

Resolutions

Eight resolutions were considered, five from committees and three from the floor.

1. **Fellowships for SUNY Undergraduate Students to Attend Graduate School at SUNY** (passed)
Encourages the SUNY administration to offer a Chancellor's graduate fellowship at each campus to an outstanding undergraduate SUNY student to begin their graduate work at a SUNY institution.
2. **Joint Statement on Faculty Oversight of Curriculum** (passed)
Reaffirms faculty oversight of curriculum. Passed by the Executive Committees of the UFS, the Faculty Council of Community Colleges, and the CUNY University Faculty Senate.
3. **Renewal of NYSUNY 2020** (passed)
Calls for “true” maintenance of effort, renewal of rational tuition, and a fix to the “TAP gap”.
4. **Planning and Implementation of Applied Learning Experiences at SUNY** (amended and passed)
Affirms that faculty should have oversight on all credit bearing applied learning experiences and that these experiences should have specific learning outcomes and be delivered with academic rigor.
5. **Open Access Publication** (passed)
Encourages SUNY, its Libraries, and the Faculty to explore and support alternatives to publishing scholarship with commercial publishers. Sets up a taskforce to examine the issue.
6. **NSF Funding** (passed)
Opposes Congress's attempt to manage NSF funding so that social and behavioral sciences funds are cut.
7. **Presidential Reviews** (amended and passed)
Asks the Chancellor to give campuses more time to respond to review questionnaire and to open a dialog on the process going forward.
8. **Family and Medical Leave** (referred to committee)
Supports FMLA and asks SUNY and UUP to negotiate to implement it uniformly and generously across the system.