

University Faculty Senate 171st Plenary - SUNY Buffalo State

October 22-24, 2015

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A summary of each plenary is now published by the University Faculty Senate:

<http://system.suny.edu/media/suny/content-assets/documents/faculty-senate/plenary/buffalostateplenary.pdf>

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

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

1. *Performance Improvement Plans (PIP) and SUNY Investment Fund* – SUNY called on the campuses during the summer to produce a PIP based on the SUNY Excel metrics. Completion and approval of the PIP by the end of the calendar year is required by language in the Enacted State Budget. Simultaneously, SUNY sent an RFP to campuses for requests for new funds from the SUNY Investment Fund. The fact that these two initiatives have parallel but slightly different timelines has led to confusion. Although approval of the two campus submissions (a PIP and one or more requests for funds) is independent, any funds that are approved under the Investment Fund process won't be released until SUNY approves a campus' PIP—all to be done by late December. We expect the new budget to tie some funding to the PIPs.
2. *SUNY Diversity and Inclusion Policy*. The Board of Trustees passed a new Diversity and Inclusion Policy at the September meeting. The Policy has a number of key elements that are worthy of further discussion. These include: (1) each campus must appoint a Chief Diversity Officer (2) each campus—and SUNY System—must develop a diversity and inclusion plan by Sept. 1, 2016, and (3) SUNY will seek to develop a cross-campus mentoring network for faculty.
<http://www.suny.edu/about/leadership/board-of-trustees/meetings/webcastdocs/Reso%20Tab%2005%20-%20Diversity,%20Equity,%20and%20Inclusion%20Policy.pdf>
3. *Applied Learning*. Implementation of the Applied Learning “requirement” is being left up to the campuses. Guidance documents will be finalized shortly and sent to campus Presidents, CAOs, and CGLs. The first part of the campus plan—an inventory of applied learning—is due in January, followed by a full plan in April. A feasibility study and campus decision on whether or not to require applied learning for all students will be undertaken by each campus in the 2016-17 academic year.
4. *Patents and Inventions*. SUNY is proposing significant modifications of the current patents and inventions policy. The proposed policy remains under review. SUNY is anxious to move this forward, and UUP is deciding how to handle its obligation to protect member interests on this matter.
5. *SUNY Social Media Policy*. Earlier in 2015 SUNY developed a task force composed of faculty, student, law enforcement, and government representatives to develop recommendations to support SUNY institutions as they modernize policy and programs in the digital age. Draft recommendations have already been presented to the Board of Trustees and likely will be brought to the Board for adoption in November.
<http://system.suny.edu/media/suny/content-assets/documents/news/SMRTF-Report.pdf>
6. *Maintenance of Effort Legislation*. The Legislature overwhelmingly passed legislation in June that would obligate the State to provide a true maintenance of effort in its funding of SUNY and CUNY. Specifically, the legislation calls upon the State to increase SUNY's base budget to cover mandated costs such as negotiated salary increases, inflationary increases such as utilities, etc. The legislation has not yet been forwarded to the Governor, who is expected to veto it.

Diversity Conversation—*Carlos Medina, Senior Assoc. Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion*

Carlos Medina made a presentation highlighting progress in the area of diversity and inclusion, problems we still face, and plans going forward in response to the new BOT resolution:

<http://system.suny.edu/media/suny/content-assets/documents/faculty-senate/plenary/Carlos-Medina-University-Faculty-Senate-Plenary-Meeting.pptx>

- BOT resolution: “SUNY aspires to be the most inclusive state university system in the country.”
- Changing demographics demand a greater focus on under-represented populations.
- Data comparing SUNY employee diversity to other state-operated higher ed. systems was presented.

Following his presentation, Dr. Medina asked subgroups of the Senators to address a set of questions focused on how faculty can work to facilitate the retention of students of diverse backgrounds and recruit and retain diverse faculty and staff.

Chancellor's Office Report – Nancy Zimpher, SUNY Chancellor

The Chancellor presented what she termed a set of “causes” and “effects” regarding SUNY’s initiatives and State funding over the last six years. Some of her main points:

- This is not the year to expect a tuition increase from the legislature (elections).
- SUNY will push to move the power of setting tuition to the Board of Trustees.
- We need “true” maintenance of effort.
- SUNY will ask for additional monies to continue with the Investment and Innovation Fund

The Chancellor will take this message on the road (“Stand with SUNY”):

<http://system.suny.edu/media/suny/content-assets/documents/faculty-senate/plenary/10-23-15---Chancellor-University-Faculty-Senate.pptx>

The Chancellor then answered questions from the sectors, available here in full:

<http://system.suny.edu/media/suny/content-assets/documents/faculty-senate/plenary/sector-reports/buffalostateSector-QA.pdf>

Some important topics in the Q&A session were:

- The lack of consultation with governance when developing PIP targets. The Chancellor suggested that the process would be better in the future.
- The capital budget. The Chancellor said that SUNY wants to go back to a 5-year planning process, since that process was working very well before it was changed.
- The mandatory student diversity survey in Banner. The concern is that the data is not adequately protected and that the data carries identifying information. The Chancellor said that the survey is a multifaceted way of self-identification and there was debate about whether people want to self identify.
- The appropriateness of SUNY Excels metrics for Comprehensive Colleges. Chancellor Zimpher responded by putting up the Excel matrix PowerPoint slide and commented that we started with over 200 items, so maybe 17 are too few. She also said the process was intended to have a great deal of adaptability. She suggested that we have the presidents and the senators gather to address what we would prefer to see within the matrix. She indicated that this is the first round of a decade of experiments.
- Competition within and between sectors in the realm of distance education. The Chancellor agreed that we all need to be more collaborative and less competitive. She noted that some of the recent white papers/proposals were very collaborative. Also, with regard to Open SUNY we are in version 1.0. Version 2.0 needs to include revenue sharing between campuses.

The Comprehensive Sector also invited the Chancellor and the Provost to a special meeting with sector senators and others at a time and place convenient for them so that we can talk about how the Sector can support SUNY goals. This would help the system by providing faculty leadership and buy-in on a bigger scale to help SUNY.

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

The Provost gave a presentation on how SUNY can meet the Chancellor’s goal of 150,000 completions:

<http://system.suny.edu/media/suny/content-assets/documents/faculty-senate/plenary/Provost---UFS-10-21-15NN.pptx>

Highlights included:

- If we do nothing (we are near 93,000 now), we will be closing campuses in the next decade.
- It will take 10 years (not 5) to reach the goal of 150,000 completions.
- This is not 150,000 “degrees”, but rather “completions” (any credentials).
- This goal can be achieved by increasing retention and graduation rates, increasing credentialing (certificates, multiple degrees, accelerated programs), increasing new and transfer enrollment, and growing online enrollments.

Resolutions

1. Academic Freedom (passed)

Urges campus governance at each SUNY campus to open a campus-wide discussion on academic freedom and to review any campus documents that pertain to this issue.

2. Family and Medical Leave (passed)

Urges SUNY and UUP to address the implementation of FML in a system-wide, equitable, and uniform way.

3. Policies of the Board of Trustees with respect to Officers of the University Faculty Senate (passed)

A resolution designed to modify the Vice-President/Secretary Office of the USF.

4. Service Learning (postponed until January)

A motion to adopt the Undergraduate Academic Programs and Policies Committee’s report entitled “Service-Learning in SUNY: Current Status and Strategies for Implementation”.