

**To: University Faculty Senate**  
**From: University Faculty Senate Executive Committee**  
**RE: Resolution: "SUNY/CUNY Budget"**  
**Date: 184th Plenary, January 18, 2020**  
**Location: University at Albany**  
**Resolution #: 184-01-01 Executive**  
**Vote: For: 36 / Against: 0 / Abstain: 0**

## RATIONALE:

**WHEREAS** the State University of New York (SUNY) and the City University of New York (CUNY), like other public higher education systems across the nation, in fulfilling their core academic missions, transform students' lives and life chances and serve their state as foundations for democracy, platforms for civic engagement, engines of economic development, pathways to the middle class, magnets for population growth and private investment, and generators of health, creativity, and innovation; and

**WHEREAS** the SUNY University Faculty Senate (SUNY UFS) has worked closely in recent years with the SUNY Faculty Council of Community Colleges (SUNY FCCC) and the CUNY University Faculty Senate (CUNY UFS) and has worked in alliance with the SUNY Student Assembly (SUNY SA) and United University Professions (UUP) in advocating for New York State to become a national leader in investing direct state aid in SUNY and CUNY's core operating budgets;

## RESOLUTION:

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that SUNY UFS calls on Governor Cuomo and the New York State Legislature to make New York State a national leader in sustainably and equitably supporting and advancing SUNY and CUNY's core academic missions by

- increasing the share of public funds going to public higher education core operating budgets and decreasing the share of SUNY and CUNY core operating costs paid for by student tuition and fees, through such means as
  - fully funding all negotiated contractual increases, starting with UUP's;
  - fully funding other mandatory operating cost increases;
  - pegging the maximum Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) award to SUNY tuition and sunseting the SUNY/CUNY Supplemental TAP Awards, thereby closing the TAP Gap;
  - pegging the maximum Excelsior Scholarship award to SUNY tuition and simplifying eligibility requirements;
- fully funding requests by the SUNY and CUNY Boards of Trustees for five-year capital plans addressing critical maintenance and new capital projects, as well as necessary accessibility upgrades to older buildings;
- establishing a SUNY endowment.

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that in 2020 SUNY UFS will expand and deepen its coordination with SUNY FCCC, CUNY UFS, SUNY SA, UUP, SUNY and CUNY campus governance bodies and union chapters, and all other good-faith partners by calling on all leaders and members of these organizations and friends of SUNY and CUNY, in their capacity as citizens or residents of New York and/or supporters of public higher education, to contact Governor Cuomo, their representatives in the New York State Legislature, and legislative leaders, and express their support of both their organization's advocacy priorities and those of SUNY UFS.

## BACKGROUND:

1. According to a November 2018 Rockefeller Institute report, SUNY's economic impact is \$28.6 billion (\$6.83 billion in Long Island, \$4.37 billion in Western NY, \$3.94 billion in Central NY, \$3.43 billion in the Capitol Region, \$2.98 billion in the Southern Tier, \$2.53 billion in New York City, \$1.6 billion in the Hudson Valley, \$1.32 billion in the Finger Lakes, \$.82 billion in the Mohawk Valley, and \$.78 billion in the North Country); every dollar invested in SUNY returns \$8.17; and 78 percent of SUNY's 633,000 bachelor's degree graduates in 2006 worked in New York two years after graduation and 64 percent remained in the state eight years later.

According to higher education scholars Walter McMahon and Christopher Newfield, decision-makers consistently underestimate higher education's private non-market goods (on one's health, longevity, happiness, human capital, working conditions, job type and benefits, control over consumption, savings, and family size, and children's education and cognitive development), indirect private market benefits, nonmarket private benefits (both direct and indirect), and social goods (both direct and indirect), leading to an overemphasis on the "personal monetary benefit of a college degree," although this is really "only about one-third" of its "overall value" (Newfield 71).

2. See, for instance, the joint statement from the Executive Committees of SUNY UFS, SUNY FCCC, and CUNY UFS from January 2016, "Invest in CUNY and SUNY," and UFS's January 2019 "New Deal for SUNY and CUNY" resolution.

Policy-makers need to take a hard look at New York State's ranking in standard measures of the fiscal health of public higher education, including

- SUNY's and CUNY's shares of NYS's general fund;
- NYS general fund shares of SUNY's and CUNY's core operating budgets;
- appropriations of NYS general funds for operating expenses of SUNY and CUNY per \$1,000 of personal income in NY;
- appropriations of NYS general funds for operating expenses of SUNY and CUNY per capita in NY.

More general measures, which include all higher education, both public and private, provide some insight into these matters.

**NY's Rank among States on Appropriations of State Tax Funds for Operating Expenses of Higher Education per \$1,000 Personal Income and per Capita, 2008, 2014-2015, 2017-2020**

fiscal year	/\$1K	rank	/capita	rank
2008	\$5.70	38	\$266.17	23
2014	\$4.92	37	\$269.98	20
2015	\$5.00	32	\$281.37	16
2017	\$4.77	34	\$291.99	20
2018	\$4.66	34	\$302.76	16
2019	\$4.58	34	\$314.58	15
2020	\$4.40	38	\$314.97	17

Source: Grapevine

Imagine what a difference cracking the top 25 in appropriations per \$1,000 or top 10 in appropriations per capita would make.

**NY's Rank among States on State Support (mostly tax revenues and lottery profits) in Constant Adjusted Dollars for Operating Expenses of Higher Education per \$1,000 Personal Income, per Capita, per Student FTE (relative to national average), and as Share of Total State Revenues (tax + lottery), 2008-2018**

FY	/\$1K	rank	/capita	rank	/FTE	rank	share	rank
2008							3.9%	45
2009	\$6.32	T34	\$294	T25			4.1%	46
2010	\$5.98	35	\$290	25			4.0%	46
2011	\$5.87	30	\$300	20			3.9%	T45
2012	\$5.32	32	\$283	18			3.6%	44
2013	\$5.46	T29	\$298	14	+1,738	6	3.6%	42
2014	\$5.51	29	\$306	15	+1,902	5	3.6%	44
2015	\$5.41	31	\$318	13	+1,865	5	3.6%	43
2016	\$5.45	29	\$325	14	-\$10	14	3.5%	45
2017	\$5.14	33	\$332	14	+\$998	10		
2018					-\$1,035	38		

FY	/\$1K	rank	/capita	rank	/FTE	rank	share	rank
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Source: State Higher Education Executive Officers Association (SHEEO)

Note how the one measure in which New York State was close to being a true national leader--state support per student FTE--plunged from FY17 to FY18.

**Student Debt, by United States Average, New York State Average and Rank, Percentage of New York State Students Graduating with Debt and Rank, New York State Public Four-Year Average, and Percentage of New York State Public Four-Year Students Graduating with Debt, 2008-2018**

graduation yr	US ave	NY ave (rank)*	NY %age (rank)*	NY 4y public ave	NY 4y public %age
2008	\$21,167	\$23,580	62%	\$18,026	56%
2009	\$22,522	\$25,590	63%	\$20,911	56%
2010	\$23,540	\$26,360	61%	\$21,706	55%
2011	\$24,854	\$25,764 (19)	60% (25)	\$20,561	54%
2012	\$25,903	\$25,686 (27)	60% (23)	\$20,875	55%
2013	\$26,406	\$26,371 (25)	60% (26)	\$21,720	55%
2014	\$27,052	\$27,822 (19)	61% (25)	\$23,774	53%
2015	\$27,992	\$29,320 (18)	59% (31)	\$24,307	52%
2016	\$28,711	\$30,303 (15)	58% (27)	\$25,967	58%
2017	\$29,000	\$30,931 (13)	60% (15)	\$26,380	54%
2018	\$29,456	\$31,127 (15)	59% (17)	\$26,456	56%

Source: College Insight

\*Ranked from highest to lowest in student debt and percentage of students graduating with debt; that is, the closer to #1, the more student debt or the more students in debt there are in a state.

Imagine how much faster New York State would move in the right direction--reducing average student indebtedness and the share of indebted students--if instead of slowing the rates of their increase in SUNY and CUNY, a more ambitious effort were made to reduce both.

## SOURCES AND REFERENCES

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