

MINUTES OF THE
FACULTY SENATE MEETING
December 2, 2014

The second Faculty Senate meeting of the 2014-2015 academic year was called to order by Prof. Lees at 11:49 am.

1. Minutes A motion was made to approve the minutes of the October 21, 2014 meeting as submitted. On voice vote, the motion was approved.
2. Approval of degree candidates
A motion was made to approve the summer and fall degree candidates. On voice vote, the motion was approved.
3. New Business
 - a. Budget Review Committee report – No questions or discussion. Prof. Lees thanked Prof. Naslund for his work and chairing this committee which was very busy last year. Upon voice vote, this report was accepted.
4. Reports
 - a. Prof. Thomas Sinclair, Chair of Faculty Senate Executive Committee

The role of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee in shared governance on this campus reminds Prof. Sinclair about Aaron Wildavsky's book on policy analysis "Speaking Truth to Power." We are privileged to have faculty who give up their time to show a strong faculty voice on campus with administration and other units on campus. Our faculty engagement, collaboration, and good problem solving is the envy of other SUNY universities.

The Campus Governance Leaders have had conversations with President Stenger and Provost Nieman on new directions on campus including the Pharmacy School proposal, the roadmap process, and the budget review process. There is a role for faculty in reviewing proposals and the budget before it is passed which is significant. Our budget review process has been submitted for a SUNY shared governance award.

The movement towards performance measurements and metrics is shaping the University in important ways. At the SUNY level, this is evolving into SUNY Excels, while here at Binghamton the focus is on tracking progress of the key measures of the roadmap.

It has been decided that we will not be having a closer alignment with Upstate Medical Center.

The resignation of VP of Administration Jim Van Vorst led to a significant realignment of administrative functions including the consolidation of budget and finance activities into Academic Affairs. The reorganization seeks to bring financial matters closer to the core academic functions of the University and has an additional benefit of streamlining the focus of the new Division of Operations onto the day-to-day administration of the campus. These changes were implemented in the job description applied in the search for the new Vice President for Operations.

The FSEC as a body participated in the search for the Vice President for Operations, which concluded with the appointment of JoAnn Navarro, and the ongoing search for the new University Ombudsman. The FSEC also recommended faculty for appointment to the search committees for the Dean of the new Pharmacy School, the Dean of the Libraries, and the Chief Information Officer to head up the Information and Technology Services.

As always, matters of curriculum and new academic programs occupied significant attention by the FSEC. We met with Dean Susan Strehle to discuss progress of the Pharmacy School implementation and the development of letters of intent related to a new interdisciplinary master's degree in sustainable communities, and possible programs in Africana Studies and an ESOL degree in the Graduate School of Education. The implementation of the Online Task Force was discussed with Prof. Pitarresi and Vice Provost Don Loewen.

A topic that involved considerable discussion with the Provost was the effect that classroom renovations will have on course scheduling for next year. This resulted in an administrative change to "prime time" for course scheduling and an extension of the academic day to include courses ending at 10:30 pm. The change in prime time was inserted into the Faculty Handbook without consultation with faculty governance which initiated discussions with Provost Nieman on how we can have prior review of significant policy changes.

The change from an "opt in" to an "opt out" policy for final exams that was approved by this body last year is being implemented, but not without its challenges. The room scheduling software was not able to absorb the additional room assignments, and staff had to organize the final exam schedule by hand. This resulted in a number of problems, but we have been promised that they will be resolved in time for next semester.

We had a conversation with Interim Dean of the Libraries Susannah Gal and Prof. Sol Polachek on the impact of library funding decisions on library services and the challenges in acquiring sufficient space for study areas in the library. SUNY's inability (to date) to secure a contract with Elsevier jeopardizes the availability of many critical journals, and the increased contract costs will be borne by the campuses. In particular, Binghamton University needs to become a member of Association of Research Libraries if we are to have the resources needed to achieve premier status. Discussions with Provost Nieman on these items continue.

Finally, when a series of minor violations prompted the State of New York to consider revoking the Campus Preschool's operating license, the FSEC wrote a letter of support. The Campus Preschool is still caring for children.

Question from Prof. Manoj Agarwal, School of Management – What are the range of issues associated with online learning? Prof. Sinclair responded that we will continue to be a very high quality residential campus, and online learning will not be the central way of learning/teaching. Many units are offering online course and it has been discovered that the quality of these courses differ widely. We want to insure that the quality of courses is high when the courses are developed. We will be putting recommendations in place and the Center for Learning and Teaching will be the clearinghouse for the initiation of course proposals. Colleges will be setting their own policies that make sense for each individual school.

Comment from Prof. Sandra Michael, Biological Sciences – In a recent online daily from Inside Higher Education, there was an article about premier research universities not allowing their own online modules for fully online education. There seems to be no interest in reducing the time students spend on campus. At Duke, for example, there appears to be no plan to expand those offerings in the future. This was an interesting observation. Prof. Sinclair noted that how we maintain high quality in our online courses are the same things that are really essential to maintaining quality in our face-to-face classes. He encouraged the body to review the Online Task Force report on the web at <http://www.binghamton.edu/academics/provost/documents/otf-report-2014.pdf>

b. Prof. Randall McGuire, University Faculty Senator

The SUNY Faculty Senate met in October at SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry in Syracuse. It is readily apparent when we attend these meetings that our administration is very open to communication which may not be seen at other campuses.

Several issues were discussed. The SUNY Excels program contains five areas of evaluation. Chancellor Zimpher has asked each campus to indicate how they might get evaluated under each area and the areas in which we can excel. There was a concern on the part of faculty that these measures would be used to rank universities. This in fact is the Chancellor's ammunition with the state government to show that SUNY is excelling. There is not much concern here with these measures; we will look good. There have been discussions by FSEC, President Stenger, and Provost Nieman on how to look at these measures. A resolution was passed calling for continued involvement of faculty with the Chancellor before things like this are instituted.

There are ongoing issues with the established transfer pathways. These transfer pathways were created so a student can begin at any SUNY institution and transfer to another campus and graduate in four years. At the point of implementation, there is a strong feeling that the implementation has not gone as well as it should have. Many campuses have been submitting requests for exceptions which have been turned down. This program is very much oriented toward the four-year comprehensive schools. The new SUNY Provost will be addressing this issue.

Prof. McGuire noted that there are two sets of transfer pathways, one that is in effect now and one for the next academic year. Some are quite different, so he wanted everyone to be sure they were referring to the correct pathway for next year.

The Chancellor continues to work on the Library funding and continuation of the Elsevier contract.

There is a new SUNY-wide sexual harassment policy which calls for affirmative assent. This will be in effect January 1, 2015.

SUNY Faculty Senate passed resolutions regarding text books and prices; University Police at all SUNY campuses having a drug available to avert heroin overdoses; and raising the number of hours a student worker could work so they are eligible for health care.

Question from Don Greenberg, Student Association representative – Does the pathway transfer policy affect admissions? No, it does not affect admissions. A student can start at another SUNY institution, and transfer to BU and graduate in four years.

After no more business, meeting was adjourned at 12:19 pm.

Present: Manoj Agarwal, Josephine Allen, Serdar Atav, Jeffrey Barker, John Baust, Mark Blumler, Anne Brady, Gisela Brinkler-Gabler, Howard Brown, Nicole Cameron, Manas Chatterji, Kenneth Chiu, David Clark, Scott Craver, Lee Cummings, Magdalena Czubak, Leslie Gates, Brandon Gibb, Jennifer Gillis, Charles Goodman, Don Greenberg, Fernando Guzman, Colleen Hailey, John Havard, Hadassah Head, Leslie Heywood, Hoe Kyeong Kim, Celia Klin, Ji-Song Ku, Ricardo Laremont, Michael Lawson, Alistair Lees, Stephen Levy, Michael Lewis, Gretchen Mahler, Randall McGuire, Sandra Michael, Pamela

Mischen, Donald Nieman, Neil Christian Pages, Seungbae Park, Carolyn Pierce, Florenz Plassmann, Dmitry Ponomarev, Xingye Qiao, Sara Reiter, Bonita Roth, Omowunmi Sadik, Daryl Santos, Thomas Sinclair, Pamela Smart, Diane Sommerville, Jim Stark, Harvey Stenger, Sandro Sticca, Ruth VanDyke, Leigh Ann Wheeler, Sara Wozniak, Thomas Wilson, Stephen Zahorian

Excused: Jonathan Biggers, Frank Cardullo, Vincent Grenier, Sharon Holmes, Jonathan Karp, Mark Poliks, Pamela Sandoval, John Starks, Lisa Tessman

Absent: Benjamin Andrus, John Cheng, Alison Coombs, Douglas Holmes, Murali Jagannathan, Aja Martinez, Robert Micklus, Robert Palmer, Michael Rozalski, Karen Salvage, Bruce White, David Wilson, Zili Yang, Chaun Zhong