

MINUTES OF
FULL FACULTY SENATE MEETING
November 19, 2024

Associate Professor of Pharmaceutical Sciences Aaron Beedle, Faculty Senate chair, called the Full Faculty meeting held in Old Union Hall to order at 11:48 a.m. She welcomed President Harvey G. Stenger and turned the meeting over to him.

President Stenger provided his report to the Full Faculty meeting attendees. The presentation can be found at <https://www.binghamton.edu/faculty-senate/documents-and-forms.html>.

Chair Beedle then asked for questions from the full faculty.

After no questions or discussion, the Full Faculty meeting was adjourned.

Chair Beedle called the second Faculty Senate meeting of the 2024-2025 academic year to order at 12:06 p.m.

1. Minutes

The following changes were discussed regarding the September 17, 2024 meeting minutes.

- Bartle Prof. Anton Schick, Mathematics and Statistics, noted a few minor grammatical corrections provided to Ms. Hovancik.
- Prof. Marina Sitrin, Sociology, recommended the following wording change on page 9 to reflect:
 - “Prof. Marina Sitrin, Sociology, recommended that all Senators take the draft motions that were proposed back to our departments and programs to discuss them and see if there is agreement.”

Prof. Robyn Cope asked for an explanation of voting on motions, how they work, and whether Faculty Senators can raise motions without going to the executive board.

Chair Beedle explained that, in general, a senator can bring forth a motion related to a process. Under a request for a call for a resolution, the Senate would vote on whether to pursue the resolution or refer it to a committee to write it if there is no resolution.

Chair Beedle then requested a motion to approve the minutes with the discussed changes. A motion was made and seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

2. Obituary notices

Chair Beedle informed the body that Former Prof. August Mueller, Biology, had passed away. After speaking about our colleague, Chair Beedle requested a moment of silence in his memory.

3. Reports

a. Report from Chair Beedle

Chair Beedle provided an update on the Presidential Search. She has sent Senators multiple emails regarding the search since President Stenger announced stepping down. We will follow the SUNY rules and regulations on the presidential search. This process has begun; we expect seven faculty representatives on the search committee. The campus process for faculty

selection was distributed and posted, and the open nomination period ended on Friday, November 15. Election ballots were distributed yesterday in our six different divisions that will elect six of the seven faculty members. She thanked those who assisted and engaged with this process. We had several nominations across our divisions. She reported that 300 votes were already cast across the six ballots. She noted that the Faculty Senate Executive Committee chose to expand from our typical voting faculty to full-time instructional faculty on multiple-year contracts, which included the addition of clinical faculty, lectures, and other titles. Our process in determining the electorate is imperfect, coming from various sources, so if you know anyone who should be included or eligible to vote but has not received a ballot, let us know. There will be a posting in Dateline.

Chair Beedle provided an update from SUNY Central about General Education Requirements. She reported that SUNY Central had adjusted and added to the general education competencies, which will take effect in the fall of 2026. Adjustments/additions noted included:

1. Artificial Intelligence- The call for incorporating artificial intelligence into general education's existing information literacy competency.
2. A new competency, civic discourse, would be added, and the language would be posted within the online agenda.

Chair Beedle noted that if you have courses mapped to information literacy, you should anticipate receiving outreach to ensure you include this component. A group will be conferred on civic discourse to discuss how we want to include this in our curriculum. Anyone interested in or knowledgeable about this topic should contact Chair Beedle for comment or inclusion in the process.

Lastly, Chair Beedle encouraged the Senators to review the resolution on reading days for final exams posted with the online agenda for this meeting. This will be discussed and presented for vote at the February Faculty Senate meeting, and stakeholders who can provide perspective will be available for questions from the Senate.

b. Report from Prof. Laura Fine Hawkes, chair of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee

Prof. Hawkes shared highlights from FSEC meetings this fall semester.

- FSEC nominated faculty members to a task force from higher learning for service to the School of Computing Chair search for service and to the Vice Provost for Education Enrollment Management.
- FSEC Completed a review of the ENVI proposal

Prof. Hawkes then provided highlights of business covered at various meetings, which included:

- Hosted conversations with a variety of ENVI stakeholders throughout the process of the proposal.
- Hosted conversations with administrators and faculty regarding the Research Prominence Task Force, addressing individual elements for a robust discussion. In addition, peer institutions and findings of that task force.
- Tenure and promotion, various discussions about program initiatives, and data findings are still under investigation.

Chair Beedle thanked Prof. Hawkes for her report.

c. Report from Assoc. Librarian Erin Rushton, SUNY University Faculty Senator

Prof. Rushton provided a brief update on the SUNY Plenary held in Plattsburgh last month. Her update included:

The Senate's major work was passing five resolutions and failing to pass a sixth.

The passed resolutions include:

- A resolution recommending the adoption of the Student Life - Okanagan Charter
- A resolution concerning faculty freedom and HyFlex teaching Modality
- A resolution calling for the creation of a SUNY-wide work group to compile and share best practices for graduate education
- A resolution endorsing the Joint Statement on Funding Public Higher Education.
- A resolution endorsing UBs resolution that asked that language specifying terms limited to "not more than three years" be changed to allow "not more than five years".

The resolution that did not pass was related to hourly equivalents for applied learning/experiential learning credits.

Throughout the meeting, we heard updates from several SUNY leaders, including the Chancellor and Provost. There was much discussion about AI, the digital transformation project, the climate and sustainability action plan, and the general education framework.

- Registration for the Public Good U conference is open. It will be held in Albany, NY, from February 7 to 9, 2025.
- Comments are open for the Transfer Task Force and Climate and Sustainability Action Plan
- And finally, you can submit proposals for the Conversations in the Disciplines Grant

Chair Beedle thanked Associate Librarian Rushton, SUNY University Faculty Senator, for her report.

4. New Business

a. ENVI Departmental Proposal

Chair Beedle explained the process for the proposal component, which included a short presentation by Prof. George Homsy, Environmental Studies Director, and others from the dean's office regarding this proposal, followed by a follow-up statement from the Diversity Committee. Then, move to the floor for an open discussion. Following that, a motion will be made to vote on this proposal.

Chair Beedle then summarized the proposal's history, noting that it was provided to the FSEC with various consultations two years ago. The proposal then went to the Program Review Committee in the spring of 2024. It did not go through the Budget Review Committee because it did not request additional resources. It then went to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee for various discussions and votes and now comes to the Faculty Senate for deliberation.

Chair Beedle then welcomed Prof. Homsy to the floor for his presentation.

Prof. Homsy presented the [ENVI Proposal Summary](#).

Harpur Dean Celia Klin expressed her support for the proposal while acknowledging the valid concerns raised by other programs that offer courses related to ENVI. She also recognized the grey areas that exist between different fields. She is committed to reviewing the ENVI major, addressing the concerns raised by those discussing this with George, and having the program revisit these issues.

Chair Beedle thanked George and Dean Klin for their information.

Chair Beedle reminded the Senators that Prof. Homsy presented a two-page summary of the proposal, and the ENVI full proposal is posted on the online agenda.

Chair Beedle then invited Claudia Marques, Biological Science, the chair of the Diversity Committee (FSDC), to provide comments from the committee regarding this proposal.

The FSDC remains neutral upon review of the Department of Environment and Sustainability proposal. The current proposal addresses several components regarding diversity and inclusion, particularly for undergraduate student recruitment and opportunities, as well as faculty recruitment, retention, and support. However, the proposal does not address recruitment or retention of graduate students (for example, through the Clark Fellowships, the Woo Fellowship, and the Provost Summer Fellowship) and staff. Furthermore, the proposal seems to have a disconnection between the current undergraduate student population within the program and future efforts to specifically and actionably address the current gaps identified there. For example, Binghamton has created several new initiatives to increase Indigenous student enrollment and is currently hiring an assistant director for Native American and Indigenous Student Initiatives. How might specific collaborations be developed through this office? As such, the FSDC would like to continue to work with Dr. Homsy to further evolve the proposal and the future Program/Departmental efforts in the development of Diversity and Inclusion plans.

Chair Beedle thanked the Diversity Committee for their review.

Chair Beedle then opened the floor to the Senate to discuss the proposal. Following the discussion, a motion would be made to approve the ENVI program for departmentalization.

Prof. Jay Sobel, Biological Sciences, noted the department continues to oppose the proposal due to various issues. Concerns he mentioned include the overlapping and reliance of other departments and negotiations that have not been completed.

Prof. Kirsten Prior, Biological Sciences, pointed out that the current proposal lacks specific details on how the department identifies its unique niche and creates an overlap with other units. She mentioned that she would prefer to leave specialized training to the affiliated departments, suggesting they incorporate major tracks within the science degrees to serve their objectives better.

Prof. Norah Henry, Geography, recommended a delay in departmentalization. She expressed the following concerns: the students' needs for graduate and employment success and the department overlap of existing units.

Prof. Tom Powell, Biological Sciences, recommended eliminating or substantially revising the tracks to better align with the department's mission statement.

Prof. Adriane Lam, Earth Sciences, asked for a delay in the vote to departmentalize for more communications with George and the unit. Concerns shared include student outcomes, resource allocation, and undergraduate majors.

Prof. Mark Blumbler, Geography, supported all comments and supports making the ENVI program the best it can be. He raised an additional concern about the increasing inability to have discussions across divides, which needs more discussion before moving forward.

Prof. Homsy responded with the following comments: He noted a significant need for change. However, ENVI's existence as a program or department is not relevant to such change. He added that they would continue to have discussions with contributing departments and organize those discussions. The ENVI department transformation has much more to do with protecting its faculty and students. This change has happened at other universities. He mentioned that their niche is focused on solving supply problems.

Prof. Anthony Fiumera, Biological Sciences, commented that there is a large degree of overlap that does not rely on areas of expertise, and those discussions that we have been trying to move forward are not finished.

Professor Homsy emphasized that efforts are underway to collaborate with community groups and utilize social science surveys to enrich natural science research. He mentioned a specific natural science study, highlighting that environmental studies examine the human-natural interface. Changes are occurring at this interface, and managing those changes is essential. We focus on integrating information from various fields and translating it into actionable community initiatives, which is how we define our work. ENVI does not currently enroll graduate students, explaining why the proposal does not include recruiting and retaining graduate students.

Prof. Marques responded that as a department, we assume the intention is to expand to graduate students in time, whether it is a department or remains a program.

Prof. Wei Chang-Lee made a motion to table the discussion. The motion was approved and seconded.

Chair Beedle noted that the Senate would vote on the motion to table the ENVI departmentalization. A motion was made and seconded, and it was approved with 39 in favor, 7 opposed, and 1 abstention.

5. Returning Business

- a. Statement by Provost on Support for Academic Freedom, motion to endorse

Chair Beedle noted a follow-up item from the last Faculty Senate meeting. The motion is to endorse the provost's statement supporting academic freedom. Before moving forward, she asked the Senate for comments.

Professor Melissa Hardesty, Social Work, suggested revising the language in the statement to include a definition of hate speech. Additionally, regarding faculty and staff making extramural utterances and not institutional spokespersons, there should not be default exceptions for expressing personal opinions when not at work; however, these opinions should not be interpreted as representing the institution.

Prof John Havard, English, called to edit the motion in response to the discussion of the letter of concern.

With this proposed amendment, Chair Beedle noted that the amended motion would read as a motion that the Faculty Senate agrees with the provost's statement on support for academic freedom and is in response to the discussion with the letter of concern. A motion was made and seconded, and the motion was approved with 28 in favor, 12 opposed, and 8 abstentions.

Chair Beedle then requested a vote to endorse the amended statement. The amended statement was approved with 40 in favor, 6 abstentions, and no opposition.

Chair Beedle noted that items were remaining on the agenda, but being out of time, she provided the three items raised at the last Faculty Senate meeting from the Concerned Faculty letter, making the following requests;

1. Pass a resolution supporting the guaranteed right to engage in free speech and assembly about Palestine/Israel
2. Pass a resolution of concern regarding the administration's response to the student encampment or May 2024
3. Pass a resolution calling the Administration to refrain from calling the police/threatening heavy-handed punitive action.

Chair Beedle asked the Senate if they wished to vote to forward the three motions to a committee to draft resolutions. She then asked if a senator would like to propose a motion that those items be referred to a committee.

Prof. Marina Sitrin, Sociology, motioned that all three requests go to committee. After no further comments, Chair Beedle requested approval of the motion that the three specific items raised by the letter of concern be moved to the committee for drafting formal resolution documents. The motion was seconded. After no further discussion, the motion was approved with 43 in favor, 10 oppositions, and 2 abstentions.

The meeting adjourned at 1:08 p.m.

Present: Nancy Abashian, Meaghan Altman, Nathanael Andrade, Christina Balderrama-Durbin, Aaron Beedle, Lina Begdache, Megan Benson, Jeremy Blackburn, Sungdai Cho, Robyn Cope, Leon Cosler, Weiying Dai, Sidney Dement, Tara Dhakal, Mateo Duque, Gregory Evans, Anthony Fiumera, Rodney Gabel, Matt Gallagher, Donald Hall, Tiffany Keller Hansbrough, Melissa Hardesty, John

Havard, Laura Fine Hawkes, Nora Henry, Barry Jones, Rebecca Kissling, Ahyeon Koh, Adriane Lam, Michael Lawler, Wei-Cheng Lee, Meg Leja, Colin Lyons, Andre Mathis, Marcin Mazur, Tom McDonough, Vladimir Nikulin, Thomas O'Brien, Julien Panetier, Andreas Pape, Heather Parks, Sabina Perrino, Mark Poliks, Kirsten Prior, James Rea, Erin Rushton, Anton Schick, Tarek Shamma, Timothy Singler, Marina Sitrin, John Starks, Harvey Stenger, Jodi Sutherland, Bogum Yoon, Marguerite Wilson, Melissa Zinkin

Excused: Peter Borgesen, Michael Buck, Kenneth Chiu, Mackenzie Cooper, Sean Dunwoody, Kimberly Jaussi, Gladys Jimenez-Munoz, Debi Mishra, Gail Rattinger, Jennifer Stoevers, Sofia Theodore-Pierce

Absent: Ming An, Laura Anderson, Ramaesh Bhagirat, David Campbell, Luca Cassidy, Paul Chiarot, Laura Cook, Marvin Diaz, Mikhail Filippov, Joseph Keith, Shuxia Lu, Jeffrey Lum, Anthony Meder, Anjani Praneet Meruvu, Nkiru Nzegwu, Shay Rabineau, Olga Shvetsova, Cyma Van Petten, Bridget Whearty, Melvin Whitehead