

MINUTES OF
FULL FACULTY SENATE MEETING
February 11, 2025

Associate Professor of Pharmaceutical Sciences Aaron Beedle, Faculty Senate chair, called the third Faculty Senate meeting of the 2024-2025 academic year to order at 11:47 a.m.

1. Minutes

Minutes from the November 19, 2024, meeting were approved.

2. Obituary notices

Chair Beedle informed the body that Former Technical Assistant and Instructor Paul Allan Blythe, Electrical and Manufacturing Engineering; Former Professor David Clatworthy, Music; Former Distinguished Teaching Professor Gerald Kadish, History; Emeritus Professor Gerald Kutcher, History; and Former Chair Professor Eugene S. Stevens, Chemistry, had passed away. After speaking about our colleagues, Chair Beedle requested a moment of silence in their memory.

3. Reports

Chair Beedle encouraged faculty to complete the COACHE (Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education) survey. This faculty recruitment, development, and retention survey allows comparisons with peer institutions. The survey was announced in Dateline on Wednesday, February 5. The COACHE survey is an essential component for us as an institution and allows us to get direct faculty feedback on things we are doing well and things we need to improve on. She added that the survey will ask about different components of teaching and service, opportunities for tenure and promotion, faculty recognition, availability of disciplinary work and departmental resources, institutional leadership, and faculty retention rates. Previous findings from this survey led to the formation of the TAEs (Transdisciplinary Areas of Excellence). The survey will close on April 7.

Chair Beedle reported the upcoming FSEC (Faculty Senate Executive Committee) elections that will take place in March. She referred the senators to the paper nomination form on the attendance table and noted that an electronic version would be sent soon. The FSEC term is 2025-2027 and has openings in the following divisions: Decker College, Harpur/Natural Sciences & Mathematics, Harpur/Social Sciences, Libraries, SOM, and SOPPS. She encourages the Senate to consider service on the FSEC. The FSEC meets on Tuesdays in the fall and spring semesters during this time slot (11:45 am – 1 pm). She added that the Senate should contact Chair Beedle or Laura Fine Hawkes, current FSEC chair, or current committee members with questions about the FSEC service.

Chair Beedle reported that the upcoming UFS (University Faculty Senator) term is three years. The UFS is, by default, a member of the FSEC and FS (Faculty Senate). The UFS is also

considered one of the CGLs (Campus Governance Leaders), which includes additional service and leadership. The UFS attends the SUNY Plenary meetings in the fall, winter, and spring. She added that if there is interest in serving, contact her or current UFS members. This election will take place in late March.

Chair Beedle noted that five nominators, on paper or electronically, are required for the FSEC elections and are due March 4. Nominations for the UFS positions (one plus alternates) will be open until March 25. She will remind the Senators at the next Faculty Senate meeting in March.

Lastly, Chair Beedle provided a summary of the curriculum report of items approved by the FSEC that do not need to be approved by the full Senate. These included a revision to the FNP-DNP program, the deactivation of a TESOL program that will be redesigned as an online program, a revision to update the name of the Math BA/BS Data Science and Statistics 4+1 program, an MSED request to the State Education for licensure for Literacy and Early Childhood Education, and a Forensic Health certificate program. She noted that if there are questions or comments related to these reports, to contact her or Prof. Scott Craver, PRC (Program Review Committee) chair.

Chair Beedle reported that a SUNY Plenary was held in January; there were no resolutions, so there would be no report today. Librarian Erin Rushton, UFS, will report at the next Faculty Senate meeting.

4. Curriculum Items (PRC)

Chair Beedle reviewed the Theatre BA-MPA 4+1 Program Proposal and noted that Prof. Laura Fine Hawkes and Director Regina Alfieri, CCPA, were available for questions about the new 4+1 program.

Prof. Gladys Jimenez-Munoz, Sociology, requested a limit of three minutes due to the multiple resolutions needing to be voted on. Chair Beedle responded that she had time limit planned for each resolution when we reach those items on the agenda.

Without further questions, a motion was made and seconded, and the new Theatre BA-MPA 4+1 program was approved unanimously with no opposition or abstention.

Chair Beedle then reviewed the deactivation and discontinued track in Community Schools for the Educational Studies MS. Prof. Matt McConn was available for questions from the senate. She explained that only one student has ever graduated from this program, and the track is empty. CCPA is requesting approval from the Senate to remove this program.

Without further questions, a motion was made and seconded, and the discontinuation and deactivation of the program were approved unanimously with no opposition or abstention.

5. New Business

Chair Beedle announced that the Faculty Senate is considering four resolutions, including one on reading days for final exams and three resolutions (A, B, C) based on the faculty letter of concern discussed at prior meetings.

Chair Beedle began with the resolution on reading days, which originated from the FSEC. Then, we will discuss three resolutions (A, B, C) in response to the letter of concern discussed at the last Faculty Senate meeting in November, for which the Senate had requested that resolutions be drafted. The resolutions and comments from the FSEC are posted on our website and presented to the Senate today. She added that she received comments from the Diversity Committee, which would also be presented to the Senate.

Chair Beedle then proceeded to discuss the plan to address the resolutions, facilitating the discussion in a timely fashion and per Robert's Rules. She asked that the senators keep their comments to one minute or less.

Chair Beedle presented the first resolution on reading days for final exams, which was shared with the Senate at our last meeting. A subgroup of the FSEC prepared this resolution. She reported that the FSEC and the diversity committee endorsed the resolution. Since the original draft, the FSEC has proposed an amendment, which was included in the resolution. This resolution addresses concerns regarding the academic calendar, explicitly ensuring that students have adequate time, through sufficient reading days, to prepare for their final exams between the last day of classes and when the final exams begin. The FSEC met with Amber Stallman, Registrar and Assistant Provost for Student Records, and other representatives involved with scheduling. They discussed specific Federal and State requirements that must work into our calendar; for example, no academic semester can overlap with another academic semester, and student financial aid requires a certain amount of time to process student results to determine if they are eligible. She then presented the following proposed amendment by the FSEC.

4) If the Calendar Committee believes it cannot construct a calendar for a given academic year that meets all Federal and State requirements in light of the required number of reading days specified in this resolution, then the President and/or designee will meet with either the full Faculty Senate Executive Committee or a subcommittee comprised of the Chair of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, the Chair of the Faculty Senate, and one or more additional members of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee chosen by its Chair to attempt to resolve the issue. The Faculty Senate Executive Committee retains the authority to approve a reduction in the number of reading days in a given semester following a formal request by the President due to extenuating circumstances.

Chair Beedle invited Prof. Claudia Marques, Biological Science and Diversity Committee chair of the floor, to provide comments from the committee.

Prof. Marques noted that the Diversity Committee endorses the resolution but recommends at least two working days as reading days to accommodate our diverse learners.

Chair Beedle invited Prof. Barry Jones, Economics proposer of this resolution, for comment.

Prof. Jones noted the need for adequate reading days to relieve student stress and affect learning outcomes. His research found that many students did not always have two consecutive reading days to prepare for exams and sometimes had no reading days. He agreed with Prof. Marques that more reading days were needed. However, they wanted to be

cognizant that the calendar is very complex to construct, but to keep this on the forefront, they pushed for additional reading days in the future. He then asked for support to endorse this resolution.

Chair Beedle then opened the floor for additional comments or questions on the proposal. Per Robert's Rules, senators who opposed it were invited to share their comments.

Prof. Marcin Mazur, Mathematics and Statistics, commented that the second page of the resolution falls short. The main concern should be teaching the students and ensuring they have enough time to reflect and prepare, but it falls short of what we strive to achieve.

Prof. Melvin Whitehead, CCPA, asked if we are going with two working days or pushing back the final grade deadline. Also, at what point will this resolution go into effect?

Chair Beedle responded that the resolution would not go into effect until the subsequent development of the academic calendar year in fall 2027. The final grade deadline would be the purview of the Calendar Committee, which we have not yet stated in this resolution.

Chair Beedle then asked for questions from the Senate about the specific amendment to the resolution.

Without further comments, a motion was made and seconded, and the amendment to the resolution was adopted with one abstention.

After the amendment was approved, Chair Beedle moved to approve the resolution. Without further comments, a motion was made and seconded regarding the amendment to the resolution. The resolution was then approved by a paper ballot, with 52 votes in favor, 1 against, and 1 abstention.

Before the paper vote, Chair Beedle expressed gratitude to Librarian Heather Parks, the Faculty Senate secretary, and Andre Mathis, the chair of the PSS, for managing the counting of the paper votes.

Chair Beedle proceeded with the first amendment, which came from the letter of concern. She presented the ad-hoc committee's Resolution A. This resolution supports academic freedom, free speech, and the right to assembly. She reviewed the following statement from Resolution A:

WHEREAS, the rights of faculty, students, and staff to engage in speech and assembly regarding matters of domestic and global significance, including but not limited to Palestine/Israel is fundamental to the values of the university community;
THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate affirms its support for the guaranteed rights of faculty, students, and staff to engage in speech and assembly concerning matters of domestic and global significance, including but not limited to Palestine/Israel, in alignment with the core principles of academic freedom and rights to free speech and free assembly.

Chair Beedle reviewed the comments the FSEC and Diversity Committee raised, which are included in the resolution.

Comments/Questions that arose from FSEC members included:

- The spirit of the resolution aligns with the FS support for academic freedom.
- The resolution is very narrow in focus; wouldn't the FS generally support academic freedom across broader issues/concerns?
- The resolution does not mention or acknowledge the responsibilities of academic freedom or constraints of the UUP contract.

Chair Beedle noted that the FSEC endorsed Resolution A and did not propose any amendments.

The Diversity Committee has endorsed Resolution A but had the following proposed amendment:

- *A revision to the proposed amendment was adopted in the final resolution- Endorsed unanimously with the following comments: The committee feels that in the WHEREAS, the rights of faculty, students, and staff to engage in speech and assembly regarding matters of global significance, including but not limited to, Palestine/Israel, are fundamental to the values of the university community, "domestic and" should be added before global significance and that "including, but not limited to, Palestine/Israel," should be removed. The "therefore" paragraph should be added to "engage in speech and assembly concerning matters of domestic and global significance, in alignment" as the inclusion in this paragraph of "Palestine/Israel," and only that item should be exclusive.

Prof. Surya Parekh, English, commented that the faculty and staff group that wrote the letter of concern would like the resolutions passed in their original format. He then thanked those involved with this resolution. They are concerned with the change recommended by the Diversity Committee because it would erase mention of Palestine and Israel. They crafted the resolution in a way that includes but is not limited to Palestine and Israel. They aim to change the culture of censorship and self-censorship so that faculty, staff, and students feel able to speak about Palestine and Israel as it relates to academic freedom and freedom of speech.

Chair Beedle asked for comments from the Senate opposing the amendment.

Prof. John Starks, MEAMS, spoke against the amendment, leaving the original language, including Palestine and Israel, in the discussion, which is crucial to making any statement, especially during the national climate, in particular with Palestine and Israel.

Chair Beedle then asked for comments from the Senate in support of the amendment.

Prof. Claudia Marques, Diversity Committee Chair, noted that the committee did not feel they had enough time to review the resolutions but wanted to make it more global in significance, including domestically.

Prof. Gladys Jimenez-Munoz, Sociology, spoke against the amendment proposed by the Diversity Committee. She commented that the Second Amendment of free speech is important to our university, other universities, and the country.

Prof. Bridget Whearty, English and Medieval Studies, appreciates what the Diversity Committee added and asked if we could revise the amendment so that we include:

- the WHEREAS, the rights of faculty, students, and staff to engage in speech and assembly regarding matters of global significance, including but not limited to Palestine/Israel, are fundamental to the values of the university community, “domestic and” should be added before global significance and that “including, but not limited to, Palestine/Israel,” should be included and carried over to the “therefore” paragraph, it, should be added “engage in speech and assembly concerning matters of domestic and global significance, including but not limited to Palestine/Israel.

Chair Beedle then requested a vote to discuss the proposed revision of the amendment. A motion was made and seconded to discuss the proposed revision, which was approved unanimously with no opposition or abstention.

After Chair Beedle revised the following proposed statement:

WHEREAS the rights of faculty, students, and staff to engage in speech and assembly regarding matters of domestic and global significance, including but not limited to Palestine/Israel are fundamental to the values of the university community;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate affirms its support for the guaranteed rights of faculty, students, and staff to engage in speech and assembly concerning matters of domestic and global significance, including but not limited to Palestine/Israel, in alignment with the core principles of academic freedom and rights to free speech and free assembly.

After no further discussion, Chair Beedle requested a vote to approve the revised language. A motion was made and seconded, and it was approved unanimously with no opposition or abstention.

After no further discussion, Chair Beedle requested a vote to approve the entire amendment with the revision. A motion was made and seconded, and it was approved unanimously with no opposition or abstention.

After no further discussion, Chair Beedle requested a vote to approve Resolution A with the revised amendment. A motion was made and seconded, and it was then approved by paper vote with 48 in favor, 3 oppositions, and 3 abstentions.

Chair Beedle proceeded to Resolution B, a resolution of concern on the Administration’s Response to the Encampment.

WHEREAS, the University Faculty Senate is committed to upholding the core principles of free speech and the right to assembly for all members of the university community, including faculty, staff, and students;
WHEREAS the rights of faculty, students, and staff to engage in speech and peaceful assembly are fundamental to the values of the university community;
WHEREAS, from May 1 to May 3, 2024, an encampment was organized on the Peace Quad of Binghamton University, protesting the war in Gaza;
WHEREAS, students were threatened with punitive action if the encampment was not disbanded by 5 PM on May 3;
WHEREAS, students were fearful of punitive and policing action;
THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate expresses concern about the administration's response to the encampment that took place in May 2024, particularly regarding the possibility of punitive and policing action against students involved in the peaceful demonstration.

Chair Beedle then reviewed the following comments by the FSEC:

- Note that due to a preference to complete the resolutions in a timely fashion, no students have been consulted by the resolutions ad hoc committee or the FSEC to understand the range/scope of student perceptions.
- The encampment was non-violent, allowing 48 hours for protesters to engage in free assembly. It is unreasonable to expect that such protests should be allowed to block university spaces and other groups' rights indefinitely.

Chair Beedle reported that the FSEC did not endorse this resolution and did not propose any amendments.

The Diversity Committee also did not endorse the resolution and had the following comment:

- The committee felt that we were missing some information about the response from the administration and what was said. The committee also felt this would most likely apply to students at higher risk, and we want to be as clear in our protections as possible.

Prof. Surya Parekh, English, the initiator and in favor of the resolution, commented that the administration has a grey area of discretion regarding encampments. The police chief, vice president of affairs, and other members of the administration and FSEC have acknowledged that the student encampment last year was peaceful. Still, there are concerns because, on the first day of the encampment, the administration did not attempt to negotiate. Students were threatened with severe sanctions and withholding of grades, and if they did not dismantle the encampment, what happened at other universities would soon occur at Binghamton. Threatening students sends a chilling message to the exercise of the freedom of speech on this campus. He added that students were never offered to move their encampment elsewhere.

Prof. Claudia Marques, Diversity Committee Chair, noted that the diversity committee thought it was a peaceful demonstration and understood they were not offered another place. The

Diversity Committee also stated that it is hard to locate in our policy how to have a peaceful encampment on campus, and this information is unclear as to whom they are protecting.

Chair Beedle noted that those resources exist and were shared at the September Faculty Senate meeting and that there is a longstanding policy on not camping on campus.

Professor Jennifer Stoever from the English department expressed her support for Resolution B, emphasizing its significance in light of the University's severe and potentially violent punitive actions on May 3, 2024. Many faculty members involved in the letter of concern participated in the encampment. Prof. Stoever described the last day of the encampment as frightening, stating that the threatened punishment and policing were unlike anything she had ever witnessed on this campus. She pointed out that the policing tactics employed resembled wartime strategies. It was unacceptable to use such aggressive measures against students who were peacefully assembled at the encampment.

After no further discussion, a motion was made and seconded to approve Resolution B, a resolution of concern on the Administration's response to the encampment. By paper vote, it was approved with 25 in favor, 20 oppositions, and 10 abstentions.

Chair Beedle proceeded with the last resolution, Resolution C-Resolution on the Use of Punitive Action in Response to Peaceful Student Protests.

WHEREAS, the University Faculty Senate is committed to upholding the core principles of free speech and the right to assembly for all members of the university community, including faculty, staff, and students;
WHEREAS the rights of faculty, students, and staff to engage in speech and peaceful assembly are fundamental to the values of the university community;
THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate calls on the Administration to refrain from threatening heavy-handed punitive actions in response to peaceful student protests.

Chair Beedle reviewed the comments made by the FSEC and Diversity Committee, which are included in the resolution.

Comments from the FSEC included:

- We support peaceful protest action and recognize its importance in civil discourse
- The resolution reflects the national context of recent heavy-handed actions against protesters at other institutions.
- What does heavy-handed mean? /How should it be interpreted?
- How is "peaceful" defined in this context?
- The resolution does not acknowledge that protests, even if peaceful, are not always possible and may need to be disbanded if they disrupt university business or ensure that other campus groups have access to spaces they have reserved for their free speech rights.
- How does this resolution relate to the University Policy "Guidelines for Non-Credit Use of Campus Facilities"?

<https://www.binghamton.edu/operations/policies/policy-410.html>. This policy

states, "Students should expect that violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action under the University's Student Code of Conduct, up to and including interim suspension, suspension, and expulsion."

- Given that such events may be time-sensitive and occur in the context of a broader political environment, the administration is charged with doing what is best for the campus as a whole.
- The framing of the resolution is that if any protest is peaceful, it should be allowed to proceed. Still, the fundamental issue is that the institution has a legitimate claim to enforce the rules of place, time, and manner. The framing of the resolution suggests that time, place, and manner restrictions are not valid.
- The resolution's title is about the "USE" of punitive action, but the resolved statement is about the "threat" of use. Shouldn't these be in alignment?
- Disciplinary action can be appropriate, and students should be informed of the consequences of actions that may lead to disciplinary action. This should be distinguished from punitive.

The FSEC did not endorse the resolution. The Diversity Committee did not endorse the resolution as well and had the following comment:

The committee had the same concerns as FSEC, where clarity was missing.

What was heavy-handed? Distinguish between disciplinary action and punitive (singling people out for out of proportion responses). Is there a protest policy versus day-to-day? Overall, the resolution is too broad and vague.

Chair Beedle noted that no amendments had been suggested by either committee.

Prof. Surya Parekh, English, commented that this resolution is intentionally broad. Our aim is more cultural and atmospheric than merely concerned about policy and rules. Prof. Suria wants the administration to change its approach with good faith and open-minded negotiations.

Prof. Robyn Cope, Romance Languages and Literatures commented in favor of the resolution regarding two FSEC comments defining heavy-handed punitive actions and relating to the current university policy online regarding using university facilities. She said students were told their grades would be withheld and reports would not count if they did not dismantle the encampment. However, the language of the FSEC quotes from that policy using the university facilities quotes, "Students should expect that violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action up to including interim suspension and suspension expulsion"; is new and was not included in the guidelines and student code of conduct at the time of the encampment in May 2024. The possibility of interim suspension and suspension expulsion, as well as a link to a new camping policy with the use of tents, was added to the code of conduct in August of 2024 after the encampment that specifically targets future demonstrations and/or camping.

Chair Beedle explained that a long-standing no-camping policy dates back decades and was a university policy before the encampment.

Prof. Bridget Whearty, Medieval Studies, commented that the resolution underscores that the university needs to treat its students, staff, and faculty as members of our community instead of as trespassers. Peaceful protests should not be met with acts of violence, as with the May

2024 encampment. Faculty who observed the encampment and students who spoke with them afterward would like to know the following. Despite the university stating that the police presence was there to protect the peaceful protesters, police were facing and surveilling the student protesters, not threatening the counter-protestors. Moreover, when others hurled homophobic, transphobic, racist, and sexist slurs by counter-protestors at the peaceful student protesters, the police did nothing to protect queer, trans, bi students and faculty from the verbal attacks. Academic freedom, which the university states it is committed to, requires spaces for protests such as these. It is much harder and more critical to defend academic freedom consistently when it causes friction and inconvenience. This resolution is ultimately about offering a defense for academic freedom free from threats and intimidation, which is especially violent at this moment.

Chair Beedle reminded the Senate that the resolution currently open is for forwarding and considering future protests; it is not specific to or directed at the encampment.

Prof. Jennifer Stoeve, English, commented that students were informed of the new additional punishment for participation in the protests, having their grades from their current semester expunged. This is something that will be discussed. This is not only heavy-handed, meaning physical violence, but also financial violence. Students were afraid of additional student debt and having to redo a semester, possibly even longer; it wasn't just their labor that was threatened; it was their future livelihoods. The peaceful actions of our students should be met with good-faith negotiation, not legal trouble or burdens of debt.

Chair Beedle noted that the comments made on the floor today are the first she has heard of any expunging of student grades or other such threats, which has not been raised previously. She is unaware of the source or nature of those comments that have not been made before.

After no further comments about Resolution C, Resolution on the Use of Punitive Action in Response to Peaceful Student Protests, a motion was made and seconded, and it was approved by paper vote with 26 in favor, 23 opposed, and 6 abstentions.

6. Spring 2025 Faculty Senate meetings

Chair Beedle reminded the Senate of the remaining meetings for the spring semester: Tuesday, March 25, 2025, and Tuesday, May 6, 2025. She also reminded the Senate to complete the COACHE survey again. Lastly, nominations are open for the FSEC, UFS, and alternates.

The meeting adjourned at 1 p.m.

Present: Ming An, Laura Anderson, Nathanael Andrade, Aaron Beedle, Lina Begdache, Megan Benson, Ramaesh Bhagirat, Jeremy Blackburn, Peter Borgesen, David Campbell, Paul Chiarot, Sungdai Cho, Laura Cook, Robyn Cope, Sidney Dement, Tara Dhakal, Marvin Diaz, Mateo Duque, Gregory Evans, Anthony Fiumera, Matt Gallagher, Donald Hall, Melissa Hardesty, John Havard, Laura Fine Hawkes, Nora Henry, Kimberly Jaussi, Gladys Jimenez-Munoz, Barry Jones, Rebecca Kissling, Colin Lyons, Andre Mathis, Marcin Mazur, Tom McDonough, Debi Mishra, Vladimir Nikulin, Thomas O'Brien, Julien Panetier, Andreas Pape, Heather Parks, Sabina

Perrino, Mark Poliks, Erin Rushton, Anton Schick, Tarek Shamma, Marina Sitrin, John Starks, Harvey Stenger, Jennifer Stoeve, Jodi Sutherland, Sofia Theodore-Pierce, Cyma Van Petten, Bridget Whearty, Melvin Whitehead, Marguerite Wilson, Melissa Zinkin

Excused: Nancy Abashian, Kenneth Chiu, Mackenzie Cooper, Leon Cosler, Weiyang Dai, Sean Dunwoody, Rodney Gabel, Ahyeon Koh, Wei-Cheng Lee, Anthony Meder, Gail Rattinger, Bogum Yoon

Absent: Meaghan Altman, Christina Balderrama-Durbin, Michael Buck, Luca Cassidy, Mikhail Filippov, Tiffany Keller Hansbrough, Joseph Keith, Adriane Lam, Michael Lawler, Meg Leja, Shuxia Lu, Jeffrey Lum, Anjani Praneet Meruvu, Nkiru Nzegwu, Kirsten Prior, Shay Rabineau, James Rea, Olga Shvetsova, Timothy Singler