

SUNY Faculty Senate Plenary Session

January 23-24, 2003

SUNY Geneseo Campus

An overview of the session:

The Friday meeting began with traditional introductions of Senate officers and a welcome from the local campus officials. The Senate President, Joseph Hildreth gave a detailed report of his activities to date that included a variety of contacts with various colleges, state offices and organizations as well as senate committees. James McElwaine gave the Executive committee report.

Several major topics were reported on with discussion. The most significant were:

- The Provost's formation of ACGE (Advisory Council on General Education): This group will replace the similar PACGE group that has assisted the central administration in implementing General Education across the SUNY System. The role of ACGE, however, is significantly different, in that it will ONLY require consultation in cases where individual campuses are "uncertain" or a controversy exists concerning the appropriateness or ability of a particular course offering to meet the learning outcomes specified in each campus' General Education Plan. In other words, routine responsibility for approving General Education offerings is about to be delegated to the individual campuses.
- A new Provost's Committee was formed on "Faculty Development"
- Development of a "Distance Learning Plan" for SUNY including mechanisms for equitably distributing available courses, providing/crediting FTE's, etc.
- A new policy is under development on "Misconduct in Faculty Research" in the Chancellor's office. This is intended to clarify policy on public disclosure, notification of the Chancellor, and notification of the Board of Trustees. The Chancellor's office is working w/ UUP to determine contract impacts, etc.
- "RE-Thinking SUNY II" – a new working group of the Board of Trustees (BoT) formed
- Long meeting held in November between the Chancellor and the Executive Committee regarding "System Wide Assessment." Certain members of the BoT are still very much determined to see a system-wide exam developed and applied to assess General Education outcomes. The Senate is adamantly opposed.

Guest speakers during the afternoon session included both Provost Salins and Chancellor King. Provost Salins' comments focused on new initiatives from his office, including a "new vision" for Teacher Education, Enrollment Planning efforts, Homeland Security/Defense task forces, and an update on the "SUNY-Connect" library initiative extending to add major NYS private colleges (SU was conspicuously absent from his comments!). Brian Stenson provided an updated budget report that covered the SUNY system budget process and the status of this year's budget. The near term outlook is generally bleak, with next year much worse than bleak.

Chancellor King addressed the senate and focused on the state of the budget. The Chancellor was generally upbeat, but clearly concerned about political bargaining process the budget will undergo between now and July(?) (primarily between Pataki and Silver—the potential tuition increase is likely to become a major bargaining chip). The chancellor spent a significant time addressing the questions and concerns of Senators. These included uncertainties of foreign grad students, concerns over the tuition increase and its equitability, assessment, and losing students to community colleges (due to tuition increase).

The final session of the day a presentation by SUNY Vice Chancellor Wayne Locust (in charge of admissions and marketing). Wayne gave a very nice overview of the significant strides taken by SUNY over the past 2-4 years to create a more unified marketing image, to simplify and streamline the application

process, and to promote SUNY throughout the state and the northeast. Clearly, things are VASTLY improved.

On Saturday (1/24), activities focused on the reports of task forces and committees. Of particular note was the final report of the Task Force on Rational Fiscal Policy. This report was first presented to senators on Thursday evening and placed on the floor for discussion Friday afternoon. It was very well received and accepted with one minor amendment on Saturday. A resolution urging the Chancellor to implement the policy was adopted without dissent. The primary recommendations (in abbreviated form) include:

1. *State Tax Support*
 - The State should increase its funding of SUNY over time
 - The percentage of State tax dollars should not decrease
2. *New York State Public Higher Education Stabilization Fund*
 - To provide long-term stability, the State should create a Public Higher Education Stabilization Fund
 - This fund would provide additional resources to SUNY and CUNY during times of fiscal hardship
 - The fund should be replenished during times of fiscal stability and growth
3. *Enrollment Policy*
 - To maintain and enhance quality, enrollment goals should be consistent with available funding
 - In particular, enrollment increases must be accompanied by appropriate funding increases
4. *Tuition Policy*
 - Tuition should be indexed annually
 - The possibility of setting a higher undergraduate tuition at the doctoral campuses should be explored
5. *Student Fees*
 - Student fees should be set in an open, consistent and accountable manner
 - Annual increases in tuition should help moderate increases in student fees
6. *Financial Aid*
 - The TAP award should also cover broad-based student fees
 - The maximum TAP award should be adjusted annually
7. *Unfunded Mandates*
 - Adequate funding should be provided to campuses to offset the costs of new mandates
8. *External Funding*
 - SUNY should intensify its efforts to diversify its sources of funding from external sources
 - Such increases should not result in declines in State support

9. *Truth in Budgeting*

- The State, SUNY, and the campuses should provide proper, consistent, and open budgeting and accounting

10. *Effective and Efficient Use of Funds*

- SUNY and the campuses should continually look for ways to economize
- Best practices should be shared

11. *Cooperation/ partnership with CUNY and independent institutions*

- SUNY should develop working relationships with the independent sector and CUNY for the benefit of the State and its citizens

The following standing committees gave reports:

Executive, Awards, Governance, Graduate and Research, Operations, Public Information, Undergraduate, and Student Life.

The Campus Governance Leaders group met at the same time and provided a report as well.

Copies of the committee reports are on file with Scott Shannon and will be on line at the new SUNY Faculty Senate Web-site soon. **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Respectfully submitted:

Scott Shannon

ESF Faculty Senator

2/10/03