

State University of New York
University Faculty Senate
Governance Committee

Fall Plenary Session
Maritime College
October 21-23, 2004

**Proposed Resolution [re Procedure for Review of Proposals for
Change to Academic Programs and Organization]**

Background:

In January 2004 the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate requested the Governance Committee to examine the issues surrounding the establishment of the School of Nanotechnology at the University at Albany. To that end the two committee co-chairs visited the Albany campus on two occasions in February and April 2004, meeting with faculty critical of the process and with faculty and the Dean of the School of Nanotechnology.

As noted in the Report to the Executive Committee, there are differing perceptions on the question of whether the governance process broke down. However, as noted in the Report, "that, by itself, indicates that there was not a set of procedural expectations shared by the faculty leadership, the administrative leadership, and the leadership within the School of Nanotechnology."

A clear understanding of governance procedures by all segments of the campus community is central to the success of the governance process, and clear and frequent communication about procedural expectations facilitates such an understanding. To that end, the following resolution is offered:

Whereas increasing pressures upon the campuses of the university to become more responsive to the economic development priorities of the state and the communities in which they are located, as well as budgetary pressures to increase efficiency, make it likely that reorganizations of academic units will occur with greater frequency than in the past, and

Whereas the organizational structure of the campus has a profound impact upon matters of research and instruction, whose primary responsibility rests with faculty, and

Whereas a broadly understood and carefully articulated consultative process enables the faculty to effectively discharge its governance responsibilities,

Now therefore be it **Resolved**:

1. that the University Faculty Senate recommends to Campus Governance Leaders that each campus should have, within its bylaws, an explicit process for reviewing proposals for academic reorganization; an explicit process for review, prior to the submission of proposals to System Administration, of new academic programs; and an explicit process for the approval of, and changes to, the curriculum.
2. that the University Faculty Senate recommends to Campus Governance Leaders that upon the appointment of all new academic administrators (e.g., Dean, Vice President for Academic Affairs, President), the chair of the governance body should communicate with the new appointee, apprising the appointee of the extant process of consultation, and reminding the appointee that all changes to the process must emanate through the normal governance mechanisms, and
3. that the University Faculty Senate recommends to Campus Governance Leaders that as part of its periodic review of governance, the local governance body should review the consultative process, and even where adequate and working well, should use the opportunity to reacquaint the campus community with the process.