

Faculty Governance Orientation (October 4, 2019)

Faculty Senate Activities (Historical Overview)

Point of Information

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(initial presentation at 4/27/18 Faculty Senate Meeting)

Background:

- Actions and Activities undertaken by Faculty Senate may span weeks, months or semesters.
- Faculty Senate activities include resolutions, reports, initiatives, hearings, town halls, investigations, analyses, task forces, establishment of new Standing or college-wide committees, joint effort.
- Areas of Faculty Senate activity include broad matters within the Authority of the Faculty, as empowered through Policies of SUNY Board of Trustees, through established governance structure, consistent with UFS standards and practices.
- Breadth and depth of FS activities include matters of the educational program, student life, facilities, quality of life, budget, planning, operations, campus development, ethics, energy and sustainability.
- Effective outcomes from Faculty Senate activities contribute to institutional effectiveness.

A Brief Sampling of Faculty Senate Activities (historical)

In Matters of the Educational Program:

- Deliberation and approval to establish **Honors College**.
- Deliberation and approval of **Latin Honors**; approval of policy to establish **Grade Point Average**.
- Deliberation and approval of **Master Plan amendment** to allow granting of **Graduate Degrees**.
- Deliberation and approval of change in admissions **Selectivity matrix** for FTC students.
- Facilitation of Special Meetings of the Faculty regarding **NCATE** accreditation.
- Deliberation and approval for departments **within each School** to be represented on Faculty Senate.
- Faculty Senate-led initiative for **local/campus control of General Education**: program design, rubrics and assessment, in collaboration with UFS task force, leading to establishment of GEC (now LEC).

In Matters of Student Life

- Deliberation and actions regarding **minimum GPA** for First Year Residents (including presentation of Faculty Senate resolution to College Council).
- Deliberation and actions in response to administration's zero-tolerance policy (including presentation to College Council).
- Comprehensive initiative regarding revisions to the college's judicial process and **Code for Student Conduct** (including joint effort with Student Affairs and presentations to College Council).
- Establishment of **Faculty Judicial Committee** as part of the college's judicial process (involved revision to Faculty Bylaws, 2009).

In Matters of Campus Development

- Actions in opposition to building the **Nassau County Police Academy** on Old Westbury campus; (involved College Council Chair and NC Police Commissioner appearing at Faculty Senate hearing).
- Faculty Senate-led hearings on proposed **Land Lease Legislation** (1998-1999) which would have allowed the leasing of campus land for public/private development such as a Sports/medicine complex, Hotel/conference center and residential housing.
- Faculty Senate-led hearings on **Open Space Preservation Legislation** (1999-2000) in reaction to proposed Land Lease Legislation and proposed development projects on the Old Westbury campus.
- Faculty Senate comments in response to State University Construction Fund re. **Parking Lot Project** and Short Environmental Impact Form (**SEIF**) prepared by SUCF contractor for NYS/DEC (2018).

In Matters of the Physical Plant

- Faculty Senate-led investigation of **IEQ** (indoor environmental quality), including air quality, health, safety, cleanliness of campus facilities (per APPA standards), with focus on the Academic Village. Analysis of facilities, including joint effort with UUP, came to attention of SUNY and relevant agencies (1995-1997), and helped facilitate both short-term and long-term solution strategies.
- Faculty Senate-led energy audit of Old Westbury campus buildings, with focus on Academic Village, which created opportunities for undergraduate research. Energy analyses initiated by FS came to the attention of SUNY and NYSERDA (1997-2000), and led to opportunities for comprehensive development of energy conservation measures, energy efficiency and cogeneration projects.
- Regular reports to Faculty Senate on **energy conservation, energy efficiency and renewable energy** projects proposed for Old Westbury by NYSERDA, SAIC, LIPA, EnLink GeoEnergy (1998-2002).
- Establishment of **Campus Green Committee** (ad hoc college-wide committee convened 2009-2010) in response to *SUNY Energy & Sustainability Policy* enacted by SUNY Board of Trustees, Nov. 2007. Note: re-establishment of Campus Green Committee is included in **Strategic Plan 2018-2023**.

In Matters of Budget, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

- Faculty Senate-led **Strategic Plan** (in response to Rethinking SUNY, 1995) identified over **\$1Mil** in cost savings as an **alternative to retrenchment** of academic programs and faculty; FS Strategic Plan was delivered by college's CFO as *campus response to pending 10% reduction in operating budget*.
- Faculty Senate-led **budget analyses**, including analysis of the college's operating and all-funds budget, **benchmarking** vs. peer institutions, and development of metrics for institutional effectiveness, informed by survey of *best practices in SUNY campus budget process* (2000-2002).
- Regular reports to Faculty Senate by Senate representative from **College-wide Budget Planning Committee** (1992-2002). Note: the position of Senator from BPC is codified in Faculty Bylaws.
- Faculty Senate-led **360° Review** of senior administration (1997): included performance indicators for academic and non-academic units (all divisions); analyses and metrics for institutional effectiveness, including in areas of resource allocation, M&O (maintenance and operations), student support, institutional advancement. The **300 page report** and analyses produced by FS was provided to the SUNY Chancellor, College Council, Board of Trustees; a transition in college leadership followed.
- Faculty Senate **joint effort in Strategic Planning** during the past two decades, including in 1998, 1999-2000, 2008-2010 and, most recently, joint effort in developing the **Strategic Plan 2018-2023** and proposal for Strategic Plan Analysis, Assessment and Review Committee (**SPAARC**).

In Matters of Governance Outreach

- Faculty Senate-led investigation, at the behest of 400+ students who submitted petition to FS Office (regarding alleged misconduct within a certain department); report of Ad Hoc Ethics Committee was presented at special meeting of FS (June 1996); broader recommendations **led to establishment of Faculty Rights & Responsibilities Committee** as a Special (now standing) Committee of the Senate.
- Faculty Senate initiative to improve the **proportion and composition of faculty participation** in governance. In period 2005-2009, a concerted effort led to participation increasing from **35% to over 50%** of FT faculty, with improved balance of senior/tenured and junior/untentured faculty. (Previously, senior/tenured faculty had pre-dominated in governance.) In 2018-2019, about 58% of faculty were participating in some aspect of governance. But over the past decade, balance has now shifted to a greater proportion of junior/untentured to senior/tenured faculty serving in governance.
- FS activities to improve **interface with SGA**, including outreach to fill 3 SGA seats on Faculty Senate, and FS workshops on the budget presented at SGA meetings. Outreach by faculty on Student Life (and other committees), assisting students in bringing concerns and actionable items to Faculty Senate.
- Faculty Senate initiative to improve **interface with the College Council**, including regular written reports to the Council; invitation to members and chair of College Council to attend FS meetings.