

Report on the Fall 2004 Plenary Meeting of the University Faculty Senate
Submitted by Maureen Dolan, University Senator, 11/12/04

The UFS Fall Plenary meeting was held at the SUNY Maritime Campus, October 21-23, 2004. In addition to the regular reports (by UFS Senate President, UFS Executive Committee, UFS Standing Committees, and Sharing of Concerns by campuses in each sector), Chancellor King and Provost Salins addressed the University Faculty Senate and responded to a number of questions on Mission Review II and the new Budget Allocation Process (BAP). The Senate was also addressed by Trustee John Cremins, the newly appointed Chair of the Board of Trustees Committee on Academic Standards. Updates on the SUNY Faculty Development Initiative and on SUNY-wide campus-based assessment were provided by the Assistant Provost for University Assessment and Academic Initiatives, Dr. Patricia Francis.

The major issue throughout the Fall Plenary meeting was Mission Review II, in particular, the appropriate role of campus governance throughout all phases of the process, and the implications for SUNY campuses of the new BAP. Several important resolutions emerged from this Plenary: (i) Campus Governance Leaders (CGLs) resolution on the role of campus governance in MR II; (ii) UFS Governance Committee resolution on the role of campus governance in academic reorganization; and (iii) Governance Committee resolution providing for site visitation (to candidate's place of employment) during the search process for campus presidents. These resolutions received unanimous endorsement by the University Faculty Senate and are attached to this report. Also attached is Executive Summary of *Report of the Provost's Advisory Task Force on Faculty Development*.

Summary of major agenda items:

Report by UFS President, Joseph Hildreth

Reaffirmed his goal of seamless communication between SUNY and the campuses, with a return loop of communication from SUNY which addresses the concerns of campuses. Cited the good progress made in recent years [through the University Faculty Senate] for effective faculty input to decision making in SUNY. Announced new USF website at www.suny.edu/facultysenate. This is to include a "President's Corner" of news and key issues, Resolutions passed in last few years, pages for Standing Committees and the Executive Committee, the Faculty Senate Bulletin, Bylaws, and perhaps excerpts from major reports generated by the Senate.

Hildreth summarized the new BAP, which will distribute \$1 Billion from the \$8 Billion All Funds Budget. Whereas the 1998 BAP allocated funds according to a campus-cost approach, the new BAP will allocate to campuses based on their proportionate share of available SUNY funds in six major categories of undergraduate, graduate 1 and 2 (masters and doctoral), professional, research, and special/earmarks. He said the new BAP was intended to be fair, simple, transparent and predictable.

Hildreth indicated there was a spectrum across campuses, from satisfactory to unsatisfactory, of faculty governance input to Mission Review II. He said there should be significant involvement of faculty throughout all phases of MR II, beginning with the planning and drafting of the Guidance Document, especially the areas dealing with admissions selectivity, campus distinctiveness, faculty quality and direction of the institution.

Six courses for Teacher Education program have been approved for the Community Colleges (four of which are for general education). So far two Community Colleges have been approved to offer Teacher Education; eight more are awaiting approval. John Lombardi will be offering a workshop on national benchmarks, in particular, benchmarks for the "Honor's" designation of academic programs and colleges.

Joe announced that SUNY is preparing a response to address the Nursing Shortage in NYS. Also, he categorized as "a very positive sign" the replacement of Trustee Candace DeRussy by Fr. John Cremins as Chair of the Academic Standards Committee. (In his remarks to the Senate, Cremins termed the faculty the "mortar and the bricks" that hold SUNY together. He said he was optimistic about the future direction of the Academic Standard Committee, which he saw as undergoing "monumental change".)

Report by Provost Peter Salins

The Provost focused most of his remarks on the new BAP and Mission Review II. He said that faculty governance must be deeply involved in a meaningful way in Mission Review II. Finance issues and facilities issues must be integrated with academic planning in Mission Review. The campus Guidance Documents are due to SUNY by December 15th; campus site visits will occur through the Spring and Fall of 2005. This will form the framework for a new set of MOUs.

Provost Salins said half the students in NYS are taught by teachers who graduated from Teacher Education programs in SUNY. He cited the need for more teachers in mathematics and science, special education and foreign languages - especially in poor areas of the state. The higher education community can take a lead in helping public schools to become more effective.

The SUNY Master Plan is available online. This integrates the initiatives of Provost's Office with the rest of System Administration, and provides a planning framework for the 64 campus system.

The Provost's Faculty Development Initiative is in partnership with the University Faculty Senate. The report of Task Force shares best practices in faculty development in SUNY and nationwide.

Speaking on the academic preparedness of students when they enter SUNY, he said that recent ACT report finds that students are not better prepared than ten years ago. Several SUNY campuses have volunteered to have Provost's office review the transcripts of their incoming students. Salins said that SUNY should be more involved in the preparation of students prior to their enrollment.

In response to questions on Mission Review II, Provost Salins said that the involvement of faculty governance in MR II is a more strenuous requirement than the first Mission Review. He said effective planning must be legitimate, and that meaningful involvement of governance was needed to build a legitimate process. The entire community must work together to reach agreement on goals.

Provost Salins gave an overview of the new BAP, which is still under development. (SUNY Vice Chancellor for Finance and Business, Brian Stenson, had been scheduled to provide an update on the budget and BAP, but was unable to attend Fall Plenary.) A major problem with the old BAP, according to Salins, was that it did not connect the funding actually available to SUNY, with the allocations driven by the BAP cost-based formula. The new BAP is tied to a performance variable rather than to reimbursement [of expenses]. Campuses must be fiscally well-managed.

About 2-3% of SUNY's budget will be allocated as a "reward" to campuses that have met specific performance objectives. The details are yet to be worked out, but performance measures would likely include retention and graduation rates, increased sponsored research, and a metric to measure general progress of a campus towards achieving the goals of its MOU.

In the case of residence halls, previously all revenues from dormitories were pooled; better-managed campuses to some degree were supporting poorly managed campuses. Under self-sufficiency, each campus is responsible for the management of its own residence halls.

Salins reinforced that, under BAP (both old and new), each campus gets a lump sum from SUNY. What each decides to do with these funds is a matter of internal decision making.

The Provost cited the report from the Advisory Task Force on Faculty Development (2002-2004). This group was charged with developing strategies for improving ongoing scholarly and professional development, including: improved teaching and research; community and professional service; administration and governance skills; and leadership in SUNY. The Task Force developed strategies for meaningful recognition and reward, and strategies to address the need for sufficient additional resources in support of faculty development. The four-page Executive Summary is attached to this report.

Sharing of Concerns (Comprehensive Colleges)

For most campuses in this sector, major issues were the lack of meaningful participation of faculty governance in Mission Review II, and lack of effective consultation especially as regards academic reorganization. There was also general concern about increased reliance on non-tenure track and adjunct faculty, and the associated impact on students and institutional quality. There was also general concern about the poor compensation of SUNY faculty (e.g., as compared to public school teachers); and the impacts of larger class size on retention, on academic quality, and on time available for scholarship and professional development.

Concern was raised about community colleges' development of Teacher Education Programs, and the impact on the Comprehensive Colleges of SUNY's approval of 4-year degree programs for the Colleges of Technology. All sectors raised concerns about the new BAP and its impacts, for example, possible impacts on the funding of undergraduate education, and on the funding of pure vs. applied research. (Note: the Colleges of Technology sector indicated that the new BAP may actually benefit them, as they move towards four-year degree programs.)

The Student Assembly president, Stephanie Gross, reported that they are developing their own tuition plan, which calls for tuition to be locked in for an incoming SUNY student for up to 5-6 years - and not the four years stated in Chancellor King's policy recommendation.

Remarks by Chancellor King

The Chancellor answered questions from the floor regarding the new BAP and Mission Review II. He said that University Centers, Specialized Colleges and doctoral/medical campuses tend to be more dependent on state aid; Comprehensive Colleges and Colleges of Technology tend to be more dependent on tuition revenue. The old BAP model implicitly assumed increased funding for increased enrollment. That assumption is no longer valid. He said the new BAP will be fair,

predictable and transparent; it will not create financial expectations that cannot be met. In response to a question about the impact of new BAP on undergraduate education (since this is represented by one of only six “baskets” in the new BAP model), King said it is the intention to support undergraduate education as much as possible.

There were many questions on Mission Review II. The Chancellor said that Mission Review II is expected to flow from the initial round of mission review, and to be integrated by campuses with resource planning, facilities planning and other institutional strategic and long-term planning. The MOU is used as a template in the five-year evaluation of campus presidents; presidents are to be held accountable for achieving the goals identified in their campus’ MOU.

The Chancellor said he was surprised to hear that some campuses had not directly involved faculty in the drafting of the MR II Guidance Document. He said he would contact campus presidents and encourage them to directly involve faculty governance in the Mission Review II process.

Committee Report Highlights

Awards Committee:

- Established a Medallion for Distinguished Professor;
- Announced \$30,000 available for Conversations in the Disciplines;
- Developing criteria for the UFS awards endowed by Distinguished Service Professor Ram Chugh: Outstanding Service Award, UFS Senator Emeritus Award (this year’s recipient Vince Aceto, UFS President 1995-1999), and UFS Friend of the Senate Award (this year’s recipient, Dick Miller, former SUNY Vice Chancellor and University Senator representing System Administration).

Governance Committee:

Presented a Resolution to establish site visitation teams in the selection of campus presidents, and a Resolution on the involvement of campus governance in academic reorganization. Both Resolutions passed unanimously and are attached.

Operations Committee:

Summarized ongoing projects:

- analysis of perceived increase in administrative positions relative to faculty in SUNY;
- study on increased use of adjunct faculty and impacts on retention;
- energy whitepaper: challenges and opportunities related to energy efficiency and energy conservation in SUNY.

Undergraduate Committee:

- Working on Guide for Internships (best practices);
- Planning a Spring 2006 Symposium on Copyright as it pertains to academia.

Campus Governance Leaders:

Presented Resolution on the involvement of established campus governance structures in all phases of Mission Review II, consistent with public statements from the SUNY Chancellor and Provost. Resolution passed unanimously.