**University Faculty Senator’s Report: Spring Plenary Session (U Buffalo)**

**1. SUNY Financial Strain/Campus Closings?**

This question of whether there were plans to close any SUNY campuses was posed to Gwen Kay, UFS President (as it has been at both of the sessions I attended this year). Her response was more definitive this spring:

* No, not in the near future anyway, because campuses are economic drivers for their community.
* State senators are motivated to not let their particular campus close, and will presumably fight to keep their campus open.
* However, two-thirds of the SUNY campuses are “financially strained”;

**Other financial circumstances:**

* FTE enrollment is down in many of the upstate campuses, both CC’s and the comprehensive colleges;
* Some upstate private schools are also in financial trouble;
* At comprehensive colleges sector meeting, various strategies being employed by various comp colleges included:
  + increasing class enrollments
  + decreasing evening classes
  + decreasing the number of adjuncts
  + investing in higher paying students (e.g. graduate programs)
  + SUNY Brockport 🡪 budget and planning committee, consisting of administration, faculty and staff that met and brainstormed for over a year on how they could cut costs without retrenching full-time faculty…
  + some campuses (*e.g.* New Paltz, U Buffalo) are financing their own new buildings/facilities via partnerships (*e.g.* U Buffalo 🡪 Drs. took out mortgage for their new medical training facility, and then partnered with private agencies, *etc*. to gain the financial support – *cf.* sports world where corporate sponsor pays for the new stadium, perhaps with some public tax relief, then has the new facility named after the corporate sponsor.)
  + SUNY Potsdam – now resorting to taking loan $ as a source of funding!

**Impact of Excelsior:**

* + Fall 2017 🡪 ap. 17,000 SUNY students received Excelsior Scholarships
  + 🡪 decrease in students (esp. FTEs) in the CCs, some comprehensive colleges (*e.g.* SUNY Oneonta),
  + 🡪 decrease in FTEs in private colleges as well;
  + However, students who receive TAP or PELL grants are not eligible for Excelsior 🡪 decreases the percentage of Excelsior-eligible students on SUNY campuses
    - AY2016-2017: 104,480 SUNY students were offered a TAP grant; 42% of all matriculated undergraduates received a federal loan;
    - Fall 2017: 130,997 SUNY students received PELL grants, and
* *Some concern expressed that the Chancellor will advocate for privatizing SUNY (or at least some campuses), but that option was not mentioned at the Plenary.*

**2. Chancellor Johnson’s Visit and Q & A (via Zoom Conference)**

* has been visiting SUNY campuses (just recently visited OW) – where she meets with the President, President’s team, faculty governance leadership, faculty and students;
* had major health scare the previous week (prior to Spring plenary) 🡪 has had some impact on her priorities, although her ***overall vision consisting of four themes*** remains:
  + energy and sustainability
  + innovation/entrepreneurship/research
  + **“individualized education” initiative (*see below*)**
  + partnerships – key to bringing more resources to SUNY
    - Cultivating partnerships with private corporations, philanthropic partners, and other sources
    - (*e.g*. working on strategic plan with NYPA / partnership with National Grid regarding utilities…”stay tuned”)
* **Chancellor’s more recent concerns/additional priorities:**
  + safety of students, faculty and staff – from active shooters and sexual assaults;
  + seamless transfer
  + more full-time faculty
  + stability and respect for our university system

**3. Individualized Education – Update (*Interim Provost Grace Wang*)**

* An update on this theme of the Chancellor’s vision;
* Rationale and Goals:
  + allows students the flexibility and capability to learn on their terms;
  + helps students with different backgrounds and different resources to succeed;
    - ***Micro-Credentialing***

***[SEE: (1)****Memorandum to Members of the Board of Trustees from Chancellor Kristina Johnson re: SUNY Micro-Credentialing Implementation (dated 1/23/18) with attached Excerpt from and Highlights and Notes: Report of the SUNY Micro-Credentialing Task;* ***(2)*** *Memorandum from Interim Provost and Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development Grace Wang on Final Report of the Micro-Credentialing Task Force (dated 2/7/18); and* ***(3)*** *Ed Bever’s Presentation to OW Faculty at Full Faculty Meeting (May 11, 2018****)]***

* + - ***Academic Advising*** – more facilitative to student success;
      * ***Degree Works*** 🡪 Individual Academic Plan (utilizing single, interactive software) – allows students to determine their progress towards degree completion, and what they need to complete their degree requirements;)
      * ***NOTE: Degree Works is intended to interact with academic advising (from humans)/ supplement not replace it!***
      * Degree Works Usage data 2017:
        + 43 campuses
        + 230K users
        + 3.9 million logins
      * ***SUNY 🡪 SUNY Transfers***
        + nearly 60,000 students transfer across the SUNY System each academic year; (Majority: 60% - 2 🡪 4-year campus)
        + ***Degree Works – Transfer Finder*** 🡪 allows students to compare Individualized Academic Transfer Plans by comparing degree progress ***if*** students were to transfer to one SUNY campus vs. another SUNY campus (Academic History 🡪 Search for Programs 🡪 Compare Individualized Academic Transfer Plans).
    - ***Cross-Registration* 🡪** allows students from one SUNY campus to take a course at another SUNY campus;
      * + provides course availability;
        + decreases time to degree completion;
        + 🡪 streamline, standardize, and automate process of cross-registration:

new cross registration electronic platform replaced paper-based process;

implementation: 52 campuses participating.

* + - ***Re-Enroll to Complete 🡪*** encourages students who withdrew before degree completion to return to school and finish credential/degree requirements:
      * + students who have dropped are contacted, provided information (including data on employment earnings) intended to motivate them to return to school;
        + currently: in a two-year pilot project with multiple campuses; 1185 students contacted;
        + message themes to students included:

financial benefits associated with degree completion (Associate – Bachelor’s – Advanced degrees);

“Come back to SUNY”;

academic program counseling available;

free financial aid literacy and financial aid resources.

🡪 over 80% contacted re-enrolled at SUNY (N<1000)

* + - * + **Next Step** 🡪**Scale up of Re-Enroll to Complete program** (launched on March 14, 2018)

$1M investment;

29 participating campuses;

3,184 withdrawn students already receiving target outreach (as of March 2018).

**Issues of Concern:**

* *Nina Tamrowski, FCCC President*: Individualized education plans (aka: guided pathways)🡪 may result in streamlining that decreases course offerings at the community college level;
* *Anastasia Pratt, Empire State College*: There are financial aid restrictions to students doing micro-credentialing 🡪 a “policy problem” according to Interim Provost Wang that should be addressed.

**4. *Applied Learning Degree Requirements by Campus***

* *UFS Undergraduate Academic Programs and Policies Committee* 🡪 Report presenting compiled data (including survey responses) re: applied learning as a graduation requirement for individual SUNY campuses, and degree of shared governance involvement in the policy decision whether or not to require AL for graduation.
* Seven of the 27 (26%) of the campuses included in the report have an applied learning graduation requirement.
* ***SEE***: ***Applied Learning Degree Requirements by Campus Report*** (dated April, 2018).

**7. Open Educational Resources (OER) Update**

* report by *Mark McBride, Library Senior Strategist at Library and Information Services SUNY Administration;*
* **Open NYS** = collaboration between SUNY and CUNY showcasing and supporting the use of sharing of open educational resources (**OER**);
* Numerous workshops as part of education campaign: 12 in Fall 2017; 14 in Spring 2018;
* 65,817 SUNY students enrolled to take an OER course in AY 2017-2018;
  + Estimated textbook savings = ap.$7,460,733.00 (based on national averages);
  + Top five disciplines utilizing/benefitting from OER (based on enrollments) thus far:
    - math
    - English
    - first year experience
    - business
    - psychology
  + ***OF NOTE*:**  October 10-12, 2018 🡪 an international Open Education Conference to be held in NYS. Among the members of the conference planning committee is SUNY Student Assembly member **Evan Rufrano (OW)**, who is forming a student panel to present at the conference.

**Issues of Concern:**

* Use of OER materials/texts may be questioned by transfer and post-graduate institutions, compared to the validity of established texts);
* Maintaining ownership of original material/work (*e.g*. Creative Common license);
* More information needed on best practices for use of OER 🡪 stay tuned, survey data to come;
* Problem of texts online via OER having different pagination compared to original texts;
* Can OER encourage students to go 🡪 library and actually read real books?!
  + McBride noted that students actually do want both options, that is, digital and print materials;
  + OER is still working on this…

**6. Resolutions**

* Five resolutions that were voted on;
* Two resolutions (*Program and Awards Committee*) addressed eligibility of full-time, *non-tenured track faculty* to be eligible for (1) Chancellor’s Award for Faculty Service, and (2) Chancellor’s Award for Scholarship and Creative Activities; (“Must have completed three out of five years of full-time appointment just prior to the year of nomination.”) 🡪 Vote: Approved.
* One resolution (*Student Life Committee*): SUNY-wide policy for announcing names of graduating students with their military rank at their Commencement ceremony 🡪 Approved.
* One resolution (*Communications Ad Hoc Committee*) to convert an ad hoc committee into a standing committee 🡪 Approved.
* One resolution (*Governance Committee)* to establish a SUNY-wide Office of Ombuds Services 🡪 Vote: Send back to committee…

**7. “Social Media and First Amendment on Campuses Today”**

* Panel discussion
* First Amendment rights and hate speech/social media postings:
  + what we can do;
  + what we cannot do;
  + the need to help our students.