

University Senate Meeting Report

UUP SBU Communication Committee

Compiled by University Senate member Andrew Solar-Greco

May 4th, 2020, 3:30-5:00 PM

Zoom

Meeting called to order by Senate President Nancy Tomes at 3:30 PM.

Livestream coverage can be found [here](#).

I. Welcome from Nancy

- Ballots on Solar soon. Have till wednesday to nominate for Statewide senator positions
- Senate Executive Committee is thinking about how to make sure shared governance happens during the summer
- Senate Secretary Nazanin Karimi will start July 23rd.
- Moment of Silence for Aaron (Bill) Godfrey, former UUP President and longtime Senator

II. University Faculty Senate 4/17 Plenary Report

- Report is online ([link here](#))
- Agreement reached with Elsevier
- Pre-COVID budget was decent
 - \$550M for critical maintenance
 - \$50M for each hospital
 - No Maintenance of Effort
- Post-COVID budget authorizes state budget director to cut spending by 25% per quarter if state revenue is down
- Chancellor reported no personnel actions beyond 5/10 and now a system wide hiring freeze except PRODIG and campus presidents.
- Provost reports current instruction is 'remote instruction' not 'online education'
- SUNY will not be doing Pass-Fail
- UFS Governance Committee is analyzing how academic policy changes will result from COVID-19.

III. Interim President Michael Bernstein report

- Commencement will be online.
- Fall Scenario planning is underway and includes Dr. McInnis in discussions
 - Weeks ahead key decisions will be made.

- Final decisions made no later than 6/30.
- Groups working on recovery related to:
 - Course modality, class size, enrollment management, course delivery, residence halls, food service and amenities, student and employee health, athletics, student life and activities, research scholarship, facilities, campus events, finance/administration
 - Working on how to engage shared governance, student, and union leadership
 - Groups working on how to manage social distancing, PPE, testing, etc.
- A Lot will depend on enrollment trends, funding, research and scholarship support
- We have received some CARES funding, but they will not cover all expenses. New state budget is limited, cuts are expected.
- SUNY wants for sizable cuts to be made, we must be prepared to make these cuts here too.
- For the next 60 days there will be a hiring freeze except if directly approved by senior leadership. All contract and procurement expenditures are on hold..
- We are already very lean in staffing.
- We will send updates as they develop.
- Questions
 - Hanna Ekvasil
 - What role does the senate play in these committees set up?
 - Answer - I spoke with the Senate Executive committee to work on coordination.
 - Jonathan Sanders
 - Does the hiring freeze have an impact on search for the provost position?
 - Answer - there is an exception process. Provost's question is up to Maurie McInnis.

IV. Interim Provost Minghua Zhang report

- Asking Faculty to be compassionate with students and recognize their unique circumstances.
- Enrollment is going to be an issue, but our admissions staff are working hard to engage students
- Question - J. Sanders - Due to decline does it look like departments dependent on graduate students could be an issue?
 - Answer - International partner universities are doing study abroad programs to help us enroll these students. Working to be accomodating.
- Question - M. Bowman

- 3 scenarios were circulated previously on how campus could operate in the fall
 - Answer - all options are still being evaluated. Most likely a scenario in the middle. Decision will come in June.

V. Sr. VP for HSC Dr. Kenneth Kashansky

- Experiential learning is being delayed as long as possible, but students need to get into clinical rotation to graduate on time.
- 50M for the hospitals is allowed to be borrowed and paid back, not just a gift from NYS.
- COVID #s
 - 6700 persons under investigation.
 - 4000 patients are COVID positive
 - 2,500 in intensive care, most on ventilators
 - Numbers are coming down
 - 473 at peak 3 weeks ago, now 137
- 3% of 9000 employees turned up positive
 - Study of 500 healthcare workers - rate of infection is identical to the community, so PPE is working.
- Question - E. Feldman
 - Cuomo talks about 70% occupancy for hospitals to accommodate patients
 - Answer - We are not going to get that high, but we have surge capacity to expand as needed.
- Question - R. Larson
 - Virologists are expecting a pulse after a lull period. What are you doing to prepare?
 - Answer - masks, public education, want viral testing. Expand testing widely. We are far away from herd immunity.
- Question - H. Nekvasil
 - People avoiding hospitals if they have other issues because afraid of getting infected by healthcare workers
 - Answer - Everyone wears masks in the building. Moved anyone with symptoms off-site to mobile ER.

VI. President Elect Maurie McInnis

- Working to understand the relationship between shared governance and university administration.
- I believe strongly in open and regular communication between faculty leadership and academic leadership
- Working closely already with M. Bernstein.
- Question - J. Sanders - new students coming in with a tumultuous transition to college. Parents might be choosing public universities to save money. How will

you adapt to welcoming these students leaving high school without saying goodbye.

- Answer - We will work to consider all these variables, especially keeping in mind our marginalized students

VII. Secretary/Treasurer election

- Sarah Battaglia spoke about her qualifications and interest in the role.
- Elected by unanimous consent

VIII. Student Affairs presentation on Health and wellness

- Rick G and Marisa spoke about services offered to students for physical and mental health and wellness.
- J . Heinz Will the admin plan to rescind the \$148 fee increase?
- Answer - Fees were prorated and refunded. Be done by the end of this week. Fees in the future - This is a discussion with SUNY. In motion moving forward. Health and Wellness fees - huge demand from students for this. 1-1 therapy is costly.
- Question - Students worried about jobs after graduation. Tracing is important work

IX. Reports from UUP:

- Carolyn Kube - Chapter President - Stony Brook HSC
 - UUP and NYSUT donated PPE supplies to the hospital
 - Workshop soon on terms and conditions of employment
 - Write your federal senators and representatives to fight for stimulus money
- Jeff Heinz - VP for Academics - Stony Brook West Campus UUP
 - Welcome Dr. McInnis to Campus
 - Working with members on concerns around the budget
 - We need to stand united with admin and students to lobby for all public services - hospital, K-12, post office, etc. Not just Higher Ed.
 - Members concerned about re-opening. Criteria used around re-opening needs to be transparent
 - Concerns around teaching and modality are on the rise. Faculty worried about being asked to prepare for the fall semester over the summer, unpaid.
 - Shared governance needs to be respected, we call for it. Glad to hear Dr. McInnis supporting it.
 - We need representation from Faculty, Staff, students, and all unions on the task forces.
 - What do students think about online instruction?

X. New Business:

- Ed Feldman presented the following resolution which was passed unanimously:

Be It So Resolved:

That the University Senate expresses its deepest respect and appreciation to Nancy Tomes, President, and Pamela Wolfskill, Secretary/Treasurer of the University Senate for their consistent leadership of the Senate and vigorous advocacy of shared governance during the last two years. The Senate and its constituents are fortunate to have benefitted from their outstanding service during these extraordinary times.