

MINUTES OF THE COLLEGE SENATE OF SUNY ONEONTA MEETING OF 23 NOVEMBER 2015

The fifth regular meeting of the 2015-2016 College Senate of the State University of the New York College at Oneonta was held November 23, 2015 in the Craven Lounge of the Morris Conference Center at 3:05pm. The Presiding Officer and Secretary of the Faculty were present and serving in their elected capacities.

The first order of business was the approval of the Minutes of the Senate Meeting of November 9, 2015. Dr. Kelly Gallagher (Chemistry & Biochemistry) requested the minutes be corrected to reflect that her question about the Health & Fitness B.S. with Exercise Science track was about degree applicable credit, not about wording, and to reflect that the updated proposal was not made available for review. There was no objection to these changes, so they will be made. **Subject to these changes, the minutes were approved by voice vote.**

The Presiding Officer, Dr. Michael Koch, had no report.

The President of the College, Dr. Nancy Kleniewski, gave her report. The first topic was the Academic Master Plan. Dr. Kleniewski thanked those who worked on it and discussed how that work is being carried forward as part of the strategic plan. The President then discussed the issue of diversity, equity and inclusion. She mentioned that while SUNY Oneonta has been a leader in terms of the programs and policies we've adopted, programming is not equity; and she calls on all the faculty to think about how they can contribute to overcoming institutional racism.

The Provost, Dr. James Mackin, gave his report. He discussed the SUNY Mandate on Applied Learning. The SUNY Board of Trustees issued a resolution last May that SUNY should develop a plan for applied learning, and each campus is to create a plan. The given definition of applied learning is broad, and can include classroom activities; it emphasizes applying the theory learned in the classroom to real-world situations. The SUNY Provost has an applied learning steering committee, and there is also an advisory board. The College will submit its plan to the steering committee, whereas the advisory board includes campus representatives advising the provost. Our representative is Amy Benedict (Career Development). The first part of the plan is due in February, with additional parts due in April. The final plan is due May 1, 2017, but some version is expected to be implemented by fall 2016. The schedule is broken into of a variety of parts, including information gathering, data collection, faculty engagement (including oversight and assessment), student engagement, feasibility of applied learning as a graduation requirement, community engagement, and finally an explanation for the decision on whether or not applied learning is made a graduation requirement for the campus. There is currently an on-campus steering committee for the plan, which has faculty representatives from each school, as well as many staff. There followed discussion on the nature of the committee, the issue of whether applied learning will be a graduation requirement, and the inclusion of faculty governance in the process.

Documents that have been made available by SUNY have been placed in the College Senate Blackboard site in a folder entitled “Applied Learning.”

There was no report from the Student Association President, Kainat Malik.

The University Faculty Senator, Renee Walker, gave her report. She discussed follow-up information on the student survey. The data will not be stored in standard results tables. There will be no staging tables. No display tools will display the data. It will be stored without personally identifiable information. Only aggregate data will be returned to campus. The data is protected and students have the option to opt out.

There was a report from the graduate committee. Dr. Cynthia Falk (Chair of Graduate Committee, Cooperstown Graduate Program) discussed two program revisions which the committee has reviewed and recommends.

The revisions to the M.S. in Biology passed unanimously.

The revisions to the M.S. in Lake Science passed unanimously.

There was a report from the General Education Committee. Rhea Nowak spoke as co-chair of the committee. The committee has been working to bring the next iteration of general education into focus, developing learning outcomes, and to create a second-level writing experience as a graduation requirement for Oneonta students. The plan is to have discussions on this in focus groups.

The General Education Committee brought the resolution “Resolution on Reestablishing COMP 100 as a Requirement for Completion of General Education at SUNY Oneonta”, and it was seconded on the floor. Ms. Nowak spoke for the resolution, pointing out that this will close a loophole which allows students to graduate without taking any writing courses, that does not change 7-10-30 or increase the 30 credit requirement; and that the provost always has the option to make exceptions for specific programs. The presiding officer opened the floor for questions. It was clarified that this would only apply to students coming here as freshmen. Eileen McClafferty (Academic Advisement) pointed out that this would affect freshmen who completed BC3 in high school and raise the concern that if passed as written, this might increase the number of credits required in some programs, such as education. Cynthia Klink (Part-time Faculty Concerns) asked regarding how these courses would be staffed. Ms. Nowak stated that as of last spring, the courses were staffed. Amie Doughty (English) also stated that staffing should not be an issue. Oscar Oberkircher (Human Ecology) raised a question about DegreeWorks. Ms. Nowak stated that only the primary BC3 would be covered by COMP 100, and then students could fill the other BC3 credits with any of the other classes. Ms. Klink asked whether this change would put pressure on other departments to not rehire adjuncts. John Schaumloffel (Chemistry & Biochemistry) asked if it has been determined that courses that previously met BC3 are no longer suitable. Ms. Nowak responded that prior to this semester the only course that covered the primary basic communications requirement was COMP 100, and the goal of this resolution is to not lose writing

instruction. Charles Maples (CADE; co-chair, Gen Ed Committee) pointed out that courses which had been approved by SUNY as general education courses had to be mapped into the new 7-10-30 plan. Anything with certain codes were mapped to BC3, so courses intended as building on COMP 100 are now “building on nothing”. Dr. Koch mentioned an oral course, PHIL160, which has been mapped to BC3. Dr. Roger Hecht (English, Gen Ed Committee) pointed out that the current listing of BC3 includes courses such as public speaking, small group communication, student teaching, a number of 300 level courses, which in many cases do not provide formal writing instruction. Ms. Nowak added that 300-level Gen Ed course is out of compliance with SUNY, and that NSSE data indicates that our students feel that they are not being given enough writing instruction.

Moving on from questions, the Presiding Officer opened the floor for debate. Dr. Steven Walsh (Marketing) called the question, but there was no second.

Dr. Leah Bridgers (MCS) spoke against the resolution, stating that it feels too restrictive and does not offer maximum flexibility with regard to gen-ed.

Ms. Bethany Marx (Theatre) spoke for the resolution, stating that the process of changing general education is slow, and while we are looking for a new way to solve the problem, we should make a change that ensures that our students are learning to write.

Dr. Anita Levine (Elementary Education and Reading) proposed an amendment, and passed out a hand-out with the proposed amendment, which modified the resolution as follows: (The underlined and italicized text below has been added to the final paragraph.)

Resolved, that the SUNY College Senate

1. Endorse closing the current COMP100/BC3 loophole by making COMP100 an explicit General Education requirement (*Except for Education Majors whose satisfactory completion of EDUC106- Issues, Philosophy, and Foundations of Education or its equivalent as identified on the Transfer Pathways, demonstrates having met the SUNY Basic Communication Learning Outcomes*) at SUNY Oneonta for all students who have not completed the BC3 requirement at a prior institution.
2. Endorse the recoding of BC3 so that the primary Basic Communication area required by SUNY may be fulfilled only by COMP100 at SUNY Oneonta (*or EDUC 106-Issues, Philosophy, and Foundations of Education or the equivalent transfer class as identified on the Transfer Pathways*).

(End of proposed amendment.)

Dr. Rosemarie Avansato (Human Ecology) seconded the proposal to amend the resolution. The Presiding Officer opened the floor for debate on the amendment.

Mr. Maples (CADE) asked whether we have plans in place for EDUC106 to have assessment plans comparable to COMP 100; most importantly assessing multiple drafts. Dr. Paul Bischoff (Secondary Ed & Ed Tech), stated that the students have a weekly

writing assignment and they receive weekly feedback on the writing and are monitored on changes in response to that feedback. There continued discussion on this.

Dr. Schaumloffel (Chemistry & Biochemistry) spoke against the amendment, stating that it is too narrow.

Dr. Paul French (Physics) spoke for the amendment, stating that this is a way to ensure that most students receive writing instruction similar to what has worked for years.

Dr. Bianca Tredennick (English) spoke against the amendment, stating that if we begin to delineate courses as special cases for avoiding the COMP100, then other courses will follow.

Dr. Elizabeth Seale (Sociology, Gen Ed) spoke in favor of the amendment, stating that it is in the spirit of the resolution.

Dr. Stephen Walsh (Marketing) asked whether the people teaching EDUC106 would be academically qualified to teach COMP 100; and stated that if not, he is against it.

Mr. Oscar Oberkircher (Human Ecology) spoke for the amendment, stating that education program is separately accredited and we cannot sacrifice that accreditation.

Mr. Andrew Kahl (Theatre) spoke against the amendment, stating that the ability to create exceptions is within the context of the provost's abilities, and this can be settled that way.

The Senate voted on the amendment by a show of hands. **With a vote of 29 in favor to 18 opposed, the amendment passed.** There was no further discussion of the amended resolution. **The resolution is approved by voice vote.**

There was no new business, and no college community reports.

In the Legislative Open Forum, Philip Hill, an Oneonta student, read from a prepared statement and requested the statement be entered into the minutes. Dr. Donna Vogler (Biology) moves that letter be added to the minutes, and the Senate voted unanimously to include the prepared statement in the minutes.

This is the statement read by Mr. Hill:

My name is Phillip Hill. I am a nontraditional student, currently a senior here at SUNY Oneonta. I moved to Oneonta, NY in 2004 and have been involved with various groups within the local community. I enrolled at SUNY Oneonta in the Fall of 2011 as a Continuing Education, non-matriculated student. I was admitted to the college as a matriculated Biology major prior to the start of the Spring 2012 semester.

I would like to read this prepared statement for the good of the college and the college community as well as having the statement entered into the minutes for the College Senate Meeting of 23 November 2015.

In the course of exploring returning to college at SUNY Oneonta, I had discussions with the Financial Aid office regarding my ability to receive aid and the amount of aid I was eligible for. Through the Fall of 2014, I had a conversation or email exchange with my financial aid counselor regarding my eligibility and my progress academically each and every semester. I was informed I had 150% of semester hours and 150% of semesters within which to finish my degree while being eligible for aid. I was repeatedly told I had a total of 9 semesters of aid and would not reach the maximum semester hours while completing my degree from the beginning of my time as a matriculated student. This was based on previous college attendance and aid. I based the decisions on course work and timing of course work on the availability of aid through the Fall of 2015. The conversations prior to being admitted to SUCO and the conversations each semester were the same. I planned carefully to meet both my degree requirements and Physician Assistant School requirements.

One year ago I received an email that the Financial Aid Office needed to speak with any students who had more than 120 credit hours. After contacting the Financial Aid office I was informed that I was no longer eligible for aid for the following semester, the Spring of 2015. My financial aid counselor was unable to answer any of my questions. I asked to meet with the Director of Financial Aid and was told: "He is not meeting with anyone regarding this." I pointed out that my counselor was obviously not able to help me or to explain it and it was reasonable to expect the Director to take a meeting and explain it. I then emailed the Acting Vice President of Student Affairs and repeated my request for a meeting, only at this juncture was I granted a meeting with Clyde Goodhue.

The meeting consisted of the Financial Aid Director telling me, I quote: "It was your responsibility to have read and complied with the federal handbook on financial aid. I was surprised when I learned that many of you and your fellow students are not complying with federal regulations." Mr. Goodhue informed me that I had to read and understand the 1200 page federal student aid handbook. This is the handbook that explains how Financial Aid Departments and Institutions comply with federal regulations. I was addressed in a very rude, condescending, and disrespectful manner. I repeatedly asked to see the campus policy for the decisions made regarding my financial aid. Clyde Goodhue finally stated: and I quote, "I will not rewrite federal regulations to have a campus policy." It is federal policy to have a campus policy that complies with federal policy. He was unable to provide me with the federal regulation and smugly told me to read the federal handbook, "it (the federal regulation) is in there." It was clear the victims of the new way of evaluating financial aid were being blamed for the failure of the financial aid office to track student's eligibility and maintain current policies regarding eligibility. Not once did the Financial Aid Office or the Director take responsibility for the failure to do their jobs.

I had \$3000.00 in aid removed from my account 6 weeks into the Spring of 2015 semester. I was notified only when student accounts sent me a bill. I was forced to sign for an additional loan to cover what would have been grant money.

This fall I was awarded the Robyn Higgins Ross Veterans Scholarship. The fourth week of this semester, the scholarship was cancelled from my award under the explicit instruction of Clyde Goodhue.

Meeting with the President's Senior Assistant I was informed that the scholarship was being returned. I was asked to rescind a series of FOIL requests I had made when the scholarship was cancelled. I rescinded them with the provision that I would be given the written Financial Aid policy for the Fall of 2014, Spring of 2015, and Fall of 2015. Having yet to receive the documents, I have filed new FOIL's in order to attempt to read those documents.

I have written emails and letters to the President and senior administrators of the college and have received no reply regarding my concerns. The lack of change in leadership of the Financial Aid Office and the inaction of the administration suggests that the administration is at a minimum complicit with this policy and at worst devised it.

Many of my fellow students have been affected by the Financial Aid Offices actions in the past year. SUNY Oneonta has a contract with the student body. That contract has been violated. For the past year, myself and my classmates have been treated in a very hostile manner and our academic progress, ability to apply to graduate schools, and our sanity affected by the Financial Aid Offices actions. Only the students who have contacted the financial aid office have been affected by the changes in financial aid. This action has effected the nontraditional students and the most economically challenged students disproportionately as both groups keep close watch on their financial aid availability and eligibility.

(End of statement.)

Mr. Oscar Oberkircher (Human Ecology) raised the issue of renumbering courses, stating that it is affecting our ability to provide education to our students. He asked the Senate to look into it.

There was one announcement for the good of the order. Ms. Mary Lou Benson (Milne Library) announced that the deadline for reviewing library for items recommended for deselection is November 30th. The list is available on the college senate website.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Keith Jones
Secretary of the Faculty