

## **Comprehensive Colleges**

Sector Concerns

11/10/10

### **Continued erosion of governance and consultation**

Nearly every sector report for the last ten years has mentioned the increasing tendency to subvert the necessary processes of shared governance. Counter-productive top down management and lack of consultation remain trenchant problems on our campuses. Inappropriate ad hoc and temporary groups subvert our established process. At the campus levels, we are experiencing the loss of the voices of the faculty and professional staff. Are we restructuring the university, to its detriment, without consultation or consent? Shared governance is critical to academic freedom. It is crucial that creativity and democratic process survive at universities. How will System address the continued erosion of shared governance?

### **Deactivation and Discontinuation**

The current convergence of deactivation and discontinuation as alternatives to retrenchment are typical to the erosion of governance. De-activation and discontinuation seem to be increasingly used locally as an easier alternative to retrenchment. Given the patterns of recent program closures at New Paltz, Potsdam, Purchase and Albany and later, Geneseo, what can be done to avoid further subversion of collective bargaining and established governance in a difficult financial environment?

### **Budget**

The constant cuts, mid-year cuts and additional adjustments create a long list of budget impacts: loss of budget transparency, course load and work load increases, inaccurate grant indirects recovery, retirement pressures, unfilled positions, program reaccreditations caused by cuts. What is System doing to ease the downward flow of budget cuts?

### **General Education**

All campuses welcome the redesign of a flawed general education. Doing so with diminished resources and scant budgets creates a tendency to make certain changes and readjustments with a preliminary eye to budget solutions. Administrative groups that lack sufficient faculty input are making curricular decisions and implementation policy. In the midst of our scant budgets, we firmly believe that great opportunities lie within our adversity, but not at the expense of careful deliberation by the community. What can you do to improve the primary focus of general education changes driven by curricular matters, not fiscal ones?

**Summer term**

We recommend the use of innovative alternatives: summer school, semester alterations, intensive sessions, new terms, interdisciplinary clusters, all with appropriate governance consultation. How will System change to serve adult learners? And how will the 'Open University' section of the Strategic Plan be used to implement a better summer learning environment?

**Assessment Of Academic Affairs Management**

We ask for a renewed commitment by System Administration to the concept of 360° review at the decanal level and above. How are you exercising the charge to the Chancellor in the Policies of the Board of Trustees to review campus presidents?

**Program assessment and Middle States**

The academic assessment mechanisms on our campuses seem to be shifting the processes of justification and accountability from System to Middle States. MSACHE accountability mechanisms do not align easily with System needs. This creates another opportunity for governance erosion: creating administrative patchwork accountabilities that satisfy both System and MSACHE without addressing other critical issues. Such accountability can work directly against both normative and summative assessment. How do you think we can maintain our assessment as practices that are unflawed by the change in report structures?

**Administrative 'churn'**

Personnel turnover is increasing at the upper levels of administration on our campuses. That creates even more opportunity for poor governance and lost leadership. How will you address administrative turnover?

**The Image of SUNY**

People see us wrong now. They see us as doing all right, with 4% raises and numerous building projects. In the best interests of 'town and gown,' they often do not get a chance to sense the hardships that exist. How do we use the *Power of SUNY* to correct that inaccurate vision?

Appendix #1 – sector meeting concerns, in real time.

30 concerns, 13 sections

1. budget transparency at college level, need more community voice
2. failure of indirect/overhead recovery (8.5 million) from stateside research
3. system's ability to serve adult learners: TAP, financial aid, part-time study
4. Open University section of Strategic Plan: impact on campuses
5. Concerns about Standard 4, MSACHE Governance management shifted to Middle States
6. Changes in course loads, specifically 3:3 to 4:3
7. Work load revisions arbitrarily appearing as part of increased "top down" management styles
8. Impending retrenchment: 12 positions
9. Impending retrenchment: non-accredited departments
10. Retrenchments on campus
11. Need for Senate mentoring and orientation for CGLs
12. Impact of Gen Ed 7-of-10 revisions - need to gather and document
13. Effect of phased-in retirements on leadership at campuses
14. Number of part-time faculty: effect on curriculum and pedagogy
15. Enrollment caps: regressive tax?
16. Summer school use as tool to increase enrollment and revenue
17. Continued development of online courses with little input
18. MSACHE and budget adjustments impacts <unclear reference>
19. Arbitrary enrollment targets within departments
20. New enrollments? <unclear reference>
21. Public's perception of SUNY is off-target: They think we are doing quite well
22. Governance and budget interconnected in inappropriate ways
23. Enrollment caps damage small campuses
24. Summer school over-tallies, large class sizes, workload issues
25. Program suspensions - 13-14 positions unfilled
26. Effects of 'unfilled' retirements on curriculum
27. Faculty evaluation of deans needed as statewide practice
28. GenEd changes and faculty hiring shifts
29. Curricular change from 3-credit to 4-credit courses to save money and generate income.
30. Administrative and staff churn - rapid turnover