President’s Report—Ken O’Brien
-- complete text available online. Issues included SUNY Strategic Planning—and a plea to make your voice known to the “Traveling 200” via the SUNY website by early March, prior to the wrap-up session on 3/18 in Albany. The previous Strategic Plan was produced about eight years ago, was written by ten people, and filled one page. 
-- Board of Trustees’ hostility for SUNY and its faculty is gone. More particularly, UFS’ relationships with the Board, Chancellor, and senior administration are very collegial and productive.
--UFS will not officially endorse or oppose The Public Higher Education Empowerment and Innovation Act (hereinafter “The Empowerment Act”) until more detail and information is available and forthcoming. Of course, the UFS supports in principle any legislation that is able to guarantee support for SUNY’s mission.

Comprehensive Colleges Sector Meeting
--many comments and (unanswerable) questions about The Empowerment Act, especially regarding differential tuition and land-use/entrepreneurial public-private arrangements. N.B.—See comments under Senior Vice Chancellor Monica Rimai’s presentation, below.
--Our sector, with help from Jim McElwaine and Phil Ortiz, will establish a Discussion Database for faster communications and interaction between comprehensive college representatives.
--Concerns were raised about the General Education revisions, especially as regards the constant, increasing “mission comprehension” (McElwaine’s phrase) of CCs and university centers pressuring the comprehensive college sector. N.B.—see comments under Chancellor’s Report, below.
--Budget updates by campus:
   * Brockport, Buffalo State, Purchase and Oswego reported that academic affairs had been largely spared so far and that impacts had been largely invisible or minimal beyond common sense and frugality. However, Purchase has eliminated stipends for academic chairs.
   * Potsdam reported “a couple of faculty retrenched,” some contracts not renewed due to cuts, many adjunct contracts discontinued. Also, minimum class sizes have been established (no classes with fewer than ten students will run), chair stipends have been reduced and the faculty teaching load has increased from 4-3 to 4-4.
   * Plattsburgh also reported an increase in teaching load, there from 3-3 to 4-3, local retirement incentives and other more predictable measures.
   * New Paltz reported that over 100 adjuncts have been “dropped,” and that those involved in the nursing program have been retrenched in the wake of that program’s elimination. As a result, the campus seems to be weathering the cuts well.
   * Geneseo reported incentives for a “gradual retirement program” (details unclear), a hiring freeze and rigorous scrutiny of sabbatical applications. (In essence, only full-year, ½-pay applications are being granted.)
* Oswego reported an across-the-board 20% reduction in the number of classes offered, mandatory higher enrollment caps on many classes, a hard hiring freeze except for Business and Administration (soft freezes).

* Fredonia has instituted a freeze on sabbaticals. It and Empire State are using up funds—updating equipment, conducting maintenance ahead of schedule, etc.—before the funds are “clawed back” (Ortiz’s phrase).

**Presentation**—Vice Provost Pedro Caban, Office of Diversity and Educational Equity (ODEE)

Presentation will be available via SUNY website soon. Vice Provost Caban stressed the need for individual campuses to decide upon and define diversity based upon their missions and efforts, avoiding “face diversity” and the counting of how people look in favor of who they are. ODEE’s mission is not to impose a model of diversity, but to support each campus in its implementations. Two overarching concepts for diversity guide his thinking: academic excellence, because diverse learning environments lead to positive learning outcomes, & social justice, the redress of prior and current social inequities of all sorts. Commitment to these two core concepts guides ODEE’s support of four additional SUNY challenges: ensuring appropriate representation and access for New York State’s population in SUNY at all levels, streamlining the so-called Education Pipeline (K-20), considering the complexities of globalization, and assisting in workforce development projects within and without the system.

--Stressed the necessity of supporting The Empowerment Act for diversity reasons.

**Presentation**—Interim Provost David Lavallee

--Search for a permanent Provost continues, with some hope that s/he will be in office by fall 2010. The search committee (eighteen members) is chaired by Trustee Merrick.

--A Board of Trustees resolution concerning assessment will be forthcoming very soon. The gist of the resolution will be based upon the Provost & Chancellor’s guarantees to the Board that although campuses and not System Administration will now be responsible for assessment plans, the regional and disciplinary accreditation groups’ commitments to accountability are such that SUNY will have essentially an “audit function” two years before Middle States ten-year review; one year before the five-year mid-term review.

--Comments on the Voluntary System of Accountability referred to online “dashboards” of available data for fulfilling required steps leading to such things as CLA. He reiterated his sense that Middle States (as well as the other accrediting agencies) and the current administration in Washington are adhering to much of the Spellings Commission Report.

--Comments on Student Mobility and the recent General Education revision created some controversy after summary explanations of seamless articulation issues such as the guaranteed transfer into majors and programs of “course normally offered in the first two years”—topical comparability to be determined by disciplinary bodies and existing articulations. The controversy was really contradiction of some of what President O’Brien had produced in writing, as Provost Lavallee noted that while campuses can decide that incoming first-year students at baccalaureate institutions can fall under even current General Education plans, transfers will and should be treated differently under the revision. According to Provost Lavallee, he would be “amused”—
after the difficulties of insisting on ten Gen Ed areas back in 1998—if campuses now decided that all ten silos were absolutely essential. According to him, since flexibility is the keynote of the revision, each campus should identify its strengths and focus its Gen Ed requirements (at least for transfers) accordingly, and “we would not think that that would be all ten.” Waivers of various areas could, for example, be decided upon by programs and departments. The Provost also stated that he “would be disinclined” to approve General Education revisions that forced juniors to take first- or second-year courses. N.B.: Later, President O’Brien agreed that the Provost contradicted his own words (O’Brien’s FAQs were derived in part through conversations with the Provost), but that under the now-revised policy, “disinclination does not equal cannot do.” There will be more to come on this, I’m sure.

--Compliance with the transcript-review provision is not required until the transfer/articulation website/database for first- and second-year courses is fully operational.

--Sold The Empowerment Act as the second act in the chorus.

Presentation—Senior Vice Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer Monica Rimai
--Has been with SUNY and in New York one month; gave an extended analysis and historical overview of SUNY and its problems since the 1970s.
--Detailed cuts to SUNY based upon Governor Patterson’s budget proposal as a prelude to insisting that The Empowerment Act will solve these historical shortfalls. Details are available upon request, though it’s likely that you are already aware of the broad strokes. The remainder of her comments concerned advocacy for The Empowerment Act, which she admitted was at best a “a push” to pass the Legislature. The “three buckets of flexibility” create, according to the Vice Chancellor, a powerful set of liberating financial possibilities for SUNY. The “buckets” are (1) revenues from tuition/fees; (2) savings from statutory deregulation; and (3) entrepreneurial partnerships, including land-lease opportunities.
--Ron Sarner (NYIT) asked for data that would show that tuition controlled by campuses and bureaucratic efficiency would equal current operating budgets (in his words, “the numbers don’t add up”). Vice Chancellor Rimai’s response—that entrepreneurial partnerships would make up the difference—did not satisfy him or others.
--Differential tuition was defined and possibilities by campus and program under The Empowerment Act were discussed, including a mandated cap of 2 1/2x the Higher Education Price Index (HEPI) over a rolling five-year period. In her opinion, tuition policy must be cost driven, enacted in step with a rational tuition plan, TAP considerations and enrollment management more generally.
--Questions were raised related to increased competition as a result of a de facto step towards privatization (one questioner observed that campuses might be driven to “cannibalize” each other): her response was that “collaboration is a good thing.”

Sector Reports & Chancellor Zimpher’s Responses

Comprehensive Colleges
--Jim McElwaine summarized the concerns of our sector break-out session, detailed above: large-scales of change (strategic planning, student mobility—including Gen Ed changes), sector & intercampus competition, and mission compression, voicing support
for the Empowerment Act in principle, but asking about foreseeable consequences in the light of those concerns.

*Chancellor Zimpher’s response* was dismissive of concerns over mission compression and competition, etc. The Chancellor insisted upon a System’s approach over parochial considerations: “calibration of enrollment plans, mission statements, tuition plans and curricula” should be the goal for all campuses.” She also insisted that other presenters (Provost Lavallee and Vive Chancellor Rimai) had adequately addressed all these concerns, especially misperceptions about The Empowerment Act. They had not, in the opinion of many present.

**Health Sciences and Colleges of Technology**

--These representatives (Barbara Brabetz and Shelly Mozlin) raised issues such as SUNY support for differential tuition for higher-cost programs in the sciences, concerns related to clinical revenues, shared governance; they (and their sector) generally agreed with The Empowerment Act’s flexibility components.

*Chancellor Zimpher’s response* mentioned that “data would be forthcoming” on national tuition tendencies/trends in comparison to sectors within SUNY and sub-sections of high-cost programs. She reminded us that “differential tuition” is already a reality in some programs within SUNY (medical schools, etc.; some CC programs), and that the campus and program differentials to be approved by the SUNY Board would have to be driven by cost analysis not anecdote.

**University Centers and Campus Governance Leaders**

--Representatives (esp. Dennis Showers for CGLs) raised questions about tuition waivers for graduate students and the proposed cap on out-of-state students in The Empowerment Act.

*Chancellor Zimpher’s response* stressed—for the third time that day (Lavallee, Rimai and now Zimpher)—the need for “entrepreneurial partnerships” between campuses and private enterprise: rain-making efforts and differential tuition policy on a given campus will allow for tuition remission, scholarships, etc. The cap-on-out-of-state students’ provision was a concession to the Legislature, so that no in-state student is refused a seat in a SUNY classroom. She mentioned a high, never-reached cap at one campus that might be a model for disingenuous adherence to the provision.

The Chancellor continued her remarks at dinner on Friday night, was applauded for her energy and commitment to a new, shared governance model while delight was shared like pie.

(Saturday)

**Resolutions**

1)  **Amendment to the Bylaws of the University Faculty Senate**

“The teller’s report [of UFS elections] shall consist of only the candidates’ names and the winner of the election,” essentially suspending that section of *Robert’s Rules* (10th Edition, p. 404) that requires a vote tally be reported out after an election.  

   **Failed**

2)  **Resolution on the Executive Budget**
Calls for restoration of the base SUNY budget. \textit{Passed}\n
3) \textbf{Resolution to establish as a standing committee the University Faculty Senate Committee on Diversity and Cultural Competence}, which had heretofore been the Special Committee on Diversity and Cultural Competence (ad hoc). \textit{Passed}\n
4) \textbf{Resolution to Establish a System-wide SUNY Faculty Research and Scholarship Interest Database} \textit{Passed}\n
Reports
\textbf{Faculty Council of Community Colleges (FCCC)}—Tina Goode
--Heralded a new era of cooperation between CC and UFS representatives.
--FCCC’s total annual budget equals only $36000, so frugality is the norm: even attending required meetings is problematic—as is the political danger of opposing activities that might lead to the punitive elimination of funding.
--Many new CC presidents, much transition, including at SUNY itself.
--Only two plenary sessions a year (due to budget and higher teaching load).
--FCCC had been reactive in the past, doing what System Administration demanded/required; now looking to extend CC-initiated activities (sustainability, mission identification, shared governance, etc.).
--Initiating an open discussion on the Education Pipeline.
--Do not agree that externally mandated assessment is appropriate.
--Think that current Gen Ed (the old one) is/was an albatross.
--FCCC will probably stay silent on Higher Ed Empowerment and Innovation Act for political reasons (fear).
--FCCC opposed Gen Ed Revision on the basis of process: rushed notification, e.g.

\textbf{Committee on Ethics and Institutional Integrity}—Janet Nepkie
--Committee has reported to the Executive Committee on recent matters regarding academic freedom.
--Will be making a presentation at the spring 2010 UFS Plenary on Ethics and Information Technology in Academia.
--Is researching a plan to create a formal, organizational entity such as an Ethics Institute to implement the goals of the Committee and the UFS.
--Is working on a questionnaire for VPAAs / Chief Academic Officers on each SUNY campus.

\textbf{Operations Committee}—Ron Sarner
--Has held two videoconferences since the last Plenary.
--Worked on a resolution in support of the Public Higher Education Empowerment and Innovation Act, but was unable to agree on language.
--Work continues on revision of the Rational Fiscal Policy document.
--Work is almost complete on the Longitudinal Faculty Profile: it will be finished and presented at the spring 2010 Plenary. Three data sheets are currently available that detail
* a substantial recovery over the past five years in the number of f-t faculty at state-operated campuses;
* an increase in the number of female f-t faculty throughout the system over the past twenty years.

--A report on time-to-degree completion is almost complete. There are two key findings to date: 1) SUNY students exceed national averages for baccalaureate degree completion in four-, five- and six-year time frames; 2) degree completion rates are highest at the university centers, lowest at campuses in the Technology sector.

--A report on Encroachment of Library Facilities is almost complete, but has thus far found no widespread pattern of problems.

--Work continues on the Library Acquisitions, Budgets, and Utilizations report, which will be made available in .pdf format on the UFS website. (There are over 190 pages of charts, so no hard copy distribution will be made.)

--Other projects, including an examination of Fringe Benefit Recovery and use of Part-Time Faculty are hampered by data access issues.

Programs and Awards Committee—Sandra Michael
--Update on Conversations in the Disciplines guidelines, available at www.suny.edu/provost/facultyawards.cfm and www.brockport.edu/CID
--Comments on Chancellor’s Awards, reminders of guidelines and encouragement to establish campus-specific awards for those not covered by existing Excellence awards.
--The newly created Advisory Councils for Distinguished Teaching or Distinguished Service Professors have not met because no nominations were made in the fall. (Nominations for Distinguished Research Professor status have been received, and that Council has met.) Members of the Councils are appointed by the SUNY Provost. Nominations for DTP, etc., are now accepted all year, and the Councils will meet twice a year to review them.

Graduate and Research Committee—Mark Noll
--Will be setting up a working meeting on sustainability, inviting experts from four areas: energy, environment, green chemistry and social/political consequences and opportunities. A summer 2010 meeting is envisioned. UF senators are asked to nominate experts in these four fields. More info will be forthcoming on the UFS website.

Governance Committee—Sharon Cramer
--CGL Orientation Guides finished and available.
--New Senator Orientation conducted at fall 2009 plenary a success.
--The Committee was asked to provide a clearer definition for the process of selecting alternate senators. In sum, the definition of “alternate” and how one is chosen is a campus responsibility, and must be made prior to any Plenary meeting at which an alternate is to represent the campus. In other words, each campus must write its bylaws to enable representation at the UFS; however, the campus must have its process and representation in place prior to a Plenary.
--Questions were asked about the variability by campus of administrative review.

Student Life Committee—Ray Krisciunas
--Two surveys are ongoing: Focus on Returning Veterans (with an emphasis on health care) and Off-Campus Housing Issues.
--The project on Student Leadership Development is close to completion, awaiting consultation with experts in the field.
--Work compiling SUNY Campus Traditions II continues, including outreach to CCs and statutory colleges, to culminate in website creation due by April 2010.

**Undergraduate Academic Programs and Policies Committee**—Kane Gillespie
--Scholarly poster presentation of undergraduate work will appear in the “well” of the Legislative Office Building in Albany in mid-April.
--Interest is high in continuing discussions with Interim Provost Lavallee on international education and student mobility.

**Ad Hoc Diversity Committee**—Phil Ortiz
--Coordination and publicizing of campus-based diversity activities continues.
--Working relationship with Dr. Pedro Caban, Vice Provost, Office of Diversity and Educational Equity (ODEE) is excellent and has already yielded positive results, including a pamphlet on ODEE and its activities.

**Campus Governance Leaders**—Dennis Showers
--Draft of CGL Orientation Guide completed and distributed.

**Joint Task Force on Student Mobility**—Joe Hildreth
--New Board policies in the wake of Seamless Articulation and Transfer and the revised General Education policy. *N.B.: Board of Trustees resolution on Student Mobility available online, faculty Senator’s Corner:*
  * First- and second-year courses will be accepted in the major at transfer school;
  * Students with two-year degrees will be accepted into transfer institutions as juniors. Students must be supported by enabling graduation in four semesters after they transfer with an A.A. or A.S. degree;
  * Transcript review must now be done prior to admission (after deposit but prior to actual start of classes so students can choose to attend or not). Student appeals’ processes must be in place on each campus.

**Ad Hoc Nominations Committee**—John Denisco
--nominations for Vice President/Secretary will begin today. The Committee will continue to receive nominations via Carol Donato through to and at the spring Plenary in April.
  * Runi Mukherji (Old Westbury) & Jim McElwaine (Purchase) nominated.

**Old Business**—Carl Wiezalis
--Carl continues projects and liaisons for UFS at President O’Brien’s behest, including sustainability meetings, Business and Leadership seminars in Albany and New York, the Retirees Service Corps, the Peace Corps, Project Hope, among many others.

**New Business**—Ken O’Brien
--UFS Bulletin will be mailed to campus senators for distribution.
--Ed Alfonsin update on nomination and elections’ procedures in accordance with *Roberts Rules* and UFS bylaws.

Adjournment at 11:30am on 1/30/10

Respectfully submitted,
Richard Lee
Alternate UFS Senator