

President's Report—Ken O'Brien

BUDGET—Essential paradox: SUNY Strategic planning that is aspirational (including requisite “production” expectations of faculty/campuses) & that will serve NYS, opposed by the possibility that the Legislature is “starving the SUNY beast,” forcing cuts in even basic campus functions. President O'Brien sees the new strategic plan as an opportunity for all of us in SUNY to serve the larger polity—“getting us out of the ivory tower,” in his words, and out into the community. [President O'Brien's *Report to the Plenary*, available in a link on the UFS Corner, provides detail specific to his presentation.]

Monica Rimai's budget update & the Chancellor's roll-out of the new strategic plan will provide more specific info.

UFS Election

After the names of three members were placed in nomination (Runi Mukherji, Old Westbury; James McElwaine, Purchase; Norman Goodman, Stony Brook), and after a run-off between two of the three, Norman Goodman was elected Vice President/Secretary for a two-year period to begin fall 2010.

Comprehensive Colleges' Sector Meeting

*Jim McElwaine was re-elected to serve as Sector Representative for the University (comprehensive) Colleges.

*The sector representatives will continue to share information on budget-related problems on each campus.

*The sector will establish an ongoing database of local campus changes to General Education requirements: Jim will collate. We hope that will learn from each other even as we attempt to lessen some of the competitive consequences of the move from ten to seven required disciplinary silos. [N.B.: during Tina Good's FCCC report, an approved resolution regarding a system-wide re-evaluation of the Gen Ed silos was presented. The CCs are pushing for a reduction in the ten silos or at least a re-consideration of the structure.]

*Sector representative McElwaine was interested in how each campus deals with issues related to *in loco parentis*. Discussion will continue in the future.

Presentations

Interim Provost David Lavallee

*Approximately eight administrative positions in the Provost's office have been left unfilled due to budget considerations; however, two key assistant/associate provost vacancies are about to be filled: one primarily responsible for academic program review and assessment, the other for interactions with (especially) the members of the comprehensive colleges sector. Administrative reorganization will include oversight of six (geographical) sectors in the System, each overseen by someone in the Provost's Office.

*Mobility & Transfer Articulation is proceeding apace. Disciplinary articulation of courses in the first two years of three programs—Communications, Criminal Justice and Social Work—presented particular problems. Communications programs are still debating agreement on core courses; the other two named programs have reached agreement and disciplinary boards are being staffed. The Provost reminded us that appeals and reconsideration of specific transfer courses are possible and appropriate, especially if students in a given course from a given community college are not appropriately prepared. Databases specific to student tracking are being developed so that evidence-based decisions can proceed. The Provost thanked all academic faculty for their involvement.

--Formal implementation guidelines will be forthcoming, to include the need for a grade of “C” or better in order for a course to transfer. Too, a review of College in the High School and AP (high school) credits is forthcoming so that only legitimate courses/credits will be allowed. There was some confusion about whether grades lower than a “C” in a given course that fulfills a Gen Ed attribute can be transferred into a major/program: the Provost’s answer was ambiguous. The course would fulfill Gen Ed but would not transfer into a major to fulfill a requirement. (?)

*Strategic Enrollment Management is beginning; for example, possible caps on programs/majors, re-evaluation of how many elective, upper-division courses should be offered given the student cohort in a given program. Related to this will be a heightened concern with graduation rates, possibly including a system-wide graduation audit. Even given the pressures of current budgetary constraints, a close look at programs/majors that offer particular problems for students trying to graduate in four years is long overdue.

*A second initiative that will begin next year relates to all learning events that occur outside of the classroom—co-op activities, internships, study abroad, honors programs, service learning, etc. Recent NSSE data—a report that included student responses from three SUNY colleges—makes plain that we do very well, but there’s no coordinated way to inform and educate our stakeholders about these activities even as we learn from best practices at other campuses.

Budget Update

Senior Vice Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer Monica Rimai

*Everything related to the State budget is still up in the air. The Governor’s \$210m cut to SUNY is still on the table. (See the One House Bill grid on the website for relative positions on the various elements of PHEEIA.) Current moving targets being bandied about include the elimination of the State Univ. Construction Fund, to be controlled by the Dormitory Authority; all appropriations to SUNY to be modeled on the CUNY model—as an Aid-to-Localities approach, combining state appropriations and tuition revenues as a bundle, which would eliminate mid-year cuts—auditing efficiencies to be eliminated across the System; etc. The Senate has added two cuts to the Governor’s cuts: \$7.2m to System Administration & \$22m to university-wide programs. The Assembly is adamantly opposed to the elimination of the Construction fund. The two houses can’t even agree on such basics as revenue projections; the emergency spending bills do not include construction funding, so as of May 1st, no campus construction workers can be paid.

**Question about closing campuses and retrenchments: “all campuses have plans for retrenchments and other draconian cuts . . . furloughs, layoffs, and program eliminations will*

occur.” Period. **“Within the next two weeks announcements will be made.”** Faculty input on criteria, mission-consistency, etc. is appropriate; sharing specifics is not.

*Higher Ed Act advocacy with the Legislature continues. Tuition rates as controlled by the Board of Trustees and land-use potential are particular concerns of many legislators. The overriding concerns of legislators are (1) to guarantee oversight/mission consistency in land-use and public/private partnerships, and (2) collective bargaining rights (current and potential, such as CSEA, UUP and building trades even on land-use partnerships). Many arguments against the Act—including eliminating competitive bidding, privatizing the System, etc.—are specious. Ms. Rimai promises persistence as an advocate for restoration of cuts (“no chance,” regardless of advocacy) and ongoing, incremental tactics related to getting PHEEIA’s various components enacted.

Sector Reports & Chancellor’s Responses (by Monica Rimai and David Lavallee)

Campus Governance Leaders (CGLs)

--Dennis Showers (Geneseo) raised issues for the Chancellor’s office related to faculty evaluation of administrators, transparency regarding retrenchments of programs and faculty, and faculty governance commitments in general.

Senior Vice Chancellor Rimai’s Response: Sure. We’re committed to shared governance. The Chancellor has agreed to a meeting related to faculty governance, including discussion of whatever seems relevant.

University Colleges

--Sector Representative Jim McElwaine (Purchase) expressed concerns about faculty evaluation of administrators, equitable application of all elements of PHEEIA across all sectors, and General Education changes.

Gen Ed questions included whether campuses can require additional general education courses for a student who has completed 30 s.h. of Gen Ed credit, 7 of 10? [YES, of course, says Dr. Lavallee]; & if there is a “two-year guarantee” for students who transfer with A.A.S. and A.S. degrees? [NO, says Dr. Lavallee, there is no guarantee, but reasonability, flexibility and common sense need to be applied.]

Provost Lavallee’s Response: of course we should do 360° review of senior administrators, and of course shared governance matters. A draft related to specific implementations of Gen Ed under the new policy will be forthcoming from his office.

Colleges of Technology

--Sector Representative Barbara Brabetz (Cobleskill) raised issues such as SUNY support for differential tuition for higher-cost programs in the sciences, issues related to clinical revenues, shared governance, “disproportionate resource allocations,” and processes related to Gen Ed and the specialized colleges, especially those with Bachelor of Technology degrees (B.T.). Many of these issues are still hanging on from previous plenary sessions, and these representatives would like to see routine follow-ups to sector concerns after reports are made.

--Joe Petrick (Alfred State) is the Sector Representative for next year.

Provost Lavalley's Response: offered a few suggestions as to Gen Ed (B.T.) concerns. (They have an 8-of-10 silo requirement.)

Senior Vice Chancellor Rimai's Response: as to “disproportionate resource allocations to university centers,” System is looking at the allocation model now, though budget issues have taken pride of place.

Health Sciences Sector

Representative Shelly Mozlin (SUNY Optometry) noted that 90% of their faculty do not have tenure or are not on tenure tracks, so the Awards Committee should include criteria that include these faculty. Other concerns were related to the longitudinal gender study recently released by UFS, workload of clinical faculty and the coming retirement incentive.

--Middle States accreditation: faculty selection for the self-study did not include consultation with campus governance. The Governance Committee will be receiving a resolution from the sector regarding this.

--The Ethics Committee should be discussing issues related to “special” jobs for trailing partners.

Provost Lavalley's Response: We will consider modifying the Chancellor's Awards criteria to include clinical faculty.

Specialized Colleges

Representative Maryellen Keefe spoke to such issues as the construction fund, sustainability, deferred maintenance and budget concerns.

Senior Vice Chancellor Rimai's Response: Facilities Management planning is under constant review; sustainability and facilities planning is always a balancing act (echoing Tom Rathbone's presentation on 4/19).

University Centers

--Representative Bill Lanford (Albany) raised questions about presidential searches, including a request that the faculty component not be “diluted below 50%.” Reduction in numbers of courses offered [2700 fewer sections across the system this coming fall, according to Ken O'Brien] with no decline (actually an increase) in enrollment means that increased time to graduation is inevitable. This increased time-to-graduation rate is a de facto tuition increase, and should be communicated as such.

Provost Lavalley's Response: faculty should be represented at appropriate percentages and he will communicate same to John O'Connor, Vice Provost.

(Friday session ended at 4:20pm)

(Reconvened Saturday, 4/24; 8:30am)

Chancellor Nancy Zimpher: SUNY Strategic Plan Launch

6 Themes (Power Point, the same as that which you have all received), based on “One Big Hairy Audacious Idea”: SUNY can be the economic engine for NYS's economic recovery. [see, e.g., The Rockefeller Institute's report on higher education and economic change, *A New Paradigm for Economic Development—How Higher Education Institutions Are Working to Revitalize Their Regional and State Economies*: [http://www.rockinst.org/pdf/education/2010-03-18-A New Paradigm.pdf](http://www.rockinst.org/pdf/education/2010-03-18-A%20New%20Paradigm.pdf)]

1—Research and Innovation (entrepreneurial and traditional)

- 2—The Seamless Education Pipeline (K-20; cradle to career)
- 3—Health & Wellness
- 4—Energy & Sustainability
- 5—The Vibrant Community
- 6—SUNY & The World

*Unsurprisingly, the Chancellor linked success of the strategic plan to the passage—in whole or in part; by legislation or fiat—of PHEEIA, The Higher Education Empowerment Act.

*Questions included some that referred to SUNY’s relationship with UUP as advocacy for PHEEIA goes forward [she’s still working to find a “cross-walk”; “UUP and SUNY both want the same thing, but are pursuing different tactics”]; to the difficulties of creating private/public partnerships; community involvement and faculty service (lack of tangible reward for those who do serve in their communities, e.g.); the tension between budget cuts and student load as we “launch” [N.Z.: “we are at a tipping point”; the Chancellor has created a task Force on Strategic Enrollment Management, to be led by Senior Vice Chancellor Rimai.]. One question referred to the seeming absence of the arts and humanities in the plan. [N.Z.: “It’s a perceptual absence, and I would hope that all disciplines would come to the table.”]. The issue of shared governance and presidential evaluations led to a reminder by the Chancellor that local strategic planning will need to be aligned with the SUNY plan; however. . .

[N.Z.]: Not all cells of the SUNY plan need to appear in the local plan; not all elements of the local plan need to be linked to the SUNY plan. Campuses will be evaluated based upon the criteria forwarded by the campuses, not imposed from above. Each campus president will be evaluated based upon how well the campus succeeds in building upon its own strengths.

One interesting, implied comment was that a federal review of the 1862 Land Grant Act might lead to Congressional rather than state-specific funding opportunities, but that’s a downstream possibility. [N.B.: This might be related to the CUNY Faculty Senate President’s presence here and several mentions during the plenary of CUNY vs. SUNY structural models and their relationships to legislature, unions, etc.]

Ken O’Brien’s brief follow-up urged us to pay attention to the formation of various task forces, especially those that will be formed for each of the 6 themes, in the near future. He would appreciate a forwarding of faculty names who could serve on these boards.

Reports (truncated from handouts: adjournment occurred before presentations)

Programs and Awards Committee—Sandra Michael (Binghamton)

--7 Conversations in the Disciplines projects were funded, at a total of \$30k.

--216 (of 219) nominations for Chancellor’s Excellence Awards have been forwarded to the Chancellor for review. 234 awards were conferred in 2009. Guidelines have been changed (slightly), and the Committee is still urging individual campuses to create awards for non-tenure-track faculty, including part-time faculty.

--Under the new guidelines allowing for fall and spring nominations for Distinguished ranks, all 8 faculty nominated in fall 2009 have been approved by the Board of Trustees; 30 nominations were received in the spring of 2010, and notifications should be made by the end of April.

Graduate and Research Committee—Mark Noll (Brockport)

--Currently “contacting faculty to gauge interest and willingness to participate in a conference/workshop on sustainability and research needs in the areas of green chemistry, the environment, energy and social and political impacts.”

Committee on Ethics and Institutional Integrity—Janet Nepkie (Oneonta)

--Committee has reported to the Executive Committee on recent matters regarding academic freedom. Presentation on Ethics and Technology proffered. [Available on the website.]

Faculty Council on Community Colleges (FCCC)—Tina Good

--Several recently passed resolutions: on (1) creating a task force to re-evaluate the ten Gen Ed silos & include student learning outcomes; (2) streamlining assessment; and (3) creating a working group on shared governance, especially regarding student mobility and transfer & Middle States Standard 4. Not surprisingly, the FCCC expects to be a major player in any activities related to the “Education Pipeline.” Tina Good has been re-elected as President of the FCCC, serving a three-year term to begin fall 2010.

CUNY—Manfred Philip, Chair of the Faculty Senate for CUNY

--Trying to create linkages between the two systems.

--Boom times, perceptually: construction, enrollment, faculty hiring; however, CUNY has substantially the same structural problems as SUNY. “We’re running on reserves, but administrative and faculty leadership saw current crises coming four/five years ago.”

--Several concurrent issues at SUNY/CUNY: presidential review and individuated student tracking (including grades, persistence to graduation).

Governance Committee—Sharon Cramer (Buffalo State)

--Created an *Orientation Guide for New CGLs* [A couple of copies have been given to Steve Garner].

--Follow-ups included reporting on academic freedom (instructors and grading), evaluative review of senior administrators & orientations for new senators.

Student Life Committee—Ray Krisciunas (Canton)

--The Committee has discussed student health services (report to be made available on the SUNY website), off-campus housing, student leadership development & SUNY Campus Traditions II

Operations Committee—

--Substantive reports on four areas of long-term concern have been completed, three of which have been distributed at this plenary: *Trends in Library Acquisitions*, *Library Space Survey*, *Baccalaureate Degree Time to Completion Rates & a Longitudinal Faculty Profile by Gender 1980-2008*. [Copies of all but the Library Space Survey have been given to Steve Garner; all are to be made available on the SUNY UFS website.]

Resolutions

1) *On Presidential Searches* [three “resolveds”]

- *changes name of handbook from “guidelines” to “requirements” for searches.
- *codifies faculty representation percentages and “encourages” both additional faculty representation (beyond the six currently required) for larger campuses & consultation with campus governance bodies prior to appointing additional committee members.
- *changes language related to balloting for faculty representatives to allow each campus to determine how the secret balloting proceeds.

*Motion, by a member of the nominating committee (Governance) to refer the resolution(s) back to Committee, **FAILED.***

*Main motion, each “resolved” voted on separately, **PASSED***

2) *On Electronic Meetings of the UFS (emergency meetings only)*

- *changes bylaws to allow for electronic interfaces for special meetings.

*Motion, after some language changes, **PASSED***

3) *On The Public Higher Education Empowerment and Innovation Act (support of PHEEIA)*

*Motion **PASSED***

Plenary adjourned, noon, 4/24/10

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Lee
Alternate University Faculty Senator