

SUNY shouldn't piggyback on UB

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The final paragraph of Rex Smith's May 1 column, "SUNY offers Albany a lesson," and Gov. Andrew Cuomo's introduction of NYSUNY 2020 confirmed what many associated with the University at Buffalo foresaw: The other SUNY university centers are leeching off of UB's seven years of planning.

NYSUNY 2020 will award each center up to \$35 million for campus expansion plans. UB has announced it would use the money as a base to move its medical school to downtown Buffalo. That move has been in the works since the \$5 billion UB 2020 plan was introduced in 2004.

How do UAlbany and the others plan to use this opportunity? Plans have yet to be revealed, but UAlbany administrators are certainly reiterating Smith's conclusion: "Thanks for the encouragement, Buffalo. We'll take it

from here."

UB 2020 was never as shortsighted as becoming the champagne of SUNY: it was about reversing 40 years of economic downfall in Buffalo.

The university, the second-largest employer in New York's second largest city, invested time and money to create a plan that would benefit it and the region. It worked hard to gain community support.

The other university centers should have been busy creating and fostering their own strategic plans. Instead, one took three years to name a permanent president, and Binghamton struggled to address questionable athletic practices.

The same obstacles UB 2020 faced remain with NYSUNY 2020.

The Assembly hates the idea of autonomy and tuition increases.

Now, instead of one campus increasing its tuition, all four campuses will, in Speaker Sheldon Silver's eyes, price out New York students.

It's time for UAlbany to utilize its wealth of lobbyists so UB can say, "Thanks for the encouragement, Albany. We'll take it from here."

David Sanchirico

Albany

The writer is a 2010 graduate of the University at Buffalo.







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