Faculty Senate Executive Committee

Minutes of September 19, 2007
(unapproved)

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee met at 2:00 PM on Wednesday, September 19, 2007 , in 120 Commons to discuss the following agenda:

1. **Report of the Chair**
2. **Panel discussion on Critical Incident Management**

   Beau Willis, Executive Vice President for University Support Services Dennis Black, Vice President for Student Affairs Jerry Schoenle, Director of Public Safety Sharon Mitchell, Director of Counseling Services Elizabeth Lidano, Director, Judicial Affairs Elias Eldayrie, CIO Scott Nostaja, Interim Vice President for Human Resources

3. **Adjournment**

Item 1: Report of the Chair

The chair introduced Beau Willis, Executive Vice President for University Support Services.

Item 2: Panel Discussion on Critical Incident Management:

Beau Willis, Executive Vice President for University Support Services

Dennis Black, Vice President for Student Affairs

Jerry Schoenle, Director of Public Safety

Sharon Mitchell, Director of Counseling Services

Elizabeth Lidano, Director, Judicial Affairs

Elias Eldayrie, Chief Information Officer

Scott Nostaja, Interim Vice President for Human Resources

Campus Information Security Officer

Randy Borst, Director, Disability Services

Gerald W. Schoenle, Chief of Police

Executive Vice President Beau Willis began with a presentation about safety in the aftermaths of the Virginia Tech Shootings. He explained that there are a lot of regulations, local, state regulations that dictate the kind of safety issues we have on campus and that UB needs to address safety and security on campus in a comprehensive way. The university is like a midsize city, with a population of 35 000 to 40 000 people; 7500 students in resident; 1300 acres, 250 buildings spread across the 3 campus centers and across WNY. This demands the constant attention of a great number of people on the staff. The responsibility of the institution toward these 35 000 or 40 000 people is to do everything it can so students can be safe, live and learn, and faculty and staff can work.

The Vice President also reminded everyone of the magnitude of the tragedies that can happen in any given environment: The VT shootings hit home that tragedy can happen on any campus; the October storm was a significant destruction that challenged our infrastructure; Katrina was another example of a catastrophe that requires preparedness. The Vice President highlighted that we all bear a responsibility in handling these events, and that we all have an important role to play in an individual capacity to be prepared if something does arise.

Prevention, preparedness, and response

Pandemic Influenza

Bomb threat

Active Shooter/hostage incident

Hazardous material incident

Communication failure

Power outage

Several weather conditions

Structural collapse

It is not just about how to respond, but also about how to prepare for and prevent an emergency. What are we doing to mitigate these events?

Emergencies are defined as Levels 1, 2, or 3 depending on the severity of the incident. This includes things that involve people, such as demonstrations and crimes, all the way to infrastructure issues such as power failure or a fire. In the course of the life of a university and often in the course of a year, we typically hit each of these levels, so we really have to be prepared. Responsibility for all of this not only crosses many aspects of the campus in terms of the operational infrastructure, but it also extends into the surrounding community, so the coordination of each of these pieces is absolutely crucial. The Virginia Tech incident in particular gave UB pause to think about how we need to rethink our communication infrastructure.

Nevertheless, in advance of the October surprise and Virginia Tech tragedy, UB had already hired an emergency management coordinator, a staff person whose entire responsibility is the planning and preparation of the campus in case we need to respond. There is an emergency response plan that has been adopted by the campus and is accessible to the campus population: Emergency.buffalo.edu is the campus portal to our preparation and response activities.

PREVENTION: Managing our Risk

UB has launched programs aimed at avoiding hazards and emergency situations. A number of committees like the Personal Safety committee have also been put together to address safety issues.

There are also infrastructure issues to make our physical environment more secure (upgrading the phone system, the lighting environment, the ability of staff to get to campus at all as with the October storm). Changes to our CCTV and lighting systems are also being implemented.

We know incidents will happen, we know there will be a fire at one point, a power outage, so we have standard operating procedures to fall on, but what we don't know is when the next incident is going to be, so preparations need to take this temporal uncertainty into account.

With respect to the VT incident, there wasn't a weather or infrastructure issue involved but the behavior of an individual. In a population of 35 000 we have a wide variety of people and need to have the right kind of policies and procedures in place, the right type of communications network so that if there is someone on campus who is in some state of crisis we can respond and address the situation by directing him/her to the appropriate office.

Close circuit Television: North campus can be somewhat isolated. South campus in the middle of a urban environment. To what degree do we use technology to insure the safety and security of our population is a question that still needs to be debated.

There is now a formal training program for faculty to let them understand how to handle safety in their classroom, how to identify students in crisis, whom to contact, what to do, what to say or not. This information may have been available to faculty before but it wasn't readily accessible before in a formal and structured way. UB has established a set of policies and a process for sharing information about potential mental health problems on campus. We have a system and process for conducting welfare checks on students. There is a Students of Concern Committee, Mental health and wellness promotion programs (Student Wellness Team) including comprehensive suicide prevention programming.

We have a highly trained, full service police department serving the campus community: 44 officers with staff = in excess of 60. University Police Officers are granted full authority by the State of NY to enforce and investigate violations of laws and regulations.

RESPONSE Integrated coordinated timely

UB is prepared to immediately and fully respond should a situation arise. It is important to have a structured plan that conforms to national standards for emergency response because any type of incident, even if confined to the campus, is likely to involve the surrounding community and when those types of things happen, the national incident management system (NIMS) knocks into place.

Emergency Response Plan:

UB has created a Hazard Emergency plan and has put into place an Extended Operations Group: the group consists of 30 or 40 individuals some of whom will intervene depending on the nature of the incident: a traffic incident or a student demonstration will bring together different individuals.

UB has also aggressively upgraded its communications infrastructure and invested in training key responders so as to improve the initial response. We have been participating in mock drills, response exercises with NYS Department of Health and others: mock drills are important so all involved can understand what their role is. Important to know who is calling the shots in the case of an emergency: e.g. public safety issue => chief of police is in charge; fire => fire marshall . Mock drills teach people when to step down and let others take the lead. On Nov 8, we are going to have an exercise on South Campus where there will be the point of distribution for immunization (people getting their seasonal flu shot).

The issue is how to communicate across a diverse campus that there is a problem or crisis? The actual response to the October Storm from facility staff to public safety services and student organizations was excellent. Where we failed was at the level of the

communications network. Rather than depend only on our own communication infrastructure, there is now a countywide incident command.

One of the things UB has been doing with the UB2020 Academic Support Initiatives is recognize that the plethora of phone systems that exist across campus does not work. UB is already committed to single voice IP phone system that will allow us to call every office in the case of an incident and get a hold of people. This was already underway before VT.

In terms of Emergency communication, no single channel works so a variety of channels have been put into place and need to be integrated and be sustainable in case of an emergency.

In terms of campus security system, UB is looking into putting in emergency phones across the campus, loudspeaker capability (some of it exists, not all of it is functional).

Sheet being distributed to faculty, staff, students that identifies the resources available to respond or mitigate a crisis.

Collective Responsibility: Ways that everyone can help

Safety is a shared responsibility

Support us in balancing individual rights and the needs of the greater community

Do not hesitate to file reports with the University police department

Make referrals to Students of Concern

Request welfare checks

Familiarize yourself with safety procedures

Learn whom to contact in case of an emergency

Student help resources www.student-affairs.buffalo.edu/judicial/resourcestu.pdf

Faculty and staff help resources

The Executive Vice President then opened the floor to questions.

1/ Response to a question about creating a ham radio community and organizing training: UB does not yet have a Citizen Emergency Response Team as of yet (group of volunteers that would communicate through radio etc.) but it does have a police radio system and a NEXTEL phone system with the ability to have a separate stand-alone system (up to the up system). UB also has the ability to get Text messages out very quickly (email comes out really quickly, the phone message sometimes does and sometimes not). With every major disaster in the country's history, there has been a problem with communication so multiple systems need to be put into place: manual signs, postings, text messaging, nothing is overlooked.

An exciting new development: South Campus: blue-eyed phones are slated to be replaced with brand new phones with speaker systems on them, so every place on campus will be accessible with speakers.

2/ Concerns were expressed about the effectiveness of text messaging, since so much depends on the location, reception, etc. How about a more primitive and effective because immediately apparent measure that would be heard by everyone, namely sound signals as with tornadoes (two clearly distinct types of signals to signify 1/ get out 2/ don't get out)

Response: text messaging is only one among the 3 major categories the SUNY Chancellor's recommendation has outlined in communication channels: active, proactive and individual. All (siren system, 8x11 sheet of paper and magic marker, masking tape, all are appropriate and relevant depending on the context).

3/ Does this include an understanding with all the TV and radio stations in the area including immediate broadcasting?

Response: Yes.

4/ What kind of understanding is there for people with Special needs? Do we know who is in a wheelchair where?

Not at this time. A piece of that has been put into place insofar as a check box corresponding to any individual student's name that needs emergency assistant can now be checked and allows us to identify those individuals for the next stage of planning (intervention). This system does not include faculty and staff at the present time although faculty and staff could make a self-report to our offices (importance of being pro-active).

Information available for residence halls but when students are out in classrooms or elsewhere, the system does not track them. Ideally, it would be good figure out the schedules of all the students who have mobility impediments; in the event of a storm, for instance, 12 paths could be opened up right away so as to ensure that access is open to as much of the population as possible. People with a hearing disability also require special attention. Lots of these areas need to be addressed at the individual level but institutionally, there is no insurance that this is the case. There are gaps that UB is now trying to fill.

5/ Bill commented that as an employee, he can testify to the preparedness that is going on. He mentioned the recent Evacuation Drill Flyer that was posted … at a week's notice, everyone must evacuate the building on such a date. Maps are available for people to know where to go and everything seems to be coming into place.

6/ Beau Willis explained that he attended a conference this summer and a presentation by his counterpart at UC Berkeley got him to appreciate the dimension of the challenge when the university's infrastructure is really taxed (Earthquake for CA, long term power outage for us). Berkeley has every unit prepare their own business continuity plan. For instance, each unit needs to determine whether there is a priority of classes to bring online if something prevents teaching on a long-term basis. Similarly, their management of transportation services has to prepare a business continuity plan. What happens if access to buildings is lost when 50% of their fleet is in the building: need for a contracting agreement with a surrounding municipality to bring in buses. Gets people to think at the management level what to do. This level of preparation might be necessary at UB.

7/ The need to accommodate emotional as well as physical impediment through adequate mental health resources was also discussed.

8/ What about emergencies that are not on the "list" of expected emergencies?

The speakers recognize that while it is impossible to prepare for *all* emergency situations but the use of a standard national incident management system of emergency response works. It ensures that different people, key players will come together and form several different groups (someone will be logistics, someone planning, communications, media; there will be an incident commander, a commander for emergency operation center, someone on the scene where the incident is taking place in charge of that, etc). Even if we don't know what the incident is going to be then, the structure allows us to respond to it in efficient ways.

The Red Cross is a good model: they have chapters from areas of the country train chapters from other areas about experiences each is the most familiar with (hurricane, snow).

9/ Discussion about the use of information from the Student Governance as a resource and communication tool. The Undergraduate Student Association and the Graduate Student Association also have resources that can be used in case of emergency to relay information over the phone etc. Contacting student leadership is important provided the accuracy of the information being relayed has been verified.

10/ Counseling Services : does a lot of consulting with faculty about students they are concerned about. The issue was raised of helping faculty develop the skills necessary to be aware of the student who may be experiencing some kind of psychological or emotional distress and to be informed about the resources available to the students. It isn't about diagnosing students, but it is about providing the language so that faculty can have a conversation about a student they are concerned about. Fine line between recommending that someone make use of resources vs. requiring that they do. Also, to what extent is faculty obligated to identify problem students?

If there is a student anyone is concerned about, Student Affairs will always consult with faculty and keep the information confidential if so desired. There is a committee called Students of Concern that does do follow-ups and that gets names in a variety of ways: students involved in a police incident over the weekend, resident house referral or faculty referral.

There is also a Suicide Prevention Training that is open to any member of the campus.*Question, Persuade, and Refer* (QPR): about how to express concern to a person so s/he does not feel attacked, demeaned and realizes that you know there is something wrong. Since the Spring, 700 people have been trained in QPR but only 13 were faculty members.

The speakers emphasized that the people on the front lines, i.e. residential hall staff and faculty in the classroom, are the people who need to know what resources the campus has available. It is crucial to provide faculty with the sense that they are able to work in a safe and secure environment. Workshops should be offered to that effect, and we need to be talking to schools and departments.

11/ The chair suggested that it would be helpful to have ONE phone # that people could call right away, the campus equivalent of a 911 with someone at the other end who knows exactly where to route the call.

Item 3: Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 PM .

Respectfully submitted,

Carine Mardorossian, Secretary of the Faculty Senate

Attendance

Chair:

Robert Hoeing (P)

Secretary:

Carine Mardorossian (P)

Arts & Sciences:

Joseph Woelfel (A)

Melvyn Churchill (P)

Kenneth Takeuchi (A)

Stanley Bruckenstein (A)

Architecture & Planning:

Scott Danford (P)

Dental Medicine:

Peter Bradford (P)

Educational Opportunity Center:

TBA

Engineering & Applied Sciences:

Stella Batalama (P)

Graduate School of Education:

Thomas Schroeder (A)

School of Law:

TBA

Management:

Hodan Isse (P)

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences:

William Fiden (A)

James Hassett (A)

James Springate (P)

Merril Dayton (A)

Nursing:

Cynthia Curran (P)

Pharmacy:

Gayle Brazeau (E)

School of Public Health and Health Professions:

Peter Horvath (A)

Social Work:

Barbara Rittner (P)

SUNY Senators:

William H. Baumer (A)

Peter Bradford (P)

Henry Durand (E)

Marilyn McMann Kramer (P)

Parliamentarian:

William H. Baumer (A)

Ex-officio:

Peter Nickerson (E)

University Libraries:

Dorothy Tao (P)

Guests:

Claude Welch (CAS/PSC)

Barbara Burke (EDAAA)

David Bray (EDAAA)

Gay Lynne Samsonoff (Graduate Student Association)

Peter Grollitsch (Undergraduate Student Association)

Janiece Kiedrowski (Professional Staff Senate)

Kelly Warth (The Spectrum)

Sharon Mitchell (Counseling Services)

Elizabeth Lidano (Director Judicial Affairs/Student Advocacy)

Mike Dupre (University Facilities)

Randy Borst (Disability Office)

Barbara Ricotta (Student Affairs)

Dennis Black (Student Affairs)

Chuck Dunn (Student Affairs)

Beau Willis (University Support Services)

Elias Eldayrie (Chief Information Officer)

Scott Nostaja (Human Resources)

Gerald W. Schoenle (Chief of Police)