



Faculty Senate Meeting  
September 15, 2020  
Online by Zoom

Attendance:

Proceedings of the meeting are uploaded onto UB Box.

The Chair, Dr Robert Miletich called the Annual Voting Faculty Meeting to order at 3.00pm.

**Agenda:** Agenda was presented. A motion to move the item FS orientation to the end was brought to the floor. The motion was seconded and passed. With that change, the agenda for the day was accepted.

**Secretary's report:** Minutes from the meeting of May 12, 2020 was presented and accepted unanimously.

The Secretary reminded everyone that during the year ahead there would be a number of positions that needed to be filled and requested that the Senators participate in the process by taking up the positions or figuring out good candidates for the posts. In addition, she mentioned that senators from all decanal units needed to be filled and a reminder would be sent out in October.

**President's report:** President Tripathi spoke of the unprecedented times we are experiencing, which is also today's global experience. The University is committed to keeping the campus and associated sites safe. To make the University a safe place, he mentioned that each of us must adhere to the University health protocols in place and risk expulsion if one is not compliant. He said that the updated student conduct policy reflects necessary compliance with UBS health and safety guidelines. The University is working with the community leadership groups and local officials such as the Police Department. UB has established a screening protocol spearheaded by Dean Cain, which includes daily health check, on campus testing for antibodies as well as PCR testing for asymptomatic students, random pool surveillance and confidential phone lines for students that test positive for the virus.

Another currently ongoing dialogue is on race & racism, and diversity, inclusion and social justice. The President informed the FSEC of the formation of the President's advisory council comprised of Faculty, staff, students and alumni to address issues of race and culture at UB, and guide

and shape the university's programs, policies, activities and traditions. The council will inform how UB can harness its tripartite mission of education, research and engagement to battle racism and dismantle structural barriers to equality. The committee has been working on Faculty, staff and student hiring, recruitment, admission, retention, graduation curriculum, teaching and community engagement and relations. There have been discussions at the Town-hall meetings arranged to address these issues. He stated that "More than ever before, UB should serve as a bastion of hope and a community of action compelled by the greater good." UB will remove the names Millard Fillmore, James O. Putnam and Peter B. Porter from four locations on campus, a decision that aligns with the university's commitment to fight systemic racism and create a welcoming environment for all.

Effective immediately:

- Putnam Way on the North Campus will be renamed Mary Talbert Way in honor of the Buffalo civil rights pioneer.
- Millard Fillmore Academic Center, which is part of the Ellicott Complex and houses academic departments, student residences and other services, will be known as Academic Center until a new name is determined.
- The former Putnam's Marketplace Eatery in the Student Union will be known as Union Marketplace & Eatery.
- Porter Quadrangle, a residence hall in Ellicott, will be renamed at a later date.

The faculty continue to play an important role in COVID19 response. Along with the testing and tracing, they are also studying the impact of COVID19 in underrepresented communities.

Yu-Ping Chang, Associate Dean for Research & Scholarship received \$2.5 million from the independent and non-profit Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) for the project entitled, "Comparing Two Ways to Mitigate the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Mental Health among Adults from Underserved and Racial Minority Communities."

Faculty recognized for scholarly excellence include:

Peter Rogerson, a UB faculty member in geography and biostatistics, has been elected a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

John Crassidis, SUNY Distinguished Professor and Samuel P. Capen Professor in the Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, has been elected a fellow of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME).

**Provost's report:** Provost Weber welcomed everyone back on campus and gave an insight into what is today's UB normal. UB welcomed 4500

freshmen. However, due to COVID19 campus density is reduced by about 30%. Classroom density is reduced to about 87% compared to last year. Classrooms have been reconfigured to accommodate physical distancing guidelines and been upgraded with the latest technology. About 40% of the faculty are teaching completely online. Occupancy of residence halls is reduced by 48%. Surveillance testing has been initiated and a quarantine plan is in place. 29 students are in isolation. 63 have been deemed positive on campus including 2 employees. The good news being so far there have been no serious cases. The daily cases of COVID19 are being recorded. If more than 100 cases are recorded in 2 weeks the University will move completely online for two weeks. The report was concluded by thanking the faculty for their dedication.

**Presentation:** Michael Cain, Chair, Screening, Testing, Contact Tracing Protocol Committee, Vice President for Health Sciences and Dean, Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences presented the COVID19 testing measures in place.

As part of the university's ongoing and evolving efforts to help protect students, faculty and staff from the spread of the coronavirus, UB is conducting randomized COVID-19 surveillance testing of students, faculty and staff. By testing large numbers of people on campus who do not have COVID-19 symptoms, valuable insights will be obtained into asymptomatic but individuals with infection, which will help us reduce transmission of COVID-19 within the UB community. Periodic, randomized, surveillance *testing* of a representative sample of asymptomatic students, faculty and staff provides an important metric of changes in *prevalence* of COVID-19 within the UB *community*. Saliva sample aliquots (from 12 individuals) are being pooled and subjected to PCR with 2-3 days turnaround time for the results. If positive, then the stored samples are individually tested to trace the positive individual.

Approved by the New York State Department of Health for use by all SUNY institutions, this simple and non-invasive testing procedure checks for the presence of the virus using saliva samples pooled in batches. The Screening, Testing, and Contact Tracing Protocol Committee has recommended use of this approach at the present time. Surveillance testing will focus on three groups:

- Students residing in campus housing.

- Students in nearby privately owned, multi-resident apartment complexes, as well as students in the Buffalo area taking in-person classes during the fall semester.
- Faculty and staff.

Individuals who do not have on-campus, in-person interactions are also subject to random testing.

Sewage testing has also begun to determine community prevalence. The cases are beginning to show a downward trend since the last 4 days. Everyone needs to continue best practices – masking, social distancing and hand washing. Further information is available on the [COVID-19: UB Planning and Response website](#).

**Chair's report:** The Chair reminded the Senators to avail themselves of the COVID19 information on the website that is being regularly updated. He also suggested that they should participate in the committees.

**Old Business:**

*Second reading of the Bunsis report.* It was presented by Dr Dauber who gave a short summary of all the material concerning the Bunsis report that has been uploaded on UB Box.

Dr. Alexander served as the Chair for the resolution on the Bunsis report since Dr. Miletich wished to participate in the discussions.

A collegial discussions of the resolution ensued.

The question was called and seconded.

The Chair asked for those against voting to raise their hands.

The decision to vote on the resolution was passed by a simple majority.

Polling was conducted on the Bunsis report resolution.

The resolution was passed - vote of yay=38; Nay = 13 and abstain = 21.

*SUNY no confidence resolution:* Dr. Basaran presented the SUNY no confidence resolution. The SUNY Board of Trustees bypassed a traditional nationwide search to name Jim Malatras a longtime close aide to Cuomo as the new State University of New York Chancellor. The SUNY Faculty Senate, SUNY Faculty Council of Community College and SUNY Student Assembly passed a joint resolution of no confidence in the political appointees serving on the Board of Trustees.



After a short discussion the question was called and seconded.  
The FS voted in favor of the resolution– 48 yay:6 nay: 14 abstain.

**Executive session:** None

**New business:** None

**Adjourned:** Meeting was adjourned at 4.30 pm. -

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Submitted by Jessy Alexander, Secretary of the Faculty Senate,  
September, 2020.