

FACULTY SENATE

Minutes of January 25, 2000 - (approved)

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The Senate met at 2:00 PM on January 25, 2000 in the Center for Tomorrow to consider the following agenda:

1. [Approval of the minutes of December 7, 1999](#)
2. [Report of the Chair](#)
3. [Report of the President](#)
4. [Report of the Provost on the Academic State of the University](#)
5. [Resolution from the Grading Committee - First reading](#)
6. Old/New Business

Item 1: Approval of the minutes of December 7, 1999

The minutes of December 7, 1999 were approved.

Item 2: Report of the Chair

The Chair's written report was distributed with the meeting agenda. The Chair supplemented that report with the following comments:

1. the SUNY Senate will meet at UB January 27 through January 29; the Chair of the SUNY Senate, Professor Joseph Flynn, will meet with the FSEC on January 26 to discuss issues affecting SUNY; UB Senators are invited to attend SUNY Senate meetings as observers
2. Professor Adams-Volpe met Chancellor King at a meeting of the SUNY Senate Executive Committee; she reported that the members of the Executive Committee were impressed with the Chancellor's commitment to creating directions for SUNY and his enthusiasm for the job

Item 3: Report of the Provost on the Academic State of the University

Provost Triggles began his review of the academic state of the University with the comment that the financial state of the University is a critical issue. We must live within our budget, making priority decisions about how to allocate our resources. Finding ways of increasing our income beyond state support will be crucial.

He then reviewed the history of the University from its founding in 1846 as a for profit medical school which issued stock. We grew by adding professional schools, and to some extent, that history shaped and continues to shape UB's directions.

UB has over time variously described itself as: a small, local, poorly endowed private university; being ambitious to become a top ten public research university; an AAU member; a research and graduate driven enterprise; and, the "flagship campus" of SUNY. What we have tried to achieve is to be a significant, research driven university belonging in the major echelon of research universities in the United States.

There are many ways in which to classify public research universities. It is important to look at a variety of these to get a broad view of a university, rather than just one indicator which may give idiosyncratic results. The Provost selected a dozen parameters by which to compare UB to its 32 public AAU peers:

1. freshman in the top ten percent of their high school class; UB ranks towards the bottom
2. acceptance rate; UB ranks in the middle
3. retention rates; UB ranks in the middle
4. percentage of classes with more than 50 students; UB ranks high
5. percentage of classes with less than 20 students; UB ranks high
6. Ph.D. awards; UB ranks in the bottom third
7. research doctorate profile; UB is very similar to the average profile of Research I universities
8. employment record of Ph.D.'s; UB is very close to the average profile of Research I universities
9. post-doctoral appointees; UB is in the middle range
10. NRC ranking; UB ranks low
11. National Academy of Science members; UB ranks last
12. arts and humanities awards; UB ranks in the lower middle

These rankings raise issues for UB.

UB is weak in sponsored research activity. During the last seven years our research expenditures have been static; taking inflation into account they have effectively decreased. It will take time and a significant investment of resources in programs to turn this situation around.

UB lacks support for developmental activities. For many years development was not a priority; for example, we have lost track of many alumni. As a result UB ranks nearly at the bottom of our AAU peers in alumni giving.

UB is administratively a very lean institution, ranking at the bottom of our AAU peers in the ratio of administrators and professional staff to faculty members. This impacts UB's ability to deliver services. Our IT budget and the number of IT personnel, for example, ranks very low among our peers. The growing demand for IT services will require UB to make substantial investments in this area.

New York's statistical profile on expenditures for higher education is mixed. New York spends 3% of its tax revenue on higher education, California spends 8.4% and the national average is 6%. On the other hand, New York and California spend comparable amounts per student. But while California and a majority of the other states have increased the amount spent per student over the last decade, New York has steadily decreased that amount.

Nonetheless, UB does enjoy a steady state tax revenue stream, and the state has been generous in providing physical facilities. UB's physical plant is a large asset which could be unlocked if used creatively, and UB has far more flexibility than in the past to do so.

UB is an interesting mix of things done well, things done adequately, and things done badly. We must focus on the latter, specifically on research, productivity and sponsored programs.

The Provost then described what he believes are the trends in higher education for the next decade. Higher education is increasingly sensitive to the cost of doing business. It is increasingly niche or sector driven. Instruction is increasingly job related. Barriers to entry into the field are decreasing, both for students and for institutions, and traditional institutions will lose market share to the new, non-traditional institutions.

Traditional institutions have major strengths. Campus based institutions offer students a socializing and maturing experience and exposure to diversity. Traditional institutions are like franchises with brand name recognition, offering a known product of known value. They have talented faculty who are major providers of basic research. They are relatively inexpensive. They enjoy broad public support and relatively stable income streams.

They also have weaknesses. They emphasize process and are very slow to make decisions. They remain committed to providing low demand curricula. They tend to lack venture capital. They erroneously measure faculty productivity by seat hour of instruction.

Competition is sharp. Institutions face other aggressive traditional institutions, and new models like brokers and portals, corporate institutions, system providers, and reverse auction marketing to fill seats.

Institutions of higher education are essentially "knowledge factories", providing the world's intellectual capital; how well an institution generates intellectual capital is an increasingly important measure of its effectiveness. For UB to be a significant public research university, it must rebuild its sponsored research programs. Three units, the School of Medicine, the School of Engineering and the College of Arts & Sciences are key to UB's securing that stature. They must be successful in developing programs of national and international distinction and in capturing the dramatically growing funding, federal, state and private, available for research in the sciences. Excellence in other areas is important, but those three key areas will determine UB's ranking as a research university.

We will need to be nimble of intellect and finance in order to survive and to take advantage of the changes that are coming.

There were questions and comments from the floor:

- how does UB rank on size of faculty and research dollars per faculty member? (Professor Malone)
- in some areas, e.g., the Chemistry Department, the research productivity of faculty is good; we have many small departments and that hurts UB's reputational rankings; we are

trying to amalgamate small departments to enable them to better compete, especially those in the biological sciences, which is the area in which large amounts of research funding will be available (Provost Triggles)

- how is new faculty retention? (Professor Jorgensen)
- have spent large sums of money to retain productive faculty members (Provost Triggles)
- we rank low in infrastructure, such as support for IT, and these are critical for attracting and keeping young faculty (Professor Jorgensen)
- we will need to make staggering investments in IT to provide services which faculty feel are basic, e.g., e-mail, increased library access; increased research funding and development money will be crucial to our ability to provide these (Provost Triggles)
- takeovers and new alliances are common in the corporate sector; will UB go it alone or develop new alliances? (Professor Meacham)
- believe that among mid-level universities, there will be significant fall out of institutions that have not positioned themselves well; UB will, at minimum, have regional affiliations with a range of schools, e.g. University of Rochester, Brockport, Erie County Community College (Provost Triggles)
- decision-making at UB, such as decisions on tenure cases, is slowed by the difficulty of scheduling meetings with the Provost's Office; the delay results in the loss of young faculty who go elsewhere rather than waiting a long time for what ought to be a routine tenure decision; the Provost should be on the command deck in Capen rather than away in India (Professor Boot)
- Professor Boot speaks loudly, but with little substance; my Office will respond to questions concerning specific instances of alleged delay, delay may be occasioned by a faculty member who is negotiating with another institution (Provost Triggles)
- great universities have great libraries, but UB's Libraries are becoming less great; your plan relies on increased development and research funding; what steps will you take to get there? (Associate Vice President von Wahlde)
- need to make sure that a consideration of the impact on the Libraries is an integral part of the planning for new enterprises launched by the University (Provost Triggles)

Item 4: Report of the President

The President observed that 70% of UB's research dollars are generated by about 100 faculty members. We have been recruiting, tenuring and promoting outstanding people which demonstrates that UB is an attractive institution to which to come.

He stated that he is interested in meeting the faculty's need for access to information in the most timely and effective manner possible. He believes that doing so is less and less dependent on acquiring physical volumes for the Libraries, and increasingly on acquiring electronic access to material. The ideal would be for a faculty member to have direct, electronic access to the Library of Congress, rather than the University engaging in a race to replicate other institutions' holdings.

We need to figure out what the top research universities will look like in 20 years, not what they looked like 20 years ago. Technology may make possible more one on one contact with students, with large lecture classes becoming obsolete.

The President noted that the Provost's talk touched on issues discussed in the AAU. Distance education and the emergence of non-traditional competitors is a concern. Another major concern is how to rank member universities, and the Provost outlined many of the criteria used. For UB attracting Academy members will be the hardest figure to increase, although the President is skeptical that the number of Academy members is a good indicator of a university's research productivity. As for other ranking criteria, UB has enormous potential to improve. UB ranks in the bottom third of AAU members in sponsored program funding, total research dollars, etc., but we are within easy reach of institutions of our size. However, the first measure of the quality of an institution is the total research expenditures. We are in the middle of AAU rankings, and we can do better

The President indicated his pleasure that the SUNY Senate Executive Committee found Chancellor King impressive. The Chancellor has aspirations for New York, and he believes that the education of the state's human capital is the key to its success. The Chancellor sees the research institutions in the state as critical and knows that the publics have not advanced as far as necessary.

UB is moving in the right direction. The creation of the School of Information Studies and the merger of two small chemistry departments are good examples of changes that will increase our

ability to compete. We have put a structure in place to increase philanthropic giving, and \$1 M gifts are no longer uncommon.

An issue still to be resolved is the number and quality of our undergraduates and the number, quality and nature of our post- baccalaureate students. The Provost and SUNY favor a somewhat smaller and more selective undergraduate population for UB and a larger graduate population with greater emphasis on Master's programs and on smaller but higher quality Ph.D. programs. We will also have excellent professional schools that are increasingly supported on their own bottoms.

New York may be willing in the coming years to fund higher education more generously. UB, with a relatively modest increase in state funding, augmented by faculty initiative in finding other funding, is ready to move into the top 40/50 rank of universities.

Item 5: Resolution from the Grading Committee - First reading

Professor Baumer, Chair of the Grading Committee, summarized the report of his Committee on "reasonable academic progress", i.e. the successful completion of credit hours at a rate and with a cumulative grade point average that indicate the student can complete a baccalaureate program. This standard would be in addition to the current standards which govern a student being in good academic standing or conversely on warning or on probation. The consequence of not making reasonable academic progress is dismissal from the University.

The Committee is concerned that since a student not in academic good standing is ineligible for financial aid, a student who requires financial aid, if allowed to continue at UB, can incur a sizable indebtedness with little likelihood of bettering her standing. Reasonable academic progress is defined by a graduated scale of GPA, which gives a student opportunity to improve gradually.

There were questions from the floor:

- proposal needs to be read in the context of the complex set of rules, passed by the Faculty Senate, governing academic good standing so that we do not inadvertently undermine the existing rules in implementing this proposal (Vice Provost Goodman)

- Section 1 of the report says that a student not in good academic standing is not eligible to participate in extra-curricular activities; how is participation defined? (Professor Malone)
- that provision needs either to be thoroughly explained or deleted; will take up the matter with the Committee before the next reading (Professor Baumer)
- in applying the scale in Section 2, if a student's credit hours attempted is between steps, which step governs? need to explain that for a transfer student, it is UB credit hours completed divided by UB credit hours attempted that count toward the cumulative GPA; a beginning student who fails all her courses can't reasonably achieve the requisite 1.25 GPA at 30 credit hours attempted, so consider adding a lower step (Professor Faran)
- if a student is between steps, the lower step governs; Committee chose to specify a minimum GPA that must be achieved at 30 credit hours attempted because student records are reviewed once a year (Professor Baumer)
- if a student retakes the failed courses, may be able to meet the GPA requirement (Dr. Coles)
- this resolution would change the spirit of our dismissal procedures, making it a mechanical process; this resolution implies that we would have to dismiss a student who has more than 120 credit hours if her GPA falls below a 2.0; do we want to do that? (Vice Provost Goodman)
- student records should be reviewed twice a year (Professor Ohki)
- academic review of freshmen for issues of academic good standing and probation occurs at the end of the first year, but for other students it occurs every semester; eligibility for financial aid is, however, determined only in the summer; without further instruction from the Senate would review for satisfactory academic progress only in the summer, since traditionally UB has not dismissed students mid-year (Vice Provost Goodman)

There being no old/new business, the meeting adjourned at 4:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilyn McMann Kramer
Secretary of Faculty Senate

Present:

Chair: P. Nickerson

Secretary: M. Kramer

Arts & Sciences: J. Dugan, M. Churchill, J. Faran, C. Fournier, T. Gregg, M. Ram, K. Regan, J. Reineck, S. Schack, W. Baumer, L. Bian, J. Campbell, J. Dewald, L. Dryden, J. Meacham, E. Segal, L. Vardi

Dental Medicine: B. Boyd, M. Easley, G. Ferry, M. Neiders, L. Ortman

Education: C. Hosenfeld, B. Johnstone, T. Schroeder

Engineering: D. Malone, J. Mollendorf, R. Sridhar

Health Related Professions: L. Gosselin, S. Nochajski, J. Tamburlin

Information Studies: C. Jorgensen

Law: L. Swartz

Libraries: A. Booth, W. Hepfer, M. Miller, S. Tejada, M. Zubrow

Management: J. Boot

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: D. Amsterdam, P. Bradford, M. Dryjski, R. Heffner, F. Mendel, S. Okhi, S. Rudin, Cedric Smith

Nursing: E. Perese, P. Wooldridge

Pharmacy: T. Kalman, R. Madjeski

Social Work: B. Rittner

SUNY Senators: J. Adams-Volpe, J. Boot, H. Durand

University Officers: W. Greiner, President

D. Triggler, Provost

R. Wagner, Senior Vice President

K. Levy, Senior Vice Provost

N. Goodman, Vice Provost

B. von Wahlde, Associate Vice President

Guests:

M. McGinnis, *Reporter*

J. Tererei, *The Spectrum*

J. Cusker, Executive Assistant

C. Welch, Chair, Academic Planning Committee

Absent:

Architecture: R. Shibley

College of Arts & Sciences: B. Bono, J. Conte, S. Elder, J. Guitart, J. Holstun, L. Kurdziek-Formato, F. Pellicone, Charles Smith, H. Sussman, S. Bruckenstein, W. Chang, D. Radner, G. Radford, J. Poon

Education: C. Toepfer, J. Hoot

Engineering: S. Ahmad, D. Benenson, R. Mayne

Management: G. Hariharan, C. Pegels, R. Ramesh

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: M. Alashari, B. Albini, S. Awner, J. DeBerry, W. Flynn, V. Li, F. Loghmanee, A. Michalek, C. Pruet, S. Spurgeon, J. Sulewski, J. Yates, L. Wild

Nursing: J. Thompson

Social Work: A. Safyer

SUNY Senators: J. Fisher