

FACULTY SENATE

Minutes of December 7, 1999 - (approved)

E-MAIL: ZBFACSEN@ACSU.BUFFALO.EDU

The Senate met at 2:00 PM on December 7, 1999 in the Center for Tomorrow to consider the following agenda:

1. [Approval of the minutes of November 16, 1999](#)
2. [Report of the Chair](#)
3. [Report of the President/Provost](#)
4. [Budget Update](#)
5. [Second reading - Resolution on Centers and Institutes in the Promotion Process](#)
6. [First reading - Resolution on Student Evaluations of Instruction](#)
7. Old/New Business

Item 1: Budget Update

Senior Vice President Wagner outlined major points concerning UB's 1999/2000 financial plan. First he noted that this year a new resource distribution process is being implemented under which 90 % of revenues generated by units are allocated to those units with the remaining 10 % going to University Services. He estimated that over this academic year UB will generate \$5.4 M in tuition revenues above target and an extra \$.7 M in Indirect Cost Recovery (ICR) from sponsored programs. Applying the resource distribution formula, an additional \$4.8 M in tuition and \$.6 M in ICR will go to the units.

Second, he stated that while SUNY increased UB's base budget by \$5.4 M, offsetting these additional revenues are campus obligations of \$8.4 M arising from contractual salary increases, \$1.1 M for inflation, \$.9 M in tuition for the Schools of Law and Pharmacy, and \$.4 M for other expenses, totaling \$10.8 M, leaving a \$5.4 M shortfall. That shortfall will be covered by reducing unit budgets by \$4.3 M and not providing inflation funding. In addition UB has \$7.9 M in internal obligations (the largest component of which is the Undergraduate Merit Scholarship program) which must be covered. Taken together these add up to \$12.2 M which UB needs to manage. Again applying the resource

distribution formula, the Provost's area will be assessed \$9.7 M, University Services \$2 M, Student Affairs \$.4M, Development \$.2 M and the Presidential area \$.1 M.

Putting these figures in context, the Senior Vice President explained that last year the University's savings factor was \$5.4 M. This year the savings factor will be \$6.4 M. The remainder of the assessment will be covered by applying the additional tuition and ICR revenues.

The Chair asked for questions and comments:

- how far in advance did we know what the obligations imposed by collective bargaining would be? (Professor Mollendorf)
- the contract that was in place while we were developing the 1999/2000 financial plan obligated us to \$5.3 M and the newly ratified contract added \$3.1 M (Senior Vice President Wagner)
- do those figures take into account faculty who are retiring and not being replaced? (Professor Holstun)
- as faculty retire, the money that funded their salaries becomes available for the Deans to manage (Senior Vice President Wagner)

Provost Trigg spoke about the new resource allocation process, which his Office has spent the last several months detailing. First enrollment, research and development histories of the units over the past three to four years were compiled in order to "draw a line in the sand" describing where the units currently stand. There were then negotiations with the Deans about enrollment, research and development opportunities, following which challenging scenarios for possible future change were developed to which the Deans subscribed. An incentive process which distributes 90 cents of every marginal dollar to the unit that generated the dollar was then adopted. This is a big change from the traditional black box model of resource allocation.

The distribution of this year's budget was played out according to this incentive model. Units that exceeded their revenue goals were given 90 % of the marginal revenues, while units that failed to meet their revenue goals were assessed 100 % of the shortfall. The units were also given their

allocation of state money. The units were then asked to pay 30 % of the marginal provostal allocations (allocations historically made to the Provost's Office for a variety of purposes, e.g. special programs, faculty set up costs). Additionally the units were asked to pay 2.5 % of their all funds budget.

The Provost then turned to the \$4.5 M deficit in the College of Arts & Sciences. Dean Grant and his staff and the Provost and his staff have analyzed the deficit in detail. They have reached two conclusions. First before undertaking the merger of the three constituent units into the College, personnel and financial structures should have been developed. Second, responsibility for certain costs as between the Provost's Office and the College was not fully established, so each believed the other would cover these costs.

The deficit will be managed over two years. The College's substantially increased enrollment will in subsequent years generate increased state tax dollars. Additionally \$1.7 M for obligations which are more appropriately handled by the College rather than funded annually by the Provost's Office are being permanently added to the College's base budget. Also \$1M annually for faculty set ups is being transferred permanently to the College rather than being managed by the Provost. Finally more effective personnel and financial structures are being put in place with help from Senior Vice President Wagner.

Professor Hamlen, Chair of the Budget Priorities Committee talked about how the \$9.7 assessment from the Provost's Office and the academic units was handled. The Provost's share was \$1.3 M, but the Provost set aside \$.8 M of that for priority investments. The academic units share was, therefore, \$9.2 M. Half of that sum was raised by the 2.5 % all funds budget tax. Additionally, units falling short of tuition and research targets paid 100 % of the shortfall. Provostal allocations made to units for such things as special programs and faculty set up costs were taxed at 30%. Finally development costs associated with a unit were charged to the unit. Professor Hamlen noted that this formula based process, unlike its black box predecessor, could be understood by and was accessible to faculty. Decisions about how a unit's resources are spent will now be made at the Dean's level. This gives faculty an opportunity to influence those decisions much more than before.

Given this scenario the Budget Priorities Committee is concerned about the year to year scrambling to cover budget deficits and late budget assessments. These reduce units' abilities to work toward goals and to do long term planning. A fear is that units will be tempted to better their financial picture by cutting the quality of programs. The budget formula currently focuses on the volume of transactions; the Committee would like to see more emphasis on performance indicators. Finally, the Committee is concerned that politics will still be part of the budget process.

The Committee works behind the scenes. It encourages communication with the faculty. For example, the budget explanation authored by Senior Vice President Wagner that appeared in the *Reporter* was a result of discussions with the Committee. The Senior Vice President's Office is also working to present budget information in a consistent format and more frequently. The Committee itself plans to build a web site, to meet with the Deans for updates on unit budgets, and to find ways to influence investment priority decisions that drive UB's long term budget.

There were comments from the floor:

- am concerned that what happened in the College of Arts and Sciences was serious mismanagement; first, Dean Grant seems not to have done his homework to have had a \$2 M confusion about what he was to pay and what the Provost was to pay; second, with a \$2.5 M salary over commitment, Dean Grant seems not to have done his of the envelope calculations accurately in keeping track of how much he was spending; this performance gives me no confidence in the ability of the people assigned to rescue the situation to do so; in the last year and a half some 10 % of the College's faculty retired with more retirements expected, so the Dean's ban on hiring will produce a crisis situation; how can the faculty of the College have confidence that these questions are being addressed in the best possible way? (Professor Schack)
- the salary deficit occurred because faculty who had promised to retire chose not to do so; there has been misinformation about the level of recruitment in the College; in 1997/1998 the College had 631.39 FTE, in 1998/1999 672.41 FTE, and in 1999/2000 681.53 FTE; tenure track faculty positions have increased from 389.9 in 1997/1998 to 406/77 in 1999/2000 while non-tenure track positions have increased from 49.4 in 1997/1998 to

76.44 in 1999/2000; these increases will make retirements manageable though not without pain; the agreement to roll over into the College's budget money for such things as faculty set ups changes the magnitude of the College's deficit (Provost Triggie)

Item 2: Approval of the minutes of November 16, 1999

The minutes of November 16, 1999 were approved.

Item 3: Report of the President

The President, responding to Professor Schack's comments, affirmed that there were omissions in the formation of the College, but none critical, and that the permanent assignment of erstwhile provostal funds to the College and the increase in its tuition revenue ensure that the College will get through these difficulties. He urged Professor Schack to discuss the issues he raised with Dean Grant in the spirit of collegiality.

The President expressed cautious optimism for the next year. The Board of Trustees has adopted a 2000/2001 SUNY budget request, which, were the Governor to include it in his Executive Budget, would be assured passage in the Legislature. The proposed budget includes the provision that the Governor would fully fund salary increases he negotiates. It also includes funding for inflation and performance funding for quality programs and growth in enrollment. If UB stays the course we have been following, we would do very well under this budget. The President urged the Senators to do whatever they can to encourage the Governor to adopt the budget request. Another positive is that the state will recognize all research done by UB faculty which has not been true in the past. Also there may be increased funding coming from the mission review process in which UB did very well and for certain quality measures.

In January SUNY will have a new Chancellor in the person of Robert King. The President thinks his is a good appointment given the current state and dynamics of SUNY. He will be a politically astute leader. Other systems have done very well under leadership that comes up from the business or political side.

Another reason for optimism is that state and sponsored research funding is increasingly being supplemented by philanthropy. Over the next several years we should see a significantly increased return on our state held endowment because of budgeting changes negotiated by Senior Vice President Wagner. This will be especially important for the Medical School and the College of Arts and Sciences. Annual giving is also increasing; UB will net \$1 M more in unrestricted gifts which will probably be used to fund the merit scholarship program.

He then turned to the men's basketball program. There are two elements to the situation: a personnel issue which has been resolved and allegations of violations of National Collegiate Athletic Association rules and regulations. UB reported evidence of an irregularity to the Mid America Conference which investigated the allegations and produced a thorough report. UB has accepted the report and is putting forth corrective measures which will go to the Mid America Conference. We expect a response from the NCAA shortly thereafter, at which time UB will release whatever information it is allowed to release. Newspaper reporting to date has been reasonably good, though with some key inaccuracies.

There were questions from the floor:

- what is the status of mission review? (Professor Malone)
- SUNY Provost plans to produce a Memorandum of Agreement; SUNY will propose a first draft which will go to the campuses, followed by regional meetings to discuss issues raised by the draft, e.g. course overlap; a final MOA will be negotiated with each campus to be ratified by the Trustees; mid Spring is the likely time frame (President Greiner)

Item 4: Second reading - Resolution on Centers and Institutes in the Promotion Process

Professor Acara, Chair of the Committee on Tenure and Privileges, reported on changes made to the resolution since its first reading. In items 2, 3 and 4 of the Resolution, the Committee changed "should" to "must". In item 3, line 7 the Committee added "...must be signed by all interested parties..." in order to increase the formality of the process. In the introduction to item 4's listing of mandatory elements in the dossier, the Committee added "This evaluation must include at least the

following...". to make clear that other items are permitted. In 4a the Committee narrowed "participated" to "formally participated". In 4b the Committee added "and included on the checklist for the dossier".

In 4c the Committee added "A record of this consultation must be included in the dossier". In 4d the Committee added "and is entitled to participate in other formal deliberations". The Committee also decided that as a matter of accountability, a candidate could not exclude from consideration in his dossier work done in another unit.

The resolution was moved (seconded). The resolution passed unanimously.

The Chair, responding to a question from Professor Adams-Volpe, said that this resolution would have to be approved by the President before being included in the *Faculty/Staff Handbook*.

Item 5: First reading - Resolution on Student Evaluations of Instruction

Professor Gentile, Chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee, explained the ground of the resolution. First, procedures followed across the campus for collecting and interpreting student evaluations of instruction vary widely. Second, the philosophy of evaluation differs across the campus with some areas doing primarily norm based evaluation and others criterion based evaluation. Finally there was a question as to whether students' written comments should be published.

The resolution reaffirms the University policy that all courses should be evaluated. It places the responsibility for administering evaluation on the Deans, including: ensuring the standardization of evaluation instruments within discipline clusters, establishing, specifying, collecting and updating normative data against which courses and instructors will be compared, and publishing or otherwise making available course ratings and norms. The Committee recognizes the size of this task, especially in regard to establishing norms, but it is important that the results of evaluation actually be, not just appear to be, interpretable. The resolution specifies that students' written comments should be given to the instructor, chairs, deans, etc. but not published. Furthermore, Deans are responsible for having a published policy on student written comments. The resolution also says that the evaluation

instrument should have some criterion referenced questions in order to give specific feed to instructors.

Accompanying the resolution is a report by the Committee. The report is in five sections. The second section, entitled "What is known about student ratings of instruction", relies heavily on the November 1997 issue of the *American Psychologist* which is devoted to the topic. The third section, "Variety and ambiguity in current UB course evaluations", outlines the current situation at UB. The fourth section lays out the recommendations which appear in the resolution. The final section suggests that the Committee would like to follow up its work by focusing on alternative ways of documenting the efficacy of instruction.

There were comments from the floor:

- resolution should include a parenthetical definition of criterion referenced evaluation (Professor DesForges)
- need to make much more explicit the issues of norm and criterion referenced measurement and to advocate for more criterion based evaluation; for example, in a class I taught the rating of one item was in the 60th percentile, but the student responses were all in the highest category except for one response which was in the second highest category; this misleading ranking is because the norming group has a very high rating; normative referenced ranking is inappropriate in such circumstances (Professor Schroeder)
- (addressed to Professor Schroeder) do you have suggestions for the best way to educate people about these issues? (Professor Gentile)
- the resolution speaks first to norm referenced evaluation and then to criterion referenced evaluation; would reverse the order to give more prominence to the latter; the resolution should better define the two types of evaluation; resolution might include a statement that in certain circumstances criterion referenced evaluation is more meaningful than norm referenced evaluation (Professor Schroeder)
- there needs to be a connection between item 4 on page 6 of the Committee's report and work being done on preparing teaching dossiers to accompany promotion and tenure

dossiers; data from criterion referenced questions on UB-CATS are being converted into normed T-scores which is a clearly inappropriate practice (Professor Meacham)

- given the number of evaluation mechanisms in use, the sensitivity of these measures to outlier students, and the fact that hard data drive out more subtle measures, don't think publishing summary course ratings which lend themselves to misinterpretation is in the best interest of high performance in instruction (Professor Campbell)
- the Committee assumed that the ratings would be published and was attempting to make the ratings more meaningful; will discuss the issue (Professor Gentile)
- think that faculty should participate in administering evaluation, perhaps through decanally appointed committees of faculty; would be helpful for the Committee on Teaching and Learning to also discuss what kinds of questions are reasonable to ask; for example, asking first semester freshmen how faculty rank among other UB faculty is absurd; also useful would be context setting questions like "How often do you attend class, etc.?" (Professor Schack)
- the Committee felt that it was impossible to standardize evaluation questions and left it up to the unit to ask appropriate questions (Professor Gentile)
- many institutions similar to UB do use standard course evaluation forms; understand that UB has never adopted a standardized form because Deans are afraid that their unit would show up as having relatively poor instruction while individualized forms allow departments within a unit to be compared but not one unit against another; a single standardized form would be in the best interests of the University as a whole and the students (Professor Meacham)
- would be helpful to centrally collect the evaluation forms; think most units do what they have done historically without giving much thought to some of these issues (Professor Cedric Smith)
- Associate Dean Gold has collected these forms (Professor Gentile)

Item 6: Report of the Chair

In addition to his written report, the Chair noted that there will be an election for two SUNY Senators, one of whom will be from the Health Sciences, and Secretary of the UB Faculty Senate. The

Secretary added that nomination forms were distributed about a month ago and nominations are coming in. The Elections Committee will verify the willingness of nominees to run and ballots will be shortly distributed.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilyn McMann Kramer
Secretary of Faculty Senate

Present:

Chair: P. Nickerson

Secretary: M. Kramer

Architecture: R. Shibley

Arts & Sciences: B. Bono, J. Holstun, L. Kurdziek-Formato, E. Scarlett, J. Faran, T. Gregg, M. Ram, K. Regan, J. Reineck, S. Schack, W. Baumer, L. Bain, J. Campbell, W. Chang, R. DesForges, L. Dryden, J. Meacham, C. Fourtner

Dental Medicine: M. Easley, G. Ferry, L. Ortman

Education: C. Hosenfeld, T. Schroeder, J. Hoot

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

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

Law: L. Swartz

Management: J. Boot, C. Pegels

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: M. Alashari, D. Amsterdam, P. Bradford, M. Dryjski, R. Heffner, S. Rudin, Cedric Smith, J. Yates

Nursing: E. Perese, P. Wooldridge

Pharmacy: T. Kalman, R. Madejski

Social Work: B. Rittner

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

University Libraries: A. Booth, W. Hepfer, M. Zubrow

University Officers: W. Greiner, President

D. Triggler, Provost

R. Wagner, Senior Vice President

Guests:

M. McGinnis, *Reporter*

K. Levy, Senior Vice Provost

M. Acara, Chair, Tenure and Privileges Committee

R. Gentile, Chair, Teaching and Learning Committee

S. Hamlen, Chair, Budget Priorities Committee

Excused:

Information Studies: C. Jorgensen

SUNY Senators: J. Fisher

Absent:

Arts & Sciences: J. Conte, S. Elder, J. Guitart, F. Pellicone, Charles Smith, H. Sussman, S. Bruckenstein, M. Churchill, H. Calkins, J. DeWald, D. Radner, E. Segal, T. Thornton, L. Vardi

Dental Medicine: B. Boyd, M. Neiders

Education: B. Johnstone, C. Toepfer

Engineering: S. Ahmad

Management: G. Hariharan, R. Ramesh

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

Nursing: J. Thompson

Social Work: A. Safyer

SUNY Senators: H. Durand

University Libraries: D. Woodson

