

## Minutes of the Executive Committee – APPROVED

February 11, 2021 (virtual, held using Zoom, business conducted)

**Convener:** Tim Tryjankowski

**Officers Present:** Tim Tryjankowski (Chair), Don Erb (Vice Chair), Hugh Jarvis (Secretary)

**Executive Members Present:** JD Augustine, Jessica Coram, Cathy Donnelly, Rita Ferri, Chris Keough, Dom Licata (ex-officio), Rose Mammen, Jill Rexinger-Kuhn, Marlo Roetzer, Krystal Testa

**Executive Members Absent:** Jenna Lenz (excused, but no alternate), RJ Multari

**Members/Guests:** (none)

**Parliamentarian:** Rachel Poole

**Staff:** Jessica Naish

**Recorder:** Hugh Jarvis

**Meeting called to order** by Tim Tryjankowski at 3:00 p.m.

**Quorum reached:** 7 members and 3 officers present.

**Supporting documents in Box.com folder in  
Professional Staff Senate/ Meetings/ Executive Committee Meetings**



### PRESENTATION OF AGENDA – Tim Tryjankowski

- **Motion to adopt Agenda: Cathy Donnelly (JD Augustine). Passed.**

### REVIEW OF PAST MINUTE(S) – Tim Tryjankowski

- **Motion to approve Minutes from Executive Meeting on January 14, 2021 and from Special Meeting on February 4, 2021: JD Augustine (Rita Ferri). Passed.**

## CHAIR'S REPORT – Tim Tryjankowski

- Faculty Senate Executive Meeting w/ Provost Webber: fall semester is projected to be a normal reopening, but this may change depending on safety issues. Concerns also raised about campus suicide risk areas (e.g. Clemens stairwells) and there will be permanent fixes in long range.
- Drawing from speakers at our general meeting, our Drive for 25 Resolution, and a recent senior administrators retreat, the chair seeks concrete action by PSS to further inclusion and diversity.
- Marketing & Communications Cmt is developing a logo to promote our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year.
- CIO Brice Bidle will require more security for remote meetings and has developed a 'kill switch' to stop all video and audio until the host can take back control of the meeting.
- Recent Chancellor's visit to campus promoted use of UB lab facilities to process COVID-19 samples, cofunded by a commercial company. (All SUNY facilities have been made available to the Governor.)
- Any staff, vendors, students coming to campus will need weekly tests this spring.
- Chancellor supports our desire to have ALL front line staff vaccinated early.
- Erie Health Commissioner Dr. Gale Burstein will be at Feb. 25 general meeting. Chair requests questions in advance and has extended this offer to campus unions, Faculty Senate and students.
- Chair gave thanks to Heather Hagenbuch who stepped down as chair of Inclusion & Diversity Cmt.
- Drive to 25 Resolution, after it is approved and presented to Pres. Tripathi, chair plans to begin conversations about continuing remote work after pandemic.
- Chair will open discussion with Provost, VP for FA, and VP of HR to discuss retirement guidance. HR does not currently have anyone in this role. President shares our concerns.
- As part of campus beautification, interest in tree survey using drones has resurfaced. Faculty member has successfully received funding, so this project may reopen. VPFA is supportive. Chair has asked Sustainable Living Cmt to take this up.
- In budget news, federal govt is moving towards a COVID relief bill, which will then help SUNY and thus UB including departmental budgets and our delayed raises. Unions are encouraging people to lobby Congress to pass these measures.
- SUNY plans to allow some campuses (like UB) to offer differential tuition. So UB plans to increase tuition in some programs. But there is concern that aid will increase to match.
- Chair is still keen to establish a retiree cmt and seeks volunteers.
- Shared Governance Day will include comments from all tiers of campus governance, including the president, and these will be in our March Newsletter.
- Regarding shared governance, the chair feels that on our campus, our administration does include us in planning (unlike most SUNY campuses based on comments at SUNY plenary).
- SUNY Faculty Senate terms are ending and there will be three openings. Professional staff can serve and all professional staff will be notified they can run.
- **Motion to receive: Marlo Roetzer (Chris Keough). Passed.**

## VICE-CHAIR'S REPORT – Don Erb

- 28:03
- Awards Cmt – deadlines for outstanding service award nominations is March 11.
- Constitution & Bylaws Cmt – changes to Bylaws and Standing Rules have been sent to membership for consideration and will be discussed at Feb. 25 general meeting. We could then vote on them.
- Election Cmt – officer elections should occur this week.

Office of University Shared Governance  
Professional Staff Senate

543 Capen Hall, Buffalo, NY 14260-1601

Ph: (716) 645-2003; Fax: (716) 645-2717

pssenate@buffalo.edu

www.buffalo.edu/pss



- Marketing & Communications Cmt – considering alternate products for newsletter. February newsletter reached 2,772 with 29% open rate.
- Sustainable Living Cmt – new member, Jennifer Chazen. Discussing virtual presentations by previous fair participants. Also educational offerings such as advice for buying electric cars. Campus tree survey, one of faculty members has received funding to research use of drone swarms, tentative plans to meet again in May.
- **Motion to receive: Cathy Donnelly (Jessica Coram). Passed.**

## SECRETARY'S REPORT – Hugh Jarvis

(None.)

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

### Special Committee on Redistricting – Tim Tryjankowski

- Work continues with hopes for a proposal this spring. We expect an update in March.

### Drive to 25 Resolution – Tim Tryjankowski

- Full text is provided below.
- Hopefully we can approve any final changes today, then bring it to general membership at Feb. 25 general meeting for their approval, in time to present it to Pres. Tripathi on our annual Day of Shared Governance (Mar. 2).
- Only revision is date change from March 4 to March 2.
- **Motion to accept final version: Jessica Coram (JD Augustine). Passed unanimously.**

### Bylaws and Standing Rule Changes – Don Erb

- Full text is provided below.
- There have been no additional changes since our special meeting on February 4.
- We have now vetted the final versions, which have been sent out for final discussion at the Feb. 25 general membership meeting. Barring any additional changes, they can then be voted on after that meeting.

## NEW BUSINESS

### Inclusion & Diversity Cmt changes to chair and charge – Don Erb

- Jessica Coram has been nominated to serve as their new chair.
  - **Move to name Jessica Coram as new chair of Inclusion & Diversity Cmt: (Chris Keough) Krystal Testa. Passed unanimously.**
- Committee has proposed a new charge:



*We support the University mission by contributing to a welcoming and inclusive University community by educating ourselves about our differences while simultaneously celebrating and respecting our diversity.*

*We will endeavor to make use of our strengths and empathy as a community of individuals in order to challenge oppressive systems particularly those that perpetuate and encourage hatred, intolerance and bigotry.*

*Throughout the year, the PSS Inclusion and Diversity Committee:*

- *Hosts numerous social and educational programs such as our longstanding Education and Advocacy Series that explore issues of diversity, inclusion and community.*
- *Provide professional development opportunities with a focus on inclusive excellence, positively impacting UB and the larger Buffalo and WNY community.*
- *Organize informal events designed to encourage colleagues to have meaningful interactions that enable people to go beyond stereotypes and build a vibrant learning community in which all perspectives are heard and valued.*

- **Motion to accept new charge: Rita Ferri (Marlo Roetzer). Passed.**
- Request for EC committee liaisons to speak with their committees to encourage them to similarly update their charges to more closely reflect their goals and duties.

#### Formation of an Awards Celebration Working Group – Tim Tryjankowski

- We need a group to set up a celebration for award winners, once we can meet in person.
- Becky Bryerly has volunteered to serve but we need a formal chair and more volunteers.

#### Chair's Committee to Appointment a Parliamentarian – Tim Tryjankowski

- Each year we are required to convene a special committee to appoint (or reappoint) the senate parliamentarian. Rachel Poole has agreed to serve again, but we need to independently review her service and consider other candidates. This committee will include our current chair plus the newly elected officers and an EC member. They will meet once the officers' election has completed.
- Chris Keough agrees to serve as the EC Member.

#### Shared Governance Day – Tim Tryjankowski

- As detailed in the Chair's Report, we will run a special March Newsletter with comments from select members of the various governing bodies on campus and hopefully our Drive for 25 Resolution.

#### Agenda for February 25 General Membership Meeting – Tim Tryjankowski

- Chair shared a draft agenda.
  - Dr. Gale Burstein, Erie Co. Health Commissioner
  - Drive to 25 Resolution
  - Bylaws & Standing Rules updates
  - Formation of Awards Celebration Working Group
  - Shared Governance Day plans
- **Motion to accept agenda: Cathy Donnelly (Rose Mammen). Passed.**

## ADJOURNMENT

**Motion to Adjourn:** 3:58 p.m.

*Attendance sign in sheet(s) available through the PSS office.  
Meeting audio recording available through the PSS office.*

## *DRIVE TO 25 RESOLUTION*

**Whereas**, University at Buffalo (UB) President Satish Tripathi, in his 2020 state of the university address, envisioned that the priority of UB will be to rise to a top 25 rank in nationally regarded publications such as the US News and World Report : Ranking of US public research institutions;

**Whereas**, the address was given and accepted as a report to the university community and further accepted as the President's report by the University Council;

**Whereas**, the metrics highlighted as "areas to improve upon" in those rankings included national and international award recognitions of faculty, retention of students, increase in research activity and growth of student enrollment;

**Whereas**, the UB Professional Staff Senate (PSS) was established on July 30, 1971, thus marking the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the UB Professional Staff Senate on July 30, 2021;

**Whereas**, the PSS was established by proclamation of President Robert L. Ketter and the PSS Constitution ratified in 1972, defining the purpose of the Senate to "**seek an active role for the professional staff in the governance of the University; provide advice and counsel in administrative matters; and assist in the development of administrative policies and procedures**";

**and Whereas**, many of these ranking factors (including those we currently score highly in) will involve direct and indirect input, and support from the highly educated, dedicated and talented professional employees of UB, as stated in the PSS charter;

**now, therefore be it Resolved**, that the professional staff of the University at Buffalo commit to working to enhance the global reputation of UB by:

- Continuing to provide exemplary professional service to all research endeavors
- Continuously calling on University leadership to divest from UB investments in fossil fuels
- Prioritizing excellence of service to student experiences and academic offerings
- Promoting initiatives to diversify the UB community at every level, to increase representation from historically underrepresented groups and bring new perspectives while continuing to grow a global community
- Influencing campus decision making as it relates to sustainability issues and issues of campus beautification and assisting in planning and supporting all UB campus beautification initiatives.
- Promoting participation in larger sustainability initiatives to promote awareness throughout the UB community (for example, see the UB Sustainability calendar <http://www.buffalo.edu/sustainability/keyinitiatives/sustainability-month.html>)
- Promoting awareness and education through various modes of delivery including social media, videos and events sponsored through the PSS and other campus groups
- Continuing to impact and influence university policies that promote a robust system of physical, mental and emotional well-being of students, faculty and staff by the most robust means across our campus community
- Striving to offer exceptional service to students, parents, faculty, researchers and all UB community members so as to increase satisfaction, recruitment and retention outcomes through careful planning and assessment of services in student advising, community engagement, employee professional development, alumni relations, outreach to UB professional staff retirees, all in order to create life-long learners, educators and service providers as full time members of our extended UB community. All of these efforts will foster our collective aim to improve undergraduate four-year and

Office of University Shared Governance  
Professional Staff Senate

543 Capen Hall, Buffalo, NY 14260-1601

Ph: (716) 645-2003; Fax: (716) 645-2717

pssenate@buffalo.edu

www.buffalo.edu/pss



University at Buffalo

## Professional Staff Senate

University Shared Governance

*six-year graduation rates by extending additional support to at risk students starting their freshman year, providing a clear pathway to graduation.*

- *Identifying and taking active steps to eliminate any gaps in student retention initiatives and graduation rates that may be influenced by race, ethnicity, gender, first-generation status, disability status, and veteran status*

*We look to continue to nominate members of the Professional Staff Senate to serve as active members of campus committees and hiring search committees to promote a diverse work force that best reflects the diversity of our students and of us all... in areas of race, religion, and gender... as diversity and awareness of social and societal issues can in some part be addressed through the lens of diverse staff leading to a more represented and thus comfortable student body.*

*In stating our commitment to these standards as well as offering professional flexibility to solve unforeseen challenges as they materialize, such as remote learning and instruction with the myriad of support services and technologies necessary behind the scenes to allow for faculty and students to thrive, based on the efforts and expertise of all UB professionals,*

***We submit this resolution to UB President Tripathi, his administrative cabinet and the UB Council on this the 2nd day of March 2021, our annual Shared Governance Day, and be it further resolved that members of the PSS look forward to working with campus and community partners at every occurrence as it relates to our shared goal of achieving a top 25 national public university ranking for the University at Buffalo.***

Office of University Shared Governance  
Professional Staff Senate

543 Capen Hall, Buffalo, NY 14260-1601

Ph: (716) 645-2003; Fax: (716) 645-2717

pssenate@buffalo.edu

www.buffalo.edu/pss