

Minutes of the Executive Committee – APPROVED

December 10, 2020 (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, Lynn Emminger, Rita Ferri, Chris Keough, Dom Licata (ex officio), Rose Mammen, Michael Montoro (student rep), RJ Multari, Jill Rexinger-Kuhn (alternate for Jenna Lenz), Marlo Roetzer, Krystal Testa

Executive Members Absent: Jenna Lenz (sent alternate), Cathy Donnelly

Members/Guests: Ramelli Choates

Parliamentarian: Rachel Poole

Staff: Jessica Naish

Recorder: Hugh Jarvis

Meeting called to order by Tim Tryjankowski at 3:01 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: Rita Ferri (Rose Mammen). Passed.**

REVIEW OF PAST MINUTE(S) – Tim Tryjankowski

- **Motion to approve Minutes from November 12, 2020: Rita Ferri (Marlo Roetzer). Passed.**

CHAIR'S REPORT – Tim Tryjankowski

- Chair spoke with CIO Bruce Bible about voting platform and also possibility of a unified campus-wide communication platform for business and teaching (vs Slack, Zoom, WebEx, etc.)
- Chair had conversation with Provost and President's offices about professional staff membership on search for new dean of pharmacy school. As a result, we are invited to submit several candidates. Provost explained subsequently need for many faculty due to wide ranging impact of that position, but also that he had believed that because some of his appointees had been professional staff, they should be sufficient. But going forward, he will be more aware of the need to include PSS. Chair has thus requested nominations.
- Student survey about pandemic conducted by SUNY was accidentally sent to more than just UB constituents (46,000 subjects!) so results will not be very useful. OIA will share what they can.
- Provost asked chair for our feedback on how UB handled the pandemic this fall, and appreciates the value of remote working and learning. Current working atmosphere may have trickledown effect on new employee hiring, position descriptions, sustainability... Definitely open to more conversation.
 - Comment from floor: This success is greatly due to shift to employee resources.
- UB investigating waste water sampling for COVID-19.
- NB: VP Hubbard helped fast track approval of today's special 'Laughter in Workplace' event. But suspect sponsorship will be part of a greater conversation for UB units in general.
- Dave Emhof has resigned as Area 3 EC member and senator. Jill Rexinger-Kuhn is willing to shift from alternate to full member. Phil Ryan has agreed to serve as the alternate.
 - **Motion approving Jill Rexinger-Kuhn as Area 3 member: Lynn Emminger (RJ Multari). Passed.**
 - **Motion approving Phil Ryan as Area 3 alternate: Lynn Emminger (Rita Ferri). Passed.**
- Comments from the floor:
 - Q/ We continually have to remind admin of value of including professional staff on important committees. Glad the provost sees the importance.
 - Q/ Regarding working remotely, remember while UB is saving resources, employees are absorbing some of those costs. Any agreements should take that into account.
- Faculty Senate election, Fred Stoss won majority but the margin is too slight so will be a run-off election.
- PSS officer election will occur this spring with assistance of Carol Van Zile-Tamsen. Note, once the emailed link to ballot is opened, there is a limited amount of time to vote.
- PSS was established July 30, 1971, so 2021 will be our 50th anniversary.
- Officers are discussing how our email lists function and will do some streamlining of process now we have a permanent admin staffer.
- **Motion to receive: Lynn Emminger (Chris Keough). Passed.**

NEW BUSINESS

Adopt a Family – Marlo Roetzer

Marlo is coordinating PSS donations this year. No physical objects accepted this year. Collecting for gift cards through Community Relations for three families: one survivor of domestic violence, one large family fallen on hard times, and one single mother, non-English speaker with many kids.

GUEST SPEAKER – Minority Faculty & Staff Assn – Ramelli Choates, Pres.

Board members: Ramelli Choates (President), Jerry Linder (VP), Kevin Ragland (Treasurer) Deborah Pierce-Tate (Secretary), recording secretary is vacant. Association began in 1976 under Edward Jenkins, faculty in Department of Learning and Instruction, during period of political unrest on campus, with a goal of enhancing quality of life and campus climate through participation and inclusion of minorities. Support recruitment and retention, networking and mentoring, and positive community links. Support programs including annual MLK, Jr. Commemoration Event and a biennial conference with Buffalo State College (next is in 2021).

Membership is open to all. \$30 membership fee, primarily used for scholarships, e.g. MLK, Jr Award and Academic Achievement Award.

Discussion:

- Q/ We are keen to collaborate with them.
 - A/ Open to partnership with PSS. Meetings are open to all.
- Q/ Were they involved with recent announcement about UB committee on race?
 - A/ No.

Chair will ask new chair of Diversity & Inclusion Cmt to contact her for future collaboration.

VICE-CHAIR'S REPORT – Don Erb

- VPFA reached out to VP for Advancement with concerns about PSS sponsorship activities such as our emails about our sponsors. Our liaison in Advancement, Nick Lane, is firmly behind us and will push back that we are in lock step with university policy.
- PSS corporate sponsorship program (Quicken Loans, VOYA, Orange Theory and Morton Lane).
 - VP Hubbard outreached to Advancement with concerns about recent email including corporate sponsorship. Our liaison in advancement, Nick Lane, who set up this whole process, has reassured us that this is normal process.
 - Chair affirmed we had these concerns to begin with and have been working closely with advancement all along.
- Inclusion & Diversity Cmt: virtual potluck Dec. 17, 12-1:30pm for holiday food and recipe sharing.
- Awards Cmt: Now accepting nominations for Chancellor's Service Excellence Award (Jan. 8).
- Marketing & Communications Cmt: new member; newsletter retains >30% open rate; continue to actively support senate activities.
- Constitution & Bylaws Cmt: proposed amendments for bylaws and standing rules will be shared for more discussion with additional documents outlining the changes. Will be discussed further at January EC meeting before presentation at the next general meeting. If approved without revisions, can then be finalized at that meeting.

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Professional Staff Senate

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- **Motion to receive: Chris Keough (Rita Ferri). Passed.**

SECRETARY'S REPORT – Hugh Jarvis

(none)

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Drive to 25 Resolution – Tim Tryjankowski

- Our goal has been to showcase and underscore how UB Professionals will be integral to UB's overall efforts to rise in the National University Rankings. We are all in this together, yet I feel it important to highlight how and where UB professionals will lead the charge in this effort.
- We are using these markers as a base to work off of <http://www.buffalo.edu/president/vision.html>
- Please work with the senators and members from your own areas or the committees you are liaison to and suggest fully prepared additional bullets, or deletions
- Would like to adopt final version at next EC meeting and present for approval at the January general membership meeting, ideally to then deliver to the president and council for their spring (February) meeting.
- **Shared updated draft of resolution (below and also in Box). Subsequent discussion (see recording) resulted in numerous changes which will be assimilated into the next version.**
 - Whereas University at Buffalo President Satish Tripathi, in his 2020 state of the university address, envisioned that the priority of the university will be to rise to a top 25 rank in the US world and news report ranking of US public research institutions
 - And whereas the address was given and accepted as a report to the university community and accepted as the president's report by the University council
 - And whereas, the metrics highlighted as "areas to improve upon" in those ranking included national and international award recognitions of faculty, retention of students, increase in research activity and growth of student enrollment,
 - Hence, many of these ranking factors (including those we currently are rated highly in) will involve direct input, and support of the highly educated, dedicated and talented professional employees of the university,
 - Now be it resolved that we the professional staff of the University at Buffalo commit to:
 - working to enhance the academic reputation of UB (list examples ?)
 - Continuing to invest in research
 - Prioritize student experience and academic offerings
 - Promote initiatives to diversify the UB community at every level to increase representation, bring new perspectives and continue to grow a global community
 - influence campus partner decision making as it relates to sustainability issues and issues of campus beautification (list examples – trees ? and or ways to meet the International scoring system led by Ryan McPherson's group)
 - Promote participation in larger sustainability initiatives to promote awareness throughout UB community (e.g. <https://www.aashe.org/get-involved/campus-sustainability-month/>)

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- Promote awareness and education through various modes of delivery including videos and events sponsored through the PSS and other campus groups. (perhaps videos like other SUNY campuses have done <https://system.suny.edu/capital-facilities/energy-management/sustainability/campuses/>)
- guide university policies, through The Professional Staff Senate to offer and promote a most robust system of physical, mental and emotional well-being of students, faculty and staff by the most accessible means across our varied locations,(list examples currently in use – but in need of more support)
 - Counseling Services, Accessibility Services, Student Conduct & Advocacy, EDI, Wellness Office, TASS, HR virtual workshops, Career Services, Navigate, Blue Table, Emergency Funds, Scholarship Portal, etc.
 - Should we mention our wellness committee here as an of the examples currently in use?
- strive to offer exceptional service to students, parents, faculty researchers and all UB community members so as to increase satisfaction, recruitment and retention measures, this will be achieved by careful planning and assessment of services in areas such as (list areas like student advising . others ?)
 - Student advising, community engagement, employee professional development, and alumni outreach
 - “Improving undergraduate four-year and six-year graduation rates by extending additional support to at risk students starting their freshman year, providing a clear pathway to graduation.”
 - For this bullet below, does it make sense to add in alumni? Our Alumni Engagement team is striving to offer exceptional service to our alumni 😊 We could list alumni programming and lifelong learning opportunities for alumni (don’t know how specific you want to get here)
- continue to allow PSS members to serve as active members of campus committees and hiring search committees to promote a most diverse work force on campus that better 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 diversity of faculty and staff – leading to a more diverse and comfortable student body.
- And whereas this body commits to these standards as well as offering our own 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 UB professional staff
- And whereas we the membership of the over 3,000 professional staff members of the UB community work force submit this resolution to president Tripathi, his administrative cabinet and the UB board of trustees on this the 10th day of February 2021, and be it further resolved that we welcome every opportunity to;
- -work 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
- And be it further resolved that we present this resolution as a sign of our good faith in all invested partners working together to achieve the best for UB and the entire Western New York community in which we all live, work and thrive.



- Therefore be it resolved that we the officers and Executive Committee members of The University at Buffalo Professional Staff Senate, backed by a motion and vote of support of our elected area senators and our general membership, present this resolution of professional staff action in support of UB's Drive to 25 to UB President Satish Tripathi and the University at Buffalo Council as a gesture of exemplary shared governance practices and shared action as we seek to attain the goals outlined in the 2020 State of the University address. You have our support and involvement as together we Drive to 25.
- Chair will share updated version before next EC meeting in January.

Redistricting Special Committee – Tim Tryjankowski

- Committee is assimilating returns from December survey.

Bench Dedication for Sarah Piraino– Dom Licata

- Moving slowly due to pandemic but will be located in Founders Plaza. Dedication has not yet been scheduled but may happen quite quickly.

UPCOMING MEETINGS & DEADLINES

- January general meeting: Despina Stratigakos (VP Inclusive Excellence) and D'Ann Keller (Athletics)
- February general meeting: Dr. Gail Berstein (Erie Co. Health Dept) and have invited Mark Poloncarz.
- December 16: Adopt a Family donation deadline.
- December 17: Inclusion & Diversity Virtual Potluck
- January 14: EC meeting

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to Adjourn: 4:24 p.m.

Attendance sign in sheet(s) available through the PSS office.

Meeting audio recording available through the PSS office.