

Minutes of the General and Senate Meeting – APPROVED

February 25, 2021 (virtual, held using Zoom, business conducted)

Convener: Tim Tryjankowski

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

Senators Present: JD Augustine, Charlie Baxter, Kim Behun, Jessica Coram, Catherine Donnelly, Lynn Emminger, Rita Ferri, Bradley Hendricks, Janiece Jankowski, Chris (CJ) Keough, Gerri Kremer, Kimberly Krzemien, Carl Lam, Jenna Lenz, Doug Levere, Dom Licata (ex officio), Rose Mammen, Sherene Milizia, RJ Multari, Marlo Roetzer, Pam Rose, Melinda Saran, Mary Jo Sicurella, Eileen Sirianni, Virginia Stever, Carlos Tejada, Krystal Testa

Senators Absent: Ashley Allen, Andrew Fogelsonger, Meredith Forrest Kulwicki, Lauren McGowan, Jill Rexinger-Kuhn, Dan Ryan, Phil Ryan, Terry-Ann Smith, Valerie Stannard, Glenn Taplin, Christopher Wilson, Melissa Wood

Members/Guests: (not recorded)

Parliamentarian: Rachel Poole

Staff: Jessica Naish

Recorder: Hugh Jarvis

Meeting called to order by Tim Tryjankowski at 3:05 p.m.

Quorum reached: 24 senators and 3 officers present.

Supporting documents in Box.com folder in
Professional Staff Senate/ Meetings/ Senate and General Meetings



PRESENTATION OF AGENDA – Tim Tryjankowski

- **Motion to adopt Agenda: RJ Multari (Rita Ferri). Passed.**

REVIEW OF PAST MINUTE(S) – Tim Tryjankowski

- **Motion to approve Minutes from January 28, 2021: Jenna Lenz (Lynn Emminger). Passed.**

Dr. Gale Burstein, Erie County Health Commissioner

- Provided a pandemic update for the county then answered questions.
- Q/ Do you think it's advisable to operate a food service facility on the same floor and in the same building as a COVID Vaccination Center with no physical separation between activities?
 - A/ Assume same prevalence in clinic as general population, so need to ensure everybody is taking normal precautions (mask enforcement, distancing, one door for entry vs exit, good ventilation, regular disinfection) and suggests food be takeout only.
- Q/ How is contact tracing being handled?
 - A/ (covered in detail in the presentation)
- Q/ Is it worthwhile to take a COVID test before travelling or visiting with vulnerable relatives after receiving the vaccine?
 - A/ Vaccine provides protection but not fully certain so yes, good idea esp. PCR test.
- Q/ Will the test detect whether you are a carrier who might still be able to infect others?
 - A/ PCR test is recommended.
- Q/ People are getting sick for about 24 hrs after the second vaccine. Why is that?
 - A/ It's a natural immune response which shows vaccine is working. (Based on trials, more likely for Moderna than Pfizer.) But if it doesn't go away get tested. Can also report to CDC and they will do follow-up.
- Q/ How can we get public-facing professional staff prioritized higher in vaccination eligibility?
 - A/ Eligibility is set at state level and keeps changing. Keep checking their website.
- Q/ Should we still get vaccinated even if have been exposed...?
 - A/ Probably immune but vaccine is still a good idea. Please wait 90 days.
- Q/ If infected, how long will tests show that?
 - A/ Most tests are not looking for antibodies. 90 days after infection still have antibodies or RNA fragments so would still show up in an antibody test but would not be infectious.
- Q/ If students are being mandated to be vaccinated this fall, what about staff?
 - A/ Vaccine requirements are being debated. They are not FDA approved but manufacturers are getting ready to apply. Once they are approved, legislation could then follow and a state school like SUNY could require this.
- (Got permission to share the recording.)

CHAIR'S REPORT – Tim Tryjankowski

- Provost and President hope to have a normal fall semester but still being decided. Commencement also being discussed.
- Chair is ready for "do it" stage from our Drive to 25 Resolution. Expects us all to "make it happen."
- Inclusion & diversity are a major concern just now and there is extra funding for "bold initiatives."
- July is PSS's 25th anniversary. Marketing tools are being created.
- CIO is beefing up UB's cyber security e.g. for Zoom meetings.
- SUNY Chancellor visited Buffalo recently to promote rapid-testing diagnostic center at UB, also to require regular testing including campus visitors. Feels campus safer than community. UB is still under current state limits, but significant numbers on campus. Has offered all SUNY campuses for



emergency testing/vaccination sites. Wants to expand 1B eligibility to professional staff – is a vaccine supply issue.

- Heather Haggenbuch is stepping down as chair of Diversity & Inclusion Cmt.
- Campus beautification / tree survey plans are resurfacing.
- Budgets cuts now look like 5% versus 20/25%.
- If federal funding trickles down, negotiated raises may occur sooner than feared.
- TAP gap remains but TAP and Excelsior still funded.
- Opportunities for differential tuition for some programs.
- Capital planning looking to mitigate high suicide risk locales on campus.
- SUNY Faculty Senate election is about to start. Professional staff are eligible. Expect announcement.

- **Motion to receive: Kim Krzemien (Janiece Jankowski). Passed.**

VICE-CHAIR'S REPORT – Don Erb

- Awards Cmt – Outstanding service nomination deadlines approaching.
- Election Cmt – PSS officer elections underway.
- Inclusion & Diversity Cmt – Change in leadership and charge.
- Marketing & Communications Cmt – Assessing new newsletter tool. 29% great open rate.
- Sustainable Living Cmt - New member Jennifer Chazen. UB Sustainability has requested help promoting new UCapture program (carbon offset for purchasing via browser plugin).

- **Motion to receive: Janiece Jankowski (Cathy Donnelly). Passed.**

SECRETARY'S REPORT – Hugh Jarvis

(none)

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Drive to 25 Resolution – Tim Tryjankowski

- Resolution has been approved by EC and is ready for final review by general body.
- Next step if approved will be to share with president in time for shared Governance Day in March.
 - 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 50th 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 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.
- Motion to accept: RJ Multari (JD Augustine). (Zoom poll.) Passed: 26 yay, 0 nay, 12 abstentions.

Proposed Bylaws and Standing Rules amendments – Don Erb

- Information only. Proposed changes were emailed twice plus two Zoom forums were held for open discussion. Only concerns raised were two small editorial changes to Article XVI, Section C:
 - Paragraph 1, “Senate” omitted from “...Professional Staff [Senate]”.
 - Paragraph 4, “any proposed amendments must be submitted to the Chair” (not the Secretary).
- No discussion. Next step will be a general vote online run by Elections Cmt.

NEW BUSINESS

Changes to Inclusion & Diversity Cmt – Tim Tryjankowski

- New chair, Jessica Coram, with new charge already approved by EC.
- This exemplifies the new preferred model we wish all cmt’s to adopt for greater clarity.
- **Motion to accept new chair and charge: no mover or second. Zoom poll shows consensus support.**

Formation of Awards Celebration Working Group - Tim Tryjankowski

- Becky Brierley (Pharmacy) has volunteered to assist but additional volunteers needed.

Formation of Retirees Committee - Tim Tryjankowski

- Two people have volunteered. Chair seeks additional members.

Shared Governance Day - Tim Tryjankowski

- This year we will celebrate through special March newsletter with involvement from key campus leaders plus promulgation of Drive to 25 Resolution.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- March 25 – general membership meeting with special guest VPFA Laura Hubbard
- April 22 – general membership meeting with special guest Pres. Satish Tripathi

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to Adjourn: 4:36 p.m.

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

Meeting audio recording available through the PSS office.