

University Senate Minutes

May 3, 2004

At 3:36 PM the University Senate President, Brent Lindquist, called the meeting to order. He suggested item VI on the agenda be moved to item III. There was no objection to this change and the agenda for the meeting was approved. After two corrections were made, the minutes of the last meeting were approved. Brent announced that the agenda was long and discussion of the topics on the agenda would be limited to 15 minutes.

A. Godfrey, representing the Library Committee, moved four resolutions (approved by the University Senate Executive Committee and distributed with the minutes) concerned with keeping the journal costs under control, the Elsevier contract and the support of alternatives to commercial publishers. After some discussion these motions passed the University Senate with no opposition and one abstention.

The University President distributed a written report and made an oral presentation. She mentioned that the recent fund raising gala resulted in \$1.2M of which she estimated \$1 M would be available for scholarships. The Faculty/Staff fund raising campaign will soon begin.

She looks forward to the next capital budget (not yet passed by the State) that will be primarily devoted to rehabs. The Humanities Building should finish on time. Plans are underway to improve the cement area adjacent to the Staller Center (known as the "Staller Pit"). The Rec. Center still must be approved by the State Assembly. It will be paid for by usage fees.

The Gyrodyne acquisition is still proceeding forward. There is a public meeting tentatively scheduled for June 9 in the Wang Center. They have finished with the zoning, historical and environmental impact. This is a very "green" proposal that is part of our economic development.

A question was raised concerning the involvement of the Senate Environmental Committee. They are informed, consulted but not involved. It is still too early. In response to a question concerning a student arrest at a recent student meeting the President responded that a tape exists of this arrest and it shows University Security behaved professionally.

The Provost submitted a written report and made an oral presentation where he noted the recent symposia held at Stony Brook honoring G. Williams and G. Stell.

The Provost again stated how pleased he was with the Middle States comments.

In order to respond to the SUNY administration we need a Mission Review, a self-study and a 5 year plan.

R. McGrath along with two other Provosts will be on a committee working on the BAP.

R. McGrath and L. Martin reported on the new "tuition from grants" policy. The primary reason for this new policy is to increase the funds available for TA recruiting stipends. It is generally acknowledged that our stipends are at the low end compared to our peer institutions. It is estimated this new policy will generate \$3 M/yr. This would allow the withdrawal of \$1 M of supplemental funds now being used from the Presidential and Provostial areas leaving \$2 M for stipend supplements.

Among the reactions to this proposal noted by the Provost are the following: This policy should be periodically reviewed. It should have an independent monitoring group. Implementation questions still being considered include: Should organizations, such as BNL, who support students, also pay tuition? Does this policy tax grants too much for students early in their careers and contributing little to research?

The Provost acknowledged that this new policy could result in a reduction of the number of graduate students in graduate programs if sponsored research budgets do not increase to accommodate the increased costs of support for students. However, he asked if this new policy results in fewer but better graduate students, because of improved stipends, is that a bad thing? He also noted with regret that in general other costs of doing supported research are increasing, e. g. fringe benefit rates, staff salaries, and IDC rates. However, he asked if this new policy results in fewer but better graduate students is that a bad thing?

In the question and answer period some issues were clarified.

- These funds will be used to supplement recruiting TA stipends. They can be used for RAs but that is not the primary intent.
- These funds will be used to only supplement TA stipends in the areas that generate them.
- Graduate programs will not see their TA stipends decrease when the Provost withdraws the \$1 M supplement.
- The tuition charge will be on 6 credits of instate tuition but this is still under discussion
- If the granting agency eliminates tuition from a grant the PI will still be responsible for the tuition. Paying tuition is a cost of doing research.
- All grants must include tuition as of March 2004 and the tuition will be collected starting Spring of 2005.

N. Goodman distributed a summary report of the Spring Plenary Session of SUNY University Faculty Senate and asked for questions. There were no questions and Norman encouraged the faculty to get involved with the State-wide Senate. He distributed a nomination form to the Standing Committees of University Faculty Senate.

Angeliki Field-Pollatou from GSO distributed a blurb on the state of graduate student housing and asked for comments. The Chair of the Graduate Council noted that this was one of their three priority areas. B. Lundquist noted that there are two aspects to the problem. Current housing needs to be repaired and new beds need to be constructed. L. Martin commented there is a problem with the construction of student housing. The ratio of graduate to undergraduate beds is based on their relative enrollments. However, the percentage of graduate students requesting housing is greater than the percentage of undergraduate students requesting housing. The Provost noted that housing, like the stipends, is an important aspect of graduate student recruitment. He expressed frustration at the difficulty of solving the housing problem. Unlike the stipend issue, housing does not consume resources since it pays for itself. Brent assured the GSO representative that the University Senate would do all it could do to help with this problem.

N. Goodman, noting the complexity of building new campus residences due to issues of financing, obtaining the necessary ground lease, appropriate siting due to the need for utilities, etc., suggested that the Senate invite Dan Melucci (chair of the President's Advisory Committee on Campus Housing), Dallas Baumann (Assistant Vice President for Campus Residences) and Dick Mann (Vice President for Administration) to discuss these issues at the September, 2004 meeting of the University Senate.

W. Dethlefs from the Campus Environment Committee commented on the need for an overall Environmental Master Plan. We need to find the balance between sustained growth and stewardship of the land. A resolution will be introduced in the Fall on the creation of an Environmental Master Plan (EMP).

Questions noted that destruction of the colonial carriage road supports the need for a master plan and the importance of the campus environment in student recruitment and fund raising.

W. Collins from the Undergraduate Council moved a proposal to make a 1-credit Introduction to Stony Brook courses mandatory. This proposal was distributed to the University Senate. After a discussion of the pros and cons of this proposal it was approved (18 for, 12 against and 1 abstention).

The Senate adjourned at 5:18 PM.

Recorded by F. Fowler.