

**Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**UUP Albany Chapter**  
**November 10, 2014**

**Attendees:** B. Benjamin, L. Bickmore, P. Breiner, E. Briere, J. Collins, C. Fox, R. Friedman, L. Gallagher, J. Gendron, J. Harton, C. Jewell, M. Knee, G. Landsman, G. Petry, P. Pinho, P. Romain, H. Scheck, M. Seidel, B. Shadrick, P. Stasi, I. Steen, E. Torgersen, B. Trachtenberg, R. Vives, M. Weiss, L. Wittner, J. Stefl-Mabry, and K. Thompson-LaPerle

**I. Minutes**

In the interest of time, review of 10/16/14 meeting minutes was deferred to 12/11/14.

**II. Senate Chair, Joette Stefl-Mabry, and Vice-chair, Cynthia Fox, Addressed the EC**

The current chair will only be serving 9 more months, at which time the vice-chair will become chair. Elections for vice chair and other leadership positions are held in March. All were encouraged to take an active role in the Senate, and to participate in any campus-wide Senate votes or initiatives. Strong faculty governance requires an active, participating faculty. The vice chair also serves the critical role of chair of the Governance Council (GOV). The GOV charge to systematically report on governance was overlooked for years and was recently reinstated, with a change in language at the last Senate meeting such that this GOV report will be done every two years. If faculty find this is not being done, they should ask for it.

Stefl-Mabry and Fox reported results of the spring 2014 Senate survey on the role of faculty governance at UAlbany. Two surveys were completed, one for academics and professionals and one for students. The surveys could not have been done without the support of President Jones and our new administration and their desire for shared governance and transparency. This report focuses on the academics and professionals survey. Findings were presented to President Jones. Findings were then publicly presented at the Senate. The report is available for review on the Senate website ([www.albany.edu/avail/files/2014\\_Faculty\\_Staff\\_Survey\\_Shared\\_Governance\\_Final\\_Report.pdf](http://www.albany.edu/avail/files/2014_Faculty_Staff_Survey_Shared_Governance_Final_Report.pdf)).

This initial survey was modeled on an AAUP survey with the help of UAlbany's Institutional Research office. There were 311 respondents (12.4% of 2500). Stefl-Mabry, a quantitative researcher, stated the sample size was taken into consideration, that the 311 respondents' surveys cannot be discounted, and noted that so many choosing not to respond is also important information. Most respondents were full-time, had worked at UAlbany 5-14 years, 22% had served as a senator, and 40% had served on a senate committee. Only 24% were "not at all familiar" with the senate. On the whole the majority indicated they did not know if the Senate or its consultation with administration were effective. The final question was open ended and on analysis showed 3 themes: 1) perceiving the Senate to be largely ineffective (e.g. administrators should not serve on the Senate if Senate is advisory to administration, that faculty input is essential to good administration), 2) expressing distrust (e.g. of administration and leadership, and due to deactivations, fear, lack of respect), 3) sharing recommendations for improvement (e.g. need to focus on curriculum, need for continuity in Senate—officer turn-around is too quick, relocate/rotate Senate and council meetings to include the other UAlbany campuses, need for greater accountability).

The findings indicate the climate last spring, when the survey was administered. Changes are already coming about from survey results including: 1) modifying the Senate language such that GOV will provide a report on governance every 2 years, 2) accommodating President Jones and Interim Provost Mulcahy's suggestion to modify Senate bylaws to remove votes from administrators serving on Senate, 3) the president changed the Senate full faculty meeting format to an armchair discussion, 4) Senate representatives are being asked to report to faculty at every faculty meeting, 5) Senate committees are reviewing their charges, 6) the survey tool will be continuously improved for its next iteration in March 2016, 7) the Senate is working to rebuild ties with faculty, including councils holding open forums for broader discussion.

Concerns raised by the EC included the need to address 1) deactivations and all that these represented, an attack on departments and the liberal arts, 2) the relentless, meaningless, time sinks from repeated charges to create new metrics to measure faculty contributions 3) departments that lose faculty/have retirees do not get those lines back without increasing enrollments and this at the cost of other departments all competing to keep their positions, which is self-defeating, 4) accountability and effective communication remain major issues, 5) procedural reform without substance, 6) a demoralized faculty, 7) where Senate can effect change—in the past Senate alone seemed insufficient to represent faculty interests, 8) an interest in working collaboratively with the Senate on shared agenda items.

Stefl-Mabry and Fox asked to be invited to faculty meetings to share information about the report, answer questions and discuss the importance of being involved in the Senate, if not in an officer role, then serving on Senate committees (and also serving on college governance bodies). All were encouraged to hold senators responsible to report back to their constituents and to be aware of what is unfolding, the faculty's role in shared governance and formal consultation, to work toward shared governance, not merely see it as the senators' work or to abdicate because faculty are busy, and to bring more people into the democratic process. She invited all to read Senate minutes, participate in discussions (reiterating that Senate meetings are open to all, unless explicitly in closed session), and welcomed faculty ideas, concerns and questions.

### **III. Labor Management Notes**

In the interest of time, review of the notes was deferred.

### **IV. Contingents**

The university has set up a committee to address issues around contingent employment on campus and asked UUP for recommendations for members. The EC was asked to talk to department contingents to identify good candidates. The EC should recruit more contingents. VAPs and lecturers need to know they can participate.

#### **IV. George Fox University**

**A resolution (moved by B Trachtenberg, seconded by C Jewell and approved by all) was provided condemning George Fox University's actions** related to transgender student housing, academic freedoms and faculty being threatened for advocating for students. UUP stands in solidarity with the students and faculty. Benjamin will send a letter conveying the chapter's disapproval and asking George Fox University to reconsider.

#### **VI. Drescher Event Reminder**

All were invited to attend Thursday's event and to bring colleagues.

#### **VII. Education from the Inside Out (EIO) Reminder**

EIO co-sponsored with GSA, GSEU, and other groups, a capital area speak out reaching several hundred. An organizational meeting will be held on 11/20/14 5-7pm.

#### **VIII. Officers' Reports**

Reports were provided prior to the meeting. Questions should be addressed to officers.

#### **IX. Other**

**At the last EC all agreed to fund cookies and coffee for the Legislation/Outreach Committee event with legislator Jack McEneny, but the committee now believes lunch to be the better option and would attract a larger audience so requests this change. P Romaine moved, B Trachtenberg seconded and all voted in favor.**

All agreed to use the Good & Welfare funds collected today toward Thanksgiving dinners at a local food pantry. We collected \$240 to be donated.

Jack Gendron just retired. UUP commended his service and provided him with a resolution presented to him on a plaque. All wished him well and celebrated his long service at UAlbany with cake.

Meeting adjourned 2:00 pm. Minutes submitted by J Harton.