

University Senate Meeting Minutes

August 31st, 2020, 3:30-5:00 PM (Zoom Meeting)

Meeting called to order by Dr. Richard Larson, the University Senate President, at 3:30 PM. Meeting recording can be viewed [here](#). A motion to approve the agenda and the minutes from May 4, 2020 carried.

I. Greetings from Richard Larson, University Senate President

- Introduced President McInnis, Provost Bernstein, and VP for Health Sciences Center, Dr. Kenneth Kashansky. They will present their reports.
- Will hold election for the Senate Secretary/Treasurer.

II. Report from President Maurie McInnis

- Full written report can be viewed [here](#).
- SBU signed up for SUNY pool testing if it's up and running soon.
- Budget Update:
 - Cash reserves are being used now, but they are not vast.
 - SUNY did not increase the academic excellence fee or raise tuition \$200.
 - No fall Athletics, so no athletics fee, that 2 million cut went right to the department.
 - Fewer students and international students in residence halls.
 - 20-30% cuts for this fiscal year, and years going forward.
 - Facing a \$9 million Tap Gap this year.
 - Hiring freeze continues, but it is just a stop-gap measure.
 - We refinanced student housing.
 - Senior management took a 10% pay cut, the MC 2% raise is gone.
 - Starting conversations with key legislators.
 - Provost search
 - It is going well, the search committee is doing its work.
 - The Provost is chief academic officer who manages student success, works with deans and chairs, manages strategy, promotion and tenure.
- Question - O. Smirnov: Will the increase in grad students' fees be addressed?
 - Answer: These decisions emerged before the pandemic and my arrival. We are working directly with students, departments are too. We will see if solutions can be achieved.
- Question - Jonathan Sanders: Have you had a chance to speak to the Chancellor yet? Has he ever spent time at Stony Brook? He should come down here to visit our campus and see the LI perspective.
 - Answer: I have not yet met the Chancellor in person yet. I am working on a date to have him come to our campus. He is a Chancellor who wants to think hard about the current situation and develop the right solution for SUNY.

- Question: Andrew Fleischer: How are you going to ensure that faculty/staff jobs are safe in light of these budgetary concerns?
 - Answer: Other institutions have let faculty/staff go; we have not resorted to that solution. I hope we can come up with a strategy that will allow us to keep faculty and staff important to our functioning.

III. Provost Bernstein's Report

- Full written report can be viewed [here](#).
- Communication was sent out last week about seating charts, which helps with contact tracing.
- A message was sent to Deans about managing expectations of students and faculty on mask wearing.
- Numbers:
 - A little over 3,350 courses are being taught this semester.
 - 26% classes are on-site.
 - Student census data: SBU is several hundred students down due to a decline in international students, several hundred up with NYS students.
 - Overall, we are down 49 undergrads.
 - Total full-time graduate students are down a couple hundred students.
- Question- J. Sanders: Are any departments facing major changes? How will this affect teaching of popular undergrad courses because we are missing international students?
 - Answer – we are seeing this most in Engineering departments – Computer Science, Electrical Engineering and some basic science areas.
- Question – K. Wilson: It doesn't seem fair to settle financial troubles on those who can least afford it, the graduate students. If they are funding services everyone uses, why aren't those costs folded into tuition? Can senior faculty help? They are losing ¼ of their funding per semester to fees
 - Answer – We don't have control over tuition, SUNY does. We are working closely with graduate student leadership and it will take a little time.

IV. Sr. VP for Health Sciences Dr. Kenneth Kashansky

- Full written report can be viewed [here](#).
- Numbers:
 - The hospital is facing \$150-200 million losses from canceled operations and people staying away due to the pandemic.
 - \$52 million in extra expenses due to the pandemic.
- Question – T. Wilson: What is the survival rate for COVID-19?
 - Answer – The survival rate for SBUH is better than other hospital systems, a 86% survival rate, which includes ICU patients.
- Question – A. Orlov: How can faculty respond to non-mask wearing?
 - Answer (Provost Bernstein): We have sent messages to faculty on how to address this. Individuals can address it verbally, or notify student affairs.
 - Answer (VP Kaushansky) it's not for your protection, it's for protection of your colleagues and campus community. Six feet distance is not rock solid, but masks cut down on airborne distribution.

V. Secretary/Treasurer election

- Richard Stein is the sole candidate for the position.
- He is a staff member in DoIT, part of the academic technologies services group.
- Richard was elected unanimously by the University Senate.

VI. Reports from UUP:

- Bruce Kube - Vice President for Professionals - Stony Brook HSC
 - East campus UUP has been working with other unions to open a dialogue for hazard pay for essential employees who worked at the height of the pandemic.
 - Please advocate to congress to pass the HEROES Act to help our campus out financially.
- Ed Quinn - Chapter President - Stony Brook West Campus UUP
 - Membership Meeting dates will be published Wednesday.
 - Telecommuting agreement was negotiated previously by UUP with SUNY and it is on the table to extend it beyond the October expiration.
 - UUP Statewide President Fred Kowal is in regular contact with Chancellor Malatras.

VII. Old Business

- Senate representation on the SB Foundation.
 - J. Sanders - unethical procedures being followed.
 - 7-8 months ago J. Sanders put this issue before the Senate and it passed, but it has not been acted on.
 - R. Larson said the Senate Executive Committee will discuss and bring it to President McInnis.

VIII. New Business:

- Athletics Budgetary situation
 - Shawn Heilbron, Director of Athletics
 - Hope to have minimal impact on student athletes.
 - Great success with virtual tutoring and advising.
 - Providing academic support. Cuts are largely administrative: Travel reductions, car stipend gone for coaches.
 - Basketball season: a decision will be made in September.
- Campus community and safety advisory committee
 - Question - J. Klecker: how was the graduate student on it selected?
 - Answer (President McInnis) - We will still be adding people to that committee. USG and GSO delayed elections until early fall. We wanted to launch the committee promptly and as soon as new USG and GSO leadership is in office we will ask for a recommendation. The graduate student on this committee has a relevant research.

Meeting adjourned at 5 PM.