

SUNY Downstate Medical Center
EXECUTIVE (Centerwide) COMMITTEE of the Faculty and Professional Staff
Minutes of the Meeting of Monday, May, 22 2017
4:00 PM – 5:00PM

Attending:

Presiding Officer & University Faculty Senator
Presiding Officer Elect
Secretary
Presiding Officer, School of Public Health
Presiding Officer, College of Medicine
University Faculty Senator
Past Presiding Officer, College of Medicine
Presiding Officer, School of Graduate Studies

Rauno Joks, MD
Nicholas Penington, PhD
Raavi Gupta, MD
Paul Landsbergis, PhD, EdD, MPH
Clinton Brown, MD
Helen Durkin, PhD
Allen Norin, MD
John Kubie, PhD

Unable to Attend:

Past Presiding Officer
Presiding Officer, College of Nursing
Presiding Officer, (CHRP)
Presiding Officer Elect, (CHRP)
Presiding Officer Elect, College of Medicine
Presiding Officer Elect, School of Graduate Studies
Alternate University Faculty Senator
Presiding Officer Elect, College of Nursing
Presiding Officer Elect, School of Public Health
Alternate University Faculty Senator
University Faculty Senator
Alternate University Faculty Senator
Secretary, College of Health Related Professions
University Student Assembly
University Student Assembly

Stephan Rinnert, MD
Patricia DiFusco, MS, FNP-BC (E)
Margaret Kaplan, PhD, OTR/L (E)
Brigitte Desport, DPS, ATP, OTR/L(E)
Haseeb Siddiqi, PhD
Katherine Perkins PhD
Farhad Haeri, DPT
TBD
Aimee Afable-Munsuz
Steven Kang, MD
Miriam Vincent, MD, PhD, JD
Virginia Anderson, MD
Alithia Alleyne
Sachaloraine Volcy
Andrew Hasenzahl

Centerwide Presiding Officer Dr. Joks called the meeting to order. Minutes of previous meeting were approved by Dr. Rinnert. He briefed the committee of the vacancies in faculty government which are up for election for the next academic year.

3 Senators

4 Alternate Senators

Senators have a 3-year term. Elections are planned to be held in July. Nick Pennington gave a brief update on his attendance at SUNY Voices Shared Governance Conference. Please see his attached report.

Report on the SUNY Voices Shared Governance Conference, Suffern, NY April 27-28, 2017

Nicholas J. Penington, Center wide Presiding Officer Elect

This conference was well attended by about 80 representatives of Faculty Governance at SUNY campuses half of whom came from SUNY community Colleges. The theme of the conference was “Maintaining shared faculty Governance at a time of changing administrative leadership”. It was made clear to us by members of SUNY administration that Chancellor Zimpher had given a high priority to strengthening Faculty Governance to create a model for the country.

There were two Keynote speeches:

The first was given by Dr. Michael DeCesare of Merrimack College in MA. Dr. DeCesare is the Chairman of the Committee on College and University Governance for the AAUP (American Association of University Professors). The title of his talk was **“Threats to Traditional Academic Governance”**

Dr. DeCesare made the point that the 1966 Statement on government of Colleges and universities of the AAUP is still the bedrock of the principles by which Universities should be governed and that we at SUNY should all make sure that it is referenced in our Faculty Handbooks and By-Laws. Link provided below:

<https://www.aaup.org/report/statement-government-colleges-and-universities>

In this document it lays out that Faculty should have primacy for their opinion in matters of curriculum standards, research and hiring to the faculty. They should also be consulted in a more advisory role in other matters. Students are also to be consulted in student’s affairs policies. This appears in the “Joint Statement on Shared Governance for the State University of New York” endorsed by the University Faculty Senate, the Student Assembly and the Faculty Council of Community Colleges. The AAUP document states that the power of review should be used by the President of the institution only in “exceptional circumstances”.

Dr. DeCesare went on to list what he identified as threats to these principles (perhaps from the point of view of a liberal arts college) and bemoaned the tendencies towards:

1. Administrative “Bloat”
2. The over insistence on technology
3. Education has become only about getting good job statistics for the institution
4. An obsession with “Experiential Learning”.

A plea was made that faculty must participate in a broad range of decisions or their role will be taken away from them. Talk of who has the primary responsibility for certain functions was relevant here. For instance, if the school fails academically it is the fault of the faculty and so they must have insisted on a primary role in this function to accept the blame (if they did not get involved in the curriculum they may deserve the blame).

The second Keynote was given by Dr. David Maxwell a fellow (consultant) for the “Association of Governing Bodies” (which represents Presidents and Boards of Trustees of mostly private institutions). Dr. Maxwell was the President for 16 years of Drake University in Iowa. His talk was entitled “**Shared Governance in Challenging Times**”. It was interesting to hear a mostly supportive talk coming from the side of the issue that seemed to be mostly informed by college Presidents. The Faculty view was compared to those of Presidents and a comparison made between private and public institutions. Dr. Maxwell agreed that the 1966 statement was the “bedrock” of the principles of Faculty Governance but he emphasized that the presence of certain “Threshold Conditions” for success must be in place for successful Faculty Governance. The culture of the interaction between Administration and Faculty must include:

1. Trust
2. Collaboration
3. Communication
4. Transparency
5. Inclusion
6. Honesty
7. Integrity
- and 8. Respect.

Dr. Maxwell surveyed 10 institutions in depth and concluded that without this culture in place the institution will fail in governance and also probably fail the Middle States Commission accreditation. Where the culture was good there were no problems with Faculty Governance and all sides were happy with the way it worked. He also noted that in institutions that entered a crisis it was a very bad time to discover that their Faculty Governance was not working.

The message that we got from several of the break-out sessions was that we should use resolutions in our meetings and vote on them. Finally, there is a rubric being prepared by Deborah Moeckel of SUNY System Administration to help institutions assess our shared governance and help us improve for the Middle States. This rubric draws from NYS regulations, MSCHE Standard VII and the AAUP principles.

The meeting was adjourned at 5.00 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Raavi Gupta,

Secretary