

Official Meeting Notes of the SUNY Downstate 2025 Assembly of Faculty & Professional Staff

Date: May 5, 2025

Presiding Officer: Dr. Norin

Location: Alumni Auditorium/Virtual

1. Call to Order and Agenda Overview

- PO Norin opened the meeting at 3:05 pm

2. Approval of Minutes

- A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes.
- No opposition; minutes approved unanimously.

3. President Riley's Remarks

- Celebrated Middle States reaccreditation success.
- Warned of potential financial shortfalls:
 - **Federal Risk:** ~\$90B in NYS federal funding at risk.
 - **SUNY Downstate Impact:** 10% cut to \$55M base funding possible.
 - **Hospital Risk:** \$140M in DISH payments and \$48M Medicaid revenue potentially threatened.
- Emphasized risk management planning (staffing freezes, financial modeling).
- Detailed the \$750M capital funding uncertainty—technically protected but politically vulnerable.
- Noted potential political dynamics due to the upcoming gubernatorial election.
- Emphasized commitment to local care and hospital renewal.

Questions and Open Discussion Highlights

Financial & Operational Concerns:

- Can the \$750M be withdrawn by the governor in a crisis?
 - Yes, under fiscal emergency powers, capital projects can be delayed.
- Is relocation to Kings County viable?
 - Unlikely; financial and space limitations make this infeasible.

Clinical Program Risks:

- Caution shared about losing existing services; cardiac surgery example used.
- Rebuilding lost programs is costly and inefficient.

Research & DEI Concerns:

Concerns over NIH guidance linking funding to DEI program compliance.

- SUNY has directed campuses not to comply with potential federal restrictions preemptively.

Faculty and Advocacy:

- Strong support noted from UUP and faculty groups advocating for Downstate's clinical future.

4. Dr. Salifu's Presentation

- Outlined the chairs' consensus plan:
 - New 250-bed tower.
 - Maintain current hospital operations during construction.
 - Avoid relocation to Kings County.
 - Integrate complex surgical and specialized services.
- Shared progress on volume and access initiatives:
 - New centralized phone system.
 - Open access scheduling and Saturday/evening hours.
 - Community referrals via the Flair Health app.
 - Faster patient access from ED and outside institutions.
 - Significant reduction in patient leakage to outside systems.

5. Bylaws Amendments (Presented by Dr. Katherine Perkins)

- Proposals:
 - Add non-voting "Past Presiding Officer" position to Executive Committee.
 - Establish rules and procedures for special elections.
 - Minor clarifications on election timelines and processes.
- Amendments require a 2/3 vote from the Assembly.

6. Nominations and Elections Report

Presented by Dr. Joanne Rittel-Teitel

- Overview of the nominations process and committee composition.
- Slates of candidates were presented, and the open **positions on the Ballot were reviewed:**
 - 1 Presiding Officer
 - 1 Secretary
 - 2 Senators
 - 2 Alternate Senators

New Floor Nomination:

- A request from the floor for new nominations was made

- **Dr. Marlene Camacho-Rivera** was nominated from the floor and accepted as a candidate.
- Materials will be submitted, and she will be added to the final ballot.

Next Steps:

- Voting to occur via VoteNow; ballots will be distributed once the nomination slate is finalized.

7. Closing Business

- No old or new business was raised.
- Meeting adjourned following a motion.