



*Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Downstate Assembly of Faculty & Professional Staff*

Date: February 11, 2026

Time: 4-5 pm

Location: Zoom

Agenda:

- Nominations Committee Chair, Brigitte Desport, to present slate of Senator nominees

Present:

|                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                    |
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| Cristopher Roman<br>Edeline Mitton<br>Alithia Alleyne<br>Kathleen Bratby<br>Rose Calixte<br>Marlene Camacho-Rivera<br>Anika Daniels-Osaze<br>Daniel Ehlke<br>Lori Hoepner | Chella Kamarajan<br>Allen Norin<br>Efekona Nuwere<br>Nkiruka “Kiki” Nwokoye<br>Nick Penington<br>Katherine Perkins |
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I. Opening

- The meeting was called to order by Secretary Mitton.
- A request was made for any revisions to the minutes of the previous meeting.
- A motion to approve the minutes was made by Member Ehlke and was seconded and approved

**1. UFS Plenary Report**

Member Camacho-Rivera summarized the resolutions discussed and passed at the recent University Faculty Senate (UFS) Plenary:

- **Amendment to SUNY Policy 5600 (Display of Flags):**  
Allows campuses to display flags of federally and state-recognized Indigenous nations whose traditional territories encompass campus locations.
- **Support for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice (DEISJ) Knowledge Areas:**  
Encourages SUNY leadership to support DEISJ programs and departments as autonomous interdisciplinary units. Dr. Camacho-Rivera noted extensive and vigorous discussion prior to passage.
- **Resolution Responding to Faculty and Staff Funding Cuts:**  
Advocates for mitigation strategies addressing funding shortfalls, with emphasis on protecting faculty research agendas and tenure-track continuity.
- **Support for UFS Budget Priorities (State Fiscal Year 2027 Executive Budget):**  
Expresses support for priorities outlined in the December 17 open letter to Governor Hochul.

Member Camacho-Rivera also highlighted a comprehensive SUNY-wide survey on faculty and professional staff burnout (1,000+ respondents), describing it as compelling and significant

Member Daniels provided additional context from the plenary:

- A **subcommittee on faculty and staff burnout** is being formed. Faculty interested in contributing are encouraged to volunteer.
- The Chancellor discussed Downstate’s **\$1.1 billion allocation**, confirming funding remains in place.

- The campus garage demolition is expected to proceed following completion of the current bidding process. The site is designated for an ambulatory care center.
- Dr. Daniels emphasized that campuses must present UFS resolutions to the full faculty and submit a formal feedback report through the UFS reporting system to remain compliant.

### **Discussion**

PO Roman asked for clarification regarding:

- Timeline for feedback submission.
- Mechanism for collecting faculty input.

Member Daniels clarified that feedback is expected immediately upon return to campus and must be compiled into a report uploaded to the UFS system.

PO Roman noted the need to develop a structured mechanism for gathering campus-wide feedback

### **Budget Report – Alithia Alleyne**

Ms. Alleyne reported:

- A formal budget request has been submitted to support:
  - o Travel to UFS plenaries
  - o Election administration via external vendor (VoteNow)
  - o Governance communications
  - o A proposed campus visit by the UFS President
- Funding approval is pending confirmation from the Finance Office.
- The election delay is due to awaiting release of funds to contract the vendor.

PO Roman added that discussions with Finance have been constructive and that the account is administratively housed within the Dean's Office of the College of Medicine.

### **Election Compliance and Timeline**

Member Daniels noted that UFS has a deadline (believed to be in March or May) requiring campuses to have senators seated.

PO Roman acknowledged concerns regarding compliance and expressed commitment to expediting the election once funding is released.

Member DeOliveira asked directly whether a timeline would be established to avoid further non-compliance.

PO Roman stated that once funding is finalized, the election will move forward promptly.

### **Vacancy and Eligibility Discussion**

Member Kamarajan raised questions regarding:

- Whether a previously resigned senator who has resumed paid faculty status may reclaim the seat.
- Whether representation is capped by college.

Member Penington clarified:

- Eligibility to vote and run is tied to paid faculty status.
- The question of reclaiming a resigned position requires bylaw interpretation.

Member Perkins clarified:

- There is no strict numerical cap per college in the bylaws.

The matter was referred to the Elections and Nominations Committee for review.

### **Parliamentarian Update**

Member Penington stated he is currently serving as Parliamentarian but intends to step down in June.

PO Roman acknowledged and noted that a transition plan will be developed.

### **ADA Title II Digital Accessibility Compliance**

Member Nuwere reported on new federal digital accessibility requirements under Title II of the ADA.

- **Deadline:** April 24, 2026
- **Standard:** WCAG 2.1 AA compliance

- Applies to:
  - o Websites
  - o Learning management systems (Brightspace, Leo)
  - o PDFs, PowerPoints, syllabi
  - o New digital content and social media

Member Nuwere reported that a Downstate ADA Task Force has convened and is developing a campus action plan.

#### **Discussion**

Member Penington raised concerns about workload implications, noting that:

- Accessibility remediation of PowerPoints may require several hours per lecture.
- Many faculties are likely unaware of the requirements.

Member Nuwere acknowledged the workload concern and emphasized that compliance extends beyond formal accommodations and represents a campus-wide inclusion mandate.

Member Camacho-Rivera recommended that the Task Force provide structured transition guidance

Member DeOliveira asked whether a consultant would be hired to assist with compliance.

Member Nuwere indicated that while a consultant may help assess institutional readiness, faculty will remain responsible for remediating their instructional materials.

#### **5. Closing Remarks**

PO Roman thanked presenters and reiterated the importance of:

- Achieving election compliance
- Securing budget approval
- Coordinating faculty feedback for UFS
- Supporting ADA compliance efforts

Meeting adjourned.