



UNIVERSITY
AT ALBANY
State University of New York

November 18, 2010

Dear President Philip,

We are aware of the seriousness of the budgetary predicament at the University at Albany and of the need for an effective response. However, the Faculty Council of the College of Arts and Sciences is troubled by your decision to suspend admission to five programs within CAS, a decision likely to lead to deactivation of these programs.

- This decision sets an unacceptable precedent of treating academic programs as dispensable rather than vital to the core educational mission of this University. CAS in particular has already suffered devastating faculty and program reductions during the last 30 years, yet still provides 80% of the undergraduate education and 90% of the general education to an unreduced undergraduate population.
- The costs of this decision include severe damage to the University's academic reputation and greatly outweigh the projected \$2M in savings.
- The process leading to this decision was troubling. Only 10 of the 39 members of the third Budget Advisory Group convened by the Provost were from CAS. We note with concern the absence of any representatives from the four largest humanities departments, including the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures, from the BAGs.
- The criterion cited for targeting programs, "comparatively lower enrollments," is problematic. These programs are deeply integrated with others in teaching students and are part of the core mission of a comprehensive University Center, as stated by faculty at the October 18, 2010, Faculty Senate meeting (see Appendix for SUNY University Faculty Senate Resolution 156-02-1).

In response to your challenge to the Faculty Senate on October 18, 2010, to identify alternatives to these program deactivations, we submit the following:

- The projected \$2M savings from the deactivated CAS programs is dwarfed by the \$4.27M state allocation to the athletic program, which receives another \$9.4M in nonstate revenue.
- Given that we are in a state of financial emergency, have you asked to tap the SUNY Central "rainy day" reserve fund? If so, why was the request denied?
- We suggest an urgent appeal to alumni for funds to sustain the University's academic core.
- We urge a continued effort to obtain a larger share of the indirect costs from externally funded research than our campus currently receives and exploration of other possible funds that may be retrievable from the Research Foundation.
- Change in the way New York State fiscally manages SUNY is overdue. We need a strategic taskforce to mobilize support for the University at Albany to thrive as a *public* institution of higher education.

We urge you to reverse the deactivation processes and continue consulting on solutions to the budget crisis with all units of CAS as per SUNY University Faculty Senate Executive Committee Resolution 156-01-1 of October 23, 2010 (see Appendix). We ask that as resources become available in the future, you and the Provost prioritize reinvestment in CAS, given its central role in the educational mission of the University. In particular, we ask the

return to CAS of the 30% of funds retained by the Provost's office from CAS faculty lines vacated through retirements and departures.

We affirm our commitment to collaborate actively with all parties to weather this funding crisis while ensuring that the University continues to provide the best possible education to our students.

Respectfully,

College of Arts and Sciences Faculty Council
University at Albany, SUNY

cc: Susan Phillips, Provost, Academic Affairs
Edelgard Wulfert, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Eric Lifshin, Chair, University Senate

Appendix

**University Faculty Senate
University Centers Sector
156th Plenary
Alfred State College
October 23, 2010**

Resolution on the Suspension of Programs at the University at Albany

Whereas the core mission of a comprehensive University Center is to deliver an education and to do research of national and international repute

Whereas one of the six big ideas of the SUNY strategic plan ("The Power of SUNY") is "SUNY and the World" which emphasizes SUNY's global mission

Whereas the motto of the University at Albany is "The World Within Reach"

Whereas the administration of the University at Albany has suspended admission to the following academic programs: Classics, French, Italian, Russian, and Theatre

Whereas these academic programs are part of the core mission of a comprehensive University Center

Be it resolved that the actions of the administration at the University at Albany compromise the core mission of that University Center and compromise the ability of SUNY to fulfill its global mission as articulated by "The Power of SUNY" strategic plan.

156-02-1

Resolution on the Suspension of Programs at the University at Albany

Passed

October 23, 2010

Appendix

University Faculty Senate
Executive Committee
156th Plenary
Alfred State College
October 23, 2010

Resolution on Consultation with Governance

Whereas SUNY campuses are facing extraordinary financial pressures, and

Whereas campuses may be forced to consider program consolidation, suspension or elimination, and

Whereas the procedures for reaching such decisions have not always involved appropriate consultation with existing governance, and

Whereas SUNY has clear policies for establishing and revising programs, and the impact of program consolidation, suspension or elimination is as significant to a campus as the establishment of programs,

Therefore, Be It Resolved

The University Faculty Senate urges System Administration to ensure that campus administrations and existing governance bodies employ formal procedures for consultation before reaching any decisions regarding program consolidation, suspension or elimination.

156-01-1
Resolution on Consultation with Governance
Passed
October 21, 2010