UNIVERSITY POLICY AND PLANNING COUNCIL  
2009-10 CHAIR: JOHN DELANO  
MARCH 12, 2010  
MEETING MINUTES  

PRESENT: E. Eisenbraun, I. Murakami, C. Lenart, M. Range, A. Byon, K. Lahiri, D. Wagner,  
T. Bessette, R. Johnson, J. Delano  

GUESTS:  
- Benjamin Weaver, Executive Assistant for Academic Affairs and Administration  
- Vincent Delio, Chief of Staff  
- Elga Wulfert, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences  
- Kim Bessette, Associate Vice President for Financial Management and Budget  
- Richard Collier, Executive Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, CNSE  
- Edward Cupoli, Head of Nanoeconomics Constellation; Professor of Nanoeconomics  
- Timothy Groves, Associate Head of the Nanoscience Constellation; Empire Innovation  
  Professor of Nanoscale Science; Director, Center for Nanolithography Development  
- Eric Lifshin, Professor of Nanoscience; Director, Metrology & Electron Imaging Facilities; Co-  
  Director, Center for Advanced Interconnect Science & Technology (CAIST)  

MINUTES: Minutes of December 3, 2009 approved with revisions  

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS REPORT  
No report was given  

CHAIR’S REPORT  
No report was given  

Proposal to suspend admission to the Russian M.A. and Certificate programs  
Dr. Delano raised some questions regarding the proposal; letters in support of the suspension were  
submitted in June 2009; wondered why the council is seeing it now. He also asked about the minimum  
enrollment requirements; it is known that enrollments were small and declining, but would like to hear it  
specifically stated. Dr. Eisenbraun asked if this is effective spring 2010 as Fall 2010 would be more  
appropriate at this point. Dr. Delano indicated that the suspension proposal came to UPPC from Larry  
Kranich; was suggested by Jon Bartow. GAC has reviewed the proposal and approves. If it does go  
forward to the Executive Committee, the bill will be co-sponsored by GAC and UPPC. Dr. Wagner;  
assumed that it referred to Dean Wulfert enforcing enrollment minimums (5) for graduate courses. Dr.  
Delano requested that the council touch on the resource implications of discontinuing the program –  
what is the impact on LLC (Languages, Literatures and Cultures) department.  

Elga Wulfert, Dean of College of Arts and Sciences attended the meeting to elaborate on the proposal  
and to address questions from the council. Dr. Wulfert began by discussing how languages change in
popularity over time; she has been following national trends. At this point, some European languages are going downhill; Spanish is still rising on this continent. Russian, although considered a strategic language, is in decline. Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Arabic on the upswing. The UAlbany Russian program is not viable from an academic perspective – enrollments in the MA and certificate programs have dwindled to 0, 1 or 2 over last several years. Looking at undergraduate enrollment, Russian 1 & 2 enrollment still good, whereas intermediate courses are barely meeting enrollment standards. Nothing in this trend supports boosting the major. Russian faculty members have been consulted; the department has two younger faculty members. One has resigned, and is leaving at the end of the year. A junior faculty member has tried to get a ROTC grant for master’s program; nothing has come through, and there is no funding for graduate students, leaving the program untenable from an academic perspective. Dean Wulfert has been working with younger faculty to try to attract more interest, but they have not identified anything yet. The program is registered, and Dean Wulfert does not want to deregister the program, only wishes to deactivate it and re-evaluate in 2-3 years.

Dr. Lahiri asked who recruited Russian faculty when the program was clearly on the downswing. Dean Wulfert replied that the hires had been made by a previous administration. Dr. Wagner noted that this was proposed last year and wondered if this was supposed to be effective as of this spring, and why the proposal took so long to get to this point. Dean Wulfert assured the council that there was no agenda behind the delay. The proposal had to go through CAS committee and other administrative bodies within CAS. Dr. Delano responded that there was no documentation that it has been through CAS committees. Dean Wulfert assured the council that the proposal had gone through the CAS Academic committee. GAC has also approved the proposal with two abstentions. Dr. Delano asked about resource implications. Dean Wulfert intends to backfill with adjuncts – if there is no MA program, existing faculty (now 3) could offer the major and the minor without additional resources. She intends to hold onto the vacant line with the Provost's approval for other emerging LLC resource needs.

Dr. Delano noted that there is no enrollment history shown in the proposal for undergraduate program, and inquired about trends. Dean Wulfert replied that undergraduate enrollment has remained almost static with around 30 majors. The undergraduate program makes substantial Gen Ed contributions – Russian Civilization with enrollment of 28; Russia Today 38; translation courses also draw well. Dr. Delano asked if the few remaining faculty should be encouraged to teach their majors and not contribute to Gen Ed, would there be a need for adjunct support; could the 50 Gen Ed students go elsewhere. Dean Wulfert responded that CAS is moving in this direction because 3 faculty with a full load would not require backfilling. Dr. Lahiri asked if there is another local Russian master’s program (there is not). Dean Wulfert expressed frustration that they have not been able to recruit students for the program despite vigorous efforts. Dean Wulfert has been communicating with faculty members
who have started working on possibilities of making the program known more widely – if we could boost major enrollment, that could regenerate interest in the MA (the certificate never really popular). She went on to note that (the university) cannot have an academically rigorous program when major classes are taught as an independent study. Enrollment threshold is 5 grad, 10 undergrad. Dean Wulfert added that we are more liberal than other SUNY Centers (7 & 15).

Dr. Delano thanked Dean Wulfert for her attendance and the council discussed the proposal. Dr. Wagner felt that the proposal makes sense since enrollment declines preceded funding deterioration, which clearly indicates that this is appropriate; suspension is the correct course of action. The council agreed and Dr. Delano called for a vote – suspension of the MA and certificate programs in Russian was unanimously approved.

Presentation on SUNY Empowerment and Innovation Act
Vincent Delio, Chief of Staff presented a slide show on the SUNY Public Higher Education Empowerment and Innovation Act and encouraged the council to visit the web page www.albany.edu/empowerment/ for additional information.

Discussion of Graduate Student Support Doctoral Review Panel Final Report
Dr. Range began the discussion by commenting that GAC is on record that they are not able to respond to or evaluate the report because they are being denied departmental assessments from panels. The Senate Executive Committee addressed the issue some months ago and agreed that these data should be held in confidence. No final decision taken at SEC on passing on the data. Dr. Delano asked the two members of UPPC at the table, Drs. Wagner and Lahiri to comment. Dr. Wagner said that they went through process with understanding of confidentiality and an understanding that this report is advisory to Provost; the panel was hesitant to jump in without additional understanding. Dr. Lahiri noted that GAC was upset at lack of involvement. Dr. Murakami asked to what degree did problems with academic analytics affect the process. Dr. Lahiri replied that it must have affected the process; many committees tried to distill the information and it came out well overall; the group learned a lot about graduate programs and how all of the programs have suffered because of budget cuts; the picture is pretty dismal across the board. Dr. Wagner added that in terms of the care or process and involvement of as many stakeholders as possible, this exercise was very carefully and responsibly executed.

Dr. Lenart asked whether this will form basis for distribution of grad student support. Dr. Delano replied that the Senate Executive Committee has met with Provost regarding resource allocations in the future – this was intended as a metric. Dr. Range commented that data from GAC showing allocation of
stipends demonstrates that there have been reallocations, and the data shows that cuts are not just across the board. Dr. Wagner added that this is some of the reason for unwillingness to identify this as a determining document; didn't want to be bound to exact metrics of the document as a definitive determiner of resource allocation, since there is a need to preserve breadth. Dr. Lenart called the council’s attention to page 15 of the report, noting the perceived disadvantage of UAlbany compared to other SUNY Centers, which indicates a need for more resources for our Graduate Programs. Despite recent hires, we are having trouble attracting good students – looking for brand improvement at institutional level. Dr. Wagner referenced the strategic planning committee - a core area of interest is graduate brand improvement. Dr. Range commented that no metric was used related to the method of funding for graduate assistants with other SUNYs or peer institutions.

Dr. Wagner provided information on the packets provided from the Provost for the panel’s edification. Each departmental packet included data on the amount per person and student counts going back to 2003. If departments felt that information was inaccurate or had some greater impact than the panel had indicated, then they commented on it. This was a significant part of the data that was available to the panel. Dr. Range asked if any pattern emerged that UA is not able to pay as much as other research centers. Dr. Wagner responded that information was provided on all of the programs, but not collated for comparative judgment with others. Dr. Lahiri noted that our competition may not be within SUNY, but rather private institutions. These are comparisons of departments in the context of SUNY Albany, and are not analyzed nationally, which creates a difficult situation. Many departments got a chance to look at themselves. Some departments don’t keep track of their own students and are not well managed, which Dr. Wagner saw as being more revealing than the statistical data as it identified people who knew how to manage their departments. Dr. Range expressed his concern about graduate student support.

Budgetary Questions
Kim Bessette, Associate Vice President for Financial Management and Budget attended the meeting to respond to a list of budgetary questions that had been posed by Dr. Range via e-mail on January 4, 2010:

1. Q The figures show a 08-09 mid year reduction of about $7.3M in state tax support, putting the state tax allocation back to the 07-08 level. This reduction is just a little bit less than half of the $15.5M state tax reduction that UA experienced since the beginning of FY 2008-09 which the president mentioned in his 11/23/09 message to the faculty/staff. How is this difference reconciled?

A The reconciliation of 08/09 that was provided to UPPC is ‘snapshot in time’ and is not representative of final picture; she went on to explain how cuts affected the state side at the end of the day. The data seen here is just about state tax support.
2. **Q** How have the deficits during most of the past 8 years, in particular the $7.8M deficit in 08/09, been covered?

   **A** Deficit coverage – units have taken permanent base reductions to solve the problems. Cuts to date have been ‘opportunistic’ vacancy reductions using vacant lines and attrition. At this point, we have exhausted the vacancy pool.

3. **Q** Why are ‘negotiated salary increases’ listed separately on the commitment side? Are these amounts not allocated to the various divisions according to the raises given individuals in those units? What happens to these commitments in successive years? Is there a time lag? For example, in 06-07 there were such commitments in the amount of $2.75M. Is that amount then included in the 07-08 subtotal? If so, couldn’t it already be included in the 06-07 subtotal, with corresponding adjustments in the appropriate line items? If not, why? It would be useful to break out on the revenue side that component of the state tax support that needs to go to negotiated salary increases (whether there was a separate legislative appropriation or not).

   **A** Negotiated salary increases are budgeted centrally and allocated to the units once the raises are paid. Increases stay with the units once allocated. There is a time lag. We can project on contractual raises, but not on where discretionary raises will land.

4. **Q** Why is the $8.25M salary increase shown in 08-09 considerably higher than corresponding amounts in previous years? To my knowledge the negotiated increases – when available – have remained pretty much at the same rate over the past decade.

   **A** Contracted salary increases in 08-09 – included 2+ years of negotiated salary increase money because contracts were not settled beforehand.

5. **Q** Until the BOT resolution re CNSE in Fall 2008, the CNSE budget was part of the state tax allocation to UA. Until 2004-05 it was even included in Academic Affairs, and since then it was listed as a separate division. In order to provide a complete historical picture of the UA State allocation, the CNSE allocation should be included in the total revenue each year through 08-09, and the corresponding amounts should be listed as a line item under commitments. The information should show what was transferred out of the UA state budget as a consequence of the BOT resolution – perhaps part of the mid year correction.

   **A** (This question has been referred to Vice President Alain Kaloyeros since it dealt with the CNSE budget.) Timothy Groves, Edward Cupoli, Eric Lifshin and Richard Collier from CNSE will relay the college’s response to the above inquiry.

6. **Q** The data shows that as part of the 08-09 mid year reduction, Graduate Student Support has been taken out from the line items for the various schools/colleges, and it was pooled together in a new $14.26M line item. What is the rationale for this change? Also, in order to get the full picture of the allocations to schools/colleges and of the impact of the mid-year reduction, the graduate student support allocations after the mid year reduction should be reported for each school/college separately.

   **A** Graduate student support moved to being a centralized model – initiated by Provost

Dr. Delano thanked Ms. Bessette for her time.
In order to respond to question #5, Vice President Kalloyeros sent Timothy Groves, Edward Cupoli, Eric Lifshin and Richard Collier to the meeting to address Dr. Range’s assertion that until the 2008 BOT resolution, CNSE was part of UA, and their line item should be shown on the budget report. Tim Groves, chair of CNSE Faculty Council, responded with a prepared statement that reads:

The College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering’s (CNSE) fiscal autonomy was established in 2004 with the SUNY Board of Trustees (BOT) resolution that created CNSE, and the subsequent 2004 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the CNSE Vice President and UAlbany President.

In its 2004 resolution, the Board of Trustees of the State of New York confirmed the appointment of Professor Alain E. Kalloyeros as Vice-President of the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering and authorized him to “…work with the President and the Nanoscience and Nanoengineering faculty of the University at Albany and take all necessary and appropriate actions to implement the establishment and operation of said college…..”

The subsequent 2004 MOU that included the CNSE fiscal autonomy was developed between the President and the Vice President in accordance with this authority. The MOU clearly states that the CNSE budget is not subject to oversight by the University Senate and its various councils and committees.

The CNSE fiscal autonomy, including the existence of the MOU, was fully and satisfactorily described to University Resources Priorities and Advisory Committee (URPAC) at its April 8, 2005 meeting. URPAC was furnished with a written copy of the supporting document presented at that meeting.

The matter was further clarified in a December 2008 BOT resolution. Any questions regarding CNSE fiscal and budget matters by any external governance body should be referred to the CNSE Faculty Council, the duly appointed governance body of CNSE.

Dr. Range asserted that in looking at 2004 BOT resolution, it does not talk about fiscal autonomy, just that it is headed by a Vice President reporting directly to the President. The MOU has nothing to do with faculty governance; it is inconsistent with established bylaws of UA which requires that UPPC receive annual reports on expenditures; covers CNSE until fall 2008. Dr. Lifshin cited discussion within CNSE relating to faculty council – the position of CNSE stated in the prepared statement; it will reference all appropriate sources. It is no more appropriate for UPPC to inquire about internal finances than inquiring about Stony Brook. If UPPC or other groups want to pursue, at this point this is their feeling that this is the end of the discussion. Much of the funding in CNSE has to do with confidential contracts. Dr. Range stated that the council is just asking for state allocation data before autonomy from UAlbany became effective fall 2008. Dr. Eisenbraun noted that the MOU clearly identifies CNSE
budget as separate entity. Range responded that this is inconsistent. Dr. Cupoli asked Dr. Range how he could see this as a private agreement as it represents institutions, asked under the BOT resolution to fill in details, which the document does. Dr. Delano cited Article 3 section 1, of the MOU between UA and CNSE as evidence that the MOU is a legally binding document.

Dr. Johnson offered that we (the university) should already know how much state allocation came to UAlbany. Therefore, would it not make sense to request overall state allocation figures for 04-05 through 07-08 and figure out the difference. Mr. Collier noted that every president since Ryan has signed MOU. Dr. Lahiri stated that since we know the amount of state support comes in to UAlbany, how much goes to CNSE should be transparent. Dr. Lifshin noted that the presentation provided to URPAC shows this data. Dr. Range commented that until 2004, there was a line item for SNN under Academic Affairs. Thereafter a separate line outside for CNSE, and then it disappeared altogether. Dr. Johnson said that Nano(CNSE) is another state agency. A private citizen can ask for the information; this is a situation where if the governance body of a separate entity asks for it, he can see where the problem arises and where we (the council) are losing track of the end goal. Dr. Lifshin asked about the end goal of obtaining this information. Dr. Lahiri replied that the council wants to see if CNSE is taking the same cuts as the rest of the institution. Mr. Collier countered that the trustees set it up the way they set it up and did not ask the faculty’s opinion – end of story. Dr. Wagner asked whether we have the core amount of this information. Dr. Johnson sees the ‘subtraction perspective’ as a different issue. Dr. Range asked the council to make a resolution to ask President to ask us to provide total state budget figures from 2001 to 2008. Dr. Delano declined, citing that it would take more time than the council had today, as the meeting had already run over by a half hour.

Dr. Lifshin closed the discussion by stating that CNSE wants to participate as much as possible; they have a very successful enterprise and would like to share story of their success and enter into partnership with others; entering into discussions in a confrontational mode is counterproductive to maintaining a collegial relationship. In the long run, from their perspective, this is the end of the discussion regarding the budget data, and it would inappropriate for UPPC to go any further. Dr. Delano suggested that more productive approach might be an offline conversation between CNSE faculty council and UPPC. Dr. Lifshin replied that some financial data is shared within CNSE; it is inappropriate to go outside, and that state data can be accessed by some other means. Dr. Delano thanked the CNSE contingent for their time.

Motion was made to adjourn at 5:28pm with Dr. Delano’s thanks to all in attendance

Respectfully submitted,
Stacy Stern