

## UNIVERSITY POLICY AND PLANNING COUNCIL

March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021 – 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

(via Zoom)

### MEETING MINUTES

**Present:** S. Axley; B. Benjamin; Y-H. Chen; S. Commuri; C. Fauchon (Recorder, non-voting); J.R. Gil-Garcia; C. Kim, (Ex-officio); J. Hwang; Z. Lawrence (Chair); L. Ndambuki; S. Rafferty; K. Reinhold; K. Rethemeyer (Ex-officio); J. Rivera-Wilson.

**Guests:** G. Berg, CEHC; Todd Foreman (Finance and Administration); S. Galime, Provost's Office; J. Goodall, CHEC; J.A. Malatesta, Undergraduate Education; B. Szelest, President's Office; J. Stefl-Mabry, CEHC; K. Winchester, Undergraduate Education.

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#### I. Approval of the March 3<sup>rd</sup> minutes

A motion was made and seconded to approve the March 3<sup>rd</sup> minutes. The minutes were approved without revision.

Vote: Yes = 5    No = 0    Abstain = 0

#### II. Provost's Report

Provost Kim updated the Council on the latest COVID-19 campus figures. Our numbers for testing remain high. In terms of infection rate, we are well below 1%, compared to around 2% for the Capital Region. The State is relaxing restrictions, so we need to look at what that means for us in terms of dining, events and so on.

In regards to the draft budget metrics, the Provost Office just received the latest numbers from the various work groups. The Governor's budget is supposed to be finalized by April 1, so the Provost Office will be able to update the Council and the Senate at the next upcoming meetings. All the information and various reports regarding the budget metrics are posted on the Academic Affairs website as they become available.

Commencement ceremonies are being planned. The events team has been meeting with the Deans and came up with a plan where each student, along with their friends and family, will be traveling individually through the Casey stadium concourse and going from station to station, and finish with a walk across a fully dressed stage with a limited stage party. There will be plenty of opportunities afterwards for photos in various areas of the campus. This year, we will also be recognizing the class of 2020. Depending on the number of 2020 graduates interested, up to two days will be added to the

Commencement schedule for the 2020 graduates' special events. The events team is still working on the final scheduling and it will be made available as soon as it is ready. There will be opportunities to volunteer but right now we are limited to 200 volunteers.

### III. Chair's Report

- **Award of Academic Credit by Evaluation Policy Draft**

The Council has been asked to provide feedback on a draft update to SUNY's Policy on the *Award of Academic Credit by Evaluation* (also known as 'prior learning assessment,' 'credit for prior learning,' or 'learning recognition'). The policy (which dates to 1976) recognizes the value of learning outside the classroom. However, research findings point to many students, particularly those who self-identify as low income or under-represented minority, are not aware of the policy. The purpose of this revision is to address effective and transparent communication on the award of credit by evaluation.

Chair Lawrence invited members' feedback on the policy impact on resources. Up to 30 credit hours can be awarded, and we also have to take into consideration other aspects such as whether we will be training our faculty or professional staff (and how) or will we be using outside sources, and the resources involved. This also represents another student fee and UUPC has a responsibility to weigh in on that. As to the process of earning up to 30 credit hours in this non-conventional way it is a significant change from what we would normally be thinking about when we think about transfer credits. Chair Lawrence also invited comments on whether anyone had had experiences with evaluation tests. Member Karin Reinhold said that she had had some experience with the creation of a statistics exam for Excelsior, and that it is quite an involvement both in terms of work and costs. Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Studies Joanne Malatesta joined the discussion. She clarified that we are not being asked to do testing. What we are being asked to do is to accept credits that have been awarded at other SUNY institutions, based on the prior institutions' evaluations, and we also will need to do experiential evaluations and portfolio evaluations. This is a brand-new endeavor for us, so it is important to grasp all the implications.

Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Education Kathy Winchester joined the discussion and added that we have dealt with many sources for credit recommendations in the past, such as the College Board. What is different now is that we will be dealing with students who want to be evaluated for academic credits for what we typically would not post as credit. She agreed that significant training was going to be needed. Chair Lawrence added that it is unknown if we have the resources in place right now, and that we really do not even know what the implementation timeframe is, and she invited comments from Provost Kim. Provost Kim clarified that all that was needed for the moment was to get everyone's feedback, then we will decide whether this is what we want to really invest in. Ultimately, we want to best serve our students and

provide them with as many opportunities as possible, but we do have to weigh that with what our mission and goals are for university.

Chair Lawrence told the members that feedback and suggestions that had already been sent to her via email will be transmitted to the Provost Office and to the Senate, and ended the discussion with an invitation for all to contact her with any additional feedback.

- **Proposed SUNY General Education Framework**

Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Studies Joanne Malatesta presented the proposed changes. The number of credits will not change (30), and the rest is not changing dramatically. The category levels will be reduced to eight and the numbers of competencies will be increased. UAlbany is in good shape because we just did a full Gen Ed review six year or eight years ago and we are already pretty well aligned with the new changes. The categories that will be remaining are writing, mathematics, natural sciences, humanities, social sciences, the arts, history (which will be called historical and civil engagement) and world languages. For the competencies we will still have communication, critical thinking and reasoning, and SUNY will be adding a diversity competency, global learning, information literacy, and technology competency. Vice Provost Malatesta stressed that the changes align well with what we already have, and that the University will still have the ability to retain a particular UAlbany specific Gen Ed. Once SUNY finalized the proposal, it will be presented to the Senate. The policy might be announced as early as the Fall, but SUNY is aware that campuses will need adequate time to implement the changes so at the moment it is too early to pinpoint an implementation date.

**IV. Program Proposal: Minor in Electrical and Computer Engineering - CEAS**

Vice Dean of the College of Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security and Cybersecurity (CEHC) Jennifer Goodall presented the Minor in Electrical and Computer Engineering proposal. UAC reviewed and approved the proposal from a curriculum standpoint. UPPC is asked to review the campus impact form for any resource implication. As all courses are already being taught as part of the major, there is no financial implication to this proposal and other departments involved are not additionally impacted.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Minor in Electrical and Computer Engineering (campus impact form).

Vote: Yes = 7    No = 0    Abstain = 0

**V. Joined Resource Analysis and Planning / University Facilities Committee Report**

Co-chair (Karin Reinhold, Chair) presented the report. The joined committees met with Vice President for Student Affairs Michael Christakis but there are still a lot of unknowns. The budget gap has been reduced by the State funds we received, but we still have a gap to worry about. Updates will be given at our next UPPC meeting. For our next UPPC meeting, the joined committees will also be looking at the implication of the new marijuana state law: how it will be affecting facilities on campus, and the financial implications.

**VI. Adjournment**

Meeting ended at 4:10 p.m.

*Minutes prepared by: Corinne Fauchon.*

**Minutes Approved: 4/26/2021**