

University Senate Meeting Minutes

May 3, 2021, 3:30-5:00 PM (Zoom Meeting)

Meeting called to order by Dr. Richard Larson, the University Senate President, at 3:30 PM. Meeting recording can be viewed [here](#). A motion to approve the agenda and the minutes from April 5, 2021 carried.

Greetings from Richard Larson, University Senate President

- Last University Senate meeting for Spring semester.

Report from President Maurie McInnis

- Full written report can be viewed [here](#).
- Roughly \$420,000 was raised in the third annual giving day.
- Since the start of the 2021 fiscal year, \$54.5 million has been generously pledged or contributed by 9,900 donors.
- Join Campus Conversation on May 13th to learn the latest on our budget and finances, next steps and plans for the Strategic Budget Initiative.
- The federal relief bills were very generous to higher education, but it doesn't exceed the amount of revenue loss.
- There is no new money for contracted salary increases.
- Asking faculty to join the in-person commencement.
- Stony Brook has administered more than 350,000 vaccines.
- Stony Brook University plans to return to primarily in-person learning, working, and research in the fall 2021 semester.

- Comment – M. Bowman – We had an annual pilgrimage up to Albany to meet and educate legislators. I think it was a very important tradition which we have lost it.
 - Answer – We'll see what we can make work for next year.
- Question: E. Feldman – In the last Senate meeting you talked about meeting before the board of trustees to talk about the concept of differential tuition. How that went and were they at all receptive to that concept?
 - Answer – Chancellor asked me to talk before board of trustees to help them better understand the role of research universities. You can go online and watch the recording.
- Question: C. Kube – We were told that the federal funds will cover state contractual salaries.
 - Answer – If the federal funds are more than the amount of revenue we lost, we can use the state dollars for salary increases, but that is not the case for our campus.
- Comment – R. Aller – Administrators come and go on a relatively short basis and mostly many of us remain here for decades, so involving us in decision making is very important, as we will just get stuck with decisions that administration had made.

Report from Provost Paul Goldbart

- Full written report can be viewed [here](#).
- Congratulated faculty who recently elevated to the rank of distinguished professor.
- Announced May Provost's Lecture Series.
- Department of Materials Science and Chemical Engineering Team Receives \$2.4 million ARPA-E Award
- The annual SB campus-wide undergraduate research symposium will take place virtually.
- Alan Alda Film festival will happen May 20-23.
- Described structure of the provost office.

- Question – J. Sanders: When faculty depart from university, considering hiring freeze, do you have any plan to replace them?
 - Answer – Stay tuned, as we are in conversations about this matter.
- Comment – H. Nekvasil – In the Senate we believe very strongly in joint governance and we hope you use the knowledge of our standing committees in your decision-making processes.

Report from Sr. VP for Health Sciences Dr. Kenneth Kaushansky

- No written report provided.
- Hospital is facing a new wave of Covid-19, staffing continues to be a challenge.
- Program in Public Health received accreditation.
- SHTM holds a virtual Research Day.

- Question – R. Larson – Why we are getting more Covid patients as vaccination is increasing?
 - Answer – We are seeing younger patients with better survival rate. Very few of the young patients are vaccinated. In New York, people are still getting infected. Pandemic is not over yet and we need to wear mask, follow social distancing, washing hands, and get vaccinated.
- Question – S. Finkelstein – There are plans to fully come back to campus in Fall, do you think we will still have social distancing in place and what sort of policies need to be in place?
 - Answer – Indoors, especially in crowded areas, we need to keep our masks on. It seems that vaccination demand is going down, then I think we are going to be dealing with a chronic infection rate and have to develop policies to deal with that.

Reports from Administrative Review Committee:

- S. Walker and M. Turan's report can be viewed [here](#).
- A survey was administrated and received over 1600 responses:
 - High satisfaction working with online platforms such as Zoom, working from home, and attending online meetings
 - Not satisfied with a staggered work day, or working on weekends, or with some classes in the evenings

- Comment – J. Dubnau – Results from this survey and report from Dr. Kaushansky regarding the need to wear masks and social distancing in Fall, make me really question whether we're rushing things to go back to full face to face this Fall, given the fact that most people seem to be able to get their jobs done remotely.

Reports from University Senate Environment Committee:

- T. Wilson's report can be viewed [here](#).
 - A survey was conducted and received 531 responses
 - Very many respondents cited avoiding the time, expense, and stress of commuting and parking as one of the very best aspects of working remotely.
 - New York state climate leadership and community protection act of 2019 mandates ambitious carbon footprint reductions for all state agencies, including stony brook university. SB employees commuting in a single occupancy vehicle generate an average of 3.24 metric tons of CO2 annually during commuting. So, this reduction of carbon footprint might be credible towards the university meeting those legislative goals.
 - Working remotely will have tremendous environmental benefit to the campus.

Reports from UUP:

- Ed Quinn:
 - General membership meeting will happen on Wednesday.

Old Business

- No old business.

New Business:

- Senate Vote on Modality for Fall 2021 Meetings
%90 prefer Zoom Meetings
- J. True: Blackboard outage forced us to reschedule exams:
 - A new test had to be written
 - Student frustrations showed up in course evaluations
 - Requesting blackboard system be improved to eliminate these outages

Meeting adjourned at 5:35 PM.