

State University of New York
University Faculty Senate
University Operations Committee

Report to the Senate
Winter 2009 Plenary
Morrisville

The University Operations Committee had videoconference meetings on November 20, 2008 and January 15, 2009. Projects the committee is working on and the status of each follows:

1. A resolution to amend the by-laws of the Senate to change the sector for the Farmingdale campus was presented at the Fall plenary. Because the resolution was not in the hands of members thirty days prior to the meeting it must be carried over to the Winter plenary. The resolution can not be voted on until the Spring plenary, but any alterations to the language of the resolution must occur at the Winter plenary in order to hold a vote in the Spring.
2. Longitudinal Profile - In addition to updating prior reports on gender and ethnicity, the Operations Committee was charged with examining faculty salaries controlling for variables such as sector, discipline, gender, ethnicity, length of service, and geographic region. The committee was made aware of a salary equity study being undertaken by UUP and the principals of that study were contacted and joined the Operations Committee for the November videoconference. The UUP study is limited to seven campuses and acquiring the data not in the state payroll records, and cleansing the data required the release time of one faculty member for one full year. At this point it is not at all clear that the UUP study will be extended to other campuses, nor expanded beyond its one point in time. The committee is appreciative of the participation by Professors Jamie Dangler and Kathy Burr from SUNY-Cortland. We are, however, persuaded that the complete study desired by the Senate is beyond the capacity of the Operations Committee. Accordingly, we will limit our efforts to updating the existing template. To date the committee has not been successful in securing the most recent data compiled by a former member of the committee, but efforts toward that end will continue. If successful, the collected data will be used; if unsuccessful, the required data will be recollected.
3. Rational Fiscal Policy Update - A meeting was held in Albany in mid-December with several committee members and Professor Emeritus Ram Chugh, the primary author of the Senate's earlier report. Three central tasks were identified: (a) updating the financial data in the report to reflect what has occurred since its publication in 2003; and (b) a substantial rewrite that focuses on the importance of a complete fiscal package (not solely tuition - this is a fiscal policy report, not solely a tuition report); and (c) a discussion of institutionalizing faculty participation in the budget development process at both the system and campus levels. The updated financial data will likely be ready for publication for the Spring plenary, the larger rewrite will carry forward to next year.

4. The committee began to familiarize itself with the issues surrounding the way that fringe benefits are calculated for employees funded through IFR accounts. The committee expects to continue to engage this issue which should result in the publication of a white paper and perhaps a series of recommendations.

5. The committee heard concerns that on several campuses librarians are being hired in professional as opposed to faculty positions. Jurisdiction for this issue is unclear and will be raised with the Executive Committee.

6. The committee remains interested in exploring issues attendant to resources available on the campuses for library acquisitions. A subcommittee has been working and further committee action is expected at the next meeting.