

University Senate Meeting Minutes

October 5, 2020, 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 August 31, 2020 carried.

I. Greetings from Richard Larson, University Senate President

- Thanked those who participated in the Senate elections and those who consented to serve in the Senate.
- Encouraged visiting the website that is being crafted about financial sustainability for Stony Brook University.

II. Report from President Maurie McInnis

- Full written report can be viewed [here](#).
- Change in Staff:
 - Thanked Michael Bernstein who stepped down from Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs position, for his service.
 - Welcomed Fotis Sotiropoulos as interim Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs; Rosemaria Martinelli as Vice President for strategic initiatives; and Robert V. Kukta as acting CEAS Dean, as of Oct 1, 2020.
- Fall semester is going according to plan:
 - Students on campus were asked to move in with a recent PCR test.
 - University began surveillance testing of commuter students.
 - Thanked student affairs team for working with students to protect the campus community.
- Chancellor Jim Malatras visited the University on September 24th.
 - Commended our COVID preparedness and role in fighting the pandemic.
 - Talked about research work.
- CampusClear App for Faculty and Staff is now available to use.
- Winter term will be online.
- Spring semester will start with delay in February 1st:
 - No Spring break.
 - Students must come back to dorms in mid- January to observe two weeks' quarantine.
 - Students must come back with a recent negative PCR test.
 - Continue to do surveillance testing on commuter students, faculty, and staff.
- Will partner with SUNY Upstate Medical University to launch their pooled saliva surveillance testing.
- LI Veteran's home ranked number 15 in NY state.
- Provost search interviews will start on October 12th.

- Budget Update:
 - Thanked those who attended the Town Halls and brought up questions.
 - A one time monetary help from the federal or NY state will not solve SBU financial problems.
 - We need to focus on longer term solutions such as focus on research and interdisciplinary collaboration and innovation, integrate hospital and clinical enterprises with academic campus.
 - Will create task forces to resolve the issue.
 - Visit the financial sustainability website for updates.
- Question: M. Bowman - How will vendors and the increasing flow of people be managed? What about the Staller Center and its large crowds?
 - Answer - Everything is dictated by NYS guidelines. We are a long way off to opening crowded arts venues. Staller is doing a lot of online events. There are provisions related to vendors visiting campus, they follow strict protocols.
- Question - AleK Lewis, Statesmen - Javits Center was supposed to be renovated during Summer 2021. Have there been any delays?
 - Answer - The design team is still meeting, the project is on schedule as planned, as long as NYS funding is secured to do the labor. Construction finances are unsure with NYS before going to bid.
- Question: J. Sanders: You've had a chance to meet with the chancellor. I'm wondering if you could give us a fuller impression?
 - Answer: We have not had any strategic conversations yet.

III. Interim Provost Sotiropoulos's Report

- Full written report can be viewed [here](#).
- His first Senate meeting as interim provost.
- He has been on campus for five years as Dean of CEAS.
- Looking forward to working as provost until one is elected.
- Would like to make the measurable positive impact on Stony Brook University.
- The report was prepared by the previous Provost by Michael Bernstein:
 - Winter term is online with a very few exceptions.
 - Spring semester:
 - No Spring break.
 - Classes less than 45 will be in-person and the rest online.
 - Online writing support is available for faculty and students.
 - The fourth town hall for social justice was held on September 30
 - Library is documenting the university experience and response to COVID-19
 - Zuccaire gallery has launched an online exhibition.
- Question- R. Larson: What's your outlook about the kinds of integrations that are possible between East and West Campus from an academic point of view?

- Answer – In the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences, we grew our research expenditures in the five years due to synergy between engineering and medicine and bringing the two sides of our campus together. We want to grow research expenditures and maximize our impact.
- Comment - N. Goodman - When John Marburger was President they worked on east and west campus integration - it was best program-to-program, less structural.

IV. Sr. VP for Health Sciences Dr. Kenneth Kashansky

- Full written report can be viewed [here](#).
- Number of Covid-19 patients admitted is very low and very few of them are badly sick. It's been over eight weeks since we've had a patient pass away from covid-19.
- In preparation for phase two of Covid-19:
 - Stockpiling.
 - Increasing hospital staff.
 - Cross training hospital units.
 - Increasing telehealth capacity.
 - received a \$900,000 grant from the FCC to put together a healthcare network at Stony Brook medicine.
- Relunched Masters of Science in Epidemiology and Clinical Research.
- Over the last nine months received 180 new grants into the School of Medicine.
- Ijeoma Opara received NIH early independence award.
- 50th anniversary of the school of Nursing.
- SHTM passed professional licensing exams and was awarded five seed grants.
- High record enrollment in the MPH.
- Question – R. Larson: When vaccines might be available. What do you expect their effectiveness to be in terms of months? When a second wave might appear and how that would interact with the flu?
 - Answer – The second wave might be in a month or two. That is going to overlap the influenza season. It's going to make things very confusing and we are really going to have to get on top of dual testing rapid testing of all of the people who come in with upper respiratory tract symptoms. The Vaccine may be available after three clinical trials and it may be successful. There will be people who got the vaccine and still might have contracted the illness.
- Question – R. Larson: What are your impressions of President Trump's illness and his treatment?
 - Answer- He received experimental drugs that FDA has approved for patients with very severe Covid-19. The fact that Mr. Trump received those drugs implies that he has a very severe case of Covid-19 but don't make the assumption he has a severe case. But he is the president of the United States, and they're going to give him everything possible.

- Question- Alek Lewis, Statesmen: How is the hospital handling patients that have symptoms that are both similar to the flu and to Covid?
 - Answer - We are isolating any patient who has these defining elements. We send them to ACP building and then over to South P-lot where we set up a temporary triage facility. We're going to get rapid testing on for both of the viruses and then we'll know how to treat them appropriately.

- Question - Hanna Nekvasil - What about those who are testing positive while teaching? Should they withdraw for the semester?
 - Answer - The range of symptomatology goes from absolutely nothing to pretty significant. It should be handled in an individual case.

- Question - M. Bowman: What happened to the role of the US Army field hospital and what should we think going forward?
 - Answer – Nobody at the hospital asked for one to be built. We were prepared to go up to 800 patients, and the most we ever had was 437 COVID patients, at our peak. We didn't know how high the peak would be, so I understand why it was built. NYU hospitals had a 29% mortality rate, ours was 13%. Governor Cuomo was in the dark of when the curve would be flattened. It is better that we were prepared instead of running out of beds.

V. Reports from UUP:

- Carolyn Kube (Reporting for Ed Quinn as well, as he was not present today):
 - The extension of the telecommuting policy approved until January 1, 2021.
 - 2% raises have been delayed at least till Jan 1, 2021. UUP has filed grievances against both delays from September and now this second delay.
 - Compression and DSI raises are still going forward.
 - A Federal stimulus package may help us out with money earmarked for higher education and state government.
 - On November 3rd, you get 3 hours of time to vote.
 - Look for virtual workshops.
 - Working on details of faculty and staff pool testing.

- Question- E. Feldman: What does it mean to file a grievance?
 - Answer – Whenever a contractual violation occurs, the union can file a grievance against that issue. They violated the contract, so they will serve a penalty or a settlement could be reached.

VI. Old Business

- Senate representation on the SB Foundation.

- J. Sanders - unethical procedures being followed.
- R. Larson - The Senate Executive Committee discussed and brought it to President McInnis:
 - She recognizes that, especially now that we're budgetary straightened.
 - Stony Brook Foundation needs to work very carefully with departments.
 - She would work with the stony brook foundation regarding reporting of finances, and the idea of having senate representation on the stony brook foundation.
- R. Larson - That's basically not possible, as SBF is a separate Corporation, the president herself is ex officio she has no position with respect to which to insist on anyone being a member of the stony brook Foundation Board. But discussion is still ongoing.
- J. Sanders - That is not acceptable, they have a major role, faculty need to be involved. At the very least distinguished faculty. Those of us who are concerned with this issue need to take it up with the attorney general of the state of New York. We must continue to understand that without representation we are dealing with a tyrannical kind of rule by the stony brook foundation and in no way should we tolerate it.
- N. Goodman - We should look at what they use the money for and how it's used. Not sure what access we have, since President Stanley argued he wasn't obligated to report that.
- Carolyn Cube- UUP is also pushing for more transparency and how SBF money is spent.

VII. New Business:

- John True – Department of Ecology and Evolution:
 - Liliana Davalos was contacted by Lauren Brookmeyer, Director of Government Relations, to provide quotes about two recent NSF grants in August regarding “describing the importance of federally funded research we do to help advocate for increased funds for scientific research”
 - The two quotes were provided, not knowing that they were going to be used for political announcement during the reelection campaign.
 - It's imperative that other faculty researchers are made aware of the potential further quotes to our university Office of Government Relations to become part of such press releases, as they did in this case.
 - The Office of Government Relations should mention clearly that these quotes could appear in press releases by these representatives or government officials.
 - Judy Grieman:

- Throughout the year, we get money from the federal and state government and sitting delegation members often ask if they can use a quote from a faculty member at the federal level.
- Promised to be more clear when asking for quotes in the future.
- Course materials are the intellectual property of the instructors, and must increase the students' awareness about this, as to not share those materials without permission of the instructors.
 - This needs to be put into the student conduct code explicitly.

Meeting adjourned at 5:14 PM.