SUNY Potsdam Faculty Senate: DRAFT Meeting Minutes 10/16/2008

The meeting was called to order in Kellas 106 at 4:10 pm by Jan Trybula, Chair pro-tem.

1. **Approval of the Agenda** as sent to the faculty by email, published in the *Reporter* of 10/10/2008 and posted on the Faculty Senate web page http://www.potsdam.edu/faculty_senate

2. **Approval of the Minutes** of the Faculty Senate meeting of 9/18/2008 as sent to the faculty by email, published in the *Reporter* of 10/10/2008 and posted on the Faculty Senate web page http://www.potsdam.edu/faculty_senate

3. **Report from the Faculty Senate Chair** – Jan Trybula, Vice-Chair
   - 2 weeks from today (10/30/08) is the full faculty meeting, in Kellas 106. Agenda will include Academic Master Plan discussion.
   - University Senate plenary is occurring on campus right now in Knowles MPR, feel free to attend tomorrow’s sessions as well.

4. **Report from the President** – John F. Schwaller
   - Issue going forward to Exec Committee: Class size is increasing, causing a crowding problem for undergraduate graduation ceremonies. Several options are available, including limiting who may walk at graduation – Potsdam has an extremely liberal policy on who may participate.
   - Budget update: 3rd wave of reductions to SUNY funding are ongoing; $2.5 million reduction management underway. Focus of administrative action is on vice-presidential recommendations in order to ensure that stakeholders are represented. Plans due from VPs to President in next 2 weeks, and President expects to see different approaches from each area, meaning that campus offices may see different approaches to budget management based on the vice-presidential area they reside under. Additional reductions beyond currently known cuts are anticipated after legislature comes back to session. This will be extremely difficult for SUNY Potsdam, and most other campuses, as we have already done what can easily (and not so easily) be done. Once the term has begun, as it has, this becomes even more difficult. Additionally, the current reductions we have accommodated with one-time savings will need to become permanent reductions to our budget which cannot be accommodated with the same one-time budget adjustments. This seems to inevitably point to cuts in personnel, as personnel takes up the vast majority of our overall operating budget. Therefore, the Cabinet and the President are working on models that will support our forward-looking strategic plan to ensure that next year’s budget plan is as smart as possible in light of the hard circumstances we face. On top of all other issues, tuition increases have become an issue again. Our tuition has fallen far behind our financial needs, and we cannot assume that any tuition
increase will go far enough to fill the gaps in our income streams. Whether things are good or bad, President Schwaller is committed to making Potsdam the best place it can be, and will consult and collaborate as best he can to ensure that happens.

- **Clarification based on question**: We have had to reduce ("give back") 2.5 million dollars in State funding.
- **Question**, “If tuition increases, will we see the same siphoning off of dollars to feed into University Centers”**: Very likely.
- **Question**, “In personnel reductions, are you talking about not hiring, or firing, or some other options?”**: The best choice is to eliminate positions that are vacant, but President Schwaller is unwilling to say that one-size-fits-all, and wants to be proactive about making those decisions when the depth of the cuts is known. Firing people is not something he wishes to do, but it will be dependent upon the gravity of the situation.
- **Question**, “How are we doing, relatively speaking?”**: Compared to other comprehensive campuses, we are doing remarkably well. We are at least in the middle of the pack, if not doing better, because we have consciously built a budget plan that allows us to accommodate these kinds of actions.

5. **Report from the SGA President** – Matthew Cotty

- SGA and student body are discussing budget and rational tuition plans, as well as TAP increases and adjustments to the current TAP policies. While the Student Assembly does not find the previous 38% increase in tuition to be rational, they also do not find it rational to increase tuition in the spring semester 2009. Therefore, the Student Assembly hopes to provide compelling options to the state agencies and legislators involved which are more rational and palatable for students, including a proposed change in TAP policy regarding mid-year changes. The Student Assembly is also advocating for all tuition increases to be passed back to the campuses enrolling the students paying the tuition, rather than allowing tuition funding to be siphoned off for other State purposes.
- SGA is revising its constitution this year.
- Extended library hours are in place, and the SGA is very pleased.

6. **Report from the University Faculty Senator** – Joe Hildreth

- No report.

7. **Action Items**:

- **Program Revision Proposal: Childhood Education**
  - **Concern raised**: Special education is not included in a compelling way.
  - **Answer** from E. Raymond: The 314 course will function to replace the 2 courses which previously taught issues regarding special education, and will be taught as a block. As a special educator, E. Raymond is
unconcerned by the expansion of age range in this new course, as teaching it twice would be redundant.

- **Concern raised:** In original program, there were free electives, but there are now choices without any free electives. **Response:** That’s true. 6 credits were not firmly fixed in the original program, but those two electives were replaced by more content-focused courses. However, most students coming into Childhood Education do not start off in Modern Languages 101, but with much of the Modern Languages taken care of already. Therefore, there is actually more room for specialization than is apparent on paper. Additionally, we are held accountable by the State for ensuring that childhood education professionals are broadly educated in all subject areas, and this type of program is the only way we can do that. Though they don’t have a lot of choices, they do have a lot of exposure to many topics.

- **Concern raised:** Will this affect the graduate level? **Answer:** We have no plans to change the graduate programs.

- **Concern raised:** There seems to be a tension between providing a broad education in all topics and allowing students to choose the topic they intend to teach in the classroom, and our focus on Chemistry and Geology seems to contribute to that. **Response:** We’re hemmed in by SUNY standards and State requirements. We must supply depth and breadth, and that’s why we have focuses where we have them – which are not changing in this revision. Since the Education courses cover only pedagogical content and not subject content, these subject courses are responsible for ensuring that our students have the appropriate content knowledge for their courses.

- **APCC moves to accept the proposal.** Motion carries.

### 8. Standing Committee Reports

**Academic Policies, Standards and Advising (APSA)** – Harold Ellingsen, Chair
- Continuing to work on access to student records by non-academic advisors, and also to define a “college sponsored activity”.

**Academic Programs and Curriculum (APCC)** – Marianne Hebert, Chair
- Reviewing Business Administration minor, currently on hold pending meeting with Business Administration faculty.

**Admissions Committee** – Susan Haller, Chair
- No report.

**Business Affairs Committee** – Christopher Lanz, Chair
- Still working on new charge integrating Resource Transparency Committee’s work, but given current financial chaos, this will take a while. Be assured they are working on it.
- Summer salaries are an issue passed to the committee, which the committee will pass on, as it is an issue that cannot be addressed by this group.

**Goals and Planning Committee** – Kathryn Jeror and Krista LaVack, co-Chairs
• No report.

**Graduate Affairs Committee** – Lisa Wilson, Chair
- Working on a Posthumous Degree Policy for the next Senate meeting.
- Will be discussing the Academic Master Plan in light of Graduate programs on campus.

**Student Affairs Committee** – Alan Hersker, Chair
- Know your vote program was a great success, and public thanks should go out to the committee, the faculty who participated, Phil Neisser, Jack McGuire, Christina Knopf, and Jackie Goodman, and the students who participated, Danielle McMullin, Lauren Kline, and Henric Nielsen.

**Nominating Committee** – Melissa Evans, Convener
- Still in need of a Crane representative, though three volunteers have been found from the other schools.

9. **Report from the Provost** – Margaret Madden
- Please review Academic Master Plan. In these difficulty financial times, we need to be reassured that there is a future for Potsdam, and in a time of constrained resources, we will need to make decisions based on what is more important to us and what is less important to us, and plans like these and the thinking that go into them can help define those priorities. Provost Palm reported recently that we can look for 2-3 years of significant restraint, but at some point we’ll have more resources, and we must have a thoughtful context in which to apply those resources.

- [http://blogs.potsdam.edu/provost](http://blogs.potsdam.edu/provost) is new way to help create dialogue with the Provost on this issue, and Provost Madden encourages us all to provide feedback in whatever way works for each member of our community.

10. **New Business**

Meeting adjourned at 5:04.