Presidential’s Report

- **Higher Education Act Reauthorization.** Congress is debating the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, with separate Republican and Democratic bills under consideration. Potential changes include who is eligible for Pell grants (including incarcerated students, students taking summer courses, students who have taken more than twelve semesters); use of work study funds to support unpaid internships; changing the definition of the credit hour; and speeding up the process for accreditation of online programs. The legislation will be open for public comment this summer; senators and CGLs are encouraged to provide comments on areas of concern in the bills.

- **SUNY Budget.** There were a number of significant wins for SUNY in the enacted budget. SUNY will receive direct support to cover retroactive pay raises in the new contract, without having to borrow those funds against future budgets. The funding model for the community colleges includes an FTE tuition increase for those campuses with stable or increasing enrollments, but also a guaranteed minimum budget for those seeing declining enrollments so that they can cover fixed costs. EOP and childcare funding have been restored to the final budget, and the state is covering the matching funds needed for the hospitals to get DSH reimbursements from Medicaid.

- **Task Force Updates.** The Shared Governance Award task group has selected the winner of this year’s award, and encourages a broader segment of campuses to apply in the future. The Student Mobility Steering Committee is reviewing feedback from campuses on the existing seamless transfer pathways, to determine which pathways are priorities for review. And the General Education working group has distributed a draft Green Paper of recommendations for general education changes, for review and comment.

- **UFS Plenaries.** In the recent past, several campuses have had difficulties with the expense of hosting our plenaries when their turn in the rotation has come around. SUNY System has agreed to become part of the rotation again, and periodically host UFS plenaries at System Administration. That, plus the willingness of Albany to host early and of Downstate and Optometry to co-host a plenary at the Global Center, means that the schedule of plenaries is now set for the next two years. UFS is also in the process of receiving approval to increase the per-Senator charge to campuses, which will allow the UFS to provide more financial assistance to campuses when it is their turn to host.

- **Board of Trustees News.** Chairman McCall has announced his intention to step down at the end of the current academic year, marking a significant change in leadership. The Board has approved our recent UFS Bylaws changes, and now campus ratification is needed for final approval. The May meeting of the Board should see a number of announcements about ongoing Presidential searches.
Q&A with the Chancellor

Specialized and Statutory

Q: Can SUNY help the sector market and recruit online program offerings, especially to the US military?
A: Graduate online makes a lot of sense for Maritime. Almost all of our current online students are at our brick and mortar campuses. We need to recruit from new populations, such as international students and the military, to develop fully online programs.

Q: As the call for online programming increases, what expanded support will SUNY provide for faculty offering the courses and students taking them?
A: SUNY System is working with the Governor’s office to identify funding for an 8-9 figure investment for SUNY Online, which will include support for instructional designers, media specialists, marketing, student advisement, and other online student services.

Q: When will the head of NYS College of Ceramics at Alfred be reviewed, and will that position be made permanent?
A: There are annual reviews for leadership in all sectors. Presidents identify peers inside and out of SUNY for comparison, campus budgets and performance metrics are reviewed, and the Chancellor has one-on-one consultations.

Health Sciences

Q: Can you provide a status update on plans to diversify funding for the Health Sciences sector through philanthropy and private donors?
A: As an example, of the current $17M in unrestricted Annual Fund giving, two-thirds of that is due to one campus (Cornell). Imagine the opportunities if we could develop the same level of giving across SUNY. SUNY is looking into Endowed Professorship programs, and how to bring in more resources to support scholarships and fellowships.

Q: What are your plans for the sector for the coming year?
A: The Chancellor expressed pride in the accomplishments of the sector, and will be consulting with Presidents about where to make investments. It will be important to follow up on DSH funding.
University Centers

Q: Are you aware of the Business report reviewing finances at Stony Brook, and what can be done to ensure transparency and faculty involvement in budget processes?
A: The Chancellor has spoken with President Stanley about the report, and would like to have the report forwarded so that she can review the numbers. One potential issue is that medical centers need to maintain substantial cash reserves to deal with emergencies, so it will be important to make sure that factors such as those are being taken into account.

Q: How can SUNY maintain quality and distinctiveness as we ramp up online programs?
A: Differentiation of mission and vision across sectors is key, as we need diverse types of programming. One-on-one mentoring will continue to be important for scholarship and teaching, but at the same time a number of students want options for how to obtain a basic degree.

Q: What are you doing as Chancellor to promote liberal arts and push back against the narrative of higher education as workforce training centers?
A: There is a project under development that will be of specific interest to the comprehensive colleges and university centers, to enhance the distinctiveness of the liberal arts across SUNY. This is currently under confidential discussion; more details will be released later.

Comprehensive Colleges

Q: How can SUNY get the Governor to act to appoint members to College Councils, so that critical searches for campus Presidents can proceed?
A: More appointments to the Councils are expected, now that the budget process is completed, but full Councils are not needed for searches to proceed. SUNY would like to broaden the pools for Presidential searches, and the Chancellor asks for all of us to help identify promising candidates.

Q: How can we work together to advocate for more direct state aid for our core operating budgets?
A: Budget advocacy has been excellent this year. SUNY lobbied extensively for funding to cover the retroactive pay increases from the recent contract, and having that included in the enacted budget is a big win for the system. Advocacy by campuses is important to support the efforts of the system.

Q: Are the mission, identity, diversity, and efforts of the comprehensive colleges sector well understood and appreciated outside of SUNY?
A: Business and community leaders around the state not only respect the sector, but are grateful when there’s a SUNY campus in their district. SUNY is augmenting its communication team and will focus on better communicating the value of SUNY to the state.
Colleges of Technology

Q: Do you find these Q&A sessions useful?
A: Yes, certainly.

Q: Our sector is known for and has invested heavily in experiential learning. Will all campuses be expected to develop online programming? What support will be available to campuses to reconcile the dual focus on applied learning and online education?
A: Applied and experiential learning is a critical initiative, and it would be good to scale it up further. SUNY Online is opt-in for campuses, but most campuses will probably become involved in some format. Ideally the online initiative will result in new enrollments, new opportunities for program development, and new opportunities to collaborate across the system.

Q: What funding will be available through PRODI-G to support undergraduate pipeline efforts?
A: Extending recruitment of historically underrepresented minority students to the undergraduate level is a great idea. High school students today can be PRODI-G faculty of tomorrow.

Campus Governance Leaders

Q: Misapplication of Research Misconduct charges has been a problem at Downstate, and requests by campus faculty governance to restart a fair and impartial process based on national standards have been ignored. Can System Administration intervene to assure fair processes are established?
A: The Chancellor will bring the issue up to her executive leadership, and have Vice Chancellor Wang and Provost Laursen look into it.

Q: New public health laws in New York mandate the use of Department of Health ELAP certified labs for analysis of environmental samples, which places undue financial burdens on our campus labs and creates barriers to training our students on water quality sampling. Will you work to create an exemption for teaching labs, or a certification model more suited to academic labs?
A: The Chancellor will look into these regulation issues. While on the surface this looks bad for education, it will be important to understand the rationale that the Department of Health used to establish the current certification process.

Q: Even as the roles of Campus Governance Leaders have grown on campuses, their participation on College Councils remains varied and restricted. Will you work to include CGLs as voting members on College Councils?
A: One of the most important roles of the College Councils is to hire campus Presidents. It may be a conflict of interest for CGLs to be involved in hiring Presidents that they would later work for.
Chancellor’s Report

- **Advocacy:** Chancellor Johnson described the recent DC Days trip, a two day event in Washington. Day 1 is focused on a SUNY research forum and updates from federal agencies such as NIH, Dept of Energy, NSF, and AAAS, to highlight current research areas. Priorities discussed this year included the opioid crisis, and research in aging and Alzheimer’s. Day 2 is focused on meeting with congressional leaders and staffers to promote SUNY’s role in research. SUNY has a goal to double the amount of sponsored research done across the system.

- **Budget:** There were a number of successes in the budget negotiations this year: $550M for capital projects across SUNY; the adoption of the funding floor model of support for the community college campuses; state support for Medicare DSH funding to the hospitals; and restoration of funding for EOP and related programs. Extensive meetings with state Senate and Assembly members, and with other groups, was critical for obtaining these budget outcomes.

- **PRODI-G:** Chancellor Johnson stressed the importance of the PRODI-G initiative in meeting SUNY’s diversity goals. SUNY lags behind many state higher education systems in faculty diversity, even as our student body becomes increasingly diverse. PRODI-G aims to be an evidence-driven program to campuses as they develop individual campus strategies to recruit and retain more diverse faculty. The salary support from system will allow campuses to bring on underrepresented minority faculty and women faculty in STEM in advance of upcoming faculty retirements, which will provide for greater opportunities for mentoring of the new faculty. PRODI-G will also include graduate student stipends to build the recruitment pipeline. Campus PRODI-G proposals and hiring plans are due to System in July.

- **Sustainability:** SUNY will soon launch a Green Revolving Loan Fund to support campus environmental sustainability projects. Campuses can apply for up to $1M for projects to save on energy budget, such as building retrofits and clean energy purchases.

- **SUNY Online:** Online program development can help SUNY grow in new areas, and will need investments to provide faculty development support, infrastructure enhancements, and marketing.

Provost’s Report

*Provost Laursen devoted his remarks to an update of the SUNY Online initiative.*

- **Process to date:** The SUNY Online Working Committee has been working since fall 2018 to identify opportunities and options for scaling up the fully online programming that SUNY offers. As part of this work, the committee reviewed Request for Information submissions from a few dozen vendors, to explore services that could be used to scale up SUNY’s online offerings. The committee released a draft white paper of findings and recommendations for comments. Some of the main issues raised during the comment period included concerns over academic freedom and intellectual property; quality assurance for the online courses and what faculty development would be provided; how the financial model would work; and what would be the role of System and individual campuses such as Empire State, and commercial online program managers.
SUNY Online framework: Current plans are for System Administration to establish an administrative unit to create and manage an online environment that provides a common suite of services to campuses to support students, faculty, and campus units; and to engage vendors as needed to provide key business and technical services. Goals include increasing the number of fully online learners in SUNY, recruit NY residents who are going out of state for online programs, and increasing the number of non-traditional out-of-state and international learners. SUNY Online will target programs that fill in gaps in Open SUNY offerings and respond to market opportunities by selecting programs that can scale up to 1000+ students within three years. The working committee has facilitated webinars in a dozen or so disciplinary areas to identify programs and partner campuses that can meet these requirements.

Fall 2019 pilot: A handful of previously approved Open SUNY+ programs in the target disciplines will be invited by the end of April to participate in the fall 2019 pilot. These programs need to be willing to integrate with the System IT environment (Banner, Ranku, Slate, Blackboard, Starfish, Degree Works, and Transfer Finder), as testing the new system integration is an important goal for the pilot. In addition, the pilot will test how System investments in marketing, student services, and faculty support can facilitate scaling up of the existing programs.

Fall 2020 launch and beyond: RFPs will be issued in summer and fall 2019 to identify programs, along with stand-alone elective, general education, and core courses, as identified by the discussions in the thematic webinars. SUNY Online will expand its marketing and recruitment campaign, develop budgets and financial models to support budget advocacy, and continue to develop the IT infrastructure. It will establish mechanisms for ongoing engagement with shared governance.

Leading From the Front Lines: The Importance of Faculty Leadership in Response to, and Prevention of, Sexual and Interpersonal Violence

In addition to being a justice, health, and safety issue, sexual violence is also a civil rights issue. Persons from marginalized groups are more likely to experience sexual violence, whether women, especially women of color; Trans and gender non-binary persons; individuals with disabilities; low-income populations; and other marginalized groups. On campus, Title IX is the principle framework for dealing with sex discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual and interpersonal violence. The basic framework for Title IX has been elucidated over the years through a series of Dear Colleague letters from both Republican and Democratic administrations to college campuses, but recently much of that framework has been rolled back by the Trump administration.

Associate Counsel Storch said a number of resources are available to SUNY campuses to deal with the issues of sexual and interpersonal violence:
- SUNY Student Conduct Institute: provides training to student conduct officers, Title IX administrators, and other college personnel on due process, trauma-informed investigations, and adjudication processes.
- Sexual Assault & Violence Response (SAVR) Resources: compendium of sexual assault resources from SUNY campuses and their surrounding communities, available in a variety of languages and searchable by campus and geographic region.
- SUNY’s Got Your Back: assembling and providing bags of personal care items needed by victims of sexual and interpersonal violence when they seek assistance at shelters or hospitals.
- SPECTRUM Conference: preventing and responding to violence against LGBTQI+ students.
SUNY Childcare: Educate, Advocate, Elevate

Campus child care is an important service, as 22% of undergraduate students have children. Students with children are less likely to graduate on time, but use of child care services helps with student retention and completion rates. Approximately ¾ of SUNY campuses have child care centers, serving about 1,400 SUNY students and 5,000 children each year. Centers also provide a service to campus programs, serving as learning centers for about 3,000 students each year in fields such as early childhood education, nursing, business, and psychology. Funding comes from a variety of sources, including a Child Care and Development block grant ($2.2M) from the NYS Office of Child and Family Services, state-allocated operating funds ($1.5M to state-op campuses and $2M to community colleges), and some smaller programs; 85% of the centers are accredited.

Campus child care centers face a number of challenges. Low teacher salaries make it difficult to attract and retain staff, but flat funding, raising operational costs, and limited options to raise tuition without decreasing enrollment make it difficult to consider raising salaries. Universal Pre-K is siphoning off older students for some centers, leaving them with more expensive and resource-intensive infant rooms without the broader enrollment revenue to support them. Operating funds haven’t increased in the last decade, and half of the centers would consider closing if state funding levels dropped.

Still, many centers deal with issues of waiting lists. Some students have misconceptions about the centers, thinking they can show up and drop off their children, not realizing the long lead time needed to register for the limited number of slots. Increased funding would be needed to expand access and services, if centers are to meet the needs of SUNY students and employees.

Cultural Appreciation/Cultural Appropriation

Sharing cultures across communities and continents is a fundamental human process that’s been going on for thousands of years. But when is it cultural appreciation, and when does it become cultural appropriation? When items or traditions are taken out of the original context, problems of appropriateness can occur. The original cultural significance can be lost, and new meanings that are divorced from, or even antithetical, to the original meaning may develop. This can be exacerbated by unequal power dynamics between the cultures, especially in cases of forced assimilation and colonial relationships.

Cornrow hair styles were discussed as an example. Cornrows have been worn for centuries in Africa, and have cultural connections to agriculture, planting, and labor, related to row cropping. These styles were dispersed by the transatlantic slave trade, and became symbols and even tools of the resistance to slavery. When such styles are adopted by the dominant culture in America as ‘edgy and chic’ new styles, the cultural meaning is lost, no cultural appreciation is possible, and appropriation is occurring.

Cultural appropriation regularly occurs on campuses in terms of Halloween costumes, and other costume events. “Culture, Not Costume” is an annual national campaign to dissuade the use of inappropriate costumes.
Cultural appreciation requires a more reciprocal and equitable interaction between cultures, and a willingness to engage in dialog on the meanings and cultural significance of items and practices, not just on the use of their aesthetic. This can be difficult given past history of hierarchical and disempowering relationships between dominant and assimilated cultures.

Review of Bylaws Revisions

Chair Rezac led discussion and solicited polling feedback on five issues that the Bylaws subcommittee in Governance is looking into.

- **Should Chairs of the Standing Committees be added to the Executive Committee as non-voting members?** Senators discussed whether this would represent a new obligation, what impact this would have on leadership turnover, whether or not Chairs should be elected by the committees and if they should be voting members on the Executive Committee, and the role that the standing committees have in developing the work of the Senate. A majority of the body was in favor of adding committee chairs.

- **Should the Executive Committee approve all resolutions that come to the Senate?** Currently the bulk of resolutions come from the standing committees through the Executive Committee, but they can also come from campus governance bodies or by being presented from the floor. Members discussed the review process used by the Executive Committee, preserving the ability to submit resolutions from the floor, and whether vetting resolutions by the Executive Committee is too much concentration of power. A majority was in favor of maintaining the status quo.

- **Should the names and brief charges of the standing committees be written into the Bylaws, or be in the Standing Rules instead?** Members discussed how often changes occur to names or charges of committees, the standing that would be given to committees by having them listed in the Bylaws vs. the flexibility from having committees listed in the Standing Rules. Feedback from the body was split, but more in favor of having committees in the Standing Rules then having them in the Bylaws.

- **Should the Bylaws include language and processes for specifying official alternates for Sector Reps and the convener of the Campus Governance Leaders?** There was little discussion and overwhelming support for this suggestion.

- **Should the Bylaws include language for disciplinary procedures?** UFS guidelines would default to Robert’s Rules on this, as the current Bylaws do not include specific language on disciplinary procedures. A majority of members supported adding this to the Bylaws.
Faculty Council of Community Colleges Report

The enacted budget includes several provisions that are welcomed by the FCCC. Most notably, the 98% funding floor for community colleges will be critical for those campuses dealing with enrollment declines, and the restoration of childcare and EOP funding will help many community college students.

President Tamrowski highlighted several potential changes in the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, such as expanding Pell grant eligibility to Dreamers and incarcerated students, the use of Pell funding for workforce development, and redefinition of credit hour requirements. These changes could have significant impacts on our campuses; as individuals and organizations we should follow these developments and make use of the public comment period to provide feedback.

The SUNY Online initiative and General Education green paper were major topics at the recent FCCC Spring Plenary, resulting in resolutions from the Governance and Academic & Student Affairs committees. FCCC is generally supportive of the recommendations for general education in the green paper, although there are still questions about how to deal with the scientific reasoning requirement from Middle States, and what SUNY means by 21st Century Skills. There were many unanswered questions about SUNY Online at the FCCC Plenary; President Tamrowski expressed appreciation for the greater level of details about the program that the Provost presented at the UFS Plenary.

CUNY University Faculty Senate Report

CUNY has seen significant turnover and vacancies in its top administrative ranks. As a result, there have not been many system-level initiatives involving governance participation. Instead, CUNY UFS has worked to adopt a number of amendments updating and modernizing its charter. One outstanding issue that they haven’t resolved is the role of part-time faculty in governance.

The budget situation across CUNY is bleak. There is nothing in the budget for CUNY collective bargaining; any salary changes on individual campuses would have to be tuition-driven. Developmental education has all but been eliminated in favor of a co-registration model. And there is a lack of transparency by CUNY System about the budget process, with McKenzie consultants brought in to develop plans to reduce the CUNY budget by $100M. Numerous personnel at CUNY System have been terminated, and replaced with appointees from the Governor’s office. All CUNY campuses are projected to be in deficit in the next two years.
SUNY Student Assembly Report

Over the past year, Student Assembly has worked on strengthening networks for student governance, provided programming to develop student leaders, and enhanced their advocacy efforts.

- SUNY SA is represented at 83% of SUNY campuses, and the SA spring conference was attended by 450 student leaders from across SUNY. Within NY, SA collaborates with CUNY USS, NYPIRG, NYSUT, and UUP on advocacy, while nationally SA is an active member establishing the Policy Alliance, with student governance organizations from 15 states with over 7M students.
- SUNY SA members attended over 50 Higher Ed conferences, and the spring conference included a record number of professional development workshops.
- Budget priorities for SUNY SA included restoration of funding for EOP and related programs, renewal and expansion of the telecounseling program, and funding to campuses to cover the TAP gap. While telecounseling and TAP gap did not make it into the final enacted budget, they made progress in the individual house bills, and SA is optimistic about future approvals.

SA has implemented a mobile platform for coordinating advocacy efforts. Text SUNYSA to 52886 to participate.

UFS Elections

President Gwen Kay was re-elected by unanimous consent to a second term.

The following slate of Sector Representatives and alternates was ratified by the body.

- Comprehensive Colleges:
  - Rep: Bruce Simon, Fredonia
  - Alternate: John Keiser, Brockport
- Technology Colleges:
  - Rep: Barat Wolfe, Canton
  - Alternate: Tim Gerken, Morrisville
- University Centers:
  - Rep: Patrick Doyle, Binghamton
  - Alternate: Sara Reiter, Binghamton
- Health Sciences Centers:
  - Rep: Alexander Schwartzman, Downstate Medical
  - Alternate: Phil Glick, U Buffalo
Committee Reports

**Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity Committee**

Chair Gerken reviewed the accomplishments of the committee over the past seven years, stemming from the Make Diversity Count white paper in 2013, and its goals of establishing an Office of Diversity and supporting commitments to build diversity and cultural competencies among faculty, staff, and students. As a result of Board of Trustees policy, all campuses now have Chief Diversity Officers and strategic diversity plans. Going forward, the PRODI-G program will be key for scaling up SUNY’s efforts on diversity. Training and professional development will be needed to accomplish and sustain SUNY diversity initiatives, and courses on inclusive classrooms are planned for the coming year by the SUNY Center for Professional Development.

**Operations Committee**

*Heather Maldonado, Chair*

Library Senior Strategist Mark McBride provided an update on the SUNY Library Consortium’s negotiations with Elsevier. Our current contract with Elsevier expires at the end of this calendar year, and negotiations to date have not made much progress, with Elsevier having canceled meetings or not provided requested proposals in time for other meetings. Elsevier represents 25% of SUNY’s journal subscription expenses, and at the same time Elsevier charges our scholars author processing fees to publish their work. SUNY’s goals are to reduce our library expenditures to maintain access to our current holdings, and grow support for open access publishing, but so far Elsevier has refused to consider an Open Access agreement with SUNY. The SUNY Library Consortium will hold a series of eight town halls on different SUNY campuses in the remaining weeks of the spring semester, to brief faculty on the progress of the negotiation.

**Undergraduate**

*Ron Sarner, Chair*

Chair Sarner listed some of the projects completed by the committee, including a resolution on governance sign-off on program proposals (not acted on by the Chancellor), the resolutions adopted at this plenary (registration deadlines review, and shared governance in online program development), and the potential to move the timing of the Chancellor’s awards for student excellence (which is not feasible).

Ongoing projects for the coming year include revisiting the governance sign-off resolution, recommendations on equity and inclusion in pedagogy, and promoting intelligent, data-informed advising.
Resolutions

Senators passed the following resolutions at the Spring Plenary.

- **Campus Governance Leaders**, “Proposed Policy for Appointment of Interim Administrators at and above the Level of Dean” - This resolution provides suggested guidelines for involving shared governance when interim administrators are appointed on campuses.

- **Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity Committee**, “Resolution to Ensure Numerous Pathways to Continuing Appointment and Promotion” - This resolution asks that appointment and promotion policies align with inclusivity goals of SUNY, that promotion be based on all of the criteria set forth in Board of Trustees policy, and that the guidelines for promotion be made clear as part of the onboarding process for new faculty.

- **Governance Committee**, “Resolution on the Expectation of Professional Employees, as defined by the policies of the Board of Trustees, to Participate in Shared Governance” - This resolution requests that professional employees of SUNY be made aware of and also be supported in opportunities to become involved in governance activities at the campus and system level.

- **Operations Committee**, “Resolution to Create Common SUNY Onboarding Information Points and Processes for New Employees” - This resolution recommends the development of a set of recommended onboarding practices and information for use across SUNY, including the establishment of a shared repository of onboarding materials.

- **Operations Committee**, “Resolution to Improve SUNY Reimbursement Processes” - This resolution requests the development of a modernized travel reimbursement system that will provide for easy and timely submission of reimbursement requests and transparency around approval and reimbursement processing.

- **Specialized and Statutory Colleges Sector**, “Resolution on reaffirming 176-11-1 Resolution in Support of Stand-Alone Unit Head for New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University” - This resolution restates support for the position that there needs to be a stand-alone head for New York State College of Ceramics, at Alfred University.

- **Undergraduate Committee**, “Resolution on Campus Review of Course Withdrawal Deadlines” - This resolution recommends periodic review by governance of campus policies, and suggests policies involved with registration deadlines as one area for review.

- **Undergraduate Committee**, “Resolution on Privatization, Academic Freedom, and Shared Governance in Online Education” - This resolution asks that shared governance be clearly involved in the development of policies and procedures for SUNY Online, and that faculty be informed of their rights to retain ownership of their work and their role in the development of online policies.

New Business

**Cramer Civility Compact.** Chair Wall (Program and Awards Committee) described the memo that Parliamentarian Cramer shared on acts of incivility that occurred at the last Plenary, and discussions by the Executive Committee on ways to increase civility going forward, including a set of core principles that all UFS members would sign on to, which have been put together in a draft document, the “Cramer Civility Compact.” She then made a motion to refer the document to the Executive Committee for further study and action, which passed through unanimous consent.