



TO: SUNY University Faculty Senate
FROM: UFS Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity Committee
RE: Resolution to Ensure Numerous Pathways to Continuing Appointment and Promotion
DATE: 182nd Plenary, April 11-13, 2019
LOCATION: SUNY Potsdam
RESOLUTION #: 182-02-01
VOTE TALLY: For: 30; Against: 6; Abstain: 5

RATIONALE:

WHEREAS the SUNY Board of Trustees (BOT) passed a resolution on September 10, 2015, “to make SUNY the most inclusive higher education system in the country”; and

WHEREAS the number of Historically Underrepresented Minority (HURM) students graduating from NYS high schools continues to rise; and

WHEREAS in 2018 almost 30%¹ of all SUNY students were Historically Underrepresented Minorities; and

WHEREAS the success and completion rate of these students lags behind those of non HURM students²; and

WHEREAS research suggests that HURM students do better when they have HURM faculty and staff that they can look to as examples and turn to for advice³; and

WHEREAS SUNY has considerably fewer HURM faculty compared to the number of HURM students⁴; and

WHEREAS SUNY has made little progress over the last 20 years in increasing HURM faculty⁵; and

¹ <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-launches-prodig-initiative-increase-faculty-diversity-all-suny-campuses>

² <https://system.suny.edu/media/suny/content-assets/documents/institutional-research/Diversity-Data-Brief-June2017.pdf> (p.1)

³ <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14675986.2018.1437997?scroll=top&needAccess=true>

⁴ <https://system.suny.edu/media/suny/content-assets/documents/institutional-research/Diversity-Data-Brief-June2017.pdf> (p.1)

⁵ <https://system.suny.edu/media/suny/content-assets/documents/faculty-senate/resources/Composition-of-Faculty-Report-Submitted-to-Operations-Committee-April-12-with-final-revisions.pdf>

WHEREAS SUNY has launched PRODiG⁶ (Promoting Recruitment, Opportunity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Growth) with a goal to increase HURM faculty and Women in Stem (WSTEM) to better reflect the diversity of its students; and

WHEREAS hiring, retaining, and promoting underrepresented faculty requires significant commitment by campus administration, faculty, and faculty committees involved in these processes; and

WHEREAS campus Professional Development (PD) structures and Mentoring Programs (MP) play a significant role in campuses' abilities to hire, retain, and promote underrepresented faculty; and

WHEREAS current Professional Development funding often serves to promote an individual faculty's members research agenda and campus-wide PD programs often only offer general pedagogical instruction and classroom management strategies; and

WHEREAS Mentoring Programs often serve the department or school as a way of transitioning new hires into existing structures and practices and do not focus on supporting the strengths and values new faculty bring to the campus; and

WHEREAS many faculty are hesitant to participate in campus-wide PD and MP because they play an insignificant role in a faculty member's continuing appointment or promotion consideration, especially at campuses which emphasize research and publication (i.e. "publish or perish"); and

WHEREAS Scholarly Ability is a valuable and integral part of a campus' identity but is only one of five areas that may be considered for retention, continuing appointment, and promotion according to Board of Trustees policies⁷; and

WHEREAS according to SUNY Human Resources,⁸ Academic Rank appointees are described through nine different categories and only one is "conduct research" and "publish findings" the other eight focus on teaching and service; and

WHEREAS PD and MP provide value to the campus, can increase student retention, support new and HURM faculty and WSTEM, and require faculty to engage all five areas of faculty evaluation (Mastery of subject matter, Effectiveness in teaching, Scholarly Ability, Effectiveness in University service, and Continuing growth) suggested by the BOT; and

WHEREAS without a significant rethinking of traditional practices which maintain a dominant focus on publication and discount the importance of the other four areas, SUNY will continue to limit pathways to retention, continuing appointment, and promotion:

⁶ <https://www.suny.edu/prodig/>

⁷ <https://system.suny.edu/media/suny/content-assets/documents/boardoftrustees/SUNY-BOT-Policies-June2014.pdf> (p. 53)

⁸ <https://www.suny.edu/hr/compensation/unclassified/other/academic-rank-titles/>

RESOLUTION:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Chancellor direct college presidents to work with Provosts and CGL's to review campus continuing appointment/promotion policies to ensure a process that aligns with the inclusivity goals of SUNY; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Chancellor direct college presidents to work with CGL's to ensure faculty continuing appointment/promotion pathways encompass all five areas of faculty evaluation suggested by the Board of Trustees Policies from June 2014⁹; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Chancellor direct college presidents to require written expectations for continuing appointment/promotion be developed for each new tenure-track hire as part of their onboarding process.

⁹ <https://system.suny.edu/media/suny/content-assets/documents/boardoftrustees/SUNY-BOT-Policies-June2014.pdf> (p. 53) - Now located at https://www.suny.edu/media/suny/content-assets/documents/boardoftrustees/SUNY_BOT_Policies_August2021.pdf, page 41.