

**University Faculty Senate  
Graduate Academic Programs and Research Committee  
Martin Kaczocha  
Year End Report  
June 3, 2020**

**Committee Charge**

The Committee serves as a source of professional advice and guidance to the Senate on matters relating to the quality, operation, and encouragement of graduate programs and research. To these ends, the committee may be concerned with the procedures, criteria, and support of existing and new graduate programs within the University. The Committee may review and recommend policies and procedures relating to moral and ethical concerns of research and graduate studies and other matters involving support and furtherance of research and graduate studies within the University.

**Committee Members 2019-2020**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Campus</b>	<b>Email</b>
Martin Kaczocha (Chair)	Stony Brook	martin.kaczocha@stonybrook.edu
M. Scott Goodman	Buffalo State	goodmams@buffalostate.edu
Asif Ahmed	SUNY Polytechnic	asif.ahmed@sunypoly.edu
Eric Eisenbraun	SUNY Polytechnic	eeisenbraun@sunypoly.edu
Elizabeth Bradley	Empire State College	elizabeth.bradley@esc.edu
Michael Figuccio	Farmingdale	figuccm@farmingdale.edu
Lee Graham	Oneonta	grahamml@oneonta.edu
Jennifer Rosseland-Bates	University at Buffalo	jmr1@buffalo.edu
Katherine Thweatt	Oswego	katherine.thweatt@oswego.edu
Laura Martello-Rooney	Downstate Health Sciences	laura.martello-rooney@downstate.edu
Samir Haj-Dahmane	University at Buffalo	sh38@buffalo.edu
Sergios-Orestis Kolokotronis	Downstate Health Sciences	sok@downstate.edu

**Research Foundation Liaison**

Kathleen Caggiano-Siino	Research Foundation	kathleen.caggiano-siino@rfsuny.org
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**SUNY Staff Liaisons**

Ann Hawkins	SUNY Admin	ann.hawkins@suny.edu
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**Student Liaison**

James Vassallo	Stony Brook	james.vassallo@stonybrook.edu
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**Summary of Committee Actions since Winter Plenary**

- Graduate Student Showcase at the Legislative Office Building.
  - The graduate student showcase was held on February 7<sup>th</sup> 2020. The topic for the showcase was “Artificial Intelligence, Data Misuse, and Deepfakes”. Four graduate students presented their research to legislative aides. The students were: Yuezun Li from the University at Albany who presented on “Detecting AI-Synthesized Fake Faces”, Charuta Pethe from Stony Brook University who presented on “Identifying a subject's most characteristic tweets”,

Ehab AlBadawy from University at Albany who presented on “Detecting AI-Synthesized Speech In Real-World Scenarios”, and Shirin Feiz Disfani from Stony Brook University who presented on “Empowering Blind People to Independently Fill-out Paper Forms”.

- Intellectual Property and Tenure/Promotion Decisions.
  - Tenure and promotion decisions (TPDs) rely heavily on scholarship activities, which typically refers to publications in peer-reviewed journals. Although tenure and promotion criteria are campus specific, it has been brought to the committee’s attention that patent-generating scholarly activities may not be adequately considered in PTDs within the SUNY system. This in turn would disenfranchise faculty who engage in patent-generating research activities. However, it has also been brought to the committee’s attention that giving greater credit to patents in TPDs could inadvertently incentivize faculty to file patent applications that have little merit and a low chance of commercialization. This would swamp technology transfer offices with poor quality patent applications and dramatically increase institutional costs. The committee has reached a temporary impasse on the issue but may decide to launch a survey of stakeholders to determine whether any system-wide efforts to address this issue are warranted.
- Increasing Collaborations Within SUNY.
  - Martin Kaczocha and Kathleen Caggiano-Siino engaged in a discussion with Grace Wang about developing mechanisms to foster research collaborations between institutions within the SUNY system. The committee was informed that SUNY and the Research Foundation are launching system-wide consortia designed to connect faculty from SUNY institutions to conduct research projects focusing on singular topics of special interest. The first consortium, “SUNY Curing Alzheimer's Health Consortium”, was recently announced. Additional consortia that will focus on topics such as drug addiction and artificial intelligence have been proposed.
- Elsevier Contract.
  - In collaboration with the Operations Committee, we drafted a resolution in support of the SUNY team negotiating a new contract with Elsevier, which was subsequently passed at the Fall Plenary.
- Chancellor’s Graduate Research Scholarship.
  - The SUNY Chancellor’s Graduate Research Scholarship was launched last year with the intended goal of rewarding undergraduate and graduate students who successfully compete for national fellowships and continue their graduate studies within the SUNY system. The committee has noted that the Scholarship has not been widely advertised and is working on identifying mechanisms to more effectively disseminate such information to graduate program directors and graduate students. The committee is also soliciting input from Susan Brennan (Stony Brook University) about the possibility of developing and deploying SUNY-wide grant writing seminars to aid students in submitting competitive NIH F31/F30 proposals.