

Communications Committee

Report Date: 1 June 2021

Presented at: 2021 UFS Summer Planning Meeting

Charge:

The committee will seek to implement and continually enhance methods of internal and external communication in order to disseminate news in a timely manner. Media techniques can include traditional press releases and social media platforms, as well as informal methods such as senator reports to local senates. The goal will be to inform our constituents across SUNY and, when applicable, news outlets, legislators and others about faculty and staff concerns and views on topical and continuing issues.

2020-21 Committee Members:

Chair: Joe Marren, Buffalo State (resigned, April 2021)

Acting Chair: Peter Knuepfer, Binghamton

Members:

- **Alithia Alleyne, Downstate Medical**
- **Sarah Battaglia, Stony Brook**
- **Tim Gerken, Morrisville**
- **Justin Giordano, Empire State**
- **Keith Landa, Purchase, UFS Vice President (ex officio)**
- **Leo Rosales, SUNY System Administration Liaison**
- **Pamela Wolfskill, Stony Brook**
- **Jie Zhang, Brockport**

Committee Goals for 2020-21:

- Redesign the online Bulletin into a more nimble publication, with a mix of short timely pieces and longer thought pieces
- Develop a well defined process for submitting pieces to the Bulletin for publication: repurposing material from other campuses
- Continue the development and dissemination of post-Plenary reports
- Interview Chancellor Malatras on his priorities for SUNY
- Establish a UFS presence in SUNY Workplace
- Contribute to timely topics, including the three “committees squared”: COVID impact on schools, Black Lives Matter, role of campus police
- Support communication efforts of other UFS committees
- Support the President in external communication (e.g. press releases)

Committee meeting dates (include type of meeting):

The Committee met via Zoom on January 29 and on March 18.

Committee accomplishments in 2020-21:

Our focus throughout this year has been to reimagine and reinvigorate the UFS Bulletin. We renamed/rebranded it as UFS Connects, which is located on the UFS website [here](#). The intent of this rebranding of the Bulletin is to provide the UFS community, and other interested parties, with timely and/or in depth blog posts, official communications, reflections, etc. about issues related to SUNY, shared governance, and higher education more broadly. We encourage submissions for the page.

The committee developed the following process for reviewing submissions: (1) a potential submission is forwarded to the Chair; (2) within a couple of days the submission is made available to all committee members; (3) committee members review and recommend publication and/or possible modifications within a week; approval by a majority of the committee members is needed; (4) the article is either returned to the author(s) to consider the committee's recommendation(s) if any changes are requested or submitted to the UFS VP/Secretary for posting on the website.

The committee will continue to work on a document that will provide guidelines for authors on how to submit items for UFS Connects. Committee members also will be reaching out to request possible submissions.

We did not conduct an interview with Chancellor Malatras this year, but hope to do so as he completes his first year in office in August, and as we look beyond the Covid response to longer term goals for SUNY.

After considerable discussion, the committee decided to defer establishing a UFS presence on SUNY's Workplace platform. We consider this a lower priority at this time, particularly given complexities in deciding how to set up and monitor a UFS group, but we will re-examine this decision in the coming year.

Members of the committee contributed to discussions among the three "committees squared" and supported the President in framing her communications, especially in UFS Connects.