

**SUNY University Faculty Senate
Student Life Committee
Amy Rosen-Brand, Chair
Annual Report
June 1, 2021**

Committee Charge

The Committee will be concerned with significant educational, developmental, social, cultural and recreational policies, programs, issues and services that affect the quality of student life and the campus environment of the State University of New York.

Committee Members 2020-2021

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Summary of Committee Actions Academic Year fall 2020- spring 2021

Much of the work was impacted by the pandemic.

The chief issue we were working on through the year was developing a resolution for SUNY wide dedicated holistic campus space.

1. Dedicated Holistic Campus Space Issues – Via SLC Subcommittee, Resolution brought forward at the spring plenary 2021. Focus was to have SUNY UFS support to designate, develop, and maintain a dedicated multi-purpose space on campus for private student holistic well-being needs (e.g., spiritual practice, meditation). The resolution also supported developing online meeting space for private student well-being needs. Motion passed and is included at the end of this report.
2. SUNY Old Westbury’s College Senate passed a resolution to change campus use of the word “freshmen” and any related derivatives to “first year student” and other similar language to more accurately describe the diverse student body. Our committee looked at this and generally supported it. We determined, with the assistance of SUNY System Student Life, that most campuses have “first year student” wording currently. Aspirational, we also wished to have input from the Student Assembly as to support, which we did not have as we did not have an active student member of our committee. SA participation is in flux currently due to pandemic and change in leadership. This matter continues to remain pending, but formal support does not appear necessary.
3. We were considering development of a resolution to mirror an anticipated spring 2021 FCCC resolution on state funding of campus childcare centers. We were exploring bringing this forward as a possible spring 2021 resolution for consideration, if there was an FCCC resolution approved by that body. The timing of the resolution would be made relative to the established state budget process. We had a subcommittee ready to work on this issue should more extensive examination have been needed. Our support of such FCCC Campus and Student Life resolution is not needed as New York State has provided funding for this in the current budget.

Amy Rosen-Brand serves as the UFSSLC liaison to the group.

Additionally, the SLC is actively participated in the following UFS subcommittees:

Pandemic Committee: This committee examined impacts of the pandemic on campuses, from student life to course delivery, from shared governance to accessibility, from research to communication.

Black Lives Matter Committee:

This committee considered the ethical, curricular, operational and student implications of Black Lives Matter.

University Police

This committee reviewed and suggested the appropriate role for University Police. In particular, questions of when the police versus other entities (student services, human resources) might be deployed.

Two UFS SLC committee members serve on each committee.

All subcommittees and ad hoc committees remained active in their work throughout the year.

All faculty/staff committee members were active and involved during the year. All the members are welcomed to return for the next academic year.

Resolution: Holistic Student Space

TO: SUNY University Faculty Senate
FROM: Student Life Committee
RE: Resolution: Holistic Student Space
DATE: 188th Plenary, April 22-24, 2021
LOCATION: Online
RESOLUTION #: 188-02-1
VOTE TALLY: For: 41 / Against: 5 / Abstain: 3

RATIONALE:

WHEREAS the mission of the State University of New York (SUNY) system commits SUNY to offering “the broadest possible access” and being “fully representative of all segments of the population” with a “comprehensive program of higher education” that meets the needs of “traditional and non-traditional students” through careful development and “balance of its human and physical resources;”¹ and

WHEREAS SUNY’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy codifies that SUNY “needs a multi-pronged approach to addressing diversity and assuring inclusive excellence” and “it must implement best practices to attract and retain diverse students, faculty, staff, and administrative leaders,” that includes implementing “programs and strategies to establish a welcoming environment for all;”² and

WHEREAS higher education literature suggests the critical role college environments play in student development³, people’s sense of mattering⁴ and belonging⁵, and retention of students⁶, faculty, and staff; and

WHEREAS behavioral health literature suggests isolation causing anxiety and stress is increasing in U.S. society, and such isolation is exacerbated in college students when communal non-curricular spaces on campuses are limited, both in general and during specific emergency situations such as during the recent COVID crisis when communal spaces were closed entirely, and

WHEREAS various SUNY initiatives, such as PRODIG⁷ and the Student Mental Health and Wellness Task Force⁸ have been developed to attract, retain, and support students; and

WHEREAS a survey conducted by the UFS Student Life Committee in the Fall of 2019 of SUNY state-operated campuses indicated that there are multiple campuses that do not provide a dedicated multi-purpose space on campus for private student holistic well-being needs (e.g., spiritual practice, meditation space)

¹ <https://www.suny.edu/about/mission/>

² https://www.suny.edu/sunypp/documents.cfm?doc_id=804

³ Astin, A. (1987) “Student Involvement: A Developmental Theory for Higher Education,” Journal of College Student Personnel, 25.

⁴ Schlossberg, N. (1989) “Marginality and Mattering: Key Issues in Building Community.” New Directions for Student Services, 48,

⁵ Strayhorn, T. (2018) College Students’ Sense of Belonging, 2nd ed. New York: Routledge

⁶ Tinto, V. (1987) Leaving College: Rethinking the Causes and Cures of Student Attrition, 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

⁷ <https://www.suny.edu/prodig/>

⁸ <https://www.suny.edu/suny-news/press-releases/10-19/10-10-19-student-mental-health-task-force/index.html>

RESOLUTION:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the SUNY University Faculty Senate requests the Chancellor to direct campus presidents to designate, develop, and maintain a dedicated fully accessible, multi-purpose space on campus for private student holistic well-being needs (e.g., spiritual practice, meditation, or other self care), and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the SUNY University Faculty Senate requests the Chancellor to direct campus presidents to develop and maintain a dedicated fully accessible, secure multi-purpose online meeting space for student well-being needs, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the University Faculty Senate requests the Chancellor to direct campus presidents to create a plan to broadly advertise these spaces, assess the spaces for appropriateness and usage, and to use assessment data for the continued maintenance and refinement of these spaces to best meet student needs.