

## Undergraduate Council 2020-2021 Report

Submitted By Hanna Nekvasil, Chair

The Undergraduate Council of the University Senate played a particularly important role in joint governance during the 2020-21 academic year as the university transitioned to new leadership at the presidential and provostial levels and adopted a new administrative hierarchy for Undergraduate Education. This added to the challenges that came with the continuing Covid-19 protection requirements and their impact on instruction.

We applaud the efforts of Senate President Larson for make the UGC an integral part of the advisory system when changes to Undergraduate programs are being considered that potentially impact undergraduates across the colleges. The UGC had a particular active and dedicated set of members who took each task seriously and professionally. These members for the 2020-2021 academic year were Hanna Nekvasil, Chair; Srineeth Jayanthi, Deborah Serling, Jason Trelewicz, Deborah Zelizer, Norman Goodman, Kenneth Faulkner, Rachelle Germana, Judith Lockhead, Andrew Platt, Kevin McDonnell, Christine Pitoccco, Liz Montegary, Jacqueline Rowe, Brenda Anderson, Diane Bello, Sandra Brennan, Jennifer Dellaposta, Srinivas Pentyala, Jennifer DeVito, Peter Gergen, and Arlene Feldman. This mix of faculty and staff and students was invaluable in allowing the Senate Members to understand in detail the implications of proposed changes for our undergraduates. I cannot thank them enough for their service and dedication!

Discussions/meetings of particular note:

- **Discussion /assessment of proposed grading changes.** This included considerations of extension of G/P/NC deadlines, raising the credit limit during winter semester and procedures for petitions, etc.
- **Interviews of candidates for the position of Vice Provost for Curriculum and Undergraduate Education.**
- **Meetings with Interim Provost Fotis and Vice Provost for Curriculum and Undergraduate Education Elisabeth Newman** with a focus on the role of the UGC.
- **Assessment of proposed SBC Learning Outcomes changes.**
- **Assessment of changes to Move-UP/Drop-Down courses** to provide a clearer mechanism for this process and give students a better understanding of the implications of doing this.
- **Discussion and recommendations for the SOMAS 3+3 program with Pace Law School.** This provided a guide for SOMAS to develop a full proposal for submission through the appropriate channels.
- **Consideration of College of Business Proposal to Deactivate and/or Discontinue Program.** This was particularly useful as it stopped the process before an important program was closed accidentally.

- Discussion of **UFS Plenary Resolution 187-04-1 University Faculty Senate Recognizes and Supports Black Lives Matter** and consensus statement preparation and submission.
- Discussion and consensus statement development for the **Revised SUNY Policy on the Award of Academic Credit by Evaluation**. The UGC discussion was of particular relevance as it could draw upon the staff participants that were familiar with our current procedures.

### **Chair's commentary**

This year was marked by a positive change in the administrative view of joint governance. It is vital that this continue. The UGC will have to focus on specific outreach to Vice Provost Newman, to continue this trend. She must be reminded periodically that she can reach out directly to us, or through the Senate President, for our comments on proposed policy changes *before* decisions are made.

The presence of staff such as Arlene Feldman, Deb Serling, and Jenn Dellaposta added immeasurably to the knowledge base of the Senate voting members of the Council. I made a particular effort to welcome them and show them the value of their input. I hope that this continues in the future.

The Covid-19 induced instructional modality changes have shown that we need to move forward with developing next-generation methods of instruction that incorporate the best of in-person and remote learning. The UGC would like to support efforts that give faculty the flexibility to do this and work with the administration to facilitate this.

The UGC will remain available during in the summer to take on tasks that come up. This is particularly important to keep the pipeline of information from and to the Senate flowing smoothly!