

**UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AT AMHERST  
OFFICE OF THE FACULTY SENATE**

**MINUTES:** Presiding Officer Frank Hugus called the 602<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Faculty Senate to order February 28, 2002 at 3:30 p.m. in Herter Hall 227.

A moment of silence was observed in memory of Professors Susan Duffy (2/14/02) and Haluk Derin (2/24/02) and Associate Provost Barbara Burn (2/24/02), who died this month.

**A. "BUDGET UPDATE" BY INTERIM CHANCELLOR MARCELLETTE WILLIAMS**

The full text of this address can be viewed online at  
<http://www.umass.edu/chancellor/announcements/facultysenate020228.html>

**QUESTIONS**

*Senator Brian O'Connor* asked Chancellor Williams to explain why the University has hired a new assistant football coach when such an action discredits all of the effort in the past few weeks to organize "Save UMass" and similar funding strategies.

*Interim Chancellor Williams* explained that the position has been vacant for 3 months, and that with Spring practice beginning, it was necessary to provide a defensive coordinator for the team. She then added that the new hire was in the most recent budget for athletics.

*Senator Marta Calas* stated, in response to Chancellor Williams' remarks, that the self-reflective approach in which the faculty is being asked to use in trying to evaluate and predict the fate of the University is a form of victimization in itself.

*Interim Chancellor Williams* responded that recently the University has found itself needing to be more responsive and more accountable, so that its advocates can effectively say what needs to be said. She stated with heightened advocacy comes a heightened attention to perceptions, however wrong they may be, that have been formed over the years.

*Senator Juan Zamora* stated that his colleagues in the Schools of Management and Engineering could be working for private enterprises, making twice the salary as they are making at UMass. He then pointed out that their devotion to education is keeping them here.

*Interim Chancellor Williams:* I agree completely. We know what keeps us here; we know what brought us here.

*Senator Jane Giacobbe-Miller* asked whether or not the President's Office is incurring the same degree of reduction in budget that the rest of the campuses are.

*Interim Chancellor Williams* responded that the President's Office has undergone the cut of its entire auditing unit. The elimination of that unit resulted in the layoffs of five to six people.

*Faculty Senate Secretary Ernest May* asked, given the uncertainty of future budgets, if the administration is going forward with planning for next year taking into account what they know about the budget so far and the rumors of what the budget could be if state revenues keep falling.

*Interim Chancellor Williams:* That unknown is the biggest source of frustration for me as Chancellor and for all of us in the executive advisory group because we know we have to plan. We know on the one hand we can plan for the imagined worst case scenario. We know the implications of planning that way. When I talk about dire, if we imagine worst case scenarios for next year, given all of the projections for even the most conservative of the planning indicators out there, it's almost too overwhelming to consider, but we have to plan.

One of the processes whereby we've engaged the planning, as you know, is having as much data as we possibly can to inform every decision that's made so that we never find ourselves in the position of needing to pause to get further information. When I spoke to the Senate in mid-December, I also hoped for a variety of strategies. The State's Early Retirement program was actually being discussed that day in the State House. I advocated for Early Retirement. It had never occurred to me that the outcome of the program would be so drastic for the University, but it makes sense from the legislature's and governor's perspective when reducing the number of state employees.

Daily we engage the question of how to live with an uncertainty that is crushing. There isn't a meeting that we have that it doesn't come up. So, fortunately or unfortunately, there are software programs that allow all kinds of scenarios to be run, and allow us to have a bottom line...Come July 1, this University is going to be faced with a budget number in which we'll need to operate. And however we will have gotten to July 1, with whatever strategies, flexibilities, planning attempts and scenarios, between now and then, we will arrive at July 1.

We will also have a curriculum to deliver come fall semester. This is the first semester that students can prepare for fall semester online. There are already courses listed. One of the things we may need to do is provide a transition period of a sort we've never mounted before. The good news, I think, is that we live in a Valley that's rich in intellectual capital of former retirees, not just those who may be taking advantage of the current system. From this campus and from the campuses in the consortium, as well as people who have moved to this valley from around the nation because they find in it the same attractions that we do. I'm as frustrated with not having that information as could be imagined.

**Senator Roland Chilton** asked Chancellor Williams if she had thought of offering incentives to those who have put in for Early Retirement to encourage them not to retire, as he heard President Bulger had done.

**Interim Chancellor Williams** responded that department heads, chairs, deans and the Provost routinely try to retain people they want to retain.

**Senator Chilton** asked if the administration has developed a timetable for narrowing down their options as far as budget strategies, with the intent of carrying out one of those strategies instead of waiting until June or July to come up with a plan.

**Interim Chancellor Williams:** In previous years that I've been here, I've always been aware of the concerns and the suspicions that the administration times things to occur at a time when faculty and students aren't here. This is not the case. There are facts out there that are known, there are some that are unknown.

The Provost has set in motion different kinds of reviews that have been asked for at certain times. I would love to have them sooner, as would she, but there is but a point beyond which one simply cannot contract anymore in terms of time for discussion and processing things. So, as you heard me mention earlier, one thing that may happen is a longer transition period. Since we know that we have students in majors, we have programs and departments, we have tenure, we have commitments around grants, we know that nothing happens instantly in academic affairs with regard to the things I just mentioned. So, there are transition plans that can be put in motion, both in terms of money and in terms of programs or any other aspect of this campus. We know it can't happen overnight.

The entire campus is under review, not just academic affairs. At the last Senate meeting, I had commented that there was a review underway in Athletics, and had hoped that there would be an outcome that we could announce sooner, rather than later. Athletics is not the only other part of the campus, either. There are many other executive areas as well, and in each of those other areas, the scrutiny and the review that I'm talking about is ongoing. The timelines are different, again by virtue of the complexity of the units and the size of the units.

**Peter Tamas, President of the Graduate Student Senate** asked about rumors of other "incentivization" for retirement packages: one for trust-funders, the second for people who are not enticed by the early retirement, but perhaps are already maxed out on the plan.

**Interim Chancellor Williams** answered that there have been and still are discussions going on regarding additional incentives.

*President Tamas* asked if it would be reasonable, as a body charged with the academic mission of this university, to have faculty approach the faculty of other campuses and see what can be done as a system about meeting the educational needs of the state.

*Interim Chancellor Williams* stated that curriculum is the purview of the faculty, so discussions that emerge from the Academic Affairs vice presidency with the various provosts always goes back to the individual campuses.

*Senator Eric Einhorn* stated that the early retirement program is certainly better than laying off faculty, but that it doesn't increase the ability to deliver a curriculum. He wondered how the University could get closer to a state of stability when there are ongoing discussions of *additional* incentives that will downsize the faculty.

*Interim Chancellor Williams* stated that it's critical to have as much flexibility as possible when making internal decisions about faculty positions. The state's Early Retirement system disallowed that, but the program currently being discussed allows the campuses greater flexibility in decisions over funds, over the salaries of people choosing to act on that particular incentive.

***Senator Brian O'Connor* moved to suspend the rules in order to make a motion concerning the hiring of a new assistant football coach.**

**This motion was seconded and passed.**

**WHEREAS the University is currently facing its greatest financial challenge of its history, and**

**WHEREAS the faculty and staff ranks may be decreased by as many as four hundred, and**

**WHEREAS the faculty, staff and students are mobilizing whatever resources possible to help ward off the potential irreparable damage to the academic mission and reputation of the University, and**

**WHEREAS the primary mission of the University is academic,**

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT: The Faculty Senate condemn the decision of the administration to approve the recent hiring of an assistant football coach.**

*Senator O'Connor* stated that the hiring of a new coach is sending the wrong message at the wrong time. Right now the University should be working to send the message that its mission is *academic* and not athletic.

*Senator Jack Tager* spoke in support of the motion, recalling that two searches for faculty in the History department have been suspended, even though internationally recognized professors applied for the positions. He added that the new assistant football coach is probably making twice as much money as the two assistant History professors would have.

*Senator Surinder Mehta* recalled that at the last meeting the Senate passed a motion recommending a reduction in the Athletic Department budget by \$2 million over the next four years. He then asked what the Chancellor thought of that motion since the decision to hire a new coach did not reflect the intent of the motion.

*Interim Chancellor Williams* stated that she regretted not having the chance to make an announcement concerning reductions in athletics at the last Senate meeting. She added that once the cuts that need to be made in particular units have been identified, decisions about flexibilities--hiring being one of them--can responsibly be made.

*Senator Arthur Kinney* stated that the academic part of the campus will be cut by 10% over the next two-year period. He then asked what percentage the Athletic Department would be cut by.

*Interim Chancellor Williams* stated that Athletics will be cut by 10 percent, while Academic Affairs will be cut by 5%.

*Senator Richard Bogartz* stated that it would be useful to the University for budget scenarios to be made public at the earliest possible time, rather than kept in committee. Notifying the public and the legislature that the University might have to cut football or Chemistry or Physics or Computer Sciences would help to make them aware of what's actually going on in the University.

## **B. ANNUAL REPORT**

**Annual Report of the University Ombuds Office for the Period July 1, 2000 to June 30, 2001, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 02-024.**

**This report was received by the Faculty Senate.**

## **C. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **1. Principal Administrative Officers**

*Interim Provost Charlena Seymour* stated that plans are being made to reschedule the meeting for the Deans and Heads to May 3, so that activities discussed at that particular meeting can be further discussed at subsequent Rules Committee and the Faculty Senate meetings that week.

### **2. The Secretary of the Faculty Senate**

*Secretary May* stated that there are four ad hoc committees in operation right now: the Ad Hoc Committee on Admissions Practices and Minority Recruitment, the Ad Hoc Committee on Undergraduate Education, the recently formed Ad Hoc Committee on Sustainability and the Alcohol Abuse Task Force. They all function with the joint participation of administrators, faculty, staff and students, and are all effective.

He then reported that the search for a new Chancellor has fallen about one and a half to two weeks behind schedule, so candidates will not be on campus until early April. Finally, he congratulated the MSP and the Save UMass committee on taking political action to lobby the legislature and to get students and parents involved, but warned that in order to effectively deliver a message, that message must not be totally negative.

### **3. The Faculty Delegates to the Board of Trustees**

*Faculty Delegate O'Connor* mentioned that at the Feb. 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Committee of the Whole, Vice President Selma Botman organized a panel on how technology has changed instruction at the five campuses of the University. It generated a great deal of questions to the presenters from the trustees, and the outcome was that online instruction is not the answer to the University's problems.

## **D. QUESTION PERIOD**

*Secretary May* asked Provost Seymour if the administration has a strategy for integrating the assessment of current programs with the assessment of new programs such as the Intercampus Graduate School of Marine Sciences and Technology, the Information Technology Minor, and the Biomedical Engineering Program.

*Interim Provost Seymour* answered that there are procedures and policies in place for the evaluation of all academic programs, and that these same policies and procedures will still be used to evaluate new and existing programs.

*Interim Chancellor Williams* agreed with Provost Seymour's statement, and added that at the last President's Council meeting, a delay in decisions about funding for new programs in the next period was discussed.

*Peter Tamas* asked if the President's Office would be determining the merit of new intercampus programs with that of existing programs on campus.

*Interim Chancellor Williams* responded that no, the curriculum is the purview of the faculty.

*Secretary May* stated that the faculty do have primary responsibility for the curriculum, but the administrative units within which the curricula reside is the primary responsibility of the administration. He then mentioned that the Intercampus Faculty Council, consisting of leaders of the Faculty Senates on all the campuses, and which meets after each trustee meeting, exists to discuss these issues while the Board of Trustees and the different campuses are divided on the merits of master planning.

**The 602<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Faculty Senate stood adjourned at 5:03 p.m. February 28, 2002.**

**Respectfully submitted by Ernest May, Secretary of the Faculty Senate.**

**The Proceedings of this meeting are available on audiotape at the Faculty Senate Office dated February 28, 2002.**