Presiding Officer W. Brian O’Connor called the 728th Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate to order on May 9, 2013 at 3:30 p.m. in Herter Hall, Room 227.

A. ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Principal Administrative Officers

Provost James Staros shared some data from Enrollment Management regarding the incoming class. He decided to share this because it has been a particularly controversial issue that has included some spurious charges about diversity on campus. Comparing data regarding deposited students from the current first-year class and the incoming first-year class, we see that the ALANA population of the current first-year class, excluding international students, is 20.9%. The University has been sitting at around 21% for the past few years. The ALANA population for the incoming first-year class is 23.2%. That is a 10% increase in the total ALANA population on a year-to-year basis. Looking at a couple of the subtotals, we have currently deposited 137 students who identify themselves as Black/Afro-American, compared to 128 last fall. We have an increase in self-identified Hispanic only students from 70 to 75; Hispanic/Multiple from 133 to 151; Multiple Non-Hispanic from 114 to 143. Category by category, we are going up. It is important to share this information because it is an issue in the strategic plan and because the issue has been raised publicly with claims that have no bearing in truth.

2. The Secretary of the Faculty Senate

Ernest May, Secretary of the Faculty Senate, thanked the SGA for its report on FBS Football. It was a very thoughtful and balanced report. It refrained from making any definitive statements, but called for very sensible further study.

As soon as the semester ends, the Rules Committee is empowered to approve, on behalf of the Faculty Senate, a number of items of routine business that did not make it onto the agenda for the meeting of May 2. These actions will be reported on at the first meeting of the academic year in September.

This meeting is devoted to the strategic planning process. Secretary May has had plenty of opportunities to participate, so he will concentrate on listening.

Unrelated to strategic planning, an issue came up recently in the Boston Globe. It has to do with the tragic circumstances that happened in Boston and had some involvement with UMass Dartmouth students. This could have happened on virtually any campus, but it did happen on a UMass campus. There are issues of institutional responsibilities that are raised, and UMass will have to deal with them on all campuses. These issues include federal privacy laws and the question of leaks. It is okay to share some information with law enforcement, but not the public. Apparently a UMass Dartmouth faculty member has been disciplined for this. The Globe goes on, in a column, to discuss the stewardship of taxpayer dollars, tuition payment policies, what happens regarding bad grades with international students, the invalidation of visas, etcetera. Federal policies on these issues seem to have tightened up immediately as a result of this incident at UMass Dartmouth. The columnist asked if we are putting up with bad students who don’t pay their bills, get terrible grades, and smoke marijuana. We do not want anti-social behavior by students becoming the UMass signature, so we need to work on the appropriate antidotes. Secretary May is sure that the administration and the Rules Committee will be thinking about this over the summer.

3. The Chair of the Rules Committee

Joseph Bartolomeo, Chair of the Rules Committee, thanked the members of the Rules Committee for their insight, their diligence, and their collegiality over the year. He also thanked Ernest May, Secretary of the Faculty Senate, for his extraordinary dedication to the Senate, to shared governance, and to this campus.
4. The Faculty Delegates to the Board of Trustees

*Marilyn Billings, Associate Delegate to the Board of Trustees,* reminded the Senate that the Board of Trustees meetings would take place in June: on the 5\textsuperscript{th}, 12\textsuperscript{th}, and 19\textsuperscript{th}. Those meetings will be reported on at the first meeting in the fall.

B. QUESTION PERIOD (10-Minute Limit)

*Senator Richard Bogartz* commented on the *Globe* article. He noted that someone has to call it crap. He doesn’t know why the task always falls to him, but the article is a vile smear of a great University.

*Presiding Officer O’Connor* asked if the article was anything new. Unfortunately, it is typical of the *Globe.* The *Globe* hates UMass. As a former president once said, “The *Globe* is like the *Herald* with verbs.”


*(Nancy Cohen, Bryan Harvey, and Amilcar Shabazz, Co-Chairs)*

MOVED: That the Faculty Senate receive the report by the Joint Task Force on Strategic Oversight, *Innovation and Impact: Renewing the Promise of the Public Research University,* with thanks and appreciation for the contributions of the many participants. The Faculty Senate specifically supports the report’s broad goals of establishing UMASS/Amherst as a “destination of choice for the next generation of the Commonwealth’s high school graduates” and as an “investment of choice in the Commonwealth’s and nation’s future.” The Faculty Senate recognizes and applauds the fact that this was the first strategic planning process in the institution’s history that was genuinely collaborative among faculty, students and administration, and it looks forward to continued collaboration as the campus moves into Phase II of the planning process during academic year 2013/2014.

*Amilcar Shabazz, Faculty Advisor to the Chancellor for Diversity and Excellence and Co-Chair of the Joint Task Force on Strategic Oversight,* noted that he and the other co-chairs of the Joint Task Force on Strategic Oversight would take a few short moments to open the discussion of the motion and speak to the merits of the motion and the process that the Task Force has been engaged in. There have been a number of people involved in the process, some of whom are listed in the presentation. Even before thinking of the many people who have played a role in moving this conversation and work forward over the past six months, the process should be situated. It has been a great year. It was the year of the launching of UMass Rising, a great campaign to raise money for the institution. The campaign is more than 50% of the way to its $300 million goal. It is a time of new, dynamic leadership on the campus. It is also a time of historical reflection; a time when we look back over the hundred and fifty years that this institution has been serving the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the world. It is an international campus. From William Clark, President of what was then the Massachusetts Agriculture College from 1867 to 1879, who went on to develop higher education in Japan and who launched this institution with the very strong sense of serving the world, onward, the University of Massachusetts has been international, and it certainly does not want to take any step back from that. Professor Shabazz says to the *Globe,* in the way the Roman Senate of old said *Carthago delenda est,* “*Globe delenda est,*” but that might be going too far. Senator Bogartz said it best. This is a time when we look at our history. Looking at diversity, we can look back at our yearbooks from more than a century ago and see students who *Plessy v. Ferguson* said, if they go anywhere, they should go to separate Black institutions; that was constitutional; the law said it was okay to separate them out from state institutions of higher education. When the Supreme Court sanctioned that, this institution was already admitting African Americans; it was admitting the very people that the country and the constitution said should not be going to school with whites; people that it was deemed legal to bar from going to school with everyone else, not just whites, but all races. This is a time of reflecting on that history. We should consider why we are here and talk about how our environment is changing rapidly. This issue should be thought of over a hundred and fifty years.
A banner was recently hung on campus that asked, “Why did Amherst College admit more Black students than UMass this year?” That is shamelessly wrong, shamelessly erroneous, just factually untrue. But we can think about where this is coming from. The Joint Task Force did an exercise over the past six months generating a word map from the strategic plan. In that word map, “diversity” did not even make it as a small term. And yet we set diversity out as a cross-cutting theme. In our charge, we said we wanted to look at this. Yet, midway through the process, it wasn’t even showing up on the word map. Professor Shabazz regrets removing that word map from the slides because where the University really exists is in the gaps between the words, the white spaces. All of the questions, all of the tensions, all of the issues that the strategic planning document hasn’t addressed are still here: they are in the white spaces of the word map, and we have to think about how, as we go forward, do we hear all of the voices and make a more representative document. Some units of the campus are already organized around a clear-cut vision of the things they think this University needs, while there may be other colleges or departments or units that are not so organized. Some of their voices are not in here as much. They are not taking up as many words. But they are in the white spaces, they are not missing. The issue is how we charge ourselves, going forward, to think about the creative tensions in this document vis-à-vis our rapidly changing environment. We have to decide what to do about it because others have noticed UMass. They’ve noticed where our position is and have asked, “Where are you really going, UMass Amherst? What are you planning for? Who are you and who do you hope to be?” Specifically, our accreditors require us to report on a strategic plan by August 15 and stakeholders at all levels want to know how we are adapting to change. And so here we began the discussion six months ago. We wanted to look at public impact through innovation as part of our thinking; of course, our core mission of research and scholarship, of teaching and learning—we said, “Let’s look at that”; as well as how we’re involved—from that old land grant mission to now—in outreach and community service. We looked at the data points and saw things about ourselves. We are clear on who we are. And it is clear that the edifice is not so strong.

From the financial standpoint of state resources, federal resources, and what students are paying the campus, the model is strained. The basic organizing model, that convergence of the immersive residential experience at the undergraduate- and graduate-level together in a rich research environment, cannot be sustained if we do not adapt. We have to think strategically, look ahead, and consider how we’re moving, who we are, and where we’re going.

The first broad area identified by the Task Force was destination of choice. The University needs to become more effective at demonstrating value to those who hold a stake in our success and it needs to operate effectively in this new and much more challenging resource environment. UMass needs to be the clear choice for the many talented, highly-motivated students in this, the so-called education state. It needs to make this immersive residential experience part of a destination of choice. Other key tasks need to be addressed, as well, in order to define what makes a UMass Amherst education distinctive. A lot of discussion has been ongoing concerning curricular innovation in order to create the capacity for educational effectiveness. Other issues include identifying the paths to success that UMass succeeds at and outcomes assessment in general.

A second broad area is investment of choice. We need to be part of the Commonwealth’s and the nation’s future. The Task Force saw various themes emerge in discussions that are now reflected in the document, including excellence in research and graduate education, community engagement and impact, and many more. These are broad areas that make UMass Amherst an investment of choice.

Thirdly, the Task Force looked at how to mobilize for success, studying the financial strategies and work that are necessary to sustain the campus.

Nancy Cohen, Professor of Nutrition and Co-Chair of the Joint Task Force on Strategic Oversight, noted that the 31-member Joint Task Force on Strategic Oversight was appointed in October 2012. Many members of the Task Force are associated with the Faculty Senate. Many individuals who are not specifically part of the Joint Task Force were also involved in the processes. The Joint Task Force was charged to make recommendations to the Chancellor with respect to a high-level strategic plan. The Chancellor asked for this draft in time for campus review and comment. Four main committees comprised the Joint Task Force, and each of those committees had many subcommittees. All in all, over 130 individuals on the campus were part of the various committees. The Phase One draft was released on March 27. This document and others were available on the Provost’s Strategic Planning website. A blog link was set up for comments. When Professor
Cohen printed out the comments, there were over 100 pages of them. More recommendations were sent in to an email account set up by the Joint Task Force. Four public forums were held, three in person and one being a webinar featuring the Chancellor. The online forum was recorded and available for viewing after the event by UMass community members with a NetID. Moreover, comments were solicited from every Faculty Senate Council and Committee. Many presentations were given to a variety of campus groups. Many presentations were made by various JTFSO members. Along with the four public forums, there were presentations given to every school and college, either through a head and chairs meeting or an all-faculty/all-school or all-college meeting. There were also presentations given to the Deans’ Council, numerous Faculty Senate Councils, the Graduate Student Senate, and the SGA Senate. It was a very widespread airing of the draft document.

The Joint Task Force reviewed all of the input from all of the various outlets and made significant changes to the document that was distributed in March. Besides doing things like increasing clarity and organization, the Joint Task Force made significant changes in the content of the document. The new document is much longer than the previous one. The Joint Task Force knew fairly early on that it did not have very much at all on the co-curricular and student life experience at UMass, even though that is a major part of the immersive residential experience of the University. There is now a much more fleshed out consideration of that now. There is also more material referencing graduate education and workforce development at the master’s and doctoral level. Diversity, access and inclusion was very important all along, but the Joint Task Force heard from the comments that it wasn’t infused to the importance that it needed to be. The revised document has much more in that area. Similarly, outreach and engagement are addressed more fully. Many people on the UMass campus are passionate about its land grant roots and the importance of engaged scholarship and engaged research. Additionally, internationalization and global issues are very important to the University, and those issues have been more fleshed out in the new document.

Because some of the comments have to do with what the document is, what is missing from it, and what it was meant to do, the Joint Task Force is hoping to clarify these issues by reiterating that this document is not a strategic plan. It is a Phase One document, an agenda-setting document that lays out broad goals for the campus. It challenges the campus to think about what makes UMass distinctive. Many of the comments noted that the document needed to clearly state what is special about UMass. That is a very important discussion to have, but the Joint Task Force did not feel it had the time to formulate a definitive response to that question. An important next step is bringing the campus together and identifying exactly what makes UMass a distinctive place.

The document also calls for focus on value to stakeholders, recognizing that many various stakeholders are interested in the University’s success and can support the University. This brings the conversation in setting priorities and examining how resources are allocated, but it is not a prescription at this point. Part of the next step, as well, is determining what each unit can do. How can each unit feed its strategic planning into the larger rubric? Again, that is not something that is spelled out in this document, but an important aspect to address in the next stage. At this point, the Joint Task Force has not identified any specific plans for priority staffing, organizational structure, or resource allocation. It is a broad agenda. The document is public, but really serves as a somewhat internal document. Some of the comments that the Joint Task Force received questioned who would read a 49-page strategic document. The document is not made for every alumni of the University, but is a launching point for communication that will be better targeted to those particular audiences. Right now, it is more of an internal document. While being our own conversation, it is able to be relayed into new methods of communication as we go forward.

This is not the end of the planning process. It is the beginning. This document acts as an agenda to follow going forward.

_Bryan Harvey, Associate Provost for Academic and Resource Planning and Co-Chair of the Joint Task Force on Strategic Oversight_, addressed the timeline of the planning process. So far, the Joint Task Force has been in the process of creating a draft and receiving feedback from the campus. This piece of the process has now concluded, because the campus now has a document to work with going forward. August 15 is the deadline for the campus to submit its fifth year intermediate report to its accreditors. One of the things the accreditors asked the University to do is report on its progress in developing a strategic plan. Now there is a Phase One report to cite. The campus will also refer to the fact that the process is going to continue. By the time the
As the Joint Task Force was putting this document together, the co-chairs were struck by the fact that there are so many types of great ideas and conflicting ideas and tensions that are present in the public research university today. It is going to be a great challenge moving forward and bringing all the units together. We have all of the notions associated with destination of choice: student outcomes; sorting out instructional supply and demand; ensuring inclusiveness, diversity and access; promoting engaged learning; among others. Along with that we have the notions associated with investment of choice: recommendations about research alignment and community engagement, understanding what graduate students are looking for, and all the rest of it. And then we have other considerations: the University’s mission and values, figuring out risk and reward, cost and benefit, identifying opportunities, efficiency and effectiveness, et cetera. All of these aspects have to come together as we move forward and as different groups on campus articulate how they see themselves fitting into the larger picture so as to allow the University to make the specific decisions about what has to happen in terms of setting priorities, forming programs and allocating resources.

The hope is that all of this can be pulled together and that the campus will be able to articulate that it should be an investment of choice. If this can happen, we will have a more competitive research profile, better recognized impact, and more expansive partnerships—all of which broaden the investment pool that sustains a lot of our research and community impact agenda. In terms of being a destination of choice, if we can make a lot of these improvements and demonstrate the value of our education with better recognized outcomes and greater student demand, then that bolsters a more sustainable enrollment strategy. At that point, we are in a position to continue to demonstrate leadership in our system, in the state, in the nation, and maybe we are
able to create a more solid funding base from the public. If we can sort out the alignment about where a lot of the public and community support for our research and scholarship program could be coming, then there could be much more stability. The federal government is going through a lot of changes trying to understand federal support; states are doing the same thing. It is extremely important that we have a long-term, sustainable strategy for the sharing of costs between the state and the students. The principles of the 50/50 plan seem to be gaining traction. It is extremely important to figure out what a fair and sustainable balance is between the state and the students. Otherwise, we are lurching from year to year in a way that does not allow us to do good planning. All of the creative things we do on campus, including the CPE programs and entrepreneurial activities that we have been and continue to create, need to be aligned in a way that allows us to be a better contributor to what we think is important.

All of these plans bring us back to our long-term mission: public impact through innovation.

Associate Provost Harvey thanked the Senate for its willingness to participate in the conversation both at this meeting and throughout the process. It was an interesting and eye opening experience for everyone involved. Diane Vayda was a tremendous help throughout the process, and Associate Provost Harvey thanked her for her work.

Senator Bogartz noted that, throughout this process, people would remark that they had seen strategic plans before, and they had come and gone, but that there was never anything like this one before. What they were talking about is the way this plan was created: the fact that the faculty was involved and taken seriously. He believes a profound gratitude and appreciation is owed to Chancellor Subbaswamy and Provost Staros for setting up this process in a way that allowed this collaboration. Everyone has had the opportunity to provide input and comment. No one knows what is going to happen in the next stage, but this stage deserves a “Bravo.”

Senator Max Page echoed Senator Bogartz’ sentiments regarding the process of this strategic plan. It was very different than previous strategic planning processes. It is great to have so much involvement and discussion. However, Senator Page wondered why three issues of grave concern were not addressed in an otherwise very good report. The first is that the UMA 250 Plan is not named in this strategic report. For several chancellors, since the MSP put it forward several years ago, the UMA 250 Plan has been named as a central goal of the campus in order to return the campus to where it was, with around 1200 full-time, tenure-system research faculty. Even the section on faculty hiring makes no mention to actual faculty hiring, only to retention. The University of Connecticut now has a 290 plan. That institution copied us and expanded on the idea in order to establish their university. The second concern is about embracing what Senator Page calls the accountability monster. He recognizes that we have to always be thinking that we want to be accountable and how to do things better, but the accountability movement that is currently occurring was not intended to help better fund public higher education or public life. When we dive into that and try to follow that lead, we are not helping ourselves. The third concern also relates to the accountability issue. Senator Page has never seen a closer articulation than this document to the idea that the University will have a pre-test and post-test. The document reads, “The next step is to build direct measures across the curriculum.” As Senator Page reads that, it feels like the University is heading towards a pre-test and post-test model. That model is being pushed for across the nation, but it would be very concerning to head in that direction at UMass Amherst.

Associate Provost Harvey stated that there is no mention of the UMA 250 Plan specifically, but that the campus budget plan still clearly addresses a commitment to increasing the faculty. The Joint Task Force did not acknowledge any specific number, but the notion of rebuilding and renewing the faculty is obviously going to continue. In the next phases, the Chancellor will have a chance to articulate what that will look like. Regarding accountability, the Faculty Senate and the administration formed a Joint Task Force on Accountability, including Associate Provost Harvey, Assistant Provost Martha Stassen, and MSP President Randall Phillips, among others. There has been more and more external demand for the University to prove its worth and show what it does concretely. Because of this, there has been a lot of concern among both the faculty and the administration about how to handle that. The Joint Task Force on Accountability has put together some interesting documents on the issue. The University has taken a very aggressive stand about suggesting that while we want to be accountable as a public institution, we have to be accountable in terms that mean something not only to the public but to what we do. One of the changes that occurred in this
document, because comments did arise, is that the Joint Task Force tried to make this as explicit as it could. The document states: “Our mission is to serve the public good. We must always be capable of demonstrating our success. There is no easy way to sum up what a public research university does and often little agreement on what constitutes value. Challenging though it may be, if we are to maintain public confidence and support, we need to find meaningful ways to display our performance. In so doing, we must remain true to our purposes and aspirations and to demonstrate the value of our values. As we embrace accountability we must also work to expand and enrich its language.” Associate Provost Harvey believes that to be a very important priority for the campus to pursue. There are a lot of dead ends and a lot of crossed purposes in some of the accountability issues the campus is facing. As a community of inquiry, we ought to be able to demonstrate why what we do is important not only to ourselves but to the world.

Senator Howard Peelle addressed a descriptor that might be considered: institutional learning. The term “adapt” has been used in many reports and presentations. We hear that UMass should be adaptive. Of course, UMass and other institutions of higher education are institutions of learning, meaning that that is what we expect to happen here. Senator Peelle suggested that UMass should proudly say that it is an institution that does learning, meaning that the institution responds to feedback. UMass should attend to the feedback systems. It should be conscious of what they are, be deliberate about setting them up, and pay attention to the feedback that it actually gets in order to be an institution that learns.

Senator Marta Calas noted that one of the things that really struck her in the report was its language. The language in which the report is written is very familiar to her. It is not familiar in terms of being similar to other planning documents, but in that it is a very managerial discourse. Much of it sounds like corporate discourse, like it could be the report of an organization that is not dedicated to learning. Very recently, Nigel Thrift, the Vice Chancellor of the University of Warwick and a regular contributor on international issues for the Chronicle of Higher Education, referenced the way universities have become beacons of public values that other types of institutions are unwilling to address. Usually universities are being told that they don’t change, and that they absorb resources that are needed elsewhere. What is not being addressed is that universities themselves, in the ways they conduct their “business” are, in fact, creating new forms, new models, and new ways of doing good. If UMass looked at itself reflectively and tried to come up with new language to express what it stands for—and not fall for the easy managerial language that is so conveniently located all around us—then maybe its unique public value would be recognized.

Senator Audrey Altstadt noted that the language question is very interesting and that Senator Calas’ comments that the report is in managerial language is important. What struck Senator Altstadt about the report were a couple of things. She really appreciated the good ideas and the good suggestions in the report, as well as all of the hard work that went into it. However, she is very distressed at the fact that she didn’t see language about intellectual and academic rigor. She only eventually saw any mention of a challenging academic experience on page 21. A couple things could have made this report much clearer in terms of all the good things that are in it. It is too long. There are so many lists and so much jargon. There are whole sentences that Senator Altstadt does not understand at all because of the jargon. The problem with this is that it did not make it very clear what the real vision was meant to be. A clearer statement of vision would allow everyone to get behind it much more thoroughly and willingly. A particular problem that Senator Altstadt had in the report, with regard to jargon, was the description on page 9 of the University as being “a higher education delivery system.” At first, she did not understand what that meant, so she asked herself what a delivery system is. UPS is a delivery system; and it’s a good delivery system. It receives a package, tracks it, delivers it where it’s supposed to—to a person who does whatever he or she wants with it. And that is not what we do at all. UPS does not create the product it delivers. It doesn’t make choices about what it delivers. UMass, on the other hand, creates knowledge. That is part of its distinctiveness. UMass creates priorities and makes choices. That is one of the strengths that researchers practice and are able to share with students in classes. Page 17 notes that there is a one-sidedness flaw to this, but Senator Altstadt thinks it is a lot more than one side. That comment is one of many things that Senator Altstadt thinks could be crossed out of the report, but apparently it is a final document. Senator Altstadt is concerned with the issue of priorities. The report should clearly state that this University has high standards and is about intellectual rigor. It was very distressing to see, in the PowerPoint presentation, that the University’s mission and values were listed under “other concerns.” If this is a final document, and there is nothing left to do to adjust it, then our attention on these intellectual issues should go into the next phase. The document and the presenters have said that
priorities have not been established, but as soon as you put words on paper, as soon as you make a list, you are implicitly saying what your priorities are. One way that we can demonstrate to the public that we are accountable, that we understand accountability and are capable of it, is by articulating that sense of rigor. Senator Altstadt may be thinking of this because she has been grading many exams and paper. If we are going to be upholding standards, then we are going to be writing Fs on some of those papers and exams. Senator Altstadt has written two Fs so far, and she is not done grading. That is a part of accountability that we don’t like to point out, but when Senator Altstadt gets an article back from an editor with a note that says, “Cut 20,000 words out of this,” or, “You can only have this much space,” or, “This isn’t clear,” or, “This has to be better,” Senator Altstadt addresses those issues. That is the real world. If we want to help our students be ready for the real world and show that we are accountable and do many other positive things, then rigor needs to be stated openly and stressed repeatedly.

Senator Frank Hugus stated that he was surprised, when he read the report, to see that there was very little about international issues. He was even more surprised to hear one of the co-chairs mention that there was even less in the first iteration. Everything that Senator Hugus does and has done in his professional career has been related to international issues. He takes it very seriously, so he is glad to see that someone else was thinking along the same lines as he does. He had a few specific suggestions as to what UMass Amherst might do in order to be more international and more interdisciplinary, as some of UMass’ aspirant universities have done. Penn State and the University of Connecticut, for example, have Euro Tech programs. Those programs give qualified students the chance to earn a B.S. in Engineering and a B.A. in a European language. The University of Rhode Island has an International Engineering Program. It is a marvelous idea that should be tried here. Senator Hugus has, at various times, attempted to introduce such suggestions to no avail. This needs to be followed up on very seriously. Another issue is having Languages, Literatures, and Cultures work with the professional schools on campus. LLC has a lot of expertise in a variety of areas and would be happy to explore partnering with other disciplines on campus for dual degrees, joint degrees, or even joint courses. Senator Hugus has participated in such courses in the past and they have been extremely rewarding. Finally, Languages Across the Curriculum needs to be mentioned in this discussion. It is an exciting program, but like so many volunteer-driven programs on campus, it died on the vine because there was no funding or institutional support. These ideas are relatively easy to put in place and relatively inexpensive, so they are worthy of serious consideration. Another thought that Senator Hugus had while reading the report related to the current review of Ph.D. programs on campus. He was pleased to see that, after 40 years, the Ph.D. programs are being evaluated. He remembers the rather interesting process of the last review. There are six categories to assess programs in the current process. One is stellar. The one at the very bottom doesn’t bear the name terminally ill, but it probably should. One of the actions in the boxes beside the poorly assessed programs indicates that, during the fall semester, the department will work with the Dean to shut down the program. Given the fact that this is the first time in 40 years that any of these programs have been evaluated, it would seem that one would want to be a little bit more deliberate in deciding which programs are necessary and desirable at the University and which ones might be terminated. A little more thought and a little more deliberation wouldn’t hurt.

John McCarthy, Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of the Graduate School, responded to Senator Hugus’ comments. What the review form says about the three programs in the lowest category is that they develop a plan with a focus on issues of viability. Dean McCarthy has been in conversations with two of the three programs and he is quite hopeful that they will have plans that will sustain them. He would be surprised if the University closes any programs.

Senator Steven Brewer thanked the members of the Joint Task Force on Strategic Oversight and the many allied committees that worked long and hard to create the current document. He applauded their efforts. This work is difficult, often thankless, and too often conducted in an atmosphere of cynicism. Senator Brewer has heard many people say, “Ho hum, I’ve seen these plans come and go.” He exhorted his colleagues to actually read this document and to recognize that it is not just more of the same. It is not perfect, but it is not just a list of numerical targets, it is not just following the crowd, it is not just aspirational language, it is not just a laundry list of administrative goals. It is something that is qualitatively different. This document represents genuine soul searching on the part of many thoughtful people throughout the institution. This document aims to raise the consciousness of all the members of the University community to the fact that we find the ground shifting beneath our feet. We need to look carefully at where we are and where we want to go. We need to
come to know what we are and decide what we intend to be. This is not a task of the administration, it is the task of all of us. But this is only the first step. Next, we need to take this agenda and begin building the concrete steps to carry us forward towards our goals. As Chancellor Lombardi was fond of saying, “Time is the enemy.” Senator Brewer urged his colleagues not to merely adopt this report, but to go back and read it carefully and to begin helping figure out how every one of us can start making these things happen. We are going to need every one. This is the invitation.

Jack Ahern, Vice Provost for International Programs, commented on the internationalization of UMass Amherst. He was happy to report that the University is already signed up for a strategic planning exercise with the American Council on Education. It will be starting next fall and will run for 18 months. The University will be working with a cohort of ten other institutions to develop an internationalization plan that will address all of the issues raised by Senator Hugus, including internationalizing the curriculum, expanding international research opportunities, expanding education abroad, and figuring out how this might permeate and pervade our identity as an institution. There will be broad faculty involvement and leadership in all of the associated committees and subcommittees. Vice Provost Ahern welcomes anyone’s participation. Interested faculty should contact him and he will be happy to involve them.

Senator Bogartz noted that one of the things that he has been concerned about in participating in this process is that there has been a lot of talk about adapting to the realities of the availability, or lack of availability, of resources. There is no question that we have to do that. On the other hand, if we do that, we run the danger of becoming complicit in supporting that reality when our business should be subverting it. Senator Bogartz believes the new President and the new Chancellor have been busy attempting to subvert that reality. What we need to do is appreciate the part of the document that addresses how we make it known, how we broadcast to the world, what a great institution this is, because that will serve to subvert that reality to the extent that people know the degree to which the University serves the Commonwealth—to the extent to which we make sure that they know that. Then it will be easier to subvert the resource reality and start it moving in the direction opposite to that which it is moving right now.

Senator Shabazz reiterated Senator Brewer’s comments. In the next phase, it is on us to pick up where we haven’t gotten so far and to look harder at some of the questions. On page three, there is a section titled “Strength Through Community.” In listing out the shared values that guide our actions going forward, the very first one is excellence. Whatever we choose to do, we do with excellence. Senator Shabazz hopes that is not idiotic accountability monster verbiage linguistic garbage. He hopes it is a clear-cut statement of who we are and the shared values that guide our actions going forward. “Commitment to excellence signals that we are an organization, an institution of higher learning, a place that deserves and rewards investment and therefore helps attract resources even as we find ways to put them to better use.” We need to be accountable amongst ourselves to be good stewards of the resources entrusted to us and invested in us. There are a lot of missing elements, a lot of white pages, and a lot of people that haven’t been thanked. Senator Shabazz thanked Marilyn Blaustein and the people at OIR as well as the Communication Department, whose Diversity and Social Justice Committee submitted a report regarding the strategic plan. People took time and were thoughtful in their deliberations regarding this report. A lot of that couldn’t get into the report. At the open forum for Humanities and Fine Arts, the Department of Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies talked about finding the soul of the institution and how it is expressed in the strategic report. There are obviously aspects of the soul of the University that are not expressed in the report that we definitely want to sustain. If we are not even saying it, if it is not in the utterance, how are we at least doing it in our own scrappy UMass way? How are we making that sustaining of our heart and soul continue? With the spirit of Senator Brewer’s points, go UMass.

Secretary May thanked the three co-chairs of the Joint Task Force on Strategic Oversight: Nancy Cohen, Bryan Harvey, and Amilcar Shabazz. He invited Chancellor Subbaswamy to speak to the strategic plan. The Chancellor was in and out of Boston and made a very special effort to attend the Faculty Senate meeting.

Chancellor Kumble Subbaswamy noted that his primary motivation in attending the Faculty Senate meeting was to thank everyone involved in the process, particularly the co-chairs, but, going beyond that, the people who, in spite of initial cynicism, gave the whole process the benefit of the doubt. Those individuals will not be disappointed. Up until now, the Joint Task Force and the administration have delivered on how they said
they would operate. That will be true in the fall and beyond. The Chancellor hopes that everyone sees that the feedback process was taken seriously. Obviously, not every word or every sentence could be changed. The work of this plan has been that of a committee attempting to at least reach a general sense of the group, rather than a consensus. It is impossible to reach a consensus of 30,000 people—let alone of one hundred people. The points have been well taken. Certain things could be stated differently, but, as Professor Shabazz noted, we will be able to fill in the white spaces with what we think is important as we go forward. Some of the concrete steps that need to take place at the executive level will begin next week. Developments will come out as documents that the campus will have the opportunity to review and comment on. There are a lot of changes that need to take place, and they will happen collectively with the wisdom of the entire campus weighing in on them. Chancellor Subbaswamy urged the faculty to stay involved.

Thomas Lindeman, acknowledging his official and unofficial service to the University since the 1960s and the fact that he has been sitting in as an observer to Faculty Senate meetings for all of those years, noted that this is only the second time he has asked for the privilege to speak. He added two comments to the conversation. The first was to second the motion of the central significance of learning as a key word in the document. It is a better word than teaching to describe what we do and what we need to do. It accentuates the point that this is something new in what we say to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Learning is collaborative between faculty and students; learning is collaborative between the various publics and communities with which we work. In many places in this document, the word learning could be substituted for the word teaching with profit. Secondly, Mr. Lindeman found nowhere in the report an indication about the unique function of higher education in our society to critically engage and critique the society of which we are a part. The term “academic freedom” does not appear in the report. How can that be if this document is a descriptor of who we are if we do not say strongly that one of our unique roles is to criticize our society, and not just serve it in the way it decides?

The motion was seconded and adopted unanimously.

The 728th Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate stood adjourned at 4:47 p.m. on May 9, 2013.

Respectfully submitted,

Ernest D. May
Secretary of the Faculty Senate