

School of Arts and Sciences
SUNY Buffalo State

Minutes

November 15, 2024 ♦ 3:00 pm ♦ BULG 217

- I. Call to order – Meeting called to order at 3:05pm
- II. Presentation of the Consent Agenda – confirmation of the content of the consent agenda. Moved and seconded. None opposed. Consent agenda passes.
- III. Presentation of minutes from the September 20, 2024 meeting – request for corrections? Hearing none – the minutes are adopted.
- IV. Remarks of the Speaker – We are required to hold two meetings per semester. Please hold the December date just in case we need to meet. Will decide in the next week when we will meet next.
- V. Report from the Interim Dean
 - Academic Affairs reorganization update

Interim Dean Frothingham – Presented information from the following websites:

1. Academic Unit Restructuring <https://academicaffairs.buffalostate.edu/academic-unit-restructuring>

Academic Unit Restructuring of Academic Affairs – on website the presentation about restructuring is posted. Impacts schools of Professions and Education more than SAS. Professions and Education Schools will be merged. We will keep departments and not have superchairs / units. Various task forces and groups will develop what that will look like.

Provost Wall made it very clear that she is still interested in more department mergers. Any proposals you guys have for mergers will be entertained. Continue on with those discussions please.

Questions – no

2. At the last Chairs meeting there was a conversation about course syllabi –have been talking about them for years now – required content, the lengthy and required statements that need to be included and can change frequently – importance of attendance policies and grading policies - when students come in with concerns, one of the first things the Dean's office looks at is the syllabus – they can show students that something was clearly stated and that the student wasn't treated unfairly.

This Spring Dean's office is going to do a random review of syllabi to ensure that required content is really there. Intent is not micromanagement – trying to improve student success and retention.

Pointing out that SAS website has a section of syllabus requirements, links to faculty handbook, additional syllabus content and a template if you want to use it.

SAS Syllabus Requirements: <https://artsandsciences.buffalostate.edu/syllabus-requirements>

Under “for students” there is a list of “syllabus statements” so you can just link to the SAS website rather than changing your syllabus every time. Recommend just using the link with the up to date information.

SAS Syllabus Statements: <https://artsandsciences.buffalostate.edu/syllabus-statements>

Some syllabi have information that is wildly out of date.

Contact them if you think the Dean's Office can do more for support.

Question from Faculty Speaker Ben-Merre – Has there been any change to statement of intellectual property rights over faculty material? – assert their right to faculty course material including syllabi.

Answer - It remains intellectual property of the faculty member. Faculty have right to insist that their materials not be publicly distributed or selling it or stuff

Additional Information from UUP Vice President Anselmi – Also in UUP contract.

Interim Dean Frothingham – Some good news – meeting recently with Marketing and Communications about upcoming marketing campaign. Faculty will be involved with it. Has heard in Cabinet meeting – they want this marketing campaign to be faculty focused. They recognize the accomplishments, and our faculty can transform student lives. Want to tell stories from faculty perspectives and student perspectives. Hoping that SAS will talk about these things openly and widely. Be ready to tell the story of how fantastic you are. “Soft roll out” using faculty achievements in the Daily – on Thursdays they are doing a faculty and staff achievements roundup. Please look for those. Think there will be a new newsletter that will go out to alumni and parents.

Questions ? No questions

VI. SAS Standing Committee reports (submitted in writing; see Appendix A)

Sent around as appendix A – any questions or additions?

VII. SAS Senate Liaison report (submitted in writing; see Appendix B)

Sent around 1st in appendix B and as a separate email this week. Any questions for senate liaison?

Faculty Speaker Ben-Merre – you reported that our sustainability plan was 99% complete – would be released “soon” – any more information?

Liaison Ettestad – only has a bit more – but nothing clearer than shortly.

Bylaws & Elections Chair (and SAS Senator) Grinnell – BSAC will have something to say at December meeting.

Faculty Speaker Ben-Merre – scope of the Bengal Fridays 2nd of each month – sounded like it was something that might be restarted. Look for announcement start of Spring Semester.

- VIII. Motion to amend the SAS Bylaws to allow the Bylaws & Elections Committee to make non-substantive corrections and changes without following the general amendment process (see Appendix C)

SAS Secretary Bergslien – The intention of this amendment is get ahead of several possible structure changes at the institution that would require constant revisions to the Bylaws if we want them to stay current.

Bylaws & Elections Chair Grinnell – Bylaws Committee discussed this proposal – gist of it is that there are some mergers coming up and changes in list of units and departments – makes life a lot easier to not have to hold votes for all of these changes.

Motion passed – will be sent out for a full vote

- IX. New Business

Any new business? None

- X. Adjournment

Moving so fast to adjourn we are flying

Appendix A: SAS Standing Committee Reports

SAS Bylaws and Elections Committee (Jason Grinnell, chair)

SAS BYLE is continuing to explore the implications of recent and planned restructuring within the School. Several elements of our bylaws reflect the current practice of classifying academic departments by “divisions.” Those elements will need to be modified to address changes in school organization. BYLE is also considering changing the deadline for the Speaker/Steering Council to disseminate the School Meeting Agenda.

SAS Contingent Faculty Welfare Committee (Roy Bakos, chair)

The **Contingent Faculty Welfare Committee** is continuing the process of advocating for contingent faculty College Senate representation.

SAS Curriculum Committee (Julie Wieczkowski, chair)

The **SAS Curriculum Committee** continues to review course and program proposals and revisions as they are submitted. The last submission deadline for the Fall semester is November 20.

SAS Personnel Committee (Jennifer Ryan-Bryant, chair)

The **SAS Personnel Committee** will review four dossiers for faculty members applying for promotion to full professor in early November. We have no applications for promotion to associate professor coming in for review until the spring semester.

Appendix B: SAS Senate Liaison report

College Senate meeting of October 11, 2024

President's remarks:

The final tally for total Fall 2024 enrollment is 6,138. This was a 4% decrease from fall 2023, partly caused by raising the high school GPA requirement from 76 to 78. Undergraduate enrollment went down by 6% while graduate enrollment was up by 4%. On a positive note, there was a 1% increase in continuing student enrollment.

The retention rate was up by 2% for the School of Arts and Sciences and the School of Professions. It was flat for the School of Education.

After many years of trying to get a polling place at Buffalo State, this year there will be one at the Alumni and Visitor Center. It will be open for election day, but not for early voting.

Dr. Durand commented that many of our sports teams are doing well this fall. The Men's and Women's soccer teams as well as the Women's volleyball team are all undefeated in SUNYAC play so far.

She also mentioned that this year's homecoming celebration "was a resounding success." A particular highlight was the EOP Alumni Reunion, which brought together well over 100 EOP alumni from across the country.

In response to several constituent questions about the appointment processes with our Student Affairs division, Dr. Durand provided further clarity. For details see the transcript of the President's Report under the October 11 minutes on <https://collegesenate.buffalostate.edu/senate-meetings>.

Another constituent question the president responded to was why the electric vehicle charging stations on campus are free and open to the public. The president explained that Buffalo State has been fortunate to receive low-cost or free EVC's through grants from NYSERDA and other sources. However, these grants stipulate that the EVC's must be available for free public use. But SUNY EV guidelines require campuses to charge users for the estimated cost of the electricity. Buffalo State is currently working on developing a policy that balances these conflicting considerations.

Committee reports:

The student welfare committee presented a resolution about the revised transportation fee. As was stated in last month's senate report, because of the drop in student use of the NFTA bus pass from 33% in 2013 to 9% in 2022, the school decided to not get bus passes for all students and drop the transportation fee from \$110 to \$80. This was announced to students just a couple weeks before the beginning of the fall semester. The welfare committee was upset that this would cause hardship for

students who had relied on bus passes to get to school. They were also upset there was zero communication to faculty and staff by email or the Daily Bulletin regarding the removal of NFTA bus passes from the transportation fee. They proposed a resolution related to these concerns with possible solutions. After much debate and several amendments, the resolution passed.

The Budget and Staff Allocation Committee reported they are examining progress with the Sustainability Plan as well as Enrollment. Part of that includes looking into the costs of the several scholarship programs and their impact on recruitment or retention. They are also reviewing the fiscal implications of the over 50 employees who took advantage of the Voluntary Separation Plan. They are looking into how much academic consolidation has saved in the past and what savings we can expect from recent or proposed changes in the service of “academic optimization” (such as merging schools, merging departments, deactivating programs).

Respectfully submitted,

Senator Dave Ettestad

Appendix C: Motion to Amend the Bylaws

SC-01: Advanced with a positive recommendation

Motion by the Steering Council to amend Article X of the SAS bylaws to add the following language:

Article X. 4.

~~Be it Resolved, That~~ The bylaws and elections committee be authorized, without holding a vote among the voting members of SAS, to correct article and section designations, typos, and perform such technical changes as may be necessary to reflect changes in the structure of the University insofar as these changes do not impact the sense and intent of the document. These proposed changes will be announced in the SAS meeting agenda and, upon consent of those at the meeting, be adopted and archived in the records. At the SAS meeting, any two members of the faculty may declare that a change is substantive and call for a vote; the proposed changes would then proceed as outlined in the SAS bylaws.

Vote to remove 4 words at the beginning passes.

Proposed change

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Vote to accept these changes – passed by acclamation

Main motion.

J. Cole - change The bylaws and elections committee **is** authorized,

Motion adopted – passed by acclamation

All in favor of main motion – passed by acclamation – will now be sent out for a vote