

MINUTES OF  
FACULTY SENATE MEETING  
September 17, 2024

The first Faculty Senate meeting of the 2024-2025 academic year was called to order by Associate Professor of Pharmaceutical Sciences Aaron Beedle, Faculty Senate chair, at 11:46 a.m. in Old Union Hall.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
Minutes from the April 30, 2024, meeting minutes were approved with no opposition and one abstention.
  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair Beedle notified the body that Prof. Bruce E. Borton, Music; Prof. Emeritus Mario DiCesare, English and Comparative Literature; Retired Prof. Ralph Hocking, Video and Computer Art, Cinema; Prof. Emeritus Clifford R. Kern, Economics; Retired Prof. Daniel D.



Faculty Senate meeting

and in other applicable campus policies, members of the University community may hold public meetings and engage in peaceful and orderly assemblies—including, but not limited to, protests, demonstrations, rallies, vigils, marches, and picketing—in and upon designated public areas of campus grounds and buildings.

- [Demonstration Policy, Student Handbook](#)
- Students are free to voice dissent and to demonstrate in an orderly and peaceful manner. Picketing or demonstrating must not interfere with the normal flow of pedestrian or vehicular traffic or with the entrances to buildings and must not interfere with the normal functioning of the University. Sticks, or other objects that may prove to be dangerous in a crowd, are not permitted for use in support of signs or banners or for other purposes. [Rules for the Maintenance of Public Order](#) may be used if necessary.

Individuals wishing to organize a demonstration on campus should follow the normal space reservation procedures, which are available on the [B There Portal](#).

- Overview of the Do's and Do Not's when it comes to expression and protests on campus

Do:

Use standard space reservation procedures to book events (B-There portal), contact the University Union office and UPD to arrange the event

Review SUNY [Rules for the Maintenance of Public Order \(suny.edu\)](#) for appropriate conduct, prohibited behavior, and conduct violations

Plan events of <12 hr and within 8 am – 10 pm

- **The collective:** The faculty responsible for a particular course of study may share responsibility for determining courses to be offered or texts to be assigned to students. The shared academic freedom to make this decision trumps the freedom of an individual faculty member to assign a textbook that he or she alone prefers.
- **Professional ethics:** A faculty member must act ethically in their teaching and research, for example, by following regulations on human subject research.
- **Professional competence:** In order to produce and disseminate the highest quality of knowledge in a given field, academics are regulated by other academics who are in a position to judge the work of their peers. A faculty member is not entitled to teach something that their academic peers judge is invalid--for example, teaching that  $2+2=5$  would not be protected; neither would teaching intelligent design in an evolutionary biology class.

The Academic Freedom Resources include:

- [AAUP](#) American Association of University Professors
- [FIRE | Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression \(thefire.org\)](https://www.thefire.org/)

Chair Beedle explained the difference between Academic Freedom and free speech. Academic Freedom is the idea of engaging in responsible professional activities without the threat of censure from administrative officials, and it is a principle that we hold at this University. Free speech is the right of an individual to voice their opinion. Such speech should

Faculty Senate meeting

September 17, 2024

Page 6

all forms of violence and hate speech, as well as any uncivil language or behavior that does not conform to our expectation of respect and responsibility.

subject matters and conducting research that is supported, celebrated, and recognized, even in controversial areas.

Provost Hall would like to submit this statement annually to the faculty before the classes begin.

Chair Beedle then asked the senators to endorse this annual statement provided by the Provost. She then opened the floor for discussion from the Senate.

Prof. Marina Sitrin, Sociology, asked to discuss Provost Hall's statement before endorsing it. She suggested having a chance to take the conversation back to her department so they could have a say collectively.

Chair Beedle responded with the Senate's option to table this discussion and bring it up at the next Faculty Senate meeting.

Prof. Bridget Whearty, English, also expressed that she would share the statement with her department before discussing it further.

After hearing from the Senators, Chair Beedle suggested two options: Separating the components into two pieces.

- Endorse the statement as written
- Endorsing the principle, the Faculty Senators support distributing the annual statement on academic freedom with consultation from their units. Then, discuss at a future faculty Senate meeting.

Prof. Matt Gallagher, Libraries, requested clarification of what the Senate was voting on.

Chair Beedle clarified at the moment, noting whether the Senate endorses the statement as written and provided or endorse the statement on the principle that the Faculty Senators distribute to their areas and have a discussion, then discuss it at the next Faculty Senate meeting.

After no further discussion, Chair Beedle requested a motion to table this discussion for a future Faculty Senate meeting. A motion was made and seconded. The motion was approved with one opposition and two abstentions.

Chair Beedle noted she was contacted by a group of faculty with a letter of concern. This letter was provided to the Senate for review. It is not the product of an elected or appointed group of the Faculty Senate and is not an official Faculty Senate document. The Faculty Senate Executive Committee did not endorse the letter.

Chair Beedle then invited representatives of the group to address the letter that was provided.





Brian Rose provided background and details of the encampment that occurred in May, explaining the staff and police's response. He then explained the preexisting policy about camping (encampments) on campus. That policy prohibits overnight camping but provides a process for exceptions. Those who organized the encampment did not make any request for an exception. Those administrators who were monitoring the encampment decided to proactively provide an exception and communicated

