

Remarks by Chancellor Kent Syverud

Delivered on February 13, 2019

Location: Maxwell School Auditorium

Remarks: University Senate

*The Chancellor was introduced by the Senate Chair, Professor Ramesh Raina*

Good afternoon. I have three very brief updates today.

**Revisions to the Faculty Manual**

As you know, New York State has issued new guidelines for sexual harassment and abuse policies and procedures. They took effect in October and, at that time, we revised Syracuse University policies to be in compliance.

I want to again today remind us all that we still have important work to do. The Agenda Committee of this body has tasked Academic Freedom, Tenure and Professional Ethics Committee to work with the Office of General Counsel and the Office of Equal Opportunity Inclusion and Resolution Services to improve the procedures in Section 4.11 of the Faculty Manual for responding to complaints of sexual assault and harassment against faculty and to ensure that new faculty we hire have consistently undergone an appropriate background check related to these issues. The Agenda Committee has requested that draft recommendations be submitted to the full Senate. I ask that the Senate consider and resolve those recommendations before Commencement 2019 — time is now running short.

**Adverse Weather Announcements**

The last time the Senate met, much of the country was in the midst of extreme weather, including here in Syracuse.

As you may recall, the University canceled evening classes and activities on Wednesday, January 30 and remained open on Thursday, January 31. This decision was based on the latest weather forecasts, which indicated that conditions on Thursday morning would not be as extreme and based on a number of other considerations that the emergency management response team assesses — such as the number of classes potentially disrupted and the physical conditions on campus.

Even taking these factors into account, the University fell short on implementing the decisions and communicating with our campus community.

I have spoken with Tony Callisto, our chief law enforcement officer and leader of our emergency management response team, and Dara Royer, our chief marketing and communications officer. I have requested that they work together to ensure changes to operational status are decided and communicated with more clarity and timeliness.

It’s important to note, that as a residential community, the University will, in general, remain open for business despite adverse weather conditions. But, despite that, if we make any changes, or for that matter if we don’t, we must do a better job communicating with our community.

**Visit to Latin America**

Last week, I had the honor of meeting with faculty and administrators at EAFIT University in Medellin, Columbia. Between 1962 and 1969, scholars from the management school at Syracuse helped in the establishment of EAFIT – their university’s 60th anniversary coincides with Syracuse’s 150th. Today, EAFIT is one of the leading universities in Latin America with an internationally-recognized business school and a structure that largely mirrors that of Syracuse University with humanities, arts, information sciences and other areas of study. The University has hired a cohort of faculty who earned their PhDs in the United States and is on a positive trajectory. Our own Francisco Sanin and a group of students from our school of Architecture met with EAFIT in 2017 and began to rekindle our relationship, which seems to have been largely forgotten on campus.

Last Week I was joined by Whitman dean Gene Anderson, Gurdip Singh from the School of Engineering and Steve Bennett, who oversees Syracuse Abroad and our exchange programs, to meet with senior administrators at EAFIT. As you likely know, Syracuse’s international presence is somewhat different from our peers as it tends to be a “build our own” strategy. Many of our peer institutions do form partnerships with highly regarded universities in selected strategic locations where faculty collaborate on research, faculty and student exchanges take place and, often, undergraduates choose to come to the U.S. partner school for graduate education.

The conversations last week were productive. We signed a Memorandum of Understanding to explore a partnership for a 4+1 course of study in mechanical engineering which, we hope, will develop into a richer relationship that can benefit both institutions. There are potential collaborations across all of these areas.

Thank you. This concludes my remarks. I will take questions after the Provost’s presentation.

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