

April 8, 2005

## April Plenary Minutes

Chair: Tomo Imamichi

Minutes: Tina Lee

Meeting Called to Order at 6:05 PM

### I. Sharon Lerner: presentation on disability issues.

Sharon described the evolution in legal/social understandings of disabilities in the last 20 years (since the Rehabilitation Act of 1973) to a civil rights framework. The law and practice is to provide reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities so that they can participate fully.

Lerner's own role has also evolved. She has systematized services at CUNY. Students now often call in advance for Sharon to lay the groundwork, if necessary. This included students recovering from alcoholism and drug abuse. Sharon now has systems and methods in place to accommodate the individual—this is a state requirement.

She also works in disability advocacy and expects this role to increase at CUNY central under Chris Rosa (CUNY sociology PhD).

There is a calendar of events for Disability Awareness Month (April) on CUNY portal. She left us with a brochure detailing what is included/involved in making “reasonable accommodations.”

### II. Agenda approved unanimously.

### III. March Minutes approved unanimously.

IV. Health Services Committee Report. Dave Golland presented the official committee report and focused his presentation on the “recommendations” section. The report was accepted unanimously and the petition to hold the referendum to increase the student activities fee was circulated.

### V. Old Business

A. Camille Tipton presented 2 new proposed by-laws. By-law no 9 makes the USS delegate a non-voting, ex-officio member of the executive and steering committees. The alternate will take this role if the delegate is absent. In discussion, steering committee members Tipton and Moira Egan mentioned it was helpful to have Golland in this role this year and that it helped out ties with the USS. The by-law passed unanimously. By-law no 10 stipulates that the co-chair for student affairs and the co-chair for communications, respectively, shall fill the positions of USS delegate and alternate should no one be selected for these offices. In the discussion it was mentioned that the purpose of this is to ensure our representation at the USS. Carrie Fisher proposed that the language be changed to say should the offices be vacant to cover cases of resignation. Tomo Imamichi moved to amend the language, Egan seconded. The by-law passed unanimously. 2 more by-laws will be voted on in May.

B. Website DNS problem has finally been fixed. Tipton described the circuitous route by which

she found the person at the GC who could help (she had to contact CUNY central staff at 57<sup>th</sup> st.). She reiterated the fact that we should tell her if the site is down. Tipton will continue to make changes to the site—committee pages will be added, navigation will be eased, info about the offices that are elected in May will be posted. We need submissions for the logo contest. You must be a student to enter. The prize is \$150. Please announce!

VI. USS Report. Golland discussed the petition calling for a referendum to raise the student activities fee to cover the wellness center and the fact that we need petitions from 10% of the student body. It will be mailed with elections materials.

1. Golland spoke at a press conference about tuition issues in the Skylight room.
2. He attended an honors reception for new students.
3. Press release from the USS legal affairs office (committee?) about funding was disseminated. Golland is quoted in the NY Post about this issue.
4. April 1<sup>st</sup> rally against tuition increases. He spoke at this rally calling on the governor not to veto the budget that DOES NOT have the increase and to remain committed to TAP support. A copy of his remarks can be sent to anyone who wants them.
5. At the April 4<sup>th</sup> Board of Trustees meeting several important issues came up for which Golland voted “aye.” Creation of a journalism school and approval of their governing document, new vice president for Kingsborough, 2 appointments at Medger Evers, new vice president for John Jay. He commented that the journalism governance document originally didn’t provide for student participation and input. The final version puts 2 student members on their council.
6. Testimony at a Board of Regent Meeting—he highlighted the need for funding of graduate students, housing, and health care.

#### VII. Co-chair for Student Affairs Report

A. We need help for the election. Please sign up. We will be stuffing ballots beginning at noon. The office can be reached at. Ballots must be post-marked by April 29<sup>th</sup>. You must sign the pre-paid return envelope. Please remind your constituents before spring break. We also need around 420 responses to the petition and the constitutional changes. Before the election we will be tabling in the lobby to further publicize the election and people can sign their petitions at that time.

B. The presidential search is ending. Campus interviews will occur soon and we need student input.

C. Retirement ceremony for Pres. Horowitz and a dedication ceremony for Charlotte Frick’s painting are coming soon. We will also take the opportunity, at the dedication ceremony, to thank student affairs for all their hard work. A search to fill Frick’s position is beginning soon.

D. Stephanie brought up the issue that budget shortfalls are a reality and are affecting our student. Several departments have found classes held at the senior colleges are being canceled late in the term. This stems from the CUNY charter and how classes that are taken by graduate students at other campuses are paid for.

#### VIII. Co-chair for Communications Report

A. Two visits were made to off campus students in March—to City and John Jay. These were a success and we want to make visits to other campuses this semester.

B. 5414 will be equipped with a flat screen and computer soon to allow for projection capabilities.

C. The search for IR Director has been reopened.

D. One meeting of the Grad. Council remains on May 12<sup>th</sup>. Please make sure your department reps go!

E. Positions at the advocate are open and we will be hiring soon.

#### IX. New Business

A. Presentation of the constitution for the proposed French Interdisciplinary Group for 17<sup>th</sup> Century Studies. Structure, purpose, and activities highlighted from the document. Minor changes to the constitution were suggested. A discussion ensued about presenting papers in French and if this allowed the group to be open to all. A vote to charter the org. will occur at the May plenary.

B. Disability resolution was presented. Kevin McGruder asked about how we propose to monitor progress. A discussion about this was held. The consensus was that we want to raise awareness and hope that people will report problems to the DSC who can then work with the administration. The resolution was approved unanimously.

C. Rebecca Bucht raised issues about the e-mail failures and the change in policy (i.e. that messages over 3 months old are automatically deleted unless archived). Archiving is done on the U: drive and can't be accessed from home. Moira Egan mentioned that people with dial-up can't use the VPN to get to their U: drive. James Lyles explained that these issues are valid, but the issue of the extremely old hardware must be dealt with first. He suggested people start using Gmail. Dave Golland asked about issues of accessibility (screen reading programs, etc...) with Gmail. Lyles said it is in beta so this is unclear.

#### X. Announcement

A. Movie tickets will now be \$6.50. Jose Zambrana said he is very sure this is not legal because these cannot be sold at a profit. A discussion about this was held. Carrie Fisher introduced a motion stating that the steering committee should not to go forward with the increase in movie ticket prices until they are sure it is legal. The motion passed with 17 ayes and 3 abstentions.