



CUNY Graduate Center  
Doctoral Students' Council  
Plenary Minutes

December 9, 2005

**Chairperson: Lee Hachadoorian**  
**Minutes: Celia Braxton**  
**Meeting called to order at 6:10 P.M.**

**Members and Voting Alternates Present:**

Biochemistry: Jianghua Yin  
Chemistry: Marie Thomas; Hasan Yumak  
Classics: Paul McBreen (alt.)  
Comparative Literature: Joanna Guittari  
Criminal Justice: Charles Lieberman, Brenda Vollman  
Earth & Environmental Science: Lee Hachadoorian  
Economics: Francois de Paul Silatchom  
Engineering Biomedical: Ericka Calton  
Engineering Civil: Rouzbeh Nazari  
Engineering Electrical: Muhammad Salim  
French: Chong Wojtkowski  
Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Literature: Hyon Kim  
History: David Golland, Kevin McGruder  
Mathematics: Hieu T. Nguyen  
Music PhD: Megan Jenkins  
Philosophy: Jennifer Jensen  
Physics: Huafeng Xie  
Political Science: Aleta Styers, Jen Gaboury  
Psychology Environmental: Stephanie Domenici  
Psychology Industrial/Organizational: Marissa Agin  
Theatre: Kate Wilson (by proxy: George Panaghi)  
Urban Education: Donal Mulcahy (by proxy: Pamela Proscia)  
At Large: David Aliano, Celia Braxton, Moira Egan, Ian Jones, Pamela Proscia, Michael Westbrook

**Non-Voting Alternates Present:**

Criminal Justice: Meredith Dank

**Members Absent:**

Anthropology: Tina Lee (excused), Andrea Morrell (excused)  
 Art History: Daniel Quiles (excused)  
 Biology: Adam Kavalier, Selena Ahmed  
 Business: Kate McPadden (excused)  
 Classics: Pat Brooks (excused)  
 Computer Science: Sumon Azhar  
 Educational Psychology: Kallen Tsikalas, Leslie Craigo  
 English: Adriana Tomasino  
 German: Marie Giurrieri  
 Liberal Studies: Cam McDonald (excused)  
 Linguistics: Alexandra Ioannidou  
 Music DMA: Barbara Podgurski (excused)  
 Music PhD: Jonas Westover (excused)  
 Political Science: Christopher Poulos  
 Psychology Biological: Alicia Walton  
 Psychology Clinical: Nora Goudsmit  
 Psychology Developmental: Aloka Star Felty  
 Psychology Forensic: Virginia Fineran  
 Psychology Learning Processes: Adrienne Robek (excused)  
 Psychology Social Personality: Valerie Futch (excused)  
 Social Welfare: William Cabin  
 Sociology: Emily Mahon, Antonia Levy  
 Speech and Hearing Sciences: Jung Moon Hyun  
 At Large: Jen Adler, James Hoff, Dorian Luey, Binh Pok, Nelly St. Maurice, Spencer Sunshine,  
 Nelson Tiburcio (excused), Camille Tipton (excused)

**Guests Present:**

Hon. Susan Gushee O'Malley, Chair, University Faculty Senate  
 Rex Wong

**Total Members and Voting Alternates Present: 32. Non-Voting Alternates Present: 1.**

**Members Absent: 35. Guests present: 2.**

**Quorum established to conduct business.**

- I. As the invited speaker, Hon. Susan Gushee O'Malley, had not yet arrived, Lee Hachedoorian moved that invited speaker will be inserted when she appears. The motion was seconded and approved by unanimous consent.
- II. The Agenda was approved with minor changes, by unanimous consent.
- III. Minutes: Moira Egan moved for minor changes in item IV.E. Motion passed by unanimous consent. The minutes were approved by unanimous consent.
- IV. Old Business:
  - A. Technology Committee: Paul McBreen reported that only one meeting had been held this semester, very late in the semester. The major subject of discussion was Flash

drive distribution. Paul reports that now, anyone who wants one will get one. Pam Proscia states Urban Ed. did not get any at all. A question from the floor: will the new ones be 256K or 512K? According to Paul, you were only supposed to get a 512K “if you needed it.” Lee states that 512K drives were distributed on a first-come, first-serve basis. Brenda Vollman pointed out that as all of us pay the same tech fee, we all should have the same drive, whether we “need” it or not. Moira states the Office of Information Technology did not ask her anything about her discipline or her use when she picked hers up.

Ian Jones, also on the committee, states he raised the issue about network stability. Administration claims they are only down when they choose, but his experience is that this is not true, and that he has continually to reboot, etc. He is going to ask to have a physical tour of the entire network to see what needs to be replaced, and what has been replaced. Paul states the committee is going to get a group of people together for a tour of the server room. Ian states it’s not just the server, it’s power sourcing, etc.

At this point, the invited speaker, Hon. Susan Gushee O’Malley, Chairperson, University Faculty Senate, arrived. After the usual introduction, she explained her position as Head of the University Faculty Senate (UFS): she doesn’t have a vote in the Trustee’s meeting, although the student representative does.

Trustee O’Malley spoke next about tuition raises. She states the Trustees don’t know anything about Higher Education, because they are political appointees. They don’t understand that, as she put it, “I suspect some of you are in debt.” She thinks the amount of debt students are incurring is “a little scary”--\$80,000 worth of debt. People are taking out loans to attend the Community Colleges, as well as Senior colleges and the GC. She suggests that to educate the Trustees, we should survey and list students (not by name) along with the amount of debt they carry. When members of the Board of Trustees went to college, they paid little or nothing and got out of college without any debt. P. McBreen states it is true they know nothing about the student experience. She suggests having them come here. She has them address the Faculty Senate. They reveal there that they know nothing about faculty life, either. She states, however, that they are nice and well-meaning people.

P. McBreen asks if she can help move the issue of Housing to the front. She says Trustee Wellington Chen is interested in this, but the Facilities committee is involved in dormitories for City College and Staten Island. M. Egan points out that not only do they not understand the debt situation, but they don’t understand what we can afford to spend for housing, or what students need for housing – a bed, a desk, and a dresser, and a kitchen down the hall without even a stove is not adequate.

D. Golland asks how the UFS is advocating for adjuncts. She states that in many ways the union is doing better than the UFS. Many campuses have either adjunct or CLT (college lab tech) representatives, but she can’t organize this. She suggests adjuncts get together and make a Caucus.

A question was asked about the Contract negotiations. She can’t speak to this.

In regard to the Sciences, the Chancellor is trying to reorganize doctoral sciences. She thinks they will cut the number of students by admitting fewer students. The question at present is “will the degree continue to be given by the GC or by the campuses?” The fear is that if given

by the campuses, some campuses will then become “lead” campuses and this could pull needed Graduate lab people from the other senior colleges and vitiate the science programs there.

She thinks that once they have reorganized the Sciences, they will move to reorganizing the other fields – fewer students, better packages.

The meeting returned to the Agenda.

- B. Bylaw 14. D. Golland reads the bylaw. After discussion, Chong Wojtkowski calls the question. She moves that Bylaw 14 be accepted. M. Egan seconds. The motion passes 21-0 with 2 abstentions.
  - C. D. Golland reports that the plaque in honor of Charlotte Frick is missing. Facilities know nothing about it. Security is calling it a “theft.” The cost to replace it, according to Tina Lee, would be under \$100, and could be paid for from special allocations. D. Golland moves that we approve no more than \$100, Charles Lieberman seconds. Motion passes by unanimous consent.
  - D. Tuition cap update: Stephanie Domenici reports that Julia Wrigley got a healthy response to her request for information on the funding cap. She is still taking responses. She will compile them and there will be a meeting in the new semester.
  - E. Miguel Malo: C. Wojtkowski reports they got 1500 signatures from tabling this week.
  - F. F. Travel & Research: L. Hachedoorian reports that the Steering Committee is looking into splitting the pot into two pots – for Fall and Spring conferences -- in order to prevent people going to conferences in the spring from being locked out of the fund. D. Golland will be emailing the Plenary to ask what month the top conferences in your field fall in.
- V: Report of the Co-chair for Student Affairs, Stephanie Domenici:
- A. On-Campus bar: The Open Mike nights were the beginning of an attempt to get a bar on campus. The old building had this; it wasn’t planned for this building. Anyone who wants to join the Bar Committee should email her. It will be in 365 Express on Mondays and Thursdays to start. She is worried it will seem more like an event than a bar. She has asked David Chapin if he can help us figure out how to reconfigure the space in the Foundation lounge. You can email her with suggestions, too.
  - B. Business cards: they are in. If you are ordering for your department, the \$3.99 deal is not available, but \$4.99 is. There have been a few problems with it recently.
  - C. The Compact: The Chancellor’s Four-Year Master Plan is an attempt to get the City and State to agree they’re responsible for a certain amount of support. Under the plan, students will face a 2.5% continuous per semester tuition increase. We did not support this. On Monday we learned Graduate Students would not be a part of this. The Board’s reasoning was that we had a huge tuition increase last year and shouldered the burden of the undergraduates last year. This includes Masters’ students, too. Also, we did not get

the money back from Albany as we should have. The Compact is an attempt to make sure we get it.

- D. The CUNY Research Grant: There were a huge number of applications from Social Sciences, while Humanities did not make enough applications to use all their allocations. Extra monies were moved to Social Sciences. Therefore, everyone this year who made it to the cluster committee got funded. Next year this won't be so. Stephanie reports that because the Board allocated \$59,000 more for the Research Grants than originally expected or budgeted for, this year, the overflow is going to the Travel & Research Fund. But the more interest there is in the Research Grant program, the more we'll keep that money. Also, the Travel & Research Fund is still open because we got the extra money.
- E. End of semester report: This coming year we will have elections in March. She discussed the importance of the DSC and having a representative from each department.

#### VI. Report of the Co-chair for Communications, David Golland:

- A. Open Meetings Law. In *Perez v. CUNY* (November 17, 2005), Chief Judge Kaye, writing for a unanimous NYS Court of Appeals, affirmed precedent (*Smith v. CUNY*, 1999) in interpreting the NYS Open Meetings Law to mean that all meetings of bodies deciding on the expenditure of student monies (including sub-committees) are to be open to the public. This includes, in our case, College Association, the plenary, the Steering Committee, the Media Board, the Health Committee, the Cultural Affairs Committee, etc. etc. We don't have to feed guests but we do have to admit them. An open online forum on the website might solve the problem posed by committees which traditionally conduct all business via e-mail, and such a forum will be more feasible as soon as the DSC moves to a commercial server, something in the works for 2006.

M. Egan brings up the problem of the Cultural Affairs committee. D. Golland suggests the Cultural Affairs committee and other such committees may have to meet once a semester to ratify their decisions. George says we could have a discussion board on the website. Aleta Styers says this means we have to put meeting times on the website, and/or the Chair can have the Co-Chair for communications send out a notice to the list.

- B. Class Size Report. Following an inquiry at last month's plenary by Antonia Levy, Golland sent out an e-mail asking for DSC reps to solicit and forward input on class size in their departments. Thus far I have heard back from four departments. Philosophy and French report that they have a problem with overcrowding; Political Science and the Psych sub-programs report that they do not. He and the other co-chairs will raise this issue with the President at their next lunch with him, scheduled for this Wednesday (but subject, as with everything in the President's schedule, to cancellation).
- C. *Advocate* Correction. A front-page story in *The Advocate's* November edition incorrectly stated that the DSC had denounced the Chancellor's Compact. This was incorrect. The DSC, by resolution in November, denounced *tuition increases* in the Chancellor's Compact. I have instructed the editor to immediately append a correction to the online version of the article and to print a correction in the next edition.

D. BOT Report. At the meeting of the Board of Trustees, held at Baruch's Vertical campus on November 28<sup>th</sup>, the Board approved the following items of interest to GC students:

- 1) City College School of Engineering renamed the Grove School of Engineering.
- 2) The public-private project at New York City College of Technology with Forest City Ratner.
- 3) The budget request, including the Chancellor's Compact and its indexed tuition increases.
- 4) The Graduate Center Student Activity Fee increase, as per our referendum; this enacts DSC Bylaw #13.
- 5) Additionally, the Board approved eight honorary doctorates, six in Humane Letters and two in Science, including two Doctorates in Humane Letters from Hunter for former Mayors Ed Koch and Dave Dinkins.
- 6) Flu Shots: no additional news. Watch your email.

VII. Health Services Committee. Ericka Calton asks people to fill out surveys and gives out Chong's flyer about the online survey. We need 100 more answers for it to be in the least bit statistically significant.

VIII. USS Report: Charles Lieberman reports that at the BOT meeting, the Chair of USS abstained from the vote on the Compact due to the tuition increase. In a USS Plenary meeting they had voted to okay it but then the USS president abstained. He'll find out why this Sunday.

IX. New Business.

A. Registration stickers: S. Domenici asks if anyone had a problem getting stickers by mail after paying online. She heard about this from one of the Psychology programs, but perhaps it is just a departmental issue. From the floor, one person states she did not receive it by mail.

B. Other New Business:

- 1) P. Proscia brings up a problem with consolidation of loans by phone; hers didn't go through and because it was by phone, she has no proof she did it on time. James Newall is the new Chief of Financial Aid.
- 2) L. Hachedoorian will be working on Home Campus outreach. Anyone interested please talk to him.
- 3) A. Styers reports that the only issue people in her department want her to address is increased or more extended hours in the library, and this was after she had sent out the notice about the newly extended hours. D. Golland says we got a bunch more money and the President asked what to do with it and the Executive Committee said longer library hours. This is money coming from Central that wasn't expected. P. Proscia asks will this extend to the Building being open longer hours? D. Golland reports "not yet."

X. Announcement: Jen Gaboury reports that OIT has now found a way to take a computer off the Internet for exams and notify the proctor if someone tries to override it.

- XI. Motion to Adjourn: The motion was moved and seconded by multiple members and approved by acclamation. The meeting adjourned at 8:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Celia Braxton