



**Graduate Center, CUNY
Doctoral Students' Council
Plenary Minutes**

November 16, 2007—6pm

Members and Voting Alternates Present:

Anthropology: Javiela Evangelista, Mariya Radeva
Biology: Kathleen Schnaars Uvino (proxy: Karyn Collie), Lisa Offringa
Chemistry: Nancy Medina
Classics: Michael Broder (proxy: Paul McBreen)
Comparative Literature: Andrea Efthymiou, Adele Kudish
Computer Science: Omer Demir, Deniz Sarioz
Criminal Justice: Alissa Ackerman
Earth/Environmental Science: Lesley Patrick
Engineering Chemical: Mehrdad Kheiripour
Engineering Civil: Rouzbeh Nazari
English: Kerdiana Chez, Allyson Foster, Cori Gabbard
French: Chong Wojtkowski
Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Lit: Teresa Darwich
History: Jameel Haque, Carl Lindskoog
Liberal Studies: Christopher Ian Foster
Mathematics: Micah Miller
Nursing: Mirian Zavala
Philosophy: Chris Sula
Political Science: April Henning, Aaron Ibur
Psychology: Bio: Maria Maust
Psychology: Cognition, Brain, Behavior: Karla Felix
Psychology: Environmental: Stephanie Domenici Cabonargi
Psychology: Forensic: Elizabeth Arias
Psychology: Learning Processes: Matthew Taylor
Psychology: Social Personality: Rachel Verni
Social Welfare: Denise Torres
Urban Education: Pamela Proscia

At-large Reps: Jill Belli, Ericka Calton, Randy Cota, Rob Faunce, Geoff Rab, Meghan Sacks, Aya Shohat, Danielle Wu

Members Absent:

Art History: Monica Steinberg
Audiology: Allison Shapiro (excused)
Chemistry: Clayton Mattis
Criminal Justice: Crystal Rodriguez (excused)
Engineering Electrical: Rex Wong
Linguistics: Elizabeth Pratt (excused)
Mathematics: Brooke Orosz (excused)
Music DMA: Judy Woo (excused)

Music PhD: Sean Murray
Psychology: Industrial and Organizational: Jessica Anderson (excused)
Psychology: Neuro: Jenny Ly
Sociology: Valerie Francisco (excused), Jesse Goldstein (excused)
Theatre: Ana Martinez (excused)

At-Large Reps: Nazreen Bacchus (excused), Gregory Donovan (excused), Caroline Erb, Dave Golland (excused), Fiona Lee (excused), Charles Lieberman (excused), Anton Masterovoy (excused), Amy Meyers (excused), Frank Muscara, Amanda Springs (excused), Brenda Vollman (excused), Kate Wilson (excused)

Members Present: 43; Members Absent: 26

Guests Present: Linda Perrotta, Child Care Center, Sharon Lerner, Student Affairs, Emily Sherwood, English, David Spataro, Earth & Env Science, Leah Souffrant, English, Cristina, Medellin, Developmental Psychology

Plenary Meeting 11-16-2007

Chair: Rob Faunce (RF)
Minutes: Alissa Ackerman (AA)

At 6:11 pm the meeting was called to order by RF

Sharon Lerner, Director of Student Affairs updated DSC regarding Student Health. She stated the starting date for the new nurse practitioner will be approximately January 1, 2008. Further, Sharon Lerner explained that stop-gap services are available at the Institute for Urban Family Health. Students can call and make an appointment or just walk in.

Next, Linda Perotta, Director of the Child Care Center at GC, provided an update about the services provided by the center. The Child Care Center provides full day early childhood care and educational services. Further, the center works with students from a number of the psychology programs so that they can complete their research.

Funding for the center is provided from a variety of sources including: New York State, The Graduate Center, tuition to use the child care center, the CUNY United Way Campaign, fundraising, and the Federal Block Grant for poor families. However, this year the expenses at the child care center have increased, as they are seeking accreditation. According to Linda Perotta, CUNY Central is urging accreditation and a recent evaluator suggested that the center make a variety of changes that would increase the likelihood of taking the next step toward accreditation. With increased costs, Linda Perotta asked DSC to consider increasing the amount of money we donated in the past.

Sharon Lerner suggested that DSC ask for a matching grant. Rather, if DSC offers a specific amount of money, GC administration could match that amount or provide additional funds.

I. Approval of Agenda

Point “d.” should be in place of the second “c.” under the Student Affairs Report
Point “e – Wellness Center” added to the Student Affairs Report
Point “e – Near Eastern Studies” should actually read “Classical and Ancient Near East Studies Group

Agenda approved by unanimous consent

II. Approval of Old Minutes

Old minutes approved by unanimous consent

III. Old Business

a. GC email Service

RF explained that Gregory Donovan (GD) and himself created a resolution regarding email services and previous conversations with administration and IT about mail forwarding. In the past, Bob Campbell mentioned that the issue was with 80th street, not with GC. However, President Kelly said that the decision was made and that approval was not needed

Aaron Ibur (AI)– stated that Windows Live was a huge improvement over what we currently have

Denise Torres (DT) commented that we could have had Google Mail (Gmail) for free

Stephanie Domenici (SD) mentions that the document is not in a resolution type format and that it would present better if the format was changed

Chong W. (CW) explains that there are various typos in the document

DT motions to pass resolution in the spirit of the document with changes to be made to reflect the resolution format.

Pam P. 2nd

Passes with unanimous consent

*Break from agenda at 6:36 pm to hear from Robert Ramos (RR), Chairperson – University Student Senate

RR congratulated Rouzbeh Nazari for being elected as vice-chairperson for graduate affairs and explained that graduate students would now have better access to the chancellor.

Last year graduate students received a tuition increase and a new contract is coming up. Further, a fee increases have typically been covered by the state until now. However, because of financial deficit the city and state are in, as evidenced by the hiring freeze and budget cut, it is unlikely that this fee will be covered. This year a fee increase will occur for undergraduates, if budgetary

needs are not met, graduate students will receive a fee increase as well. Therefore, RR states that USS will not asking for a fee increase.

RR discussed the USS Legislative Action Plan. Upon graduation, many CUNY graduates cannot find jobs in the field. USS is asking the city to promise that one out of every ten interviews would be given to a CUNY graduate.

RF questioned the inconsistency of the USS website and RR maintained that the problem was resolved. The USS webmaster left and the new webmaster will be updating the website soon.

Proceeded with agenda at 6:47 pm.

b. DSC response to CUNY Master Plan

RF - Provost Edwards has not responded to our document, though in conversation has expressed her gratitude to our response and will integrate it into the final document to be sent to 80th street.

Adele Kudish (AK) inquires as to how the sample student response was chosen

RF explained that the sample student response was actually the entire student response

AK – certain issues are not discussed

RF – issues that were most pertinent to what 80th street wanted were in the document.

IV. New Business

a. Health Insurance

Paul McBreen– The Adjunct Project met with Barbara Bowen and PSC. The union is pushing for universal health insurance for all graduate students. The union wants graduate students on board the “campaign” to put pressure on administration to go along with the contract.

The union is insisting that graduate student health insurance be in the contract. A student/professor alliance will affect the process and may put pressure on President William Kelly to also push for graduate health in this contract/initiative.

Emily Sherwood - is a member of the Student Service Committee and states that student health is next on the list. She mentions a possible student survey to better understand how many students are under insured or uninsured.

RF – “Anything DSC can do to help”

DT – Previous DSC co-chairs conducted such a survey in 2005 and the numbers were consistent with the national averages. She will forward the previous numbers to Emily Sherwood. Therefore, resources may be useful elsewhere.

RF – if DSC moves to e-balloting we could use the student insurance survey as a pilot or “test.”

AI – how scientific was the first survey?

DT- not an issue, as results were consistent with national averages.

b. USS Rep

RF – Ally Foster (AF) is the new USS Representative. Alissa Ackerman had to step down for personal reasons. AF will attend the next USS meeting on Sunday November 18th, 2007.

DT motions to affirm AF as new USS representative. Danielle Wu 2nd - Passes with unanimous consent.

c. Ratification of New Reps

Steering Committee recently removed two at large representatives for failure to attend two consecutive plenary meetings with unexcused absences. A third at large rep was moved up to program representatives. Seven reps were certified by Student Affairs and ratified by SC. The list of reps include: Jill Belli, Caroline Erb, Amanda Springs, Jenny Ly, Elizabeth Arias, Karla Felix, Maria Maust, Lauren Evans, Lesley Patrick

AI - Motion to ratify

DT – 2nd

Passes with unanimous consent.

d. Bylaw Presentation

RF noted that by adding this bylaw we are allowing w-balloting to be read in multiple formats. It is a way of interpreting what is meant by “mail” etc.

Erika Calton (EC) – If information for voting is sent via email, is there any way to acknowledge that specific emails were read?

RF – 1) We always receive a large number of returns from the post office. 2) GC email accounts for ballots allows for acknowledgements.

EC – still concerns – conducting e-balloting has kinks that need to be straightened out. For instance, often the POP will cutoff connection. A lot of issues with an already low voter turnout leaves questions as to whether e-ballot is the best way to go.

RF – the by-law is about broadening the interpretation of specific words and may pave the way for e-balloting, the by-law itself is not about the e-ballot, though RF acknowledged that EC had valid concerns.

EC – cautions DSC to be careful because making a by-law change is difficult

DT – States that the executive committee worked hard to word the bylaw carefully. They understood the ramifications that could occur and pursued assistance from various administrators.

SD– Is this replacing a bylaw?

RF – No – it is creating a new bylaw

SD - Why not a constitutional amendment?

RF – 1) elections and changes to the constitution are governed by the constitution, must mail document via “postage paid reply” and constitutional changes would cost thousands of dollars. 2) Future plenaries may want to go back to mailing voting forms. A bylaw change would allow for different interpretation.

CW – Who is chair of the bylaws committee?

RF – No one on steering committee has stepped up to the position, so executive committee took the document to Student Affairs

Stephanie – Points out that either way a constitutional amendment is important because elections are governed by the constitution, not the bylaws. She questions if there is money in the budget for constitutional amendments

RF – given timeliness of the issue, we would not be able to institute e-balloting this year

e. Wellness Center

DT – Wellness Center reimbursement policy – DSC provides a \$50 per incident because we do not have onsite services at the moment. With what Sharon Lerner said at the beginning of the meeting, DT questions whether we should stop reimbursements for services rendered after December 1, 2007. This would allow students 2 weeks to keep already existing appointments, after which time they can go to the Institute for Urban Family Health for free.

Geoff Rab – Why should we wait to cut off funds? – No reason to keep extending the reimbursements if students can go for free to the Institute for Urban Family Health.

DT – We want to ensure continuity of care

AI– Why do we pay for reimbursements when we pay a fee for services?

DT – Brenda wanted to make sure that the needs of the student body were met

Pam Proscia (PP). – Can DSC be reimbursed for allocated funds

DT – Everything will be ironed out. Motion to discontinue reimbursements as of December 1, 2007.

Geoff Rab 2nd – Passes with unanimous consent.

V. Student Affairs Report

Gregory Donovan was not able to attend the meeting this evening, however he has provided a report regarding student affairs.

a. Outreach Strategies

b. E-ballot online voting service

RF – There are many questions about voting ballots. GD has been in contact with companies and IT regarding this issue and will speak about it at the December plenary.

DW – Can we combine e-ballots and mail ballots?

Robert Ramos – Brooklyn College does voting by e-ballot and will find out what company

PP – Consideration to electronic voting – what is the point?

RF – We will cut costs – the entire process costs us \$1,995.

DT – We will be saving many trees – This is the platform that GD ran on when running for Co-Chair for student affairs; online voting is cheaper and people are more familiar with working online. We will be able to communicate with more people. New forms of media provide access to more people.

c. Proposed Chartered Organizations

David Spataro – provided DSC with the constitution for the CUNY Spatial Scholars Group for approval

Emily Sherwood – distributed the constitution for the Early Modern Interdisciplinary Group for approval

Corey Frost – distributed the constitution for The GC Poetics Group for our approval

Lisa Offringa – distributed the constitution for CUNY Women in Science, Engineering and Math for our approval

d. Classical and Ancient Near East Studies Group

Paul McBreen provided the constitution for Classical and Ancient Near East Studies Group for DSC to charter.

Jameel Haque (JH) – questioned the difference between the Middle East group and the Near East Group and stated that overlap was not allowed.

CW stated that some overlap was allowed

AK – wanted clarification regarding grammar – was it “Classical” and “Ancient Near East” or “Classical and Ancient Near East”

JH– objected to the group because it was not very inclusive

Jill Belli – stated that with the word “classical” many people assume strictly Greek/Roman and not Near East

DT – clarified what was allowed as far as overlap in the constitution

PP – the problem is not overlap in subject matter, it is in the mission.

AI – Motion to Charter the organization

EC – 2nd

32 votes for chartering, 1 abstention

VI. Communications Report (Rob Faunce)

a. Media Board

The Media Board met on November 9. During this meeting, the Board discussed budget initiatives for 2008-9, but deferred voting until the next meeting. The Media Board did vote to recommend that a seventh issue of The Advocate, which would be web-only, be published in May, funded by the current web budget overflow created by the release of the DSC Webmaster.

The Media Board meets again March 7 at 6pm in room 5489.

b. Board of Trustees Update

At the November 26 meeting, they will be discussing funding options for next year, including a proposed \$164.9 million increase for the University, including 500 new full-time faculty (100 of whom are specifically earmarked for the Decade of Science initiative). There will be a public hearing on November 19, 2007 at 5pm in Room 104 of 535 E. 80th St to discuss the budget.

c. Meetings with Administrators

Members of the Executive Committee met with Student Affairs on 11/16. During meetings with President Kelly, members of the Executive Committee expressed concerns over the proposed rollout of Windows Live “student” email accounts, and received reassurance that there will be at least two student members on the upcoming Provost Search Committee.

d. Grad Council – Executive Committee of Graduate Council met on November 14 to set the agenda for Graduate Council on December 13.

VII. Business Report (Denise Torres)

a. We still have lockers available if anyone wants them

b. Chartered Organizations and Programs – must submit receipts for program money by December 14th, 2007

c. Steering Committee staffs the DSC office 5 days a week – some days are more staffed than others, but we are available.

d. Child Care Center –

Special Allocation monies – should we continue to provide funds?

RF – providing money is a symbolic gesture

Pam – we should look to other campuses to see what their student government organizations give. Also, what is the market rate for child care? Why should we fund a program for only 24 students when federal subsidiaries were lost because the families that use the center are not impoverished?

Aaron: Maybe we should ask for a lottery for the children each year. Potentially a child can be in the center for up to 5 years and there are only spots for 24 children.

DT: Continuity of Care

Aaron: Some people can afford to pay for child care – maybe there should be a sliding scale.

DT: Motion to use special allocation funds to provide money to the child care center.

Pam: 2nd

11 in favor, 6 oppose 3 abstentions. We do not have quorum – motion fails.

VIII. USS Report – Ally Foster will attend the USS meeting this Sunday (November 18th, 2007).

IX. Committee Reports – Nothing to report

X. Announcements

Pam – Issues with printing on the concourse level of the library – inexcusable. Techs have said that the library is out of toner and no budget for new toner. One out of every four printers works and people wait up to 45 minutes to get a document printed. Bob Campbell has not returned emails.

RF – There is a meeting with Bob Campbell in the next few weeks and this issue will be addressed.

XI. Adjournment

CW - Motion to adjourn

DW – 2nd

Unanimous Consent