

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

March 14, 2008—6pm

Members and Voting Alternates Present:

Biology: Lisa Offringa
Classics: Michael Broder
Computer Science: Omer Demir (proxy: Mehmet Bicer), Deniz Sarioz
Criminal Justice: Alissa Ackerman
Engineering Biomedical: Xiang (Ian) Gu
English: Allyson Foster
French: Chong Wojtkowski
History: Carl Lindskoog
Liberal Studies: Christopher Ian Foster
Linguistics: Elizabeth Pratt
Mathematics: Micah Miller
Philosophy: Chris Sula
Political Science: April Henning, Aaron Ibur (proxy: Jen Gaboury)
Psychology: Bio: Maria Maust
Psychology: Cognition, Brain, Behavior: Karla Felix
Psychology: Educational: Astrid Rodriguez
Psychology: Environmental: Stephanie Domenici Cabonargi
Psychology: Forensic: Elizabeth Arias
Psychology: Industrial and Organizational: Jessica Anderson
Psychology: Learning Processes: Matthew Taylor
Psychology: Neuro: Jenny Ly
Social Welfare: Denise Torres
Sociology: Jesse Goldstein
Speech & Hearing Sciences: Kristen Maul
Theatre: Ana Martinez

At-large Reps: Jill Belli , Gregory Donovan, Rob Faunce, Larry Ianotti, Taylor Kennamer, Neil Meyer, Geoff Rab, Meghan Sacks, Kate Wilson, Danielle Wu

Guest: Elaine Montilla, IT

Members Absent:

Anthropology: Javiela Evangelista (excused), Mariya Radeva (excused)
Art History: Monica Steinberg, Whitney Thompson
Audiology: Allison Shapiro (excused)
Biology: Kathleen Schnaars Uvino
Chemistry: Nancy Medina
Comparative Literature: Andrea Efthymiou, Adele Kudish (excused)
Criminal Justice: Crystal Rodriguez
Engineering Chemical: Mehrdad Kheiripour

Engineering Civil: Rouzbeh Nazari (excused)
Engineering Electrical: Rex Wong
English: Kerdiana Chez (excused), Cori Gabbard (excused)
Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Lit: Teresa Darwich
History: Jameel Haque
Music DMA: Judy Woo
Music PhD: Roberto Barnard
Public Health: Lauren Evans
Psychology: Social Personality: Rachel Verni (excused)
Urban Education: Pamela Proscia (excused)

At-Large Reps: Nazreen Bacchus, Ericka Calton, Randy Cota (excused), Fiona Lee (excused), Charles Lieberman (excused), Anton Masterovoy (excused), Amy Meyers (excused), Aya Shohat, Amanda Springs (excused), Brenda Vollman (excused)

Members Present: 37; Members Absent: 32

Chair: Rob Faunce (RF)
Minutes: Allyson Foster (AF)

Guest Speakers:

Elaine Montilla, Director of IT User Services addressed several issues:

- a. Email. Windows Live is not an option as it does not allow email forwarding. They are still trying to find a workable email solution.
- b. New Computers. All old computers in the GC should have been replaced, so please notify User Services if you notice any that haven't been.
- c. Linux. Now available at the GC on computers in rooms 4208 and 4217. Should you need other open source applications, notify User Services and they will test and install the applications.
- d. Help Desk. The help desk has been moved into the main computer lab area, so please let them know if you find it too noisy, etc.
- e. Printer Room. The paper room has been converted into a printer room that contains 3 printers (with a larger paper capacity than the current HPs), tables, and fax machines. The HPs will also remain outside in the lab, at least for a time.
- f. Mac Lab. A Mac Lab initiative has been proposed for the C-Level, and would also contain a couple of Linux machines. Should it be approved, it will be open next fall.
- g. New Hires. Two new employees have been hired for the help desk, and two more are forthcoming.
- h. Right Answers. This online support database will be available within the

GC, hopefully in the summer.

Next, John Flaherty, Director of Security and Public Safety talked about CUNY Alert. He encouraged students to sign up for the service, which delivers campus emergency information to students personally by email, voicemail, and/or text message. Sign up for each CUNY campus that you attend or work at. Sign-up requires you to provide your Social Security number, but all information is encrypted and secure. Feel free to address any questions to him at jflaherty@gc.cuny.edu

Finally, Dan Lemons, Associate Provost and Dean for Doctoral Science Programs spoke about Health Insurance. All new incoming students in the four hard sciences will receive health insurance packages. However, he stated that he wants *all* GC students to have health insurance, and have parity with SUNY graduate students.

Kate Wilson (KW): It is “unconscionable” that some GC students get health insurance while others don’t.

DL: It’s certainly not ideal, but it’s what we’ve been able to obtain. If you look at the big picture, funding has greatly improved overall in the last few years. It is more pragmatic to take an incremental approach than to demand everything at once. The GC health coverage issue is being pushed in the state legislature right now, but we probably won’t see results this year. We’ll probably have a better chance next year, the second time around.

Dan Lemons also confirmed that Engineering degrees will no longer be granted by the GC. If approved at the state level, new doctoral engineering students will be admitted to City College. For a time there will be two parallel programs running, as engineering students currently at the GC will remain there. He also confirmed that Joint Degrees in the four hard sciences will be granted by Hunter College and City College. The programs will continue to run in the same way. Lemons said that while there may have been rumors of Criminal Justice and Business also going the Joint Degree route, no official moves have been made. He is committed to the GC being the center of graduate study at CUNY.

At 6:38 the meeting was called to order by RF.

I. Approval of Agenda

Remove item III.a as it will be covered under III.e (now III.d).

Passed with unanimous consent.

II. Approval of Old Minutes

- Deniz Sarioz is listed as both present and absent. His proxy, Debora Upegui, attended.

- KW: - Under At-Large Reps, it should read “Kevin Born,” not “King Brave”;
- Charles Lieberman’s proxy, Julie Viollaz, attended
- There needs to be a sign-off from the minute-taker

Gregory Donovan (GD): Approve

Alissa Ackerman (AA): 2nd
Unanimous Consent

III. Old Business

a. Nurse Practitioner

Denise Torres (DT) said that a contract for a Nurse Practitioner is moving forward.

Michael Broder (MB): Hasn’t this been under discussion for a long time now?

DT: Yes, but it’s on its way to Albany for the final sign-off. We’re hopeful that we’ll have a Nurse Practitioner at the end of April or beginning of May.

MB: An offer still hasn’t been made to a person?

DT: I can’t say.

b. Elections Process

RF said that the nominees have been certified by Student Affairs. Approximately 80 nominations were received for Departmental Reps, and approximately 30 for At-Large. We’re now waiting for people to confirm their nominations, and will then move on to preparing the ballots.

GD asked if anyone had problems with the on-line nomination system. MB wondered if there was any way to log in again after you’d logged out. GD said that you can log in and out as many times as you want, until you hit Submit. However, it may not save your information. KW asked if it was possible to look at the positions and what they entail, etc. before going online (post hard copies, or send out an email). GD explained that that info does come up when you log in, before you get to the ballot itself. Next time we’ll make it clearer that you can log in and out. Info about the positions is also available on the DSC website, and is linked to on the voting postcards.

Chong Wojtkowski (CW) asked about the voting numbers. GD said there were roughly 80 nominations for Departmental Reps, 30 for At-Large, 30 for Media Board, high 20s for Academic Appeals. RF noted that approximately 1.5% of the GC students participated in the nomination process. GD thought this was a good sign for actual voting, and DT noted that there was a significantly larger list of potential nominees than previous years.

c. Wellness Center

DT said that there is about \$96,000 in the Wellness Center budget, and would like people to make suggestions as to what it could be used for. The money can be used on anything that is related to health and well-being.

KW asked if lab rates are still subsidized, and DT confirmed that they are. Stephanie Domenici (SD) suggested that we reimburse people for insurance people had to buy, and DT said we could look into it.

Meghan Sacks (MS) also approved of that idea.

KW suggested that the nurse's hours be increased, and DT noted that we've talked to President Kelly about having extended and weekend hours.

Lisa Offringa (LO) wondered if it would be possible to arrange a set-up whereby GC students who work at another campus could use that campus's health facilities. It is often difficult and inconvenient to get to the GC. DT noted that, bureaucratically speaking, that would be difficult, and that all students are eligible to use the Institute for Urban Family Health. KW proposed that we work to allot two hours a month at other campuses for the use of GC students.

There was a discussion about what the deadline should be for deciding how to allocate the money. If we can make a decision shortly, then we can vote on it at the April 11th meeting and get things moving forward. GD suggested that we have a referendum by April 1st, and RF suggested that we could post a survey on the DSC website. Jessica Anderson (JA) said that students were really annoyed by the lack of a nurse practitioner, so giving them a voice would be empowering.

d. Email Taskforce

GD explained that the GC will not be switching to Windows Live, so we are essentially back to ground zero.

IV. New Business

a. Budget

DT presented the proposed budget for 2008-2009.

KW: Has anyone discussed the Advocate Film Series? Is it worth the expenditure?

DT: It's a Media Board thing.

RF: I've talked with James Hoff, and attendance has been steadily rising. The \$50/month

they spend for food has encouraged post-film discussions that dovetail nicely with issues the Advocate is concerned with.

CW: Is the Film Series a line item?

DT: Yes

SD: Is this year's (2007-2008) budget available online for comparison?

DT: Yes, although it will look different (in terms of format) from this one.

JA: Re: the Travel and Research line – how is it allocated?

DT: We give Student Affairs a lump sum, and they decide.

JA: Do we know how much of the fund is being used?

DT: A lot. If we had more money, it would definitely go here. It's sort of a matching fund.

JA: Since it's so well-utilized, it should be emphasized in the budget.

DT: Absolutely. The DSC provides about 50% of the fund. Unfortunately, the more money we commit, the more reluctant they are to top it up.

JA: It's not sufficient – we should push them to put more money into it.

Jill Belli (JB): What happens if Professional Development and Cultural Affairs grants don't get used?

DT: The money goes back in the DSC coffers.

GD: The proposed bylaw amendment might make the distribution less lop-sided.

SD: Can we have a copy of this year's, as well as the proposed budget for comparison at the next meeting?

CW: Why are there no more coffee hours?

GD: Poor attendance. If we want them, we can draw from the discretionary fund.

KW: Re: Travel/Research: Putting aside institutional history, we should open up discussion on how to get more money in the coffer.

MB: Is there room for a different fund – one that is purely DSC-administered?

DT: Brenda Vollman has been working on Scholarship Development, but it's met with little interest.

b. New and Revised Bylaws

AF noted that the strikethroughs didn't show up in Section 1.6 Advertising and Outside Funding. Please cross out the following: “be sent directly to the Business office in exchange for receipts for the money. The editor-in-chief may draw from that money to pay newspaper expenses through the normal check request procedure”

Re: Section 1.6

SD: Why can't the Advocate use the advertising money they raise in the same year? Wouldn't that provide more incentive?

RF: They can, but they need to come to the Steering Committee and request it.

MB: In terms of incentive, it shouldn't matter when the money can be used. We should think of the newspaper as an institution over time, rather than as belonging to any particular

editor.

KW: The wording of the bylaw suggests that the money can only be used next year.

DT: James Hoff wanted that specific language. Should we bring it back to him?

RF: It will go back through the Constitution and Bylaw Committee

SD: We should ask James to explain his rationale.

Re: Bylaw #18: Compliance with New York State Laws

CW: Isn't compliance with laws a given?

RF: Yes, but this validates our document while also acknowledging a higher authority.

c. Health Insurance

Sean Murray and Carl Lindskoog encouraged students to attend the rally at the GC on March 18 that coincides with Chancellor Goldstein's visit. We need to emphasize the need for health insurance for all GC students and parity with SUNY graduate students. They also encouraged students to participate in the letter writing campaign, and agreed to forward contact info for the people we should write to, as well as talking points for the letters. It would also be helpful if we could encourage faculty members to write letters. All of this needs to be done by April 1.

V. Student Affairs

a. Online Forms

GD reported that the DSC website now includes forms for the Student Travel Award, Room Reservations, Check Requests, Coffee Urn Reservations, and Facilities. Are there any others that need to be added?

b. Chartered Organizations

GD noted that there are several Chartered Orgs that are inactive or who have not submitted digital constitutions. He asked that people from these groups be in touch with him.

There were two proposals for Chartered Organizations:

1. Eastern European Studies
There was no representative of the group at Plenary, so no action was taken
2. Global Governance Studies
KW noted that there is already a Middle Eastern group that seems to have a similar

focus, as well as a Global Studies group. It was unclear how this proposed group would differ from the others, and there were concerns about some of the wording in the constitution. As the person who wrote it was not present, RF suggested that we move to table the proposal so it could be revised and re-presented.

In Favor: 16

Opposed: 0

Abstentions: 2

VI. Communications Report

The Board of Trustees held a public hearing on Tuesday, February 19, at 5pm, in the Courtroom, Brooklyn Borough Hall. Many professors and administrators expressed both support and concern over the joint degrees resolution for the GC with Hunter and CCNY regarding Biology, Biochemistry, Chemistry, and Physics, as well as the handling of the move of the Engineering programs to CCNY. At the February 25 meeting, the Board of Trustees approved all of these resolutions.

Members of the Executive Committee met with President Kelly on February 18 and March 11. He expressed confidence in the IT department's ability to negotiate an appropriate email service for our students. The President also iterated and reiterated that there are potential budget woes afoot due to revenue decreases and the recent Spitzer scandal that could impact CUNY in the next academic year. He reaffirmed his commitment to student housing and is working on a letter of intent for a facility in Long Island City—stay tuned for more details on that exciting possibility. The President also strongly supports raising funds to include the majority of graduate students under the NYSHIP currently available to SUNY students who perform service (such as teaching or research) to the University. To that end VP for Information Technology Steve Brier and I went to Albany on Monday to raise awareness and support for this funding, hoping to get affordable health insurance to our students sooner rather than later. Since then, the President and CUNY Chancellor Matthew Goldstein co-signed a letter to Assemblyperson Glick and Senator Kenneth LaValle. The President also asks for your help in writing to Senator LaValle lavalle@senate.state.ny.us and Assemblyperson Glick glickd@assembly.state.ny.us in support of this initiative, and spreading the word among the student body to make this affordable plan a reality.

Nominations are being tabulated and certified for the 2008-9 DSC Elections! Thanks for getting out the word—we hope to continue eliciting strong response when balloting begins on April 1!

The Executive Committee met with Student Affairs on March 14. We can report that the contract with Mount Sinai is being submitted to Albany on Monday; there is hope to have a Nurse Practitioner in the GC in May.

The Media Board met on March 7 at 6pm. At that meeting a budget for \$25,097 was submitted to the Steering Committee for inclusion in the DSC 2008-9 budget. I am particularly pleased to note that we've authorized a seventh issue—with more pages per issue—of the Advocate while slimming the Media Board's overall budget. The Media

Board also reappointed James Hoff as Editor-in-Chief of the Advocate for 2008-9. The Media Board meets again on April 18 at 6pm in room 5489.

President Bill Kelly will be our speaker for Plenary on April 11.

VII. Business Report

DT: We don't have quorum, so no action can be taken

VIII. USS Report

AF: Nothing to report. I am still not receiving meeting information, and the times and locations of meetings are not posted on the USS website.

IX. Committee Reports

Nothing to report

X. Announcements

None

XI. Adjournment

RF: Motion to adjourn

GD: 2nd

Unanimous Consent

Minutes respectfully submitted by Allyson Foster