



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

February 13, 2008—6pm

Members and Voting Alternates Present:

Anthropology: Andrew Brooks, Christine Pinnock
Biochemistry: Richard Able
Biology: Armin Lahiji, Kathleen Schanaars Uvino (proxy: K. Viers)
Chemistry: Yu Zhao
Classics: Jared Simard
Comparative Literature: Anick Boyd, Anna Finkelstern
Computer Science: Jeremy Seideman, Suzanne Tamang
Criminal Justice: Tasha Youstin
Earth and Environmental Sciences: Katie Gill
Economics: Junnan Zhao
English: Jill Belli, Allyson Foster
French: Chong Wojtkowski
Linguistics: Elizabeth Pratt
Music DMA: H. Roz Woll
Philosophy: Kyle Ferguson, Chris Sula
Political Science: Aaron Ibur, Patricia Stapleton
Psychology: Bio: Preston Foerder
Psychology: Cog, Brain, Beh: Justin Ostrovsky
Psychology: Dev: Vicky Barrios
Psychology: Forensic: Marsha Brown
Psychology: Neurology: Olga Nikelshpur
Social Welfare: Larry Iannotti
Speech & Hearing Sciences: Carol Tessel
Theatre: Frank Episale
Urban Education: Shana Henry, Liza Pappas

At-large Reps: Kate Broad, Ericka Calton (proxy: P. McBreen), Karyn Collie, Gregory Donovan, Rob Faunce, Lindsey Freer, Charles Lieberman, Alison Powell, Shawn Rice

Members Absent:

Art History: Monica Steinberg, Whitney Thompson
Biology: Samantha Sheppard (excused)
Chemistry: Tony Perri (excused)
Criminal Justice: Julie Viollaz (excused)
Engineering Biomedical: Xiang (Ian) Gu (excused)
Engineering Chemical: Mehrdad Kheiripour
Engineering Civil: Rouzbeh Nazari
English: Taylor Kennamer (excused)
Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Lit: Efrain Cardenas (excused), Teresa Berenice Darwich
History: Igor Draskovic, Anton Masterovoy (excused)

Music PhD: Rachel Lumsden (excused)
Psychology: Environmental: Stephanie Domenici Cabonargi (excused)
Psychology: Industrial and Organizational: Kimberly Iaffaldano (excused)
Psychology: Learning Processes: Matthew Taylor (excused)
Psychology: Social Personality: Stephanie Anderson
Public Health: Princess Fortin (excused)
Sociology: Colin Ashley

At-Large Reps: Sari Altschuler (excused), Boris Daussa Pastor, John DeCarlo, Ian foster (excused), Jesse Goldstein (excused), Malav Kanuga, Lauren Klein (excused), Philip Kopp, Renee McGarry (excused), Neil Meyer (excused), Linda Neiberg (excused), Pamela Proscia (excused), Denise Torres (excused), Brenda Vollman

Members Present: 42; Members Absent: 34

Chair: Chris Sula
Minutes: Suzanne Tamang
Meeting Called to Order: 6:25

I. Approval of Agenda

Chris Sula (CS) asks for additions to the agenda. There are none. Charles Lieberman (CL) motions to approve the agenda; Andrew Brooks seconds the motion; the agenda is approved by unanimous consent.

II. Approval of Old Minute

CS asks for corrections to draft of December 12, 2008 minutes. CL points out there is no adjournment of the meeting indicated and suggests, "Adjourned" be added to the minutes. Rob Faunce (RF) motions to approve the old minutes pending submission of the revision; Christine Pinnock (CP) seconds the motion; the agenda is approved by unanimous consent.

III. Old Business

Approval of the following new At-Large Reps:

- Lindsey Freer, Jesse Goldstein, Renee McGarry, Alison Powell

RF motions to approve the new reps; Shawn Rice seconds the motion; the new reps are approved by unanimous consent.

IV. New Business

- a. *DSC Nominations Process* – The Web-based nominations process is now live and can be accessed through DSC website. APOs have been sent an email asking that they provide students in their program with the information on the submission process. RF discusses some issues that have come up. For example, only students can nominate candidates and not staff. Also, the accuracy of the contact information for nominees is

important because nominees need to accept a nomination through email. Gregory Donovan (GD) notes that the process is more specific than last year and requires the following fields: name, department, and email information/phone number.

- b. *Research Foundation* –RF reports on behalf of Ericka Calton (absent) that there was a meeting at the end of last semester. Tuition and the student grant program were discussed and plans to continue the grant program are expected.

V. Student Affairs Report (GD)

- a. *Chartered Organizations* – All eligible groups should now have their office space. Every room should have 2 working computers. Expect an email if you are eligible for a space and don't have it as of yet.
- b. *Opencuny.org* – Going live next week. Slowed down temporarily by an upgrade and a term of use policy, but now moving ahead.

VI. Communications Report (RF)

- a. *Student Affairs* - RF reports that he has met with Student Affairs and they informed him that travel funds are nearly expended. If you or another student wants funds, they should apply ASAP.
- b. *Grad Council* – RF reports that Grad Council is has been focusing on department executive committee (EC) meetings; specifically, are ECs meeting each semester and is at least one meetings open to students per year? This is a major issue of contention and Grad Council would like student cooperation in supporting open meetings. Another recent focus of Grad Council is a policy Baruch has for printing materials with corporate branding. The potential of a GC policy and formation of an ad hoc committee is being discussed. CS and RF express the responsibility of DSC reps to serve as alternates for the department Grad Council reps when they are unable to attend. CS notes the next Grad Council meeting is 3/5 and attendance is very important at these upcoming meetings.
- c. *Communications* – RF reports there are still some NYSHIP enrollment issues. Students from the floor express that covering a domestic partner requires additional documentation that can be difficult to obtain or requirements that may be unfair. Other students note issues with communication, especially on the side of NYSHIP. For example, NYSHIP fails to answer phone calls. RF stresses contact with Elise Perram in Student Affairs for any difficulties with the process, and reminds the Plenary of the Ombudsman's services.
- d. *Adjunct Project* – RF reports that equity month will focus on employment and un-insurance issues. Despite increases in student enrollment, adjunct in some CUNY schools have been receiving notification that there will be less employment opportunities in upcoming semesters. RF mentions that if you are expecting to be employed in the fall and are not currently, you can sign up for NYSHIP and get covered over the summer.
- e. *Other Communications* - CS notes that Gilleece Fellowships have been eliminated to compensate for the larger differential between international and out-of-state tuition in comparison to in-state cost that has been driven by the new tuition increases. Also, Writing and Tech Fellowships will be a

5-year package in 2011 versus the typical open enrollment process. Jill Belli (JB) notes that there are other possible restructurings to fellowship packages and that there is talk of a quantitative fellowship.

- f. *Advocate* – RF announces that there is an ad for the Editor-In-Chief (EIC) position for the *Advocate* in the current edition of the paper and notes that the current EIC has expressed interest in staying. Aaron Ibur (AI) requests that an announcement is sent to DSC members. Deadline is 2/26 for all applicants.

VII. Business Report

- a. Budget - CS announces that he will have a proposed budget for next year for discussion at the next plenary.
- b. Convenience Fee - CS brings up the issue of the 2.65% convenience fee that is charged on students paying tuition with credit cards. The fee is a result of Central office moving to the EDF system. This system does not accept visa Visa because Visa does not allow this surcharge on its customers. CS directs students with complaints to Central office. A discussion about the issue ensues and a student asks if there are any organized efforts to combat this problem. Another student suggests that alternative systems that don't charge this fee, or charge a lesser fee would be a better alternative.
- c. Program Election System - CS working on directions for using GC's survey tool, Opinio, to run elections of students for program committees. Email with information will be sent to APOs, EOs, and Plenary members. Graduate Council Governance requires that programs have an Executive Committee, Admissions & Awards Committee, Election Committee, Faculty Membership Committee, Curriculum & Exams Committee and others as established by a program's faculty, structure, or Executive Committee. Governance requires that each standing committee have student members. CS is working to create a standard resource for the departments to use for elections. This information will be posted to the DSC website, along with references to program committees in the GC Governance.

VIII. USS Report (Allyson Foster)

The budget was passed. Ongoing rallies are being organized. The new president of USS has been invited to speak to us but has not replied as of yet. We are actively soliciting USS to contribute to our Student and Travel fund, to honor a commitment made last year and to renew one for this year, but we have not heard from them yet.

IX. Committee Reports

- a. *Constitution and Bylaws* – Existing bylaws with revisions indicated by underline and strike through provided in hard copy. CS and GD discuss the modifications and the rationale for them.

- i. Bylaw #19 (definition of semester) –CS takes suggestions from the floor and plenary agrees on the language that a semester is defined as the period from the first day of classes through the end of the semester. The “end of the semester” will be defined as 10 business days from the last day of class as set by the GC calendar.
 - ii. Bylaw 5 (5.1 – 5.3 student activity fees in payment for “outside” performer/speaker) - GD noted his additions. CS reads the amended text.
 - iii. Bylaw 2 (chartering, dechartering, interdisciplinary requirement) – GD describes and presents the rationale for the potential modifications to the bylaws on the process of chartering, dechartering, interdisciplinary requirement. A discussion of problems/issues/potential modifications ensues. CL notes the signature requirement is trivial and that something is necessary to monitor the membership of clubs so that they are not exclusive to one department. Tasha Youstin asks if DSC has the power to revoke chartering based on failure to comply with their constitution and is informed by GD that DSC has this power. RF motions for straw poll “to add some language” and the plenary is 50/50 split. GD asks to finish describing the edits and reads modifications to bylaw 2.4 and 2.7. Student from the floor asks if any groups will be dechartered this year and GD notes that this will likely happen to 5 groups. After finishing GD asks for a straw poll on the modifications –now far more than 50% (about 95%) of the floor agrees with the modifications as they were described.
- b. *Health Committee* – Jill Belli discusses the blood drive and upcoming meeting.

X. Announcements

3/20 DSC party!

XI. Adjournment

CP motions to adjourn; AI second the motion. Meeting is adjourned at 7:55.

Respectfully submitted by Suzanne Tamang