

**Plenary  
MINUTES  
December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

**Plenary**

Executive Committee

Steering Committee

Constitution and Bylaws

Grants

Health & Wellness

Outreach

Student Services

USS Advisory Committee

Advocate Advisory Board

OpenCUNY Board

Governance Task Force

EDLAB

Student Tech Fee

**Present:** Ryan Abrahams, Khalid Al Hilli, Fabiana Alceste, Jimiane Ashe, Colin Ashley, Chloe Asselin, Lisa Babel, Cassandra Barnes, Kyla Bender-Baird, Shelley Buchbinder, Carlos Camacho, Kevin Cedeno-Pacheco, Elaine Chang Sandoval, Rachel Chapman, Jennifer Chmielewski, Pablo Crespo, Ernesto Cuba, Erin Cully, Chloe Edmondson, Ernesto Garcia, Dean Gibson Schafer, Drew Green, Amelia Greene, Anna Harb, Michael Healy, Stefanie Jones, Sean Kennedy, William Lorenzo, Laura Lutgen, Theodor Maghrak, Velina Manolova, Elizabeth Martignetti, Amy Martin, Erin McKinney-Prupis, Jeremiah McMillan, Dominique Nisperos, Teresa Ober, Rajat Kumar Pal, Helen Panagiotopoulos, Alison Parks, Jennifer Peirce, Brooke Prashker, Jen Prince, Jeremy Randall, Jacob Russell, Saiful Saleem, Rebecca Salois, Cecilia Salvi, Liza Shapiro, Gwen Shaw, Hamad Sindhi, Corinna Singleman, Cihan Tekay, Charlotte Thurston, David Topel, Deepti Wadhwa, Janet Werther, Tellisia Williams, Jessica Woodson, Allan Zelener

**Absent:** Yuval Abrams, Hillel Broder, Rebecca Fullan, Kishore Gangangari, Maryam Ghaffari Saadat, Eleanor Goldman, Huw Green, Richard Gustavson, Lauren Hudson, Joshua Katz-Rosene, Mawia Khogali, Melissa Marturano, Ana Perry, China Sajadian, Cosim Sayid, Stephanie Vella

**Guest:** Interim Provost Louise Lennihan (LL)

Smaller items:

- 5489 was painted & carpeted.
- 9th floor prayer/meditation room and it will find a new home along with other offices moved for the construction on the 9th floor.

Larger items:

- The letter received from the ad-hoc committee on gender neutral bathroom was forwarded to Mike Byers; there is a larger project to renovate all bathrooms on the first floor, and more than one gender-neutral bathroom are part of the plan. Mike Byers noted that a new gender-neutral bathroom in the library would be costly. More gender-neutral bathrooms on every other floor would require capital funds, and should be part of a CUNY-wide initiative, since there is no city, CUNY or state code that requires gender-neutral bathrooms, only a code on male/female restrooms. Only one of the 8th floor bathroom is a faculty-only bathroom, but no other faculty/staff bathrooms exist. There are codes about number of plumbing fixtures per floor based on gender, which makes converting other rooms to bathrooms very difficult. The maps of the GC online will be updated to contain the new g-n bathroom. It's regretful that there is only one GN bathroom and that it is a single stall.
- In order to reduce teaching load of the ECFs, the GC agreed to pay for the difference last year and this year, \$300k each year, and they didn't take money from GC last year, so they took \$600k this year. The governor vetoed the MOE bill, forcing CUNY schools to cover automatic increases in costs. The union thinks an override of the veto would be unlikely (even though only one member of each house voted against it). Decisions are made more difficult since the tax levy funds are only available one year at a time and don't roll over from year to year. Attrition is a way of cutting; when people leave the GC they are not replaced and so their salary is no longer a cost. Some hires that have gone through are being paid for by the Central Office.

- The President will be sending out an end-of-year summary outlining many of the issues we've been facing because of budget cuts. 17 faculty offers since spring 2014, 53% were made to underrepresented groups. Urban Ed students have met with the Provost about hiring problem in that program. A recent hire in critical race theory in the Philosophy program. An offer is outstanding for another woman faculty member (named in the letter from faculty about diversity). Every member of any hiring committee, admissions committee, etc. should be more aware of the need to do more in the area of diversity.
- The tasks that she found the most satisfying were the ones that were brought to her by the DSC. Parental leave, gender-neutral pronouns.

Tanzeem Ajmiri (TA): Are faculty leaving, leaving shortfalls in programs, because of the budget cuts?

LL: Faculty aren't leaving because of it, but when they do leave, it is better to leave a position unfilled than to cut fellowships.

TA: Why wouldn't we cut the Deans rather than fellowships or faculty?

LL: We only have two Deans: Sciences and Humanities & Social Sciences.

TA: The Chancellor makes so much money, and yet we talk about cutting funding for students. It makes no sense.

Jen Prince (JP): What are you going to do in your final semester to increase diversity?

LL: I will direct more funds to Dean K. Harrison funds and other student fellowships. Although faculty LL: Hires aren't likely, but if we open up searches, we will be diligent to think about diversity when hiring.

JP: Does the responsibility of program diversity reside mostly with the program itself?

LL: We aren't planning on doing hires, but we would attempt to offer incentives to programs, to encourage them to look at internal diversity data. But programs should still have autonomy. Programs should be aware of the diversity in their consortial faculty and who is working at the CUNY campuses who aren't already on the consortial faculty.

Jen Tang (JT): As we continue to discuss services for students with disability, EOs and programs should really be sensitive to and able to understand the students' accommodations. In the area of diversity, we could push the importance of diversity outward into the CUNY system, as we did with parental leave for grad students. Could you share some of the ways you've been blocked from getting things done so that as we move forward we won't have to fight the same fights?

LL: The bureaucracy of the public institution is certainly a drag. Change will always come from the masses, the students, EOs, APOs, and this agency from below will bubble up. I will think about more specifics to share with you.

JT: What do we do when programs are flagrantly out of line with their program governance?

LL: You can come to the Structure Committee, or take it to the Deans.

Dadland Maye (DM): With respect to the work you've done, we have heard the same ideas from previous administrators, that diversity will be taken into account. Speaking up now as a man with black skin, because silence has not served me and others at this school so far, we are sick and annoyed at the lack of diversity. The President needs to be aware that things are going to change in 2016, we are going to get his attention in a radical way.

Sean Kennedy (SK): Is the Diversity Task Force report going to be released?

LL: I expect you'll see it released next week.

Liza Shapiro (LS) calls the meeting to order at 6:55pm.

### **I. Approval of Agenda**

Theodor Maghrak (TM) motions to add New Business 6. Presentation of Sociology Students Association Constitution, and to move the Officer for Funding report to Steering Officer Report #1

Colin Ashley (CA) seconds.  
Passes unanimously.

## **II. Approval of Minutes of November 20 2015**

Jeremy Randall (JRa) motions to approve the minutes from Nov. 20.  
Alex Sullivan seconds.  
Corinna Singleman notes that there are two CS in the minutes.  
Amy Martin notes that we will make the correction.  
Passes unanimously.

## **III. Executive Committee Reports**

### **1. Co-Chair for Student Affairs (Amy Martin | [ccsa@cunydisc.org](mailto:ccsa@cunydisc.org))**

AM reports:

We have 18 active chartered organizations out of 46. The deadline for getting 20 names on the rosters and filing spring 2015 reports is Dec. 23rd.

The DSC has offered the Labor Relations position to a student. We are still waiting to hear back from them, but our search went well and we had good candidates with applicable experience. The AP is also trying out a new, short-term position, Co-Coordinator for Campus Outreach, and they have filled that position for the spring semester as well.

### **2. Co-Chair for Communications (Hamad Sindhi | [ccc@cunydisc.org](mailto:ccc@cunydisc.org))**

HS reports:

Executive Committee meetings:

The EC met on Dec 3rd:

DACA eligibility notifications: EC discussed what type of language we should advocate the admins should use on funding calls and on the website for indicating whether funding is available to undocumented folks or not; agreed on the following language for funding not available to undocumented folks: "Students must be U.S. citizens or eligible non-citizen to receive so and so scholarship/fellowship"; and the following for funding available to undocumented folks: "fellowships are available to ALL students regardless of documentation status".

UFS and USS roles in the DSC Constitution: EC discussed adding to the UFS and USS roles more responsibilities, especially responsibilities they are already taking on in practice; there was a consensus that both USS and UFS positions could collaborate on representing DSO interests to external bodies like the Board of Trustees, the State legislature, etc.

Co-Chair meetings:

Meeting with Student Affairs: Elise Perram (EP) updated about the sexual assault prevention education product HAVEN, it will be ready to roll out in early Feb, and all new students will be asked to go through it; the fitness classes made enough money to cover the cost of the classes in the Fall; Sharon Lerner (SL) informed us that she has sent a blurb on disability services available to IT for them to include it on all the BlackBoard course pages; SL has also drafted a letter to all EOs informing them of accommodations for students; Scott Vorhees informed us that everyone got a letter that NYSHIP rates have gone up for 2016, he asked his contacts in Albany if there would be any changes to the coverage content, but has not heard anything back yet, Albany will be doing an audit for everyone who signed up for family plans

Other meetings:

Ad-hoc committee on disability services met on Nov 23rd:

Chair of this committee; members discussed goals and action items; next meeting will be in Feb

Met with Nicole Elden, the WC workshops coordinator, with CT:

Discussed the ways in which DSC can collaborate in the workshops, to provide both community-oriented and structural resources; NE agreed with us that workshops can only go so far to resolve student issues at an individual level, and community or structural solutions can also be a part of the workshops; for example, for the upcoming 'Impostor Syndrome' workshop, CT and HS sent a list of resources containing information on student orgs but also DSC advocacy and program level committees that students can approach for help; in future, would like to ask chartered org leaders to attend or co-facilitate particular workshops

Asked about workshops for faculty, and whether the WC has thought about addressing problems at the faculty level; NE said that they had, and they decided not to because they did not want students to perceive that the workshop coordinators are talking to faculty, which may be a barrier for students; NE also mentioned that this may be more appropriate for the Provost's office or Student Affairs to tackle

Grad Council met on Dec 9th:

Approval of a new course in Psychology, change to admissions requirements in English, change in ITP certificate bulletin language and requirements, approval of new courses in Women's and Gender Studies, and revised governance document for Speech-Language-Hearing program; Updates from Chase: in addition to the \$4.2 million cut, we also had to address a further \$600,000 cut - this is a consequence of the roll-out of the financial aid packages that went into effect recently (but this is just a one-year effect); so in total \$4.8 million cut); \$840,000 cut from OTPS; curtailed and significantly slowed appointments; senior position in Facilities is being dismantled (person is resigning this year); director of the office of communications is now vacant and has been terminated; has been a search for VP for Communications, and it has been now slowed and remains vacant; Charles Mill will be joining the GC Philosophy program next year

EDLAB met on Dec 10th: major items of discussion were the DSC website, and DSC successes and challenges especially when dealing with the admin

The meditation/prayer space is now open, room 9201

Dominique Nisperos (DNi): A suggestion for Sharon Lerner: The Student Affairs office should make it public to students that they can ask for accommodations for disability services.

### **3. Co-Chair for Business (Jennifer Prince | [ccb@cunydisc.org](mailto:ccb@cunydisc.org))**

JP reports:

Legal services will be available next semester.

Movie tickets are available, Angelika are restocked. Office hours are limited but available during the break to buy tickets.

The DSC website is highly customized with a lot of coding. We are likely going to use special purposes funds to pay a GC student to move from PHP coding to simple site plug-ins.

The Provost search committee is running on time. We met with candidates for information gathering sessions, and will be picking candidates for campus visits soon.

Alan Zelener (AZ): Are we still paying an outside contractor to maintain the site?

JP: Yes, in the past we chose this option for the sake of continuity.

AZ: Though I wasn't completely opposed to hiring an outside contractor, some Computer Science students were opposed to that hire, so they are supportive of hiring a student for this work.

### **4. USS Delegate (Cecilia Salvi | [uss@cunydisc.org](mailto:uss@cunydisc.org))**

CS reports:

1. Board of Trustees: Public Hearing, Board Meeting

- a. On November 23, The BoT approved the proposed 2016-2017 Operating Budget Request, with the proposal for tuition increases at the Senior Colleges. There were two votes against, from USS Chair Awadjie and Trustee Shorter. I consider this a success, because a) last time tuition increases were proposed in 2011, the USS Chair abstained and b) a month ago, the USS was still supporting the budget in principle.
  - b. This proposal goes to the State and given Governor Cuomo's veto of Maintenance of Effort legislation, it means that tuition increases are a real possibility for senior colleges.
2. USS
- a. Plenary held 11/22 and 12/6
    - i. I was voted onto the Audit Committee
    - ii. I was also appointed to the Scholarship Committee and the Tuition Task Force
    - iii. I did a brief introductory presentation on Robert's Rules of Order, Open Meetings Laws and Minutes. I distributed materials which officers could use.
    - iv. Students voted to spend up to \$2000 on a lawyer to investigate why members of the public were not allowed into the public hearing on November 16. The rationale: if the process of OML was violated, there's a possibility that their vote can be overturned, thus stalling the tuition increase process. I abstained from the vote for reasons of procedure. The latest information is that the lawyer says that it seems no procedures were violated because it was a public *hearing*, not a meeting.
  - b. USS Dinner with Milliken and BoT members 12/2
    - i. Representatives asked questions about:
      1. increasing capital spending on disability services, ADA building compliance and Blackboard accessibility; Response: We do allocate money for critical maintenance, especially in older buildings; \$1.5 baseline from the state; we can work leverage our power with Blackboard because we are one of their largest consumers
      2. increasing wi-fi access points and fiber capacity; Response: start at the tech fee committees
      3. reports of surveillance on Muslim students; Response: these are alleged NYPD actions, and they are not required to share their plans with CUNY; "we have (literally) no information as to such activity; the NYPD did follow its own guidelines; General Council: We "understand and recognize" that activity can have "a chilling effect on first amendment rights";
      4. when we can expect a contract; Response: 2 bargaining sessions are scheduled for this month; an offer has already been made, and if not accepted, we will negotiate the 2016 contract;
      5. increasing the ASAP program across the Bronx to Hostos; Response: It's part of the ramp up scheduled for 2018;
      6. I asked about the Chancellor's Nov 18 response to Central Line Faculty's letter calling for him to "ensure adequate funding" for contracts. I asked: a) Have there been similar cuts and freezes at the administrative level? b) about plans for increasing tenured faculty in SCs and CCs, specifically central line faculty at the GC; and c) plans for increasing the racial diversity of the faculty.
        - a. He responded that colleges faced 3% cuts, while CUNY Central experienced 6%. I reminded him there were at least 2 new administrative positions at the GC, like the Deputy Director of Initiatives.
        - b. Milliken: "we've done more than most" with the predictable tuition increase, like funding 1,000 new F/T faculty positions. He called it an "almost dramatic investment", but that we can't keep hiring like this, because we need to pay



- faculty and staff without a contract. VC Sapienza added this has been our “top priority”.
- c. Gloriana Waters, VC for Human Resources Management deals with Diversity Compliance: “each campus produces a plan”. Recently received a new initiative from Robinson and I will follow up.
  7. The idea of increasing resources and funding loomed large, but the responsibility for that lobbying was thrown back on students. Milliken reminded us that there has been state disinvestment over the past 30 years, but there’s been less of one in NY.
  8. In a discussion with Dean Rosa, he mentioned that some of these questions made BoT members more uncomfortable than usual.
    - a. Representatives asked CUNY to take a “strong and public stand” on surveillance; for a definitive answer on what alternatives exist to tuition increases
  - c. Tuition Task Force: meeting on 12/6
    - i. Leverage
  - d. Lucas Almonte, former VC for Legislative Affairs, is now the new USS Legislative Director.
3. Committees and Meetings
- a. Meeting with Jen Tang and Dean Rosa, the Assistant Dean for Student Services, regarding Disability Services, specifically off campus access to Assistive Technology- December 4
    - i. We discussed the difficulty of getting off campus access because it’s not mandated when it is “personal use”, and because of funding and licensing issues. Dean Rosa offered possible workarounds, like: tech fee committee, partnering with outside organizations, and requesting funds from VC Cohen. The example given was a kickstarter for a “university-wide loan program” for laptops with AT. He acknowledged that there needs to be a paradigm shift in the way the university deals with students with disabilities, and described the difference between code compliance and programmatic access, noting that both are required.
    - ii. He also committed to Jen Tang that he would work with her to get her issue solved, and they will meet with AT staff at Baruch.
    - iii. Plan: to set up a meeting with CUNY Central IT- AT staff or VC Cohen- regarding this issue.
    - iv. Finally, he mentioned that the state and city commit \$2.5 million annually to underwrite these obligations, but that hasn’t increased in 20 years. While students with disability population enrollment has grown at CUNY by 1/3, the purchase power of that money has decreased by 1/3.
    - v. Other possible things to investigate and work on: making the CATS (CUNY Assistive Technology Services) service an itinerant resources; getting a button opener to make GC bathrooms more accessible (Rosa said they cost \$4000).
  - b. Meeting with Dean Rosa on December 10 regarding USS
    - i. We discussed issues regarding the audit and how to make it available publically, the possibility of having an Office for Students with Disabilities, and best practices for the USS.

Janet Werther (JW): Tuition increases are not helping the university to fund new faculty or student services. Is it possible for the DSC to put forward a statement questioning where the money goes?

CS: We can look into this.

Rachel Chapman (RC): In regards to the MOE bill, do you know when the legislature will be voting on the bill after the veto?

CS: There is a whole series of events heading into the spring around this before the vote.

CA: Is there are relationship change between the GC and the School of Public Health?

Erin McKinney-Prupis (EMP): All graduate public health programs in CUNY will be their own grad school.

## **5. UFS Liaison (Liza Shapiro | [ufs@cunydisc.org](mailto:ufs@cunydisc.org))**

LS reports:

Milliken was the guest speaker and gave to presentations.

First was the CUNY Budget Request for 2016-2017, approved by the BOT, The request passed with the USS member, Joseph Awadjie and Trustee Charles Shorter declining.

Budget request pointed out new faculty lines 588 snr 488 at cc colleges btwn. 2010 and 2015

Argued that because of predictable tuition: graduation rates increased

showed that BA freshmen who graduate in 4 years went up from 20.6% to 22.5% over the last five years; 6-year rate up from 44.4% to 47.6% (the six year rate goes up--so this is not exactly good news..)

CUNY supporting revision of MOE legislation requiring state to fund mandatory costs

Budget presentation was in support of increasing tuition at senior colleges by arguing that

CUNY senior college tuition is below the national average for public universities and that 2/3 of CUNY students attend tuition free.

TAP: For the fiscal year 2015-16, CUNY will issue \$49M in TAP tuition credits

pursuant to the NYS legislature requirement asking CUNY to issue TAP waiver credits to cover difference between tuition and TAP award

- The University requests State funding to close the gap between the maximum TAP award and tuition and allow for reinvestment into student support.
- Eligible students can receive up to the maximum TAP award of \$5,165; and the
- maximum Pell award of \$5,775.

Budget submitted to BOT does not include amounts related to any new labor contracts

Second was the "CUNY Value"-slideshow essentially as advertisement

- "Predictable tuition" slide said that from 2010-2014 when "Predictable tuition" was instituted, CUNY enrollment went up by 6%--false correlation suggesting that this led to rising enrollment.
- "Since the predictable tuition policy began in 2010 CUNY students and alums have won..." lists awards and fellowships. THIS IS CHEAP.

Only good news: CUNY not planning to increase CC tuition in 2017

COACHE (The Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education) survey now available:

administered across senior and CCs (w/ exception of Guttman) to non-tenure track/pre-tenure and tenure full time faculty. The survey displays several discrepancies between the satisfaction of faculty of color and their white colleagues. This will play into tonight's resolution.

## **IV. New Business**

Quorum count: 52

### **1. New member ratification**

Kyla Bender-Baird (KBB) motions to ratify new member, Erin Cully from History.

Carlos Camacho seconds.

Passes unanimously.

### **2. Vote on Constitution & Bylaw changes:**

#### **a. Gender neutral language in the Constitution**

- Change any gendered language in the Constitution to gender-neutral language; for example, "he or she" to "they"
- 11 "he or she"
- 6 "his or her"
- Example III.2.3: Each member of the DSO shall be allowed a number of votes for Program Representative(s) that is equal to the total number of Program Representative in ~~his or her~~ their program.

KBB motions to approve changes.

JRa seconds.

Passes unanimously.

#### **b. 1.5.a [Affiliate] Annual Goals and Quarterly Review**

~~By August 15 of each academic year, each senior employee~~ Each Affiliate shall submit to the Co-Chair for Business a description of goals within each of their duties as enumerated in the Bylaws at least 10 days before the September steering meeting. Prior to submitting these goals, Affiliates will meet with at least three members of the Steering Committee, including one co-chair to have an informal discussion about the goals they will submit.

KBB motions to approve the change to bylaw 1.5.a.

TM seconds.

Passes unanimously.

#### **c. 1.5.b [Affiliate] Reappointment**

~~The Executive Committee shall conduct an annual review of all students hired for senior non-contractual positions and make a verbal report to the Steering Committee at its February meeting or, in the case of a separate personnel meeting, at its February personnel meeting. If satisfied with the performance, the Steering Committee may offer reappointment for the following year without opening a regular job search. Each senior employee is automatically reappointed for the following academic year unless they choose to resign or are removed from their position following a period of probation.~~

KBB motions to approve the change to bylaw 1.5.b.

CC seconds.

Passes unanimously.

#### **d. 1.6.a [Affiliate] Probation**

~~Informal resolutions to personnel issues are strongly encouraged. When formal methods are deemed necessary or desirable, a~~ Any senior employee may be placed on a period of probation by a two-thirds majority vote of the Steering Committee. The motion for probation must specify the cause of the probation and outline a series of expectations according to which the employee shall be evaluated at the following Steering Committee meeting. The probation shall lapse at the end of that meeting unless a motion to withdraw appointment is passed, in which case the term of the employee shall end at the date specified in the motion one month from the date of that meeting.

KBB motions to approve the change to bylaw 1.6.a.

CA seconds.

Passes unanimously.

#### **e. 1.6.e [Affiliate] Withdrawal of Appointment**

Any senior employee may be removed by a two-thirds majority vote of the Steering Committee following a period of probation. The Co-Chair for Business shall notify the employee no later



than three calendar days following the Steering Committee meeting at which a motion to withdraw appointment is passed. The motion to withdraw appointment must contain the date at which employment shall be terminated, and all stipend payments shall be prorated to this date with the understanding that the outgoing employee will participate in the transition of the position, which may include preparation of a transition memo, archival of relevant materials, and advising on the hiring and training of the next employee. The Co-Chair for Business shall notify the employee no later than three calendar days following the Steering Committee meeting at which a motion to withdraw appointment is passed.

KBB motions to approve the change to bylaw 1.6.e.

LS seconds.

Passes unanimously.

### **3. Vote on Wellness Center funding**

HS motions to spend \$48k on the Wellness Center in Spring 2016.

Jimiamé Ashe seconds.

JP reminds body that there was a referendum in 2005 to increase student activities fees by \$12 to cover the cost of the nurse practitioner. The Wellness Center has been around since 1993 and the nurse practitioner was meant to be the director of the WC, therefore it is understood that that service should be part of the WC. The referendum had just over 50% of support from the 12-15% of students who voted.

Roj Kochhar: Is this money going only to the NP or all of the WC services?

JP: The fee was earmarked for the NP, but it is a drop in the bucket of the WC budget.

Jacob Russel (JRu): Do you know how many students who are uninsured and which of those are ineligible?

JP: There are a variety of students who are eligible for health insurance as adjuncts and fellowship recipients, but we don't have exact figures.

David Topel (DT): I don't feel comfortable leaving students who aren't eligible for insurance without a service.

JP: We want to have services in place, but this is part of a larger budget issue. We have lost \$32k in student fees over the past few years because of reduced enrollment.

JW: Rather than spending DSC resources on a NP, I would rather push for better coverage through NYSHIP, expanded to students who currently aren't eligible.

CA: Funding services with our own money was a way to put pressure on the administration, but then they end up relying on student fees instead of taking care of the problem. Many of the services most often used are available for free or low-cost throughout the city, such as STD tests.

EMP: Coming from a program without fellowships, I question what kind of insurance many of those 80% insured students visiting the WC are in. We are one of the few campuses in CUNY that have an NP.

JP: 60% of students who used the NP had NYSHIP. Only 18.1% of students had "other" insurance (non GHP, non NYSHIP).

CS: Often it is just more comfortable to have the service in house.

David Nagy (DNa): If we had this money, what could we do with this?

JP: I came up with a chart with for suggestions for how we could spend money on various budget lines.

Erin Cully: How might a stopgap measure work? Is there any chance that they would fire the NP?

JP: It would be difficult for just the DSC leadership to tell the administration to pay for the NP, we would have to have more support from many students.

DNi: By voting no, we would be making a political statement that all students should have health insurance, and that they should have services available to them where they don't have to wait a month, which sometimes happens now.

Abstentions: CC, JA, Laura Lutgen.

Motion does not pass.

#### **4. Student Activity Fees**

JP: I will send out a more detailed list for how we can justify spending money on fees for the next meeting.

JP motions to table this item to the next Plenary.

CC seconds.

DNa abstains.

Motion passes.

#### **5. Resolution on Student & Faculty Diversity at the GC**

HS motions to approve the Resolution on Student & Faculty Diversity at the GC.

LS seconds.

JRu: The vast majority of Math faculty is campus-based. Is that typical? And are the numbers in the resolution reflecting just central line faculty?

JW: There is a disparity between central line and campus-based faculty in the work they do and the labor that isn't compensated.

HS: CUNY workforce data, taken as a whole is doing better than the GC, but not that much better.

JRu: Is there any account for the diversity within a field?

HS: Conversations are ongoing around getting women and people of color into fields earlier so that they can be part of the field later in their career, especially when a given field isn't very diverse now.

DM: Even though a field is not very diverse, diversity strategies can be used to recruit people in those fields at our university.

Sean Kennedy: Higher Ed faculty across the board is predominantly white, not just one particular field.

AZ: Is there a source for the Whereas about the hiring metrics?

HS notes that this is a practice but it's not published anywhere.

DNi notes that this was shared with DSC leadership by Edith Rivera, the Diversity Officer.

DT: The data in Whereas 4 needs to be updated. DT motions to revise the figures to the most recent numbers.

JT seconds.

Motion to update Whereas 4 passes.

RC: What will the Resolveds look like in practice?

HS: It depends on the call. Advocacy from the DSC and students wherever appropriate.

The motion to approve the resolution passes unanimously.

#### **6. Presentation of the SSA Constitution**

AM notes that the Sociology Students Association has existed within Sociology for a few years, but they are petitioning for official DSC recognition as a PSA. The Plenary will vote on their petition at the February Plenary after review of their Constitution.

#### **V. Steering Officer Reports**

##### **1. Officer for Funding (Theodor Maghrak | [funding@cunydisc.org](mailto:funding@cunydisc.org))**

TM reports:

Grants Committee met on December 7

- 6 regular grant applications
  - Two approved for a total of \$1,475.00
  - Revisions and resubmission requested on four
- No start-up grant applications

Total Funds \$19,750

Initial Funds \$10,331.69

Funds Awarded \$1,475

Funds Remaining \$8,856.69

- Upcoming deadlines:
  - January 15, 2016
  - March 18, 2016
- Next meeting TBD (first week of February)

## **2. Officer for Technology & Library (Jeremy Randall | [library@cunydisc.org](mailto:library@cunydisc.org))**

JRa reports:

- 1) @[gradcenter.cuny.edu](http://gradcenter.cuny.edu) emails are outside FOIL
- 2) They have reopened depositing dissertations in the library. For those wanting to graduate in February, please deposit no later than Jan 29. Outside of the signature sheet, it is now an electronic process.

## **3. Officer for Student Life & Services (Carlos Camacho | [services@cunydisc.org](mailto:services@cunydisc.org))**

End of semester finals salons were amazing.

We will try to do an oils/aroma therapy sampling event in the spring.

## **4. Officer for Outreach (Saiful Saleem | [outreach@cunydisc.org](mailto:outreach@cunydisc.org))**

68 responses so far to our Outreach Survey.

Soccer league signup sheets; we're interested in knowing who would like be coordinators for programs.

## **5. Officer for Health & Wellness (Charlotte Thurston | [wellness@cunydisc.org](mailto:wellness@cunydisc.org))**

CT reports:

Let's start with the not-so-great to get it over with: NYSHIP biweekly premium rates--the money taken out of your paycheck that goes to NYSHIP--are going up.

- 14.09 for individual (used to be 13.06, so going up a dollar per paycheck); 83.23 for family (used to be 78.01, so going up about 5 dollars per paycheck).
- COBRA rates are also going up for 2016. Individual: \$261 (previously \$241). Family: \$830 (previously \$775).
- Note that the first time you'll have this new chunk of money taken out of your check is actually in 2015: it's Dec 24th. Merry Christmas from NYSHIP, I guess.
- Please try to remind your constituents of this; they should have gotten a mailing/email, but it's easy to miss, and it would be an alarming surprise if you're not expecting it (rather than just being alarming generally).
- NYSHIP is also doing an audit of dependents, but they're giving a grace/amnesty period to people who are claiming dependents who don't qualify. If you're in this situation: you have till Jan 29th to voluntarily remove ineligible dependents from coverage (in other words, if you remove ineligible dependents by that date, you will not be liable for repaying claims already paid out for them). After this period, must provide proof of the eligibility of dependents.

Finals relief stations a success!

- If you missed it, we still do have handouts on self-care that we'll put on the H&W blog/Twitter. Self care during finals is still important.

Met with Nicole Elder, organizer of workshops for the Wellness Center, with Hamad on 12/2

- Discussed possibility of linking up student groups with Wellness Center workshop; goal: get students linked up with community and advocates who can help them with structural issues. Nicole noted that we'll have to be sensitive to students' comfort levels with having student groups come in.
- Some possibilities: having students co-facilitate a workshop, having students come in briefly as reps (of different chartered org, DSC, DSC committees like H&W and Outreach and Student Services), giving Wellness Center handouts they can give to workshop attendees.
- We started by making a handout that she can give to attendees at the end of the Imposter Syndrome Workshop, with DSC resources and chartered orgs that students could reach out to.
- We brought up possibility of faculty workshops on mentoring, etc; Nicole says they've considered this a lot but fear interfering with student sense of WC as safe/confidential space: for example, students might feel uncomfortable knowing that Nicole is also working with their advisor, esp. when they might be talking about issues with their advisor in a workshop. They want to make it clear as possible that they are there for students and student concerns.
- Nicole suggests that this might be the domain of Student Affairs or Career Services, but that she agrees this is very important part of improving mental wellbeing of students.

Met with Health and Wellness committee 12/18 (today!)

- We discussed what goals and projects we wanted to work on for next semester, which included....

Campaign on reducing mental health stigma.

- Wrote and shared post on mental wellbeing and collecting narratives on any aspect of dealing with mental health problems: shared on Twitter/dsc-listserv; need to put on FB though to get it out more.
- Sent ad to Dadland to put in this Dec's Advocate.
- Once collected, need to figure out how to share them: Maybe an Advocate article, actually, would be good, as well as a pamphlet/something digital like Storify. Digital signage with a few small stories, much like OpenCUNY has testimonies?
- Please encourage your constituents to send in narratives about their experiences with mental health and grad school--and that's defined broadly, can be about, say, how dealing with a disability and not having proper resources has been harmful to your mental health. These stories can be positive, too, stories where students had access to proper healthcare and its effects. And can be about any kinds of resources you feel the GC should be providing/helping provide. More narratives also means more information to go to UB with, too, as well as Wellness Center and Student Affairs, to advocate for student wellness needs.

Some plans for next semester...

- Navigating NYSHIP this semester, which seemed helpful to the six people who came; considering, based on hearing horror stories about appeals, doing a workshop--or at least having a section on the website--on navigating the appeals process, or claims generally, and seeing if Scott Voorhees (NYSHIP liaison) and Elise Perram (Student Affairs VP who also deals with non-NYSHIP insurance).
- Have gained contact info for a nutritionist from Ashley Chastain, Health Education Coordinator at the Wellness Center: I want to contact her over the break to see if she would be willing to do a workshop on keeping a nutritious diet on grad student money and time.
- Begin hosting weekly Friday H&W/Student Life and Services coffee hours, not just to talk about health and wellness issues but so people can decompress and get to know some other GC

students in a comfortable setting (an initiative begun by a former H&W Officer that seems worth bringing back, with Carlos planning with me)

**6. Officer for Governance & Membership (Kyla Bender-Baird | [membership@cunydscc.org](mailto:membership@cunydscc.org))**

KBB reports:

- 77 Seats/76 Reps in good standing
- We are conducting a special elections for Political Science.

VI. Announcements

AM announces that there is a DSC party beginning at 8:30pm.

VII. Adjournment

LS motions to adjourn.

AM seconds.

Passes unanimously.

Meeting ends at 8:36pm.

Minutes submitted by Amy Martin