

DSC Plenary *Minutes*
December 13, 2019
4:30 PM

Attendance

Present: Kathryn Alessi (Proxy: Stephanie cruz de Echererria), Samantha Barthelemy (Proxy: Zahra Khalid), Yuliya Barycheuskaya (proxy), Carly Batist, Kieran Bono, Giacomo Bianchino, Isatou Bittaye-Jobe, Kiera Bono (Proxy: Luis Duesada), Braden Campbell (Proxy: Lara Alonso), Elena Chavez, Yuliya Cheban, Elizabeth Che, Ming Chen, Hyein Cho, Julia Danitz, Kristofer Eckelhoff (Proxy: Edward Charnley), Sonja Gandert, Michael Greer, Jane Guskin, Carolina Heredia (Proxy: Lisa Kavly), Roderick Hurley, Bertrand Fredrick Ithurburn, Adam Kocurek, Raj Korpan, Andrew Kotick, Casina Malinchak, Mary Jean McNamara, Zachary Mitnik, David Monda, Jason Nielsen, Dominique Nisperos (proxy), Kwame Ocran (Proxy: Julian Gonzalez de Leon), Bernadette Ojukwu, Alison Parks (proxy), Valicia Philbert (Proxy: Andreas Ariza Garcia), Carmin Quijano, Andres Rayas, Elsa Saade, Sami Sauma, Sherry Sayavongsa, Gwen Shaw, Andriele Silva, Queenie Sukhadia, Joseph Torres-González, Joseph van der Naald, Zhuo Yin, Anthony Wheeler, Anais Wong.

Absent: Angie Alvarado, Shoumik Bhattacharya, Prathmesh Deshmukh, Sharanya Dutta, Andre Eliatamby, Sarah Frantz, Raven Gomez, Rachael Joakim, Simon Kostelanetz, Ariel Leutheusser, Fuxian Li, Tenn Joe Lim, Lauren Moton, Kieran O'Reilly, Yilin Wang.

Meeting called to order at 5:03pm

I. Approval of Agenda

Rod Hurley (Psychology) moves to approve the agenda with the addition of New Business Item C - Proposed Changes to DSC Budget 2019-2020

Zhuo Yin (Physics) seconds the motion.

Vote: approved unanimously

II. Approval of the Minutes of the November 22, 2019 Plenary Meeting

Giacomo Bianchino (Comp. Lit.) moves to approve the minutes.

ZY (Physics) seconds the motion.

Vote: approved unanimously

III. Election of Officer (Voting)

At-Large Steering Officer

Sonja Gandert (Art History)

Unanimously elected by default

IV. Ratification of Elected Officer (Voting)

Alison Parks (Political Science) moves to ratify the election of SG (Art History)

GB (Comp. Lit) seconds

Passes unanimously

SG (Art History) recites oath

V. New Business

A. Ratification of Chartered Organization: Mexican Studies Group (Voting)

Adam Kocurek (History) moves to ratify the Mexican Studies Group.

EC (Educational Psychology) seconds the motion.

Vote: Motion passes unanimously (39 votes)

B. Resolution against CUNY proposed tuition hike & “wellness” fee (Voting)

GB (Comp. Lit) moves to approve the resolution.

RH (Psychology) seconds the motion.

Discussion:

Elsa Saade (Middle Eastern Studies) proposes language changes to include international students

Zach Mitnick (Criminal Justice) - I notice we don't explicitly say we oppose the tuition increase. I suggest we add this language.

Have they stated what the fee is being used for? Is there a need for an increase?

RH (Psychology): When we met with OSA, they said that a portion of the money will be kept by CUNY central. Another portion will be given to individual CUNY campuses so that it can be used for improving health and mental health services. There are currently no guidelines for committees to allocate the budget yet.

Jane Guskin (Sociology): They say that it will go to mental health. We need these services but they are shifting the cost of these services to the students.

Michael Greer (Philosophy) : We should also reflect the need for mental health services shouldn't be paid by students.

JG: suggested language to reflect this.

ZY (Physics): We should tell them where the money should come from.

AP (Political Science): I also agree that we should keep this resolution vague as a general condemnation of general tuition hikes. If we add various specific languages, it will limit the actions that steering and other members can ask for. We can add in spirit of the resolution.

ES (Middle Eastern Studies): proposes language about merging the recognition for the need for services and allocation of fee.

Vote: Motion passes unanimously

C. Proposed Changes to DSC Budget 2019-2020

Raj Korpan (Computer Science) presents revised DSC budget and outlines why the budget is adjusted – changes to PSC contract.

VI. Executive Committee Reports

A. Co-Chair for Student Affairs (Elizabeth Che)

For Fall 2019 active status, chartered organizations need to submit the SPRING 2019 semesterly report and at least 20 signatures by December 20th.

List of groups that need signatures can be viewed here:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1NC4d_m6OlaUyLRjEp5LRmwT_-TI-TojubWtCf9Iqdk/edit?usp=sharing

Discussion:

ZY (Physics) - How many does each group need?

EC (Educational Psychology) - Just sign the above list. If I list how many signatures are missing from each, it is likely that some groups will be skipped because they think that it has been fulfilled by someone else already.

AK (History) - It is very quick. It'll take 5mins. You can come see me during my office hours if you need help.
RH (Psychology) - I will send out a notice on the listserv

B. Co-Chair for Communications (Roderick Hurley)

Recent Activities

- 12/20 - Co-Chairs met with OSA
 - Graduate Center housing -
 - OSA has said that the situation has been resolved and a system for mail forwarding is being implemented: For 2 months after tenants move out, the building managers will collect mail and send it to OSA. OSA will be responsible for forwarding mail to former tenants. This policy and the steps required to set it up will be clearly communicated to residents.
 - I emailed CUNY Trustee Michael Arvanites, who has responsibility for CUNY buildings, and had asked about the building's non-residence status and whether this was standard across CUNY.
 - NYSHIP
 - The period during which personal information or type of coverage may be changed without requiring extensive documentation began on 12/2 and end on 12/31/2019.
 - First reduction in NYSHIP coverage rates since 2009.
 - President Search
 - The search committee has recommended a short list of finalists to the Chancellor. Groups from various constituencies at the GC are meeting with the finalists this month.
 - Health and Wellness Fee
 - OSA said they felt the fee could be valuable if managed properly, could be used to improve health and mental health services at the GC.
 - This is projected to generate about \$30M in revenue for CUNY, of which CUNY will keep "a certain amount" and the rest will be decided on by committees on the campuses.
 - I expressed the Steering Committee's opposition to the fee and asked about the lack of policy guidelines for such a fee or a committee. I was told that these would be put in place if the fee is implemented.

Updates

- Ratified PSC contract goes before the BOT for approval on 12/16. Once approved by the BOT we have to look carefully at all the implications of these changes to ensure that students are not being (further) exploited. Please let us know if you encounter issues regarding pay, hours, work assigned, etc.

Upcoming Meetings

- Co-Chairs meeting with OSA on 2/19
- Next DSC Plenary Meeting scheduled for 2/21.

Discussion:

ZY (Physics) - regarding contract, I have concerns that tuition remission will not be granted for 6th and 7th years.

Also concerned that class sizes will be increased to reduce the number of classes cost of new contract

JG (Sociology) - We should talk about the implications of the contract another time.

C. Co-Chair for Business (Raj Korpan)

- We renewed our contract with VoteNet for our elections software. This is a four year contract.
- The DSC budget is being revised due to the new PSC contract to update the stipends for all the officers and affiliates based on the new salary of the Grad B position.
- PB Process starting late this year, will begin in the Spring semester
- Legal consultations are available and intended for GC students only. Spread the word! email ccb@cunydisc.org
- AMC, Angelika, and Regal discounted movie tickets available. Price is \$10.25 for AMC and \$9 for Angelika and Regal. Check cunydisc.org for office hours to buy tickets.

- Petrie Emergency Fund still available for students. Applications are on the financial aid website.

No Discussion

D. USS Delegate (Jane Guskin)

- USS elections: At a 5-hour USS plenary on Nov. 24, in the runoff election for Vice Chair of Fiscal Affairs, Fay Yanofsky (BK) won 24 votes against 14 for John Mondal (Baruch, Unity team) with a few (4? 5?) abstentions. Since 29 votes were needed for a candidate to win, an additional round of voting was held; in that round Fay secured the seat with 29 votes against 11 for John.
- CUNY Board of Trustees (BoT) just released a budget request to the state that would impose another \$200/year tuition increase AND a \$120/year backdoor tuition hike disguised as a "wellness" fee on students at all senior and community colleges. It appears that the new \$120/year fee would apply to all graduate students as well, including GC students. Emergency actions to shut down the tuition and fee hikes:
 - Monday, Dec 9, 4:30pm @ Lehman: BoT hearing. Free CUNY and other groups protested.
 - Monday, Dec 16, 4:30pm @ Baruch: BoT meeting when the hikes will be voted upon. Location: Baruch College Vertical Campus, Room 14-220, 55 Lexington Avenue (corner of 24th Street), New York, NY 10010. We need students to come out and support this.
 - Follow freeCUNY on Instagram

Discussion:

ZY (Physics) - Does security prevent protesters from taking actions

JG (Sociology): So far, no, but we are expecting the next meeting to be more secure. All CUNY students are allowed to be at the meeting.

Joseph (anthropology): Does the university make administrative salaries public?

JG (Sociology): Several websites show NYS public employee salaries, although often they are not fully up to date.

E. UFS Liaison (Mary Jean McNamara)

- Assistant Chancellor José Luis Cruz addressed the University Faculty Senate (UFS) on December 2 and took questions from the Senate which included questions about the funding for new faculty. Cruz stated that the new proposed budget for FY2021-22 includes a four-year plan to hire a total of 500 new Faculty, at increments of 125 over the next four years.
- Faculty concerns raised at faculty senate meeting
 - funding disparities between the four-year colleges and the two-year colleges, especially deteriorating facilities at kingsborough and queensborough colleges
 - composition of university senate: adjunct faculty elected to senate seek more inclusion in the faculty senate by-laws
 - cuny central has proposed to streamline cuny's rules and regulations (henderson rules, student code of conduct, and sexual misconduct policies) into one document. This revision includes policies that have not been approved by the BoT, in particular, the definition of "bullying." Working with Professor Philip Pecorino of Queensborough college to amend the proposed changes.
- Fellowship disbursements for spring 2020 for graduate assistants

- students must be registered at least half-time by January 2nd in order to receive fellowship disbursement by January 31st. International students' disbursements will be delayed 2-4 weeks after the first disbursement in order for taxes to be deducted.
- emergency funds are available through the financial aid office.

Discussion:

MG (Philosophy) - I think the DSC needs to make a statement about the delay for international students

RK (Computer Science) - DSC already passed a resolution about this last year. Now they're saying the tax system causes the delays but they are working on it.

ZY (Physics) - I think they just don't prioritize international students

VII. Steering Officer Reports

A. Officer for Funding (Isatou Bittaye-Jobe)

The grants committee met on Thursday, Dec. 5 and reviewed the grant applications for November.

- 8 applications were received and the committee approved 7, and 1 was denied.
- The total amount approved for the 7 grants is \$4,800.
- The application denied is because the event took place before the committee meeting and the requester wanted to use this money for next year's conference. They were advised to reapply for next year's event in Spring 2020.
- The total approved grants for this semester is \$10,800 (16 grant applications) and there is a balance of \$9,200 for Spring semester.
- The next grant deadline is January 17, 2020.

No Discussion

B. Officer for Governance & Membership (Interim) (Adam Kocurek)

- We need proxies on an ongoing basis so please reach out to students in your program and introduce them to me.
- Constitution and Bylaws

Discussion:

ZY (Physics) - What is the attendance plenary like?

AK (History) - Generally we have not had quorum problems but attendance varies and we need help.

C. Officer for Health & Wellness (Ming Chen)

- Puppy Therapy
 - The New York Therapy Animals (<https://www.therapydogs.com/>) can provide 4 dogs on Sunday afternoon (December 15) from 4 PM to 5 PM.
 - The event will be held in Room 5414, and the weekend room request has been approved by Matt. Also, the security personnel has been notified of this event as well.
 - The New York Therapy Animals asked for \$300 donation and the transportation fee of all their personnel. The budget for Wellness and Health should be able to cover that. All the committee members agreed on this expenditure.
 - The New York Therapy Animals will give all the invoice after the event.
 - The event has been posted on Twitter, Facebook, and sent through DSC listserv. So far, we had 35 people signing up for the event.
 - Will send out the precautions one day before the event.
 - Debrief: need to secure the event date and confirm with puppy therapy organizations early.
- Massage Event
 - The dates and time for the massage event for this semester have been confirmed: December 16 (Monday) from 11:30 AM to 6:00 PM, & December 17 (Tuesday) from 10:00 AM to 4:30 PM.

- The space for the event has been reserved, and the facilities for this event have been requested as well (all confirmed).
- Juli has contacted me and decided to use 10-min slots this semester. Committee members Yilin and Bernadette will come to help with sign-up.
- The event has been posted on Twitter, Facebook, and sent through DSC listserv.

No Discussion.

D. Officer for Outreach (Sharanya Dutta)

No new updates.

No Discussion.

E. Officer for Student Life & Services (Giacomo Bianchino)

- I am very interested in working to create a better alternative to title IX. Any students who want to contribute to this should email me

Discussion:

ZY (Physics) - I see the need to work on this.

F. Officer for Technology & Library (Michael Greer)

1. Passed around work order notice for students to put up in their departments. I will put them up in the library and other spaces where there are computers!
 2. Sent out summary of IT meeting with highlights
 3. Started work on a list of public spaces
- a. Sent email to provost asking for students to be updated re: being allowed in any department
2. Elaine Montilla (head of IT) relayed some upsetting news about laptops for rent in the library
- a. The library only has two Macs left from the original 6 that they received - 3 are broken and 1 was lost. The two remaining Macs are "old and barely hanging on", but heavily used. They are so heavily used, apparently, that the library hasn't actually had a Mac in their possession in over two years because they are always checked out. They received 8 Dell laptops from IT to compensate for the broken Macs, but they are old and some are starting to expire. Only 6 of the original 8 Dells are still working.
- b. I'm asking IT for an updated version of the budget, Elaine told me to email Business Office, which I did. Waiting on a response.
2. Object Library
- a. Unsure what's happening with it. Co-Chairs will meet with Wrigley and Muyskens this week and brought it up.
2. CUNY2020 - Waiting on a response from Matt Gold.
- a. I want to send out meeting minutes but can't until he sends me back the draft. I also want to update the school on CUNY2020.

Discussion:

ZY (Physics) - Do students vote on the IT Budget?

MG (Philosophy) - No only STF

David Monda (Political Science) - What computers are available and can be taken out of the library?

MG (Philosophy) - 2 macs, 6 dells (really slow, but work and are available)

MC (Educational Psychology) - Can we recycle machines, get money from that and purchase new ones?

RK (Computer Science) - We can't do that because of CUNY policies related to purchasing. But recycling is a good point. They try to reuse internal components.

VIII. Announcements

- A. Report-back on PSC contract vote results & followup - JG provided info on vote
- B. Reminder to email your undergraduate students re: CUNY tuition hike and “wellness” fee - We need to engage our students to raise awareness and organizing about the issue.
- C. Help with putting up IT work order forms in department lounges
- D. Email Bursar/Provost/Financial Aid asking for confirmation about when Spring checks will arrive (harass them into giving us our money on time!) Let them know that delays are unacceptable and increase pressure on them.
- E. Remind students that FICA exemption -
Anthony Wheeler - International students are being told to apply for the exemption through Glacier and not CUNYfirst
- F. Childcare Representative – Bernadette Ojukwu (Speech Language Hearing Sciences)- Childcare director is about to retire. Cost of registration has been increased to \$200.
- G. All Gender Bathrooms - ZM (Criminal Justice) - I testified about the all gender bathrooms at a hearing being held
- H. Admissions Committees - JG (Sociology) if anyone is working on updating their admission documents, please let me know if they need help.

IX. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 6:39pm