



## Plenary Minutes November 20, 2020

### Attendance

#### *Present:*

Jorge Alvis - LAILAC, Carolina Arrunategui, Ines Vano Garcia, Inmaculada Zanoquera Garcias, Lina Garcia, Lorena Paz Lopez, Oriana Mejias, Eduardo Mora Cortes, Adam Kocurek, Alaa Sharif, Alexis Hardy, Bertrand Ithurburn, Blondie Lekemo Ngatchi Epse Pawa, Carmín Quijano-Seda, Carolyn McDonough, Casey Hall, Cecilia Salvi, Christian Martinez, Christopher Scott Campbell, Chuxin Liu, Cristina Pardo Porto, David Monda, David Udell, Deborah Leter, Dhanya Babu, Dohyun Shin, Edward Charnley, Edwin Grimsley, Efthimia Johanides, Fedor Marchenko, Felix Grezes, Jennifer Rossberg, Jocelyn Lai, Joseph Boninger, Katherine Anderson, Kyle Fraser, Lisa Millsaps-M-Graham, Luke Kayga, Marianne Madoré, Meltem Topaloglu, Milo Ward, Pamela Stemberg, Pedro Cabello del Moral, Prathmesh Deshmukh, Raj Korpan, Rod Hurley, Samantha Barthelémy, Sammi Sauma, Sara Ortiz, Sarah Chu, Shannon Brick, Sharanya Dutta, Sierra Holt, Silvia Alfaro, Sonja Gandert, Tenn Joe Lim, Yuliya Barycheuskaya, Zhuo Yin, David Dansu

#### *Absent:*

Michael Greer, Saroj Chand, Jennifer de Rutte, Robert Wrigley, Irina Fanarraga Robles

*Guest:* Emily Drabinski

### Meeting called to order at: 5:07 PM

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

Motion to approve: Sharanya Dutta (English)

Rod Hurley (Psychology): Moves to approve the agenda with following changes - adding item V - Child Care Center Representative Report, removing new business item E - Statement on Advocacy.

Seconded: Sara Ortiz (International Migration Studies - IMS)

Vote: Approved unanimously

#### **II. Approval of Minutes of the October 16, 2020 Meeting**

Motion to approve: Silvia Rivera Alfaro (LAILAC)

Seconded: Lisa Millsaps (Urban Ed)

Vote: Approved unanimously

#### **III. Executive Committee Reports**

##### **A. Co-Chair for Student Affairs (Sharanya Dutta)**

- SPARC Training Deadline is: DEC 1 2020. It is called Graduate Center Students SPARC FALL 2020 (for student leaders), AND ESPARC 2020-2021 (for all CUNY employees—adjuncts etc.) in CUNYFirst. Mine shows up in Blackboard. EMAIL ERIC THE SPARC CERTIFICATE BUT NOT THE ESPARC. YOU ALSO HAVE TO COMPLETE THE WVP TRAINING BUT YOUR ELIGIBILITY TO SERVE DOES NOT HINGE ON IT. It's also best completed on Chrome, I believe. ALL PROGRAM REPS AND CHARTERED ORG LEADERS, please complete your SPARC training as soon as possible. You will be removed from office if you do not, and there's a chance it'll place a "hold" on your record, which means you won't be able to receive the Financial Aid on time etc.
- We've just started the process of scheduling interviews with the shortlisted candidates for the Co-Coordinator role for the Adjunct Project. Will keep you all posted.
- We have a new Music program rep, Jocelyn Lai, who will be ratified later in this meeting.
- CHARTERED ORGS

- We have one new petition for a chartered organization, I'm working with them to charter them hopefully before the end of semester.
- Your deadlines to submit your reports and 20 signatures is DECEMBER 20, 2020. If you don't know whether or not you have all your signatures, please email me to find out. If you do not submit your Fall 2019 AND Spring 2020 reports + have the 20 signatures, you will not be in active status, and cannot be reimbursed for monies spent.
- Please sign each others' rosters. Signing does not make you a member, merely helps orgs achieve their 20 signature goal.
- Email me if you have any questions about your reports, please? If you're a new leader who doesn't know how to do the report, for instance. I'm here to help.

### **B. Co-Chair for Communications (Rod Hurley)**

#### Recent Meetings:

- 11/19 - GC Reactivation Committee Monthly Meeting
  - I reiterated several student concerns around teaching loads, funding extensions, leaves of absence, and other issues affecting students at this time
  - I also asked for a GC-wide town hall meeting to discuss the state of the GC. Several members expressed support.
  - CUNY has implemented mandatory COVID testing for all persons in CUNY dormitories and residences, including the GC one.
  - There is a lot of faculty support for student access to labs first, then student access to classrooms for teaching.
  - Currently there are 25 classrooms that have been prepared and can be used. But it is contingent on the approval of moving to phase 2
  - GC is still waiting for CUNY to approve the revised reactivation plan and a request to move the GC to Phase 2 of the plan. With the COVID situation worsening some of the proposals in the most revision of the plan might have to be adjusted.

#### Updates/Announcements:

- The DGSC Steering committee sent a letter to GC admin in response to [this email](#) sent to students of The Graduate Center on Wednesday, October 28, 2020 with subject "How Anxiety Can Be Your Superpower" and [a link to a news post](#) on the GC website entitled "Tune in to your anxiety: those 'bad' feelings are there to help you". View the [Steering committee letter here](#).
- Graduate Council elections have been completed. [Click here for an updated list of Graduate Council committee members](#).
- If you are not receiving meeting notices please email me your DSC Works username so I can tag your account as a representative.
- Complete SPARC training but December 1 and email the certificate to Eric Brown. This is mandatory for you to continue as a representative.

#### Upcoming Meetings:

- 11/23 - Executive Committee of the Graduate Council
- 12/4 - DGSC Steering Committee Meeting
- 12/9 - Co-Chairs Monthly Meeting with Office of Student Affairs
- 12/9 - Graduate Council Meeting
- 12/10 - GC Reactivation Committee Monthly Meeting
- 12/11 - DGSC Plenary Meeting - Registration is required
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**C. Co-Chair for Business (Adam Kocurek)**

- Program allocations: All of the program representatives should have received an email from me detailing their program allocation numbers for the Fall semester. Remember - these operate on a reimbursement basis, so we will pay you back for up to the amount noted in the email. To get reimbursed, please submit a check request for reimbursement on DSC Works, providing electronic receipts attached to your request (this is very important!).
  - Because we are virtual, program allocations will have to be creatively utilized; traditionally, this money is used to reimburse students for department party expenses or for other services to the program's students. End of the year parties may be virtual this year, so consider purchasing gift cards for your students (similarly to how we raffle out gift cards at the end of the Plenary meetings) for them to use on food, or whatever else they might need/want.
    - Consider polling your students - see what they want! The idea I presented above is just one of many potential uses for program allocations. If you have an idea for how you can spend your program allocation but are not sure whether or not it is an appropriate use of the budget, do not hesitate to reach out to me and we can confirm.
    - NOTE: these program allocations must be deployed in a way that ostensibly benefits all students/is accessible to all students. These allocations are not to be used for personal enrichment or to enrich a particular sub-community within your department.
    - NOTE: If your credit card/account cannot handle taking on such a payment, consider reaching out to others in your department to help shoulder that expense - they can also be reimbursed, just generate a check request for them.
  - NOTE: Program allocation funds that are not used this semester will carry over to next semester's general budget, and does not carry over specifically to next semester's program allocation. That said, if you cannot spend your program allocation this semester, I will try to ensure that next semester's budget line remains at the inflated rate for your program.
- The Bursar Office is now able to process direct deposit payments for NRA students living outside of the country; if you are waiting on DGSC payments that have not been deposited into your accounts, please reach out to me so that we can get to the bottom of it.
- The Advocate is continuing to publish - if you or another graduate student you know is in need of some income and would like to be published, please consider submitting to The Advocate. They are very flexible with article subjects and content.
- Please remember - we are offering DGSC emergency grants for students in dire straits. These are operating on a reimbursement model, up to \$50 per person to aid with a medical or life expense. Please contact the DGSC if you or another graduate student you know are in need of aid - we can also direct you to the wider CUNY emergency grants and work to assist students in more tailored ways.
- NOTE: We still have money for free legal consultations - if you or a student is in need of legal advice or a referral, please contact me.

**D. USS Delegate (Sara Ortiz)**

- November 5th - Global Kids Panel

*"Thank you, Amira, for connecting us. Sara, I hope this message finds you well! I am eager to learn more about your work and even more excited to build out how we can work together. I'm ALWAYS looking for ways to strengthen our students' pipeline to college! Perhaps we can find some time next week before the Thanksgiving break to discuss? Looking forward and be well!*

*Warmly,*

*Justine"* (Justine Ouano, Global Kids' citywide College and Career program)
- November 9th - First Steering Committee Meeting Introduction to [USS Steering Initiatives](#)

- November 12th - City Council - Committee on Higher Education, jointly with the Committee on Civil Service and Labor - [Testimony in Support of Adjuncts](#)
- November 17th - USS Delegate appointed as Student Representative to the Audit Committee of the Board of Trustees. My first meeting with this committee is scheduled for this Monday, November 23rd at 3:30 pm
- November 23rd - Next Graduate Council Meeting at 12 noon
- November 24th - 5:30 pm CUNY Virtual Round Table Discussion with mayoral candidate for 2021 Scott Stringer to discuss his [CUNY Plan](#)

The Roundtable will give Comptroller Stringer the opportunity to meet with student leaders like yourself, and learn about the issues affecting your college experience. The Comptroller will also discuss his recently released Tuition-free at all CUNY Community Colleges and Workforce Development proposal with hopes of building a competitive and inclusive post-pandemic economy better align to train for jobs of tomorrow. We hope you can join us for this important discussion. To RSVP, please register through the following link <https://cunyrightable2020.eventbrite.com>. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me via email at [hkhan@comptroller.nyc.gov](mailto:hkhan@comptroller.nyc.gov) or at 929-512-1946.

- Today - A colleague of mine at the GC was able to get me in touch with [Janos Marton](#), 2021 candidate for Manhattan District Attorney. I e-mailed him personally to try to schedule a CUNY Virtual Round Table Discussion such as the one for Scott Stringer. I will be attending his [Virtual Fundraiser](#) this evening - [RSVP at: janosforda.com/nov20](#)
- November 29th - 12 noon - Next USS Plenary Meeting
- December 1st - Announcement: [December 1st is CUNY Tuesday! Please give and SHARE!](#)

As the coronavirus crisis takes its toll on immigrants, CUNY Citizenship Now! is rising to the challenge. We have moved to full remote mode, aiming to help thousands of immigrants on the path to citizenship. We continue to provide application assistance to immigrants seeking U.S. citizenship, DACA and Temporary Protected Status extensions, and family immigration. This transition has posed challenges for us and the people we help. That said, no virus is going to keep Citizenship Now! from providing help to immigrants. Your donation will help make it possible. The immigrant community is counting on us. Can we count on you?

#### **E. UFS Liaison (Natacha Pawa)**

- Report of the UFS meeting (October 27, 2020)
  - We had as guest speaker [Matthew Sapienza, CUNY vice-chancellor](#), who spoke about issues related to the Budget of last year and provision for this year. Despite the challenging beginning of the fiscal year where we had to work month to month. CUNY was able to have provision (A budget is safe for October through January 2021)
  - The Cares Act money was approved. \$117 million will be distributed through Student Emergency Grant throughout the Fall Semester. \$91 million is already released. (some of the money is already distributed at the Grad Center through the Doctoral Research Grant (round 16)...up to \$1500)
- Next Meeting December 1st, 2020.

Points to be discussed:

Ed. Cruz will be our guest in December. By that time, the census would have voted [ News of consolidation?].

- Will summer 2021 require board action? (Is it almost sure to have an online Spring)
- Online Degree Programmes are going to be featured next term to Fall 2021.
- Nothing is heard yet on negotiations with vendors to provide university vendors proctoring.
- Announcement of today, November 20.
  - CUNY has begun the deployment of Camtasia and Snagit for use by University faculty. Software Licenses

were distributed to the campus Site License Coordinators yesterday afternoon, and campus Help Desks have been notified. CIS has also published informational pages on [Camtasia](https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/cis/technology-services/camtasia) < <https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/cis/technology-services/camtasia> > and [Snagit](https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/cis/technology-services/snagit) < <https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/cis/technology-services/snagit>

#### IV. Steering Officer Reports

##### A. Officer for Funding (Christian Martinez)- PUT REPORT HERE

- The Grants Committee had their second meeting last week October 28th, 2020  
There were no new grant applications to review  
As a way to increase applications, we have decided that students who organize COVID-19 Community grants (under start-up grants) will receive a \$25 gift card of their choosing
- Advertising
  - I have sent out an email to both the listserve and to all program representatives about the COVID-19 community grants
  - I have reached out to our social media coordinator and am waiting on a response
  - After speaking with The Grants Committee and Rod, we have decided that we will be also advertising in the Advocate as part of the DGSC's designated free page
- In total, we have reviewed and approved two grants: Lit Liv Journal and the 13th annual Pedagogy Day

##### B. Officer for Governance & Membership (Katie Anderson)

- [Kristofer Eckelhoff](#) has stepped down from their position as the second Music Program Rep in favor of letting a new face have a shot at representing the program: Jocelyn Lai. Exciting! Congrats Jocelyn and thank you Kristofer for your investment into the health of your program's representation!
- If you cannot attend a meeting - PLEASE request a proxy
- If you know any registered GC students (in your program or others) who are interested in learning about the DGSC - invite them to a Plenary meeting!!
  - If you do this please tell me who they are, as they will likely be able to serve as a proxy as they are viewing the meeting.

##### C. Officer for Health & Wellness (Silvia Rivera Alfaro)

- Regarding Health & Wellness, during the past month:
  - The *Navigating NYSHIP* workshop with Elise Perram, director of Students Affairs, took place on November 13th from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. Also Eric Brown, from the same office, participated in the event. We had an attendance of 6 students that asked about different aspects of the insurance offered to PhD students.
  - We continue participating in the Search Committee for the Student Health Insurance Manager with the Office of Student Affairs. Currently we finished interviewing candidates.
- On behalf of the health and wellness of the student community currently:
  - On 11/17 a conversation with Linda Perrotta, director of the Child Development and Learning Center, started. Our goal is to help the students to have the right information for the Spring semester.
  - We are consulting with The New York State Condom Program and NYC Condoms for finding out about locations where our students can have access to free condoms and safe sex materials. We hope these conversations will be successful and we will start informing about those locations as soon as possible.
- We are actively promoting the subject of Mental Health as a critical issue to be discussed and cared for during the current Covid pandemic and the large socio-economic situation. In this regard,

- On World Mental Health Day we informed on resources, including emergency resources, for graduate students.
- On 11/28 we emailed the Wellness Center asking for information about the mental health situation of the GC student community. Despite there is no general information, we received a positive answer from the director of the Wellness Center, Robert L. Hatcher, and we are following up on the subject to look for ways to collaborate.
- The Steering Committee approved (11/06) and sent an answer (11/16) to the administration in response to the email "make anxiety your superpower" sent by a news office on October 28th. As part of this we urged the administration for more responses on the subject of mental health.
- We will continue advocating on the subject.
- The Committee for Health and Wellness continues working on the best ways of updating the information of the website for wellness and health that is located at OpenCUNY (a student platform by the DGSC) and has not been updated since 2018. We are also working on options to make it more accessible.
- We are open to hearing from you. Please send an email if there are any questions, suggestions or concerns in relation to health and wellness.

#### **D. Officer for Outreach (Cristina Pardo Porto)**

- All the events from the International Education Week were recorded. Links will be released next week by the OIS. Some of the events were but not limited to:
  - Job search for International Students
  - Life after F1 and J1 visas
  - Post-Completion Optional Practical Training (OPT) Workshop for F-1 Students
  - Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Information for International Students
  - Zotero
  - Fullbright Fellowships
  - COVID related info for International Students
  - Teaching as an International Student
- International students abroad should report to ISO as required by current SEVP policy. If any student did not complete the form and they are outside the US, please contact Linda Asaro [lasaro@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:lasaro@gc.cuny.edu). If IS are in the United States for FALL and SPRING, they do not need to email ISO as they do not need to put the remark.
- If any international student has changed their address, please remind them to complete and submit the change of address form that is available on our website.
  - Direct Deposit for International Students is now being implemented
  - I encourage students to use the LIVE CHAT service that the Office of International Students is now offering
- Outreach Committee
  - Amit Kumar - 2nd year Physics PhD student would like to join the committee.
  - Oriana, Katherine and I will be having our last meeting of the semester soon to set goals for next semester.

#### **E. Officer for Student Life & Services (Edward Charnley)**

- Following the email disseminated by the GC-PSC regarding library services and solidarity, I met with Marc Kagan of the GC-PSC to discuss the relationship between the DGSC and PSC. Our discussion focussed on ways in which we can avoid working at cross purposes to one another, and the way in which the PSC can be made more responsive to the needs of student staff members, particularly those serving as adjunct level lecturers and professors.



- I suggest the development of a letter from the DGSC to the PSC, expressing a desire to work more closely with the GC-PSC, and inquiring as to how a more integrated relationship between our two organisations could strengthen student staffs' position in terms of representation within the broader pan-CUNY PSC.
- Marc suggested in particular that the GC-PSC needs more delegates and active members, so I would encourage DGSC members who feel they have time and are interested to contact the GC-PSC to find out more about what that role entails.
- I had a brief meeting with the new DGSC Social Media Correspondent Inma Naima Zanoguera, and we are going to work together on promoting DGSC events more effectively.
- If any DGSC members are currently part of any successful online social groups, I would be very interested in hearing about them, and what it is that you think makes them successful.
- Jessica Adam, a Native American Theatre and Performance 4th year, is seeking to create a student group for Native Americans at CUNY. If you are interested please email [services@dgsc.org](mailto:services@dgsc.org)! If you know any Native Americans at CUNY, pass this on! Tribal enrolment is not necessary.
- Finally while it may seem depressingly early to bring up elections in the wake of the most recent one, I would like to draw attention to the fact that next year is a Mayoral election year in NYC. While the Mayoral election will not take place until November 2021, the Democratic Primary, which will almost certainly decide the next mayor of New York City, will be held in June.
  - CUNY represents a vast voting block of untapped suffrage, and I would like to suggest that by organising an aggressive campaign to encourage voting, student government bodies can encourage candidates to take clear and hopefully supportive positions regarding CUNY - something which a cursory glance at the mayoralty of Bill DeBlasio should suggest is important to CUNY moving forward into the next few years, considering the depth of the fiscal crisis it is facing. If any DGSC rep is interested in the position of the various candidates regarding CUNY, or other issues generally, feel free to contact me and I can send you some material.

lion's share of CUNY funding comes from the state, not the city, they might not realize how important city gov is.

#### **F. Officer for Technology & Library (Carolyn McDonough)- PUT REPORT HERE**

- The Mina Rees Library is open online with a variety of services such as 24/7 chat and Research Consultations 2-- The New York Public Library announced expanded service at select grab-and-go locations such as public computer appointments and limited browsing at 14 of our locations in the Bronx, Manhattan, and Staten Island became available on Nov. 9, 2020
- IT support via SELF-SERVICE link

#### **V. Child Care Center Representative Report - Pedro Cabello del Moral (LAILAC)**

##### **Current Business**

- The Child Development and Learning Center has been operating remotely during the Fall with 12-15 kids on a tuition-free basis
- Activities included Fall appreciation, shaker making, book reading, etc.

##### **Budget**

- State funds allocation for last year did not arrive until the end of September. Major delays are expected for the next rounds of allocations. The DGSC contribution has been reduced by \$4000.
- Since tuition has not been collected and Halloween and Thanksgiving sales did not take place, the budget has been substantially affected.
- Childcare center is operating remotely for the Spring. Tuition makes up \$100,000 approx. of the budget (about half of total budget) to go towards paying teachers.

- A call for donation to parents was proposed as an alternative source of income.
- Other options will be explored as well.

New Business

- If the CDC and State guidelines allow it, the Child Development Center will open for the Fall 2021.
- Safety measures will be put in place, such as signage, cleaning toys, class size reduction, parent accompaniment limitations, etc.
- Other concerns include teachers' safety and commute.
- There are about 15 students interested in attending if in-person classes resume.

**VI. New Business**

**A. Approval of New Program Representative - Music - Jocelyn Lai (Voting)**

Motion to approve: KA (Biology)

Seconded: Natacha Pawa (French)

Vote: Approved Unanimously

**B. Endorsement of [PSC Delegate Assembly Resolution for a Strike Authorization](#) (Voting)**

Motion to approve: RH (Psychology)

Seconded: Zhuo Yin (Physics)

Vote: 45 yes; 0 no;

1 abstention - Bertrand Ithurburn (Computer Science)

**C. Resolution [in Support of Students in LAILAC Program](#) (Voting)**

Motion to approve: SRA (LAILAC)

Seconded: RH (Psychology)

Vote: Passed Unanimously

**D. [Statement in Support of Art History Student Relief Proposal](#) (Voting)**

Motion to approve: RH (Psychology)

Seconded: Sonia Gandert (Art History)

Vote: Passed Unanimously

**VII. Announcements**

Four representatives were chosen at random to receive gift cards in our Plenary attendance incentive raffle: Lisa Millsaps, Jorge Alvis, Milo Ward, Bertrand Ithurburn

**VIII. Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 7:37 PM.