



Outgoing Plenary Minutes
May 21, 2021

Attendance

Present:

Adam Kocurek, Alexis Hardy, Amanda Benjamin, Bertrand Ithurburn, Blondie Lekemo Ngatchi Epse Pawa, Carmín Quijano-Seda, Cecilia Salvi, Christian Martinez, Christopher Scott Campbell, Cristina Pardo Porto, Claudia Wald, David Dansu, David Udell, Deborah Leter, Dohyun Shin, Edward Charnley, Edwin Grimsley, Elizabeth Garza, Efthimia Johanides, Fedor Marchenko, Felix Grezes, Jennifer Rossberg, John Young, Joseph Boninger, Katherine Anderson, Kyle Fraser, Lisa Millsaps-M-Graham, Luke Kayga, Marianne Madoré, Meltem Topaloglu, Michael Greer, Milo Ward, Paul Oder, Pedro Cabello del Moral, Prathmesh Deshmukh, Raj Korpan, Robert Wrigley, Rod Hurley, Sammi Sauma, Sara Ortiz, Shannon Brick, Sharanya Dutta, Shokolatte Tachikawa, Sierra Holt, Silvia Rivera Alfaro, Sonja Gandert, Tenn Joe Lim, Yuliya Barycheuskaya, Zhuo Yin

Absent:

Beicer Tapia, Casey Hall, Chuxin Liu, David Monda, Dhanya Babu, Jocelyn Lai, Pamela Stenberg, Samantha Barthelemy (Quorate Proxy: none), Sarah Chu, Saroj Chand

Guests:

Jonathan Hanon

Meeting called to order at 3:05 pm

I. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve: Rod Hurley (Psychology)

Seconded: Silvia Rivera Alfaro (LAILAC)

Vote: Approved unanimously

II. Approval of Minutes of the April 23, 2021 Meeting

Motion to approve: Sharanya Dutta (English)

Seconded: Milo Ward (Political Science)

Vote: Approved unanimously

III. Executive Committee Reports

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

- We closed elections at 9.32%. While it's not as high as we would have liked, it is in keeping with last year's trends since. Undoubtedly the distance and the pandemic

fatigue is taking a toll. Everyone who voted, got their programs represented, and the amazing Katie and Christian who volunteered to help me with the legwork, thank you so much!

- Emails should have gone out to all the newly elected representatives. They will be voted in, along with nominations/voting into steering and EC positions at the 4:30PM meeting.
- **Chartered orgs: Your deadline is in 4 DAYS.** You have to have 20 signatures for Spring 2021 and the report for Fall 2020 submitted to me in order to be in active status, and eligible to access your chartered org funds. PLEASE MAKE SURE TO COMPLETE YOUR REQUIREMENTS FOR ACTIVE STATUS **BY MAY 25**. If you are a chartered org leader, you can see how many signatures your org has in DSCWorks yourself: On the left hand column, Go to Reports--> Chartered Orgs--> Rosters.
- **Program Student Associations:** Your renewals are due, and the deadline is **June 30, 2021**. You need to submit this form: <http://cunydisc.org/works/program-student-associations/renew> on DSCWorks. You only need an updated constitution and the most recent names of your officers within the PSA.
- SPARC and ESPARC: Please check your Blackboard for the SPARC and ESPARC notifications. If you have any issue finding it, please email Eric Brown in the OSA at ebrown2@gc.cuny.edu. These are SUPER important this time around if you want to stay in full-time status, not have any registration holds on your account, and get your fellowships on time.

Discussion:

RH (Psychology): I want to clarify that only incoming representatives (people newly elected for 2021-22) can participate in the election at the plenary-elect meeting at 4:30 but anyone is welcome to attend.

B. Co-Chair for Communications (Rod Hurley)

Recent Meetings:

- 4/29 - At GC Reactivation Committee Monthly Meeting we received updates regarding preparations for limited return to campus in the fall.
 - Registration so far - 50% of students are in at least 1 hybrid class - Admin is still working out how/when hybrid classes will meet
 - They do not yet know what the protocols for entry will be
 - Renovations to classrooms at 6' distancing are ongoing.
 - However, all these plans will change because since that meeting, CUNY announced that they are moving toward 3' distancing and 60-75% reopening. Apparently some campuses have paused fall registration so that they can make those changes.

- Comment on the plan:
<https://www.gc.cuny.edu/News/COVID-19-and-Reactivation-Planning/Reactivation-Plan/Comment-on-the-Plan>
- 5/19 - Co-Chairs Meeting with Office of Student Affairs
 - We asked questions about all the reopening concerns but they don't have any answers
 - Student services will be available in-person as well as online but they don't yet have the logistics worked out
 - One-stop, orientation online,
 - Mandatory vaccines at GC housing at 118th st - hoping to reopen the lounge and gym
- 5/21 - College Association Meeting
 - Reviewed current DGSC budget and draft budget for next year.

Upcoming Meetings:

- 5/27 - GC Reactivation Committee Monthly Meeting

Updates/Announcements:

- The Art/Photo Exhibition is now live on our website (<http://cunydisc.org/dgsc-art-and-photo-exhibit>), with contributions from 22 students from 17 different programs. Over the past couple of weeks the contributors and their works were also featured on our social media.
- This is the final plenary meeting for 2020-21 DGSC representatives. We all continue to serve in our roles until June 30th.
- This is also my last Co-Chair report as I will not be on the Executive or Steering Committee after June 30th. Thanks for your service to students and for your help and support over the time I spent as an officer.

Discussion:

SD (English): I have emailed VP Matt Schoengood asking about IS and valid vaccinations. He said he shared my email but he said that the Board of Trustees won't vote until the June meeting.

Kyle Fraser (Anthropology): Int'l students are concerned about vaccine requirements, also is there a chance that online classes will be shifted to in person.

Adam Kocurek (History): They aren't sure on what a hybrid mode would look like. One thing that is always being mentioned is that for IS that won't be present in the US, hybrid options will be made available for them.

SD (English): Even at the GC these classes that are listed as in-person or hybrid will be available to IS to be online/remote because the current SEVP policy allows IS to stay outside and take classes remotely.

C. Co-Chair for Business (Adam Kocurek)

- At College Association, the membership voted to approve my preliminary 2021-2022 budget.
 - I will be making extensive changes to the budget as more details come into light - it is very much a provisional template for a budget that we will see a finalized version of in September.
 - More to be discussed at the end of the session.

- Our fiscal year ends on June 31st, however - the Business Office representatives, who process our check and payment requests, are going to have limited working access during June, so for expediency's sake, please try to get in your allocation/chartered org check requests for reimbursement by May 31st. I will be processing check requests pretty much every day between tomorrow and the 31st when I am not grading.
 - Remember - you can try to use the tax exemption form for your CUNY-specific events.
 - Individual gift cards may not exceed \$15, and please do not purchase more than 3 per individual; Central Office raises their eyes at this over concerns of IRS audit and accusations of tax evasion.
 - Program reps must be the ones to submit program allocation check requests, but anyone can make the purchase and be reimbursed quickly so long as they have a US bank account.
- The Provost search committee has sent its shortlist to the higher-ups. The three candidates for Provost are all highly qualified, and I was grateful for the opportunity to voice student concerns on that committee.
- Correspondence - end-of-semester obligations and drafting the provisional budget have been taking up a lot of my time, but I will be dedicating the weekend and the next several days to getting caught up on email backlog. If I have not responded to you within 48 hours, please don't hesitate to forward your message again.

D. USS Delegate (Sara Ortiz)

- USS Committees Progress
 - Mental Health Committee
 - Working for Mental Health Resources to be prominently displayed on every CUNY student's Blackboard & CUNYFirst Account, as well as on syllabi.
 - We have created a planning committee for a **CUNY Student March for Mental Health and Suicide Awareness at the Highline/Hudson Yards**.
We have created a [Google Jamboard](#) to brainstorm the planning process. The march has been postponed until the Fall semester, with a date to be determined, to allow for opportunity for outreach, as well as due to vaccine concerns.
 - This event will be to amplify the [DGSC & USS Pass Joint Resolution Demanding a Safe 'Vessel' at Hudson Yards](#)
 - Began conversation with Abigail Thomas, Executive Vice Chair of CCSD, regarding officially chartering with USS.
 - Racial Equity Committee
 - No updates
 - Gender Equity & LGBTQ+ Committee
 - No updates
 - Legislative Affairs Committee

- Progress has been made with respect to “Closing the TAP gap”. USS has made its way through the NYS legislative session with some strong wins for CUNY such as a 3-year tuition freeze, increased TAP Award, funding for mental health services and so much more. As the end of the semester and summer approaches we will be shifting to City Council advocacy, our legislative Director Jasper Diaz (legislative@usscunyc.org) , and Vice-Chair of Legislative Affairs Sumana Ali (legislative@usscunyc.org) will be leading the efforts in advocacy regarding the New York City Council.
- Academic Affairs Committee
 - A P/NC [Flexible Grading Policy Resolution for the Spring 2021 Semester](#) has been passed in Plenary to be brought to the Board of Trustees this coming Monday, May 24th, if it is approved for the agenda.
 - Election of replacement Vice Chair - Jonathan Hanon, incoming DGSC representative.
 - A [memo to encourage local SGA support](#) was submitted to the Council of Presidents, to be voted on in each of their elections.
 - The transition team will work on encouraging CUNY to permanently abolish the SAT and GRE requirements. Professors will be “strongly encouraged” to be trained in and refrain from using anything other than Blackboard or Zoom for virtual or hybrid lectures.
- USS Scholarship Committee
 - The USS scholarship committee is in full swing. Scholarship applications are open until June 7th. Please let students know that if they qualify to apply for a scholarship, it will be indicated in their CUNYfirst Student Center, under “to do”. We are still looking for additional members.
 - If you or anyone you may know is interested in serving on this committee as a reader or reviewer, please reach out to our Executive Director Robin Green (executivedirector@usscunyc.org) to join and learn more!
 - Students can look for other scholarship resources on the cuny website at <https://www.cuny.edu/financial-aid/scholarships/>. They can also contact their campus scholarship or financial aid department for more resources.
- Other News
 - Members of USS Committees spoke to NY1 News reporter Ron Lee on May 7th at Brooklyn College, to advocate for CUNY to establish the Muslim holidays of Eid al Adha and Eid al Fitr as official academic holidays (without classes). [See change.org petition “Demanding CUNY Cancel Classes for Eid”](#)

- I have begun to collaborate with CUNY students to discuss establishing a CUNY Jewish Coalition to advocate for the safety and religious rights of Jewish students.
- Transition Document
 - I have begun working on updating the 2019 transition document

Discussion:

Edward Charnley (History): What is the Tap Gap?

Sara Ortiz (Int'l Migration Studies): It's the difference between tuition and NYS financial aid - the colleges have to make up this difference.

EC (History): Any plans for alternative assessment?

SO (Int'l Migration Studies): It's an ongoing discussion but there is a move away from the GRE and finding other ways to measure aptitude. The next USS delegate should take this up

E. UFS Liaison (Natacha Pawa)

● **May 11. UFS Report**

Elections of new UFS At large Members of the UFS Executive Committee.

Chair's report was about vaccines (mandatory?) , safe Reopening plan using some of the Cares Act and Crisca Money, 60 % of Reopening capacity.

- I met with Michael and Joe (Claudia) to discuss on Wednesday May 12 on "Resolution for Transparency and Representative Student Involvement in Reopening".
- I attended the PSC meeting on May 20, 2021. Invitation to all faculty to be Watchdogs on their campus by Checking ventilation/filtration in any buildings and reporting any abnormality. How to be a watchdog? <https://psc-cuny.org/form/join-psc-health-safety-watchdogs>.

IV. Steering Officer Reports

A. Officer for Funding (Christian Martinez)

No updates

B. Officer for Governance & Membership (Katie Anderson)

- Information requested by Michael Greer: As of 5/18/2021, the Vice President and Office of Student Affairs have not made a decision on the availability of Travel Awards for the 2021-2022 academic year. They made no indication of when this decision would be made.
- Two programs have submitted petitions to open seats for the 21-22 academic year: Criminal Justice, and Theater. Additional programs have requested information on the petition process.

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

- On May 07 2021 at 10a.m. we had the workshop: Navigating NYSHIP with William McGowan, Student Health Insurance Manager at the Graduate Center and Elise Perram, Director of Student Affairs.
- We are happy to announce that the DGSC morning yoga class is continuing during the summer. The class is free and open to GC students, staff, and faculty. The classes take place every Tuesday and Thursday at 9:00 a.m. EST. The classes started on May 13 and will finish on June 29.

D. Officer for Outreach (Cristina Pardo Porto)

- The last Outreach Committee meeting was held yesterday, May 20th.
- Graduate Center First Year Out of State Tuition Issue:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeSNxShXh0MK0Odm676QL8JPbYjundKQYS_W1cGbL5wbFopHg/viewform?fbclid=IwAR0yDfrv-PQYvfUwzHII_eVEHOXrA4hEuL-IXIEru_nT9N7LDgpWeH6jZ38
- SEVP POLICY update:
<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/2021/04/read-an-update-on-federal-guidance-for-the-2021-22-academic-year>
 - “The current SEVP COVID19 Policy permits continuing F-1 status students with active SEVIS records to enroll in all online courses while either remaining in the United States or while remaining abroad for both fall 2021 and Spring 2022 depending on the operating status of the University the student is enrolled. The policy also permits F-1 students to work on-campus remotely from abroad.”
“As the Graduate Center CUNY is offering online courses and hybrid/in-person classes for fall 2021 due to COVID19, continuing F-1 students with active SEVIS records could maintain their F-1 status and keep their SEVIS record in Active Status if they are enrolled all online for fall 2021 while they remain abroad or if they remain in the US.”
“If you have an active SEVIS record and plan to be enrolled online while remaining outside of the United States for fall 2021, your fellowship package will remain unchanged, provided that you are still able to meet the necessary service requirements.”

E. Officer for Student Life & Services (Carmin Quijano Seda)

- **Native American Jewelry Workshop (May 5, 6:30-9:30 pm)**
 - I am happy to report that the workshop was a success in terms of assistance and the participants' feedback.
 - 48 students registered for the workshop; and 37 attended the event.
 - We recorded it for those who could not attend; and sent the video the day after.
 - We sent out thirty \$10 gift cards to the first 30 participants who registered.
 - Everybody got their kits on time.
 - We spent a total of \$300.

- Overall, participants expressed that they enjoyed and are interested in this type of event.
- We are thinking of doing another one in the fall of 2021.
- **DGSC's Summer Virtual Talent Show (June 2nd - 6:30-8:30 pm)**
 - Show us your talent and win a GrubHub gift card of \$15
 - The first 20 students who register for the DGSC Talent Show by Friday May 28 will have the opportunity to show us their talent and win a gift card.
 - Students will have 5 minutes max for their presentation.
 - Talents can be reading an original poem, telling a joke or a short story, making an origami figure, showing a recent painting, playing an instrument, singing a song, etc.
 - Requisites: Being a registered student of the GC and performing their talent on the day of the DGSC's Virtual Talent Show.

F. Officer for Technology & Library (Edward Charnley)

- The additional STF funding was used to purchase the Duke E Book collection; those books should be available at some point in the summer, but definitely in the fall.
- There are some pre-existing deposits in the JSTOR ebook collection; because of this, if you find something in JSTOR ebooks that you want the library to own, there is now some space for purchasing JSTOR books because we have the Duke collection.
- Library is working to set up interlibrary loan and planning to pilot a grab and go system in the summer.
 - This is contingent on the reopening process.
 - The plan is a soft pilot in July.
 - § The complete services will be online in the fall.
 - § ALL DEPENDENT ON THE REOPENING COMMITTEE.
- Study space will be available in fall based on a reservation system.
- NYPL has begun a grab and go service for its research collections for Grad Centre affiliates.
 - <https://www.nypl.org/research/grab-and-go-for-researchers>

V. New Business

A. DGSC 2021-22 Budget

CCB presented the preliminary budget for 21-22. With a projected decrease in revenue several cuts were made to expenditure.

B. [Resolution for Transparency and Representative Student Involvement in Reopening](#) (Voting)

Motion to approve: Michael Greer, (Philosophy)

Seconded: RH (Psychology)

Discussion:

MG (Philosophy) - We settled on 2 MA students because of numbers and time at the GC

JB - This resolution is very different from the previous one it's really about transparency and student representation

MG (Philosophy): It might also be endorsed by the PSC.

Vote: Approved unanimously

VI. Announcements

AK (History): Thank you for your service!

VII. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 4:26pm