



Plenary
Minutes
May 20, 2022

Meeting called to order at 3:10 PM without a quorate majority. Simple majority reached at 3:23 PM.

I. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve: Jonathan Hanon
Seconded: Adam Kocurek
Vote: Approved unanimously

II. Approval of Minutes of the April 29, 2022 meeting

Motion to approve: SRA
Seconded: AK
Vote: Approved unanimously

III. Executive Committee Reports

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

- **DGSC Elections closed May 2!**
- **6.93% of the students voted (218 students).**
- While it's not as high as we would have liked, it is in keeping with last year's trends. It's also less than last year, no doubt because pandemic fatigue is taking a toll. Everyone who voted, got their programs represented, and the amazing Katie and Jonathan who volunteered to help me with processing large amounts of data, 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 5 DAYS.** You have to have 20 signatures for Spring 2022 and the report for Fall 2021 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**. You will not be reimbursed for monies spent if you do not do this. 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. Some people have had issues logging into DSCWorks; we're working on it.
- **Program Student Associations:** Your renewals are due, and the deadline is **June 30, 2022**.. You need to submit this form: <http://cunydgsc.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. If you haven't conducted internal elections yet, submit the list of current officers and email the next CCSA to notify them of the new officers when you do hold elections.

- **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.

Updates:

Discussion:

- ZY: Who votes for Steering?
- SD: We voted for reps over the online ballot. From the program and at large reps we nominate people. The elected representatives vote – the master list we just elected, they get to vote to confirm steering and EC.

B. Co-Chair for Communications (Deborah Leter)

Activites/Recent Meetings:

- 05/12: EC meeting with the Provost and various administrative offices (office of student affairs, office for institutional equity, fellowships and financial aid, registrar).
 - Cafeteria/coffee service at the GC: admin will revisit this in the fall once there are more people in the building. We raised the point that more students will start coming to the GC if there are affordable food/coffee options in the building.
 - Reduction in the number of emails being sent to the student payment email
 - Sprintax TDS: We told them the recent workshop was not helpful because it wasn't tailored to GC students specific situations, and we were told that a Sprintax TDS expert from CUNY Central office would be ask to hold a workshop for GC students.
 - FICA: Admin also wants FICA policy to be changed so we don't have to opt-out every semester, but CUNY received a fine by the IRS a few years ago for giving exemptions to students who are part-time employees, so now we're required to do it this way. We requested that an email be sent out to all students every semester by the Provost office.

Discussion:

- ZY: There has been pushback on the GC's cafeteria decision?
- SD: They know there is a pushback. They will revisit their decision. We're going to push that there are affordable options so that students can eat and drink affordably at the GC.

C. Co-Chair for Business (Adam Kocurek)

Updates:

- Please remember that the end of our fiscal year is the last day in June. This is the hard deadline for submitting any outstanding check requests for payment or reimbursements, but I STRONGLY encourage you to submit everything before the end of May, as our Business Office rep is taking some vacation in June and upon their

return, the Business Office will be overwhelmed with balancing their books and getting ready for their audit. Get everything - requests, receipts, forms, etc. - into the DSCWorks website and CCB email ASAP.

- Note - if you submit requests for payment or reimbursement in June, it may take longer for you to get your payments.
- It is looking likely that there will be a healthy carryover budget for the next DGSC fiscal year, which on one hand is a shame because it means a lot of programs and orgs did not take advantage of their funds, though this was also expected considering how volatile this last hybrid academic year has been and how burned out folks are. I'm hoping the carryover budget allows the next CCB to keep program and chartered organization allocations artificially inflated and grants the incoming steering committee the financial flexibility to explore new projects (participatory budget, movie ticket resumption, in-person gatherings, etc.).
- The Advocate's head editor, Rafael Munia, has given an update, which I will share here:
 - "We've published an issue on 'Re-imagining care work' focusing on the ways our community is handling the 'return to campus'; and that we are currently producing a new issue focusing on Anti-Asian racism that is set to be published soon (we are still open to receive contributions). We have been publishing our new issue online through our website (<https://gcadvocate.com/>), and are constantly monitoring our campus activity looking for the possibility of returning to print publication as well. We also been trying to work on ways to making the Advocate closer to the GC community during this hybrid times as we try to find ways to communicate better, especially with the new students who may have arrived at CUNY during this period where Advocate prints could not be distributed around campus (although we still have been putting some copies next to the DGSC room for our last print issue). We would love to hear more about our community on ways we can raise our visibility. I say this also because while in the first years of the pandemic we have received a lot of contributions, we did notice those numbers going down this last two semester."
 - They are actively soliciting submissions for one final publication - please consider writing for them (pay is between \$100-\$300 for a written piece).
- The Graduate Education Task Force committee will meet again on May 27th - I'll be attending as a student rep.

Discussion:

- ZY: I attended a USS meeting and they are formulating an Anti-Asian Racism declaration. Is the DGSC able to adapt/sign (?) this resolution?
- AK: We cannot as a DGSC plenary body sign off on a resolution now, but the steering body is able to do so over the summer. If the USS wants to get other people to sign on, the steering body is something to consider for signing this resolution.
- SD: The next CCB will determine how much each program receives in terms of allocation in the new budget?
- AK: It's up to the CCB's discretion, and plenary's discretion as well because they vote on the budget. It's my recommendation to the incoming CCB to keep the doubled program allocation for the next academic year.
- AK: Are there any outstanding questions, comments, or concerns about the 22-23 budget?
- ZY: A quick question about money we didn't spend. Where does this money go?
- AK: The GC doesn't get anything. It's only our money, it comes back to us. It will be available to DGSC Representatives the following academic year.

D. USS Delegate (Jonathan Hanon)

Updates:

- Final USS Plenary was this past Sunday.
 - Quorum was not reached, but discussion was had and officer reports were read.
 - USS Steering will continue to meet over the summer.
- Reflections on my year as USS Delegate and Vice Chair for Technology:
 - USS, and CUNY in general, have many structural pitfalls, but some of them can be fixed.
 - I've worked closely with every USS committee to make things easier on those who want to do things as a group to be able to do so.
 - My proposal for student representation on administrative committees, particularly on decisions in technology, has reached the IT Steering and is awaiting the hiring of a new CUNY CIO to continue to move forward.
 - The USS Disability and Mental Health Committee is stronger than ever, having coordinated numerous campaigns with CUNY Central, CCSD, and elected officials, including a disability pride march upcoming this July.
- USS Scholarship Committee is looking for reviewers. If you would like to help us in reviewing, please contact me. A few scholarships being reviewed by a handful of students can, over time, turn into thousands.

Discussion:

- ZY: Physics student would like to help with the USS Scholarship Committee.

E. UFS Liaison (Parisa Montazaran Osmanovic)

Updates: UFS plenary was 5.10.22

- Elections were held:
 - Chair: John Verzani
 - Vice chair: Keri Coughlin
 - At large:
 - Lubie Altriste
 - Grace Pai
 - Ned Benton
 - Hugo Fernandez
 - Maureen Matarese
 - Victoria Chevalier
 - Cynthia Wiseman
- Resolution was passed by John Verzani in recognition of Marty Burke's service since 2018
- IDEA (inclusion, diversity, equity and access) are resolution passed
 - I expressed DGSC support and asked if we could co sign as a body and Matt cotter said he would look into how to showcase our support on the website
 - Hugo Fernandez said we could pass a resolution as DGSC to support UFS's IDEA resolution

Discussion:

- PMO: Are any of these faculty members in your department, or do you have any sort of relationship with them? We'd like to figure out how to have more impact at these meetings. Hugo was receptive, and said that we do have speaking rights at these meetings, but that it would be an uphill battle to get voting rights. Maybe we can start strategizing with these independent positions and see if we can leverage our relationships with some of them to get more hold in UFS. Because they are passing resolutions that go upstream to administration and I feel like we should have some sort of inroad to have some sort of input.
- EC (History): In the semester that you've been in UFS, how often have there been close votes?
- PMO: Rarely.
- EC: So overwhelmingly things pass with upwards 60-70-80% approval?
- PMO: Definitely 60, but there have been things that have been turned down because of language technicalities. How many things have been in the works and have been shut down? I'm not aware of anything.
- EC: When things are voted down like that, is it close? We're talking about making this big attempt to get our vote, our speaking voice. What I'm wondering is, if quite often things are close, if we want a vote in a unipolar body you're unlikely to make a particular impact. Professor Fernandez's first action on USS Elections Review was to suspend Robert's Rules. How things go depend on "What does Professor Fernandez feel like on the day?" He's perfectly aware this gives us no practical power. We need to separate ourselves from the administration to make our own decisions. We don't need the administration to make our decisions for us. They routinely do it to USS.
- PMO: Hugo does not think that we should get a vote, and he does not think that we will be successful getting a vote. There's no precedent for it; we are students, we are not faculty. I'm 100% open to strategizing for what the biggest political gain would be. Whatever measures we have to take to get that done in a holistic manner, which is also considering what's going on with USS, what's going on with students within the EC, etc. etc. This is an important discussion, I'm glad you brought it up, because I don't think we've really ever figured that out in such a granular way. Thank you, Ed.
- ZY: I want to comment about how we can fix this. Can we make a resolution? Students from History department can approach faculty from History and ask them to consider the resolution.
- JH: It is important to foster any connections you might have with any people that might help us accomplish what we want to accomplish. If we cooperate, we can get things blocked that would benefit us. It's important to collaborate with those who are willing to listen to us. For those who aren't, it's important to try to get them to listen to us.

IV. Steering Officer Reports

A. Officer for Funding (Angela LaScala-Gruenewald)

Updates:

- Year in review
 - Committee reviewed 19 grant proposals
 - Funded 14 grants (ranging from \$350-750)
 - Total \$8500+ to support student activities, events, and resources
- One grant application remaining to review for summer 2022
 - CUNYSciCom 2022 Symposium

- Grant committee bylaw amendment to fund summer grants
 - Reviewed during April Plenary
 - To be voted on today
- Thanks for a great year!

No discussion.

B. Officer for Governance & Membership (Katie Anderson)

No discussion.

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

Updates:

-Today, Britt Munro, the Officer for Library and Technology, and I started a campaign for mental health at the library. It consists of 12 signs that include a QR code linked to the website: <https://wellness.commonsc.gc.cuny.edu/> and stickers on mental health awareness. Please let us raise our voices to make visible the importance of mental health and wellness in general in our student life.



-As a summary of the year: we help students with doubts on insurance, health and accomodation questions; we keep in touch with Student Affairs and with Clare Wilson; we had yoga and meditation sessions; we created a website that we hope can be continued by the next Officer for Health and Wellness; we collaborated organizing a collective writing space called Desk on the Cloud, which was led by the student Ernesto Cuba; we established a new chartered organization called GC Students for Disability, Health and Wellness. I want to thank the members of the Committee of Health and Wellness, Jonathan Hannon and Shibanee Sivanayagam, and the former member Sara Ortiz.

Discussion:

D. Officer for Outreach (Christopher Campbell)

Updates:

- Please keep in mind that the registration deadline for Fall semester is August 24th, 2022. A \$25 fee will be applied to those who register on or after August 25th, 2022.
 - Additionally, register as early as possible in order to receive your Fall stipend in a timely (or timeliest) manner.
- Debbie and I will be revising & updating DGSC welcome/explanatory materials for incoming and continuing GC students. If anything about the DGSC was or remains unclear to you or your constituents, please reach out and let us know so that we can evaluate our existing materials.

Discussion:

- SD: There were some glitches on the new CUNYFirst website if you were only signing up for instructional units. There might be a problem, reach out to registrar if you have any problems with that particular issue.

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

Updates:

- We celebrated the Native American Jewelry Workshop on May 4th.
- Fifteen (15) students registered for the event, and eight (8) came.
- We spent \$250 for materials, and about \$150 for pizzas and beverages. For a total of \$400.
- Students commented that they would like to attend this workshop in the fall, and Bri Alexander said that she was willing to do it again.

Announcements:

- Sadly, I will not continue in this position, but I encourage anyone who likes to organize activities and build community to nominate him or herself and become the next Officer for Student Life and Service. It is very fun work and an excellent opportunity to make new friends.
- I would be more than happy to orient and give guidance in any way I can.

No discussion.

F. Officer for Technology & Library (Britt Munro)

- Put the mental health campaign up! Thank you Silvia!
- FINALLY got the Chicago books to the library! Photos coming.
- Meeting with Elaine from IT postponed but happening.
- Planning event in collab with the PublicsLab and the library on open access scholarship.

Announcements: I have to end my time as officer for library and tech as I'm going on a LOA *weeps* It's a great position and lots of potential to get things done with the librarians in particular, so I encourage others to apply!



No discussion.

V. New Business

A. 2022-2023 DGSC Budget (Voting)

- a. Motion to Approve: RH
- b. Seconded: SR
- c. Vote: Approved unanimously

B. Grants Committee Proposed Bylaws Amendment (Voting)

a. Discussion:

- RH: The money that would go towards these grants would come from this year's budget? Say, this coming summer would come from this year's budget and already allocated for?
- AK: It would come from next academic year's budget. If any grants are requested during the summer it would come out of that budget line. Our grants budget is \$15,000 right now for the next fiscal year, and it will likely be larger come the next semester.
- RH: July 1st is when the next budget comes into effect?
- AK: Yes.
- ZY: Question concerning bylaws versus constitution amendment voting numbers for approval.
- JH: The amendments to the bylaws require a simple plenary approval. The amendments to the constitution: $\frac{2}{3}$ of plenary must approve, and then 10% of the student body must then approve of the amendment.

- b. Motion to Approve: AK
- c. Seconded: ZY
- d. Vote: Approved unanimously.

VI. Announcements

VII. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 4:12 PM