

DOCTORAL STUDENTS' COUNCIL

CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
CUNY Graduate Center
Doctoral Students' Council
Steering Committee Minutes -- [DRAFT]

March 6, 2009

Present: Jill Belli (JB); Gregory Donovan (GD); Ally Foster (AF); Anton Masterovoy (AM); Christine Pinnock (CP); Chris Alen Sula (CS); Suzanne Tamang (ST); Denise Torres (DT); Tasha Youstin (TY)
Guest: Anneliese Kamran (AK)

Absent: Rob Faunce (RF)

Chair: AM
Minutes: CP

Meeting Called to order at 6:11pm

- I. Approval of Agenda
CS added Spring Party to agenda and amended Section 7 under Business Report of convenience fee charged to students from 1.9% to 2.65%. JB amends wording under Health Committee to planning to participate. CS motions to approves agenda; AF seconded; Approved by unanimous consent.
- II. Approval of Old Minutes
GD motioned to approve Minutes; ST seconded. Approved by unanimous consent.
- III. Old Business
GD stated that once DSC Steering Committee receives certified list from Elise Perram and RF verifies the nominations, the last 2 weeks of March will be devoted to setting up ballot for elections.
- IV. New Business
 - a. Elections. AM volunteered to update election posters and create additional designs. JB noted that last year RF and GD posted all the information about both nominations and elections, and the Steering Committee received positive feedback from students. GD affirmed that last year's posters were effective and welcomed any suggestions for posting posters off-campus to reach as many students as possible. AM expressed concern about this year's elections being accessible to all students, because last year a student who was visually impaired had difficulty voting. GD told Elise Perram and Sharon Lerner in Student Affairs to assist student(s) with visual impairments to vote early on Votenet or to vote early anonymously.

- b. The Mission Statement. AK from The Working Group requested SC feedback on Mission Statement before it is submitted to Middle States Review Report. AK asked that SC take a moment to review the existing mission statement and the revised version, noting changes in terminology. AK then stated that the Working Group would like comments from the plenary at the next plenary meeting Friday March 20, 2009. GD recommended handing out copies of the mission statement along with the revised version to the plenary. TY asked AK about the types of criticism the Working Group is trying to obtain. AK replied that it is more about the changes students would like to see reflected in the mission to accurately depict what the Graduate Center provides as a graduate institution. AK also noted that students' comments that are being solicited now will not be reflected in the Middle States Review Report but will ultimately be reflected in the Middle States Review in the near future. CS recommended changes to the terminology from doctorate to Graduate Center to avoid further alienation of MALS students because technically the DSC is the Doctorate and Graduate Student Council. DT noted that many of the four-year campuses offer Masters degrees and that changing the terminology will ensure that the GC's mission reflects accessibility to doctoral education, something that is not provided at other CUNY campuses. Discussion of the Mission Statement continued. GD wanted confirmation that comments to the Mission Statement will affect the report. AK confirmed that the comments will have an impact. TY wanted reassurance that any student input will go towards future revisions and will be taken under advisement. EC confirmed. AF asked about a PowerPoint for the plenary. GD recommended a handout instead.
- c. Spring Party. CS stated that party will be held on March 20, 2009 and that a sign-up sheet will be available for SC members to sign up for duties. CS also stated that we have no food or supplies so whoever decides to undertake the catering should be advised. AM volunteers to do the posters. JB proposes that invitations are sent out on Facebook in advance. GD states that all SC members as officers should be able to access Facebook and e-mail group members. TY stated that it would be great if department representatives could send out notices/flyers on their respective student department listservs. AM noted that parties are always well attended so attendance is never a problem. GD agreed but noted that the same people are always in attendance. CS stated that we are over budget for the party as he responded to JB's request for decorations. TY suggested that we tap into Community Building. AF inquired about music. CS said that the Executive Committee spoke about hiring a DJ. TY wondered about availability of other spaces in the GC for the party to be held. GD replied that it is extremely difficult to obtain other venues within the GC and that the student lounges were for our use. There was a discussion about budget for DJ and for food. AM suggested that we continue this discussion at a later time.

V. Student Affairs Report (GD)

- a. GD stated that there were four organizations eligible for de-chartering: Association for Computer Machinery, The French Interdisciplinary Group for 17th Century Studies, The Future is Green Club, International Socialists' Organization. CS moves to begin process to de-charter these aforementioned groups. JB seconded. Motion was passed with 1 abstention-(ST). Four organizations were notified of office space availability: The Cinema Studies Group, The Spatial Scholars Group, The Classical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies Group, The CUNY Women In Science, Engineering and Math Group.

b. GD presented these changes to Bylaw 2: *Proposed Change to Funding (see 2.2):* Increase of chartered organization allocations from \$250 a semester to \$300 a semester.

Proposed Change to Chartering Process (see 2.3): A statement of purpose, in addition to the official roster and constitution, must be submitted to the Co-Chair of Student Affairs (only the statement of purpose and constitution will be circulated at the plenary). The statement of purpose is meant to explain how the group is multi-disciplinary and not redundant with previously existing groups. In addition, whether a group is "sufficiently multi-disciplinary" has been added to the criteria that the DSC must consider when deciding whether to charter an organization.

Proposed Change to Signature Roster (see 2.8): Valid rosters must now include at least 20 signatures, the provision that these signatures must represent at least 3 departments has been removed as the multi-disciplinary nature of chartered organizations will now be assessed and enforced in a more effective manner.

Proposed Change to Constitution (see 2.9): Chartered organizations will now have to submit a valid constitution annually to remain "active" and eligible for funds (in addition to their semesterly rosters and activity reports). To be valid, constitutions must reflect the multi-disciplinary focus of the original version that was approved by the plenary during the chartering process. Thus, groups who deviate from a multi-disciplinary focus will be considered "inactive."

TY asked for clarification of the term multidisciplinary. DT wanted to enforce budgetary rule to prevent a huge amount of check requests in May, thereby forcing students to adhere to structure of DSC bylaws. DT emphasized that someone needed to enforce budgetary requirements. GD responded that these laws become difficult to enforce and feels the need to streamline some of these bylaws but warned that one runs the risk of selective enforcement due to the exorbitant amount of bylaws in the constitution. AM suggested that clarification be obtained via the website and that emphasis be placed on items the SC wants enforced. CS recommended that GD provide a summary of the changes to the bylaws to be handed out at the plenary, since GD will not attend next plenary.

VI. Communications Report (RF): RF not present but submitted

recommendations for the provisional removal of DSC representatives at March SC mtg due to absenteeism (reps would have provisional opportunity to reclaim their seats at the March plenary). At Large Rep: John DeCarlo (3 absences in a row). Dept. Reps: Stephanie Anderson, Social Personality; Rouzbeh Nazari, Civil Engineering. JB motioned to remove reps; CP seconded. Unanimous vote for removal of reps at March plenary.

VII. Business Report (CS)

- a. Budget was discussed.
- b. Discussion of grant and funding opportunities for GC students such as: Doctoral Student Research Grant, Adjunct Profession Development, etc.

The meeting went into executive session to discuss personnel issues.

VIII. USS Report (AF)

AF will attend emergency meeting on Sunday March 15, 2009.

IX. Technology Committee

JB brought up issue of electrical outlets for laptops. GD recommended setting up a tech log on opencuny system for students to communicate in a blog about electrical outlets issue for laptops to determine areas in GC where the lack of outlets is an issue.

- X. Health Issues Committee (JB): JB stated that HI cmte will meet on Thursday March 19, 2009 at 5p.m. to discuss a variety of issues. Someone from Adjunct Project will come to speak about issues surrounding health insurance like the fact that students are limited to 15 office visits for the entire year (including specialists). JB is uncertain of the role of HIC with NYSHIP. CS recommends that JB invite Elise Perram to the March 19th mtg. JB expressed concern about a potential quorum issue because 2 members have been ratified but have been absent from meetings and have also failed to respond to e-mail.

- XI. Community Building (TY): TY stated that she is the only member of CB and would like to organize an event at John Jay College. GD suggested that TY solicit participants at next plenary with emphasis on those willing to coordinate events at different campuses.

AM motions to adjourn. DT seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 8:14 p.m.